

DYLAN ESLER

The
Lamp for
the Eye of
Contemplation

The *Samten Migdron* by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe,
a 10th-century Tibetan Buddhist Text on Meditation



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To
'Khor-gdong gter-sprul
Chhimed Rigdzin Lama (1922–2002)
Who lit the Lamp

and

Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin,
Holder of the bone lineage of Padma gling-pa,
Who kept it burning.

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Acknowledgments

According to Buddhist doctrine, all compounded phenomena originate in the interdependence of causes and conditions; this is aptly summarized in the first part of the famous *Pratītyasamutpādaḥṛdaya*: “Those phenomena that originate from a cause, the Thus-gone One has declared their cause, and so has the Great Mendicant spoken of their cessation.”¹ Hence, a work of this kind is itself the outcome of various causes and conditions and would be impossible without the kind help of many.

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Whatever errors remain are my responsibility alone; may they be dissolved into the vast emptiness of

phenomena's open dimension (Skt. *dharmadhātu*). May whatever merit there is in this work contribute to a better understanding of the doctrines and practices expounded herein.

¹ The Sanskrit formula reads: *Oṃ. Ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetuṃ teṣāṃ tathāgato hyavadat teṣāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃ vādī mahāśramaṇaḥ. Svāhā.* See Bhadanta Indra, *Sūtra-Tantrodbhavaḥ Katipayadhāraṇīmantrāḥ*, Transcribed and edited by Thinlay Ram Shashni, Sarnath: CIHTS, 2006, p. 58.

Abbreviations and Symbols

Sigla

- α Tāranātha (1575–1634) manuscript
β sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī (1654–1718) manuscript
γ 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros (1893–1959) block print (Kaḥ-thog)
C Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche edition (1974)
M mKhan-po Mun-sel edition (1990s)

Other abbreviations

- BG *Bai-ro 'i rgyud- 'bum*
em. emended
Gl. gloss
IOL India Office Library, Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang
Tib J library cave held in the British Library, London
KD *bKa' - 'gyur*, sDe-dge edition
KH *bKa' - 'gyur*, lHa-sa edition
NGD *rNying-ma rgyud- 'bum*, sDe-dge edition
NGM *rNying-ma rgyud- 'bum*, mTshams-brag edition
NGT *rNying-ma rgyud- 'bum*, gTing-skyes edition
NKD *rNying-ma bka' -ma rgyas-pa*, Dudjom Rinpoche edition
NKJ *sNga- 'gyur bka' -ma*, Kaḥ-thog mKhan-po 'Jam-dbyangs edition
TD *bsTan- 'gyur*, sDe-dge edition
TN translator's note

Conventions used

- [111] Bold Arabic numerals in square brackets refer to the Arabic numerals of the C edition.
1. Section numbers are editorial divisions referring to the individual subsections of the text.

Subheadings to the text are supplied by the translator.
[Text in square brackets] in the translation refers to explanations added by the translator.
{Text in braces} in the translation refers to glosses of the Tibetan text easily integrated into the English sentence structure.
The names of the texts quoted are in ***bold italics***.

Policy for glosses

When the glosses provided punctual information that was particularly helpful to understanding the text, I have given them in {braces} in the translation. At other times it was felt that the glosses rather interrupted the flow of the text, and in such cases I placed them in a footnote, marked by “Gl.” (for gloss) to differentiate them from the translator’s notes. When a translator’s note immediately follows a gloss in the footnotes, the former is marked by “TN” (translator’s note). All unmarked footnotes are the translator’s. In some rare cases, where the glosses contained too many errors to be intelligible, or where they seemed to be out of place, I have omitted them altogether in the translation.

Cross references

In general discussions of the text’s content, chapters (spelled out in full with a capital “C” and followed by an Arabic numeral, e.g., [Chapter 4](#)) refer to the chapters of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. When a reference to a note within the translation is intended, the convention “[Chapter 4](#), note 1” is used.

However, cross references to specific **section numbers** within the text of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgton* are given in the following format, whereby the first number refers to the chapter and the following numbers refer to the subsection within the said chapter: §4.2.3.3 (i.e., [Chapter 4](#), Section 2.3.3).

General Introduction: The Text and Its Author

I.1. The text

The text presented here, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (*Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*) by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, is a treatise on contemplation (Skt. *dhyāna*) that is of considerable interest for the study of the various meditative approaches current in 9th- and 10th-century Tibet; in fact, in this regard it is second only to the Dunhuang manuscripts.¹ It is written from the perspective of the Great Completeness (*rDzogs-chen*). However, as pointed out by Achard, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is a doxographical treatise (*grub-mtha'*; Skt. *siddhānta*) rather than a *rDzogs-chen* text per se;² in fact, it is among the first indigenous Tibetan doxographies.³ Its author expounds a classification of four vehicles that can lead to enlightenment, hierarchically arranged as follows: the gradual approach of the *Mahāyāna sūtras*; the simultaneous approach of the *sūtras*, otherwise known as *Chan*; the tantric approach of *Mahāyoga* (which also includes *Anuyoga*); and finally the Great Completeness, also called *Atiyoga*. In this regard, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is one of the first texts to treat the Great Completeness as an independent vehicle (*theg-pa*; Skt. *yāna*) rather than as a style (*tshul*) of practice,⁴ as

witnessed in Padmasambhava's *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*.⁵ The latter, like gNyan dPal-dbyangs' *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, treats the Great Completeness not as an autonomous textual category but merely as a manner of practicing deity yoga.⁶

In the Tibetan context, where later authors almost invariably considered the simultaneous⁷ approach (*cig-car 'jug-pa*; Skt. *yugapat*) as inferior to the gradual one (*rim-gyis 'jug-pa*; Skt. *kramavṛtyā*), the very fact that gNubs-chen does the contrary is of no small significance.⁸ Indeed, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is one of the rare Tibetan texts to give an extensive exposition of *Chan*. Rather than depreciating this tradition as is common in most later works, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* treats it with a certain impartiality, seeking to understand it in its own right.

In order to clarify his positions, the author of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* makes use of a procedure called “disputation” (*brgal*; Skt. *vāda*), where an imagined opponent poses questions, which are answered and refuted in the course of the text. In such cases, it should be understood that the opponent in no way needs to stand for an actual person or school and can in fact be long defunct or even fictitious. The views reproduced are reported second- or even third-hand⁹ and have the function of a rhetorical device enabling the author to clarify objections that could be raised to particular points of his exposition. gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' method is first to expound a given approach on its own terms, before criticizing it from the perspective of the approach above it: the gradualist from the simultaneist's

viewpoint, the latter from the *Mahāyoga* perspective, and *Mahāyoga* from the view of *rDzogs-chen*. This method becomes especially clear at the end of the four main chapters (i.e., [Chapters 4–7](#)), where the distinction with the vehicle(s) below is explained.

What transpires through gNubs-chen's work is a tireless concern to organize the teachings he had received and to present them in such a way that the distinctions between the various meditative currents of his time would not be lost sight of. This may well be in reaction to various syncretistic movements of his time that sought to blend *rDzogs-chen*, *Mahāyoga*, and *Chan*.¹⁰ In this respect, his task is facilitated by the parallel arrangement of the four main chapters, each of which discusses a particular contemplative approach in terms of its view, meditation, conduct, and fruition. The fact that these four chapters mirror each other in their structure enables the author to present each of the four doctrines independently according to a coherent framework, while at once making comparison of individual elements relatively straightforward.

The *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is known under a variety of names: *rDzogs-chen-gyi man-ngag bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (*Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation, Pith Instruction of the Great Completeness*), *rNal-'byor mig-gi bsam-gtan* (*Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*), and *sGom-gyi gnad gsal-bar phye-ba bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (*Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation That Clearly Distinguishes the Crucial Points of Meditation*).¹¹

[I.2. The author](#)

The author¹² of our text signs gNubs-ban, meaning “the venerable (Skt. *vandya*) of gNubs,” and also Ban-chung, meaning “small venerable.”¹³ This is none other than gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, an important figure of the *rNying-ma* tradition, known as a bodhisattva of the fourth stage¹⁴ and counted among Padmasambhava’s twenty-five main disciples.¹⁵ Indeed, Rig-’dzin Padma ’phrin-las (1640–1718) recounts that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes attained the fourth bodhisattva stage while practicing in a charnel ground in India, whereby he had a vision of the protectress Ekajaṭī and gained the realization of wisdom arising in phenomena’s open dimension (Skt. *dharmadhātu*).¹⁶ Already in Nyang-ral nyi-ma ’od-zer’s (1124–1192) *Chos-’byung me-tog snying-po*, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is listed as one of the twenty-five disciples to have been initiated by Padmasambhava into the eight injunctions (*bka’-brgyad*). He is mentioned at the beginning of the list, after King Khri-srong lde’u-btsan, Vairocana, and gNubs Nam-mkha’i snying-po.¹⁷ Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is also renowned as an eminent translator of both *sūtras* and *tantras*.¹⁸ Concerning gNubs-chen’s importance for the *rNying-ma* tradition, Dudjom Rinpoche (1904–1987) cites a saying according to which the *Vajrayāna* of the *rNying-ma-pas* “fell first to gNyags, fell to gNubs during the intermediate period, and fell to Zur in the end.”¹⁹



Figure I.1. Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, Tibetan mural, Mindrolling monastery (Dehradun, India).

Photograph: © D. Esler.

I.2.1. Birth

The dates of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes are difficult to establish with certainty, and we will return to this problem later. According to Dudjom Rinpoche, he was born in sGrags (Central Tibet) in the first month (ca. February) of the water male mouse year (*chu-pho byi-ba'i lo*);²⁰ depending on the sixty-year cycle, this could refer either to 772 or to 832 *ce*.²¹ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, however, gives the date of his birth as the first month of the wood male mouse year (*shing-pho byi-lo*), which is twelve years later.²² In this he follows the *rGya-bo-*

che, which purports to be gNubs-chen's autobiography.²³ This could refer either to 784 or to 844 ce, again depending on the sixty-year cycle. The dates of the earlier sixty-year cycle (i.e., 772 ce according to Dudjom Rinpoche, or 784 ce according to Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las) would make gNubs-chen a contemporary of Śāntarakṣita (d. 797), from whom he is said to have been ordained as a monk.²⁴ Sangs-rgyas ye-shes being his religious name, his secular name was rDo-rje khri-gtsug, and his secret name was rDo-rje yang dbang-gter.²⁵ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las further specifies that the name Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was bestowed on him in a vision by Vajrapāṇi that occurred while he was in Bodhgayā.²⁶ This again accords with the *rGya-bo-che*'s account,²⁷ whereby it is noteworthy that some of the lines describing this visionary event in the latter text are found echoed in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.²⁸

gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes descended from two of the most respected clans in Tibet, the gNubs²⁹ and the mChims, from his father's and mother's sides, respectively. Before his birth, a sandalwood tree is said to have appeared miraculously in the burial ground of his gNubs ancestors. A Chinese teacher prophesied that this was an omen for the birth of a high emanation and ordered specific rites to be performed in connection with the tree.³⁰

I.2.2. Travels and teachers

According to tradition, gNubs-chen was initiated in his youth by Padmasambhava into the *sGrub-pa bka'-brgyad*; his tutelary deity was Yamāntaka, and he

mastered the fierce spells (*drag-sngags*) associated with this practice.³¹ In this regard, it is reported that as he was meditating on Yamāntaka in the caves above bSam-yas, all the deities of Yamāntaka's configuration (Skt. *maṇḍala*) spontaneously appeared before him.³² He is also believed to have received further teachings from Padmasambhava in the rDo-rje rtse-lnga cave on the Nepali–Indian border.³³ In the *rGya-bo-che* gNubs-chen is made to say:³⁴

Then the great Guru imparted
To me, the small venerable, all that was needed:
The nine *tantras* of the fierce spells,
Their dissimilar modes of accomplishment, etc.,
As well as all the minor points connected to the activities.

Since in the system of the eight injunctions (*bka'-brgyad*) Yamāntaka is the wrathful form of Mañjuśrī,³⁵ the bodhisattva of sapience (Skt. *prajñā*), gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' association with this practice is particularly significant, both in terms of his exceptional intelligence and his reputed mastery of the arts of black magic. Furthermore, his alleged longevity will not be particularly surprising from a traditional perspective, given that Yamāntaka is in effect the “Slayer of the Lord of Death.” His intelligence manifested itself from an early age, as he is said to have learned to read and write by the age of seven. It is around this time that he is believed to have been ordained by Śāntarakṣita and to have first met the Nepali master Vasudhara in bSam-yas, who was to play an important role throughout his life.³⁶

During King Ral-pa-can's (alias Khri-gtsug lde-btsan) reign (815–836 ce),³⁷ gNubs-chen is held to have visited India, Nepal, and Gilgit (*Bru-sha*)³⁸ seven times,³⁹ making his first trip to Nepal and India at the age of thirteen⁴⁰ (or eleven, following Klong-chen-pa).⁴¹ In this he was following the advice of Vasudhara, who, before returning to Nepal, told Sangs-rgyas ye-shes to travel to Nepal and India in search of the teachings.⁴² Before departing for Nepal, gNubs-chen, who came from a wealthy family, sold some of his lands and orchards to convert them into gold for his journey.⁴³ Although these trips are held to have taken place during King Ral-pa-can's reign, it will be seen later that this is improbable historically.

In India he studied under Śrīsimha, Vimalamitra, Śāntigarbha, Dhanaśīla, and Dhanadhala, among others.⁴⁴ In Nepal, where he returned in his fifty-fourth year, he studied under King Vasudhara. The latter then sent him to his own teacher, Prakāśālaṃkāra, in Vārāṇasī.⁴⁵ Prakāśālaṃkāra (gSal-ba'i rgyan) was an Indian master also known as Ācārya gSal-ba rgyal⁴⁶ and Sukhodyotaka (bDe-ba gsal-mdzad); he is said to have written a number of short texts on evocations and empowerments based on the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo*, which were collected, edited, and translated by Sangs-rgyas ye-shes.⁴⁷

After studying the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo* with Prakāśālaṃkāra, gNubs-chen proceeded to Gilgit, where he continued his studies under Dhanarakṣita, Dharmabodhi, and Dharmarāja.⁴⁸ He also studied extensively with Lotsāwa Che-btsan-skyes from Gilgit,

who translated many *Anuyoga tantras* into Tibetan.⁴⁹ Dudjom Rinpoche, whose account in the main accords with that of Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las,⁵⁰ also lists Kamalaśīla, Khrag-'thung nag-po, Dhanasaṃskṛta, gNyags Jñānakumāra, and the latter's disciples, the Sogdian dPal-gyi ye-shes and Zhang rgyal-ba'i yon-tan, among his teachers.⁵¹ From the Sogdian dPal-gyi ye-shes in particular he received the pith instructions relating to the mind orientation (*sems-phyogs*) of *Atiyoga*.⁵² Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer recounts that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes received the combined transmissions of the nine disciples of gNyags Jñānakumāra,⁵³ which indicates that he was separated from the latter by one generation.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, this need not in itself be construed as signifying that he did not meet gNyags Jñānakumāra, since, as pointed out by Germano, the *lDe'u chos-'byung* (11th century) explains that gNubs-chen's root teacher was the Sogdian dPal-gyi ye-shes, but that dissatisfaction with him led gNubs to seek out the latter's own teacher gNyags Jñānakumāra. The same account specifies that his trip across the Himalayas at the age of fifty-four was motivated by dissatisfaction with the teachings that gNyags Jñānakumāra had made available in Tibet.⁵⁵ Hence, it would seem that gNubs, while mainly studying with the master's disciples, did have occasion to meet gNyags Jñānakumāra himself. In the hagiography by Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, gNubs-chen is made to say that he had eleven⁵⁶ masters, of which four were particularly close: Śrīsiṃha, Khrag-'thung nag-po, Śāntigarbha, and Vasudhara.⁵⁷ The *rGya-bo-che* further states,⁵⁸

The pith instructions were imparted to me
By the Indian scholar Vimalamitra,
The preceptor from Oḍḍiyāna, Padmākara,
The Nepali scholar Vasudhara
And the Tibetan scholar Jñānakumāra.

In brief, it can be said that in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes the traditions of *Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga*, and the mind section (*sems-sde*) of *Atiyoga* converged.⁵⁹ Although, as noted earlier, gNubs-chen is said to have been ordained as a monk in his youth by Śāntarakṣita, he later became a non-celibate tantric practitioner, a *mantrin* (*sngags-pa*). In fact, it is possible that his repeated reference to himself as the “small venerable” contains an allusion to his former status as a monk that is both humorous and self-depreciatory.

I.2.3. Conflicts in Tibet

gNubs-chen’s main hermitage was sGrags-yang-rdzong. It is here and in the vicinity that he spent extensive periods in retreat, coming to a realization of the unique self-originated seminal nucleus (*rang-byung thig-le nyag-gcig*) and liberating mind’s beingness (*sems-nyid*) after nine months of practice.⁶⁰ As he wanted to settle there with his disciples, the political situation in Central Tibet deteriorated; gNubs-chen’s hagiographies place this episode of his life during King Dar-ma Khri-’u’i dum-brtan’s reign (b. ca. 803; r. 836–842 ce), though we will see later that this is problematic. The latter king, popularly known as Glang-dar-ma, is believed to have instigated a persecution against the powerful monastic estates. This shift in the government’s attitude toward

Buddhism must, however, be understood in its proper historical context. Glang-dar-ma's predecessor, Ral-pa-can, had extended state sponsorship of the Buddhist monasteries beyond all reasonable limits, causing a deficit in the government's budget. Glang-dar-ma's attempts to redress the financial situation of the royal treasury appear to have exacerbated tensions between various clans. A series of revolts (*kheng-log*) eventually ensued, and it is these revolts that appear to have been the real cause for the destruction of Central Tibet's religious sites,⁶¹ but Tibetan historians have generally remembered Glang-dar-ma as the persecutor.

During this tumultuous period, two of gNubs-chen's sons were killed.⁶² Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, however, writes that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes had six sons, of which four were killed during the revolt, one died a natural death, and one seems to have been lost to unembarrassed debauchery.⁶³ The histories of Dudjom Rinpoche⁶⁴ and Guru bKra-shis (18th century)⁶⁵ inform us that because gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was the rebirth of the butcher (*gshan-pa*) Ma-ru-rtse of India, he had to continue taming those beings (presumably by wrathful means) who remained from his previous life.⁶⁶

During this time he faced much hardship, undergoing persecution and three years of poverty.⁶⁷ According to some accounts, in his sixty-first year he destroyed thirty-seven hostile villages with the fierce spell of Yamāntaka.⁶⁸ In this regard, it is believed that he was also an adept of the deity Vajrakīlaya, the mastery of which enabled him to shatter rocks with a touch of his dagger (Skt. *kīla*).⁶⁹ An episode is recounted from this

period, where Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, having abandoned his residence of sGrags-yang-rdzong and fled to sNye-mo bye-mkhar, found the surrounding mountains covered with soldiers. He thereupon invoked the protectors of the doctrine (*chos-skyong*) and pointed his acacia-wood dagger toward one of the mountains, and the mountain blazed up in flames, burning the hostile armies.⁷⁰ His close connection with the guardians of the teaching is made explicit in the *rGya-bo-che*, which says that he beheld the Bliss-gone Ones (Skt. *sugata*) of the three times and the protectors of the doctrine,⁷¹ as well as in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* itself, where in [Chapter 8](#) gNubs-chen alludes to the gods and ogres (*lha-srin*) who conferred on him their empowerment.⁷² Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer suggests that during this period of turmoil Sangs-rgyas ye-shes planned to go to Nepal disguised as a beggar to meet his masters.⁷³ This might refer to the trip that, according to Dudjom Rinpoche, he is said to have made aged fifty-four,⁷⁴ although the dates do not match, since the hostilities of which gNubs-chen was a victim occurred in his sixty-first year. Perhaps the trip referred to by Dudjom Rinpoche is the last he made under relatively normal circumstances, before being caught up in the revolt that was to cost the life of several of his sons. Whatever the case may be, the fact that gNubs-chen came under repeated attack indicates that he held a certain degree of prestige and power in the region, something that probably attracted the jealousy and hostility of rebellious elements.⁷⁵

[I.2.4. Other activities](#)

gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is famed for using his magic powers (first manifesting nine yak-sized scorpions,⁷⁶ then shattering a nearby boulder with lightning) to frighten Glang-dar-ma, thereby ensuring that unlike the community of monks, the “white community” of non-celibate *mantrins* (*sngags-pa*) would not be persecuted.⁷⁷ The following passage gives a hint of the master’s activities at that time:⁷⁸

I, the small venerable of gNubs,
Have, from my heart, produced the [enlightened] mind
according to the doctrine;
Hateful enemies granted me no respite.
It is in order to protect the Buddha’s teaching
That hatred was immediately born.
Thinking of the purpose of great righteousness,
I studied the documents of the evil spells.

Even after frightening Glang-dar-ma, gNubs-chen, unable to endure the religious persecution that the latter instigated, decided to kill him using the fierce spells he had brought back from his studies under Vasudhara in Nepal.⁷⁹ However, when lHa-lung dpal-gyi rdo-rje murdered Glang-dar-ma instead, gNubs-chen concealed these spells as treasures lest they be misused.⁸⁰

The later *rNying-ma* tradition often appears to portray Sangs-rgyas ye-shes as an addict to black magic,⁸¹ who wrote the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* in his old age to purify his previous misdeeds,⁸² and his embracing of the magical arts contrasts quite sharply with the overly cautious attitude toward such practices sometimes adopted by masters of the later propagation (*phyi-dar*) of Buddhism in Tibet.⁸³ However that may be, the detailed

treatment of his subject matter and the subtle philosophical distinctions he makes prove him to be the first great metaphysician and writer of 10th-century Tibet.⁸⁴ Moreover, in the Tibetan context there was no contradiction in being both a philosopher and a magician, as was likewise the case in Renaissance Europe.⁸⁵

Apart from the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, other texts that gNubs-chen is said to have composed include the *mDo'i 'grel-chen mun-pa'i go-cha* (an extensive commentary on the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo*, a *tantra* later classified as pertaining to the *Anuyoga* rubric),⁸⁶ the *dKa'-gcod smra-ba'i mtshon-cha*, and the *sGyu-'phrul brgyad-cu-pa'i mngon-rtogs 'grel*.⁸⁷ It should be noted that the latter two works appear no longer to be extant. Furthermore, Higgins⁸⁸ has recently drawn attention to another extant text by Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, the *rTse-mo byung-rgyal 'grel-pa*,⁸⁹ whereas Guarisco⁹⁰ points out that an extract from the *Paṇ-grub-rnams-kyi thugs-bcud snying-gi nyi-ma* is also attributed to gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes (who signs gNubs-chung rdo-rje yang-dbang).⁹¹ In fact, there seem to be a few other texts attributed to gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes as author. Mention may here be made of the *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*,⁹² the *rDo-rje gzong-phugs-kyi 'grel-pa*,⁹³ and the *rJe-btsan dam-pa'i 'grel-pa*,⁹⁴ as well as of the popular ritual text known as the *sDe-brgyad gser-skyems*,⁹⁵ which is recited when ritually presenting a golden libation to the eight groups of arrogant spirits.⁹⁶ This is to say nothing of the numerous texts (many of them *Mahāyoga* works devoted to the deity Yamāntaka) on which Sangs-rgyas ye-shes worked either as

translator, compiler, or editor, a more exhaustive inventory of which is under preparation. An example would be the *rDzong-'phrang srog-gsum-gyi chings-kyi man-ngag*,⁹⁷ a series of instructions on the *bKa'-brgyad* deities going back to a manuscript of Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, which were originally transmitted from gNubs-chen to his disciple Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (who will be discussed further), referred to in the colophons by their secret names *rDo-rje yang dbang-gter* and *gTer-bzhad rtsal*,⁹⁸ respectively. Indeed, Germano suggests that part of gNubs-chen's prominence may stem from the fact that he composed works in his own name rather than anonymously as was usually the case at the time. He thus could subsequently become an iconic figure of early tantric activity in Tibet, serving in retrospect as a rallying point for the authentication of *rNying-ma* lineages.⁹⁹

Judging from the gloss referring to Glang-dar-ma's persecution of Buddhism,¹⁰⁰ gNubs-chen would certainly have written the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* later than 842 ce,¹⁰¹ and, if there is any truth in the tradition that he composed it in his old age, he would have written it in the early to mid-10th century. Nevertheless, this argument must be accepted with some caution since the explanatory glosses are probably insertions by a later hand.¹⁰² However, there is another element that corroborates an early or mid-10th century composition date for the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, and this is the fact that our author repeatedly quotes the *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan* by gNyan dPal-dbyangs,¹⁰³ and that the latter lived in the early 9th century.¹⁰⁴

Following the previously mentioned revolt and the three years of poverty that ensued, gNubs-chen retired to his fortress to deepen his contemplative practice. He then taught in bSam-yas monastery, having been invited to do so by the local prince.¹⁰⁵ gNubs-chen had five main disciples: sPa-gor Blon-chen 'phags-pa, Sru-ston Legs-pa'i sgron-me, Dan-gyi yon-tan mchog, So Ye-shes dbang-phyug, and his “supernal son” (*sras-kyi dam-pa*) Khu-lung-pa Yon-tan rgya-mtsho.¹⁰⁶ Whereas Karmay appears to hold that the latter was Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' biological son, probably because of the title gNubs-chung sometimes placed before his name,¹⁰⁷ there seems little reason in doing so. Indeed, in Dudjom Rinpoche's *Chos-'byung* it is mentioned that Khu-lung-pa Yon-tan rgya-mtsho met gNubs-chen in his thirtieth year while on a hunting expedition,¹⁰⁸ an account that precludes any biological relationship. Furthermore, the title gNubs-chung (“the small gNubs”) simply indicates that he was gNubs-chen's disciple.¹⁰⁹

I.2.5. Death

As far as the date of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' death is concerned, according to Dudjom Rinpoche, he passed away in the water tiger year (*chu-stag*) in the district of Khyon-mi, aged 111, realizing the rainbow body;¹¹⁰ depending on the sixty-year cycle, this could be either 883 or 943 ce. This closely agrees with the earliest recension of the *Zangs-gling-ma*, where Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer writes that gNubs-chen lived till the age of 110.¹¹¹ Guenther, following Klong-chen-pa (1308–1364),¹¹² gives his age at the time of his death as 120,¹¹³

whereas Tulku Thondup, who agrees with both Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer's *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*¹¹⁴ and 'Gos Lotsāwa gZhon-nu dpal (1392–1481),¹¹⁵ states that he died aged 113 but also quotes a saying attributed to gNubs-chen himself stating that he lived to be 130.¹¹⁶ The same saying is cited by Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, who writes,¹¹⁷

Although it is explained in some histories that gNubs-chen lived to be 113, he himself said, “I, the small venerable of gNubs, have reached the age of 130.”

This exceptional longevity has caused some historians, notably dPa'-bo gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (1504–1566), to posit the existence of two persons with the name Sangs-rgyas ye-shes: a sGrags Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, who was a disciple of Padmasambhava, and a gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, who was born during Ral-pa-can's reign, traveled to Nepal, India, and Gilgit, studied with Lotsāwa Che-btsan-skyes, and lived to be 113.¹¹⁸ However, Namkhai Norbu has pointed out that there is no valid reason to assume the existence of two persons simply on the basis of the names sGrags and gNubs, as Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was in sGrags before fleeing to the area of gNubs and was evidently linked to both places.¹¹⁹ A similar point is made by Guru bKra-shis, who argues that gNubs refers to the master's bone lineage and sGrags to a place name, so that there is no basis for holding that there were two persons called Sangs-rgyas ye-shes.¹²⁰

I.2.6. The problem of gNubs-chen's dates

The problem of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' dates is that he is made a contemporary of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan (r. 755–797 ^{ce}), of Ral-pa-can (r. 815–836), and, beyond Glang-dar-ma (r. 836–842), of the latter's grandson dPal 'khor-btsan (r. 893–910).¹²¹ 'Gos Lotsāwa gZhon-nu dpal suggests that he was born during the reign of Ral-pa-can and lived up to the time of Khri bkra-shis brtsegs-dpal, the son of dPal 'khor-btsan.¹²² Guru bKra-shis, while he mentions the latter opinion, concludes that gNubs-chen was born during the reign of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan, attained the accomplishment of an awareness-holder of longevity and hence “appears to have lived up to the time of dPal 'khor-btsan.”¹²³ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, as mentioned earlier, bases himself on gNubs-chen's allegedly verbatim statement that he lived to be 130 and likewise concludes that he lived from the time of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan to that of dPal 'khor-btsan.¹²⁴

Karmay, for his part, is in favor of placing gNubs-chen in the late 10th century. In support of this he quotes the *Deb-ther sngon-po*, which states that there was only one teacher between gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes and Zur-po-che Śākya 'byung-gnas,¹²⁵ who lived from 1002 to 1062 ^{ce}.¹²⁶ Karmay further advances the argument that Mi-la ras-pa (1040–1123) is said to have been instructed in the arts of black magic by lHa-rje gNubs-chung (called lHa-rje Hūṃ-chung in the *Deb-ther sngon-po*).¹²⁷ Although the latter has at times been identified with gNubs-chen's disciple Khu-lung-pa Yontan rgya-mtsho, due to his title gNubs-chung, which is shared by the latter,¹²⁸ this seems improbable, as it would

place gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes far too late in the 10th century.¹²⁹ It therefore appears more likely that lHa-rje gNubs-chung, who studied with rGya Zhang-khrom¹³⁰ (more on whom will follow), was the grandson of Yontan rgya-mtsho, as is moreover maintained by Dudjom Rinpoche.¹³¹ This would imply that there were four generations between gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes and lHa-rje gNubs-chung (Mi-la ras-pa's magic teacher).

Let us summarize the different clues we have for the time frame of Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' life. As we have seen, Dudjom Rinpoche gives the indications water male mouse year for his birth and water tiger year for his death;¹³² there are two possibilities, depending on the sixty-year cycle: 772–883 or 832–943 *ce*. On the other hand, Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, following the *rGya-bo-che*,¹³³ gives the wood male mouse year for his birth, which is twelve years later. While he refrains from giving a date for gNubs-chen's death, he seems to favor the view that he lived to be 130.¹³⁴ Hence, the dates suggested by Padma 'phrin-las would be, depending on the sixty-year cycle, 784–914 or 844–974 *ce*.

There are vast discrepancies in the dating of this period; thus, Dudjom Rinpoche gives 858 *ce*¹³⁵ (rather than 800)¹³⁶ as the date for Khri-srong lde'u-btsan's death and 901–906 as the dates for the persecution of Buddhism under Glang-dar-ma.¹³⁷ These disagreements arise due to the difficulties in deciding how many sixty-year cycles elapsed between the collapse of the dynasty (842 or 846 *ce*) and the later propagation (*phyi-dar*) of Buddhism in the late 10th century.¹³⁸ This, in turn, is

because the first cycle of sixty years started only in 1027 _{ce}, after the introduction of the *Kālacakra* to Tibet.¹³⁹

I.2.7. Conclusions

The most plausible solution to the problem of gNubs-chen's dates has been pointed out by Vitali:¹⁴⁰ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, again citing the *rGya-bo-che*,¹⁴¹ writes that the persecution faced by Sangs-rgyas ye-shes occurred during his sixty-first year at the time of the intermediate revolt (*kheng-log bar-pa*).¹⁴² This is an important clue, for it refers to the second of three revolts that occurred as a result of the clan hostilities and gradual fragmentation of the Tibetan empire in the wake of Glang-dar-ma's assassination. This second revolt took place during dPal 'khor-btsan's reign (r. 893–910 _{ce}); the latter is known to have reigned for eighteen years after succeeding to the throne at the age of thirteen upon the death of his father 'Od-srung (840–893 _{ce}). Hence, it is impossible for gNubs-chen to have been born in a wood male mouse year during Khri-srong lde'u-btsan's reign (i.e., in 784 _{ce}), for in that case he could not have been sixty when this second revolt broke out.¹⁴³ Simultaneously, this argument also invalidates the water male mouse year proposed in Dudjom Rinpoche's *Chos-'byung*,¹⁴⁴ for even if we take the later sixty-year cycle with gNubs-chen's birth in 832 _{ce}, the revolt would have had to take place in 892 _{ce}, which is too early to fit dPal 'khor-btsan's reign.

It seems, therefore, that the only acceptable birth date for Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is the wood male mouse year of 844 _{ce}, with the revolt taking place when he was sixty-

one in 904 ce,¹⁴⁵ a few years before dPal 'khor-btsan's assassination in 910 ce. This implies that gNubs-chen's association with the reign of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan cannot be considered historical but, rather, serves the purpose of making him a direct disciple of Padmasambhava and Śāntarakṣita, the illustrious masters responsible for the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet.¹⁴⁶ This would have been a consequence of the development of the legends surrounding Padmasambhava:¹⁴⁷ as the latter grew in importance, other figures of the early spread of Buddhism were drawn into Padmasambhava's orbit, even though they may actually have lived later. In our present case, gNubs-chen's discipleship of Padmasambhava might be seen as ideal, in the sense that he studied under gNyags Jñānakumāra, one of Padmasambhava's closest disciples. Similarly, the statement that he was ordained by Śāntarakṣita must probably be interpreted to mean that he was ordained in the monastic lineage established by the latter. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that gNubs-chen's connection with the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava is *not* a late development, since it goes back, as already pointed out, to Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer (12th century).¹⁴⁸

Furthermore, it is also apparent that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes cannot have been a contemporary of Glang-dar-ma, as claimed by later Tibetan historians, since he was born two years after the latter's assassination. The persecutions suffered by Sangs-rgyas ye-shes occurred not during Glang-dar-ma's reign but, as explained earlier, during the second revolt that took place

in 904 *ce.* It follows, of course, that the trips gNubs-chen made abroad in search of teachings cannot have taken place during Ral-pa-can's reign but happened much later, probably in the 860s–870s, when Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was a young man. The story of gNubs-chen intimidating Glang-dar-ma into protecting the white community of *mantrins*, while obviously invalidated historically, probably indicates that, whereas the institutions of religious learning gradually disintegrated in the wake of Glang-dar-ma's policies, the non-celibate tantric *yogins* remained relatively unharmed and were able to preserve their lineages outside of monastic structures. Considering his remarkable achievements in codifying and interpreting the teachings he inherited, it is likely that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, a *mantrin* himself, had no small role to play in the preservation and transmission of these lineages during the period of fragmentation (*sil-bu'i dus*) that followed the collapse of the dynasty. It is only natural, therefore, that the later tradition should have made him directly responsible for the *mantrins'* physical survival and hence elaborated the account of gNubs-chen's encounter with Glang-dar-ma, especially considering the general confusion that exists with respect to the dating of this period of Tibetan history.

The various sources agree that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes lived to be older than a hundred, though there is divergence of opinion as to whether he died at the age of 110, 111, 113, 120, or 130. While it may be difficult to take these figures literally, especially as they contradict each other, this longevity need not in itself be seen as particularly unlikely, since throughout all times

and places there have been individuals whose life span has been longer than average. It seems quite possible, therefore, that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes witnessed the first five, perhaps six, decades of the 10th century.

Among gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' emanations are counted rGya Zhang-khrom rdo-rje 'od-'bar (11th century),¹⁴⁹ Dri-med kun-dga' (late 14th century), gSang-bdag 'phrin-las lhun-grub (1611–1662), rTsa-gsum gling-pa (1694–1738),¹⁵⁰ and, more recently, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche (1920–1996).¹⁵¹ His continued spiritual influence over the centuries within the *rNying-ma* tradition is further exemplified by such recent masters as mKhan-po mNga'-dbang dpal bzang-po (1879–1941) of Kaḥ-thog monastery and 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros (1893–1959), both of whom had visions of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes.¹⁵²

I.3. Reception of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* in Tibet

Despite its historical and philosophical importance, in Tibet itself the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* has certainly not received the attention it deserves, even within the *rNying-ma* school of Tibetan Buddhism, to the literature of which it belongs. It was transmitted until the 13th century, after which it almost disappeared.¹⁵³ Apart from a few disparate mentions or quotations over the centuries—mainly of an antiquarian character¹⁵⁴—it remained virtually unknown, and it would probably have languished in obscurity if in 1974 Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche (alias Prof. C.R. Lama, 1922–2002) of Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, had not published an

edition of the text, thus bringing it to the attention of the scholarly world. Later, in the 1990s, mKhan-po Mun-sel (1916–1994) published a revised edition as part of the fifty-two supplementary volumes to Dudjom Rinpoche's *bKa'-ma rgyas-pa*.¹⁵⁵ More recently, a few other editions were published, but these either derive from one of the above pioneering editions or attempt to compare them.¹⁵⁶

A possible explanation for this lack of popular esteem is that contrary to what became the normative standpoint in Tibet, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* upholds the simultaneous approach as superior to the gradual one. Moreover, its statement that the simultaneous approach continued until Glang-dar-ma's religious persecution,¹⁵⁷ which contradicts the assumption popular among most Tibetan scholars that it disappeared as soon as it was banned during the bSam-yas debates (792–794),¹⁵⁸ may explain this state of affairs.¹⁵⁹

Perhaps because of his informed and detailed treatment of *Chan*, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was later accused by 'Bri-gung dpal-'dzin (14th century) of mixing up the contents of *Padmasambhava's Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba* with *Chan*. Nevertheless, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* demonstrates that this criticism is quite baseless. On the contrary, gNubs-chen's concern at explaining the differences between the various meditative approaches of his time is evident.¹⁶⁰ In fact, he is very critical of a syncretistic outlook presumably popular at his time, claiming that people who mix *Chan* and *rDzogs-chen* neither understand the view of the one nor of the other.¹⁶¹

However, this is not to say that the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* was completely unknown in Tibet: it is mentioned in an official decree (*bka'-shog*) of Pho-'brang zhi-ba-'od (11th century).¹⁶² Furthermore, as pointed out by Karmay, extracts from the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* appear in O-rgyan gling-pa's (1323–ca. 1379) treasure the *Blon-po bka'-thang*.¹⁶³ Tanaka and Robertson have demonstrated in some detail that Chapters 12, 13, and 14 of the *Blon-po bka'-thang* are in fact a somewhat patchwork rearrangement of verbatim sections of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. Matter that in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* occurs in a natural order is rearranged quite artificially in the *Blon-po bka'-thang*. Moreover, O-rgyan gling-pa does not distinguish between the main text and quotations as differentiated in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. Finally, the text of the *Blon-po bka'-thang* presents the material in such a way that it appears to be a debate between only the gradual and simultaneous approaches, whereas the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* has a vaster scope since it also covers *Mahāyoga* and *rDzogs-chen*. O-rgyan gling-pa's motivation would appear to be to defend the *rNying-ma* school against the polemicists who claim that *rDzogs-chen* and *Chan* are identical. However, rather than simply disavowing a doctrinal identity between both traditions (which would have been perhaps more straightforward since this is very much one of the intentions behind the composition of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*), the author of the *Blon-po bka'-thang* sets about to prove the superiority of *Chan* to the gradual approach. In this he can base himself on the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, but he seems to bypass the distinction that this text then goes

on to draw between *Chan* on the one hand and *rDzogs-chen* on the other.¹⁶⁴

As noted by Karmay,¹⁶⁵ a *bSam-gtan mig-gi sgron-ma* is also mentioned by 'Gos Lotsāwa gZhon-nu dpal (1392–1481) as belonging to the Rong system of the Great Completeness.¹⁶⁶ However, this probably refers to another work: indeed, a *bSam-gtan mig-gi sgron-me* is also mentioned by Klong-chen-pa among the texts received by his own master, Kumarāja, from Slob-dpon sGom-pa, himself a descendant of lCe-sgom nag-po. However, the text in question is not by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes but, rather, by Vimalamitra.¹⁶⁷

As is clear from the colophon to our text, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* was known to Tāranātha (1575–1634) and to sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī (1654–1718) since Tāranātha's manuscript (α) was apparently the source of sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī's copy (β).¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu (1698–1755) quotes the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* in his history of *Chan* in Tibet.¹⁶⁹ In more recent times, a copy of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (in all likelihood β) was discovered by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho (1880–1925), probably at the library of the bKra-shis lhun-po monastery in Central Tibet.¹⁷⁰ Following this discovery, Ze-chen mKhan-chen Padma rnam-rgyal (1871–1926), who was at once Kaḥ-thog Si-tu's teacher and student, wished to have a xylographic edition of this rare text produced. This task was undertaken by his disciple, 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros, who prepared a block print edition from sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī's manuscript copy.¹⁷¹ These block prints

(γ) are the basis for the first modern edition of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (C) and, via the latter, of its subsequent revised edition (M).¹⁷²

I.4. Overview of scholarly research on the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*

Since the pioneering edition of Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche in 1974, a number of Tibetologists have turned their attention to the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. Guenther based his article on meditative traditions in early Tibet on the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, from which he made partial translations (mainly of [Chapter 3](#)).¹⁷³ Karmay has provided a summary of [Chapter 5](#) on *Chan*¹⁷⁴ and a summary and extract translations of [Chapter 7](#) on *rDzogs-chen*.¹⁷⁵ Tanaka and Robertson, as already mentioned, give a detailed comparison between the passages of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* and their reinterpretation in O-rgyan gling-pa's *Blon-po bka'-thang*.¹⁷⁶ Reynolds, in his brief survey of the historical problems concerning the origins of *rDzogs-chen*, refers to the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* and relates some biographical information concerning our author—while the latter is largely derived from Dudjom Rinpoche's *Chos-'byung*, he offers some interesting precisions.¹⁷⁷ Achard, in his magisterial work on the origins of *rDzogs-chen*, offers some perceptive reflections both on the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* and its author.¹⁷⁸

Otokawa has prepared an initial electronic version of Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche's edition of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*,¹⁷⁹ thereby making the text digitally

searchable. Dalton and van Schaik provide an analysis of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*'s structure, along with a translation of [Chapter 3](#).¹⁸⁰ Meinert too gives an analysis of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, offering a comparison with the *Avikalpapraveśa-nāma-dhāraṇī*'s fourfold correct practice.¹⁸¹ In her doctoral thesis, she compares [Chapter 7](#) on *rDzogs-chen* with a Chinese work by *Chan* master Wolun (ca. 545–626 ce), taking as the point of comparison the principle of non-conceptuality (*rnam-par mi-rtog-pa*; Skt. *avikalpa*; Ch. *wu fenbie*).¹⁸² She concludes that gNubs-chen's criticism of *Chan* stems from an insufficient reflection on the manner in which language conditions the mind—in this case, the denotative character of Tibetan versus the connotative character of Chinese.¹⁸³ Similarly, looking at the way Sangs-rgyas ye-shes integrates and reshapes ideas from previous authors, Miyazaki, in a brief study on [Chapter 4](#), compares gNubs-chen's presentation of the four immeasurables and two truths with that found in Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama*, pointing out discrepancies between both expositions.¹⁸⁴

So far, the most extensive work on the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is without doubt Donati's pioneering venture at translating and at preparing a diplomatic edition of the text.¹⁸⁵ While her monumental work is highly impressive in terms of scope and while it might at first be thought to render the present study superfluous, the difficulties in interpretation of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* are such that my new endeavor at understanding and translating the text will surely not be found to be redundant. This is especially the case since Donati bases herself primarily

on mKhan-po Mun-sel's edition. She considers the latter more reliable because Kaḥ-thog monastery, the place of its publication, is closely connected to the personages mentioned in the editorial colophon as having been involved in the production of the block prints at the source of the modern editions of the text.¹⁸⁶ This decision is, however, philologically problematic since we now know, thanks to the interviews conducted by Lopez,¹⁸⁷ that mKhan-po Mun-sel's edition, regardless of its greater elegance and of the place of its publication, is itself derived from Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche's edition.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, while in her translation Donati has made a start at identifying some of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*'s numerous sources, giving particular attention to the Dunhuang manuscripts,¹⁸⁹ many citations remain untraced, and no attempt has been made in her diplomatic edition to systematically record the variants between the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* and the texts that it quotes. Of course, this should not detract from the value of Donati's work, which is a pioneering attempt at translating a text that at times seems untranslatable due its complexity and intricate textual problems.

Building upon Donati's work, Baroetto provides an Italian translation and critical edition of [Chapter 7](#);¹⁹⁰ he is thus the first scholar to have sought to establish a critical edition for any portion of the text, and the only specialist, apart from Donati, to have made extensive use of mKhan-po Mun-sel's edition. Nonetheless, little or no attention is paid to the recensional history of the extant editions of the text that he uses in his editorial work. The first scholar to have attempted an examination of the

text's recensional history is indeed Lopez,¹⁹¹ whose work has already been touched upon. Even though some of his conclusions are marred by a misreading of the colophon,¹⁹² his work sheds some indispensable light on the obscure recensional history of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.¹⁹³ His endeavor to unravel some of the complex knots of this history is remarkable, especially since Lopez actually moves away from a strictly philological approach, seeking instead to flesh out the context of the age of fragmentation (*sil-bu'i dus*) that framed the writing of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' masterpiece.¹⁹⁴

There is no doubt that each of these studies has contributed to a better understanding of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. Nevertheless, given the length of the text and the immense philological and interpretative challenges it poses,¹⁹⁵ a comprehensive translation was called for in order to make this groundbreaking work accessible to the English-speaking public. What distinguishes the present translation from previous attempts in this direction is the fact that it is based on a critical edition of the text taking into account the numerous sources quoted by the Tibetan author. The translation has also benefited from my in-depth hermeneutical study of the text, a sustained effort to probe into and unpack the philosophical, religious, and contemplative doctrines and practices that are laid out in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.

Before concluding this section, let us recall two fairly recent Tibetan studies that touch upon the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*: Namkhai Norbu, in his work on Buddhagupta's *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*—one of the

Dunhuang manuscripts on *rDzogs-chen*¹⁹⁶—has turned his attention to gNubs-chen’s life and particularly to Buddhagupta’s teachings found in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.¹⁹⁷ Khenpo Palden Sherab, for his part, has published a brief commentary on the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, in the style of a general explanation (*spyi-bshad*).¹⁹⁸

Furthermore, for the study of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes’ life, mention should be made of the *rGya-bo-che*, his alleged autobiography,¹⁹⁹ of the hagiography by Rig-’dzin Padma ’phrin-las²⁰⁰ and of the biographical chapter on gNubs-chen found in Dudjom Rinpoche’s *Chos-’byung*,²⁰¹ as well as of the corresponding section in the *Chos-’byung* of Guru bKra-shis.²⁰² The recently published *gNam-lcags chos-’byung* by sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-’dzin also includes a biography of gNubs-chen.²⁰³ Finally, two recent articles by Dalton have contributed to shed further light on the life of Sangs-rgyas ye-shes.²⁰⁴

I.5. Textual observations

I.5.1. Overall structure of the text

As mentioned earlier, each of the four principal chapters of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* presents a detailed examination of one of the four approaches to contemplation that are the focus of this text: [Chapter 4](#) thus deals with the gradual approach, [Chapter 5](#) with the simultaneous approach, [Chapter 6](#) with *Mahāyoga*, and [Chapter 7](#) with *Atiyoga*. These four chapters do so by

individually examining each approach in terms of its view (*lta-ba*; Skt. *dr̥ṣṭi*), meditation (*sgom-pa*; Skt. *bhāvanā*), conduct (*spyod-pa*; Skt. *caryā*), and fruition (*'bras-bu*; Skt. *phala*). They also each contain an additional section, which is devoted to identifying the superiority of the vehicle in question over those below it.

If these four chapters can be said to constitute the main body of the text, they are surrounded by three introductory chapters on the one hand, and a final chapter on the other. Among the introductory chapters, [Chapter 1](#) provides the general setting for the subject of contemplation: after an initial homage addressed to the innate state of spontaneous presence and a discussion of the text's title, our author moves on to explain the practical necessity of finding a solitary place to engage in contemplation and discusses such topics as the need to be committed to one's practice of meditation and to be free from worldly attachments, as well as the necessity to study the Buddhist doctrine and to obtain the pith instructions related to the meditations one seeks to undertake.

[Chapter 2](#) continues in this vein, giving a brief overview of the lineages and means specific to each of the contemplative approaches. It then provides an interesting discussion of four reliances (*bsten-pa*; Skt. *upāsana*) that the aspiring meditator will need for his practice: they concern the master who imparts personalized instruction, the consort with whom the tantric *yogin* engages in sexual yoga, the books compatible with the meditative system one wishes to practice, and a servant who is to look after one's daily

necessities so that the latter do not become a cause of distraction. Our author thereupon enjoins the necessity of looking after one's body during one's retreat, which can be seen as a reminder that the Buddhist path of meditation steers clear of the extremes of indulgence and self-mortification. The chapter closes with reflections on the benefits of meditating and the defects of not doing so.

In [Chapter 3](#) Sangs-rgyas ye-shes broaches the interrelationship between correctly assimilating the doctrinal standpoint or view of a given contemplative approach and deepening and stabilizing this comprehension through meditation. He then provides a bird's-eye view of the differences among the vehicles examined in the text by looking at their respective understanding of the key notion of non-discursiveness (*mi-rtog-pa*; Skt. *akalpana*) and proceeds to identify and refute the deviations in the lower vehicles' understanding from the perspective of *Atiyoga*. This chapter thus provides a condensed version of the topics to be covered at length in the body of the text.²⁰⁵

Turning now to the final chapter of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, [Chapter 8](#) does not really provide a conclusion to the text—the latter is rather to be found at the end of [Chapter 7](#), which summarizes gNubs-chen's views on the differences between *Atiyoga* and the lower vehicles (§7.5).²⁰⁶ What [Chapter 8](#) does contain is a traditional dedication of virtue (Skt. *pariṇāma*) and some contextual information concerning those for whom the text is destined (and those for whom it is not) and the manner it was composed. Sangs-rgyas ye-shes tells us that his work is the fruit of his many years of study under

his various masters, as well as of his own intimate experience of meditation, and that, as such, it should be treated as something special²⁰⁷—he calls it an eye for those of later times.²⁰⁸ Some of this information is again taken up in the author’s colophon that closes the text and that also contains brief summaries for each of the preceding chapters. This author’s colophon is then followed by a final editorial colophon and aspiration prayer (Skt. *praṇidhāna*) written by ’Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros.

I.5.2. On the use of citations

Anyone who reads the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is likely to be surprised by the extent to which much of the text consists of quotations from various scriptures and from the writings of previous masters. This is especially evident in [Chapter 5](#), where a great number of *Chan* quotations are adduced with very little comment from the author himself. Many of these citations stem from *Chan* miscellanies, of which several have survived as Dunhuang manuscripts. These anthologies consisted of sets of questions answered through citations from various *sūtras* and masters. The quotations appear to have eventually acquired a life of their own and to have circulated independently, forming the basis of *Chan* instruction. In this regard, it should be noted that teachers and students rarely consulted scriptures in their entirety, relying instead on such compilations of quotations. The latter had the distinct advantage, apart from their brevity, of being arranged in an order that was congenial to the ritualized setting of *Chan* teaching practice and could be

drawn on freely according to the needs of the situation.²⁰⁹ It should also be remarked that in being anthologized, citations, while retaining their force as authorities (on which more will be said), also become a creative starting point sparking off new textual production rather than a structuring thread to be followed (as in the commentarial gloss, for instance). In other words, their own inherent structure could be broken up and fragmented so as to mirror the new concerns of the appropriating author.²¹⁰

The prominence accorded to quotations, while perhaps especially obvious in the *Chan* chapter, is also noticeable in the text as a whole. The very fact that the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is called an “extensive commentary” (*rgya-cher 'grel-pa / 'grel-ba*) at the end of each chapter should alert us to the importance in the work’s self-presentation of the underlying textual heritage it seeks to elucidate.²¹¹ Indeed, in [Chapter 8](#) Sangs-rgyas ye-shes describes the text he has written as having been largely assembled from authoritative scriptures and pith instructions in an attempt to distill for future *yogins* the material on contemplation found scattered throughout numerous sources (§8.2).²¹² If this manner of composition may seem strange to our reading habits, this is no doubt due to the different nature of expectations a modern reader comes to have of an author, expectations in which ideas of “originality,” “novelty,” and even “genius” are predominant. It is therefore well to remember that even in Europe this was not always the case. In fact, until the 17th century, copying older masters’ works was considered a normal way for an aspiring scholar to master his trade while simultaneously

paying homage to his predecessors. The cult of novelty and originality as something intrinsically valuable was far from obvious.²¹³ In the context of Tibetan Buddhism, the literary ideal was not to produce something entirely new (which would be considered mere individualistic fabrication) but, rather, to transmit what previous scriptures and masters had said in a way meaningful to new circumstances. This often involved the use of fairly extensive verbatim citations, rearranged according to the needs of the master's contemporary audience.²¹⁴ In this regard, one can distinguish verbatim citations from nonliteral quotations; the latter render the gist of a passage and are not always acknowledged as such. However, in view of the fact that we often do not know which version of a text an author had before him, this distinction can itself be somewhat arbitrary.²¹⁵ A good example of an unacknowledged nonliteral quotation in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is the paraphrase in [Chapter 4](#) (§4.2.3.1.2)²¹⁶ of a passage from Kamalaśīla's first *Bhāvanākrama* concerning the four contemplations.

Citing authors or scriptures that are considered authorities adds the weight of authority to one's own exposition. Some particularly well-known texts would lend this authority just through a casual reference, without even needing to be explicitly mentioned. As they were understood to be part of one's lineage (*brgyud*; Skt. *paramparā*), these texts could be drawn on freely without there being a perceived need to credit individual authors for particular insights.²¹⁷ The above-mentioned non-explicit quotation from the *Bhāvanākrama* is an instance of this, and so is the statement repeated in

various places that a more extensive explanation of a particular point can be found in the corresponding unspecified *sūtras* (*mdo*) or injunctions (*bka'*).²¹⁸ Indeed, much of *rNying-ma* tantric literature is modular, if not even formulaic, in nature, which means that stock phrases and textual passages of varying lengths provide the building blocks of literary composition. This entails that an author's role is not so much to conjure up new words (let alone invent doctrines, something which would be considered sacrilegious!) from out of his imagination (as would be expected of an author in the modern sense) but, rather, to act as a “tradent” who passes on and compiles the authentic doctrines and hallowed texts of yore, perhaps polishing and rearranging them so as to render them more congenial to his contemporary audience.²¹⁹ The process of unacknowledged borrowing of ideas and textual material from previous masters belonging to one's lineage can also be seen to be at work in the compositions of gNyan dPal-dbyangs, a *Mahāyoga* master often quoted by gNubs-chen who incorporated significant passages from older works in his own writings.²²⁰ After all, the audience for whom texts such as the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* were written was a learned one,²²¹ so authors did not feel the need to cater to a nonspecialist readership. As many texts were committed to memory, learned readers would have recognized the authority of a quotation even without necessarily being able to identify its exact attribution.²²² Once we become aware that quotations could be used and reused in the manner of building blocks that shaped a text's architecture, it becomes clear that an author's

skill and creativity are to be judged not in the production of something utterly new but in the apt and convincing arrangement of these building blocks.²²³

It is also interesting to observe that those sections of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* where, apart from extensive supporting quotations, we find the most exhaustive comments by the author himself, are precisely those (notably [Chapter 6](#) on *Mahāyoga* and [Chapter 7](#) on *Atiyoga*) that appear to have been the most relevant to gNubs-chen's personal contemplative practice and that thus afforded him the most explicit occasion to draw on his own experience as a master of meditation.

[I.5.3. Doxographical assumptions](#)

Since the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* is a doxographical treatise, it will be useful to take a look at some of the assumptions underlying such attempts to classify Buddhist teachings. Generally, it can be said that the elaboration of a doxography does not merely consist in the abstract presentation of different theories but is comparable to a therapeutic means that deconstructs mistaken or incomplete notions about reality.²²⁴ Moreover, as a text of this kind brings into sharp focus the different points of view within the Buddhist tradition, it will be helpful to remember that these do not necessarily imply contradictions concerning the internal coherence of the Buddhist doctrine but, rather, point toward the coexistence of different perspectives corresponding to the differing capacities of individuals. This, in any case, is how the doxographical project is understood by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, who

repeatedly refers to distinctions between the faculties of individual practitioners.²²⁵ Furthermore, underlying this acknowledgment of beings' diverse capacities is the assumption, expressed for instance in the *Sūtrasamuccaya*, that the different paths that correspond thereto ultimately all partake of a single vehicle (Skt. *ekayāna*)²²⁶—while they may not all lead to enlightenment in its fullness, they at least bring one closer to it.

One of the fundamental hermeneutical principles used in determining whether a particular doctrine is intended for those of sharp or of obtuse faculties is the distinction between teachings of provisional (Skt. *neyārtha*) and those of definitive meaning (Skt. *nītārtha*). The premise underlying this distinction is the understanding that the Buddha intended different teachings for different audiences and that, ultimately, it is wisdom (Skt. *jñāna*)—i.e., identifying, in effect, with the enlightenment of a Buddha—that allows one to determine what the Buddha's intention in giving a particular teaching was.²²⁷ The wisdom referred to in this context as the criterion for the interpretation of Buddhist texts specifically corresponds to the sapience of meditation (Skt. *bhāvanāmayī-prajñā*), as among the three types of sapience it is the only one that is supramundane (Skt. *lokottara*) and uncontaminated (Skt. *anāsrava*).²²⁸ This is not, however, to deny the social, economic, and indeed political implications inherent in the project of producing doxographical schemes, as it is clear that a master's status depended to a large extent on the status of the system he propagated, something that in part explains the

importance attached to doxographical classifications by Buddhist authors.²²⁹ Nonetheless, it would be superficial to hold that the Buddhist hermeneutical devices are mere polemical strategies aimed at relegating one's opponents to a position of provisional meaning. They must, rather, be seen as a means for the interpreter "to find his own place among the circle surrounding the Buddha."²³⁰

The doxographical model employed by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes comprises both *sūtra*-based and *tantra*-based doctrinal formulations since it includes gradual *Mahāyāna* and *Chan* on the one hand, and *Mahāyoga* and *rDzogs-chen* (or *Atiyoga*) on the other. While this model differs from the ninefold classification that became standard in later *rNying-ma* doxographies,²³¹ the ninefold scheme was surely known to gNubs-chen since it is found in the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo*, a scripture frequently quoted in his *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* under the title *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* and to which he devoted a lengthy commentary, the *Mun-pa'i go-cha*. The ninefold classification of the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo* is presented in its forty-fourth chapter as follows: the vehicle that leads away from the source [of suffering] (*kun-'byung 'dren-pa'i theg-pa*) includes (1) the vehicles of auditors, (2) independent buddhas, and (3) bodhisattvas; the hieratic vehicle of asceticism (*dka'-thub rig-byed theg-pa*) encompasses the vehicles of the lower *tantras*, namely, (4) *Kriyātantra*, (5) *Ubhayatantra*, and (6) *Yogatantra*; and the vehicle of controlling means (*dbang-bsgyur thabs-kyi theg-pa*) includes the inner *tantras* of (7) *Mahāyoga*, (8) *Anuyoga*, and (9) *Atiyoga*. Although Sangs-rgyas ye-shes does not

make use of this *tantra*'s ninefold doxographical system, he does employ some of its terminology (including the names designating the three highest vehicles, i.e., *Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga*, and *Atiyoga*), and it is clear that he did not see his own fourfold system as contradicting the nine-vehicle classification.²³² A further text that may have inspired gNubs-chen's doxography is the *Theg-pa gcod-pa'i 'khor-lo*,²³³ which, after listing various forms of incomprehension (in which are included, after the heretics, the Buddhist vehicles of the auditors and independent buddhas), presents the following five vehicles: *Cittamātra*, *Sautrāntika Madhyamaka*, and *Yogācāra Madhyamaka*,²³⁴ followed by *Mahāyoga* and *Atiyoga*.²³⁵

In his *Mun-pa'i go-cha* gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes mainly uses the rubrics of *Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga*, and *Atiyoga* as modes (*lugs*) of practice,²³⁶ though there are several instances where he refers to *Atiyoga* as a vehicle (*theg-pa*) in its own right.²³⁷ In the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, which might well be considered gNubs-chen's final work, the term "vehicle" is used to designate the various approaches under discussion.²³⁸ Moreover, in this text the rubric of *Mahāyoga* includes what in the better known ninefold classification of vehicles is called *Anuyoga*.²³⁹ We can deduct from this that the normative categories that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes utilizes to classify Buddhist teachings were perhaps quite fluid in the minds of most of his contemporaries. In fact, the early Dunhuang manuscripts are evidence for the fact that the hardening of the doxographical boundaries between *Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga*, and *Atiyoga* did not occur until the 11th

century.²⁴⁰ The earliest stratum of *rDzogs-chen* texts sought to provide a contemplative contextualization for *Mahāyoga* deity praxis, either by clarifying various issues connected to tantric practice from the perspective of the Great Completeness, as in *Padmasambhava's Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, or by presenting poetic evocations of non-referential meditation on *Atiyoga* themes, as in Buddhagupta's *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*.²⁴¹ Similarly, between the 8th and 10th centuries, *Chan* appears to have occupied a kindred contemplative space since in some of the Dunhuang manuscripts of the period *Chan* meditation instructions are provided within the context of *Mahāyoga* deity practice, specifically in order to induce the first of the three *Mahāyoga* concentrations,²⁴² the concentration on thusness.²⁴³ This does not imply, of course, that *rDzogs-chen* is a disguised form of *Chan*,²⁴⁴ since both doctrines arise from distinct lineages and doctrinal environments, the former being *tantra*-based and the latter *sūtra*-based. What it does point toward is that there was a level of convergence in the way *Chan* and *rDzogs-chen* came to serve a similar function of meditatively contextualizing tantric ritual.²⁴⁵ There does not appear to have been the perception of any fixed boundaries between these different views and systems of practice, nor a fortiori of any problem in crossing over them.²⁴⁶ Returning to the triad *Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga*, and *Atiyoga*, the picture that emerges is that initially these terms were used to designate ritual phases in tantric praxis, and that gradually the focus shifted toward a bibliographical classification of specific scriptures belonging to each of

these categories, as witnessed in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.²⁴⁷ From providing a hermeneutical space to contemplatively contextualize tantric ritual, the Great Completeness eventually emerged in a space of its own. Yet even as it came to be defined through the denial of the sexual and violent imagery typical of the *Mahāyoga tantras*, the space in which it arose continued to be creatively informed by the very absence of this same tantric imagery.²⁴⁸

As already pointed out, it is this vehicle of *Atiyoga* or *rDzogs-chen* that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes places at the pinnacle of his doxographical scheme. In itself, *Atiyoga* is the vehicle of intrinsic awareness (*rang-rig*) that is beyond all conceptual elaboration and effort, and hence beyond the views and methods of the other vehicles. Since the latter are all somewhat involved in referential thinking, they are limited by a particular point of view.²⁴⁹ Yet while *rDzogs-chen*, as the supreme view and vehicle of non-action, transcends all such particular viewpoints, it can also be said to be the cornerstone of all other views and to encompass them in its completeness. For example, neither the views of selflessness (Skt. *anātman*) nor of emptiness (Skt. *śūnyatā*) are rejected in *rDzogs-chen*, but they are, rather, integrated into a vaster perspective²⁵⁰ as alpha-purity (*ka-dag*), which brings out and expands their deeper contemplative ramifications. This is why Sangs-rgyas ye-shes describes the state of spontaneity that characterizes *Atiyoga* as the treasury of all vehicles,²⁵¹ since remaining in that state is the fount of all the qualities of enlightenment and of all paths leading thereto. Nonetheless, while maintaining the all-

encompassing nature of *Atiyoga*, gNubs-chen nowhere seeks to interpret the lower vehicles from the *rDzogs-chen* perspective, preferring instead to treat each vehicle on its own terms and to point out its shortcomings from the perspective of the approach situated above it. If we look at the later developments of *Mahāyoga* exegesis in Tibet, we can see that the Zur tradition, which goes back to Zur-po-che Śākya 'byung-gnas (1002–1062),²⁵² followed gNubs-chen's lead and considered it inappropriate to apply the view of *Atiyoga* to the interpretation of the *Mahāyoga tantras*. On the other hand, the tradition of *Mahāyoga* exegesis going back to Rong-zom-pa (11th century) and Klong-chen-pa, while also holding that each of the different vehicles has a distinct view, did not see any problem in interpreting the lower vehicles through the lens of the higher ones and seems to follow gNyan dPal-dbyangs (9th century) and the otherwise unknown master Madhusādhū, whose definitions of *Mahāyoga* were less exclusivist.²⁵³ Rong-zom-pa thus writes that all the contemplative methods of the lower vehicles can in fact be infused with the view of the Great Completeness and as such be used as skillful means and as adjuncts to its realization.²⁵⁴ It is unlikely that this attitude would have been shared by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, who, writing a century earlier, held the more uncompromising stance that while *rDzogs-chen* certainly encompasses the viewpoints of the lower vehicles in its all-englobing perspective, any attempt to integrate elements of these approaches into the vehicle of the Great Completeness is bound to involve effort and referential imaging and hence to vitiate the only practice

that can properly be said to pertain to *Atiyoga*, which is to remain in the self-sufficient and totally complete nature of the state of spontaneous presence.²⁵⁵

I.5.4. A remark concerning the glosses

The Tibetan text²⁵⁶ is interspersed with many interlinear notes.²⁵⁷ It is unlikely that these are the work of the author himself. Meinert has shown, for instance, that the second gloss in the text (C 2.3) is grammatically incorrect,²⁵⁸ and many more such examples could be adduced. This is not to say that the glosses should be rejected, but merely that one must treat them with a certain caution.

One of the glosses in particular (C 15.4) gives a hint about the dating of the interlinear notes since it alludes to Glang-dar-ma's religious persecution:

At the time of Glang-dar-ma, because of the obstacles that came toward the venerable Ye-shes dbang-po, the lineage of the instructors of dialectics declined.²⁵⁹

This gloss occurs in the context of the advice to obtain the lineages of the various approaches (§1.5.2), where it is explained that the Tibetan branch of the lineage of the simultaneous approach (which had belonged to the [Tibetan] emperor and monks) had declined by gNubs-chen's time. One of the problems with this gloss concerns Ye-shes dbang-po, who is presumably identical to dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, the first abbot of bSam-yas and successor of Śāntarakṣita; however, dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po (whose secular name was dBa' gSal-snang) is

generally believed to have passed away before the death of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan in ca. 800 ce, thus far predating Glang-dar-ma (r. 836–842 ce).²⁶⁰ A further question arises as to why Ye-shes dbang-po, who is generally referred to as a master of the gradualist approach,²⁶¹ should be mentioned in the context of the decline of the simultaneous approach. Of course, the term “dialectics” (*mtshan-nyid*; Skt. *lakṣaṇa*), which is found in the expression “vehicle of dialectics” (*mtshan-nyid-kyi theg-pa*; Skt. *lakṣaṇayāna*), can be said to refer to the *sūtra* vehicle in general, and hence to englobe both the gradualist and simultaneous approaches.²⁶² Nonetheless, it is clear from the context that it is the decline of the simultaneous approach that is being referred to. The impression one gains from all these factors is that the glosses were written quite some time after the events here alluded to. That is why Ye-shes dbang-po is wrongly made a contemporary of Glang-dar-ma, and perhaps also why his death is associated with the decline of the simultaneous approach.

Furthermore, the very mention of the sobriquet “Glang-dar-ma” seems odd since this nickname (meaning “Dar-ma ‘the ox’,” apparently attached to Dar-ma Khri-'u'i dum-brtan due to his ox-like build) is not found in the Dunhuang documents and is not used prior to the 11th century;²⁶³ this would suggest that the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*'s glosses are insertions by a later hand.²⁶⁴

Several indications point to the fact that the glosses incorporate fragments of an oral commentary to the text. This oral commentary was probably passed down over the generations until it was eventually written down,

perhaps a century or so after the composition of the main text. The lack of grammatical rigor alluded to above (which contrasts with the main text) and the fact that many of the glosses are obviously incomplete²⁶⁵ indicate that they were written down hastily as notes taken during an oral teaching. It is true that two of the glosses contain the self-reference “small venerable,”²⁶⁶ a sobriquet that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes uses in the main text of [Chapter 8](#),²⁶⁷ while this could be interpreted to mean that they were written by the author himself,²⁶⁸ it seems more likely, given the above considerations, that in these instances the glosses may have preserved a verbatim quote going back to gNubs-chen’s oral explanations.

There is one substantial portion of text, however, that presents a special case: in the section on dreams of [Chapter 4](#) (§4.2.4),²⁶⁹ which is entirely based on the *Svapnanirdeśa* of the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*, the glosses incorporate a separate section of the *sūtra* devoted to the keys to the interpretation of the dreams listed in the main text. While the glosses in this section are thus clearly textually based, one cannot avoid the impression that they, too, have been jotted down during an oral explanation that, in this particular case, was based on the said section of the *sūtra*; for while the glosses convey the gist of the *sūtra*’s elucidation of the dreams, they do so in a highly condensed and often fragmentary manner that smacks of a context of oral transmission and would at times be incomprehensible without recourse to the *sūtra*.²⁷⁰ Of course, the problem has been compounded by scribal errors, which are particularly frequent with the

glosses since the latter are written in smaller letters (*yig-chung*).

The fact that some of the glosses contain phonetic renderings akin to the Chinese manner of transcribing Sanskrit terms (such as *'bu-tha* or *'bu-ta*²⁷¹ for “Buddha” and *bo-de*²⁷² for “bodhisattva”), typical of Chinese Buddhist translations, renders it probable that the glosses go back to a time when Chinese Buddhist translations still circulated in Tibet. Such a use of Chinese-style phonetic renderings is not limited to the glosses, as is witnessed by the word *Par-na-pan-gyi mdo* for *Parinirvāṇa-sūtra*²⁷³ and *San-de'i mdo* for *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra* in [Chapter 5](#).²⁷⁴

We can conclude by saying that whereas the glosses are unlikely to have been written by the author himself, they do probably go back to a fairly early redaction of the text. In the Tibetan cultural context, where a text of this nature is rarely studied without the guidance of a teacher and where the oral commentary is supposed to resolve some of the hermeneutical difficulties inherent in reading such highly specialized material, the interlinear notes are useful in view of the fact that the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* no longer forms part of an oral tradition of exegesis. However, their usefulness should not be exaggerated: while at times they provide punctual information that is helpful to our understanding, at others they take the form of fragmentary phrases or appear so full of errors as to be unintelligible.

Translation

This is the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation That Clearly Distinguishes the Crucial Points of Meditation*, composed by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes Rinpoche.

¹ Cf. Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*, Leiden: Brill, 2007, p. 99.

² Jean-Luc Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret: Recherches philologiques et historiques sur l'origine de la Grande Perfection dans la tradition rNying ma pa*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1999, p. 62, n. 2.

³ Earlier examples are the *lTa-ba'i rim-pa bshad-pa* attributed to sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs and the *lTa-ba'i khyad-par* by Ye-shes-sde (both of which can be dated to the late 8th or early 9th century). See David Seyfort Ruegg, *The Buddhist Philosophy of the Middle: Essays on Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2010, p. 271. Note, however, that the attribution of the *lTa-ba'i rim-pa bshad-pa* to sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs has been called into question. See Sam van Schaik, "The Early Days of the Great Perfection," in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 27:1, 2004, pp. 165–206, esp. p. 188.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁵ Cf. Padmasambhava, *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/a, pp. 159–175. For a critical edition and translation, see Ulrich Loseries, *Guru Padmasambhavas "Instruktion 'Die Kette der Anschauungen'" (Man-ngag lTa-ba'i Phreng-ba) erläutert durch Methoden der Auslegung des "die Essenz des Geheimen" lehrenden Tantras (gSang-ba'i sNying-po'i rGyud)*, PhD thesis, Bonn: Rheinische

Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität, 1989, pp. 175–190 (critical edition), 191–202 (German translation).

⁶ Sam van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga: Sources from the Dunhuang Manuscripts,” in *Tantric Studies*, vol. 1, 2008, pp. 45–88, esp. p. 57.

⁷ On the translation of *cig-car ’jug-pa* (Ch. *dunwu*; Skt. *yugapat*) as “simultaneous” rather than “sudden” or “instantaneous,” see Sam van Schaik, *Approaching the Great Perfection: Simultaneous and Gradual Methods of Dzogchen Practice in the Longchen Nyingtig*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004, p. 327, n. 32.

⁸ Moreover, it is perhaps noteworthy that although Kamalaśīla and Hwa-shang Mahāyāna are mentioned side by side in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, nowhere is a debate between both of them explicitly mentioned. See David Seyfort Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective: On the Transmission and Reception of Buddhism in India and Tibet, Jordan Lectures 1987*, London: SOAS, 1989, p. 67.

⁹ Cf. Karin Preisendanz, “Text, Commentary, Annotation: Some Reflections on the Philosophical Genre,” in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 36:5, 2008, pp. 599–618, esp. pp. 606–607.

¹⁰ Cf. Sam van Schaik and Jacob Dalton, “Where Chan and Tantra Meet: Tibetan Syncretism in Dunhuang,” in Susan Whitfield (ed.), *The Silk Road: Trade, Travel, War and Faith*, London: British Library Press, 2004, pp. 63–71, esp. p. 70.

¹¹ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *rNal-’byor mig-gi bSam-gtan or bSam-gtan mig-sgron: A Treatise on Bhāvanā and Dhyāna and the Relationships Between the Various Approaches to Buddhist Contemplative Practice*, Reproduced from a manuscript made presumably from an Eastern Tibetan print by ’Khor-gdong gter-sprul ’Chi-med rig-’dzin, *Smanrtsis shesrig spendzod*, vol. 74, Leh, India: Tashigangpa, 1974, preface. Henceforth abbreviated as C.

¹² This section (§I.2) of the Introduction is revised from an earlier article that previously appeared as Dylan Esler, “On the Life of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 29, April 2014, pp. 5–27.

¹³ See C 497.5; cf. also C 375.6 (gloss), C 419.2 (gloss). In the Tibetan context, those holding epithets such as *ban-chung* (or *ban-de/-dhe*) were not necessarily monks. See José Ignacio Cabezón, *The Buddha’s Doctrine and the Nine Vehicles: Rog Bande Sherab’s Lamp of the Teachings*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 49.

¹⁴ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History*, Translated and edited by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein, vol. 1: The Translations, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1991, p. 613.

¹⁵ Tulku Thondup, *The Origin of Buddhism in Tibet: The Tantric Tradition of the Nyingmapa*, Marion, MA: Buddhayana, 1984, p. 152. Note, however, that the lists of Padmasambhava's chief disciples vary from each other.

¹⁶ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, Leh, India: Tashigangpa, 1972, p. 165.5–6.

¹⁷ Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po sbrang-rtsi'i bcud*, Lhasa: Bod-ljongs mi-dmangs dpe-skrun-khang, 1988, pp. 341–342. On this work, see Dan Martin, *Tibetan Histories: A Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works*, London: Serindia Publications, 1997, pp. 30–31. The first nine disciples in Nyang-ral's list are King Khri-srong lde'u-btsan, Vairocana, gNubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, rGyal-ba mchog-dbyangs, Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal, 'Brog-mi dPal-gyi ye-shes, Rlangs dPal-gyi seng-ge, and gNyags Jñānakumāra. This list is taken from the oldest (and least elaborated) recension of the *Zangs-gling-ma* (which Doney calls ZL3 and on which the *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po* is based), which mentions the episode of Padmasambhava conferring empowerment on the twenty-five disciples and also specifies the first eight disciples, listing gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes by name. See Lewis Doney, *The Zangs gling ma: The First Padmasambhava Biography. Two Exemplars of the Earliest Attested Recension*, Andiast, Switzerland: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2014, pp. 31, 33, 51, and n. 82; see also the two exemplars of this oldest recension reproduced in *ibid.*, pp. 174 (ZLh, fol. 73b.3) and 284 (ZLi, fol. 60a.5).

Given the composite nature of the *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*, which witnessed several waves of redaction and combines various narratives (notably from the *Zangs-gling-ma* and the *dBa'-bzhed*) in a rather clumsy manner starkly contrasting with Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer's literary skills, it is probable that its original compilers were among Nyang-ral's descendants. See Daniel A. Hirshberg, *Remembering the Lotus-Born: Padmasambhava in the History of Tibet's Golden Age*, Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2016, pp. 150–154, 174–175.

¹⁸ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 17; Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, pp. 163.1, 167.3–4.

¹⁹ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 599.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 607.

²¹ Gyurme Dorje, and Matthew Kapstein, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History*, vol. 2: Reference Materials, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1991, p. 54, n. 715.

²² Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 160.5. This date is also favored in sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, *gNam-lcags chos-'byung: gNam-lcags gter-'byung-gi lo-rgyus dwangs-gsal 'phrul-gyi me-long*, vol. 1, n.p.: Ewam Publishing House, 2019, p. 28.

²³ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes (attributed to), *Sangs-rgyas ye-shes rin-po-che'i lo-rgyus gnubs-kyi bka'-shog chen-mo*, in NKJ, vol. 42/ni, pp. 693–745, esp. p. 696.4. On this text, see Jacob Dalton, “Preliminary Remarks on a Newly Discovered Biography of Nupchen Sangyé Yeshé,” in Benjamin Bogin and Andrew Quintman (eds.), *Himalayan Passages: Tibetan and Newar Studies in Honor of Hubert Decleer*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2014, pp. 145–161.

²⁴ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 17; Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 167.3.

²⁵ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 605.

²⁶ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, pp. 164.6–165.2.

²⁷ Cf. *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 705.

²⁸ See §8.2 (C 498.4–5).

²⁹ In the ancient historical documents, this name is sometimes also spelled “sNubs.” See Namkhai Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung: The Small Collection of Hidden Precepts: A Study of an Ancient Manuscript of Dzogchen from Tun-huang*, Arcidosso, Italy: Shang-Shung Edizioni, 1984, pp. 77–78.

³⁰ See C, preface. This episode is recounted in Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 160.4–6.

³¹ John M. Reynolds, *The Golden Letters*, Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1996, p. 251.

³² Tarthang Tulku, “The Twenty-five Disciples of Padmasambhava,” in *Crystal Mirror*, vol. 4, 1975, pp. 35–74, esp. p. 46.

³³ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 607; Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 163.3–4.

³⁴ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 700.3–4: /de nas gu ru chen po yis/ /drag po sngags kyi rgyud dgu dang/ /de yi sgrub lugs mi 'dra sogs/ /las kyi kha tshar thams cad dang/ dgos pa tshang bar ban chung bdag la gnang/.

³⁵ Indeed, Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer relates that at the time of the empowerment (Skt. *abhiṣeka*), gNubs-chen's flower fell into the configuration of Mañjuśrī, whose wrathful form is Yamāntaka. See Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *rNam-thar zangs-gling-ma*, in 'Jam-mgon kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas (ed.), *Rin-chen gter-mdzod chen-mo*, vol. 1/ka, Paro, Bhutan: Ngodrup and Sherab Drimay, 1976–1980, p. 121.4–5. While this scene is absent from the earliest recension of the *Zangs-gling-ma* and would thus seem to represent a somewhat later elaboration (see Doney, *The Zangs gling ma*, p. 51, n. 82), the context being referred to in the earliest recension clearly is the configuration of the *bKa'-brgyad* deities, and gNubs-chen's accomplishment of his practice is explicitly related to his longevity, which would point to Yamāntaka. See also *ibid.*, p. 174 (ZLh, fol. 74a.2–3) and p. 285 (ZLi, fol. 60b.2).

³⁶ Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung: bsTan-pa'i snying-po gsang-chen snga-'gyur nges-don zab-mo'i chos-kyi byung-ba gsal-bar byed-pa'i legs-bshad mkhas-pa dga'-byed ngo-mtshar gtam-gyi rol-mtsho*, Beijing: Krung-go'i bod-kyi shes-rig dpe-skrun-khang, 1990, p. 246; see also Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 161.1–2.

³⁷ For the dates of Khri-gtsug lde-btsan's reign, I follow Hugh E. Richardson, *A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions*, Hertford, UK: Royal Asiatic Society, 1985, p. 92.

³⁸ According to Beckwith, *Bru-sha*, the Tibetan name for Gilgit, is related to modern names for the Hunza people and their language, Burusho and Burushaski. See Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 116, n. 44. On the Burushaski language, see Hermann Berger, *Das Burushaski—Schicksale einer zentralasiatischen Restsprache*, Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1992.

³⁹ Tulku Thondup, *The Origin of Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 153; cf. *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 734.6.

⁴⁰ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 163.5.

⁴¹ Klong-chen-pa cites the same passage with some variants and reads “eleven” (*bcu-gcig*) instead of “thirteen” (*bcu-gsum*). Cf. Klong-chen rab-'byams, *Chos-'byung rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod bstan-pa gsal-bar byed-pa'i nyi-'od ces-bya-ba*, Beijing: Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-rnying

dpe-skrun-khang, 1991, p. 406. One might note in passing that the attribution of this work to Klong-chen-pa is doubtful since it employs doxographical categories not met with otherwise in Klong-chen-pa's corpus, and since the name Thugs-mchog-rtsal found in the colophon does not correspond to any known name used by Klong-chen-pa. See Stéphane Arguillère, *Profusion de la Vaste Sphère: Klong-chen rab-'byams (Tibet, 1308–1364): Sa vie, son œuvre, sa doctrine*, Leuven: Peeters Publishers & Oriental Studies, 2007, pp. 176–177; and [Martin](#), *Tibetan Histories*, p. 58.

⁴² *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 697.3–6; quoted in [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las](#), *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 161.3–4.

⁴³ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 698.1.

⁴⁴ [Reynolds](#), *The Golden Letters*, p. 251; [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las](#), *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 163.2.

⁴⁵ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, pp. 608–609.

⁴⁶ C 412.4, C 413.3. His name is also mentioned in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes](#), *rDo-rje gzong-phugs-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 398.2.

⁴⁷ Jacob Dalton, *The Gathering of Intentions: A History of a Tibetan Tantra*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2016, p. 70.

⁴⁸ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 609. Note that according to [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las](#), the full form of Dharmarāja's name is Dharmarājapāla (Chos-rgyal skyong). See [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las](#), *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 162.3–4.

⁴⁹ See [Reynolds](#), *The Golden Letters*, p. 250. Note that these *Anuyoga tantras* are collectively referred to as *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* (alias *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo*) and are much quoted in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgon*. For further details on gNubs-chen's studies of the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo* with these masters and his role in the codification of this scripture, see Jacob Dalton, “Lost and Found: A Fourteenth-Century Discussion of Then-Available Sources on gNubs chen sangs rgyas ye shes,” in *Bulletin of Tibetology* (Special Issue, Nyingma Studies), vol. 49:1, 2013, pp. 39–53, esp. pp. 47–48.

⁵⁰ Cf. [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las](#), *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 163.2.

⁵¹ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, pp. 607–608.

⁵² [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las](#), *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 163.1–2; [Guru bKra-shis](#), *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p.

249.

⁵³ Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*, pp. 436–437.

⁵⁴ David Germano, “The Seven Descents and the Early History of rNying ma Transmissions,” in Helmut Eimer and David Germano (eds.), *The Many Canons of Tibetan Buddhism: Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000*, Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 225–263, esp. p. 253.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254, quoting lDe'u jo-sras, *lDe'u chos-'byung* (*Chos-'byung chen-mo bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan*), Lhasa: Bod-ljongs mi-dmangs dpe-skrun-khang, 1987, p. 321. On the *lDe'u chos-'byung*, see Martin, *Tibetan Histories*, p. 44.

⁵⁶ Note that Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las also mentions ten and, quoting the *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 709.5–6, thirteen masters.

⁵⁷ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 164.2–3.

⁵⁸ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 715.2–4; quoted in Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, pp. 163.4–164.1: *rgya gar mkhas pa bi ma mi tra dang/ o rgyan mkhan po padma 'byung gnas dang/ /bal po'i mkhas pa ba su dha ra dang/ /bod kyi mkhas pa jñā na ku mā ras/ /bdag la gnang ba'i man ngag 'di rnam yin/*.

⁵⁹ Tulku Thondup, *The Origin of Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 153. For detailed lists of the various lineages that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes received, see Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles: Lives of the Great Buddhist Masters of India and Tibet*, Boston: Shambhala, 1999, pp. 25–26 (for *Mahāyoga*), 28–29 (for *Anuyoga*), and 31 (for the mind and expanse sections of *Atiyoga*). See also sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, *gNam-lcags chos-'byung*, vol. 1, pp. 4–11.

⁶⁰ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 166.3–4.

⁶¹ Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, pp. 64–68.

⁶² Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 171.4; Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 610.

⁶³ Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*, p. 447.

⁶⁴ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, pp. 609–610.

⁶⁵ Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 247. On this work, see Martin, *Tibetan Histories*, p. 151.

⁶⁶ Note that gShan-pa Ma-ru-rtse is included in the retinue of the protector deity Srog-bdag dmar-po. See René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet: the Cult and Iconography of the Tibetan Protective Deities*, Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1975, p. 92.

⁶⁷ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 170.1.

⁶⁸ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 611; Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 248. Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, for his part, appears to distinguish the destruction of the thirty-seven villages from the intermediate revolt that occurred when Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was sixty-one and that he recounts as a separate event. Cf. Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 168.1–2.

⁶⁹ Tarthang Tulku, “The Twenty-five Disciples of Padmasambhava,” p. 46.

⁷⁰ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, pp. 733.6–736.3; Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, pp. 611–612; Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, pp. 168.3–169.6; Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, pp. 19–20.

⁷¹ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 739.3.

⁷² See §8.2 (C 498.3).

⁷³ Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*, p. 447.

⁷⁴ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 608.

⁷⁵ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 20, n.33.

⁷⁶ According to Dudjom Rinpoche's account, it was one yak-sized scorpion that appeared nine stories above gNubs-chen's finger. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 612.

⁷⁷ Reynolds, *The Golden Letters*, pp. 250–251.

⁷⁸ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 168.1–2: */bdag 'dra gnubs kyi ban chung yang/ /snying nas chos bzhin byang sems skyes/ /zhe sdang dgra bos byed ma ster/ /sangs rgyas bstan pa bsrung ba'i phyir/ /zhe sdang de ma thag tu skyes/ /dkar po'i che ba'i 'don (sic!) bsam nas/ /ngan sngags yig cha sna tshogs bslabs/*. The passage is quoted in Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 610; Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 247;

and Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*, p. 67. For a French translation, see Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 19.

⁷⁹ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 21.

⁸⁰ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 612; Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 173.5–6.

⁸¹ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 100.

⁸² Cf. Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 169.6; Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 249. sGo-chen gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin notes, however, that such reasoning would not apply to an adept of gNubs-chen's calibre. See sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, *gNam-lcags chos-'byung*, vol. 1, p. 34.

⁸³ Jacob Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons: Violence and Liberation in Tibetan Buddhism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011, p. 53.

⁸⁴ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 100.

⁸⁵ Reynolds, *The Golden Letters*, p. 250.

⁸⁶ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, in NKD, vols. 50/wi–51/zhi.

⁸⁷ See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 612.

⁸⁸ David Higgins, *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen in Tibet: Investigating the Distinction Between Dualistic Mind (sems) and Primordial Knowing (ye shes)*, Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2013, p. 43.

⁸⁹ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *rTse-mo byung-rgyal 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, pp. 179–230. For a translation, see Jim Valby (tr.), *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak of Pure Perfect Presence, with Tibetan Commentary by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe*, Shelburne Falls, MA: Jim Valby Publications, 2014, pp. 12–64.

⁹⁰ Elio Guarisco et al. (trs.), *The Marvelous Primordial State: The Mejung Tantra, A Fundamental Scripture of Dzogchen Semde*, Arcidosso, Italy: Shang Shung Publications, 2013, pp. 72, 183, n. 11, 243.

⁹¹ *Paṇ-grub-rnams-kyi thugs-bcud snying-gi nyi-ma*, in BG, vol. 1, pp. 1–172; the text is on pp. 84.3–99.2. Namkhai Norbu has prepared an edition of this text (to which the page numbers in Guarisco's annotations refer) entitled *Byang-chub-kyi sems rmad-du byung-ba'i nyams-khrid*. For a translation of the BG edition, see Christopher Wilkinson, *Beyond Secret: The Upadeśa of Vairocana on the Practice of the Great Perfection*, Cambridge, MA: Christopher Wilkinson, 2014, pp. 97–114.

⁹² gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, pp. 303–326.

⁹³ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *rDo-rje gzong-phugs-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, pp. 381–398.

⁹⁴ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *rJe-btsan dam-pa'i 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol.103/pe, pp. 292–301. The latter two texts are mentioned in Karen Liljenberg, *A Critical Study of the Thirteen Later Translations of the Dzogchen Mind Series*, PhD thesis, London: SOAS, University of London, 2012, p. 68.

⁹⁵ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *sDe-brgyad bcos-thabs*, in 'Jam-mgon kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas (ed.), *Rin-chen gter-mdzod chen-mo*, vol. 68/pi, Paro, Bhutan: Ngodrup and Sherab Drimay, 1976–1980, pp. 517–520.

⁹⁶ For more on the taxonomy of these spirits, see Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, “Une note sur l’origine du concept des huit catégories d’esprits,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 2, April 2003, pp. 67–80.

⁹⁷ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes (comp.), *rDzong-'phrang srog-gsum-gyi chings-kyi man-ngag*, in NKJ, vol. 29/ha, pp. 15–425. I am grateful to Dr. Cathy Cantwell for drawing my attention to this source, as well as to Mi-pham’s mention of Yon-tan rgya-mtsho’s secret name (see note 98).

⁹⁸ gTer-bzhad rtsal is given as Yon-tan rgya-mtsho’s secret name in Mi-pham 'Jam-dbyangs rgya-mtsho, *dPal-sgrub-pa chen-mo bka'-brgyad-kyi spyi-don rnam-par bshad-pa dngos-grub snying-po*, in NKJ, vol. 114/ye, p. 614.1.

⁹⁹ Germano, “The Seven Descents,” p. 254.

¹⁰⁰ C 15.4.

¹⁰¹ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 102.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 94, n. 44; cf. Introduction, §I.5.4.

¹⁰³ C 30.3–4, C 201.6–202.1, C 202.4–5, C 219.3–4, C 225.2–5, C 228.1–5, C 240.1–4, C 255.6–256.6, C 277.3–5.

¹⁰⁴ van Schaik, “The Early Days of the Great Perfection,” p. 190.

¹⁰⁵ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 736.4–6; Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 170.1–2.

¹⁰⁶ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 613.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 101, n. 91.

¹⁰⁸ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 614.

¹⁰⁹ Dan Martin, “The Early Education of Milarepa,” in *The Journal of the Tibet Society*, vol. 2, 1982, pp. 52–76, esp. p.56.

¹¹⁰ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 614; see also bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *Chos-'byung*, in *The Collected Writings and Revelations of H.H. bDud-'joms Rin-po-che 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje*, vol. 1/ka, Kalimpong, India: Dupjung Lama, 1979–1985, p. 300. The later Chengdu edition of the Tibetan text (cf. bDud-'joms Rinpoche, *bDud-'joms chos-'byung*, Chengdu, China: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1996, p. 241) gives gNubs-chen's age at the time of his death as 113, and there are several other discrepancies: whereas in the Kalimpong edition, Khri-srong lde'u-btsan's death is placed in the earth tiger year (*sa-stag*), with gNubs-chen aged twenty-seven at the time, the Chengdu edition places this event in Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' seventeenth year, in the earth dragon year (*sa-'brug*). Similarly, the Kalimpong edition says that gNubs-chen lived for thirty-seven years after Glang-dar-ma's religious persecution, but the Chengdu edition turns this into forty-two years. Nonetheless, at least both editions agree that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was born in the water male mouse year (*chu-pho byi-ba'i lo*) and that he died in the water tiger year (*chu-stag*). Hence, the Chengdu edition's statement that he lived to be 113 is evidently an error, as in that case the year of his death would have to be the wood male dragon year.

¹¹¹ Doney, *The Zangs gling ma*, p. 174 (ZLh, fol. 74a.2–3) and p. 285 (ZLi, fol. 60b.2–3).

¹¹² Klong-chen rab-'byams, *Chos-'byung rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod*, p. 406.

¹¹³ Herbert V. Guenther, "Meditation Trends in Early Tibet," in Whalen Lai and Lewis R. Lancaster (eds.), *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983, pp. 351–366, esp. p. 361, n. 6.

¹¹⁴ Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*, p. 342. On the composite nature of this work, see note 17.

¹¹⁵ George N. Roerich (tr.), *The Blue Annals*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2007, p. 105.

¹¹⁶ Tulku Thondup, *The Origin of Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 153.

¹¹⁷ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 173.3–4: *de yang lo rgyus 'ga' zhig tu gnubs chen dgung lo brgya dang bcu gsum bzhugs par bshad kyang/ nyid gyi gsungs las/ gnubs kyi ban chung sangs rgyas ngas/ lo ni brgya dang sum cu lon/*. We find the same citation in Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*, p. 75.

¹¹⁸ dPa'-bo gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba, *mKhas-pa'i dga'-ston*, vol. 1, Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1986, p. 614.

¹¹⁹ Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*, p. 77; quoted in Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 21.

¹²⁰ Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 246.

¹²¹ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, pp. 20–21, n. 36; Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*, p. 75. Some discussion of these dating issues is also found in sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, *gNam-lcags chos-'byung*, vol. 1, pp. 37–38.

¹²² Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, p. 108.

¹²³ Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 246.

¹²⁴ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 173.4.

¹²⁵ Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, p. 109; the passage is quoted in Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*, p. 250.

¹²⁶ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 101–102.

¹²⁷ Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, p. 109.

¹²⁸ Cf. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 101, n. 91.

¹²⁹ Martin, “The Early Education of Milarepa,” pp. 54, 56.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57; Dalton, “Preliminary Remarks,” p. 156.

¹³¹ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 615. Cf. Martin, “The Early Education of Milarepa,” pp. 55, 57.

¹³² bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *Chos-'byung*, pp. 290.5, 300.1; Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, pp. 607, 614.

¹³³ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 696.4.

¹³⁴ Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, pp. 160.5, 173.3–4.

¹³⁵ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 614.

¹³⁶ On the events occurring between Khri-srong lde'u-btsan's semi-retirement in 797 and his death in ca. 800, see Brandon Dotson, “Tri Songdétsen,” in John Barton et al. (eds.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 1–25, esp. p. 5.

¹³⁷ Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 950.

¹³⁸ Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 95, n. 1351.

¹³⁹ Philippe Cornu, *L'astrologie Tibétaine*, Millau, France: Les Djinn, 1990, p. 85.

¹⁴⁰ Roberto Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang*, Dharamsala, India: Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang lo.gcig.stong 'khor.ba'i rjes.dran.mdzad sgo'i go.sgrig tshogs.chung, 1996, pp. 545–547.

¹⁴¹ *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 733.6.

¹⁴² Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, p. 168.2–3.

¹⁴³ Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang*, pp. 546–547.

¹⁴⁴ bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *Chos-'byung*, p. 290.5; Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 607.

¹⁴⁵ Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang*, p. 547.

¹⁴⁶ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 21.

¹⁴⁷ See Jacob Dalton “The Early Development of the Padmasambhava Legend in Tibet: A Study of IOL Tib J 644 and Pelliot tibétain 307,” in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 124:4, 2004, pp. 759–772.

¹⁴⁸ See Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *Chos-'byung me-tog snying-po*, p. 341. See note 17.

¹⁴⁹ Martin, “The Early Education of Milarepa,” p. 56; Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 65, n. 908. Not much is known about rGya Zhang-khrom, except that he seems to have been an illiterate goatherd who discovered treasures (*gter-ma*) of a particularly wrathful nature. It is said that after having had a dream where goat-herding girls were dancing around him and where he was beaten by a man wearing a big hat, he could read and write, and he subsequently wrote down three volumes of treasures. One of these treasure cycles, called the *gShin-rje tshe-bdag*, was practiced at 'Khor-gdong monastery in Khams until the 20th century during the tenth month of each of the male years of the Tibetan calendar. rGya Zhang-khrom is also known to have been an adept of the practice of transference (*'pho-ba*), using which he liberated many of his illiterate goat-herding disciples. See the account provided by Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche in James Low (ed.), *The Collected Works of C.R. Lama*, n.p.: Simply Being, 2013, pp. 119, 164. For more on this figure and his role in revealing the treasures associated with gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, many of which are connected to the deity Yamāntaka, see Dalton, “Preliminary Remarks,” pp. 155–156.

¹⁵⁰ Tulku Thondup, *The Origin of Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 154.

¹⁵¹ Nyoshul Khenpo, *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems: Biographies of Masters of Awareness in the Dzogchen Lineage*, Translated by Richard Barron, Junction City, CA: Padma Publishing, 2005, p. 435.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 247, 302.

¹⁵³ Matthew T. Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation, and Memory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press,

2000, p. 73.

¹⁵⁴ Such an antiquarian interest in ancient texts that have fallen outside the line of oral transmission and that have been neglected by the standard religious curriculum is not unusual, especially among masters of the 19th–20th century ecumenical movement (*ris-med*), to which Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho, Ze-chen mKhan-chen Padma rnam-rgyal, and 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros, the masters responsible for the block prints at the source of both extant editions of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, belonged. See Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism*, pp. 78, 238, n. 77; see also Colophons, §C.2 (C 503–505).

¹⁵⁵ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes rin-po-che, *sGom-gyi gnad gsal-bar phye-ba bsam-gtan mig-sgron ces-bya-ba*, in *bKa'-ma shin-tu rgyas-pa* (110 Volumes), Edited by mKhan-po Mun-sel, vol. 97/je, Chengdu, China: Kaḥ-thog, n.d. Henceforth abbreviated as M.

¹⁵⁶ For details, see Dylan Esler, *The Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation, The bSam-gtan mig-sgron by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes: Hermeneutical Study with English Translation and Critical Edition of a Tibetan Buddhist Text on Contemplation*, PhD thesis, Université catholique de Louvain, 2018, pp. 384–387.

¹⁵⁷ C 15.4.

¹⁵⁸ These dates are according to Paul Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa: Une Controverse sur le Quétisme entre Bouddhistes de l'Inde et de la Chine au VIIIe siècle de l'Ère Chrétienne*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952, p. 177.

¹⁵⁹ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 102.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

¹⁶¹ See Carmen Meinert, “Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts,” in Henk Blezer (ed.), *Religion and Secular Culture in Tibet: Tibetan Studies II*, PIATS 2000, vol. 2, Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 289–307, esp. p. 303.

¹⁶² Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 102.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 91–96.

¹⁶⁴ Kenneth K. Tanaka and Raymond E. Robertson, “A *Ch'an* Text from Tun-huang: Implications for *Ch'an* Influence on Tibetan Buddhism,” in Steven D. Goodman and Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Buddhism: Reason and Revelation*, Albany: SUNY, 1992, pp. 57–78, esp. pp. 72–73, 160–161, n. 63.

¹⁶⁵ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 102.

¹⁶⁶ Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, p. 137.

¹⁶⁷ Arguillère, *Profusion de la Vaste Sphère*, pp. 90–91, 665, 672. The bibliographical reference is: Vimalamitra, *bSam-gtan mig-gi sgron-ma*, in *Bi-ma snying-thig*, in Klong-chen rab-'byams (ed.), *sNying-thig ya-bzhi: A Collection of Important Initiations and Instructions on Rdzogs-chen Practice, Arranged and Structured by Klong-chen Rab-'byams-pa*, vol. 6, Delhi: Sherab Gyaltzen Lama, 1975, pp. 306–312.

¹⁶⁸ C 503.2–3.

¹⁶⁹ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 103; Sam van Schaik, “The Great Perfection and the Chinese Monk: rNying-ma-pa Defences of Hwa-shang Mahāyāna in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Buddhist Studies Review*, vol. 20:2, 2003, pp. 189–204, esp. pp. 192–193.

¹⁷⁰ This is suggested by *sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, gNam-lcags chos-'byung*, vol. 1, p. 35. The suggestion is quite likely since in 1919 Kaḥ-thog Si-tu found a number of ancient texts at the bKra-shis lhun-po library, among them gNubs-chen's *Mun-pa'i go-cha*. See Dalton, *The Gathering of Intentions*, pp. 124–125. See also my notes to the editor's colophon (Colophons, §C.2).

¹⁷¹ Interestingly, 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros was also responsible for the carving of the woodblocks for gNubs-chen's other major work, the *Mun-pa'i go-cha*. See Dalton, *The Gathering of Intentions*, p. 125.

¹⁷² See Esler, *The Lamp*, PhD thesis, p. 388, where the stemma of the various editions and manuscript copies is given.

¹⁷³ See Guenther, “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet.”

¹⁷⁴ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 103–106.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 107–120.

¹⁷⁶ Tanaka and Robertson, “A *Ch'an* Text from Tun-huang,” pp. 57–78.

¹⁷⁷ Reynolds, *The Golden Letters*, pp. 220–225, 230, 248–253.

¹⁷⁸ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, pp. 16–23.

¹⁷⁹ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, electronic version input by Bun-ei Otokawa [being a transliterated reproduction of C].

¹⁸⁰ Jacob Dalton and Sam van Schaik, “Lighting the Lamp: An Examination of the Structure of the Bsam gtan mig sgron,” in *Acta Orientalia*, vol. 64, 2003, pp. 153–175.

¹⁸¹ Carmen Meinert “Structural Analysis of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*: A Comparison of the Fourfold Correct Practice in the *Āryāvikalpapraveśanāmadhāraṇī* and the Contents of the Four Main

Chapters of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*,” in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 26:1, 2003, pp. 175–195.

¹⁸² Carmen Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen-Lehre: eine komparatistische Untersuchung im Lichte des philosophischen Heilskonzeptes ‚Nicht-Vorstellen‘ anhand der Dunhuang-Dokumente des chinesischen Chan-Meister Wolun und des Werkes bSam gtan mig sgron des tibetischen Gelehrten gNubs chen sangs rgyas ye shes*, PhD thesis, Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität, 2004; concerning [Chapter 7](#), see esp. pp. 243–283, 352–357.

¹⁸³ [Ibid.](#), pp. 299–301.

¹⁸⁴ Izumi Miyazaki, “The Gradualist Chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the Teaching of Kamalaśīla,” in *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 52:2, 2004, pp. 899–902.

¹⁸⁵ Valeria Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright: Gnoseological Approaches and Soteriological Perspectives in Gnubs Chen Sangs Rgyas Ye Shes’ Masterpiece*, PhD thesis, Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, 2006.

¹⁸⁶ [Ibid.](#), p. viii.

¹⁸⁷ Manuel Lopez, *Bringing Light into the Darkness: An Intellectual History of Tibet’s Dark Age (842–978 CE)*, PhD thesis, Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2014, p. 110.

¹⁸⁸ For further details, see Esler, *The Lamp*, PhD thesis, pp. 380–381.

¹⁸⁹ See the tables of correspondences for the quotations from the Dunhuang manuscripts in [Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*](#), pp. 705–707 (for the Tibetan manuscripts) and pp. 708–709 (for the Chinese manuscripts).

¹⁹⁰ Giuseppe Baroetto, *La dottrina dell’atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron di gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes*, 2 Volumes, n.p.: Lulu, 2010.

¹⁹¹ [Lopez, *Bringing Light into the Darkness*](#), pp. 100–112. See also Manuel Lopez, “In Search of the Lost Manuscript: The Obscure Recension History of the Tenth-Century Text *The Lamp for the Eye in Meditation*,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 52, October 2019, pp. 90–118.

¹⁹² In particular, his contention that no block print is mentioned in the colophon ([Lopez, *Bringing Light into the Darkness*](#), p. 111) is incorrect; for more on this, see Esler, *The Lamp*, PhD thesis, p. 376. See also Colophons, §C.2 (C 504.4).

¹⁹³ Correspondence with Dr. Manuel Lopez during the time of his fieldwork in Tibet helped me to revise my own understanding of the

relationship between the two main extant editions of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. The stemma that he reproduces from my work (Lopez, *Bringing Light into the Darkness*, p. 107; now also reproduced in Lopez, “In Search of the Lost Manuscript,” p. 107) was a provisional working hypothesis that I have since corrected. For my current stemma, see Esler, *The Lamp*, PhD thesis, p. 388.

¹⁹⁴ Lopez, *Bringing Light into the Darkness*, pp. 25, 34–57.

¹⁹⁵ Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche, who produced the first modern edition of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, once remarked that the reason so few people could understand this text is that some of the passages have to be read backward. I am grateful to Dr. Stéphane Arguillère for sharing this anecdote with me (personal communication, March 31, 2009), which has now been published in Stéphane Arguillère, “Souvenirs relatifs à Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche: no.20 (épilogue),” July 11, 2017, <http://www.arguillere.org/2017/07/souvenirs-relatifs-a-chhimed-rigdzin-rinpoche-n-20-epilogue.html> (accessed November 10, 2017). The extent to which this (perhaps perplexing) hermeneutical key has been successfully applied in the present translation must be left to the reader’s judgment.

¹⁹⁶ British Library IOL Tib J 594.

¹⁹⁷ Norbu, *sBas-pa’i rgum-chung*, pp. 64–83, 259–294.

¹⁹⁸ dPal-ldan shes-rab, mKhan-po, *gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes-kyi bsam-gtan mig-sgron le’u rnams-kyi spyi-bshad mdor-bsdus shes-rab mig-’byed*, in *dPal-ldan shes-rab-kyi gsung-’bum*, vol. 1/ka, Boca Raton: Sky Dancer Press, 1994, pp. 381–470.

¹⁹⁹ *bKa’-shog chen-mo*, pp. 693–745.

²⁰⁰ Rig-’dzin Padma ’phrin-las, *bKa’-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa’i rnam-thar*, pp. 160.2–176.4; Meinert mainly bases her account of gNubs-chen’s life on this important source; see Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, pp. 222–230. For an English translation of the Tibetan text, see Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*, pp. 7–19.

²⁰¹ bDud-’joms ’Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *Chos-’byung*, pp. 290–300; translation: Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, pp. 607–614.

²⁰² Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra’i chos-’byung*, pp. 246–250.

²⁰³ sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-’dzin, *gNam-lcags chos-’byung*, vol. 1, pp. 27–40.

²⁰⁴ Dalton, “Lost and Found”; and Dalton, “Preliminary Remarks.”

²⁰⁵ This chapter has therefore received, as already mentioned, particular attention from scholars; see especially [Guenther](#), “[Meditation Trends in Early Tibet](#)”; and [Dalton and van Schaik](#), “[Lighting the Lamp](#).”

²⁰⁶ C 490–494.

²⁰⁷ C 498 (§8.2).

²⁰⁸ C 499.3.

²⁰⁹ Sam van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen: Discovering a Lost Tradition*, Boston: Snow Lion, 2015, p. 27.

²¹⁰ Cf. Michel de Certeau, *La Fable Mystique, I: XVI^e-XVII^e siècle*, Paris: Gallimard, 1982, p. 169.

²¹¹ See C 23.2, C 45.5–6, C 64.6, C 118.3, C 186.3, C 290.5, C 494.2, and C 499.5.

²¹² C 499.3.

²¹³ Elisa Freschi, “Proposals for the Study of Quotations in Indian Philosophical Texts,” in *Religions of South Asia*, vol. 6:2, 2012, pp. 161–189, esp. pp. 164–165.

²¹⁴ Cathy Cantwell and Robert Mayer, “A Noble Noose of Methods, the Lotus Garland Synopsis: Methodological Issues in the Study of a Mahāyoga Text from Dunhuang,” in *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, no. 5, December 2009, pp. 1–51, esp. p. 23.

²¹⁵ Freschi, “Proposals for the Study of Quotations,” pp. 163, 173.

²¹⁶ C 77.6–78.6.

²¹⁷ Freschi, “Proposals for the Study of Quotations,” pp. 170–171, 186.

²¹⁸ See C 40.1 (§2.5.1), C 44.2, C 44.5 (§2.5.2), C 48.2–3 (§3.2.1).

²¹⁹ Robert Mayer, “gTer ston and Tradent: Innovation and Conservation in Tibetan Treasure Literature,” in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vols. 36–37, 2013–2014, pp. 227–242, esp. pp. 235, 240.

²²⁰ Kammie Takahashi, “Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia in the Case of Mahāyogin dPal dbyangs,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 32, April 2015, pp. 1–23, esp. p. 4.

²²¹ In fact, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes explicitly emphasizes the importance of erudition (*thos-pa mang-ba*; Skt. *bahuśruta*) (C 223.3) and criticizes those in whom it is lacking (C 455.3).

²²² [Freschi](#), “[Proposals for the Study of Quotations](#),” p. 171.

²²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 175.

²²⁴ Cf. Matthew T. Kapstein, *Reason's Traces: Identity and Interpretation in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist Thought*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 15.

²²⁵ See C 23.4 (§2.1), C 62.1–2 (§3.3.2.2), C 223.4 (§6.2.2.4), C 224.2 (§6.2.2.4.1.2), C 250.6 (§6.2.2.4.2.3), and C 322.2 (§7.1.2.2.1).

²²⁶ Dorji Wangchuk, *The Resolve to Become a Buddha: A Study of the Bodhicitta Concept in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2007, p. 111.

²²⁷ Donald S. Lopez Jr., “Introduction,” in Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993, pp. 1–10, esp. p. 7.

²²⁸ Étienne Lamotte, “The Assessment of Textual Interpretation in Buddhism,” in Lopez (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, pp. 11–27, esp. pp. 23–24.

²²⁹ Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, pp. 35–36.

²³⁰ Lopez, “Introduction,” p. 7.

²³¹ For a translation of an important 13th-century presentation of the ninefold classification of vehicles by Rog ban-de Shes-rab (1166–1244), see Cabezon, *The Buddha's Doctrine and the Nine Vehicles*, pp. 181–246.

²³² Jacob Dalton, “A Crisis of Doxography: How Tibetans Organized Tantra During the 8th–12th Centuries,” in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 28:1, 2005, pp. 115–181, esp. pp. 143–145.

²³³ This possibility is suggested in Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 54, n. 2.

²³⁴ Note, however, that in Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' perspective the *Sautrāntika Madhyamaka* is to be placed above the *Yogācāra Madhyamaka*.

²³⁵ *Theg-pa gcod-pa'i 'khor-lo*, in BG, vol. 5, pp. 7.6–10.3, 31.4–54.5; see the outline of this text in Namkhai Norbu and Kennard Lipman (trs.), *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation*, Boston: Shambhala, 2001, pp. 128–130.

²³⁶ van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” p. 76.

²³⁷ See Dalton, *The Gathering of Intentions*, p. 169, n. 8.

²³⁸ See C 6.2 (§1.3), C 12.1 and C 12.6 (§1.4), C 15.1–2 (§1.5.2), C 23.4 (§2.1), C 65.1 (§4.0), C 186.4 (§6.0), C 210.2 (§6.1.5.6), C 227.3 (§6.2.2.4.1.3), C 290.6 and C 291.4 (§7.0), C 312.2 (§7.1.1.5), C 423.5 (§7.2.2.4), C 489.6 (§7.4.5), C 490.1 (§7.5), and C 494.1 (§7.5.5).

²³⁹ Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 22, n. 40.

²⁴⁰ Sam van Schaik, “The Sweet Sage and the *Four Yogas*: A Lost Mahāyoga Treatise from Dunhuang,” in *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, no. 4, December 2008, pp. 1–67, esp. p. 5.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁴² van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, pp. 176–177.

²⁴³ On the three concentrations of *Mahāyoga*, see, for instance, van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” pp. 58–63.

²⁴⁴ For a critique of this theory, see Dylan Esler, “The Origins and Early History of rDzogs chen,” in *The Tibet Journal*, vol. 30:3, Autumn 2005, pp. 33–62, esp. pp. 40–43.

²⁴⁵ Sam van Schaik, “Dzogchen, Chan and the Question of Influence,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 24, October 2012, pp. 5–19, esp. pp. 10, 15.

²⁴⁶ van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 175.

²⁴⁷ Dalton, “A Crisis of Doxography,” p. 141.

²⁴⁸ David Germano, “Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*),” in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 17:2, 1994, pp. 203–335, esp. pp. 209, 230–231.

²⁴⁹ Philippe Cornu, *La Liberté Naturelle de l’Esprit*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1994, p. 118.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁵¹ C 291.2.

²⁵² For a study of this tradition of *Mahāyoga* exegesis, see Nathaniel DeWitt Garson, *Penetrating the Secret Essence Tantra: Context and Philosophy in the Mahāyoga System of rNying-ma Tantra*, PhD thesis, Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2004, esp. pp. 111–112, 114–121, 143–144.

²⁵³ van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” p. 58.

²⁵⁴ Dorji Wangchuk, “Einige philosophische Grundlagen der rDzogs-chen Meditation,” in *Buddhismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, no. 8, 2003, pp. 165–181, esp. p. 178, quoting Rong-zom chos-kyi bzang-po, *Theg-pa chen-po’i tshul-la ’jug-pa*, in *Rong-zom chos-bzang-gi gsung-’bum*, vol. 1, Chengdu, China: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1999, pp. 415–555, esp. p. 554: /*mdor na bsam gtan gyi bye brag ’di dag thams cad la’ang/ /rdzogs pa chen po’i don kyis zin par byas na thabs mkhas pa’i spyod par ’gyur ro/ /ma zin na thabs mi mkhas pa’i spyod par ’gyur ro/*: “In brief, as regards all the particulars of contemplation, if they are held through the meaning of the Great Completeness, they become

engagement in skillful means, yet if they are not so held, they become engagement in unskillful means.”

²⁵⁵ Cf. C 296.4–6 and C 299 (§7.1.1.3), C 368.1–4 (§7.1.2.7.2), and C 492–493 (§§7.5.3.3–7.5.4.5).

²⁵⁶ This section (§I.5.4) is a revised version of comments that previously appeared in the appendix to Dylan Esler, “The Exposition of *Atiyoga* in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes’ *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 24 (Special issue), October 2012, pp. 81–136, esp. pp. 128–130.

²⁵⁷ On the role of such notes in Tibetan texts, cf. Nicolai Solmsdorf, “Scribble and Notes: Remarks on the Tibetan Marginalia/Interlinear Notes (*mchan bu*),” in Oliver von Criegern, Gudrun Melzer, and Johannes Schneider (eds.), *Saddharmāmṛtam: Festschrift für Jens-Uwe Hartmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2018, pp. 477–488.

²⁵⁸ Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, p. 238, n. 599.

²⁵⁹ C 15.4: *Glang dar ma’i ring la btsun pa Ye shes dbang po bar chad du gyur pas mtshan nyid kyi slob dpon brgyud pa nub/*.

²⁶⁰ See Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 101; cf. the *dBa’-bzhed*’s mention of *dBa’ Ye-shes dbang-po*’s death in Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger, *dBa’ bzhed: The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha’s Doctrine to Tibet*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000, p. 90.

²⁶¹ Cf. Wangdu and Diemberger, *dBa’ bzhed*, pp. 78, 88.

²⁶² On the dialectical nature of *Chan*, see Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, pp. 29–31.

²⁶³ Yamaguchi Zuihō, “The Fiction of King Dar-ma’s Persecution of Buddhism,” in Jean-Pierre Drège (ed.), *De Dunhuang au Japon: Études chinoises et bouddhiques offertes à Michel Soymié*, Geneva: Droz, 1996, pp. 231–258, esp. p. 254.

²⁶⁴ Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 94, n. 44.

²⁶⁵ For example, cf. some of the glosses to the dreams in Chapter 4, e.g., C 90.2 (§4.2.4.23), C 92.2–3 (§4.2.4.31); in these cases, the problem can be remedied by referring to the corresponding passages in the *Svapnanirdeśa* of the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*. However, see also Chapter 7, C 419.4–6 (§7.2.2.3.9): this gloss is a particularly good example in that it preserves but fragments of an originally continuous structure of thought

and is hence, to some extent at least, unintelligible. The same holds true for the gloss in [Chapter 6](#), C 251.4–6 (§6.2.2.5.1).

²⁶⁶ C 375.6 (§7.1.2.9), C 419.2 (§7.2.2.3.9).

²⁶⁷ C 497.5 (§8.2); the stanza is repeated in the author’s colophon (Colophons, §C.1.1.8, C 502.5).

²⁶⁸ [van Schaik](#), “The Early Days of the Great Perfection,” p. 197.

²⁶⁹ C 84–111.

²⁷⁰ Cf. C 89.2 (§4.2.4.20), C 94.3–4 (§4.2.4.38), C 97.1 (§4.2.4.48), and C 108.4–5 (§4.2.4.95). See also note 265.

²⁷¹ E.g., C 91.1 (§4.2.4.27), C 102.4 (§4.2.4.74), C 107.6 (§4.2.4.93), etc.; cf. *fo*, the Chinese rendering of “Buddha,” and the Japanese transcription *butsu*; see *Hôbôgirin: Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme d’après les Sources Chinoises et Japonaises*, pt. 3, Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1974, p. 190; Philippe Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2006, p. 883.

²⁷² E.g., C 88.3 (§4.2.4.16), C 91.1 (§4.2.4.27); cf. *pusa*, the Chinese transcription of “bodhisattva,” and the Japanese transcription *bosatsu*; see *Hôbôgirin*, pt. 2, Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1930, p. 136; Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, p. 882.

²⁷³ The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* is known as *Banniyuanjing* in Chinese. See Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, p. 745.

²⁷⁴ See C 138.2 (§5.1.2) and C 184.2 (§5.4), respectively.

1

Laying the Groundwork

[C 2.1–23.3; M 1b.1–16b.4]

1.1. Homage

The state of original spontaneous presence¹
Does not waver from its natural state;
However, not seen, its nature appears as duality—
It is this state² to which I pay homage!

1.2. The enumeration of the names of contemplation

The king of pith instructions that ascertains the spontaneous Great Completeness, the universal ground, the enlightened mind, contains an enumeration of the names of this contemplation called “the eye of the *yogin*.”³ Since it liberates [beings] from the four rivers of cyclic existence,⁴ it is {firstly} called “contemplation which is a boat of the *Mahāyāna*.” {Secondly} since it is the origin of all great qualities, it is also called “contemplation which is a jewel.” {Thirdly} since it assembles all the intended purposes, it is also called “contemplation which assembles the purposes.” {Fourthly} since it reaches the end of all views, [3] it is

also called “contemplation which pierces the intellect.” {Fifthly} since {for example} it makes the darkness of ignorance alpha-pure, it is also called “contemplation which is a great lamp.” {Sixthly} since it purifies the litter of the imprints, it is also called “contemplation that is a great river.” {Seventhly} since it accomplishes the search for the seven properties,⁵ it is also called “contemplation which is a great helmsman.” {Eighthly} since, when the stages of contemplation are laid out sequentially, it is taught as supreme, it is also called “contemplation which is especially great.” {Ninthly} since it does not find recrimination because of all the great enemy troops of cyclic existence and effort, it is called “contemplation that is a great fortress.” {Tenthly} since it conquers cyclic existence and all the thoughts of effortful craving, it is also called “contemplation which is a great army.” {Eleventh} since without traversing stages it treads them simultaneously, it is also called “contemplation which is a clever horse⁶ of great rapidity.” [4] {Twelfth} since it is spontaneously complete without having accomplished the Victorious One’s rank, it is also called “contemplation of the great accomplishment.” {Thirteenth} since it is brought to culmination without having gone [anywhere], it is also called “contemplation which is the highway to release.” {Fourteenth} since it becomes the origin of all wizardry, it is also called “contemplation which is a great marvel.” {Fifteenth} since it is without relinquishing or accepting any actions whatsoever, it is also called “contemplation of the great conduct.” {Sixteenth} since it is clear without needing pauses, it is also called “contemplation

of great constancy.”⁷ {Seventeenth} since it is not free from anything whatsoever, it is also called “contemplation of great compassion.” {Eighteenth} since it is without any deliberate action, it is also called “contemplation which is [like] great sleep.” {Nineteenth} since it is the great compassion that removes the chronic illness of cyclic existence, it is also called “contemplation which provides the great medicinal ambrosia.” {Twentieth} since it is without dread or anxiety, [5] it is also called “contemplation which is the great soaring *garuḍa*.” {Twenty-first} since it does not waver from the profundity and depth that are difficult to fathom, it is also called “contemplation which is a great ocean.”

For instance, it is impossible to count or know the infinite particles of dust and the drops of water [in the ocean]. It is similarly impossible to know the limit of its [i.e., contemplation’s] names. If it be asked why, it is because it is the paragon of inconceivable names. In that case, it may be asked, “Just why is it labeled *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*?” It is said so by the prominent because of its special quality of seeing the unseen great meaning. Such a great meaning is the completion of the empowerments and grades of the lineage, which is one’s family clan. It is the culmination of all that is to be learned.

1.3. The place

He⁸ who is aware that engaging in cyclic existence is meaningless and assimilates this, who casts away all

actions as similar to the dust of spittle, and who desires to attain the rank of great liberation must first search for a place. It may be asked, “What is the nature of the place that should be sought?” The system of the causal *Mahāyāna* [6] states in many texts that auspicious places where previous Teachers have strolled, such as Vajrāsana,⁹ Ḡṛdhakūṭa,¹⁰ the maroon park of willow trees in Khotan, and so forth, are to be sought out by the adept.

The textual tradition of the vehicle of Inner Yoga¹¹ declares in numerous *tantras* and texts that one should seek out [a place] that is endowed with [the signs found in] the *tantras* and texts and that has an auspicious history.¹²

Being endowed with [the signs found in] the texts refers to the fact that the cardinal and inter-cardinal directions are well delineated; that the place is endowed with a forest;¹³ that it is situated on a massive mountain; that the shapes of the mountains and of the [clouds in the] atmosphere are similar to the forms of sublime relinquishing,¹⁴ [such as] the Thus-gone One’s emblematic gesture (*phyag-rgya*; Skt. *mudrā*), the jewel, the lotus, the crossed *vajra*, the wheel, and so forth; and that it is delightfully endowed with auspicious birds making sweet sounds.

Also, relinquishing for the time being places that are too near or too far [from human habitation],¹⁵ a beginner should seek out [a place] where commotion is moderate. This is compatible with what is said in the *Chen-po padma’i man-ngag*.¹⁶

Not harming one's constitution, one should relinquish [a place that is either too] near or [too] far.

An auspicious history was mentioned previously: [7] [this refers to] the {countless} places where Indian and Tibetan male and female experts have attained accomplishment, such as: the eight charnel grounds;¹⁷ Heruka's¹⁸ ten places; the Asura's rock;¹⁹ the virtuous place of mChims-phu;²⁰ the Tiger and Lion Vales; the rock of lHo-brag mKhar-chu;²¹ the Ravine of Ga-bu; the bank of Lake Mānasa (Ma-pham) near the Kailāśa (Ti-se) glacier; the Tiger Vale;²² and so forth.

It may be asked, “Why do such [places] have qualities?” It is because in such places one is endowed with great resilience, one is close to what is pleasurable, obstacles do not arise, and one is endowed with [the places'] natural potency. It is said in the *Chos-kyi {dgongs 'dus-kyi} me-long bka'-'grel*,²³

To draw a boundary in the boundless,²⁴
Such is a *yogin*'s activity.²⁵
The knowable is phenomena's beingness (*chos-nyid*; Skt. *dharmatā*) within;
When entering it for the purpose of yoga,
Travelers are stopped from coming and going²⁶
In and out of the retreat—
This is to eliminate obstacles
Caused by people's distracting frivolity.

[8] Also, in the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*²⁷ it is explained that²⁸

If one searches for the non-conceptual meaning,
One should take hold of a solitary lonely location.

This is in order to eliminate distractions and obscurations.

The Inner *Mahāyāna* and the *Atiyoga* system declare that the third-order chiliocosm's²⁹ genuine abode is the wisdom of intrinsic awareness, the great expanse of mother-like space, which is free from all limitations, and the essence of self-originated wisdom, which is free from limitations without relinquishing them. The *Guhyagarbha-tantra* says,³⁰

Primordial solitude [is found] in the chiliocosms of the ten directions.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,³¹

These third-order chiliocosms are my country, abode, and mansion.

It may be asked, therefore, “Does searching solitude not again contradict this meaning?” One must resolve this as follows: although [solitude] is not to be relinquished, and those with few [conducive] conditions and lower qualities should search for it, neither is it said that one should become attached to the same.

It may be asked, “Is attachment to a sanctuary a defect?” [9] [It is replied that] it is the great illness that does not grant one the sight of the great meaning, which is without relinquishing and accepting anything whatsoever. The *Klong-'grel* of Vimalamitra says,³²

Good realization of mind's beingness in its [own] place
Is the supreme abode of concentration³³ and wisdom.
I do not search for the solitude of sanctuaries;
One is fettered by the conception of places.

In the same one's³⁴ instructions it is stated,³⁵

If one does not comprehend that solitude is in one's mind,
Although one goes to the solitude of a sanctuary,
One's mind is a savage roving through the chiliocosms
And one's body guards the empty place of one's bedroom:
One is like a marmot sleeping in a hole in a meadow.

It may be asked, therefore, “How should one examine a place's defects?” [It is replied that] because of a place's uneven temperature one becomes ill; because of descending upon the abodes of malevolent serpent-spirits, the abodes of black local deities, or the narrow lanes [haunted by] gods and ghosts, there are obstacles to one's life, one's requisites are veritably difficult to seek, and [the place] is supremely unpleasurable. If the place is very obscure, one's constitution is disturbed.

In a place with very great commotion, where there is barking, the sound of the clamor of libertine people,³⁶ and the sound of water, the mind is diffuse. In a place where individuals of the *Hīnayāna* abide, one is charged with a bad reputation and with offensiveness.³⁷ [10] In a place with a malevolent king and ministers, obstacles come forth. If the place is too close to one's home, one comes to harm and is distracted because of the divisive talk of one's relatives. If it is too far removed, there is the defect that injurious enemies may come there. Such [places] are not needed. It is also said in the pith instructions,³⁸

Having found a place without obstacles to my power, I shall remain there.

It may be asked, therefore, “Well, what should be done now?” [It is replied that] through intrinsic awareness one should get accustomed to looking in a manner without the view of specific characteristics. It is said in the *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag*,³⁹

He who wishes to experience absolute meaningfulness itself,
Being like a solitary lion,⁴⁰
Cuts through the objects of distraction
And exiles himself several miles from the land to which he
is connected.⁴¹
He then looks into the mirror of his psyche.

1.4. Making a commitment

Once in a while, when {, meditating again and again,} a person who is a successor to his family⁴² relinquishes with a fox’s deportment⁴³ his relatives and kin, his kingdom, and his household, he searches for the great purpose in sanctuaries. [11] Being a great person, he initially makes a commitment and thinks of all sentient beings as his children: “The great ocean of cyclic existence is veritably inexhaustible and release therefrom is difficult; because they quickly sink thereinto, [sentient beings] have no time for release from these [sufferings]. Oh, how pitiful!”

Even if I work to release them from these [sufferings], I abide on the stage of an ordinary individual.⁴⁴ Although my nature is pure, I am not endowed with great means. Hence, though {as a beginner} I might work for their purpose, following those who effect the purpose of wandering beings⁴⁵ during oceans of eons, my strength is slight. Therefore, having accomplished the great supreme rank of release,⁴⁶ I shall {as a Buddha} perform clouds of ocean-like means, liberating all thereby.

This thought is commonly implemented in the *Sūtrayāna* as well as the *Mantrayāna*. Padmasambhava further states,⁴⁷

He who desires to go to a sanctuary
Should first verily commit himself
And generate compassion, pondering:
“Having released myself from impermanence and suffering,
I shall accomplish the purpose of others.
Nevertheless, being on the stage of an ordinary individual,
my capacity is weak.
Having therefore accomplished the Victorious One’s rank
And obtained the five strengths⁴⁸ of a universal guide,⁴⁹
All those whom I install on the stage of enlightenment shall
attain bliss.”

[12] In this regard, as one applies the view, one might, when resolving [the view of] each of the four vehicles,⁵⁰ say, “This system of the Great Completeness, which for the time being [we will consider] chiefly, is free from all actions.”⁵¹ [It is replied that] if one comprehends the fact that commitments are nonexistent, since one neither relinquishes nor accepts any reified entity whatsoever, one is untainted by defects. Because [commitments] are, for instance, like the sky, it is said in the *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*,⁵²

The very object consisting of commitments is originally nonexistent;

If one comprehends the meaning that the object consisting of commitments is nonexistent,

Even commitments are like the sky which is without defects.

Hence, one does not transgress any commitments.

Even as one undertakes activities while abiding for the purpose of self and others, one excellently assimilates the basic textual tradition of non-discursiveness according to each of the individual vehicles.⁵³ Without rectifying or corrupting the three doors,⁵⁴ though one's conduct is compatible with the doctrinal view, one engages without inhibiting or being attached to either action or non-action. [13] Moreover, it is said,⁵⁵

By persevering in a pleasurable place,

One should comprehend the meaning⁵⁶ and familiarize oneself to confidence [therein];⁵⁷

One engages in conduct without attachment to anything,
Thereby bringing it to culmination according to absolute meaningfulness.

1.5. The preliminaries

1.5.1. Listening to the doctrine

In terms of undertaking the preliminary activities, one should firstly one-pointedly exert oneself in listening. As it is said,⁵⁸

If one does not generate [the ability to] hear and the
sapience of listening,⁵⁹
One is like someone without a lamp in a dark mine
[containing] gold.

Initially, like someone depending on a lamp if he searches for gold in the dark, one needs to depend on the lamp of words and letters even as one searches for the great meaning in one's mind and meditates; this is declared in many *sūtras*. Furthermore, with respect to the inner *Mantrayāna*, the ***Rin-chen rgya-mtsho*** states extensively,⁶⁰

*TRAM.*⁶¹ Listen to all the secrets,
Which are secret, greatly secret, and supremely secret!

The system of pith instructions, the ***rTse-mo byung-rgyal***, declares,⁶²

The lamp of words indicates to the eye the gold of the
meaning;
Verbal enumerations are the wheeled vehicle of awakened
speech.

Therefore, one should exert oneself in searching for the meaning.

[14] Furthermore, understanding the meaning in the *sūtras* is because of the supreme [faculty of] hearing. In the ***Chos-kyi me-long*** it is said,⁶³

It is not hearing an ocean of words,
But understanding a single word that is [meant by] supreme
hearing.

The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* declares,⁶⁴

It is the expert in the meaning, not the expert in words, who
is called erudite.⁶⁵

This should be understood.

Even if⁶⁶ one thus listens and mostly seizes the words,
They are disconnected from their meaning if one does not think
about them.

If one does not veritably scrutinize with the sapience of thinking,
One may speak nicely, yet the words nicely spoken will be
disconnected from meaning.

So it is said. Moreover, the *rDo-rje bkod-pa* states
{regarding listening},⁶⁷

Just as a clever and speedy horse⁶⁸
Becomes bound by constraining chains,
But, when liberated, comfortably sets loose,
Going unimpeded by anything whatsoever,

So this clever horse of the mental faculty
Becomes bound by the chains of unknowing,
But through hearing of utter liberation,
The conscious continuum, totally liberated, goes forth
unimpeded.

Therefore, that one should listen is compatible with all
the causal and fruition vehicles. However, the meaning
{of view, meditation, conduct and fruition} is
incompatible.⁶⁹

1.5.2. Obtaining the pith instructions

[15] Apart⁷⁰ from these {general teachings}, one should especially obtain the pith instructions of the aural lineage of instructions. Concerning the causal vehicle, when the Hallowed One passed into transcendence (Skt. *nirvāṇa*), the instructions befell Kāśyapa. Thereafter, they reached Hwa-shang⁷¹ Mahāyāna,⁷² the last in a Chinese lineage of seven,⁷³ [coming] from Bodhidharma,⁷⁴ and so forth. Then, in Tibet there was [the lineage] belonging to the emperor⁷⁵ and monks, which declined.⁷⁶ Having cut through one's doubts concerning those who have the documents related to their philosophical texts, as well as concerning the gradual learning [advocated] by Kamalaśīla, one should not chase after the later instructors [of this teaching].⁷⁷

One should obtain the means of the inner *Mantrayāna* {i.e., *Mahāyoga*}, namely, the pith instructions for the concentration on great passion, the instructions on the seminal nuclei (*thig-le*; Skt. *bindu*), etc., the pith instructions on the upper and lower doors,⁷⁸ and, regarding eminent *yogins* {i.e., *Atiyogins*}, the hearing lineage of the pith instructions on non-action.⁷⁹

These will be taught in detail later.⁸⁰

1.5.3. Miscellaneous preliminaries

[16] In brief, having cut through one's doubts regarding the means of resting, the means of rectifying the mind, and the means of action relating to the path of conduct, etc., one should exert oneself with great energy in casting molded cones;⁸¹ in extracting small fish [from the fishermen's catch];⁸² in clearing derelict bridges and

treacherous footpaths; in making *stūpas* and temples; in setting up great groups of ordained monks; in reading the extensive *sūtra* section; in turning the great wheel of the doctrine; in being a companion to those who suffer; in healing the sick without regard to closeness or distance; in extensive generosity; and so forth.

Especially concerning the tantric section of the *Mahāyāna*, one should exert oneself in receiving the numerous grades of the empowerment, in unveiling the many configurations (Skt. *maṇḍala*) of the evocations,⁸³ in performing extensive burnt offerings,⁸⁴ in honoring the group of ordained monks as a recipient of worship, in [caring for] those who are in the fold of one's compassion, in sustaining meditation schools, and so forth. Moreover, eliminating the attachment connected to food, wealth, and material things,⁸⁵ one's inclination should be resolved, and one should accrue all the above necessary conditions. It is said in the *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag*,⁸⁶

Entering into the profound has been spoken of in the past:
[17] Having resolved one's doubts and hesitancy,
One cleanses one's sins and generates the enlightened mind.
One should then act in a measure properly adequate for
The heap of merit of the yogic accumulations
And all the teachings, however many are enumerated.
In all one's temporary actions without exception,
One should act so as to be without later regret.

Regarding the requirements, one should exert oneself so that one need not seek for a path from one's meditation place. Thus, obstacles will not occur and benefit will

ensue. Guiding others, one will later become undistracted.

1.6. Relinquishing attachment

As for relinquishing material wealth, the nature of food and wealth is to appear as a conceptual representation; thinking of them as untrue, as mistaken [notions], as impermanent, as unbeneficial, as being the very cause for becoming fettered, and as [similar to] earth and stones, one shall become attached neither to a treasury of riches, nor to horses, elephants, nor to anything at all! Furthermore, it is said,⁸⁷

All those who died in the past,
Though they constantly accrued food and wealth,
Were dulled by the maturation of their sins; with this burden
of mine,
I am powerless to use this body for the sake of food and
wealth.
[18] Though one may wear many fine clothes and eat many
tasty foods,
If one postpones one's purpose, meditation, one is a beast,
Like a predator with fine sheen or a ploughing bullock with
content stomach.
Hence, throw away [these objects] like unclean excrement!

Moreover, psychic attachment to one's relatives having been relinquished, parents, king, overlord, children, relatives, wives, sweethearts, countrymen, and so forth are like guests in this world [briefly] assembling in one place; their trait is always to disperse. Even relying on these because of one's attachment to what is temporarily gratifying and likeable becomes an enemy that snatches

away enlightenment. Therefore, not giving in to their power, like a fox that runs away when it sees another [creature], one should not be attached [to them]. It is said,⁸⁸

Our relatives in this life are solely compatible with our
deeds,
[Like] guests who meet [briefly] in a place and each go on
their way.
Parents, and so forth, companions and closest friends
Make a miserable companion. Retaining the advice of [those
in] cyclic existence
Causes one's ruin both temporarily and in the long-term—
[19] Is it not insane to listen to and entrust one's mind to
them?
Therefore, since your own body's trait is to collapse,
Arouse a fox's impulse⁸⁹
And go alone to a sanctuary!

The instructor Bodhidharma's *rGya-lung chen-po*⁹⁰ also states,⁹¹

One does not concord⁹² with the boundaries of cyclic existence's torments.

From these [sources it is clear that by] being attached to one's wife,⁹³ to whatever entities one deems suitable, or to minute connections, one will relinquish even non-meditation! Moreover, it is said that⁹⁴

One may have borne one's kingdom from the world
beyond,⁹⁵
Yet one will not bear it into the future.⁹⁶
Since it is accomplished from the cause of merit,
It is merely fleeting;
Likewise, all our enjoyments will change.
[20] To those who {would meditate later and} say that they
must eliminate their important occupations,
It is answered that these are limitless like ripples on water.
Hence, if one does not finish one's occupations before one
dies,
Will one's leisurely corpse meditate once dead?
Enjoyments should therefore be cast away like spittle.

Generally, though a beginner may have such an intention, he might not [actually be able to] discard [his enjoyments] like this.⁹⁷ By engaging in the religious path of the great system, all these [enjoyments] are [found to be] nonexistent when examined. When left as they are, they appear. Appearances themselves, as well as non-appearances, are merely adventitious labels [assigned to phenomena].⁹⁸ In essence, there are no [linguistic] labels whatsoever to think about; how could anyone become attached to them? One should know that the objects of attachment are without even a dust particle's worth of existence. All that is knowable is transient.

1.7. Purging oneself of weariness

He whose psyche is thus detached from everything should scrutinize absolute meaningfulness for a prolonged period in a sanctuary. If, because of [spending] a long time in a sanctuary, becoming weary

due to the wilderness, one were to think, “The characteristic of village frivolity is slight,” one should think of impermanence and suffering; [21] [that frivolity is] very disturbing and veritably distracting; that one’s purpose is dwindling, and that many quarrels and the causes of quarrel may occur; that the curd of the afflictions is being aroused and accrued, and that the afflictions will develop; that one’s conscious continuum is indeed not peaceful, does not tolerate thorough examining, and is vain; that its trait is to occur quickly and to be thoroughly weary; and that one is veritably far from enlightenment, etc.⁹⁹

As for the qualities of staying there [i.e., in the sanctuary], they are that the aforementioned defects will be repelled. A sanctuary’s qualities are explained in the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, one should recall that it is said in many injunctions of the *sūtras* and *tantras* that a sanctuary is [a place] devoid of sinful and non-virtuous phenomena; that it makes one’s conscious continuum veritably peaceful; that it is without quarrels; that [here] the afflictions are neither accrued nor aroused; that it is close to the pledge-bound protectors; that [it is a place] where the omens in dreams are clear; where supracognition arises;¹⁰¹ [a place] which is meaningful and where the unsurpassed awakening can take place. [22] One should recall what is said¹⁰²

Regarding a person who attains the holy awakening to
enlightenment

While remaining in the midst of a town,
No such Buddha has come in the past,
Nor does one exist at present or in the future.

One should think of the fact that an individually intrinsic nature is void.¹⁰³ The *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamikas*]¹⁰⁴ hold that the only essence of reified entities is to assemble interdependently in relative truth.¹⁰⁵ Although there appears to be a carriage, {being genuinely empty,} it is all but an illusion. In absolute truth, it is without essence, without aspect, without characteristics, and free from causes and conditions. It should be known to be devoid of the eight¹⁰⁶ and three¹⁰⁷ elaborated limitations.

Thusness being the inseparability of the two truths, since the meaning—the wisdom of intrinsic awareness—is untouched by any limitations, the adept of the inner *Mantrayāna* should recall {of everything} the voidness.¹⁰⁸

In the Eminent Yoga,¹⁰⁹ whose system is to rest in the ground, the spontaneously complete beingness of phenomena, [phenomena] are not void through elimination, but they are primordially void; they are free from the very designation of voidness. [23] Since there is nothing to recall, how could one be weary or pleased during recollection? Therefore, without eliminating weariness, it is dispelled.

This will be taught in detail later as the textual traditions of the individual views.

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the first chapter, which teaches the purpose of the place, of making commitments, of the preliminaries, of relinquishing attachment, and of purging oneself of weariness.

¹ Gl.: this pith instruction from the pinnacle.

² Gl.: i.e., integral being.

TN: Meinert is right in observing that this gloss (*nyid chen-po*) appended to *bdag* to make *bdag-nyid chen-po* is not really justifiable grammatically. See [Meinert, Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre](#), p. 238, n. 599. However, my translation of the third verse differs from Meinert's since she takes *gnyis-su* to refer to the two aspects of emptiness and appearance, an interpretation which to me seems a bit far-fetched. Cf. [ibid.](#), p. 238: "und obwohl [eigentlich] nichts zu erkennen ist, gibt es [dennoch] die Natur und die [aus ihr hervorgehenden] Erscheinungen."

³ Gl.: together with the arguments for the enumeration of the greatness of these names.

⁴ These are the rivers of birth, old age, sickness, and death. See Dungdkar blo-bzang 'phrin-las, *Bod rig-pa'i tshig-mdzod chen-mo shes-bya rab-gsal*, Beijing: Krung-go'i bod-rig-pa dpe-skrun-khang, 2002, p. 821. A vivid description of these is given in Patrul Rinpoche, *Le Chemin de la Grande Perfection*, Traduction du tibétain par Christian Bruyat, St. Léon-sur-Vézère: Éditions Padmakara, 1987, pp. 86–91.

⁵ These are the seven properties of absolute truth (*don-dam bden-pa dkor-bdun*): the absolute truth of the open dimension (*dbyings don-dam*), the absolute truth of wisdom (*ye-shes don-dam*), and the fivefold absolute truth of the fruition (*'bras-bu don-dam*), namely, the Buddha's body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities. See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 153.

⁶ *Cang-shes* refers to a special breed of horses, characterized by their exceptional quick-wittedness and fearlessness; this came to be especially useful in battle. See bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1997, p. 147. The word is mentioned in the Dunhuang manuscript Pelliot tibétain 239 (fol. r12.2, r13.2). It is not without interest to note that in Indian mythology Arjuna's horses, called the scent-eaters' (Skt. *gandharva*) horses, are said to be very fast, unkillable (Skt. *avadhya*), untiring, and always voluntarily obedient. See Christophe Vielle, *Le Mytho-cycle Héroïque dans l'Aire Indo-Européenne: Correspondances et Transformations Helléno-Aryennes*, Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1996, p. 135.

⁷ Note that *phyad-pa* is archaic for *rtag-pa*. Cf. rNam-rgyal tshe-ring (ed.), *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, Beijing: Krung-go'i bod-rig-pa dpe-skrun-khang, 2001, p. 333.

⁸ Cf. gNubs-chen's discussion regarding a meditation place found in the extract of the *Paṇ-grub-rnams-kyi thugs-bcud snying-gi nyi-ma*, in BG, vol. 1, p. 89.1–4; see Namkhai Norbu's edition of the text entitled *Byang-chub-kyi sems rmad-du byung-ba'i nyams-khrid*, p. 5, and the translation of the passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 199, n. 58.

⁹ Gl.: a place of great blessings.

TN: Vajrāsana (“the adamantine seat”) refers to the place where Buddha Śākyamuni attained enlightenment in Bodhgayā in northern India.

¹⁰ Gl.: an auspicious place to attain accomplishments.

TN: this is the place in Rājagṛha, where, according to the *Mahāyāna*, the Buddha is said to have turned the wheel of the doctrine for the second time, revealing the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras*. It will be noted that, according to his hagiographies, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes visited both Bodhgayā and Gṛdhakūṭa. See *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, pp. 700, 705, 713; and also [Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*](#), pp. 164–165.

¹¹ This is a reference to the scriptures of the vehicle of *Mahāyoga*.

¹² The following recommendations concerning the place of retreat are quite similar to those found in the *Phur-'grel 'bum-nag* and translated in Martin J. Boord, *A Bolt of Lightning from the Blue: The Vast Commentary on Vajrakīla That Clearly Defines the Essential Points*, Berlin: Edition Khordong, 2002, pp. 144–146.

¹³ I have emended *snag* (“kin”) to *nags* (“forest”) following [Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*](#), p. 126.

¹⁴ “Sublime relinquishing” (*spangs-pa phun-sum-tshogs-pa*) is an epithet of the Buddha that pertains to his own purpose (Skt. *svārtha*) and refers to the Buddha's knowledge that he has relinquished all that was to be relinquished concerning the two obscurations and the imprints. See Jamgön Mipham Rinpoche, *Gateway to Knowledge*, Translated by Erik Pema Kunsang, vol. 3, Kathmandu: Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 2002, p. 236.

¹⁵ Similarly, in the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa (5th century) writes that a retreat place should be neither too far away from nor too close to a village. This is so that one will not be disturbed by frequent visitors and noise but can still easily receive the necessities of food, clothing, and medicines that sustain one's meditation practice. See Buddhaghosa,

Visuddhimagga: Le Chemin de la Pureté, Traduit du magadhi (pali) par Christian Maës, Paris: Fayard, 2002, ch. 4, §19, p. 151.

¹⁶ Unidentified source. Note that this text is referred to as *Chen-po padma'i bsgom-lung* in §6.2.2.4.1.1 (C 223.6).

¹⁷ Gl.: where the liberated Rudra's five limbs, his upper and lower chest, as well as his entrails [fell to the ground].

TN: For an enumeration of the names of these eight charnel grounds, see Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 157; an alternative list is found in Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, p. 259.

¹⁸ Gl.: i.e., Rudra Heruka.

TN: On the place of Rudra in the *rNying-ma* tradition, see Robert Mayer, "The Figure of Maheśvara/Rudra in the rÑin-ma-pa Tantric Tradition," in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 21:2, 1998, pp. 271–310. On gNubs-chen's elucidation of Rudra in his *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, see Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons*, pp. 39–41. On Śiva's/Rudra's ambivalent nature in Hindu mythology as a god of both fierceness and benevolence, see Stella Kramrisch, *The Presence of Śiva*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 21, 30.

¹⁹ Gl.: in the place of Vajrāsana.

²⁰ Gl.: a place of Tibetan saints.

TN: The caves of mChims-phu are closely associated with Padmasambhava, who is held to have meditated and instructed some of his disciples there, particularly while the nearby monastery of bSam-yas was under construction. See Keith Dowman, *The Power-Places of Central Tibet: The Pilgrim's Guide*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988, p. 226.

²¹ In lHo-brag mKhar-chu is located another cave associated with Padmasambhava as well as the cave where Nam-mkha'i snying-po attained accomplishment. See *ibid.*, p. 204.

²² Gl.: in g.Yas-ru, Tibet.

TN: This refers to the region of eastern gTsang.

²³ While no source could be identified with this name, the quotation is found in the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 452.1–3.

²⁴ It should be noted that in Tibetan, the expression "to draw a boundary" (*mtshams gcod-pa*) has the connotation of entering retreat; here, in order to render the wordplay with "boundless" (*mtshams med-pa*), I have chosen to translate the expression literally.

²⁵ Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*, p. 128, n. 19, draws attention to a commentary on these two lines from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, p. 198.4–6: “The [sentence] ‘To draw a boundary in the boundless, Such is a *yogin*’s activity’ signifies that from previously not being endowed with a boundary {such is the meaning of ‘in the [bound-]less’} to later being in a sanctuary, one draws a boundary with respect to the enemies of deteriorations and thoughts and does not travel even if one abides in a township {such is the meaning of ‘to draw a boundary’}: that is the holy deed of a *yogin*.” The Tibetan reads, *mtshams med pa la mtshams gcod pa/ 'di ni rnal 'byor can gyi las/ zhes pa la sogs pa sngar mtshams dang mi ldan* {Gl.: *med pa la*} *pa las phyis dgon par nyams pa'am bsam dgra rnams mtshams gcod pa de grong yul na gnas kyang ma 'drul* {Gl.: *mtshams bcad pa 'di*} *ni rnal 'byor gyi las dam pa'o/*. On *'drul-ba* as signifying “to travel” (*'grul-pa*), see rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 269.

²⁶ Gl. untranslated: *yin/*.

²⁷ Gl.: the *Kun-'dus*.

TN: The *Kun-'dus rig-pa'i mdo* (alias *rDo-rje bkod-pa*) is generally considered to be the root *tantra* of the *Anuyoga* scriptures. See Higgins, *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen*, p. 42.

²⁸ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 405.4.

²⁹ The third-order chiliocosm (*stong-gsum-gyi stong chen-po'i 'jig-rten-gyi kham*s; Skt. *trisāhasra-mahāsāhasra-lokadhātu*) is a concept derived from the *Abhidharma* cosmology, where the universe is divided into three chiliocosms, of which this is the third. The first-order chiliocosm encompasses one thousand worlds, each identically structured, with Mount Meru at the center, surrounded by four major continents and eight subcontinents. The second-order chiliocosm has one thousand times as many worlds as the first, and the third-order chiliocosm has one thousand times as many worlds as the second. See Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, Traduction et Annotations, vol. 2, Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1971, ch. 3, p. 170; Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, pp. 158–160. This is in some way comparable to modern cosmology, where a number of solar systems make up a galaxy (cf. first-order chiliocosm). Galaxies when added up make up local clusters (cf. second-order chiliocosm), which in turn are added up to make a universe (cf. third-order chiliocosm). However, whereas modern cosmology conceives of the universe as the largest

cosmological unit, the *Abhidharma* considers there to be infinite numbers of third-order chiliocosms. Cf. Tony Duff, *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary: Electronic Edition*, Version 5.13, Kathmandu: Padma Karpo Translation Committee, 2006, s.v. *stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams*.

³⁰ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 157.4. For a critical edition and translation, see Gyurme Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, PhD thesis, London: SOAS, University of London, 1987, pp. 186 (Tibetan text), 438 (English translation). The *Guhyagarbha* is the root *tantra* of all the eighteen *Mahāyoga tantras*. Though the lists of these eighteen *tantras* differ among each other, there is nonetheless a high degree of continuity between the enumeration of these scriptures by Klong-chen-pa in the 14th century and their mention in the Dunhuang manuscripts. See van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” pp. 72–74.

³¹ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 798.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 98.

³² Citation untraced in Vimalamitra, *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug rgyud-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 109/dze; and in *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 394–467 (the root text of Vimalamitra's commentary). Nonetheless, in a discussion concerning the outer, inner, secret, and ultra-secret levels of what is meant by a place of retreat, Vimalamitra writes, “The unsurpassed secret [place] is the thoroughly complete place that is the open dimension of phenomena free from all elaborations.” The Tibetan reads, */gsang ba bla na med pa yongs su rdzogs pa'i gnas ni/ chos kyi dbyings spros pa thams cad dang bral ba la bya'o/*. See Vimalamitra, *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug rgyud-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 109/dze, p. 71.5.

³³ Although I use “concentration” to render *ting-nge-'dzin* (Skt. *samādhi*), a more literal translation of the Tibetan term, which nicely captures the thrust of its underlying meaning, would be Guenther's “in-depth appraisal.” Cf. Herbert V. Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity: rDzogs-chen and the New Sciences of Mind*, Boston: Shambhala, 1989, pp. 75, 92. For the etymological justification of the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit *samādhi*, see Michael Hahn, “Miscellanea Etymologica Tibetica: Ting nge 'dzin et alia,” in Brigitte Huber, Marianne Volkart, and Paul Widmer (eds.), *Chomolangma, Demawend und Kasbek: Festschrift für Roland Bielmeier zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, vol. 1, Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2008, pp. 107–118.

³⁴ Gl.: i.e., Vimalamitra's.

³⁵ Citation untraced in Vimalamitra, *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug rgyud-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 109/dze; and in *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 394–467.

³⁶ Gl.: who listen in, are weary, oscillate, and seek profits.

³⁷ Note that *'tshang* (“offensiveness”) is spelled *'tshangs* in both editions of the treatise. *Ya-ga* refers to being charged with a bad reputation without reason, whereas *'tshang* refers to the criticism of one's hidden vices (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

³⁸ Gl.: *sGrub-thabs nges-pa rgyan*.

TN: Here I follow the reading of M 7b.4; note that C 10.3 reads *sGrub-thabs das-pa rgyan*, which appears to be an error. This quote is a contraction of lines found separately in *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu 'phrul drwa-ba gsang-ba thams-cad-kyi me-long zhes-bya-ba'i rgyud*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 558.7, 559.1.

³⁹ Unidentified source. The citation could be found neither in Mañjuśrīmitra, *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag nges-par lung-bstan-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 108/tshe, pp. 386–438; nor in any of the following sources: *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-po-che sgron-ma 'bar-ba'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 5/ca, pp. 267–338; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-chen 'phreng-ba*, in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 659–739; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag khyung-chen lding-ba*, in NGM, vol. 8/nya, pp. 19–22; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag seng-chen mchongs-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 8/nya, pp. 23–25.

⁴⁰ The solitude and fearlessness of the lion is a recurrent theme in Buddhist literature and is already found mentioned in the *Śūraṅgamasamādhi-sūtra* as an analogy for the bodhisattva. See Étienne Lamotte, *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra: The Concentration of Heroic Progress, An Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Scripture*, English translation by Sara Boin-Webb, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003, §10, p. 114.

⁴¹ Gl.: This does not contradict the explanation of the preliminary activities.

⁴² I have emended *gdung-tshab* to *gdung-'tshob*, meaning “successor to one's family”; cf. *bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 350.

⁴³ A fox is used in this example because it leaves its kin in search of food. The example is found in the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 561.3.

⁴⁴ Gl.: being a sentient being.

⁴⁵ The term “those who effect the purpose of wandering beings” (*’gro-ba’i don mdzad-pa*; Skt. *jagadarthakara*) would appear to be a synonym for advanced bodhisattvas. Cf. J.S. Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 2, Sarnath, India: CIHTS, 1993–2005, p. 729; Lokesh Chandra, *Sanskrit-Tibetan Dictionary*, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture / Aditya Prakashan, 2007, p. 235.

⁴⁶ Gl.: i.e., awakening.

⁴⁷ Unidentified source.

⁴⁸ The five strengths (*stobs lnga*) are those of faith (*dad-pa*), of diligence (*brtson-’grus*), of recollection (*dran-pa*), of concentration (*ting-nge-’dzin*), and of sapience (*shes-rab*). See Dung-dkar blo-bzang ’phrin-las, *Bod rig-pa’i tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, pp. 1017–1018.

⁴⁹ Gl.: these are the qualities of the Buddha’s greatness.

⁵⁰ Gl.: The *Tsen-min*, *sTon-mun*, *Mahāyogin*, and *Atiyogin* debate on the commitment not to contradict the eye whose conception is to effect the purpose of sentient beings.

TN: Guenther notes gNubs-chen’s slight preference for the Chinese terms *Tsen-min* and *sTon-mun* for the gradual (*rim-gyis-pa*) and simultaneous (*cig-car-ba*) approaches, respectively. See [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” p. 352. The above are Tibetan phonetic renderings of the Chinese terms *jianmen* [pai] and *dunmen* [pai]. See [Seyfort Ruegg](#), *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism*, p. 63.

⁵¹ Gl.: It might be asked, “Is this here not in contradiction with that commitment?”

⁵² *Rin-po-che kun-’dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 625.1.

⁵³ Gl.: as they are generally taught.

⁵⁴ The three doors (*sgo gsum*) are body, speech, and psyche.

⁵⁵ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *Rin-po-che kun-’dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 624–626.

⁵⁶ Gl.: i.e., the view.

⁵⁷ Gl.: i.e., one should meditate.

⁵⁸ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *Rin-po-che kun-’dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 624–626.

⁵⁹ This is the first of three types of sapience, which are placed in an ascending hierarchy: the sapience of hearing (Skt. *śrutamayī-prajñā*), the sapience of thinking (Skt. *cintamayī-prajñā*), and the sapience of meditation (Skt. *bhāvanāmayī-prajñā*). See Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna*

(*Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra*), vol. 4, Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1976, pp. 1883, 1900.

⁶⁰ While no source could be identified with this name, the quotation is found in the *Guhyagarbha-tantra*: *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 185.3. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 222 (Tibetan text), 865 (English translation).

⁶¹ Gl.: in terms of the view, this is Ratnasambhava.

⁶² *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 612.1–2; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 6–7 (English translation), 41 (commentary).

⁶³ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 611.4.

⁶⁴ *Lang-kar gshegs pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 49, p. 267.1–2 (Tibetan); *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Edited by P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, India: The Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1963, ch. 3, p. 80 (Sanskrit); Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki (tr.), *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra: A Mahāyāna Text*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2009, ch. 3, §76, p. 169 (English translation). This *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* citation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r32.3–4). Regarding this manuscript, which is a compilation of scriptural and other textual materials relating to *Chan*, see Sam van Schaik, “Manuscripts and Practices: Investigating the Tibetan Chan Compendium (P. Tib. 116),” in Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke (eds.), *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016, pp. 287–304.

⁶⁵ Erudition (Skt. *bahuśrutatā*) is extolled in Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya* as being the means to become skilled in the doctrine. See Walpola Rahula (tr.), *Le Compendium de la Super-Doctrine (Philosophie) (Abhidharmasamuccaya) d'Asaṅga*, Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1971, p. 138.

⁶⁶ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *Lang-kar gshegs pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 49, pp. 111–382.

⁶⁷ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 392.1–3.

⁶⁸ See note 6. *Gyi-ling* is a word for “horse” used in the *Khams-pa* dialect (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). Cf. dGe-bshes Chos-kyi grags-pa (attributed to), *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1995, p. 125, which laconically defines *gyi-ling* as “supreme horse” (*rta-mchog*). For more on the

cultural, military, and mythological significance of these horses, see Yancen Diemberger and Hildegard Diemberger, “The Social Life of Excellent Horses (*gyi ling*): A Textual and Ethnographic Exploration,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 49, May 2019, pp. 233–257.

⁶⁹ Since it is different according to whichever vehicle is under consideration.

⁷⁰ Cf. the translation of this section and the following one (§1.5.2 and §1.5.3) in Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 90–96. Karmay includes the parallel passages from O-rgyan gling-pa’s (1323–ca. 1379) treasure, the *Blon-po bka’-thang*, where the passages of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* are reinterpreted quite freely.

⁷¹ “Hwa-shang” is the Tibetan pronunciation of the Chinese term *heshang*, the Chinese equivalent to the Sanskrit *upādhyāya*, meaning “preceptor.” See Seyfort Rugg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism*, p. 56, n. 100.

⁷² Hwa-shang Mahāyāna, a master of the late Northern *Chan* school, played a significant role in the introduction of Chinese *Chan* teachings to Tibet and was held in high esteem by the Tibetan practitioners of *Chan*.

⁷³ Note that only the Tibetan *Cig-car-ba* tradition regarded Hwa-shang Mahāyāna as the seventh patriarch. The first six patriarchs of the Chinese *Chan* tradition are: Bodhidharma (d. ca 530), Huike (487–593), Sengcan (d. ca. 606), Daoxin (580–651), Hongren (601–675), and, as the sixth, Huineng (638–713) according to the Southern, and Shenxiu (605–706) according to the Northern school. Dates supplied, for Bodhidharma, according to John McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch’an Buddhism*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986, p. 18; for the other masters, according to Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, pp. 166–167, 252–253, 256–257, 520, 540–541. For a historical analysis of the lives of these and related figures, see McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 15–56.

⁷⁴ Bodhidharma, the great patriarch of *Chan*, is here called Darmodhāra. In this text he is variously referred to as Dharmora, Bod-de darmotāra, Bodhedarmotara, Dharmodhara, and Darmotara. See Guenther, “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” p. 352. These variants of the name seem to bear witness to a confusion between Bodhidharma and the Kashmiri Dharmatrāta. See Bernard Faure, “Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm,” in *History of Religions*, vol. 25:3, February 1986, pp. 187–198, esp. p. 195.

⁷⁵ As pointed out by [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), p. 94, n. 43, it is probable that this refers to Khri-srong lde'u-btsan since it is known that he had philosophical discussions concerning the simultaneous approach with Hwa-shang Mahāyāna, as well as with other *Chan* masters. Cf. Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa*, pp. 154–155; Paul Demiéville, “Récents Travaux sur Touen-Houang,” in *T'oung Pao*, vol. 56, 1970, pp. 1–95, esp. p. 39. See also the instructions of Cog-ro klu'i rgyal-mtshan to Khri-srong lde'u-btsan recorded in §5.2.1 (C 149.1).

⁷⁶ Gl.: At the time of Glang-dar-ma, because of the obstacles that came toward the venerable Ye-shes dbang-po, the lineage of the instructors of dialectics declined.

TN: For a discussion of the historical problems associated with this gloss, see Introduction, §I.5.4.

⁷⁷ Due to the decline of the lineage for the simultaneous approach in Tibet, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes seems particularly concerned that an accurate understanding of this teaching needs to rely on those still possessing the written documents related to this approach. He therefore advises his readers to be weary of later instructors who presumably were without such written sources.

⁷⁸ On the upper and lower doors, see [Chapter 2](#), note 19.

⁷⁹ Gl.: from 'Bro lHa-bu rin-chen, the [lineage of the] injunctions remains unbroken.

TN: Interestingly, this 'Bro lHa-bu rin-chen appears to be identical to 'Bro (alias 'Brom) Rin-chen 'bar-ba (see [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), p. 210, n. 20), a master in the lineage of the pith instruction section (*man-ngag-sde*) who received the aural lineage from Myang Ting-nge-'dzin. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 556; Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 81. In some accounts, it is dBa' Blo-gros dbang-phyug who transmits the lineage to 'Bro Rin-chen 'bar-ba. Cf. [Nyoshul Khenpo, *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems*](#), p. 84.

⁸⁰ I.e., in [Chapters 4–7](#), each one of these chapters dealing with one of the four meditative traditions.

⁸¹ The Tibetan term *tsha-tsha* refers to cones molded out of clay in which the ashes of the deceased have been mixed. The Tibetan word is probably derived via the Prakrit *sacchāya* or *sacchāha* (the Tibetan lexicons give *sā-tstsha*, *sāccha*) from the Sanskrit *sat-chāya*, glossed in Tibetan as “sacred representation” (*dam-pa'i gzugs-brnyan*). See Giuseppe Tucci, *Stupa: Art, Architectonics and Symbolism*, New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1988, pp. 54–55.

⁸² The expression *nye'u 'don* is somewhat ambiguous in that it could also refer to releasing offenders from imprisonment; cf. [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*](#), p. 183.

⁸³ This refers to practicing many *sādhana*s.

⁸⁴ For a description of the rites of burnt offering (Skt. *homa*) as related to the four tantric activities, see Tadeusz Skorupski, *The Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra: Elimination of All Evil Destinies: Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts with Introduction, English Translation and Notes*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983, pp. 68–72 (English translation), 220–225 (Sanskrit and Tibetan texts). See also the burnt offering rite by Kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas (1813–1899) translated in Tadeusz Skorupski, “Tibetan Homa Rites According to the gTer ma Tradition,” in *The Tibet Journal*, vol. 20:4, Winter 1995, pp. 2–46.

⁸⁵ The following passage may be of interest, taken as it is from gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, p. 203.4–5: “[. . .] Being without attachment to material things, one does not work at contriving one's manner; [even] as the desirable objects encounter mental attachment, one is without the mind of desire; when the meaning of being mentally detached from anything whatsoever dawns, there is contentment [. . .].” The Tibetan reads, [. . .] *zang zing la chags pa med pas tshul bcos mi byed pa dang/ 'dod yul la sems chags shing phrad par 'dod pa'i* {Gl.: *gdung ba med pas*} *sems med pa dang/ sems ci la'ang ma chags pa'i don shar* {Gl.: *bzung*} *bas chog par 'dzin pa dang/ [. . .]*.

⁸⁶ Unidentified source. The citation could be found neither in Mañjuśrīmitra, *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag nges-par lung-bstan-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 108/tshe, pp. 386–438; nor in any of the following sources: *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-po-che sgron-ma 'bar-ba'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 5/ca, pp. 267–338; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-chen 'phreng-ba*, in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 659–739; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag khyung-chen lding-ba*, in NGM, vol. 8/nya, pp. 19–22; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag seng-chen mchongs-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 8/nya, pp. 23–25.

⁸⁷ Unidentified source.

⁸⁸ Unidentified source.

⁸⁹ Again, the example of a fox is used to signify that he retreats from manifold social interaction.

⁹⁰ On the *rGya-lung chen-po* as a corpus of texts associated with Bodhidharma and incorporating teachings from the *Erru sixing lun*

(“Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Types of Conduct”), see Jeffrey Broughton, “Early Ch’an Schools in Tibet,” in Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory (eds.), *Studies in Ch’an and Hua-yen*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985, pp. 1–68, esp. p. 51, n. 9; and Carmen Meinert, “The Conjunction of Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen* Thought: Reflections on the Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts IOL Tib J 689-1 and PT 699,” in Matthew T. Kapstein and Brandon Dotson (eds.), *Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet*, Leiden: Brill, 2007, pp. 239–301, esp. p. 242.

The passage here referred to would seem to be from the aphorisms appended to the *Damo lun*; for translations from the Chinese, see Jeffrey L. Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology: The Earliest Records of Zen*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, p. 24; and Bernard Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma: Première anthologie du bouddhisme chan*, Paris: Éditions Le Mail, 1986, pp. 93–94.

⁹¹ Gl.: It may be asked, “Why does the preceptor explain that it is inappropriate for anyone to attend one during one’s meditation?” It is because everyone has a savage mind and seeks to obtain as much profit and service as possible. Thereby, one’s meditation on the religious path comes to harm, and [people] insistently go about saying that one is related to those one is not related to, and that one is intimate with those one is not intimate with. Whatever they may obtain, they will come looking for one’s foibles.

TN: The expression “profit and service” (*khe-g.yog*) refers to the attachments of the servant and meditator, respectively: the servant tries to acquire as much profit as possible, while the meditator ceaselessly seeks various services from his servant, thereby being distracted from his main purpose (Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin, personal communication).

⁹² This sense for *bshes-pa* is attested in *Chos-kyi grags-pa, brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 896, where it is given as a synonym for *mthun-pa*.

⁹³ Gl.: she is called a “wife” because she is accompanied by the stains of passion, hatred, and stupidity; she is like an inexhaustibly passionate ogress (*srin-mo*; Skt. *rākṣasī*) or like a female serpent-spirit (*klu-mo*; Skt. *nāgā*) in whom pollution and mistakes converge.

TN: The Tibetan term for “wife” is *chung-ma* and literally means “small lady.” For a discussion of the negative attitudes toward female sexuality prevalent in Buddhist cultures, see Serinity Young, *Courtesans and Tantric Consorts: Sexualities in Buddhist Narrative, Iconography, and Ritual*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 100, 181–182, 185.

⁹⁴ Unidentified source. Only the first four lines are found in [dBa' dPal-dbyangs, gCes-pa'i bsdus-pa'i 'phrin-yig](#), in TD, vol. 204, p. 455.4–5; and the first two lines in Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *rGyal-po-la gtam-bya-ba rin-po-che'i phreng-ba* (*Rājaparikathā-ratnāvalī*), in TD, vol. 172, p. 238.7.

⁹⁵ I.e., one's past life.

⁹⁶ Gl.: This is an example of impermanence: previous enjoyments are presently impermanent and nonexistent and will be so, too, in the future: their nature is to be without permanence.

⁹⁷ Gl.: Though one's kin, relatives, etc., are not like enemies, one should not be attached to them.

⁹⁸ This refers to the fact that labels (i.e., the names we attribute to things) do not have any intrinsic nature (*rang-bzhin*; Skt. *svabhāva*) and hence lack a fixed correspondence to the phenomena they are ascribed to. To illustrate this by a common example, although in English we may know what is meant by paper, a non-English speaker will be unaware of the linguistic convention (Skt. *prajñapti*) of ascribing the noun “paper” to the particular phenomenon we choose to designate by this term.

⁹⁹ Gl.: This taming is to be managed individually.

TN: I take *mkhyes-pa* to be an error for *mkhos bgyis-pa*, a misreading presumably based on a contraction in an earlier manuscript copy, possibly the sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī manuscript β; on the latter term, see [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod](#), pp. 65–66.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *Ting-nge-'dzin-gyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 55, pp. 296.2–297.5.

¹⁰¹ There are five (or, adding the knowledge of the exhaustion of the contaminations (Skt. *āsravakṣayajñāna*), six) supracognitions, for which, see [Chapter 5](#), note 252.

¹⁰² *Ting-nge-'dzin-gyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 55, p. 51.6–7; *Samādhirājasūtra*, Edited by P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, India: The Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1961, ch. 5, v. 7, p. 25 (Sanskrit).

¹⁰³ “Void” and “voidness” are used to translate *dben-pa*, which is a near-synonym for *stong-pa* (Skt. *sūnya*: “empty”).

¹⁰⁴ For a brief description of the view of the *Sautrāntika Mādhyamikas*, see [Chapter 4](#), note 1.

¹⁰⁵ Gl.: Reified entities [appear] due to the assembling of the four conditions.

TN: The four conditions are as follows: (1) The causal condition (*rgyu'i rkyen*; Skt. *hetu-pratyaya*) refers, technically speaking, to five types of causes (viz., the co-occurring cause, the homologous cause, the concomitant cause, the ubiquitous cause, and the cause of maturation). It designates the root springs of action in cyclic existence, these springs being the three poisons of passion, hatred, and stupidity.

(2) The immediate condition (*de-ma-thag-pa'i rkyen*; Skt. *samanantara-pratyaya*) refers to the mind and mental events that immediately precede (Skt. *anantara*) and are equal to (Skt. *sama*), in the sense of being of the same type as, a subsequent moment of consciousness.

(3) The referential condition (*dmigs-pa'i rkyen*; Skt. *ālambana-pratyaya*) can refer to all phenomena since they all can be an object of consciousness. For example, visual consciousness has as its referential condition all visual objects, i.e., the constituent of form. Even if an object is not referentially imaged (*dmigs-pa*; Skt. *ālambyate*) by consciousness, it is still a reference since its nature remains the same, just as a combustible is always a combustible, whether or not it is being burned.

(4) The ruling condition (*bdag-pa'i rkyen*; Skt. *adhipati-pratyaya*) refers to the instrumental cause (Skt. *kāraṇa-hetu*); for example, in the production of the various consciousnesses, the visual faculty is the ruling condition for the production of the visual consciousness. Its task (Skt. *kāritra*) consists in not obstructing a past, present, or future phenomenon. Hence, its purpose is to account for a condition's continued existence after it has produced an effect due to other conditions, such as the causal condition mentioned earlier. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 1, ch. 2, pp. 299–309; cf. also David J. Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994, pp. 148–149.

The above sentence (C 22.2–3) seems to be incomplete since 'dus appears quite out of place. Therefore, the above rendering is tentative at best. I have provisionally emended *bsngo-ba* to *dnegos-po*, as this allows for a reasonably meaningful sentence and suits the context of the passage.

¹⁰⁶ The eight elaborated limitations are production (*skye-ba*), cessation (*'gog-pa*), permanence (*rtag-pa*), nihility (*chad-pa*), going (*'gro-ba*), coming (*'ong-ba*), singularity (*don-gcig*), and difference (*tha-dad-pa*). See Nor-brang o-rgyan (ed.), *Chos-rnam kun-btus*, vol. 2, Beijing: Krung-go'i bod-rig-pa dpe-skrun-khang, 2008, p. 1848.

¹⁰⁷ The three limitations are the limitation of eternalism and nihilism (*rtag-chad-kyi mtha'*), the limitation of existence and nonexistence (*yod-med-kyi mtha'*), and the limitation of dualistically grasping at emptiness and appearance (*snang-stong gnyis-'dzin-gyi mtha'*). See [Nor-brang orgyan](#), *Chos-rnam kun-btus*, vol. 1, p. 294. An alternative list of three elaborations is found in §4.2.2.2 (C 73.2–3): elaboration of meaning, conceptual elaboration, and verbal elaboration.

¹⁰⁸ Gl.: Thereby, [one's weariness] is dispelled.

¹⁰⁹ The term *lhag-pa'i rnal-'byor*, translated here as “Eminent Yoga,” renders the Sanskrit *adhiyoga*.

2

Getting Ready

[C 23.4–45.6; M 16b.4–31b.3]

2.1. The lineages of the various approaches

When approaching absolute meaningfulness after having finished all the activities that are thus to be performed, the system of the causal vehicle itself [distinguishes between] the particulars of both sharp and obtuse faculties: to these correspond the gradual and simultaneous approaches, respectively.

As for the gradual approach, the philosophical texts of the Indian instructor Kamalaśīla, being *sūtras* of provisional meaning (Skt. *neyārtha*), are texts that are not thoroughly complete.

As for the simultaneous approach, the lineage is from Kāśyapa and the instructor Bodhidharma. It came from the east¹ after Bodhidharma had crossed the ocean [from India]. He went to Led-kug² in China, and [24] the Chinese lord Se'u-yan³ encountered the preceptor there. The latter knew that the Chinese lord did not understand absolute truth. Returning from the castle,⁴ he went ahead on the river, whereupon the mendicants Kha-shi, Li'u-ci, and Kwa-na-hong⁵ became jealous. Li'u-ci⁶ failed to

affect the preceptor despite administering poison to him six times earlier and later.⁷ Having found a location where he could entrust [to others] the doctrine to be instigated, [Bodhidharma] revealed the manner of passing away in China. Even after he had {died and} been buried in his grave, a merchant called 'Un,⁸ who had gone from India in the upper direction [of China], encountered the instructor Bodhidharma on the Ra-ma-ting pass. [Bodhidharma] bore a single boot in his hand. There he counseled him in detail and, when he had returned to China, ['Un] minutely related their exchange. When [the Chinese] looked at the open grave, there was nothing but a single boot [left there]. Everyone said, "He is a noble one!"⁹ The texts of Hwa-shang Mahāyāna,¹⁰ the last in this lineage, [teach] the simultaneous approach and are texts from the *sūtras* which are thoroughly complete.

Furthermore, when one enters the *Mahāyoga* of the inner *Mantrayāna* and the *Atiyoga*, one should obtain the pith instructions. [25]

2.2. Obtaining the means

Moreover, we may, for the time being, distinguish [their means] as follows:

2.2.1. The means of the gradual approach

As for the *Tsen-min* [i.e., the gradual approach], the means that are obtained are examining the conscious continuum [on the basis of] calm abiding,¹¹ {whereby,

however great the afflictions, kindness, and so forth, are their antidotes}, and calm abiding that is easy in terms of familiarization, etc.

2.2.2. The means of the simultaneous approach

As for the *sTon-mun* [i.e., the simultaneous approach], one obtains the means of familiarizing oneself from the very beginning with the absolute truth, which is unborn and without action. However, while this may be its means, it is not called a great means.

It may be asked, “What is a great means?” [It is replied that] there are two: a means with support and a means without action.

2.2.3. The means of *Mahāyoga*

Among these, the means of *Mahāyoga* are with support; for example, poison itself, when scrutinized, becomes the supreme medicine. [These means] are [subdivided into those that are] outer and inner.

2.2.3.1. The outer [means consist] of many special means¹² that are infused in the intellect from the paths of hearing and thinking, and of those that effect non-imaging by depending on syllables. One should know the [relevant] texts.

2.2.3.2. The inner [means] have two [subdivisions]:

2.2.3.2.1. The instructions on concentration that depend on the channels, lights, and seminal nuclei encompass the four means¹³ to meditate on the eight channels in the secret place {in the heart},¹⁴ as well as [26] the many pith instructions for the moment of

passing away concerning the awakened bodies and lights. Having gradually completed these and supremely gladdened {one's instructor}, one requests that the retreat boundaries be fervently drawn.

2.2.3.2.2. Concerning the dependence on a consort {of activity}, one should search for a lady with all the characteristics,¹⁵ endowed with the [facial signs of] moon and sun. Having found her, one should complete the outer phases [of seducing her]¹⁶ and abide on the generation [of the three notions].¹⁷ Once one has obtained the secret empowerment,¹⁸ one abides on the above instructions {which concern the upper door}.¹⁹ Depending on these, one enters into and examines the subtle activities.²⁰ Depending on this, one enters the great bliss. Once one has attained the follow-up yoga {i.e., the bliss of the activity-consort}, even should one be free from the *mudrā* of the basis,²¹ there is no deterioration [of one's experience of bliss].²² There is no need to exert oneself even at meditation. One should be diligent in great equanimity.

Both these means have the taste of the world {i.e., attachment} and the taste of transcendence {i.e., the inseparability of bliss and emptiness}. Therefore, one should veritably examine {whatever is} one's experience and apply the meaning of hearing and thinking. In this regard, it is said in the *Zla-gsang thig-le*,²³

[27] Where there is no passion, there is no enlightenment;
Where there is no enlightenment, there is no passion;
All is accomplished through genuine union;
Without union, there are no accomplishments.

And,²⁴

By entering into and engaging with the cause of anguish,
The great release occurs of itself,
Like the mud-born lotus-flower;
This is the vehicle of the great means, supreme among
vehicles.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* also says,²⁵

The great wisdom difficult to gain
Is accomplished by depending on sapience and means.

Furthermore,²⁶

The vowels and consonants²⁷ are revealed as profound:
As *A*²⁸ and its elaborate ancillaries,
The beautiful *TA* and *PA*,
The profundity of the Buddha's speech occurs
Throughout the scope of the entire world.

2.2.4. The means of the Great Completeness

Now, it may be asked, “Are there any means relied upon in the Great Completeness?” [It is replied that] although they do not represent the intent of the textual tradition of the Great Completeness, [means as such] do not inhibit realization since they have been transmitted for the time being as part of the same lineage. Hence, it is said in the *bDud-rtsi chen-po'i rgyud*,²⁹

There are *tantras*, authoritative scriptures, and pith instructions,
[Corresponding to] the styles of menials, gentlemen, and kings [respectively];
[. . .] [28] In the single state of mutual dependency,
If one is absent, the other aspects are entirely absent too.

As for this system of the Eminent Yoga, it is said,³⁰

The teaching of the aural lineage penetrates [to the core of] the mind.

The pith instructions of the hearing lineage are spoken orally merely through [offering] gold and turquoise. Carrying in one's hands a load of brocade and variously gladdening him, one should request [from one's master the pith instructions] in a solitary place, unperceived even by gods and ghosts. Furthermore, in this system, which is the means without support, [a means] such as [that where the various] wisdoms are produced from each of the causes that are passion, hatred, etc.,³¹ is not [considered] supreme among means.

Here, all designations [abide in] self-originated wisdom. Though one might examine the limits of a single sesame seed [trying thereby to determine the quantity of oil it contains], limits cannot be found in the expanse of wisdom, since, being without size, it is suffused and pervaded by great wisdom.³² By not depending on any position, everything is the path; whatever is seen, heard, tasted, smelt, or touched is vivid natural clarity in the expanse of self-originated wisdom. On this point, [one should see] the previously

quoted authoritative injunctions of the *Nam-mkha'-che*, as well as the *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, which says,³³ [29]

However many variegated phenomena appear, as well as
All designations, are all the path of supreme enlightenment.

The *Kun-la 'jug-pa* states,³⁴

If one enters the path where there is utter purity of the five afflictions³⁵ and five boundless deeds,³⁶ one attains [the stage of] the king of equality.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* says extensively,³⁷

The abode of hell itself is the unsurpassed path [. . .].

The *Chos-kyi me-long* declares,³⁸

The condition of desiring to see the secret spell (Skt. *guhyamantra*) becomes a mirror in which everything [is reflected]. Everything, from the Buddha to sickly creatures, from the sky to particles of dust, is made clear—still, obvious, and conspicuous.³⁹ Doubts are cut through; one becomes [like] a sacred treasury and a great book. One explains extensively and one's thorough understanding is renowned.

Here there is no dependence on the afflictions. Apart from the expanse of great wisdom, there is no seeking for another path. [30] It is taught just as {was heard} previously when cutting through one's doubts.

2.3. The four compatible reliances

Concerning the compatible reliances,⁴⁰ there are four: reliance on an experienced companion;⁴¹ reliance by the

[practitioner of the] inner [vehicle]⁴² on a consort endowed with the [required] signs; reliance on religious books⁴³ that are compatible with one's thinking; and reliance on a delightful servant.

2.3.1. The master

As for the dear companion⁴⁴ endowed with experience {in the pith instructions}, the preceptor dPal-dbyangs says {in his *Zhus-lan*},⁴⁵

Rectification in accord with the unmistakable meaning is veritably valuable for the intelligent.

An instructor endowed with experience of the intent, who has obtained the empowerments and pith instructions related to the sources and whose supreme intent is connected to absolute meaningfulness, seizes his disciple's experiential warmth and is expert at rectifying the mind. The *rTsal-chen* declares,⁴⁶

The precious instructor, who applies black vitriol on gold,⁴⁷
Is worthy of being redeemed at unfathomable value.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,⁴⁸ [31]

The adamantine instructor, the master,
Is the path's hallmark—a preceptor, a virtuous friend, and a
warden;
A precious lamp eliminating darkness;
What the psychic consciousness is to the eye-faculty which
sees;
A boat which liberates from the unfordable river;
A dependable castle for the frightened great fortress;
The supreme medicine that removes the illness of cyclic
existence.
The holy master is a helmsman,
Who takes us to the precious island:
This should be known with certainty at the outset!

Therefore, since such qualities are beneficial to oneself,
one should be owned [by such a one]. Furthermore,⁴⁹

The nature of the holy master is thus:
His mind is sensible and his morality limpid;
His intelligence immeasurably vast;
Always upright, he is endowed with patience to endure
contrary conditions;
His sincere conduct is without guile.
To all endangered sentient beings,
He provides with skillful means the various fearlessnesses.⁵⁰
A force-endowed hero, his diligence is great.
[Thanks to him,] the knowable objects occur for everyone
According to their desires.
Though implored by existence, he knows no exhaustion.
Examining him, his qualities eventually occur [in oneself].
He speaks the truth and his words do not change,
[32] Acting according to whatever he says.
With regard to positive and negative deeds,
He is without grasping at the conceptions of likes and
dislikes.
Like the lion, the king of wild animals,
He is majestic and does not enter resplendent domains.
He relinquishes activities which are lowly frivolities,
Examining such whereabouts as are free from prancing
about⁵¹ and distraction.⁵²
He dwells alone, like the lion's cub;
The edge of the wilderness and a solitary path
Are worthy for the holy one thus endowed.

One should search for a master endowed with the qualities thus taught. Even should he not be endowed with all [these qualities], if one searches for one whose nature is good and intent is profound, there will be no mistake on the path to release. If one does not find such a master, one should seek out an experienced companion. If, because of his high status, one relies on a defective person acting as an instructor, who mistakenly flees from evil words while repelling the above qualities, this should be assessed.⁵³ It is said that⁵⁴

[Regarding] the instructor who has not reached the valid
criteria,
One ends up realizing that one is on a mistaken path,
depending on a monkey's authoritative scripture.

Van Schaik suggests that the scriptures (*āgama*) and pith instructions by dPal-dbyangs and other such figures were originally written as commentaries to *tantras* (e.g., the *Guhyagarbha*), focusing on ideas of spontaneous presence (*lhun-grub*) and alpha-purity (*ka-dag*), and later developed into the literature of the mind series (*sems-sde*). See [van Schaik, “The Early Days of the Great Perfection,”](#) pp. 194–195. For a discussion of this and other theories on the formation of *rDzogs-chen*, see also [Esler, “The Origins and Early History of rDzogs chen,”](#) pp. 43–47.

2.3.2. The consort

{Secondly,} a *Mahāyogin* may rely on a consort: he should rely on [a lady] from one of the distinguished families⁵⁵ who is endowed with the qualities described in the numerous tantric texts; whose general conduct is leisurely; [33] who, when strolling, has smooth steps; who is resplendent; whose desire for objects is slight; whose face and body are delightful; whose perfume is sweet; who has relinquished lies, slander, and aggressiveness; who is not weary of repeating [the spell] to its full measure;⁵⁶ whose mind is peaceful, leisurely, and gallant; whose sapience is astute and whose afflictions are slight; whose longing is great; who has all the secret signs; whose supreme lust is great and whose

shame is slight; and who is expert in the particulars of the means of union.

2.3.3. The books

{Thirdly,} as for the books compatible [with one's thinking], there are those by Kamalaśīla, [Hwa-shang] Mahāyāna's [texts on] contemplation, as well as [those concerning] the profound position of the Inner Yoga. The eminent *yogin*⁵⁷ relies on the *Klong-drug*, the *bZhi-phrugs*,⁵⁸ the *De-kho-na nyid-kyid rgyud-drug*, the twenty or eighteen minor texts of the mind [orientation],⁵⁹ and so forth.

2.3.4. The servant

{Fourthly,} as for relying on a servant, [his] place can be annexed far or near. If far, it is possible that the obstacle of illness occurs, in which case a pair [of servants] may also be suitable. If his place is close, one [servant is enough]. Moreover,⁶⁰

He [i.e., the servant] should have great fortitude to endure
saggy shabbiness,
Be loyal and speak little.
He should be sincere, gallant and grateful to work calmly;
[34] Persevering, his everyday speech should be veritably
valuable.
If one relies on someone who, while he likes to prance about
small lanes, [engages in] much talk;
Lacks diligence, hides [when there is work], is heavy and a
little shabby;
Is cowardly, unaffectionate, and talkative,
It is a cause for obstacles to occur.
[Such a one] should be removed from the root, like poison in
a garden.

This was said by the Nepali king Vasudhara.⁶¹

2.4. Taking care of one's body

2.4.1. The means of repelling contrary conditions

Concerning the means of repelling contrary conditions, according to the *bDud-rtsi chen-po'i rgyud*,⁶² one should search for and hoard a dagger to repel enemies and obstructors;⁶³ bdellium,⁶⁴ white mustard seed, and so forth; many medicines to repel illness; medicinal and therapeutic⁶⁵ documents; moxa;⁶⁶ a lancet;⁶⁷ and the special spells of esoteric science⁶⁸ that expel illnesses. One should also hoard weapons to repel the tax collectors [who cause] obstacles. It is said in a *sūtra*,⁶⁹

That one may rear weapons in order to guard one's retinue and body —this has been imparted by the Hallowed One. Yet he has declared that one should not hit.

This being the case, one will not be injured by enemies. Since people's conduct nowadays is veritably anguishing, [35] even those meditating on the path hoard [weapons to discourage people of evil intention]. However, one should not jab anyone while under the power of the afflictions.

2.4.2. The requisites

As for one's requisites, by generally being content with food for one's livelihood {, a soft cushion [made with] 9 inches⁷⁰ of cotton cloth,} and one's bedding, one should not be attached to [anything else]. In the instructions it is stated,⁷¹

One should not adorn the body and should eat cautiously in the morning and evening.

Therefore, one should rely on [food] that is nutritious. It may be asked, "Why is this necessary?" It is in order to sustain this boat that is the body. For example, just as at the time of crossing a river, one is conveyed to the yonder shore by the great boat that is the support of the body, so, by depending on the human body endowed with pleasures and assets,⁷² one will climb up⁷³ to the rank of release. Therefore, the body should be thought of as being similar to a boat. It is thought of in accordance with the words of dBa' dPal-dbyangs:⁷⁴

When the body is assumed to be a boat,
One is conveniently conveyed to the yonder shore
And climbs up to the rank of release.

There are ten assets (*'byor-pa bcu*), of which five pertain to oneself: (1) having a perfect human body, (2) being born in a country where [the Buddhist] doctrine is taught, (3) having five sense-faculties working perfectly, (4) not having committed any of the five boundless sins of immediate retribution, and (5) having faith. Five of these assets pertain to others: (6) that a perfect Buddha has appeared in the world, (7) that he has taught the doctrine, (8) that his teaching be preserved until the present, (9) that there are masters capable of transmitting the doctrine, and (10) that these constantly have kindness and compassion toward others. See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, pp. 160, 165. For traditional Tibetan expositions of this important theme, see [Patrul Rinpoche, *Le Chemin de la Grande Perfection*](#), pp. 21–39; and Tülku Tsullo, *Manuel de la Transparution Immédiate*, Traduction, présentation et notes de Stéphane Arguillère, Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2016, pp. 89–97.

2.4.3. Physical treatments

Concerning the extensive [physical] treatments,⁷⁵ they are constantly to take baths, not to carelessly equalize heat and cold,⁷⁶ not to stay where one feels uncomfortable, to massage one's body with ointments, [36] to balance out fatigue and tiresome conduct, to stroll at a moderate pace,⁷⁷ not to give in to excessive quantities of food and broth or anything that is incompatible [with one's constitution],⁷⁸ and so on. Thereby contrary conditions [affecting one's body] are

repelled. Yet again, one should not hoard [these treatments]. Though one might honor the body like that for a while, by recalling the meaning of the view one should not become attached to this.⁷⁹

2.5. The defects and qualities

2.5.1. The defects

Regarding the defect of not meditating, it is said in the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*,⁸⁰

If a *yogin* is without this contemplation,
He is like a boulder in the middle of the ocean.
Even if he engages in the door to the unfathomable,
The heart, meaningless, dries out.

The *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* states,⁸¹

Just as some, strengthless, are forcefully
Carried away by a stream,
And dry out and die,
Such is non-meditated doctrine.

Just as one may provide food and drink
To many wandering beings,
Yet oneself die of hunger,
Such it is not to have meditated on the doctrine.

Just as some physicians,
While giving away all their medicine,
Die of food poisoning,
Such it is not to have meditated on the doctrine.

[37] Just as⁸² one may count the many precious things
In the treasuries of riches,
Yet not obtain even a half a dime,⁸³
Such it is not to have meditated on the doctrine.

Just as one may be born a retainer in a royal palace
Endowed with all comfort,
Yet not have food and clothing,
Such it is not to have meditated.

Just as a deaf musician,
Skilled in cymbals and song,
Will please others [yet not himself],
Such it is not to have meditated.

Just as a blind painter,
Though he be instigated to draw in the middle of a
marketplace,
Will himself not see a thing,
Such it is not to have meditated.

Just as a ferryman on the great sea
May save many people,
Yet himself die in a river,
Such it is not to have meditated on the doctrine.

Just like one who always describes the sublime
To the many on the paths' crossroads,
Yet has not imaged it himself,⁸⁴
Such it is not to have meditated on the doctrine.

The authoritative scriptures say,⁸⁵

Without the sapiential eye of having meditated one-
pointedly,
[38] Like a blind man who cannot journey, however much
one engages in virtue,
It is impossible to reach one's abode unless one has good
eyes and is able to take the path.⁸⁶

Like a lion who has not been liberated from his iron cage,
Need not [try to] jump or run though he can roar,
So, if one is not liberated by having meditated one-
pointedly,
It is impossible to attain release by vouching for words.

If great warmth does not come, it is impossible to produce a
harvest.
Similarly, without the warmth of having meditated one-
pointedly,
It is impossible to produce the harvest of awakened bodies
and wisdoms
In what is called the dry plain and arid wilderness of words.

For example, as even a merchant who journeys abroad
Relinquishes if he gains neither goods nor wealth,
So, without the goods and wealth of having meditated in
concentration,
The wealth of a virtuous body and speech will fall to cyclic
existence.⁸⁷

It is said in the '*Phrul-gyi me-long*,⁸⁸

For example, a *yogin* who has listened to and explained [the doctrine] but does not meditate is just like some people who, having exerted themselves until depletion in agricultural work, toss away the crop. For instance, like some sick person who, having searched with difficulty for a physician's remedy, has it prepared [39] and acquires it, but fails to listen to the words of his doctor and to take the medicine, and dies, so it is with a *yogin* who, after searching for and listening to the means of meditation, does not meditate; he dies in cyclic existence. For instance, some people dehydrate and die in the middle of the ocean; it is likewise with those who, having heard the doctrine, do not meditate on it.⁸⁹ For instance, as a naughty shammer,⁹⁰ despite much happy fickle mouthing, is of no benefit when it comes to sating [anyone], so one skilled in listening and explaining, though he may describe the qualities of meditation, fails to obtain the fruition if he does not meditate.

As an example, one knowing the path which takes you to a treasure of jewels, though he explains that path, is incapable of eliminating his poverty without going there. Similarly, though a person may speak about the evocations because of his craving for words, he is incapable of eliminating his poverty with regard to the doctrine if he does not meditate. For example, just as hired laborers may count the wealth of the nobleman's treasury, yet have no means of enjoying it themselves, so those skilled at explaining and their listeners may talk for eons about the means and qualities of accomplishing enlightenment, yet, [40] if they do not meditate, be without the fruition of enlightenment [. . .].

So it is stated extensively in many injunctions.

2.5.2. The qualities

Once one knows such defects, the qualities of meditating are spoken of in the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*:⁹¹

Just like the powerful wheel-wielding monarch,
 So contemplation wields power over of all phenomena.
 Therefore, one should implement this sacred contemplation.

The *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu-'phrul drwa-ba* states,⁹²

Just as illumination originates from darkness,
Such is the manner of medicine and of alchemical
transformation.

[. . .] Concentration wields the power of realization.

Whether healing or killing, defeat or victory,⁹³

Whether summoning or sending off, binding or liberating,⁹⁴

[All these activities] are performed by concentration.

And,⁹⁵

All activities and accomplishments are declared to be accomplished
through concentration.

Also, the authoritative scriptures {i.e., the
Kāśyapaparivarta} say,⁹⁶

For an individual meditating on the meaning of the
Mahāyāna,
Even if at present the fruition [of enlightenment] does not
actually appear,
As soon as he is free from the net of his dismal suffering
body, [41]
He will gradually obtain the fruition of release.

For instance, though the young of the *garuḍa* and lion
Are without an apparent form when looked upon at present,
As soon as they are free from the womb and the egg's
cavity,
They actually appear as a *garuḍa* and lion [respectively].

Once the king's seed has been discharged,
Whether the mother be the royal queen or an illicit
maidservant, his desirable form,
Obscured by the womb, does not appear immediately;
Yet when free from the womb, his royalty becomes
apparent.⁹⁷

Likewise, even an individual having meditated on the
Mahāyāna
Is obscured by the net of his dismal maturation body,
So that the indications and signs [of realization] do not
clearly appear at present;
Nevertheless, when free from this dismal body, the fruition
is gradually accomplished.

Even⁹⁸ if a king sleeps with a dismal maidservant,
When she becomes pregnant and the embryo is begotten,
The force of hope is born among the gods,
And when free from the womb, all can see his royal body:

Once born, he is the backing of all and has a troop's
capacity.
Similarly, an individual having meditated on the *Mahāyāna*,
Though presently without the indications and signs, as soon
as he is free from his dismal body,

The fruition appears and he becomes the warden and refuge of all.

[42] For example,⁹⁹ the cuckoo's¹⁰⁰ chick too
Does not actually appear whilst obscured by the egg;
However, from within the egg it proclaims its profound cry,
And, when free from the egg's shell, it actually appears.

Similarly, for an individual having meditated on the
Mahāyāna,
Though the indications and signs [of realization] may not
actually appear in this life,
By one-pointedly meditating on the words of the *Mahāyāna*
He will obtain the fruition when free from his dismal
body.¹⁰¹

An egg is alike in its outward form—
No distinction appears till it is broken.
Even if it is broken, there is no chick without the egg being
marred;¹⁰²
But once it has been marred, a chick appears when the egg is
broken.

Likewise, even if there is no distinction until the human
body dies,
After death there is no enlightenment for him who has not
meditated;
Yet having meditated, at death enlightenment is gradually
accomplished.
Therefore, one should exert oneself in thinking and
meditating.

Moreover, donating as gifts numerous heaps
Of jewels and wealth to all sentient beings without
exception,
As many as there are grains of sand in the Ganges,
Does not compete with the merit of the aggregate of
concentration.¹⁰³

[43] One might add up the merit of rescuing from death the
lives

Of all wandering beings without exception, as many
As may be filling the three realms,
Yet the merit of meditating one-pointedly is superior.

Likewise, filling a *stūpa* with the seven precious things¹⁰⁴
Such as gold, silver, crystal, beryl, etc.¹⁰⁵
[Found] throughout the chiliocosms,
Does not compete with one hundred-thousandth [of the
merit] of this royal concentration.¹⁰⁶

However extensive is the merit
Of donating one's body to as many beings
As there are [grains of sand] in the Ganges,
It does not come near to one hundred-thousandth [of the
merit] of meditating in concentration.

Likewise, however many heaps of merit
Of accruing virtue for eons there may be,
They do not even touch one ten millionth
Of the virtue of meditating in concentration.

Since even Māra does not steal uncontaminated virtue,
one should assimilate that it is peerless. It is veritably
valuable. Therefore, the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*
states,¹⁰⁷

For example, those who take riches from the ocean
Accomplish [their task] by practicing in the midst of
difficulties:

A host of various sufferings [caused by] a density of
Serpents, crocodiles, bees, and so forth.

[44] Likewise, if a *yogin* searching for bliss
Practices the difficult activities that conquer
The enemies of concepts, sinking, and distraction,
He will obtain bliss.

It is very valuable that one should become accustomed
To practicing concentration.

This is dealt with extensively in many injunctions. Please exhort them to meditate. At a future time, please posit this in the hearts of those emulating yoga. In this regard, when meditating, just as the sun is obscured even by white clouds, let alone by black ones, so even religious conduct [consisting of] utterly white activities is an obscuration. Therefore, giving up righteousness, one should rest in equilibrium.¹⁰⁸

This is spoken of extensively in the *sūtras*. Those with small, as well as those with great intellects, who are on the Buddhist vehicle and have not previously trained in meditation, will become distracted by outer [appearances]. Therefore, in terms of conduct, one should only be engrossed in meditation. In the *Sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud* it is said that¹⁰⁹

Resting in equilibrium is equal to the roots of virtue
compounded
From [building] *stūpas*, shrines, and so forth.

[45] The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,¹¹⁰

The *yogin* of non-action
Should neither perform the activity of [building] *stūpas*,
Nor should he read volumes [of scriptures].
He should neither undertake to make [sacred]
representations,
Nor should he perform the emblematic gestures (*phyag-
rgya*; Skt. *mudrā*).
His speech's repetition [of spells (Skt. *mantra*)] is an
obscuration for him.¹¹¹
The *yogin*'s body should not prostrate.
He does not look for gain and honor:¹¹²
Neither for profit nor for renown,
Nor for any other purpose, is he distracted by outer
[appearances].
It is veritably due to distraction
That one is not close to it [i.e., the abiding mode (*gnas-
lugs*)].
Hence, this body should be left to utterly abide.

Once all this is told, it may be said, “This is being constrained to defects.” [It is replied that] here, defects are not insistently obstructed. He who rests in equanimity is greatly indissociable from the great meaning. Therefore, his conduct non-obstructed, he is without causes [of sin] to cleanse and engages [in conduct] without imaging.

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the second chapter, which teaches obtaining the means {whose cause are the pith instructions}, the compatible reliances, and the defects and qualities.

¹ I.e., from China to Tibet. Note that this reverses the classical idiom concerning “Bodhidharma’s coming from the west” (i.e., from India to China).

² Probably Luoyang.

³ I.e., Xiao Yan, Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (464–549 ce), whom Bodhidharma is held to have met.

⁴ I have emended *mkhar-lag* to *mkhar-log*, as the former reading is nonsensical.

⁵ Li’u-ci refers to Bodhiruci (d. 527 or 535 ce), an Indian translator of Buddhist texts (notably of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*) into Chinese, and Kwa-na-hong to Guangtong. Cf. Faure, “Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm,” p. 196. On Bodhiruci’s legacy as a translator, see Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, *Le Canon Bouddhique en Chine: Les traducteurs et les traductions*, vol. 1, Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1927, pp. 252–260. It is unclear who is being referred to by Kha-shi; perhaps Dharmaruci, a translator from South India active during the same period (i.e., 501–507 ce, on whom see *ibid.*, pp. 246–247), although the latter is not usually associated with the story of Bodhidharma. Another possibility, based purely on the phonetic resemblance of the name, would be Dharmarakṣa (ca. 230–308 ce), though his dates make this historically impossible and would suggest an amalgamation of several personages having the same name. On Dharmarakṣa, see *ibid.*, pp. 83–114; his dates are proposed in Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, p. 182.

⁶ Here spelt Li-ci.

⁷ For Shenqing’s (d. 814 ce) criticism of the story of Bodhidharma’s poisoning, see Wendi L. Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Context*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, p. 279.

⁸ The merchant’s name in Chinese is Song Yun. Born in Dunhuang toward the end of the 5th century, Song Yun was sent by his government to the surrounding Buddhist countries so as to bring back Buddhist scriptures. It is said that on the way back, he met Bodhidharma, who was returning to India. See Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, pp. 573–574.

⁹ On the story of the open grave, see *ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁰ It should be noted that according to the *gTad-rgya lnga’i go-don-gyi brjed-byang-gi ’grel-pa* (a 14th-century biographical source studied by Dalton), Hwa-shang Mahāyāna was one of Sangs-rgyas ye-shes’

teachers. See Dalton, “Lost and Found,” pp. 48 (English translation), 52 (Tibetan text).

¹¹ “Examining the conscious continuum” corresponds to insight (*vipaśyanā*) and is to be practiced on the basis of calm abiding (Skt. *śamatha*).

¹² Gl.: being free from an objective scope, conceptions are not produced inherently.

¹³ Gl.: the “wheel of the doctrine” (*chos-’khor*; Skt. *dharmacakra*), and so on.

TN: In the spiritual anatomy envisaged in tantric practice, the four wheels (*’khor-lo*; Skt. *cakra*) are energy centers located along the central channel. They are nexuses where many of the subtle channels converge on the forehead, throat, heart (i.e., the center of the chest), and navel. The “wheel of the doctrine” refers to the heart nexus.

¹⁴ This gloss reads “in the heart” (*snying-gar*), and the heart—being the seat of the mind—is indeed sometimes referred to as a “secret place.” Nevertheless, this could be an error or a later interpolation since usually the term “secret place” (*gsang-ba’i gnas*) refers to the genital area, where the eight major channels are said to converge (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). A possible source for the confusion could lie in the fact that the heart nexus is similarly described as having eight major channels (Dr. Cathy Cantwell, personal communication).

¹⁵ The consort should be sixteen, twenty, or twenty-five years of age. These age requirements are discussed in Young, *Courtesans and Tantric Consorts*, pp. 140–141.

¹⁶ This refers to phases in the seduction of the consort, which are described at some length in tantric texts. We may also assume that this comprises the various phases involved in training the consort, including explaining the doctrine and imparting the required empowerments. Cf. bDud-’joms ’Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *Zab-lam mkha’-’gro thugs-thig-gi rim-gnyis-kyi khrid-yig dngos-grub ’dod-’jo*, in *The Collected Writings and Revelations of H.H. bDud-’joms Rin-po-che ’Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje*, vol. 16/ma, Kalimpong, India: Dupjung Lama, 1979–1985, pp. 371–461, esp. p. 426. For a translation and edition of this text, see Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments: Directives for the Two Phases of the Profound Path of the Khandro Thugthig*, Khye’u-chung Lotsāpa Translations, Edited by Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, Translated by Dylan Esler, Norderstedt, Germany: BoD, 2015, p. 65.

¹⁷ The three notions (*'du-shes*) are those of the *yogin* as a blood-drinker (*khrag-'thung*; Skt. *heruka*), his consort as a goddess, and their sexual union as an act of worship.

¹⁸ Although the term “secret empowerment” (*gsang-ba'i dbang*; Skt. *guhyābhiṣeka*) often refers to the second of the four tantric empowerments, here it designates more generally both the second and third empowerments—the former because it is the root of all the yogas of the completion stage, and the latter because it concerns the actual practice of sexual yoga. On the early development of the categories of tantric empowerment, see Jacob Dalton, “The Development of Perfection: The Interiorization of Buddhist Ritual in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries,” in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32:1, 2004, pp. 1–30, esp. pp. 21–26.

¹⁹ The upper door (*steng-sgo*) refers to the practice of inner heat, called the “ferocious heat” (*gtum-mo*; Skt. *caṇḍālī*), whereas the lower door (*'og-sgo*) concerns the practice of the channels, winds, and seminal nuclei (*rtsa rlung thig-le*), which prepares one for sexual yoga proper and is received in the course of the third empowerment.

²⁰ This refers to the increased prolongation of sexual union, effected by the *yogin*'s ability to withhold ejaculation. Thereby bliss pervades the entire body, which is accompanied by a sensation of “tickling” (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

²¹ The *mudrā* of the basis is one's physical consort. When one has become expert in sexual yoga, one continuously experiences bliss, so that it is no longer necessary to rely on a physical consort (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

²² The practice of sexual yoga is a particularly fast path to enlightenment since during sex the eighty types of concepts cease, just as happens at enlightenment. Thereby, the *yogin* comes to experience the illustrative wisdom (*dpe'i ye-shes*). It is so-called because it is an example for and indication of absolute wisdom (*don-gyi ye-shes*).

²³ This quote is a contraction of lines found separately in *Zla-gsang thig-le'i rgyud*, in KH, vol. 84, pp. 167.6, 147.5–6.

²⁴ Citation untraced.

²⁵ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 173.4; Keith Dowman, *Eye of the Storm: Vairotsana's Five Original Transmissions*, Kathmandu: Vajra Publications, 2006, p. 39. It is said that this *tantra* was recited by dGa'-rab rdo-rje, who is considered the first human master of the

rDzogs-chen teachings, at his birth. See Reynolds, *The Golden Letters*, p. 256.

²⁶ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 171.6–7; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, pp. 51–52.

²⁷ Generally, the vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet (referred to as *ā-li* and *kā-li*) correspond to sapience and means, respectively.

²⁸ The importance of the letter *A* as a symbol of emptiness (Skt. *śūnyatā*) is discussed in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras*. In the *Mantrayāna* and particularly in *Atiyoga* it is considered to be the supreme syllable. See Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, *Tshangs-lha'i tshig-mdzod/ Bod-skad shan-sbyar: Tshanglha Dictionary*, Sarnath, India: Ogyan Chokhor-Ling Foundation, 2015, p. 694. On the way the letter *A* is used in *rDzogs-chen* to access the state of intrinsic awareness through the practice of *Guruyoga*, see Namkhai Norbu, *Guruyoga*, Edited by Fabio Maria Risolo, Arcidosso, Italy: Shang Shung Edizioni, 2011, pp. 36, 38, 44, 46.

²⁹ *Thams-cad bdud-rtsi lnga'i rang-bzhin*, in NGM, vol. 34/ngi, p. 75.5–6.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75.3.

³¹ The five wisdoms (*ye-shes*, Skt. *jñāna*) are the wisdom of the open dimension of phenomena (Skt. *dharmadhātu-jñāna*) corresponding to stupidity, the mirror-like wisdom (Skt. *ādarśana-jñāna*) corresponding to hatred, the wisdom of discernment (Skt. *pratyavekṣaṇa-jñāna*) corresponding to attachment, the wisdom of equality (Skt. *samatā-jñāna*) corresponding to pride, and the action-accomplishing wisdom (Skt. *kr̥tyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna*) corresponding to jealousy.

³² “Suffused and pervaded” translates *snum-s-khyab*, emending *snum-s-chabs* (C 28.5) and *snum-khyabs* (M 20a.5). Though *snum* (which here and later in C 346.3 is used as a verb) is not attested in any of the dictionaries (even those specialized in the archaic terms), it is evidently related etymologically to *snum* (“oil”), which suffuses whatever substance it comes into contact with (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

³³ *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 624.6–7.

³⁴ This quote is a contraction of two phrases found separately in *Yul-kun-la 'jug-pa*, in BG, vol. 1, pp. 45.2–3, 47.4. Only the second phrase is found in *rDzogs-pa chen-po byang-chub-kyi sems kun-la 'jug-pa rnam-dag ston-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 5/ca, p. 83.3.

³⁵ The five afflictions are stupidity (*gti-mug*; Skt. *moha*), attachment (*'dod-chags*; Skt. *rāga*), hatred (*zhe-sdang*; Skt. *dveṣa*), pride (*nga-rgyal*; Skt. *māna*), and jealousy (*phrag-dog*; Skt. *īrṣyā*).

³⁶ The five boundless deeds of immediate retribution (*mtshams-med lnga*; Skt. *pañcānantaryāṇi karmāṇi*) are patricide (*pha bsad*; Skt. *pitṛghāta*), matricide (*ma bsad*; Skt. *mātrghāta*), killing an arhat (*dgra-bcom-pa bsad*; Skt. *arhadghāta*), drawing blood from the Thus-gone One's body with an evil intention (*de-bzhin-gshegs-pa-la ngan-sems-kyis khrag phyung-ba*; Skt. *tathāgatasyāntike duṣṭacitta rudhirotpādanam*), and causing a schism in the community (*dge-'dun-gyi dbyen byas-pa*; Skt. *saṃghabheda*). See Tsepak Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology* (Revised and Enlarged Edition), Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1997, p. 222.

³⁷ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 828.6; [Guarisco, The Marvelous Primordial State](#), p. 128.

³⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 244.6–245.2.

³⁹ These three adjectives (in Tibetan, *lhan-ne*, *lhang-nge*, and *lhag-ge*) are pointer terms, thoroughly experiential in character (*myong-tshig*), and correspond to the objects of sound, vision, and psyche (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). Guenther discusses the kindred terms *lhang-nge* (“obvious”), *lham-me* (“effulgent,” which here is replaced by *lhag-ge*, “conspicuous”), and *lhan-ne* (“still”) as related to the triad of awakened body (*sku*), speech (*gsung*), and mind (*thugs*), respectively. Cf. Herbert V. Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996, p. 58, n. 41. However, the use of the terms by Thinley Norbu (who, like Guenther, mentions the term *lham-me* rather than *lhag-ge* as here) would rather suggest an association of *lhang-nge* with awakened body, of *lhan-ne* with awakened speech, and of *lham-me* with awakened mind, thus confirming the understanding proposed above. See Thinley Norbu, *A Cascading Waterfall of Nectar*, Boston: Shambhala, 2006, pp. 176–177.

⁴⁰ Gl.: In this regard, they are [like] rivers at a confluence.

⁴¹ Gl.: In brief, he is the cause of non-dual conduct.

⁴² Here “inner” (*nang-pa*) refers to the inner vehicle (Skt. *yāna*) of *Mahāyoga*, rather than to the more common acceptation of the term as “Buddhist.”

⁴³ Here *dar-ma* (transcribing the Sanskrit *dharma*) has the sense of books. See [Karmay, The Great Perfection](#), p. 97, n. 73.

⁴⁴ Gl.: As is amply [explained] in our sources, he is the first holy cause among the four.

⁴⁵ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, an important tantric exegete of the 9th century ce, is the author of the *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, quoted here, which was discovered among the Dunhuang manuscripts. This citation is from IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V2.9–10). For a description of this Dunhuang manuscript, see Jacob Dalton and Sam van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stein Collection at the British Library*, Leiden: Brill, 2006, pp. 214–216. For a translation and critical edition, see KammieTakahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” in Matthew T. Kapstein and Sam van Schaik (eds.), *Esoteric Buddhism at Dunhuang: Rites and Teachings for This Life and Beyond*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 85–141, esp. pp. 104 (English translation), 125 (Tibetan text).

⁴⁶ *rTsal-chen sprugs-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, pp. 423.7–424.1; cf. *Nyi-zla dang mnyam-pa dri-ma med-pa'i rgyud*, ch. 4, in BG, vol. 2, p. 32.5–6. Citation untraced in *rTsal-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 524–537, but found in *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 27, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 99.7–100.1; Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente (trs.), *The Supreme Source: The Kunjed Gyalpo: The Fundamental Tantra of Dzogchen Semde*, Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1999, p. 165; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 6.

⁴⁷ This refers to an ancient technique of using black vitriol to remove the final impurities from gold. See Longchenpa, *You Are the Eyes of the World*, Translated by Kennard Lipman and Merrill Peterson, Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2000, p. 24, n. 29. The image is appropriate since the skilled master is able to remove the obscurations defiling the disciple's mind, so that the utterly pure nature can shine forth unobstructedly.

⁴⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 513.5–7. The first line is absent in the NGM version. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* is categorized as one of five (or later four) *Anuyoga* scriptures, although gNubs-chen himself does not make this classification and quotes the text extensively in his *Atiyoga* chapter. More specifically, the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* is identified as the explanatory *tantra* (*bshad-rgyud*) of the *Kun-'dus rig-pa'i mdo*, which is considered the root *tantra* of the *Anuyoga* scriptures. See Higgins, *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen*, p. 42.

⁴⁹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 520.5–521.3.

⁵⁰ The gift of fearlessness is counted as one among three types of generosity (*sbyin-pa rnam-pa gsum*; Skt. *trividhaṃ dānam*): these are the gift of material things (*zang-zing-gi sbyin-pa*; Skt. *āmiṣadāna*), the gift of fearlessness (*mi-'jigs-pa'i sbyin-pa*; Skt. *abhayaadāna*), and the gift of the doctrine (*chos-kyi sbyin-pa*; Skt. *dharmadāna*). See J.S. Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, Sarnath, India: CIHTS, 2006, p. 266. The gift of fearlessness consists of relieving others of their fear, for instance, by providing protection to those without shelter, by purchasing and releasing animals that are about to be slaughtered (*tshe-thar*), or indeed by taking the vow not to take life.

It should be noted that our text mentions various fearlessnesses (*mi-'jigs sna-tshogs*), without giving any further details. Perhaps a reference to the four fearlessnesses (*mi-'jigs-pa bzhi*; Skt. *caturvaiśāradya*) is intended, although the latter are counted as attributes of a Buddha: fearlessness in the knowledge of all phenomena (*chos thams-cad mkhyen-pa-la mi-'jigs-pa*; Skt. *sarva-dharmābhisambodhi-vaiśāradya*); fearlessness in the knowledge of the exhaustion of all contamination (*zag-pa zad-pa thams-cad mkhyen-pa-la mi-'jigs-pa*; Skt. *sarvāsravakṣaya-jñāna-vaiśāradya*); fearlessness to definitively prophesy that all obstacle-causing phenomena do not transform into anything else (*bar-du gcod-pa'i chos-rnams gzhan-du mi-'gyur-bar nges-pa'i lung-bstan-pa-la mi-'jigs-pa*; Skt. *antarāyika-dharmānanyathātvaniścita-vyākaraṇa-vaiśāradya*); and fearlessness that the path of renunciation, through which all sublimities are obtained, has been just so realized (*phun-sum tshogs-pa thams-cad thob-par 'gyur-bar nges-par 'byung-ba'i lam de-bzhin-du gyur-ba-la mi-'jigs-pa*; Skt. *sarva-sampadadhigamāya nairyaṇika-pratipattathātvavaiśāradya*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 130; Lotsawa Kaba Paltseg, *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms: A Categorization of Buddhist Terminology with Commentary*, Translated by Thubten K. Rikey and Andrew Ruskin, Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2006, pp. 39–40. By stating that the master provides these various fearlessnesses to his disciple, the text in effect implies that it is by relying on him that the disciple attains enlightenment.

⁵¹ Note that *'phyo-ba* is archaic for *lding-ba* and here has the sense of “prancing about.” Cf. sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *brDa-gsar-rnying-gi rnam-gzhag li-shi'i gur-khang*, Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 2000, p. 60; Duff, *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, s.v. *'phyo ba*.

⁵² I have emended *'phyong dang g.yang bral gang na rtag/* (“constant toward those free from protection and prosperity”) to *'phyo dang g.yeng bral gang na brtag/* according to the NGM version.

⁵³ Note that *gcal* is archaic for *'jal*. See [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring](#), *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 136.

⁵⁴ *rTsal-chen sprugs-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 423.7; *Nyi-zla dang mnyam-pa dri-ma med-pa'i rgyud*, ch. 4, in BG, vol. 2, p. 32.5. Citation untraced in *rTsal-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 524–537, but found in *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 27, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 99.6–7; [Norbu and Clemente](#), *The Supreme Source*, p. 165; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Gl.: such as the diamond family, etc.

TN: The five families (*pañca-kūla*) are those of the diamond (*vajra*) in the east, of the jewel (*ratna*) in the south, of the lotus (*padma*) in the west, of activity (*karma*) in the north, and of the Thus-gone One (*tathāgata*) at the center.

⁵⁶ The incantatory repetition (Skt. *japa*) of spells is an important component of tantric practice. Generally, the spells are to be repeated according to the measure of a specific number of repetitions; for a particular duration of time; or until one beholds the signs of accomplishment. See bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *dNgos-grub 'dod-'jo*, p. 394, edited and translated in [Dudjom Rinpoche](#), *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments*, p. 27.

⁵⁷ I.e., the practitioner of *Atiyoga*.

⁵⁸ Gl.: the commentary to which is like alpha-meaningfulness.

⁵⁹ This would seem to be an explicit reference to the eighteen texts of the mind section (*sems-sde bco-brgyad*), almost all of which are quoted in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.

⁶⁰ Unidentified source.

⁶¹ The king of Nepal, Vasudhara, was a tantric instructor and one of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' masters. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 610.

⁶² Cf. *bDud-rtsi'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 17/tsa, pp. 290.2–295.4, where a description of the burnt offering (*sbyin-sreg*; Skt. *homa*) is found, which could possibly be the passage referred to here. See also, especially concerning medicines, *bDud-rtsi chen-po'i chos-nyid gsang-ba'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 34/ngi, ch. 3, pp. 154.1–159.7.

⁶³ A ritual dagger is used in wrathful rites (such as those relating to the deity Vajrakīlaya) that repel and liberate obstructors—whether these

be outer enemies or the inner afflictions. See the instructions found in the *Phur-'grel 'bum-nag* and translated in Boord, *A Bolt of Lightning from the Blue*, pp. 200–203.

⁶⁴ In Sanskrit, *guggula* or *guggulu* (transcribed as *gu-gul* in Tibetan). Bdellium is a fragrant resin related to myrrh, which is used in tantric rituals. Tibetan sources mention two kinds, one of which is white, the other black. See H.A. Jäschke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980, p. 69; cf. M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2001, p. 356.

⁶⁵ In the medical context, the word *dpyad* is used with the sense of “therapy.” See Tsering Thakchoe Drungtso and Tsering Dolma Drungtso, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology*, Dharamsala, India: Drungtso Publications, 2005, p. 250.

⁶⁶ This plant, called *spra-ba* in Tibetan, is related to mugwort; it is burned on or near the skin for the purpose of moxibustion.

⁶⁷ This refers to a particular therapeutic technique whereby excess blood—held to be the cause of pain in a part of the body—is extracted by means of a lancet (*gtsag-bu*).

⁶⁸ Traditionally, three types of spells are counted: the mnemonic spells (*gzungs-sngags*; Skt. *dhāraṇīmantra*) are associated with sapience and memory and are held to originate with the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras*; the spells of esoteric science (*rig-sngags*; Skt. *vidyāmantra*), which are applied to various situations as they arise, are associated with means and are held to originate with *Kriyātantra*; the secret spells (*gsang-sngags*; Skt. *guhyaṃmantra*) are associated with non-dual wisdom and are held to originate from the three higher *tantras*. The latter may also be called the quintessence spells (*snying-po'i sngags*; Skt. *bījamantra*) since they embody the quintessence of a deity in the form of sound, as the deity's specific seed-syllable(s). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 116.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Yongs-su mya-ngan-las 'das-pa chen-po'i mdo* (*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*), in KD, vol. 52, pp. 103.6–104.1: “Son of the family, laypersons should therefore bear weapons in their hands, and should guard and protect the monks who are the guardians of the doctrine. Someone who merely guards the five disciplines cannot be called an individual of the *Mahāyāna*. Yet if one guards the holy doctrine even without guarding the five disciplines, one is called [a follower of]

the *Mahāyāna*. When guarding the holy doctrine, one should bear weapons in one's hands and should guard those who speak the doctrine." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 104.5–7: "The Hallowed One declared: Son of the family, those who hold the discipline should therefore depend on and accompany weapon-bearing householders—this have I imparted. Even if kings, ministers, householders, laypersons, etc., bear weapons in order to guard the doctrine, they can be said to be guarding the discipline. Those who do not kill even as they bear weapons are supreme in their guarding of discipline."

The five disciplines mentioned in the first passage are those practiced by a Buddhist layperson: they are to relinquish taking life, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and intoxication. See [Cornu](#), *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, p. 459. On the use of weapons in the tantric context, see Martin J. Boord, *The Cult of the Deity Vajrakīla, According to the Texts of the Northern Treasures Tradition of Tibet*, Tring, UK: The Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1993, p. 145.

⁷⁰ It is possible, though by no means certain, that the otherwise unknown word *pi-par* represents a rough phonetic transcription of the Sanskrit *vitasti*, a particular measure that is defined as the span between the extended thumb and little finger and that corresponds roughly to 9 inches. See [Monier-Williams](#), *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, pp. 962–963.

⁷¹ Unidentified source.

⁷² Traditionally, there are said to be eight leasures (*dal-ba brgyad*; Skt. *aṣṭakṣaṇa*), which pertain to freedom from being born in the following states: (1) in the hell realms, (2) among the hungry ghosts, (3) as an animal, (4) as a god, (5) among uncivilized tribes, (6) among those harboring wrong views, (7) in a far-off region among barbarians, and (8) as an idiot.

⁷³ Here and in the citation that follows, I have emended *gzeg* and *gzegs* to 'dzeg ("to climb up").

⁷⁴ Cf. [dBa' dPal-dbyangs](#), *gCes-pa'i bsdus-pa'i 'phrin-yig*, in TD, vol. 204, p. 468.5, where only the first line is found. Note that this dBa' dPal-dbyangs, who in the colophon to the *gCes-pa'i bsdus-pa'i 'phrin-yig* (p. 472.4) is simply called venerable dPal-dbyangs (*btsun-pa dPal-*

dbyangs), was the successor to dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po and the second abbot of bSam-yas monastery; as such, he should not be confused with the *Mahāyoga* master gNyan dPal-dbyangs, since gNyan and dBa' refer to distinct clan names. See Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 68–69. The problem is also discussed in Takahashi, “Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia,” p. 5, n. 7, p. 9.

⁷⁵ *Rim-gro* has a range of connotations: it may refer to rites performed for the ill, in which case it is synonymous with the village rituals (*grong-chog*) used to repel difficulties. *Rim-gro-ba* can designate a servant. *Rim-gro* may also refer to treatments for the body. Here it is the latter sense that is implied. Cf. Tudeng Nima (ed.), *Bod-rgya tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1998, pp. 2701–2702.

⁷⁶ This refers to careless behavior, such as remaining in the sun when it is too hot, or going outside with few clothes when it is cold.

⁷⁷ Strolling is listed among the four types of conduct (*spyod-lam rnam-pa bzhi*): these are strolling (*'chag-pa*; Skt. *caṃkrama*), standing up (*'greng-ba*; Skt. *sthāna*), sitting (*'dug-pa*; Skt. *niṣadyā*), and lying down (*nyal-ba*; Skt. *śayyā*). See Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 216. The Buddha recommended that his disciples apply recollection during all of these activities. In particular, he advised them to stroll at an even pace in a designated area when their meditation was overcome by drowsiness. See the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (*Majjhimanikāya*, *sutta* no. 10, PTS edition: I, 57), in Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (trs.), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009, pp. 146–147; and, on walking meditation specifically, the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (*sutta* no. 5.29, PTS edition: III, 29–30), in Bhikkhu Bodhi (tr.), *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012, p. 651.

⁷⁸ In the *Gaṇakamoggallāna-sutta* (*Majjhimanikāya*, *sutta* no. 107, PTS edition: III, 2), the Buddha recommends that his monks eat moderately, eating neither for amusement nor for intoxication, but merely in order to sustain the body for the sake of practicing the holy life. See Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, p. 875. In order not to become drowsy after eating, the Buddha is said to have advised his disciples to fill their stomach half with food and one quarter with liquid, while leaving one quarter empty. One might here recall the *Theragāthā*'s statement that a monk should always remain with unfilled stomach, eating moderately whether he partakes of moist or dry foods. Leaving four or five mouthfuls, he should drink water. See

Kenneth Roy Norman (tr.), *The Elders' Verses: Theragāthā*, vol. 1, London: Pali Text Society, 1969, vv. 982–983, p. 91. Such recommendations were common in the Indian yogic tradition, their reason being to allow the free circulation of the subtle winds. Cf. Henri Birven, *Pforte der Unsterblichkeit: Yoga als Weg zur geistigen Erneuerung*, Gelnhausen: Heinrich Schwab Verlag, 1960, p. 44.

⁷⁹ Cf. Śāntideva's statement in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya* that the bodhisattva, though he should preserve his health by taking proper nourishment and medicines, should not give in to his own attachments under the pretext of looking after his body. See Śāntideva, *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Edited by P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, India: The Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1961, ch. 6, pp. 71–79 (concerning *Śikṣāsamuccaya-kārikā*, v. 13). The passage is discussed in Richard Mahoney, *Of the Progresse of the Bodhisattva: The Bodhisattvamārga in the Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Oxford: Indica et Buddhica, 2016, pp. 100–101.

⁸⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 571.4–5.

⁸¹ *Byang-chub sems-dpas dris-pa snang-ba zhes-bya-ba'i le'u*, in *Sangs-rgyas phal-po-che zhes-bya-ba shin-tu rgyas-pa chen-po'i mdo* (*Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaipulya-sūtra*), ch. 15, in KD, vol. 35, pp. 414.3–415.1. The text is here erroneously quoted as *sDong-po brgyan-pa'i mdo* (*Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*), which, however, corresponds to *Sangs-rgyas phal-po-che*, ch. 45, in KD, vol. 37, p. 548 – vol. 38, p. 689 (the latter being the final chapter of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*). For a translation from the Chinese of the passage, see Thomas Cleary (tr.), *The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avataṃsaka Sutra*, Boston: Shambhala, 1993, pp. 306–307. This quotation is also found in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 703, translated in [van Schaik, Tibetan Zen](#), pp. 128–129.

⁸² This stanza is quoted in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 710, translated in [van Schaik, Tibetan Zen](#), p. 91.

⁸³ Here, I take *nam-phyed* (in the KD version) to mean “half [of something]” rather than “midnight,” as usually understood.

⁸⁴ The KD version reads “has not attained it” (*thob par mi 'gyur ba*) instead of “has not imaged it” (*de ma dmigs pa bzhin*).

⁸⁵ Unidentified source.

⁸⁶ Gl.: in which case one is freshened up and one's blindness dispelled.

⁸⁷ Gl.: because of one's great inclination toward property.

⁸⁸ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *Bang-mdzod 'phrul-gyi me-long*, in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 763–780; in *'Phrul-gyi me-long dgu-skor*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, pp. 963–971; and in gNyags Jñānakumāra, *'Phrul-gyi me-long dgu-skor-gyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, pp. 972–1000.

⁸⁹ This example is also found in the *Kāśyapaparivarta* of the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*, except that there “meditation” is replaced by “eliminating the afflictions” consisting of passion, hatred, and stupidity. Cf. *'Od-srung-gi le'u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 288.3–5. For the Sanskrit, see *Kāśyapaparivarta: A Mahāyānasūtra of the Ratnakūṭa Class*, Edited by Alexander von Staël-Holstein, Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1926, §128, p. 183; cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta: Romanized Text and Facsimiles*, Edited by Margarita I. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya et al., Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism, 2002, pp. 44–45. For an English translation, see Bhikkhu Pāsādika (ed. & tr.), *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 2015, p. 170.

⁹⁰ “Shammer” appears to be an appropriate rendering of *kha-g.yos-mkhan*; cf. the entries for the expressions derived from *kha-g.yo*, in Melvyn C. Goldstein (ed.), *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, p. 108.

⁹¹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 571.3–4.

⁹² *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, pp. 167.5, 168.1, 167.4. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 198–199 (Tibetan text), 601 (English translation). A shorter version of this citation is found in §6.4.2 (C 271).

⁹³ The last three lines of this quote are placed first in NGM and are separated from the following by several additional lines.

⁹⁴ The order of the latter two lines is reversed in NGM.

⁹⁵ Cf. *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 711.3, where an approximate parallel is found.

⁹⁶ Citation untraced in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, except for some fragments as indicated below. Despite the attribution in the gloss of this quotation to the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, van Schaik appears to hold that it stems, like the citation preceding it, from a *tantra* of the *Māyājāla* corpus. Cf. van Schaik, “The Sweet Sage and the *Four Yogas*,” p. 18.

⁹⁷ Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche reminds us that a prince becomes king on the basis of his royal parents and compares this situation to that of

reawakening to the original ground of enlightenment. Cf. [Low, *The Collected Works of C.R. Lama*](#), p. 126.

⁹⁸ Cf. 'Od-srung-gi le'u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, pp. 270.2–271.4; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §§81–83, pp. 118–121 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, pp. 29–30; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, pp. 144–146 (English translation).

⁹⁹ Cf. 'Od-srung-gi le'u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, pp. 271.7–272.1; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §84, p. 123 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 30; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 147 (English translation).

¹⁰⁰ The Sanskrit name of the bird in question is *kalaviṅka*, which the Tibetan text transcribes as *ka-la ping-ka*. Monier-Williams gives “sparrow” and “Indian cuckoo.” See [Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*](#), p. 260.

¹⁰¹ I have emended *lus-ngag* (“body and speech”) to *lus-ngan* (“dismal body”).

¹⁰² The implication is that the chick’s maturation process causes blood to mar the egg from inside, thereby rendering it inedible.

¹⁰³ The aggregate of concentration is listed among the five supramundane aggregates (Skt. *lokottarapañcaskandha*); these are the aggregate of discipline (Skt. *śīlaskandha*), the aggregate of concentration (Skt. *samādhiskandha*), the aggregate of sapience (Skt. *prajñāskandha*), the aggregate of release (Skt. *vimuktiskandha*), and the aggregate of seeing the wisdom of release (Skt. *vimuktijñānadarśanaskandha*). See Ācārya Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, Translated by Tashi Zangmo and Dechen Chime, Sarnath, India: CIHTS, 2007, p. 13.

A similar comparison is found in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, except that there the jewels, filling worlds as numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges, are offered to the Victorious Ones rather than donated to sentient beings, and the amount of merit is compared to reciting a verse of the *sūtra* in question rather than to the aggregate of concentration as here. Cf. 'Od-srung-gi le'u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 251.4–5; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §20, p. 43 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 15; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, pp. 116–117 (English translation).

¹⁰⁴ The seven precious things are gold, silver, crystal, beryl, pearl, emerald, and coral. Nevertheless, lists of these precious things differ from one source to another. Cf. Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology*, p. 261; Vrajavallabha Dwivedi and Thinlay Ram Shashni (eds.), *Bauddha Tantra Kośa*, pt. 1, Sarnath, India: CIHTS, 1990, p. 127.

¹⁰⁵ The Sanskrit *vaiḍūrya* is often translated as “lapis lazuli,” but this seems inappropriate inasmuch as Indian (and, following them, Tibetan) authors distinguished between several colors of *vaiḍūrya*, whereas lapis lazuli is always blue. Moreover, lapis lazuli lacks the crystalline quality of *vaiḍūrya*. Beryl, apart from being etymologically related to *vaiḍūrya* (see Eric Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, p. 46), can be green, yellow, white, and blue, and forms crystals, which makes it a most accurate translation. In this regard, see Marianne Winder, “Vaiḍūrya,” in G. Jan Meulenbeld and Dominik Wujastyk (eds.), *Studies on Indian Medical History*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001, pp. 85–94.

¹⁰⁶ Similar comparisons concerning the amount of merit are found at the end of the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, though there, rather than being put in relation to concentration as here, the merit of these activities is compared to that of reciting, reading, etc., the *Ratnakūṭa*. Cf. ‘Od-srung-gi le’u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 300; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §§158–159, pp. 225–226 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, pp. 56–57; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, pp. 187–188 (English translation).

¹⁰⁷ *rNal-’byor grub-pa’i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 585.7–586.3. The citation is also found in the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 394.3–6.

¹⁰⁸ Here we have an example of the creative etymologizing frequently encountered in Tibetan texts, where the individual syllables making up a word are at times explained as independent semantic units, thereby expanding the word’s meaning. See David Germano, *Poetic Thought, the Intelligent Universe, and the Mystery of Self: The Tantric Synthesis of rDzogs-chen in Fourteenth Century Tibet*, PhD thesis, Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992, p. 809. Here the word “equanimity” (*btang-snyoms*) is glossed as “giving up righteousness” (*dkar-phyogs btang*) and “resting in equilibrium” (*snyoms-su bzhaḡ*). dPal-sprul Rinpoche (1808–1887) explains the same term as the giving up of

attachment and hatred and the *equalizing* attitude toward all sentient beings. See [Patrul Rinpoche, *Le Chemin de la Grande Perfection*](#), p. 204.

¹⁰⁹ *Sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 642.4.

¹¹⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 451.3–5.

¹¹¹ This passage is strikingly similar to an injunction found in Āryadeva's *Svādhiṣṭhānabheda* (vv. 48abc, 49ab, 50bc), which Wedemeyer translates, "One need not perform caitya rituals; one need not recite the scriptures [. . .]/ Likewise, one need not venerate deities nor honor (*sic!*) monks [. . .]/ Nor need one make ritual gesticulations (*mudrā*) or recite mantras." The Sanskrit reads, *caitya-karma na kurvīta na ca pustaka-vācanam/ karotu vācayec cāpi svādhiṣṭhānakrameṇa tu// devān na vandayed evaṃ bhikṣuṃś cāpi na vandayet/ athavā vandayet sarvān svādhiṣṭhānakrameṇa tu// mantra-nyāsaṃ na kurvīta mudrābandhaṃ tathaiva ca/ mantrajāpaṃ na kuryād vā kuryāc ca pratibimbavat//*. See Christian K. Wedemeyer, *Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism: History, Semiology, & Transgression in the Indian Traditions*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, pp. 176 (English translation), 259, n. 19 (Sanskrit).

¹¹² Gain (*rnyed-pa*; Skt. *lābha*) and honor (*bkur-sti*; Skt. *satkāra*) are two possible "rewards" a *yogin* may receive as he perfects his practice and his fame grows. They are counted among the common accomplishments (*thun-mong-gi dngos-grub*) of yogic practice and are otherwise referred to as the three assemblages (*sdud-pa rnam-gsum*) of wealth (*nor*), things (*rdzas*), and people (*mi*). They present a serious danger, as one may thereby be distracted from one's main purpose; one speaks of *yogins* who have re-entered the world because of these (Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin, personal communication). This is why in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* Śāntideva describes gain and honor as shackles. See Śāntideva, *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, ch. 6, v. 100, p. 59. Elsewhere, in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Śāntideva writes that gain and honor should be feared. See Śāntideva, *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 7, pp. 82–88 (concerning *Śikṣāsamuccaya-kārikā*, v.16); and Mahoney, *Of the Progresse of the Bodhisattva*, p. 102. Cf. Étienne Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra: L'Explication des Mystères*, Louvain: Bureaux du Recueil / Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1935, ch. 8, §40, pp. 120 (Tibetan text), 235 (French translation); and Philippe Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, Paris: Fayard, 2005, p. 114; see also Edward Conze (tr.), *The*

Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines & Its Verse Summary,
Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1994, ch. 11, v. 6, p. 29.

3

Gaining Perspective

[C 45.6–64.6; M 31b.3–43b.6]

One should resolve the meaning in this regard through the view; {in brief} there are the means, the qualities, as well as the defects of meditating without seeing absolute meaningfulness. [46]

3.1. The means

In this regard, the means are {amply} taught when explaining the specific textual traditions.¹

3.2. The qualities

Concerning the qualities {which are twofold}, there are the qualities of one's intrinsic essence being comprehended {i.e., the view}, and, having comprehended it, the qualities of meditation.

3.2.1. The qualities of comprehension

As for the qualities of comprehension, they may be for the time being described individually. According to the system of the *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamikas*],² through [the

axioms of] interdependent origination, [freedom from] singularity and multiplicity, refutation of production in terms of the four extremes,³ and so forth,⁴ grasping at absolute truth is not produced, and the cognition of insight sees relative truth as illusory.

The *sTon-mun* say that comprehension [comes about] in the unborn expanse of phenomena without evaluating anything at all. Insight comprehends that non-cognition itself is genuine cognition;⁵ ignorance of everything is itself genuine awareness; not seeing anything is itself genuine seeing;⁶ not touching anything is itself great contact. Comprehending the two {i.e., the two truths} in that manner is explained to those expert in the doctrine. It is nowadays also explained to everyone who assembles there.⁷ The *Pratītyasamutpādayakārikā* [47] says,⁸

Without eliminating anything from it,
Nor positing anything on to it,
Genuinely viewing genuineness,
One is utterly liberated by genuinely seeing.

This is also the meaning of *sTon mun* meditation. It is said that having realized the view, there is no need to guard a discipline to accomplish enlightenment. The *'Phags-pa 'jig-rten-las 'das-pa'i mdo* declares,⁹

Discipline easily deteriorates,
But in the view nothing {can be said to deteriorate}.
By guarding one's discipline, one is born in the higher
levels;
Through the view, one attains the supreme rank.

The *Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa-sūtra* states,¹⁰

Whoever knows the discipline {of the auditors (*nyan-thos*;
Skt. *śrāvaka*)} to be the non-discipline {of the
bodhisattvas},
Thus knows the nature of discipline:
That lax and proper discipline are one {if the meaning is
comprehended},
And his discipline is never lax [. . .].

The **Candrapradīpa-sūtra* states,¹¹

Whoever is endowed with experience of a single doctrine¹²
completes all the doctrines¹³ endowed with qualities.¹⁴

[48] The *Dharmarāja-sūtra* says,¹⁵

If you are capable of knowing a single phenomenon, there is not a
single phenomenon that you do not know.

It is stated in the **Candrapradīpa-sūtra*,¹⁶

If you familiarize yourself with a single doctrine,¹⁷
You familiarize yourself with them all.

That is to say, with all the qualities whatsoever of
concentration. This is spoken of extensively in those
[texts].

3.2.2. The qualities of meditating

The qualities of meditating after comprehending [the
view]: if one meditates after seeing the meaning, one is
capable of joining the rank of omniscience. The
Samādhirāja-sūtra says,¹⁸

If one discerns that phenomena are without self
And if, having individually discerned this, one meditates,
This itself is the cause for the fruition of attaining
transcendence.
Any other cause {by which one does not become a Buddha}
cannot become the ground [of this fruition].

Furthermore, if one meditates without having
comprehended [the view], it is like entering water
without having trained to swim, or like a blind man
taking the road. Therefore, the same *sūtra* states,¹⁹

Not knowing the inconceivable,
Whoever rests without thinking,
That childish one is a fool,
And his very sense-bases become darkened.

[49] The qualities are also discussed in the same *sūtra*:²⁰

Knowing the inconceivable absolute,
Whoever rests without thinking,
That one becomes omniscient
And possessed of unfathomable qualities. [. . .]

When [it comes to] {the view of} the inner *Mantrayāna*
and *Atiyoga*, the qualities of their comprehension alone
are inconceivable. The *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu-'phrul*
drwa-ba declares,²¹

This heart of the supreme accomplishment:
[When] its meaning is realized initially, it is not given up at
the end.

Concerning the means to resolve [the view], they should
be comprehended through the authoritative scriptures,

the pith instructions, and through reasoning,²² these three. This will be taught in detail later [when dealing with] the textual traditions.²³ The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* states,²⁴

An intellect endowed with the three valid measures²⁵
Probes conceptually.

And in the *bsGom-lung* of the preceptor dPal-dbyangs it is said that²⁶

Coming to a resolution through the authoritative scriptures, the pith instructions, and reasoning,²⁷
One should trust the genuine nature of phenomena.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,²⁸

As what and how should thusness be viewed?
[50] Is it appearance, or is it not?
Or else, is it or not awakening?
Is awakening something other than it or not?
Through such discussion, one should resolve the ways it
might be posited.

This is dealt with extensively in numerous *Mantrayāna* texts. As for the qualities {of meditating}, the *Nam-mkha'-che* states,²⁹

In the domain of understanding there is great bliss;
In this, the world is utterly pure.

Therefore, each and every objective scope is clear as great wisdom. The *rTsal-chen* says,³⁰

The cognition of equality is the sovereign of all the Buddhas.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,³¹

When thusness is resolved,
Even abiding in the world is the principal body (*chos-kyi sku*; Skt. *dharmakāya*).³²
Though one is certain with regard to absolute truth, one enters the world.
One is without weariness concerning the limitations of cyclic existence.
Even the extreme activities are completed at once.
One does not even dread the realm of Māra.
In fierce realms one is without anxiety.
The entities one desires are united with the open dimension (*dbyings*).
When one simultaneously sees the definitive meaning,
Gradual training seems like inveiglement.

And,³³

By learning the single absolute truth of the genuine intent, one learns all the inconceivable doctrines. [51] Thus, if one is skilled in one, one is skilled in all the inconceivable doctrines. If one is familiar with the meaning of suchness, one becomes familiar with a hundred thousand concentrations. If one transcends³⁴ the meaning of suchness, all the pledges (*dam-tshig*; Skt. *samaya*) are guarded. If one intellectually enters the unmistakable meaning, one enters the door of all the inconceivable doctrines. If the meaning of unmistakable suchness is taught, all the inconceivable doctrines are taught. If one hears this undistortedly by depending on the ear faculty, one hears the inconceivable doctrine. If one actually sees suchness, one sees the countenance of all the Victorious Ones.

This is spoken of extensively [in that text]. The defects and qualities, too, are spoken of in the *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa*.³⁵

Meditation is not the chief;³⁶ the chief is comprehension.
If it is not implanted in the confidence of comprehension,
One's meditation consists in meditating in a state with signs,
And one's effort consists in striving with the craving of the
afflictions.

Also,³⁷

[52] Engage with the meaning in the stream of
comprehension!
Self-originated wisdom will dawn from that.

The *bDud-rtsi'i rgyud* declares,³⁸

He who is acquainted with the river of realization,
[Though] he be called a man, he is a Buddha.

The *sGyu-'phrul drwa-ba* says,³⁹

The three purities⁴⁰ are unmistakable;
By becoming familiar with the king of intrinsic awareness,
One attains the supreme enlightenment.

It is said precisely that one should meditate *after* having
comprehended [the view]. One [then] dwells in
meditation without listening to the concentration, the
means, and the aural lineage.⁴¹

One stays alone someplace; for example, one remains
just like the king of predators, the lion, who, because he
is free from fear, relinquishes his peers.⁴² Similarly, the
yogin, too, relinquishes distracting companions. This
was explained previously {in [Chapter 1](#)}.⁴³ Moreover, it
is also stated,⁴⁴

The *mantrin* rambles about like a lion.

Now, [it may be asked,] “Why is freedom from non-conceptuality⁴⁵ laid out here since it is known that even thinking about its meaning is an abyss?” It is because, even without falling for reified entities, one should know the deviation consisting in this downfall. Hence, there are four [non-discursivenesses].⁴⁶ [53] Or else, there are three non-discursivenesses.⁴⁷

3.2.2.1. Discursive examining

Furthermore,⁴⁸ in order to free oneself from discursiveness, discursive examining (*rtog-pa*; Skt. *kalpana*) is explained first: there is discursive examining with regard to appearances and discursive examining with regard to non-appearances.⁴⁹ As for discursive examining with regard to appearances, it is threefold.⁵⁰

Discursive examining with regard to appearances’ essence {which is fourfold} [consists of] the discursive examining⁵¹ with regard to the nature,⁵² the discursive examining with regard to antidotes,⁵³ the discursive examining with regard to suchness,⁵⁴ and the discursive examining with regard to the attainment.⁵⁵ The discursive examining with regard to signs is the view that discursively examines relative truth. The discursive examining with regard to appearances, which is without⁵⁶ the essence and signs, is individually discerning sapience, a view that discursively examines absolute truth.⁵⁷

Moreover,⁵⁸ there is the discursive examining of the essence,⁵⁹ the worldly discursive examining,⁶⁰ the discursive examining of that which is posited with

certainty,⁶¹ and the discursive examining of recollection.⁶²

3.2.2.2. Non-discursiveness

To each of these is applied an appropriate non-discursiveness (*mi-rtog-pa*; Skt. *akalpana*).⁶³ [54] As for non-discursiveness, there is worldly non-discursiveness, supramundane non-discursiveness, and exalted non-discursiveness. In this regard, worldly non-discursiveness is entering the {four} contemplations and {four} meditative equilibria.⁶⁴ Supramundane non-discursiveness is the cessation (*'gog-pa*; Skt. *nirodha*) of the auditors and the peaceful concentration of the independent victors (*rang-rgyal*; Skt. *pratyekabuddha*);⁶⁵ they are called the contemplations enjoyed by childish persons. Concerning exalted non-discursiveness, it pertains to the *Mahāyāna*; here, insight is contemplation that verily distinguishes absolute meaningfulness, and it originates from the cause of individually discerning sapience. Signless calm abiding is the contemplation that images thusness. The Thus-gone One's contemplation (*de-bzhin gshegs-pa'i bsam-gtan*; Skt. *tathāgatadhyāna*) integrates calm abiding and insight. These are also explained as non-imaging that originates {initially} from belief, veritable non-imaging, and subsequent non-imaging; since they are easily understandable, they have not been applied here.⁶⁶

Furthermore,⁶⁷ regarding non-discursiveness, there is both non-discursiveness with regard to appearances and non-discursiveness with regard to non-appearances. [55]

Among these, non-discursiveness with regard to appearances is twofold. {First is non-discursiveness with regard to appearances' essence.} Non-discursiveness with regard to appearances' signs refers to those free from the discursive cognition⁶⁸ that images the heteronomous nature.⁶⁹

Non-discursiveness with regard to appearances' essence is further divided into three. Regarding non-discursiveness with regard to appearances' essence as existent, it is the cognition that apprehends the heteronomous nature of the *Yogācāra*,⁷⁰ and the cognition that apprehends the self of the heretics (Skt. *tīrthika*).⁷¹

Non-discursiveness with regard to appearances' essence as empty is meditation in the thoroughly established nature of *Yogācāra*.

The cognition that meditates on the *Madhyamaka* path⁷² is insight. Here are [contained] all of the non-imagings [presented] earlier.

More special than this is non-dual non-discursiveness that pertains to *Mahāyoga*. The great spontaneously present non-discursiveness pertains to *Atiyoga*.⁷³

3.3. The defects

3.3.1. Laying out the approaches

These [approaches] are laid out gradually in order to identify their deviations.

3.3.1.1. The gradual approach

In this regard,⁷⁴ the *Tsen-min*, the gradual approach, enters non-discursiveness by gradually relinquishing the four signs, which are discursive examining with regard to the nature, etc.⁷⁵ [56] The *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇi* says,⁷⁶

A person desiring the precious wish-granting gem must psychically dig under veritably solid and rigid rock. The precious stones are as follows: beneath the rock are precious silver, gold, and emerald. When digging out everything beneath these four—the three precious stones and the veritably solid rock—the wish-granting gem, from which all the purposes for oneself and others completely originate, is obtained.

Likewise, if he who desires non-conceptuality is freed from the sign of discursive examining with regard to the nature, from the sign of discursive examining with regard to the antidotes, from the sign of discursive examining with regard to suchness, and from the sign of discursive examining with regard to the attainment, and meditates precisely upon these three signs without apprehending them,⁷⁷ he accomplishes [his aim].

Therefore, one meditates gradually. Besides, one gradually meditates on the three doors to release, which are emptiness, signlessness, [57] and aspirationlessness,⁷⁸ and meditates on calm abiding and insight, etc.

3.3.1.2. The simultaneous approach

The *sTon-mun*,⁷⁹ the simultaneous approach, schools simultaneously in the unborn absolute truth from the beginning and without discreteness. It is said in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*,⁸⁰

Having first generated the enlightened mind, one will apprehend the knowledge of all aspects.

The same text also states,⁸¹

A beginner should first start by closely generating the enlightened mind, and should learn that all phenomena are non-referential.

The *Mahoṣṇīṣa-sūtra* (*gTsug-tor-gyi mdo*) says,⁸²

If at first is generated the enlightened mind without birth or halt, one obtains in the end the fruition without birth or halt.

This is also taught further on.⁸³ Although the instructors of the simultaneous approach maintain individual positions [on these issues], the great preceptor Bodhidharma explains {in his teaching texts},⁸⁴

If, facing the genuine and relinquishing conceptions, one abides in effulgence,⁸⁵ there is neither self nor other. The vulgar and noble are equal and are one. [58] If one abides unchangingly and firmly, one need not henceforth follow after the documents and teachings. That is to say that, having settled down in the authenticity of the genuine absolute, one is without conceptualization, at peace and without action. This is the entry⁸⁶ into absolute meaningfulness.

The preceptor of contemplation 'Dug-ba explains,⁸⁷

Non-thought is discipline, non-recollection is concentration, and the non-occurrence of the illusory mind is sapience.

The preceptor of contemplation bDud-'dul snying-po explains,⁸⁸

Non-recollection of anything at all is recollection of the Buddha. If, viewing this, the mind is in equilibrium, this is the very body⁸⁹ of the genuine Thus-gone One.

The preceptor of contemplation A-rdhan-hwer explains,⁹⁰

The mind's equality as it is, this is the path of the definitive yoga.

The preceptor Mahāyāna explains,⁹¹

One should rest non-discursively in the beingness of phenomena without thoughts.

Since the meditator's awareness itself is unborn, there is nothing to deliberately recall with regard to the unborn meaning. [59] This is the simultaneous approach. In this regard, these are the authoritative scriptures and reasoning through which beginners in the early stages of training may enter [the path]. This will be explained in detail later.⁹² Furthermore, [this is] an example [of] reasoning: it is like when a white form appears as an object, the consciousness of white is produced. It is clear that when there is neither object, action, nor thinking, cognition too is without object, action, or thinking.

3.3.1.3. *Mahāyoga*

As for⁹³ the thusness of inner non-discursiveness, the *Mahāyoga* texts say that in intrinsic awareness all phenomena are luminous clarity itself and that truth is non-dual. [Thusness] is not made by an agent and is

thoroughly luminous. It is the non-duality of the open dimension and wisdom. The *Guhyasamāja* declares,⁹⁴

In the absence of reified entities there is no meditation;
That which is to be meditated on is not meditation.
Thus, since reified entities are unreal,
Meditation is non-referential.

As for non-dual thusness, it is not to be pursued elsewhere. Wisdom, without making an imaged reference of the open dimension, is free from phenomena without relinquishing them;⁹⁵ [60] it is intrinsic awareness and intrinsic clarity. In this regard, the *sGyu-'phrul drwa-ba* states,⁹⁶

Intrinsic awareness, which is free from grasping [subject]
and grasped [object],
Appears of itself in a non-referential manner.

3.3.1.4. *Atiyoga*

As for⁹⁷ the spontaneously complete thusness of *Atiyoga*, the Eminent Yoga, all phenomena of appearance-existence, without eliminating [anything at all], are primordially and intrinsically clear in the utterly pure expanse of self-originated wisdom. Concerning this spontaneous completeness that searches neither for a cause nor a fruition, intrinsic awareness is unposited, unwavering, uncorrupted, and uninvolved—in this primordial clarity, still and obvious, what is there for integral being,⁹⁸ which is without even the name of the dust of wavering, to meditate on? Whatever there is to recollect is nonexistent. There is just the very fact of this

nonexistence.⁹⁹ Who is there to take it up? In the great primordial non-discursiveness, without inhibiting appearances, one is without discursive thought; non-discursiveness itself is an analogy. It is said in the *Khyung-chen*,¹⁰⁰

Appearances are like the great ocean;
Non-discursiveness is vast like the end of space.

3.3.2. Identifying the deviations of *Tsen-min*, *sTon-mun*, and *Mahāyoga*

Their distinctions are like the rungs of a ladder: [61] for instance, just as there are higher and lower rungs on a ladder, so these four non-discursivenesses¹⁰¹ are distinct {as *sTon-mun*, *Tsen-min*, *Mahāyoga*, and *Atiyoga*}.

3.3.2.1. The gradual approach

Concerning the *Tsen-min*, the gradual approach, as was explained previously, it is by exerting oneself until depletion in imaging that non-imaging is produced. Evaluating reified entities through argumentation, one accepts the meaning of the *Madhyamaka*.

3.3.2.2. The simultaneous approach

As for the *sTon-mun*, all phenomena, oneself and others, are primordially unborn. [Yet] now, by pursuing the unborn,¹⁰² their minds are corrupted, and they never behold the great meaning. For example, it is like the ocean that is undisturbed by the gray duck's dexterity. In any case, it is maintained [by the *sTon-mun*] that by not

thinking at all, one enters the beingness of phenomena.
The *Ye-shes snang-ba rgyan-gyi mdo* says,¹⁰³

Teaching the interdependence of causes and conditions,
Though said to be the gradual approach,
Is declared to be a means for the dull.
In this doctrine of spontaneous presence,
What is the point of training gradually?

In the nature which transcends limits,
How could ovoid-like notions be viewed?
[62] When there are not the least assertions,
Then the mind is like the sky,
And one's scope is one with the Buddha.

The gradual approach is taught for the purpose of those with inferior faculties—like fleeing beetles that cannot reach Mount Meru's flank, they explain non-discursiveness as having referential imaging. Likewise, though the *sTon-mun* yearn to be free from action, they do not know non-duality {being surpassed by *Mahāyoga*}. Although they {i.e., the *sTon-mun*} speak of non-duality, they maintain oneness to be the view that in absolute truth everything is unborn emptiness.

3.3.2.3. *Mahāyoga*

In any case, those who alternate {between the unborn as true and the unborn as untrue} see inseparability as the true nature of *Mahāyoga* and are obscured by their own view. For instance, it is like not seeing the soil when collecting grains of millet, or like not seeing the sky though looking upward to insert [a thread] through the

eye of a needle. Moreover, it is evident from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* that¹⁰⁴

The nature is birthless and unobstructed, like the sky.

All-embracing, it is unseen anywhere.¹⁰⁵

Being the very non-appearance of anything whatsoever, it is without defects.

[63] Since this {if associated with} is confusion, it is ineffective.¹⁰⁶

That which is empty is incapable of appearing at all. Hence, the thusness {of the *Mantrayāna*} is yearned for in the very purpose that it is apt to transform into anything at all, such as the peaceful and wrathful configurations (*dkyil-'khor*; Skt. *maṇḍala*), which provide relief for the purpose of wandering beings.

By yearning for the non-duality of the Great Yoga, *Mahāyoga*, one does not comprehend the great spontaneous presence.¹⁰⁷ If it be asked why, [it is replied that] the *Mahāyogin* evaluates reified entities and becomes familiar with thusness through numerous means. Since he radiates emanations for the purpose of wandering beings, he neither makes actual nor learns the meaning of non-action, it being spontaneously complete in himself. Since great wisdom is precisely the uninterrupted origin of all the emanations for the purpose of wandering beings, he does not see the meaning that is precisely his own behavior, as was the case before {with the *Mādhyamika*}.¹⁰⁸ For instance, it is like not seeing the peak of Mount Meru {the supreme mountain} from the flank of {Mount} Yugamdhara.¹⁰⁹ Moreover,¹¹⁰

Even if one went to the top of the king of the [seven] golden
mountains, Yugamdhara,
One would not see the peak of Mount Meru. [64]
The *yogin* {i.e., the *Mahāyogin*} who yearns for the non-
duality of all
Fails to see the great state, being intrinsically obscured by
the limitation of effort.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* says,¹¹¹

By meditating on the doors of all the ancillaries of
enlightenment¹¹²
And on the attires, the evolutes of the elements,
Like a water moon, are untainted and unattached;
By meditating, like a child's objective scope,
One holds the great wrathful ruler's domain,
Whose attires are those of the grimacing configurations.
Even when the syllables are actualized,
Peace is not seen.

Even when the adept of the inner *Mahāyoga* shows the
indications of being competent in the concentration with
signs,¹¹³ because he has an imaged reference of
spontaneous presence, he does not see it. For instance, it
is as if one looked at the heart of the sun; one's eyes,
unable to see again, would become heavy.

This is merely the distinction between their views;
they will be taught in detail later.¹¹⁴

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation
That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the third chapter, which
teaches the distinctions in their approaches, means,
requirements, and aims.

¹ I.e., [Chapters 4–7](#).

² A similar formulation is found in [gNyan dPal-dbyangs](#), *Thugs-kyi sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1013.3.

³ These are existence, nonexistence, both existence and nonexistence, and neither existence nor nonexistence. See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 129.

⁴ Gl.: as well as the adamantine slivers, [whereby one uses] actual perception and inference.

TN: the three axioms mentioned in the main text, together with the axiom of the adamantine slivers referred to in the gloss, are collectively called the four great axioms of *Madhyamaka* logic. See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 131. The axiom of the adamantine slivers (*rdo-rje gzegs-ma'i gtan-tshigs*) is explained as the fact that a thing cannot be produced from a cause identical to itself, as that would lead to an infinite regress, nor from an external cause owing to the absence of a relationship between the cause and its supposed effect, nor from their combination nor their joint negation. See [Matthew T. Kapstein](#), “Mi-pham’s Theory of Interpretation,” in Lopez (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, pp. 149–174, esp. p. 170, n. 31.

⁵ Cf. Edward Conze (tr.), *Perfect Wisdom: The Short Prajñāpāramitā Texts*, Totnes, UK: Buddhist Publishing Group, 2002, p. 18.

⁶ Cf. Wendi L. Adamek, *The Teachings of Master Wuzhu: Zen and Religion of No-Religion*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2011, p. 149; and [van Schaik](#), *Tibetan Zen*, p. 83.

⁷ Here, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes implicitly criticizes those who teach the simultaneous approach to all and sundry since it is intended for those endowed with superior faculties.

⁸ Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *rTen-cing 'brel-bar 'byung-ba'i snying-po'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa*, in TD, vol. 96, p. 292.6. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v42.5–6). For the Sanskrit, see Nāgārjuna, *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayakārikā and Āryadharmadhātugarbhavivaraṇa*, Edited by Gyaltzen Namdrol, Sarnath, India: CIHTS, 1997, v. 7, p. 29.

⁹ Citation untraced in *'Jig-rten-las 'das-pa'i mdo*, in NGM, vol. 33/gi, pp. 492–568; in *De-bzhin gshegs-pa thams-cad-kyi 'khor-lo nam-mkha'i mdzod-kyi rgyud/ 'Jig-rten-las 'das-pa'i mdo*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 672–797; in *'Jig-rten-las 'das-pa'i le'u*, in *Sangs-rgyas phal-po-che zhes-bya-ba shin-tu rgyas-pa chen-po'i mdo (Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaipulya-sūtra)*, ch. 44, in KD, vol. 37, pp. 282–548; and in *rNam-par bgrang-ba'i mdo dang 'grel-pa*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 370–377

(whose third chapter is entitled *'Jig-rten-las 'das-pa'i le'u*, pp. 371–376). However, the quotation is found in *Zhi-ba 'tsho* (Śāntarakṣita), *dBu-ma'i rgyan-gyi 'grel-pa* (*Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti*), in TD, vol. 107, p. 164.4.

¹⁰ *Chos thams-cad 'byung-ba med-par bstan-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 931.2–3.

¹¹ Citation untraced in KD and KH but found in Vimalamitra, *Cig-car 'jug-pa rnam-par mi-rtog-pa'i bsgom-don* (*Sakṛtprāveśika-nirvikalpa-bhāvanārtha*), in TD, vol. 110, p. 21.1, and in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r31.8–v31.1); for a translation from the Dunhuang manuscript, see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 32. Here, as well as in the *bsTan-'gyur* and in the Dunhuang manuscript, the text is referred to as the *Zla-ba sgron-ma'i mdo*, whereas later (C 48 and C 139) it is quoted as the *Zla-ba mar-me'i mdo*.

¹² In this and the following quotations, one should note the wordplay between *chos* (Skt. *dharma*), meaning “doctrine,” and *chos* (Skt. *dharma*), meaning “phenomenon.” Unfortunately, this cannot adequately be rendered into English except through the regrettable yet widespread practice of leaving the word *dharma* untranslated, a practice that has been avoided in this work.

¹³ The Dunhuang manuscript (as well as C 139) here reads “accumulations” (*tshogs*) instead of “doctrines” (*chos*).

¹⁴ Similarly, Shenxiu writes in his *Guanxin lun* that all phenomena are alike in being productions of the mind, so that knowing the mind is equivalent to practicing all doctrines. Cf. McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 207.

¹⁵ *Dam-pa'i chos-kyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 66, p. 27.6.

¹⁶ Citation found in Vimalamitra, *Cig-car 'jug-pa rnam-par mi-rtog-pa'i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, p. 21.3.

¹⁷ The TD version reads “word” (*tshig*) instead of “doctrine” (*chos*).

¹⁸ *Ting-nge-'dzin-gyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 55, p. 88.1–2; *Samādhirājasūtra*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 9, v. 37, p. 49 (Sanskrit).

¹⁹ While this appears to indicate that the citation is also from the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, it is in fact from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 605.6–7. Note that this and the following quote are found in §6.2.2.4.2.2.1 (C 243.1–3).

²⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 605.5.

²¹ Cf. *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 167.6–7, where only the first line is found. For a critical edition

and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 199 (Tibetan text), 601 (English translation).

²² I have emended *rig-pa* (“awareness”) to *rigs-pa* (“reasoning”) for contextual reasons.

²³ I.e., in Chapters 4–7.

²⁴ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 405.5. A longer version of this quotation is found in §6.2.2.4.1.4.3 (C 235.4–237.5).

²⁵ The three valid measures (*tshad-ma gsum*) are actual perception (*mngon-sum tshad-ma*; Skt. *pratyakṣapramāṇa*), inference (*dnegos-stobs rjes-dpag-gi tshad-ma*; Skt. *anumānapramāṇa*), and the authoritative scriptures (*lung-gi tshad-ma*; Skt. *āgamapramāṇa*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 117.

²⁶ *gNyan dPal-dbyangs, lTa-ba yang-dag sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1045.6. Citation identified in Takahashi, “Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia,” p. 7.

²⁷ I have emended *rig-pa* (“awareness”) to *rigs-pa* (“reasoning”) according to the NKJ version.

²⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 441.7–442.1.

²⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 185.2; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 75.

³⁰ *rTsal-chen sprugs-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 423.6; *Nyi-zla dang mnyam-pa dri-ma med-pa'i rgyud*, ch. 4, in BG, vol. 2, p. 32.4; *rTsal-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 527.7; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 27, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 99.5; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 165; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 5.

³¹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 569.4–6.

³² The adjective “principal” (Fr. *principiel*) is derived from “principle”; it is used here in the translation of *dharmakāya* because, in the Buddhist context, the principle of phenomena is nothing other than their emptiness. The word *dharmakāya* thus signifies the embodiment of the realization of this emptiness, at least according to the understanding of this term proposed by Ārya Vimuktisena (early 6th century), who interprets *dharmakāya* as being an abbreviation of *dharmatākāya*, i.e., the body (in the sense of embodiment) of phenomena’s beingness (Skt. *dharmatā*). See John J. Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied: Sources of Controversy in India and Tibet*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1998, p. 417, nn. 44, 47. This interpretation appears, moreover, to be consistent with the *Prajñāpāramitā* tradition since the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*

Prajñāpāramitā directly identifies the Buddha with thusness (Skt. *tathatā*). See Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, ch. 12, §3, p. 177. The Thus-gone One can therefore neither be said to be separate from phenomena nor be directly identified with them in their mirage-like quality, since he embodies the thusness of phenomena (Skt. *dharmāṇām tathatā*), which, as their beingness (Skt. *dharmatā*), is their principle; it is the latter, not dreamlike phenomena in their own right, that represents the true identity of the Buddha, referred to as *dharmakāya*. See Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, pp. 33–34.

³³ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 568.3–569.1.

³⁴ The NGM version has a negative particle, reading “If one does not trespass against” (*las ma 'das na*), but the overall meaning is the same.

³⁵ *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 4/nga, p. 230.2–4.

³⁶ The NGM version reads “Expertise is not the chief” (*mkhas pa mi gtso*).

³⁷ *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 4/nga, p. 201.3.

³⁸ *Thams-cad bdud-rtsi lnga'i rang-bzhin*, in NGM, vol. 34/ngi, p. 77.6. This passage is also found in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 437 (fol. 14v.6–1r.6). For a description of this manuscript, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, pp. 182–183.

³⁹ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 814.7.

⁴⁰ Gl.: i.e., the elements, aggregates, and eight consciousnesses as wisdom.

⁴¹ Here my translation differs from that proposed by Dalton and van Schaik, which in this instance seems justifiable neither contextually nor grammatically: “What remains are the concentrations, the means, and meditating on one’s no longer heard hearing lineage.” Cf. Dalton and van Schaik, “Lighting the Lamp,” p. 166.

⁴² Cf. *'Od-srung-gi le'u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 256.2; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §36, p. 65 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 20; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 124 (English translation).

⁴³ See §1.3 (C 10.4).

⁴⁴ *gNyls-su med-pa mnyam-pa-nyid rnam-par rgyal-ba zhes-bya-ba'i rtog-pa'i rgyal-po chen-po*, in KH, vol. 96, p. 962.2.

⁴⁵ I.e., conceptuality.

⁴⁶ Gl.: There are the non-discursivenesses of both *sTon-mun* and *Tsen-min*, of *Mahāyoga*, and of *Atiyoga*.

⁴⁷ Gl.: It is easy to identify the three non-discursivenesses by recognizing the worldly, transcendent, and exalted discursive examinations.

TN: Cf. §3.2.2.2. Here, unlike either Dalton and van Schaik or Donati, I take *bla-ma* to mean “exalted” rather than “master,” following in this Meinert’s translation of the corresponding passage on non-discursiveness; see [Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*](#), p. 244. In a sense, Dalton and van Schaik have avoided the issue of interpretation by leaving the term untranslated. Cf. [Dalton and van Schaik, “Lighting the Lamp,”](#) p. 166. Donati proposes the translation “master”; see [Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*](#), p. 165.

⁴⁸ Cf. the translation of this section and the following one (§3.2.2.1 and §3.2.2.2) in [Guenther, “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,”](#) pp. 353–355.

⁴⁹ Gl.: i.e., grasping at nonexistents as nonexistent.

TN: These two discursive examinations correspond to the gradual and simultaneous approaches, respectively. See [Dalton and van Schaik, “Lighting the Lamp,”](#) p. 157.

⁵⁰ Gl.: discursive examining with regard to the essence, discursive examining with regard to signs, and discursive examining with regard to the inseparability of the essence and signs.

⁵¹ Gl.: as either existent, nonexistent, apparent, or empty.

⁵² Gl.: of reified entities.

⁵³ Gl.: whereby one relinquishes the afflictions, etc.

⁵⁴ Gl.: grasping at tenets.

⁵⁵ Gl.: grasping at the fruition.

⁵⁶ Gl.: [that is to say, which is the] inseparability of [the essence and signs].

⁵⁷ Cf. the German translation of this passage found in [Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*](#), pp. 243–244. Let us note in particular my divergence from her interpretation of *snang-la rtog-pa* and *mi-snang-la rtog-pa*, which she renders as “a discursiveness that [actually] appears” and “a discursiveness, whose appearance is not [felt in experience].”

⁵⁸ Gl.: This is explained incidentally.

⁵⁹ Gl.: for whatever arises.

⁶⁰ Gl.: grasping at self-sufficiency.

⁶¹ Gl.: i.e., the individual tenets.

⁶² Gl.: of what is long past.

⁶³ Gl.: When pacifying the position of each and every discursive examination, there is the position of each of the non-discursivenesses.

⁶⁴ For the four contemplations (*bsam-gtan*; Skt. *dhyāna*) of the form realm and four meditative equilibria (*snyoms-'jug*; Skt. *samāpatti*) of the formless realm, see §4.2.3.1.2 (C 78.3–6).

⁶⁵ I have rendered *pratyekabuddha* by “independent victor” or “independent buddha” since this conveys both the idea that this type of realization is attained by contemplating the twelve links of interdependent origination without the help of a teacher, and the notion that once he has accomplished his aim, this person is not particularly interested in assisting others. Cf. Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, vol. 2: Dictionary, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004, pp. 378–379. For further discussion, see Naomi Appleton, “*Jātaka* Stories and *Pacceka*buddhas in Early Buddhism,” in *Buddhist Studies Review*, vol. 35:1–2, 2018, pp. 279–292, esp. p. 280, n. 3; and Kenneth Roy Norman, “The Pratyeka-Buddha in Buddhism and Jainism,” in Philip Denwood and Alexander Piatigorsky (eds.), *Buddhist Studies: Ancient and Modern*, London: Curzon Press, 1983, pp. 92–106, esp. p. 99. Norman has pointed out that the original term may well have been *pratyayabuddha*, taking *pratyaya* in the sense of *nimitta* (“sign”), which would suggest the meaning of “awakened through signs.”

⁶⁶ Cf. the German translation of this passage given in [Meinert, Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre](#), pp. 244–245.

⁶⁷ After this incidental explanation, we now return to the main classification, which started at §3.2.2.1.

⁶⁸ Gl.: which grasps nonexistents.

⁶⁹ Gl.: i.e., the interdependence of the eye-faculty, and so forth, and their [corresponding] objects.

⁷⁰ Gl.: The heteronomous nature is interdependent and nothing but an illusion, so there is no conception of self-sufficiency.

TN: The heteronomous and thoroughly established natures alluded to in this passage are among the three natures of the *Yogācāra*; see [Chapter 4](#), note 56.

⁷¹ Gl.: there being nothing extrinsic, the psyche, too, is non-referential.

TN: This gloss might be said to encapsulate, in a strikingly brief and rather non-polemical form, the Buddhist critique of the Brahmanical notion of self (Skt. *ātman*): from the perspective of Buddhist phenomenological psychology, the self is a mistaken reification of a non-referential moment of consciousness. Cf. Stéphane Arguillère, *Mipham—L’Opalescent Joyau: Nor-bu ke-ta-ka*, Paris: Fayard, 2004, pp. 132–133.

⁷² I.e., the simultaneous approach. On *Chan* as a practical approach to the *Madhyamaka*, see van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 103.

⁷³ Cf. the German translation of this passage found in Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, p. 246. Let us note in particular my divergence from her interpretation of *snang-la mi-rtog-pa* and *mi-s nang-la mi-rtog-pa*, which she renders as “a non-discursiveness that [actually] appears” and “a non-discursiveness, whose appearance is not [felt in experience].”

⁷⁴ Cf. the translation of this section (§3.3.1.1) in Guenther, “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” pp. 355–356.

⁷⁵ Gl.: as well as discursive examining with regard to antidotes, discursive examining with regard to suchness, and discursive examining with regard to the attainment.

TN: On the fourfold discursive examining mentioned here, cf. Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, pp. 114–116.

⁷⁶ Cf. *rNam-par mi-rtog-par ’jug-pa zhes-bya-ba’i gzungs*, in KD, vol. 57, pp. 7.1–8.4, of which the citation here is an abbreviated paraphrase. For a critical edition of the Sanskrit, see Kazunobu Matsuda, “Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇī: Sanskrit Text and Japanese Translation,” in *Bulletin of the Research Institute of Bukkyo University*, no. 3, March 1996, pp. 89–113, esp. §§11–12, pp. 96–97. A further paraphrase is found in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 52 (fol. 1r.1–2r.4). For a description of the manuscript, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, p. 1. For a translation from the corresponding Chinese version of the passage, see Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, pp. 118–120.

⁷⁷ I have emended *yod-la ma-byas-par* (“without making them into existents”) to *yid-la ma-byas-par* (“without apprehending them”), following the parallel passages in KD and the Dunhuang manuscript.

⁷⁸ In the *Abhidharmakośa*, the three doors to utter release are spoken of as concentrations: (1) the concentration of signlessness is the concentration whose object is transcendence; (2) the concentration of

emptiness is said to be associated with emptiness and selflessness; and (3) the concentration of aspirationlessness is particularly linked to the truths of suffering and of the origin of suffering, as well as of the path (all of which are to be abandoned). See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 5, ch. 8, pp. 185–186.

⁷⁹ Cf. the translation of this section (§3.3.1.2) in [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” pp. 357–358.

⁸⁰ *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa stong-phrag brgya-pa*, in KD, vol. 24, p. 606.4; cf. also KD, vol. 24, p. 383.6. Cf. Edward Conze (tr.), *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom, with the Divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, p. 527. This *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* citation is also found in the Dunhuang manuscripts IOL Tib J 706 (fol. r1.3) and IOL Tib J 1372 (fol. 1r.3), as well as in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v33.3–4). For a description of the two manuscripts from the Stein collection (marked IOL), see [Dalton and van Schaik](#), *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, pp. 300–301 and pp. 339–340, respectively.

⁸¹ *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa stong-phrag nyi-shu-lnga-pa*, in KH, vol. 28, p. 351.1–2. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v37.6–7); for a translation from the Dunhuang manuscript, see [van Schaik](#), *Tibetan Zen*, p. 41.

⁸² The quotation is found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v37.4–5) and is translated in [Broughton](#), “Early Ch’an Schools in Tibet,” p. 49, n. 6, and in [van Schaik](#), *Tibetan Zen*, p. 40. Citation untraced in *bCom-ldan-’das-kyi gtsug-tor chen-po de-bzhin gshegs-pa’i gsang-ba sgrub-pa’i don mngon-par thob-pa’i rgyu byang-chub sems-dpa’ thams-cad-kyi spyod-pa dpa’-bar ’gro-ba’i mdo le’u stong-phrag bcu-pa-las le’u bcu-pa*, in KH, vol. 64, pp. 823–896; and in *gTsug-tor chen-po bam-po dgu-pa-las bdud-rtsi le’u nyi-tshe phyung-ba*, in KH, vol. 64, pp. 896–931.

⁸³ See [Chapter 5](#), which is entirely devoted to the simultaneous approach.

⁸⁴ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r43.1–4). This passage is from the *Erru sixing lun* (*Long Scroll of the Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Types of Conduct*) attributed to Bodhidharma, translated from the Chinese in [Broughton](#), *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 9; and in Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 69. The quotation again appears in §5.1.1 (C 130.2–4).

⁸⁵ The Tibetan *lham-mer gnas-pa* (“to abide in effulgence”) renders the Chinese expression *ningzhu biguan* (“wall-scrutiny”). See Meinert,

“The Conjunction of Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen* Thought,” p. 255.

⁸⁶ Although the Tibetan reads *mi-’jug*, this is clearly an error and has been emended to *’jug*, according to the Dunhuang manuscript and according to [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 9; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 69.

⁸⁷ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r43.4–5); for a translation, see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 51. This master is called Bu-cu in the Dunhuang manuscript, a reference to Baotang Wuzhu (714–774 ce). See Guilaine Mala, “Empreinte du Tch’an chez les Mystiques Tibétains,” in Marinette Bruno (ed.), *Hermes: Tch’an (Zen), Racines et Floraisons*, Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1985, pp. 387–424, esp. p. 395. Cf. the translation from the *Lidai fabao ji*, a Chinese record of Wuzhu’s teachings, in [Adamek, *The Teachings of Master Wuzhu*](#), p. 119, where we have non-recollection (Ch. *wuyi*) for discipline, non-thought (Ch. *wunian*) for concentration, and being non-deluded (Ch. *mowang*) for sapience. Note also the controversy between the rival Baotang and Jingzhong schools concerning the interpretation of the latter character (*mowang*) as “non-deluded” or “non-forgetting,” both of which are homophones in Chinese. See [ibid.](#), pp. 37–39. A further citation from the preceptor Bu-chu appears in §5.1.1 (C 121.5).

⁸⁸ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r43.5–v43.1).

⁸⁹ The Dunhuang manuscript reads “principal body” (*chos-kyi sku*).

⁹⁰ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v43.1–2). This master, whose name is misspelled “A-ngha-na-her” in the Tibetan text, is called “A-rdan-hwer” in the Dunhuang manuscript and is identical to A-rtan-hwer, a master mentioned in Pelliot tibétain 996(1). There he is described as being the master of a Be’u-sing. See [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 154, n. 8. His name would seem to refer to Ardasīr, an 8th-century Central Asian master who was probably of Persian origin. See Carmen Meinert, “A Pliable Life: Facts and Fiction about the Figure of the Chinese Meditation Master Wolun,” in *Oriens Extremus*, vol. 46, 2007, pp. 184–210, esp. pp. 191–192. See also the French translation of Pelliot tibétain 996 in Mala, “Empreinte du Tch’an chez les Mystiques Tibétains,” pp. 415–416. The present quote reappears in §5.2.1 (C 150.3).

⁹¹ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v43.4). A variant of this quotation reappears in §5.2.1 (C 150.2–3).

⁹² See §5.1.

⁹³ Cf. the translation of this section (§3.3.1.3) in [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” p. 359.

⁹⁴ *gSang-ba 'dus-pa rgyud-kyi rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 18/tsha, p. 767.1–2; cf. *gSang-ba 'dus-pa*, in KD, vol. 81, pp. 187.7–188.1; *Guhyasamājatantra*, Edited by Sitansusekhar Bagchi and Sridhar Tripathi, Darbhanga, India: The Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1988, ch. 2, v. 3, p. 8 (Sanskrit); Francesca Fremantle, *A Critical Study of the Guhyasamāja Tantra*, PhD thesis, London: SOAS, University of London, 1971, p. 34 (English translation). Both C 59.5 and M 40b.1 misquote the first line of the verse. This misreading was already pointed out in [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” pp. 365–366, n. 51.

⁹⁵ Note that *spangs-bral* has been emended to *ma-spangs-bral*, according to C 187.4, C 316.2, C 361.1, and C 404.4; cf. also the future form *ma-spang-bral* in C 8.3 and C 396.5 (though in the latter case, M 297b.3 reads *ma-spangs-bral* instead). This scribal error was already pointed out in [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” p. 366, n. 52.

⁹⁶ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 937.2.

⁹⁷ Cf. the translation of this section (§3.3.1.4) in [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” p. 360; also [Meinert](#), *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, p. 247.

⁹⁸ The term “integral being” (*bdag-nyid chen-po*; Skt. *mahātman*) in a Buddhist text may seem surprising to those familiar with the Buddhist *sūtras*, where the Buddha repeatedly criticizes the Brahmanical notion of a self (Skt. *ātman*). Nevertheless, in the higher *tantras*, particularly those pertaining to *Mahāyoga* and *Atiyoga*, there is found the notion of “integral being” (a literal translation would be “great self”), which refers to an individual’s true condition, the inseparability of emptiness and clarity (*stong-gsal dbyer-med*). As it is explicitly said to be both empty and luminously clear, it is not to be confused with the mistaken notion of a reified self, which the Buddhist tradition as a whole considers heretical and rejects. Guenther translates this term as “True Individuality,” whereas Clemente uses “the totality of one’s state.” Cf. Herbert V. Guenther, *Matrix of Mystery: Scientific and Humanistic Aspects of rDzogs-chen Thought*, Boulder and London: Shambhala, 1984, pp. 156, 162, 281, n. 40; and [Norbu and Clemente](#), *The Supreme Source*, pp. 148, 279, n. 197.

⁹⁹ Here, nonexistence (*med-pa*) must not be understood as the mere opposite of existence (*yod-pa*) but, rather, as lying beyond the conceptual categories of existence and nonexistence. See [Guenther, “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,”](#) p. 366, n. 57; also Keith Dowman, *Old Man Basking in the Sun: Longchenpa’s Treasury of Natural Perfection*, Kathmandu: Vajra Books, 2006, pp. 64–65, 105.

¹⁰⁰ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 422.5; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 91.1; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 160; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 23. This quote is also found in §7.2.2.3.3 (C 413.4).

¹⁰¹ For an attempt to correlate the various forms of non-discursiveness mentioned here with the fourfold correct practice of the *Avikalpapraveśa-nāma-dhāraṇī*, cf. Meinert, “Structural Analysis of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*,” pp. 189–191.

¹⁰² The readings *dam skyes-pa* (C 61.3) and *des skyes-pa* (M 41b.2) have been emended to *da ma-skyes-pa* since neither of these two readings makes sense in this context; the former would suggest “pursuing the supernal/absolute that is produced,” whereas the latter would be “those who pursue what is produced,” but neither of these characterizations would fit the *sTon-mun*. If anything, the latter can be said to “pursue the unborn,” i.e., emptiness. Hence, my translation differs from that proposed by Dalton and van Schaik, who write, “[. . .] yet in striving for the ultimate to be born, their minds are corrupted.” Cf. [Dalton and van Schaik, “Lighting the Lamp,”](#) p. 172.

¹⁰³ Citation untraced in *Sangs-rgyas thams-cad-kyi yul-la ’jug-pa’i ye-shes snang-ba’i rgyan-gyi mdo* (*Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatāra-jñānālokālaṃkāra-sūtra*), in KH, vol. 49, pp. 965–1069. However, the quotation is found in Vimalamitra, *Cig-car ’jug-pa rnam-par mi-rtog-pa’i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, pp. 21.6–22.1, as well as in the Dunhuang manuscripts IOL Tib J 1372 (fol. 1r.5–6) and Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v33.6–r34.1). For a description of the former manuscript, see [Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*](#), pp. 339–340.

¹⁰⁴ *rNal-’byor grub-pa’i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 445.2–3.

¹⁰⁵ Gl.: Being the real ground of everything, it is impartial.

¹⁰⁶ I have emended *gtub* (“to sever”) to *btub* (“effective”) according to the NGM version.

¹⁰⁷ Gl.: i.e., *Atiyoga* meditation.

¹⁰⁸ This refers to the *sTon-mun*, the practitioner of the simultaneous approach.

¹⁰⁹ Yugamdhara (Tib. gNya'-shing-'dzin) is the name of one of seven mythical mountains surrounding Mount Meru. The name literally means "The Yoke-Holder."

¹¹⁰ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 2–617.

¹¹¹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 183.6–184.1; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), pp. 67–68.

¹¹² There are seven ancillaries of enlightenment (*byang-chub yan-lag bdun*; Skt. *saptabodhyaṅga*): recollection (*dran-pa yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *smṛti-saṃbodhyaṅga*), analysis of phenomena (*chos rab-tu rnam-par 'byed-pa yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *dharmapracaya-saṃbodhyaṅga*), diligence (*brtson-'grus yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *vīrya-saṃbodhyaṅga*), joy (*dga'-ba yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *prīti-saṃbodhyaṅga*), suppleness (*shint-tu sbyangs-pa yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *praśrabdhi-saṃbodhyaṅga*), concentration (*ting-nge-'dzin yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *saṃādhi-saṃbodhyaṅga*), and equanimity (*btang-snyoms yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *upekṣā-saṃbodhyaṅga*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 153. Sometimes, analysis of phenomena is replaced by sapience (*shes-rab yang-dag byang-chub-kyi yan-lag*; Skt. *prajñāsaṃbodhyaṅga*). Cf. [Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology*](#), p. 184.

¹¹³ Gl.: the seed-syllables and the emblems with signs, etc.

¹¹⁴ I.e., [Chapters 4–7](#).

4

The Gradual Approach of the Classical *Mahāyāna*

[C 65.1–118.4; M 43b.6–80b.5]

It is in order to know the deviations from the vehicle of spontaneous completeness that the four textual traditions are laid out here. It may be asked, “The first among them, the *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamikas*],¹ meditate on emptiness; why then are they called the gradual approach?”² Although it was taught previously, here is an example:³ it is as when climbing up a great mountain, one walks step by step and [the panorama] expands [before one’s eyes].

When it comes to accomplishing the Victorious One’s principal body, too, having previously trained gradually in the two truths, in calm abiding and insight, one treads on the stages by degrees. Moreover, the *Ghanavyūha-sūtra* states,⁴

Veritably good gold
Might not be apparent in a golden figure;⁵
Yet, if clarified, veritably ground to powder,
And thoroughly refined, it becomes apparent.

Likewise, when the universal ground consciousness,
Together with the seven other consciousnesses,⁶
Is thoroughly refined through concentration,
The *yogin* gains constant insight.

TN: This is the *mallikā* tree, which is a kind of citron.
Cf. [Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary](#), p.
793. The Tibetan text gives the phonetic transcription
ma-li-ka.

4.1. The view

One should come to a resolution through the view.
Initially, through the view, through relying on
individually discerning sapience and through the
argument of interdependent origination, reified entities
are not established {as self-sufficient}. [66] For
instance, as the appearance of a chariot, consisting of the
chariot's aspects, namely, its wooden axle, its small draft
pole, its wheels, and so forth, is widespread, [one should
think that] the chariot's essence is neither the axle, nor is
it the small draft pole, and so forth, nor anything else.⁷
Similarly, the reified entities of pillars, vases, and so
forth appear as the widespread gathering of
interdependently originated causes and conditions; yet
in absolute truth, reified entities, causes, and conditions
of whatever kind are unestablished illusory phenomena.
They are without aspect, without self (Skt. *ātman*),

without life force (Skt. *jīva*), and without personality (Skt. *puruṣa*).⁸ It is maintained that their characteristic is the essence of the eighteen kinds of emptiness, and so forth.⁹

4.2. Meditation

Having come to a resolution through the extensive [use of] such arguments, one meditates.

4.2.1. The four immeasurables

Initially, one meditates gradually on the four immeasurables.¹⁰ First one should meditate on compassion, saying “Sentient beings do not see¹¹ the unborn meaning of absolute truth and veritably suffer: *emaho!*” Thus, one should be veritably tormented. If it is difficult for such a feeling to be produced, one should first generate in retreat [the memory of] one’s parents, siblings, and relatives.¹² When one is competent in this [meditation], that is, when their mere recollection causes tears to well up,¹³ [67] one meditates on intermediate sentient beings.¹⁴ Being competent in this, one meditates on one’s enemies, and having stabilized this, one meditates on all sentient beings. Moreover, one should do as is said:¹⁵

The feeling of compassion is like snow:
The gathering of others’ suffering
Is tormenting and melts the heart,
So that one sheds tears from both mouth and eyes.

Then, concerning kindness, one thinks of sentient beings as one's children; it is like a mother's kindness toward her only child, [yet] without distinguishing between anyone. Through joy, one will become without regret. Due to equanimity, one will not toss away [one's purpose].

The path of learning consists of having the single direction of these {immeasurables}, of having a focus [in terms of one's attention] {as a beginner}, and of being without focus.¹⁶

As for greatness,¹⁷ one will attain {at the time of fruition} the might of the Thus-gone One. Here, no detailed mention is made, but it is found in the three *Bhāvanākramas* of the *Madhyamaka*.¹⁸

4.2.2. The two truths

4.2.2.1. Relative truth

As for meditating on the two truths, first, relative truth is twofold: genuine and wrong.

4.2.2.1.1. Genuine relative truth

Among these, the nature of the enumerations of genuine relative truth, such as the five aggregates,¹⁹ and so forth, is that they are merely spurious. [68] By examining its characteristics, [one understands that relative truth] is void and dysfunctional, that it appears in compatibility [with collective perception], that it is produced from conditions, that it abides {as a mere illusion}, that it is likeable {when it is produced and appears}, and that

{being an assemblage,} it perishes; it is neither permanent {since it is not perdurable}, nor is it nil {since it is non-obstructed and appears multifariously}; it is uncorroborated.²⁰ These [characteristics] are {declared among} the *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamikas*] with regard to the provisional meaning. To give an example,²¹

Like stars, floaters,²² and butter lamps,²³
Illusions, dew, and water bubbles,²⁴
Dreams,²⁵ lightning, and clouds—
Such are compounded phenomena.

Therefore, all phenomena are merely illusory, like a star,²⁶ and so forth. The view that comprehends this {the essence of relative truth} knows things as they are {this, again, is insight}. The nature as known in meditation is the nature of the four aggregates {i.e., the immeasurables}, which is chiefly congruent with sapience and concentration. [69] Its characteristics {i.e., purpose} are to be one-pointed and to distinguish {individually}. The injunctions concerning the qualities of meditating are {spoken, therefore,} for dull people, and so forth. One meditates so as to familiarize oneself.

4.2.2.1.2. *Non-genuine relative truth*

As for non-genuine relative truth, there are dysfunctional appearances²⁷ and dysfunctional non-appearances.²⁸ {[This includes those objects] that are erased when examined, those that are negated, psychic forms, etc.}. The nature [of non-genuine relative truth] is heteronomous,²⁹ and its characteristics when

examined are in this sequence: concerning its characteristics, it is generally³⁰ (1) dysfunctional, (2) uncorroborated, (3) neither permanent, (4) nor nil. Concerning its particulars, that which appears in compatibility [with common perception] {i.e., dysfunctional appearances} (5) is void when examined and (6) has the four characteristics of compounded [phenomena].³¹ These are its six characteristics.³² Secondly, {dysfunctional non-appearances} are the reverse of the former.³³

Furthermore, one should relinquish [non-genuine relative truth] by discarding an intrinsic essence,³⁴ as well as by discarding craving.³⁵

4.2.2.1.3. The obscurations pertaining to relative truth

Even genuine relative truth is viewed as illusory. Therefore, if it be asked what is at fault with positing [genuine relative truth as real, it is replied that], it too is nonexistent. [70] {It may be asked, “Why is it nonexistent?”} [It is because] its production is without essence, so that oneself, others, etc., are genuinely unborn.

When expressed using verbal definitions,³⁶ [the relative] is totally obfuscating³⁷ as regards the absolute. “Obfuscating” [signifies that] it obscures. Moreover,³⁸ it is an obstruction for the extrinsic production of the wisdom that images the absolute; it is an obstruction for the production of the wisdom that images the absolute with respect to oneself; and it is an obstruction for the

production of the wisdom that images the absolute with respect to the natural subjective cognition.³⁹

Including that which pertains to the two obscurations⁴⁰ of genuine relative truth, there arise three {obscurations to the former}. Two are the non-Buddhist [systems], which concern other confused cognitions.⁴¹ The third is precisely [arrived at by] including the [obscuration of the] knowable.

Generally, the obscuration of genuine [relative truth] signifies that since the “relative” is all but a lie, is totally deceiving, is totally fickle and untrustworthy, is totally unexamined, is everywhere renowned as being totally imputed, and is totally obscuring and existent everywhere, it should be relinquished. Even genuine relative truth is to be relinquished.

[71] Moreover, an intrinsic essence {since such an essence is untrue} and craving {i.e., grasping at existents} should be discarded. In this regard, that which is labeled as the conscious continuum, [the afflictions] to be relinquished through seeing, as well as [those to be relinquished] through meditation,⁴² are included among the two obscurations;⁴³ {the deeds (Skt. *karma*)} that are indeterminate [with respect to the purpose of] others, the non-Buddhist⁴⁴ [tenets] {such as the conception of an essence}, which are established due to their own deeds, and {the unchanging deeds} of those who never apply themselves for the purpose of self and others are among the two factors that are to be relinquished.⁴⁵

Contaminated virtues, even those required for the purpose of self and others, are [included among] the two factors to be relinquished. For example, after crossing a

river, one discards the boat.⁴⁶ It may be asked, “How is one to discard or relinquish the very essence of virtues?” The *Āryaratnakūṭa* teaches that by rubbing two pieces of wood against each other, they both burn.⁴⁷ This is because, {when one comprehends and abides in freedom from elaboration, craving is discarded and} even individually discerning sapience is absent.⁴⁸

When the conscious continuum undergoes the abiding transformation⁴⁹ into something else,⁵⁰ there are the pure fields, the two bodies,⁵¹ and the wisdoms of a Buddha; craving is discarded {when those on the path [attain] knowledge}. [72] Relative truth {as an obscuration} may therefore be left for the time being.

4.2.2.2. Absolute truth

Although one is to meditate without imaging the absolute, one must initially comprehend the absolute. In this respect, the absolute is twofold: that which can be enumerated and that which is free from elaboration.

4.2.2.2.1. The absolute truth that can be enumerated

Among these, if that which can be enumerated is distinguished, it is twofold, consisting of cognition {i.e., the knowing agent} and meaning {i.e., the knowable}. Among these, cognition, since it images the two truths, is twofold.⁵²

Objects are twofold: the contaminated objects of hearing and thinking that image absolute truth, and, with regard to relative truth, the object of knowing it as it is and all the objects of craving.⁵³

Concerning the natures, the heteronomous⁵⁴ and imputed⁵⁵ natures are compatible with being undeceiving. This is because they are undeceiving, because they are connected to meaning, because they are to be pursued, and because they are compatible with cutting through elaborations. [73] Therefore, they are to be pursued.⁵⁶

[Absolute truth is so-called] because it is meaningful and holy.⁵⁷ Its characteristics are that it is undeceiving and compatible with cutting through elaboration.

4.2.2.2.2. The absolute truth that is free from elaboration

Concerning the [absolute] truth that is without elaboration, it cuts through the three and eight elaborations. As for the three [elaborations], they are: elaboration of meaning,⁵⁸ conceptual elaboration,⁵⁹ and verbal elaboration.⁶⁰ As for the eight [elaborations], they are to be found in the *Madhyāntavibhāga*.⁶¹ The *dBu-ma shes-rab* says,⁶²

It is not known from elsewhere,⁶³ and it is calm;⁶⁴
Unelaborated through elaborations,
It is without concepts, not different from absolute
meaningfulness:
These are its characteristics.

[Such] is the nature of the absolute truth that is free from elaborations.

The nature of nonexistents is to be without characteristics; their negation⁶⁵ is the thoroughly established [nature]. Absolute truth is not a reified

object of good conceptions {where one merely cuts through the psyche's exaggerations since one [still] has the conception of an essence with regard to the five sense-faculties},⁶⁶ [74] nor is it a place of craving [i.e., an object] of the five remnant [sense-faculties]. Because it is described as being free from an essence and signs, it is not an object that can be described as being a reified entity; it is empty of the signs of an object.

[Absolute truth is further characterized] by the two kinds of selflessness {distinguished} with regard to individuals (Skt. *pudgalanairātmya*) and phenomena (Skt. *dharmanairātmya*), and by the eighteen kinds of emptiness,⁶⁷ and so forth. In this regard, thusness, selflessness, and so on are different [only] in name. Because it is free from the two limitations,⁶⁸ it is the middle path. Since it is the object of the sacred wisdom, since it has relinquished the obscurations, and since it is established through reasoning,⁶⁹ it is absolute truth.⁷⁰ The *Dharmasaṃgīti* states,⁷¹

The truth is without birth.

Therefore, it is true because it is undeceiving. [In absolute truth,] there is neither self nor life force nor individuality nor lord nor person.⁷²

Now, there are grasping appearances⁷³ and grasping certainty;⁷⁴ from among these, here is grasping at certainty. Furthermore, it is said,⁷⁵

Mahāmati! [75] When dissected to the minutest particle of dust, even an ox's horn does not exist as an entity.

Therefore, reified entities are viewed as unborn and empty. Moreover, it is said {in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*},⁷⁶

All interdependently originated phenomena are seen as being from the beginning naturally without signs and naturally without origin. Therefore, even if they are seen as assembled causes and conditions, these very causes and conditions are known indeed to be empty, without signs, and without origin.⁷⁷

The same *sūtra* says,⁷⁸

Not looking for something empty aside emptiness;
Not looking for emptiness apart from what is empty—
Someone whose view is like that
Is said to see emptiness.

This is spoken of extensively in the third *Bhāvanākrama*⁷⁹ and the **Satyadvayanirdeśa*.⁸⁰ Notwithstanding these explanations, it is here taught in brief. In this regard, the intellect's meditating on and approaching the state of absolute truth is twofold: an approach through the door {of one's own textual tradition} and an approach through the door of eliminating the other {that is, misconceptions and doubts engendered by the other textual traditions}.

4.2.3. Calm abiding and insight

4.2.3.1. Calm abiding

In this regard, the body, on a comfortable seat, should be in the posture of the revered Vairocana: the legs crossed, [76] the body not twisted, the head not bent backward or

forward, the tip of the tongue touching the palate, the eyes settled upon the tip of the nose;⁸¹ thus, one meditates gradually on the four immeasurables, etc. Approaching like this, one images emptiness and meditates. As for the manner of evolving, it is said that⁸²

Relying on pure imaging,
Pure non-imaging is born indeed.

And,⁸³

The raucous elephant of the psyche,
Is bound with the rope of recollection
To the stable pillar of imaging
And his power divided gradually with the weapon of
sapience.⁸⁴

Some in the five continua of becoming only have the faculty of training in calm abiding.⁸⁵ Generally, one only speaks of meditation when one has attained calm abiding, but some implement the state of calm abiding familiarization [as if it were an end in itself].

In this regard, there is the cause of calm abiding, its nature,⁸⁶ its characteristic,⁸⁷ its verbal definition,⁸⁸ its time for meditating,⁸⁹ its imaging, its faults and their antidotes, the measure of completion, and the qualities of completion in calm abiding. When [the latter] is attained, it is given the name “contemplation.”

In this regard, concerning imaging at the time of meditating, one should mentally elaborate something. [77] When distinguishing an icon, it is said in the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*,⁹⁰

Pitching his mind upon imagining
The graceful protector of the world,
Whose body is of golden color,
The bodhisattva rests in meditative equipoise (*mnyam-
bzhag*; Skt. *samāhita*).

This is spoken of extensively [in that text].

4.2.3.1.1. The defects and their antidotes

Concerning the faulty defects, they are laziness, forgetfulness of imaging, sinking and agitation,⁹¹ non-effort, and effort.⁹² As for the antidotes by which to relinquish them, they are the eight dispositions:⁹³ faith, inclination, effort, suppleness, recollection, attentiveness,⁹⁴ intention, and equanimity. Concerning the manner of relinquishing these depreciable [defects], the first four are antidotes against laziness {which is fourfold}.⁹⁵ Recollection is an antidote to forgetfulness of imaging. Attentiveness is an antidote to sinking and agitation.

When one has comprehended both [the defects and their antidotes], one relinquishes [the defects]. If there is sinking and agitation, there is the fault of non-effort {if one leaves off intermittently}; this is relinquished through intention. When one is free from sinking and agitation, one finds that {implementing} effort [is a fault]; this is relinquished through equanimity.⁹⁶

4.2.3.1.2. The qualities of completing calm abiding: the four contemplations

When calm abiding⁹⁷ attains the qualities of completion, it is given the name “contemplation.” [78] In this regard, by attaining the other special qualities of imaging, [calm abiding] is given the names “contemplation,”⁹⁸ “[meditative equilibrium of the] form[less] realm,”⁹⁹ and “release in the formless realm.”¹⁰⁰

Thus, only when one is endowed with equanimity of feelings, as well as examination and scrutiny, is there stability without inadequacy (Skt. *anāgamyā*), as well as the intention of application.¹⁰¹ Also, only when one is free from the thirst of the desire [realm] and is endowed with joy and bliss does one speak of the first contemplation.¹⁰² With respect to the first contemplation, absence of mere examination is the distinctive contemplation (Skt. *dhyānāntara*).¹⁰³

Furthermore, being free from examination and scrutiny,¹⁰⁴ when one is free from thirsting for the first contemplation and is endowed with joy, bliss, and thorough limpidity, that is the second contemplation.

When one is free from thirsting for [the second contemplation] and is endowed with equanimity and attentiveness, this is the third contemplation.

When one is free from thirsting for [the third contemplation] and is possessed of equanimity that is neither suffering nor pleasure, and recollection, this is the fourth contemplation.

Likewise, this should also be applied to the formless realm.¹⁰⁵

4.2.3.2. Insight

Veritably becoming familiar like this to calm abiding, be patient! Insight is born. [79] The mind [trained in] calm abiding is unwavering and undisturbed. By entering the stream of notions, [insight] is born of its own accord. Insight is born through scrutiny. When integrated thereto {i.e., depending thereon}, contemplation {i.e., calm abiding} is completed. Concerning the manner of seeing through insight, a *sūtra* says,¹⁰⁶

Phenomena are reflections of the mind {as regards the
domain of calm abiding};
The mind, non-duality,
Is neither produced nor obstructed, and it transcends the
mind;
Non-discursive, it is even like the sky {being the domain of
peace}.

Also,¹⁰⁷

When the sky-like psyche rests in meditative equipoise, all phenomena are genuinely seen just as they are.

Meditating when focusing one's imaging on the absolute meaningfulness thus seen¹⁰⁸ is the cause of insight which, as well as its division, its verbal definition,¹⁰⁹ its characteristics, its fruition, and its object are particulars of contemplation.

4.2.3.3. Rectifying defects

Furthermore, when defects are produced, it is necessary to rectify them.

4.2.3.3.1. The defects

In this regard, there are five or six real defects. [80] The *bDen-pa'i khyad-par bstan-pa'i bsam-gtan* states,¹¹⁰

One is mentally distracted as follows: if one gives up the apprehension which is possessed of the *Mahāyāna* and views according to the auditors' and independent buddhas' apprehension, this is distraction of one's apprehension.

If one gives in to mental dispersion due to the five outer desirable sense-qualities, due to frivolity, signs, conceptions,¹¹¹ the afflictions, the subsidiary afflictions (*nye-ba'i nyon-mongs*; Skt. *upakleśa*), or outward imagings, this is outer distraction.

If one is afflicted by an apathetic equilibrium,¹¹² sleepiness, sinking, the savoring of meditative equilibrium (*snyoms-par 'jug-pa*; Skt. *samāpatti*), meditative equilibrium, or any of the subsidiary afflictions, this is inner distraction.

If one abides on outer signs or apprehends the signs concerning the scope of inner concentration, this is distraction due to signs.

If, depending upon one's inner apprehension, one is pretentious, [fancying] that there is an "I" because of the hosts¹¹³ of the atrophies of feeling, this is distraction due to atrophy.¹¹⁴

Moreover,¹¹⁵

Attachment toward one's body and enjoyments is an obstruction to [calm] abiding. [81] Never to attain satisfaction with regard to the holy doctrine of the noble one's discourse {if one hears a little} is an obstruction to insight. Remaining frivolous and being complacent when one has not even heard a little doctrine is an obstruction to both.¹¹⁶ In this regard, because of the first [obstruction],¹¹⁷ one does not apply oneself. Because of the second,¹¹⁸ one does not evolve.

Therefore, one should not act like that. Furthermore,¹¹⁹

Agitation and regret are obscurations of calm abiding. Lethargy, sleepiness, and doubt are obscurations of insight. The thirst of desire, as well as malice, are obscurations of both.

4.2.3.3.2. The means of rectifying the defects

Concerning the means to rectify them, whenever one sees internal mental distractions or external ones, one should be aware that one is without calm abiding. Recollecting the open dimension of phenomena (*chos-kyi dbyings*; Skt. *dharmadhātu*), one should rest in equipoise therein. If this is not beneficial or is otherwise unsuitable, [one should recall that] the outer reified entities of the five desirable sense-qualities, and so forth, as well as all discursive thoughts whatsoever, have the characteristic of being momentary and impermanent; they are false and hollow, are nonentities, are similar to adventitious clouds, and originate without a cause. If one examines them like that, one will become peaceful. [82]

If one is under the power of lethargy, sinking, indeterminateness, or sleepiness, and if [one's mind is] unclear, one should be aware that one is without insight. One should also be aware as [one's mind] is moved by effort.

If one enters equipoise when devoid of sinking and agitation, [one's practice] is spontaneously accomplished. Hence, if the enlightened mind is generated in suchness, one should be equanimous as one's effort unwinds from deep within. All this is dealt with extensively [in the relevant texts].

4.2.3.3.3. The qualities of rectifying the defects

As for the qualities of rectifying the defects, whenever lethargy, sleepiness, and so on [arise], one can pacify

them. The paths of calm abiding are unidirectionally biased toward cessation and calm. One falls into the limitation of the meditative equilibria of cessation, etc.¹²⁰ If one's insight is great but one is without calm abiding, this is a defect in that one becomes diffuse and wavers because of the merest imaging of outer or inner objects, like a butter lamp moved by the wind.¹²¹ The defects and qualities of calm abiding and insight are likewise dealt with extensively.

By pacifying the defects, calm abiding is connected to insight, and in the clear meaning of insight one is no longer controlled by sinking and agitation. The authoritative scriptures say,¹²²

[83] The intellect of clear insight is like a butter lamp;
Unwavering concentration of calm abiding is like the ocean
[. . .].

After a prolonged period like this, sooner or later the three experiences arise. {At first, [the mind] is like a mountain cascade, second, like a stream, and third, like a lake.} As defects are thus increasingly pacified, the conception of sleepiness is conquered, one's body becomes light, one's body and mind are supple and attain purity, one's physical complexion is blissful even as one's bodily frame is unfed, and one's faculties are clear, etc. Even if such indications occur, one should not become conceited.

Whenever a beginner in contemplation eliminates lethargy and sinking, and pacifies agitation and distraction, his physical and mental complexion is

blissful¹²³ and clear. Whenever mental events,¹²⁴ such as a little sleepiness, and so forth, are produced, so are produced the qualities {in regard to [rectifying] them}. It is said that one should not become conceited on account of this.

Furthermore, by gradually traversing the stages for a prolonged period, one gradually journeys through the excellent five paths {the path of accumulation, and so forth} and ten stages.¹²⁵ As the obscuration specific to each period [of development] diminishes, the corresponding wisdom is born.

4.2.4. Omens in one's dreams

Thus, when there is the cause of training, the good sign of omens in dreams occurs. [84] However, one should not become conceited. The *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra* says that there are 108 kinds of dreams.¹²⁶ The dreams while one has fallen asleep are as follows:

4.2.4.1. One may behold the Thus-gone One bestowing injunctions.¹²⁷ {If one sees in one's dream the Thus-gone One bestowing injunctions, and if one has accomplished the mnemonic formula (*gzungs*; Skt. *dhāraṇī*), the supracognition, or the energy of truth,¹²⁸ one is a bodhisattva [who has obtained] the eighth stage of calm abiding. If one is close to obtaining these, one will view any one of the [first] seven [stages].}

4.2.4.2. One may also see the Thus-gone One not saying anything at all.¹²⁹ {This is because of deeds (Skt. *karma*) obscuring [one's understanding of] the doctrine. One should therefore listen to, hold on to, and recite the

doctrine and should venerate those who do so. One's obscurations being thereby purified, one will view any one of the [first] seven stages [of a bodhisattva]. If one is on the first stage, one should recite the *Triskandhaka-sūtra*¹³⁰ thrice a day and thrice a night [for seven years].¹³¹ If one is on the second stage, one should recite it for six years. If on the third stage, for five years; if on the fourth, for four. If on the fifth stage, for three years; if on the sixth, for two. And if on the seventh stage, [one should recite it] for one year.}

4.2.4.3. One may see the Thus-gone One covered from head to toe.¹³² {This signifies that one views sentient beings as one's virtuous friend and listens to them [in that capacity]; since they are ordinary beings,¹³³ one will procure them the assurance of a non-hostile mind, and, having purified one's obscurations, one will view the first stage.}

4.2.4.4. One might see the Thus-gone One looking away.¹³⁴ {This signifies an obstacle to becoming ordained and for listening to the doctrine. Therefore, one should prepare a religious seat¹³⁵ and prompt one's mind¹³⁶ to listen [to the doctrine]. One's obscurations being purified, one will view any one of the [first] seven stages.} [85]

4.2.4.5. One may see a statue of the Thus-gone One made out of clay.¹³⁷ {This signifies that one is on the first stage and has engaged in¹³⁸ the conduct of expounding the doctrine. In a *stūpa* or offering chapel¹³⁹ one should generate a non-hostile mind, placing a butter lamp on one's head. Thereby, one's obscurations will be

purified. If one sees this dream on another stage, one should be aware that it is the activity of Māra.} ¹⁴⁰

4.2.4.6. One may see a picture of the Thus-gone One drawn in color. ¹⁴¹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] five stages. If one dreams that one makes offerings to [the picture], one will view the first stage. If one dreams that one joins the palms of one's hands, one will view the second stage. If one is praising it, one will view the third stage. If one is prostrating before it, one will view the fourth stage. If one is circumambulating it, one will view the fifth stage. Therefore, generating patience with regard to the doctrine, one will even obtain a prophecy [predicting one's enlightenment].}

4.2.4.7. One may see the Thus-gone One departing. ¹⁴² {That is a prophecy that one should gladden him with various means, such as reciting prayers. Therefore, one should carefully recite doctrinal explanations and whitewash *stūpas*. One's obscurations will thereby be purified and one will view the third stage. If another bodhisattva goes and sees the Thus-gone One, and if, having gone to the scullery, he sees the *Tathāgata*, one will view the first stage. If he enters a shrine, one will view the second stage. If he goes to listen to the doctrine, one will view the third stage. If he rests inside, one will view the fourth stage. If he is alone, one will view the fifth stage. If one sees him talk and go, one will view the sixth stage. If he bows down and goes, one will view the seventh stage. If he performs a miracle and goes, one will view the eighth stage. If he emanates an emanation and goes, one will view the ninth stage. If he

looks right and left, expounds emptiness to wandering beings, and goes, one will view the tenth stage.}

4.2.4.8. One may see the Thus-gone One teaching the doctrine, while not knowing [its meaning].¹⁴³ [86] {That is because one has blamed those expounding the doctrine concerning the Teacher's transcendence. Therefore, one should seek to hear [the doctrine] without being separated from a virtuous friend. One's obscurations will be purified thereby, and one will view any one of the ten stages. If one hears a religious exposition by the *Tathāgata* on generosity, one will view the first stage. The same can be applied up to sapience, [which signifies that] one views the sixth stage. If one hears a talk on compassion, one will view the seventh stage. If one hears a talk on genuine individual awareness, one will view the eighth stage. If one hears a talk on concentration, one will view the ninth stage. If one hears a talk on strength, one will view the tenth stage.}¹⁴⁴

4.2.4.9. One may see the Thus-gone One walking in the sky due to his magic.¹⁴⁵ {This is a prophecy that one will view [any one of the first] seven stages. One should meditate on concentration and be patient with respect to the doctrine. If one sees the *Tathāgata* sitting in the sky,¹⁴⁶ one will view the first stage. If one sees him going, one will view the second stage. If one sees him sitting on the ground radiating light, one will view the third stage. If he is sitting there teaching the doctrine, one will view the fourth stage. If he is performing miracles, one will view the fifth stage. If he is sitting on the ground implementing concentration, one will view

the sixth stage. If he is sitting on the ground giving off light [upward],¹⁴⁷ one will view the seventh stage. If he gets up, strides through the sky, and disappears, one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.10. One might see the Thus-gone One passing into transcendence.¹⁴⁸ {This signifies that one has relinquished the doctrine, is hypocritical, and has sought to gain things through lies. Therefore, one must honor the three jewels, present benefactions to one's teacher of the doctrine, and restrain one's three doors. One's obscurations being purified thereby, one will view any one of the [first] five stages.}

4.2.4.11. One may see the Thus-gone One sitting there and getting up [to leave].¹⁴⁹ {This signifies that, under the power of evil companions, one has performed the activity of rejoicing in the decline of the doctrine. However, having generated the mind of enlightenment, one will view the first stage before a long time elapses. [87] One should therefore confess before one's teacher during a week, or before a *stūpa* for three days and three nights. Those following *Bon* are to be prompted toward the doctrine [like that].}¹⁵⁰

4.2.4.12. One may find [in one's dream] the remains of the Thus-gone One.¹⁵¹ {This signifies that one will view the three [pure] stages.¹⁵² Even if one dies, one will meet the Buddha and obtain a prophecy [concerning one's enlightenment].¹⁵³ If one abides on any of the other stages and finds his remains, [the dreams should be interpreted as follows:] If one finds the hair, one will view the first stage. If one finds the fingernails, one will view the second stage. If one finds relics (*ring-bsrel*;

Skt. *śarīra*),¹⁵⁴ one will view the third stage. If one finds the teeth, one will view the fourth stage. If one finds the canine teeth, one will view the fifth stage. If one finds the tuft of hair on his forehead (*mdzod-spu*; Skt. *ūrṇākeśa*),¹⁵⁵ one will view the sixth stage. If one finds a hand, one will view the seventh stage. If one finds the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (*gstug-tor*; Skt. *uṣṇīṣa*),¹⁵⁶ one will view the eighth stage. If one finds individual parts of his body, one will view the ninth stage. If one finds the entire body, one will view the tenth stage.}

4.2.4.13. One may [dream that] one finds the scattered hair of the Thus-gone One.¹⁵⁷ {This signifies that one will view the ninth stage and that the past *Tathāgatas* have made a prophecy [concerning one's enlightenment]. After dying, one's obscurations will be purified. Moreover, if a householder finds the hair, one will view the first stage. If it is found by one who has renounced home, one will view the second stage. If it is found by someone walking along a lane, one will view the third stage. If it is found by someone who has come to a trifurcation, one will view the fourth stage. If it is found at the door of a city, one will view the fifth stage. If it is found by someone who has gone outside, one will view the sixth stage. If it is found in a park, one will view the seventh stage. If it is found among people, one will view the eighth stage. If it is found by the roadside,¹⁵⁸ one will view the ninth stage. If it is found by someone in meditative equilibrium, one will view the tenth stage.}

4.2.4.14. One may behold a *stūpa* one has not previously seen.¹⁵⁹ {This signifies that there are karmic obscurations and obstacles. However, if one relies on a virtuous friend, one will obtain realization and the mnemonic formula and will view all of the ten stages. If one sees oneself not worshiping,¹⁶⁰ one will view the first stage. [88] If [the *stūpa*] is made of stone, one will view the second stage. If one is whitewashing [the *stūpa*] with limestone, one will view the third stage. If one is adorning [the *stūpa*] with a platform and parasol,¹⁶¹ one will view the fourth stage. If one is adorning its stone pillars, one will view the fifth stage. If one is connecting golden tethers [to the *stūpa*], one will view the sixth stage. If one is covering [the *stūpa*] in a jeweled lattice, one will view the seventh stage. If one is adorning it with little bells, one will view the eighth stage. Regarding [dreams that are] seen on the [first] seven stages, one should be aware that they may occur as the activity of Māra. On the ninth and tenth stages, there are no such wrong dreams.}¹⁶²

4.2.4.15. One might see *stūpas* adorned with jewels.¹⁶³ {This signifies that one will quickly become a Buddha and will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.16. One may see miraculously created *stūpas*.¹⁶⁴ {This signifies that one will be purified of one's obscurations in this very life and will view the eighth stage; this is thought even by bodhisattvas.}

4.2.4.17. One may behold the light of the Thus-gone One.¹⁶⁵ {This signifies that one will view the third stage. If one is on another stage, whatever one thinks of will be

completed. If one is diligent, one will attain the mnemonic formula and any one of the ten stages.} ¹⁶⁶

4.2.4.18. One may hear the sound of the Thus-gone One's voice without seeing him. ¹⁶⁷ {This signifies that one will view the fourth stage. If one was a king in the past, sentient beings have desisted from viewing the Buddha. Even if one becomes ordained, one will deride the doctrine. Therefore, one should recite the *Triskandhaka-sūtra* day and night for a month.}

4.2.4.19. One might dream of the body of the Thus-gone One. ¹⁶⁸ {This signifies that one will view the first through to the tenth stages and, having the capacity to accomplish the mnemonic formula, concentration, and supracognition, will be considered by the Thus-gone One.} [89]

4.2.4.20. One may see oneself presenting alms to the Thus-gone One as he gets up. ¹⁶⁹ {This signifies that one will view the first stage. If one sees oneself presenting alms to him as he is seated, one will view the second stage. If one presents alms before an arrayed image [of the Thus-gone One], one will view the third stage. If one presents alms to him as he is surrounded by his closest attendants, one will view [the fourth stage. If one presents alms to him as he is surrounded by many people, one will view] ¹⁷⁰ the fifth stage. If one presents alms to him as he is surrounded by two people, one will view the sixth stage. If one presents alms to him in meditative equilibrium amid all the arrays, one will view the seventh stage. If one presents alms to him as he is teaching, ¹⁷¹ one will view the eighth stage. If one presents alms to him as he is performing a miracle, one

will view the ninth stage. One should realize that all these dreams may be the activity of Māra.} ¹⁷²

4.2.4.21. One may be presenting offerings before a *stūpa* in one's dream. ¹⁷³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] five stages. If one does not become conceited even as one recalls one's acts of generosity, one will view the first stage. Thus, the five perfections should be applied to the five stages. One should be without hostility toward anyone.}

4.2.4.22. One might [see] the Thus-gone One wearing stained clothes. ¹⁷⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] four stages. If undesirable harmful conditions occur due to one's great obscurations, one will view the first stage. If mixed conditions occur, one will view the second stage. If these occur physically, one will view the third stage. If they occur mentally, one will view the fourth stage. If one harms oneself, one will view the fifth stage. Therefore, without pride or jealousy, one should instigate sentient beings toward worshiping and should recite the *Triskandhaka-sūtra*.}

4.2.4.23. One might in one's dream hear doctrines one has not previously heard. ¹⁷⁵ {Honoring the Buddha, the bodhisattvas, and many individuals expounding the doctrine, [90] one will view any one of the [first] seven stages; it shall be according to whatever one has heard is being said. If one hears various religious discourses, one will view the first stage. If one hears a discourse on reducing one's requisites, one will view the second stage. If one hears a discourse on resolving one's doubts, one will view the third stage. If one hears a discourse on

mnemonic formulas, one will view the fourth stage. If one hears a discourse on kindness according to the dialectical vehicle,¹⁷⁶ one will view the fifth stage. If one hears a discourse on absolute truth, one will view the sixth stage. [If one hears all of these discourses, one will view the seventh stage.]}¹⁷⁷

4.2.4.24. One may [dream of] doctrines taught that one does not know upon waking up.¹⁷⁸ {Since one's former deeds are obscurations for [one's understanding of] the doctrine, one should present benefactions to those expounding the doctrine. Having cleansed these obscurations, one will view the second stage.}

4.2.4.25. One may see oneself hearing the doctrine and giving many expositions thereon.¹⁷⁹ {This signifies that one will view the first stage. If one does not forget it even as one wakes up, one will view the second stage. Thereby nothing will deteriorate.}

4.2.4.26. One may see a monk, whom one has not previously seen, expound the doctrine.¹⁸⁰ {This is the thought of all bodhisattvas. One's obscurations and obstacles are slight; if one implements diligence, one will obtain a vision and will view any one of the [first] six stages. If the monk expounds [a section in] verse, one will view the first stage. If he holds a discourse on a *sūtra* section, one will view the second stage. If he expounds [a section in] verse [and a *sūtra* section],¹⁸¹ one will view the third stage. If he expounds various [topics], one will view the fourth stage. If he expounds the profound, one will view the fifth stage. If he expounds genuine individual awareness, one will view the sixth stage.}

4.2.4.27. One might see oneself sitting on a throne expounding the doctrine.¹⁸² {If one has previously prepared a religious throne,¹⁸³ one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. If one is unsatisfied as one speaks, one will view the first stage. If one speaks with satisfaction, one will view the second stage. If one teaches coherently, one will view the third stage. [91] If all one says is coherent, one will view the fourth stage. If one teaches the object of great knowledge, one will view the fifth stage. If one teaches the object of the auditors (*nyan-thos*; Skt. *śrāvaka*), one will view the sixth stage. If one teaches the object of the bodhisattvas, one will view the seventh stage. If one teaches the object of the Buddhas, one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.28. One may dream of oneself reaching a place.¹⁸⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] nine stages. If the place is not trampled on, one will view the first stage. If one obtains wealth and remains, one will view the second stage. If one receives the religious teachings and remains, one will view the third stage. If one sees one's virtuous friend and remains, one will view the fourth stage. If one remains with one's mind disciplined, one will view the fifth stage. If one remains while one's body is comfortable, one will view the sixth stage. If one remains while one's mind is comfortable, one will view the seventh stage. If one remains and is endowed with supracognition, one will view the eighth stage. If [one receives] a prophecy in this place, one will view the ninth stage.}

4.2.4.29. One may see the dais of enlightenment.¹⁸⁵ {Generally, one is close to being non-revertible and will

view any one of the ten stages. If one sees the bodhi dais but not the bodhi tree,¹⁸⁶ one will view the first stage. But if one sees the tree [of enlightenment], one will view the second stage. If one sees many thickets surrounding the tree, one will view the third stage. If one sees [abundant]¹⁸⁷ leaves, one will view the fourth stage. If one sees abundant flowers,¹⁸⁸ one will view the fifth stage. If one sees [abundant]¹⁸⁹ fruits, one will view the sixth stage. If one sees an even seat, one will view the seventh stage. If one sees humans surrounding the bodhi dais, one will view the eighth stage. If one sees serpent-spirits surrounding it, one will view the ninth stage. If one sees gods surrounding it, one will view the tenth stage.}

4.2.4.30. One may see the Thus-gone One having a stroll.¹⁹⁰ {This is because one has gladdened [the Buddha] and has donated the doctrine.¹⁹¹ Having thoroughly attained [one's goal] through diligence, one will relish not holding on to faults. [92] One will thereby view any one of the [first] seven stages. If the Thus-gone One strolls about ungracefully, one will view the first stage. If he strolls about gracefully, one will view the second stage. If his seat is being prepared, one will view the third stage. If he sits down having strolled about, one will view the fourth stage. If one sees him surrounded by thickets, one will view the fifth stage. If he is being strewn with flowers, one will view the sixth stage. If he is being adorned with canopies, one will view the seventh stage.}

4.2.4.31. One may see the Thus-gone One turning the wheel of the doctrine.¹⁹² {This signifies that one will

view any among the [first] seven stages. If his seat has not been prepared, [one will view the first stage. If his seat has been prepared, one will view the second stage. If various seats have been prepared,] one will view the third stage.¹⁹³ If his seat has been strewn with flowers, one will view the fourth stage. If a canopy is hung up above him, one will view the fifth stage. If melodious tunes resound in the atmosphere, one will view the sixth stage. If one beholds white parasols and lattices covering the atmosphere,¹⁹⁴ one will view the seventh stage.}

4.2.4.32. One might behold the *stūpa* of the Thus-gone One's passing into transcendence.¹⁹⁵ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. If one sees dust settling upon the *stūpa*, one will view the first stage. If one sees the *stūpa* dustless, one will view the second stage. If one sees mixed kinds of grasses [growing around the *stūpa*],¹⁹⁶ one will view the third stage. If one sees green grass growing [near the *stūpa*], one will view the fourth stage. If one sees thickets surrounding [the *stūpa*], one will view the fifth stage. If one sees flowers growing there, one will view the sixth stage. If one sees many birds chirping, one will view the seventh stage. If one sees the ornaments adorning [the *stūpa*], one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.33. One may [dream of] finding the religious robes of the Thus-gone One.¹⁹⁷ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. By persevering in recalling the Buddha, one should seek wisdom. If one finds religious robes that are stained, one will view the first stage. [93] [If one finds] stainless

religious robes, one will view the second stage. If they are colored, one will view the third stage. If one is ironing and dusting the religious robes, one will view the fourth stage. If they are luminescent, one will view the fifth stage. If the religious robes are performing miracles, one will view the sixth stage. If one finds one of the [three] religious robes,¹⁹⁸ one will view the seventh stage. If one finds the threefold religious robes, one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.34. One may [dream that] one finds the alms-bowl of the Thus-gone One.¹⁹⁹ {This signifies that one will view the eighth stage and become a vessel in which to impart the doctrine. Therefore, one should meditate on patience. If one finds a defective alms-bowl, one will view the first stage. If one finds a non-defective alms-bowl, one will view the second stage. If one finds an alms-bowl full of tasty food, one will view the third stage. If one finds an alms-bowl filled with flowers, one will view the fourth stage. If one finds an alms-bowl filled with fruits, one will view the fifth stage. If one finds an alms-bowl filled with food, one will view the sixth stage. If one finds an alms-bowl full of scents, one will view the seventh stage. If one finds an alms-bowl wrapped up with flower garlands, one will view the eighth stage. If one finds an alms-bowl together with religious robes, one will view the ninth stage. If one finds an alms-bowl filled with space,²⁰⁰ one will view the tenth stage. In this regard, aside from conceit, one should realize [that these dreams may be] the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.35. One may view solely the Thus-gone One.²⁰¹ {This signifies that in solitude one should persevere in emptiness. Thus, one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.36. One may see the Thus-gone One surrounded by many people.²⁰² {This signifies that one should be patient when many people are assembled. One will view any one of the ten stages. This pivots on one's diligence. If one sees the *Tathāgata* surrounded by menials²⁰³ [and gentry],²⁰⁴ one will view the first stage. If one sees him surrounded by aristocrats, one will view the second stage. If one sees him surrounded by priests, one will view the third stage. If one sees him surrounded by kings,²⁰⁵ one will view the fourth stage. If one sees him surrounded by serpent-spirits, one will view the fifth stage. If one sees him surrounded by the four great kings,²⁰⁶ one will view the sixth stage. [94] If one sees him surrounded by the Śakras,²⁰⁷ one will view the seventh stage. If one sees him surrounded by the Brahmās,²⁰⁸ one will view the eighth stage. If one sees him surrounded by the gods of the ethereal classes,²⁰⁹ one will view the ninth stage. If one sees him surrounded by bodhisattvas, one will view the tenth stage—this is so, unless [these dreams] are the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.37. One may see the parasol of the Thus-gone One.²¹⁰ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] nine stages. If one does not like gain and honor, one will quickly gain certainty. If one sees a parasol made of leaves, one will view the first stage. One may see a parasol made of bamboo, or one made of birch bark, or of wood, or of branches, or one made of iron,

gold, or jewels, or one adorned with bells and jingles—these dreams should be applied to the nine stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.38. One might see that one happens upon the Thus-gone One.²¹¹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. If one perseveres, one will become certain. One may happen upon him as he dwells in a house, [or in a doorway,]²¹² or as he is in a pleasure grove, [or as he is strolling,]²¹³ or as he dwells in his abode, or as he implements concentration, or one might see him in a stream, or on a mountain, or in the sky, or as he performs a miracle—these dreams should be applied to the ten stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.39. One may behold the seat of the Thus-gone One.²¹⁴ {This signifies that one will view the [first] six stages. One may dream that the seat has not been excellently made, ²¹⁵ or that it has been excellently made, or that it has been dusted, or that it is multicolored, or that it has been arranged, [or that it has been excellently arranged]²¹⁶—these dreams should be applied to the six stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.40. One may see oneself presenting food to the Thus-gone One.²¹⁷ {This signifies that one will view the [first] seven stages. If one presents it to him as he has entered a town, one will view the first stage. One may present it to him as he dwells inside the town, or as he walks through a door, or as he walks along a lane, or through the city gate, or into a monastery, [95] or into a shrine—these dreams should be applied to the seven stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.41. One may see oneself presenting a garment to the Thus-gone One.²¹⁸ {This signifies that one will view the [first] eight stages. One may present it respectfully, or present a white garment, or present a red one, or a multicolored one, or a golden-colored one, or a garment bedecked with jewels, or one with colorful motifs, or a luminescent one—these dreams should be applied to the eight stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.42. One might see oneself presenting flowers²¹⁹ before the Thus-gone One.²²⁰ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages, and that one's obscurations are great. One may present withering flowers, [or fresh flowers,]²²¹ or variegated flowers, or scatter flowers, or present them in his hand, or present divine flowers—these dreams should be applied to the six stages sequentially, excepting the stage of a beginner.}²²²

4.2.4.43. One may see oneself on a mountain.²²³ {This signifies that because one is regretful and has relinquished the doctrine, there are many illnesses and one's sapience is slight. Therefore, if one is diligent in being without hostility toward all sentient beings, any one of the [first] five stages will occur. One should recite the *Triskandhaka-sūtra* many times.}

4.2.4.44. One may observe oneself naked.²²⁴ {This signifies that one's obscurations are slight and that one should meditate on emptiness. One will thereby view any one of the [first] four stages. If one is standing naked in a town, one will view the first stage. If one is in the town center, one will view the second stage. If one is

in a monastery, one will view the third stage. If one is on a mountain, one will view the fourth stage.}

4.2.4.45. One may observe oneself standing to one side.²²⁵ {This signifies that one has been relinquished by one's virtuous friend, [but if one counteracts this,] one will view the first stage. [96] One's intellect is small and lazy, and one faces many sorrows, many illnesses, and much harm. People feel hatred toward one, and one [easily] becomes distracted. Enjoyments are gained with difficulty and afflictions are many. The reason one finds this is that one has blamed and relinquished those expounding the doctrine and has failed to venerate them. But by relying on an instructor and by giving up all one's possessions with a non-hostile mind, any one of the [first] six stages will occur.}

4.2.4.46. One may dream that one has gone to a country one has [not]²²⁶ previously seen.²²⁷ {This signifies that one has obscurations; however, by persevering in one's purpose, any one of the [first] three stages will occur. If one implements many virtuous roots, one will view the first stage.²²⁸ If one meditates on emptiness, one will view the second stage. If one is patient with regard to the doctrine, one will view the third stage.}

4.2.4.47. One might see oneself standing in a river.²²⁹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the first five stages. On the stage of a beginner, virtues and sins both match each other in quantity. One should rely on an individual who has given up [his possessions], who has relinquished sin, and who believes in the doctrine. One may be standing in a raging river, or in foaming water,

or among waves, or in a pond, or in limpid water—these dreams should be applied to the five stages sequentially.}²³⁰

4.2.4.48. One may see rain pouring down.²³¹ {This signifies that the activities of Māra are numerous; [but if one counteracts them,] one will view the [first] seven stages. Cupid²³² abuses those who preach the doctrine or else extols them for his own gain and gives wrong instructions to those who persevere. Therefore, by being patient and by taking pains to hear [the doctrine], one will benefit [others] by not being attached to gain and honor. In this regard, one may dream that rain falls from dusty clouds, or that rain is accompanied by a stormy wind, or that [rain] is accompanied by stormy clouds, or that rain is accompanied by the sound of thunder, [or that it is accompanied by panic-causing lightning, or that lightning strikes]²³³ [97] or that rain is pouring down in streams—these dreams should be applied to the seven stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.49. One may dream that the earth is shaking.²³⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. Since one has caused sentient beings to be scared, one should restrain one's three doors and protect them. In the dream, the earth may shake many times, or the earth may shake while disturbing a town and all its people, or the earth may shake for a long time, or it may shake because of the energy of truth, or it may shake because of Māra, or it may shake and cause damage, or it may shake because one has persevered in the mnemonic formula. One may see all the powerful gods assemble after the earth has shaken, or one may see the

serpent-spirits and Brahmās generate dazzle after the earth has shaken, or one may, the earth having shaken, hear the voice of the *Tathāgata*—these dreams should be applied to the ten stages sequentially.} ²³⁵

4.2.4.50. One may see oneself coming upon a battle. ²³⁶ {This signifies that one will view the [first] four stages. Relying on an evil instructor, one has taken pains for the sake of gain and honor. Therefore, one should engage in the six perfections. The fight may take place where one remains, or one may come upon weapons that are being struck, or upon a fight through thrashing, or upon a fight through chastising ²³⁷—these dreams should be applied to the four stages sequentially. But if one does not persevere, these dreams may be the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.51. One may dream that one is ill. ²³⁸ {This signifies that [one will view the first] two stages and that there are many obstacles to whatever one does, whether [one's actions be] worldly or supramundane. Therefore, if one does the reverse of these three: snatching back what was donated, destroying what was assembled for the purpose of the doctrine, and presenting benefactions with a hostile mind, [their effects] will be postponed.} ²³⁹

4.2.4.52. One might observe oneself falling into an abyss without resort. ²⁴⁰ [98] {This signifies that one has debased and fickle thoughts from the past, is without belief, and that the activities of Māra are many. Being feeble and of weak intention, even if one generates an inclination [toward what is beneficial], it will subside again. One regrets being generous, and whatever doctrine one has studied is again forgotten. Relying on

an evil instructor, one has no belief in what is good. Falling from the earth into an abyss, one stumbles on to weapons; this signifies that one will view the first stage. Falling from a rock cliff signifies that one will view the second stage. One should persevere in generosity and worship.}

4.2.4.53. One may dream that one is released from being killed.²⁴¹ {This signifies that the activities of Māra are many, but one has no karmic obscurations. By much implementation of concentration and kindness, one will view any one of the [first] six stages. One may be released from being killed in a sanctuary or be released from being killed in the vicinity of a town, or be released from being killed in a relative's home—these dreams should be applied to the three stages sequentially.}²⁴²

4.2.4.54. One might [dream] that one has gone to one's enemies' home.²⁴³ {This signifies that one will view the [first] five stages. One may go to one's enemies' home as they are bearing [variegated]²⁴⁴ weapons, or one may go to one's enemies' home as they are bearing weapons of a single kind,²⁴⁵ or as they are bearing clubs, or as they are bearing stones, or as they are empty-handed—these dreams should be applied to the [first] five stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.55. One may [dream] that one is walking through the sky.²⁴⁶ {This signifies that one should not be together with sentient beings, who will tremble [at this sight]. One thereby will view any one of the [first] seven stages. One may walk through the sky while implementing generosity or walk through the sky while

beholding a seer (Skt. *ṛṣi*), [99] [or while seeing a mendicant,]²⁴⁷ or while seeing a serpent-spirit, or while seeing a god, or while seeing Brahmā, or while seeing a bodhisattva as well as the *Tathāgata*—these dreams should be applied to the seven stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.56. One might [dream that one] is holding a lamp in one's hand.²⁴⁸ {This signifies that, being without material goods, one should persevere to enjoy wisdom.}

4.2.4.57. One may see a bodhisattva returning.²⁴⁹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages. In one's next life, one will attain the non-revertible stage, and one will obtain a dependable prophecy [concerning one's enlightenment]. One may see oneself returning by foot or see oneself returning in a carriage pulled by [an ox],²⁵⁰ or in a carriage pulled by a horse, or one pulled by an elephant, or in a rickshaw, or returning through the sky²⁵¹—these dreams should be applied to the six stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.58. One may [dream that] one obtains a volume of scriptures.²⁵² {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] three stages. Therefore, one should confess one's sins. One may obtain a volume of the auditors or obtain a volume on the perfection [of sapience] or obtain a volume of the profound—these dreams should be applied to the three stages.}²⁵³

4.2.4.59. One might dream that one hears the sound of a mnemonic formula.²⁵⁴ {One may hear the sound of a mnemonic formula engendered in verse, or the sound engendered by its syllables, or the sound engendered by its being written in calligraphy, or the sound of it being evoked by serpent-spirits, or the sound of a mnemonic

formula being thoroughly grasped by the gods, or the sound of the mnemonic formula of absolute truth—these dreams should be applied to the six stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.60. One may [dream that] one hears the sound of concentration.²⁵⁵ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. Therefore, one should persevere in solitude. One may hear the sound of the concentration possessed of examination [and scrutiny],²⁵⁶ or of the concentration without examination and possessed of scrutiny, [100] or of the concentration with neither examination nor scrutiny, or of the concentration of the abodes of Brahmā,²⁵⁷ or the sound of the concentration on emptiness, or the sound of the concentration that accomplishes all needs,²⁵⁸ [or the sound of the concentration of great awareness,]²⁵⁹ or the sound of the [concentration of] arrays of Buddhas—these dreams should be applied to the eight stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.61. One may [dream that] one hears the sound of the *Vaipulya-sūtra* section.²⁶⁰ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages. The sound of the six perfections should be applied to the six stages sequentially, not omitting the perfection of sapience.}

4.2.4.62. One may hear the name of a monk who is expounding the doctrine.²⁶¹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] four stages. A bodhisattva acquainted with this relies on a virtuous friend. One may hear the name of a monk whom one has never seen previously, or of one [whose name one has] not previously heard,²⁶² or of a monk from another world—these dreams should be applied to the [first] three stages

sequentially. If one hears [the name of] a monk who is impeded by one more birth [before enlightenment], this is good and represents the fourth stage.}

4.2.4.63. One may observe that one obtains assurance in verse.²⁶³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] three stages. One may obtain assurance in [a few]²⁶⁴ verses, or assurance in a variety of verses, or assurance in profound verses—these dreams should be applied to the three stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.64. One may dream that one has [obtained] assurance in the entire *sūtra* section.²⁶⁵ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages.}.

4.2.4.65. One might [dream that] one hears the sound of a religious treasure.²⁶⁶ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. One should have belief and ask questions. One may hear the religious treasure while one is staying in a town or hear the religious treasure while one is staying in one's abode, or while one is staying in a shrine, or while one is in a monastery, or on a seat, in a park, or on a mountain peak—these dreams should be applied to the seven stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.66. One may hear [in one's dream] the name of a bodhisattva not previously heard.²⁶⁷ [101] {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] five stages. Even though one is thought of by bodhisattvas and though one may have few afflictions, one can be obscured if one greatly venerates one's relatives.²⁶⁸ One may dream of hearing the names “Attainment of Memory,” “In-Actualization,” [“Practicer of What Is Difficult”],²⁶⁹ “Tamer of Māra,” “Awakened One-to-be”

²⁷⁰—these dreams should be applied to the five stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.67. One may dream of going toward the ocean.²⁷¹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. Therefore, one should persevere in hearing [the doctrine], in belief, and in sapience. One may dream that one does not go toward the ocean after seeing it, or that one goes to the shore, or that one sits on a wooden plank, or that one enters a boat,²⁷² or sits in the boat, or stands in the water, or stands up in the boat, or that one extracts oneself on the yonder shore from a boat filled up [with jewels]²⁷³—these dreams should be applied to the eight stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.68. One may dream that one is collecting jewels.²⁷⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] three stages. Those who have abused suffer much. Therefore, having obtained the doctrine, one should not seek out those who expound the doctrine confusedly, and one should be grateful. One may find the jewels after digging, or one may find them mixed with dust, or find them mixed with earth²⁷⁵—these dreams should be applied to the three stages sequentially. Yet again, if one does not persevere, these dreams may be the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.69. One may dream that one is walking toward the peak of Mount Meru.²⁷⁶ {This signifies that one will view the first [five]²⁷⁷ stages. One should relinquish these three: [sinful] companions, fickleness, and manifold lack of belief. One becomes endowed with the three qualities.²⁷⁸ One may dream that one climbs up Mount Meru, or that one stands up after having climbed

it, or that one looks in the four directions, or that one stays there, or that one trembles—these dreams should be applied from the sixth to the tenth stages sequentially.}

4.2.4.70. One may dream that one is climbing up an ordinary mountain.²⁷⁹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] five stages or that much harm will occur. [102] One should lavishly present offerings to one's instructor. One may dream that one is climbing up the mountain, or that one has gone toward its center, or that one has gone to its peak, or that one is actually looking [at the panoramic view], or that one is staying there—these dreams should be applied to the five stages.}

4.2.4.71. One may [dream that] one is standing on a mountain peak.²⁸⁰ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. One's karmic obscurations being slight and the activities of Māra having died away, one should implement relinquishing and please sentient beings. The seven mountains²⁸¹ are indications of the seven stages. Mount Meru represents the remnant stages.}

4.2.4.72. One may [dream that] one is climbing up a tree.²⁸² {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] four stages. One's karmic obscurations and the activity of Māra both being middling, one should rely on a holy virtuous friend. Climbing up a leafy tree represents the first stage. Climbing up a fragrant tree represents the second stage. Climbing up a flowery tree represents the third stage. Climbing up a fruit tree is the

fourth stage. However, if one does not persevere, these dreams may be the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.73. One may see the chief of elephants.²⁸³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages. Since, though giving gifts, one has not scrutinized through sapience, one should perform much examining.}

4.2.4.74. One may [see oneself] riding the chief of elephants.²⁸⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. Having obtained the power of the Buddha and bodhisattvas, one is without [karmic] causes, is content, and donates what is delightful. If one rides a dismal elephant, one will view the first stage. If one rides an elephant garbed in a white garment, one will view the second stage. If one rides an elephant garbed in a red garment, one will view the third stage. If one rides an elephant garbed in a variegated garment, one will view the fourth stage. If one rides an elephant adorned with ornaments, one will view the fifth stage. If one rides an elephant sporting a chevron, one will view the sixth stage. If one rides an elephant bearing a parasol, one will view the seventh stage. This is so unless one does not persevere.}

4.2.4.75. One may [see oneself] riding a horse.²⁸⁵ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] four stages. One should chiefly implement discipline, concentration, and insight. [103] If one rides a horse that is standing up, one will view the first stage. If one rides a horse that is trotting, one will view the second stage. If one rides a horse that is galloping, one will view the third stage. If one rides a horse that is adorned, one will

view the fourth stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.} ²⁸⁶

4.2.4.76. One may [see] oneself effecting the blessing of truth. ²⁸⁷ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. The activity of Māra is slight, but one's obscurations are great. Therefore, one should implement concentration, uprightness, and emptiness. If one effects the blessing of generosity, one will view the first stage. If one effects the blessing in order to release [someone] from their fetters, one will view the second stage. If one does so in order to release someone from illness, one will view the third stage. If one does so for the sake of a city, one will view the fourth stage. If one does so for the sake of a city and its suburbs, one will view the fifth stage. If one does so for the sake of a continent, ²⁸⁸ one will view the sixth stage. If one does so for the sake of the first-order chiliocosm, one will view the seventh stage. If one does so for the sake of the second-order chiliocosm, one will view the eighth stage. If one does so for the sake of the third-order chiliocosm, one will view the ninth stage. If one does so in order to emit light, to make the earth shake, and to cause a rain of flowers, one will view the tenth stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.77. One may see a tree abounding in fruit. ²⁸⁹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. Though the tree may have small branches and be upright, ²⁹⁰ one should not hold on to this as a fault. If one sees a tree with few fruits, one will view the

first stage. If one sees a tree with many fruits, one will view the second stage. If one sees a tree with tasty fruits, one will view the third stage. If one sees a tree with fragrant fruits, one will view the fourth stage. If one sees a tree with medicinal fruits, one will view the fifth stage. If one sees a paradisaal tree, one will view the sixth stage. If one views an ambrosial tree, one will view the seventh stage.}

4.2.4.78. One may behold a tree in blossom.²⁹¹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. One should therefore persevere in practicing roots of virtue and in being truthful. If one sees a tree with many non-fragrant blossoms, one will view the first stage. If one sees a fragrant tree, one will view the second stage. If one sees a tree with many blossoms, one will view the third stage. If one sees a tree having blossoms and fruits, one will view the fourth stage. If one sees a blossoming tree with few leaves, one will view the fifth stage. If one sees a tree with divine flowers, one will view the sixth stage. [If one sees the tree of enlightenment, one will view the seventh stage.]}²⁹² [104]

4.2.4.79. One may see a city one has not seen before.²⁹³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages. One is without obscurations with respect to [one's understanding of] the doctrine, and one is close to attaining patience with regard to the doctrine. One should therefore meditate on emptiness. If one sees a city that has just been erected, one will view the first stage. If one sees a city that, after [having been erected], is being dusted, one will view the second stage; if it has

sublime enclaves, one will view the third stage; if it is endowed with parks, one will view the fourth state; if it is endowed with waterfalls, one will view the fifth stage; and if it is endowed with tanks, one will view the sixth stage. This is so unless one is being seized by sinful companions, is still endowed with imaging, or does not actually persevere, or if these dreams are the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.80. One may see Lake Anavapta.²⁹⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages and that one's afflictions are slight. Therefore, if one is without attachment to one's body, life, and requisites, a vision will quickly be produced. If one sees the bank of Anavapta, one will view the first stage. If one sees its center, one will view the second stage. If one goes there, one will view the third stage. If one touches [the water] with one's hand, one will view the fourth stage. If one takes a bath in the lake, one will view the fifth stage. If one is standing on the lake's shore, one will view the sixth stage. If one sees the serpent-spirit of Lake Anavapta, one will view the seventh stage. If one sees oneself remaining there while [the lake] dazzles, one will view the eighth stage. This is so unless these dreams are the activity of Māra.}²⁹⁵

4.2.4.81. One may see a son of the gods.²⁹⁶ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [following] five stages. The activity of Māra is slight, but some desire is present. Being considered by the bodhisattvas of the ten directions, one should persevere for three months. If one sees a god pertaining to the four great kings,²⁹⁷ one will view the sixth stage. If one sees one of

the gods of the Trāyatṛiṃśa heavens,²⁹⁸ one will view the seventh stage.²⁹⁹ If one sees a god from Tuṣita³⁰⁰ heaven, one will view the eighth stage. If one sees a god belonging to the Brahmakāyika heavens,³⁰¹ one will view the ninth stage. If one sees a god from the ethereal abodes,³⁰² one will view the tenth stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.82. One might see a son of the serpent-spirits.³⁰³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages and that one is endowed with patience concerning the doctrine. Having given back one's commitments, one should honor those who expound the doctrine. One should therefore give up all sufferings.³⁰⁴ [105] If one sees a serpent-spirit on a mountain, one will view the first stage. If one sees a serpent-spirit in the forest,³⁰⁵ one will view the second stage. If one sees a serpent-spirit on the yonder shore of a river, one will view the third stage. If a serpent-spirit is seen in the jungle, one will view the fourth stage. If he is seen in a human habitation, one will view the fifth stage. If in a royal palace, one will view the sixth stage. [If he is seen surrounded by many people, one will view the seventh stage. If he is seen in the sky, one will view the eighth stage.]³⁰⁶ The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.83. One may [dream that] one has gone to another part of our world.³⁰⁷ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages and that one has attained patience. Since one is still lazy and proud, one should conquer these [defects]. If seeing these other

parts of our world is not pleasurable, one will view the first stage. If it is likeable, one will view the second stage. If one sees a beautiful city, one will view the third stage. If one sees a park, one will view the fourth stage. If one sees many people assembled, one will view the fifth stage. If one sees a pleasure grove, one will view the sixth stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.84. One may [see] oneself clothed in a white garment.³⁰⁸ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. One's obscurations are purified, but the activity of Māra is still present. Therefore, one should persevere in wisdom. If one is clothed in a white garment that is clean yet old, one will view the first stage. One may be clothed in a garment of new cotton without a hem, or be clothed in a hemmed garment, or a dusted garment, or be clothed in an ironed garment, or be clothed in a jeweled garment, or be clothed in an embroidered garment, or be clothed in a divine garment [of white silk]—these dreams should be applied sequentially up to the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.85. One may be wearing a garland of jewels upon one's head or be [otherwise] adorned.³⁰⁹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] nine stages. If both obscurations pertaining to the activity of Māra are plentiful, there shall be fault. One should seek out the doctrine and meditate, while meditating on patience.³¹⁰ If one is wearing a garland made with one type of gem, one will view the first stage. The seven types of gems should be applied to the [first] seven

stages.³¹¹ If the garland is made of the gem of a wheel-wielding monarch, one will view the eighth stage. If it is made of a divine gem, one will view the ninth stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}³¹²

4.2.4.86. One may [see] oneself spreading flower petals.³¹³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. One's servants and [agreeable] conditions are numerous. [106] One should train in concentration. If one has blended flower petals of clear colors, one will view the first stage. If the flowers are scented, one will view the second stage. If they are soft, one will view the third stage. If they are variegated, one will view the fourth stage. If the flowers have grown in water and on plains, one will view the fifth stage. If the flowers are blooming, one will view the sixth stage.}³¹⁴

4.2.4.87. One may [hear] the sound of a large drum and of cymbals.³¹⁵ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] nine stages and that one should persevere. If the beat is dense, one will view the first stage. If it is even, one will view the second stage. If it is heard in a town, one will view the third stage. If it is heard in a great town, one will view the fourth stage. If it is heard among many people, one will view the fifth stage. If it is heard as one goes for refuge, one will view the sixth stage. If on a mountain, one will view the seventh stage. If on a mountain peak, one will view the eighth stage. If it resounds throughout the sky, one will view the ninth stage. This is so unless these dreams are the activity of Māra.}

4.2.4.88. One may see an eclipse of the sun and moon.³¹⁶ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages.³¹⁷ Since one is destitute on account of the doctrine, one should be generous. If one sees an eclipse of the sun and moon at the crack of dawn, one will view the first stage. If the eclipse takes place in the early morning, one will view the second stage. If the eclipse is accompanied by stormy clouds, one will view the third stage. If it is accompanied by a stormy wind, one will view the fourth stage. If it is covered with dust, one will view the fifth stage. If the eclipse takes place at midday, one will view the sixth stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.89. One may see oneself being smeared with an unclean substance.³¹⁸ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] three stages. Having previously denigrated the noble ones, one should thrice recite the *Triskandhaka-sūtra*. Whoever is without faith should be respectful. If one's entire body is smeared with this substance, one will view the first stage. If half one's chest is smeared, one will view the second stage. [107] If it is one's limbs that are smeared, one will view the third stage. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.90. One may [dream that] one has become a king.³¹⁹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. Since both the virtuous roots and obstacles are very dense, one should be neither conceited nor fickle; one should not praise oneself nor blame others. If the king, oneself, is in a town, one will view the first

stage. If he is in a shrine, one will view the second stage. If he is in a park, one will view the third stage. If he is in a chapel, one will view the fourth stage. If he is in a city, one will view the fifth stage. If he is on a mountain peak, one will view the sixth stage. If one becomes king of our world, one will view the seventh stage. If one becomes a wheel-wielding monarch, one will view the eighth stage. If one is in the middle of the ocean, one will view the ninth stage. [If one is on the peak of Mount Meru, one will view the tenth stage.]}³²⁰

4.2.4.91. One may [dream that] one is staying among the king and his ministers.³²¹ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. One should relinquish the religious gifts [donated by] one's next of kin. If one is training³²² and if one's identity is still under the sway of the afflictions, one will view the first stage. If one is guarding one's discipline, one will view the second stage. If one is hearing [the doctrine], one will view the third stage. If one is implementing concentration, one will view the fourth stage. If one is implementing the mnemonic formula, one will view the fifth stage. If one is implementing the supracognitions, one will view the sixth stage. If one is teaching the doctrine, one will view the seventh stage. If one is surrounded by a retinue and servants, one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.92. One may [dream that] one has gone to a park.³²³ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] nine stages. One must meditate on concentration.}

4.2.4.93. One may see a temple or an orchard that one has not seen before.³²⁴ {This signifies that one will

view any one of the [first] six stages. One should recall the Buddha and be generous. If one sees that the shrine or orchard has not been dusted, one will view the first stage. If one sees oneself dusting them, one will view the second stage. If one is adorning them, one will view the third stage. If there is a retinue, one will view the fourth stage. If there is an assembly, one will view the fifth stage.³²⁵ If one sees a divine retinue assemble there, one will view the sixth stage.} [108]

4.2.4.94. One may [dream that] one has found a parasol.³²⁶ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. If one finds a parasol made of leaves, one will view the first stage. If one finds a parasol made of bamboo, one will view the second stage. If one finds one made of birch bark,³²⁷ one will view the third stage. If one finds one made of fabric, one will view the fourth stage. If one finds a multicolored parasol, one will view the fifth stage. If one finds a parasol whose canopy is surrounded by jingles, one will view the sixth stage. If one finds a parasol made of shriveled cloth, one will view the seventh stage.}

4.2.4.95. One may [dream that] one is standing before many people teaching the doctrine.³²⁸ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. One should generate assurance and guard one's desires. If one is giving a talk on generosity, one will view the first stage. If one is giving a talk on the ten virtues,³²⁹ one will view the second stage. If one is giving a talk on hearing [the doctrine], one will view the third stage. If one is giving a talk on training and on having few requisites, one will view the fourth stage. If the talk is

on concentration, one will view the fifth stage. If the talk thoroughly and completely [is in Sanskrit],³³⁰ one will view the sixth stage. If the talk is on selflessness, one will view the seventh stage. If it is on the wisdom arrays, one will view the eighth stage. If it is on the Buddha arrays,³³¹ one will view the ninth stage. If the talk is on the measurements of the body,³³² one will view the tenth stage. [On the first stage, there are obstacles to the virtuous roots. On the second stage, there are obstacles to one's discipline. On the third stage, there are obstacles to one's actual perseverance. On the fourth stage, there are obstacles to referential imaging. On the fifth stage, there are aspectual obstacles. On the sixth stage, there are obstacles to one's patience for the profound. On the seventh stage, there are obstacles to analytical wisdom. On the eighth stage, there are obstacles to one's working for the purpose of sentient beings.³³³ On the ninth stage, there are obstacles to the sixfold gathering of consciousnesses. On the tenth stage, there are obstacles to the thorough purification of one's pure field.]}³³⁴

4.2.4.96. One may [see] oneself remaining in a city.³³⁵ {This signifies that one [will view any one of the first] eight stages. Since one is close to receiving a prophecy that one is a non-revertible [bodhisattva], one should venerate a great meditator. One should worship those who expound the doctrine. At first, one may doubt whether or not one will become a Buddha. On the second stage, one may have doubts concerning what is to be accepted as genuine. On the third stage, one may have doubts concerning wisdom. On the fourth stage,

one may have doubts concerning concentration. On the fifth stage, one may have doubts on the view.³³⁶ On the sixth stage, one may have doubts regarding the path and fruition. [109] On the seventh stage, one may have doubts regarding verbal definitions. When abiding on the eighth stage, one may have doubts concerning the manifestations.}

4.2.4.97. One may [dream that] one has planted a bridge and gone to the middle of a river.³³⁷ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] seven stages. If one perseveres, one shall obtain a vision. If there are obstacles to the vision one cognizes, one will view the first stage. If one is physically uncomfortable regarding whatever virtuous roots one has persevered in, one will view the second stage. If one is mentally uncomfortable, one will view the third stage. If there are a few visions, one will view the fourth stage. If one's fearlessness is slight, one will view the fifth stage. If there are obstacles to one's thorough maturation, one will view the sixth stage. If there are obstacles to one's teaching, one will view the seventh stage.}

4.2.4.98. One may [see] oneself steering a boat.³³⁸ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] six stages. One should rely on the six transcendent perfections. If one is steering a wooden boat untrained, one will view the first stage. If one is trained [to steer the boat], one will view the second stage. If the boat has been joined [to another boat],³³⁹ one will view the third stage. If it has not been joined [to another boat], one will view the fourth stage. If sentient beings have entered [the boat], one will view the fifth stage. If one has

liberated them [from the river], one will view the sixth stage.}

4.2.4.99. One may see clouds from which [emerge] the noise of thunder and flashes of lightning.³⁴⁰ {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] five stages. The activity of Māra is slight, but one's obscurations are great. One should therefore be generous. If, having seen the clouds and lightning, one is scared, one will view the first stage. If one is not scared, one will view the second stage. If one apprehends the doctrine, one will view the third stage. If one is on a mountain peak and apprehends the Buddha, one will view the fourth stage. If one is standing in the sky, one will view the fifth stage.}

4.2.4.100. One may [dream that] one finds an armor.³⁴¹ {This signifies that both the activity of Māra and the afflictions are great. One should rely on patience, diligence, and sapience, these three. If one finds a stained arsenal, one will view the first stage. If one finds a stainless arsenal, one will view the second stage. If one finds a good arsenal, one will view the third stage.}

4.2.4.101. One may [dream that] one finds a pure vessel.³⁴² {This signifies that one will view the seventh stage. One should persevere in the [four] entities of influence.}³⁴³ [110]

4.2.4.102. One may [dream that] one is showing the path to sentient beings.³⁴⁴ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. One should be generous and diligent. If one is showing the path for riding,³⁴⁵ one will view the first stage. If one is showing the path to a

park, one will view the second stage. If one is showing the path to a city, one will view the third stage. If one is showing a great highway, one will view the fourth stage. If one is showing a mountain path, one will view the fifth stage. If one shows a path [leading to] the ocean, one will view the sixth stage. If one is showing the path of the gods, one will view the seventh stage. If one shows the path of the auditors, one will view the eighth stage. If one shows the path of the bodhisattvas, one will view the ninth stage. [If one shows the path of the Buddhas, one will view the tenth stage.]}³⁴⁶

4.2.4.103. One may dream that one has entered a park.³⁴⁷ {This signifies that one will view the [first] eight stages. Relinquishing sleepiness, one should implement concentration. If one is scared because the kingdom is deteriorating, one will view the first stage. One may be scared because one's vows have deteriorated, or because the doctrine is declining, or because the expounders of the doctrine are dying, or because of being burned by fire, or because of being ill—these should be applied to [the second through to] sixth stages. One may be scared because of falling from a mountain into an abyss or because the Teacher is passing [into transcendence]—these should be applied [to the seventh and] eighth stages. The understanding that these dreams may be the activity of Māra pertains to the entire series.}

4.2.4.104. One may see an abundant harvest.³⁴⁸ {This signifies that one will view any one of eight stages. If one sees a harvest in one's neighborhood,³⁴⁹ one will view the third stage. If one sees a harvest in a town, one will view the fourth stage. If one sees it in a valley, one

will view the fifth stage. If one sees an abundant harvest in our world, one will view the sixth stage. If one sees abundant harvests in the four continents,³⁵⁰ one will view the seventh stage. If one sees abundant harvests in the third-order chiliocosm, one will view the eighth stage. If one sees thoroughly ripened abundant harvests, one will view the ninth stage. If one sees oneself entering [upon the harvest], one will view the tenth stage.}³⁵¹

4.2.4.105. One may [see] oneself healing the sick.³⁵² {This signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages and that one's compassion is great. If one is healing an adolescent, one will view the first stage. This pertains to the entire series: If one is healing a woman, [one will view the second stage]. If one is healing an adult man, [one will view the third stage]. If one is healing someone struck by an infectious disease, [one will view the fourth stage]. If one is healing someone having morbid pallor,³⁵³ [one will view the fifth stage]. If one is healing someone having vitiligo,³⁵⁴ [one will view the sixth stage]. If one is healing someone struck by tuberculosis,³⁵⁵ [one will view the seventh stage]. If one is healing someone who has been seized by an elemental spirit, one will view the eighth stage.}

4.2.4.106. One may [dream that] one obtains a prophecy concerning one's enlightenment.³⁵⁶ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. On the first stage, it is one's enlightenment that is prophesied. On the second stage, it is one's conduct that is prophesied. On the third stage, it is one's patience that is prophesied. On the fourth stage, one's aspirations are

prophesied. On the fifth stage, it is equality that is prophesied. [111] On the sixth stage, it is one's wisdom that is prophesied. On the seventh stage, it is one's skill in means that is prophesied. On the eighth stage, it is one's omniscience that is prophesied. On the ninth stage, it is prophesied that one is bound by one more birth [before enlightenment]. On the tenth stage, it is the empowerment into awakening that is prophesied.}

4.2.4.107. One may dream that one is a Buddha.³⁵⁷ {This signifies that one will view the last three stages and that one should accomplish one's eminent intentions.}

4.2.4.108. One may [dream that] one finds a full vase.³⁵⁸ {This signifies that one will view any one of the ten stages. If one dreams that one finds it in a town,³⁵⁹ one will view the first stage. If one dreams that one finds it at a gate, one will view the second stage. If one finds it on the road, one will view the third stage. If one finds it under a tree, one will view the fourth stage. [If one finds it while standing, one will view the fifth stage. If one finds it while sitting, one will view the sixth stage.]³⁶⁰ If one finds it near one's bed,³⁶¹ one will view the seventh stage. If one finds it in the sky, one will view the eighth stage. If one finds it while eating, one will view the ninth stage. If one finds it as one is standing in a park after riding a mount, one will view the tenth stage. One should realize that all these dreams may be the activity of Māra.}

{Moreover, if [one dreams that] one is wearing a flower garland on one's head, this signifies that one will view any one of the [first] eight stages. One is without

obscurations, but the activity of Māra is present. One should rely on sapience and generosity. If the garland is made of a single type of flower, one will view the first stage. If it is made of two types of flowers, one will view the second stage. If it is made of variegated flowers, one will view the third stage. If it is made of all flowers, one will view the fourth stage. If it is made of flowers of the serpent-spirits, one will view the fifth stage. If it is made of divine flowers, one will view the sixth stage. If it is made of variegated divine flowers, one will view the seventh stage. If it is made of light-radiating flowers, one will view the eighth stage.} ³⁶²

Even if signs of dreams such as these occur, one should not become attached to them.

4.2.5. Purifying one's obscurations

Concerning the manner of purifying one's obscurations, one purifies [the obscurations of] the afflictions and of the knowable, one's deeds and [the propensities to be born in the four types of] birthplaces, ³⁶³ and so forth. Their antidote, wisdom, becomes ever clearer, just like the waxing moon. [112] The obscurations are gradually purified, just like the waning moon or a block of ice [melting in] the hot summer season. ³⁶⁴ A *sūtra* states, ³⁶⁵

The obscurations of the afflictions and {the obscurations} of
the knowable,

As well as darkness, have emptiness as their antidote. ³⁶⁶

{[Emptiness] is twofold, as is this darkness, since both phenomena and the individual are nonexistent.} It is

also said that³⁶⁷

Due to selflessness with regard to phenomena, one relinquishes [the obscuration of] the knowable;

Due to selflessness with regard to individuals, [the obscuration of] the afflictions is relinquished.

Through one's own strength of approach, as well as through the empowerment conferred by the Thus-gone One's hand, the diamond-like wisdom dawns and one conquers [the obscurations]. The *Samādhirāja-sūtra* declares,³⁶⁸

The Thus-gone One's hand originates from numerous virtuous roots and is accomplished from unfathomable merit: golden in color, it was placed on Candraprabha Kumārabhūta's crown.³⁶⁹

The same *sūtra* states,³⁷⁰

Candraprabha Kumārabhūta actualized the many hundreds of thousands of doors to concentration, such as the concentration called “psychic rapidity” (Skt. *manojuvasamādhi*),³⁷¹ the concentration called “heroic going” (Skt. *śūramgamasamādhi*),³⁷² the concentration called “diamond-like” (Skt. *vajropamasamādhi*),³⁷³ and so forth.

4.3. Conduct

[113] The manner of seeing and the path of conduct when emerging from meditative equipoise are to engage in accruing the great accumulations. Furthermore, the qualities of engaging therein are as follows: in order to see the three times as one emerges from the [state where] reified entities appear as a mere illusion, one

should do whatever one can for the purpose of self and others, or even for the purpose of others alone, exerting oneself in the ten perfections, in the four entities of influence, in the ten kinds of religious conduct, and so forth.³⁷⁴ It is said in the *[Sems-] lon*,³⁷⁵

When emerging from meditative equipoise, one should exert oneself in righteousness.

Now it may be asked, “By exerting oneself for the ephemeral benefit of others, can one’s own purpose occur?” [It is replied that] it can: if, for example, a guest comes by night to a householder’s home and the householder lights a fire for the sake of his guest, it is the householder himself who at first is illuminated. Likewise, although one images wandering beings, it is oneself who obtains [enlightenment].

It may be asked, “How is there any reality to the qualities of exerting oneself in the extensive accumulation of merit?” [It is replied that] among the Thus-gone One’s three bodies, the principal body is accomplished solely through wisdom, whereas the two bodies [of form] are accomplished through merit; hence, it is necessary that [both] converge. The three [bodies] are not accomplished through non-imaging alone. [114] Therefore, the instructor Buddhadeva has said,³⁷⁶

In this vehicle of the perfections,
One accomplishes the two bodies of activity³⁷⁷ through
generosity, and so forth;
By meditating on non-dual sapience,
The chief principal body is obtained.

The *sūtras* state,³⁷⁸

“What activities has the Hallowed One, the Thus-gone One, formerly performed so as to have attained these rays of light?”³⁷⁹

The Hallowed One replied to Candraprabha Kumārabhūta,

“Through the causes and conditions of
Inconceivable virtuous deeds, I have
Relinquished dullnesses and
Accomplished these variegated rays of light.

Moreover, through various kinds of conduct,
I have consecrated the Buddha path.
Through the sapience of emptiness, without action,
I have shown these rays of light to guide [sentient
beings].³⁸⁰ [. . .]³⁸¹

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose eyes are utterly pure”:³⁸²
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having worshiped the Buddha with butter lamps.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose ears are utterly pure”:
[115] That is produced from [the merit of]
Having worshiped [the Buddha] with melodies.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose nose is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having worshiped [the Buddha] with scented water.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose tongue is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having worshiped [the Buddha] with delicious foods.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose body is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having worshiped [the Buddha] with garments.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose psyche is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having constantly trusted the Buddha.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose form is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having painted the Buddha’s form.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose sound is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having constantly extolled the doctrine.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose scent is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having constantly respected the community.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose taste is utterly pure”:
[116] That is produced from [the merit of]
Having given gifts according to [people’s] wishes.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose touch is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having worshiped [the Buddha] with ointments.

Possessing these rays of light,
I am also called “he whose doctrine is utterly pure”:
That is produced from [the merit of]
Having thoroughly grasped the doctrinal principles [. . .].

The *sūtra* section says,³⁸³

Moreover, Śāriputra, a bodhisattva indeed obtains the ten excellences. What are these ten? They are as follows: By donating butter lamps, he indeed obtains the thoroughly pure and sublime eye of the Thus-gone One. By donating cymbals, he obtains the sublime cliraudience. By donating gold, pearls, beryl, conch-shells, crystals, corals, and all types of jewels, he indeed obtains the thoroughly pure and sublime thirty-two characteristics of a great person. By donating jewels and variegated flowers, he indeed obtains the thoroughly pure eighty illustrative attributes. By donating horses, elephants, and [117] carriages, he obtains sublime ampleness, vastness, and greatness. By donating a park, or a grove for austerities, he indeed obtains sublime contemplation, release, concentration, and meditative equilibrium. By donating a store of wealth and grain, he indeed obtains the thoroughly complete treasury of all precious phenomena. By donating his male and female serfs, he indeed obtains the thoroughly complete and sublime self-originated wisdom, autonomously as his own experience. By donating his sons and daughters, he indeed obtains intimacy, fairness, and all that is desired, along with unsurpassed and genuinely complete enlightenment. By donating all the enjoyments of a king of the four continents,³⁸⁴ he indeed obtains the sublime omniscient wisdom which is endowed with all the supreme aspects of enlightenment.³⁸⁵

One should persevere in the five topics of virtuous merit of the path of conduct.³⁸⁶ This is dealt with extensively [in the relevant texts]. [118]

4.4. The fruition

By thus exerting oneself in the two accumulations, one goes to [the stage of] universal light.³⁸⁷ As in the teaching on the manner of purifying one's previous obscurations, this may take place instantaneously or successively.

Later, when one has obtained the principal body, one will act for the purpose of wandering beings through the power of one's aspirations and compassion. Waking up from the concentration of cessation is exemplified as waking up from sleep. It is maintained that emerging as the body of form, one will act for the purpose [of others].

Here it is not described to what extent [the gradual approach presented here] is better than the *Vijñaptimātra* or superior, in terms of time [required to accomplish the fruition], to the *Yogācāra [Madhyamaka]*.³⁸⁸

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the fourth chapter, which teaches the textual tradition of the *Tsen-min*, the gradual approach.

¹ gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes designates the adherents of the gradual approach as *Sautrāntika Mādhyamikas* because of their reliance on the profound *Mahāyāna sūtras*, such as the *Ghanavyūha-sūtra* and the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*. According to Tibetan doxographers, the view of the *Sautrāntika Mādhyamikas*, which is traced back to Bhāvaviveka, is characterized by the admission of the relative existence of external objects with specific characteristics (Skt. *svalakṣaṇa*) and by the refutation of the notion of reflexive awareness (Skt. *svaśamvedana*), i.e., of a consciousness knowing itself, as well as by the rejection of the eight-consciousnesses model of the *Yogācāra*. The view of this approach is then contrasted with that of the *Yogācāra Mādhyamikas*, who are represented by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. The latter, while accepting the relative existence of external objects, maintain that they are comparable to dreams and other projections of the mind in lacking a solid existential foundation. Tibetan authors later classified both these systems as *Svātantrika Madhyamaka*, a “school” that they distinguished from the *Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka* (Buddhapālita, Candrakīrti). Whereas

the *Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas* use *reductio ad absurdum* (Skt. *prasaṅga*) to prove the absurdity of all propositions without advancing any of their own, the *Svātantrika Mādhyamikas* have no qualms about using self-sufficient inference (Skt. *svatantra anumāna*) in their bid to establish emptiness as absolute truth in a manner that employs the intellectual arguments and presuppositions of their opponents. For a concise presentation of these different views, see [Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*](#), pp. 344–345. It should be noted that while there certainly existed differences among the Indian authors concerned, the classification into schools—*Sautrāntika Madhyamaka* versus *Yogācāra Madhyamaka* and *Svātantrika Madhyamaka* versus *Prāsaṅgika*—originated in Tibet: whereas the former goes back to the early 9th century (to the translator Ye-shes-sde) and is mentioned in this text (cf. §4.4, C 118.3), the latter can be traced back no earlier than the 12th century, it having originated with Pa-tshab nyi-ma grags and those surrounding him.

² Gl.: maturing gradually like the fruit of the citron tree.

³ Gl.: from the texts specific to the *Tsen-min*.

⁴ *sTug-po bkod-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 50, p. 85.1–2. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r40.4–6).

⁵ Gl.: though its essence is good.

⁶ These are the five sense-consciousnesses, the psychic consciousness (*vid-kyi rnam-shes*; Skt. *manovijñāna*), and the afflicted psychic consciousness (*nyon-mongs-pa-can-gyi rnam-shes*; Skt. *kliṣṭamanovijñāna*). Along with the universal ground consciousness (*kun-gzhi rnam-shes*; Skt. *ālayavijñāna*), they make up the eight consciousnesses of *Yogācāra*. While the five sensory consciousnesses and the psychic consciousness have a passive role in that they consume experiences determined by past imprints, the afflicted psychic consciousness is active in that it generates new imprints, which in turn are stored in the universal ground consciousness. Hence, it will be seen that the various consciousnesses feed on each other in a circular motion productive of illusion. See Stéphane Arguillère, *Le Vocabulaire du Bouddhisme*, Paris: Ellipses, 2002, pp. 38–40.

⁷ The example of the chariot is frequently used in Buddhist literature to demonstrate the nonexistence of a self, which can neither be identified with the aggregates taken individually nor with their totality. See Isaline Blew Horner, *Milinda's Questions*, vol. 1, London: Luzac & Co., 1969, p. 36; and Jacques May, *Candrakīrti: Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛtti*,

Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1959, pp. 239 (French translation), 441 (Tibetan). The chariot as an illustration of the human condition, moreover, is also found in the *Kāthopaniṣad* as well as in Parmenides and Plato. Cf. [Kapstein, *Reason's Traces*](#), p. 89.

⁸ Cf. 'Od-srung-gi le'u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 276.6; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §97, p. 142 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 34; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 154 (English translation).

⁹ The eighteen kinds of emptiness are as follows: (1) inner emptiness (*nang stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *adhyātma-śūnyatā*), (2) outer emptiness (*phyi stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *bahirdhā-śūnyatā*), (3) inner and outer emptiness (*phyi-nang stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *adhyātma-bahirdhā-śūnyatā*), (4) the emptiness of emptiness (*stong-pa-nyid stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *śūnyatā-śūnyatā*), (5) great emptiness (*chen-po stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *mahāśūnyatā*), (6) absolute emptiness (*don-dam-pa stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *paramārtha-śūnyatā*), (7) the emptiness of the compounded (*dus-byas stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *saṃskṛta-śūnyatā*), (8) the emptiness of the un compounded (*dus-ma-byas stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *asaṃskṛta-śūnyatā*), (9) emptiness that transcends limits (*mtsha'-las 'das-pa stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *atyanta-śūnyatā*), (10) emptiness without beginning or end (*thog-ma dang tha-ma med-pa stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *anavarāgra-śūnyatā*), (11) emptiness without rejection (*dor-ba med-pa stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *anavakāra-śūnyatā*), (12) natural emptiness (*rang-bzhin stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *prakṛti-śūnyatā*), (13) emptiness of all phenomena (*chos thams-cad stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *sarvadharmā-śūnyatā*), (14) emptiness of specific characteristics (*rang-gi mtshan-nyid stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *svalakṣaṇa-śūnyatā*), (15) emptiness without imaging (*mi-dmigs-pa stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *anupalambha-śūnyatā*), (16) emptiness of nonentities (*dngos-po med-pa stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *abhāva-śūnyatā*), (17) emptiness of an essence (*ngo-bo-nyid stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *svabhāva-śūnyatā*), and (18) emptiness with regard to an essence of nonentities (*dngos-po med-pa'i ngo-bo-nyid stong-pa-nyid*; Skt. *abhāva-svabhāva-śūnyatā*). See Alexander Csoma de Koros, *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary: Being an Edition and Translation of the Mahāvvyutpatti*, vol. 1, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1980, p. 12. For an extensive discussion of the eighteen kinds of emptiness, see Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra)*, vol. 4, Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1976, pp. 2045–2151.

¹⁰ The four immeasurables are compassion (*snying-rje*; Skt. *karuṇā*), kindness (*byams-pa*; Skt. *maitrī*), joy (*dga'-ba*; Skt. *muditā*), and

equanimity (*btang-snyoms*; Skt. *upekṣā*).

¹¹ The negative particle *ma* has been added for contextual reasons; it is, moreover, suggested by a space in C 66.5.

¹² Gl.: This is the learning mode.

¹³ On the shedding of tears as a sign of the development of genuine compassion, see [Patrul Rinpoche, *Le Chemin de la Grande Perfection*](#), pp. 210, 219, 221.

¹⁴ “Intermediate” (*bar-ma*) is to be understood as referring to sentient beings who are neither particularly close nor especially inimical.

¹⁵ This stanza is quoted in Nyi-ma-grub, *Sa-bcu'i rnam-par bshad-pa'i rnam-par bshad-pa*, in TD, vol. 116, p. 98.3; and in Smṛtijñānakīrti, *Byang-chub sems-kyi 'grel-pa'i rnam-par bshad-pa*, in TD, vol. 36, p. 275.3–4. Nyi-ma-grub's text was translated into Tibetan in the 8th century by Prajñāvarman and sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs (see the colophon, p. 238) and so might have been gNubs-chen's source for this citation. Regarding Smṛtijñānakīrti, though he was an Indian scholar who traveled to Tibet in the 10th century, there is no indication that he was associated with gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. On Smṛtijñānakīrti's literary activities, see Lupon P. Ogyan Tenzin, “Assessing the Greatness of Tibet's Early Translations According to Rong-zom Mahāpaṇḍita” (Translated by Dylan Esler), in *Temenos Academy Review*, no. 16, 2013, pp. 21–42, esp. pp. 25–26.

¹⁶ Whereas in the second stage of the path of training one focuses one's attention toward particular objects, in the third stage this is no longer necessary, since the four immeasurables have impregnated one's conscious continuum.

¹⁷ Gl.: The great immeasurables are absent at first.

TN: The “great immeasurables” refer to the immeasurables as practiced by the Buddha, particularly to great kindness (Skt. *mahāmaitrī*) and great compassion (Skt. *mahākaruṇā*). They are distinguished from the kindness and compassion cultivated on the path by the fact that they actually benefit the sentient beings to whom they are directed and by the fact that they are without referential imaging (Skt. *anā lambana*). See Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*, vol. 3, Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1970, pp. 1705–1717.

¹⁸ For a detailed description of the immeasurables according to Kamalaśīla's second *Bhāvanākrama*, see Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama: Tibetan Version, Sanskrit Restoration and Hindi Translation*, Restored,

translated, and edited by Gyaltsen Namdrol, Sarnath: CIHTS, 1997, pp. 85–90 (Tibetan text), 232–234 (Sanskrit text). It should be noted that the order of the immeasurables given in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* differs from the presentation in the second *Bhāvanākrama*, where they are listed as equanimity, kindness, and compassion, omitting joy. See Miyazaki, “The Gradualist Chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the Teaching of Kamalaśīla,” p. 901.

¹⁹ I.e., form (*gzugs*; Skt. *rūpa*), feelings (*tshor-ba*; Skt. *vedanā*), notions (*'du-shes*; Skt. *saṃjñā*), dispositions (*'du-byed*; Skt. *saṃskāra*), and consciousness (*rnam-shes*; Skt. *vijñāna*).

²⁰ Cf. Abhayākaragupta's (11th–12th centuries) comments on relative truth in his *Munimatālaṃkāra*, in [Kapstein, Reason's Traces](#), p. 399.

²¹ *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa rdo-rje gcod-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 34, p. 470.4–5; Edward Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā: Edited and Translated with Introduction and Glossary*, Rome: Is.M.E.O., 1974, §32, pp. 62 (Sanskrit text), 92 (English translation).

²² Gl.: They obscure suchness.

TN: *Rab-rib* (Skt. *timira*) is frequently seen mistranslated as “cataract,” though it actually refers to the floaters that are apparent in the field of vision of a person suffering from myodesopsia. The Tibetan word for cataract is *ling-tog* (Skt. *pātala*). See [Duff, The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary](#), s.v. *ling tog*; Higgins, *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen*, p. 125, n. 318. For the corresponding Sanskrit terms, see [Negi, Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary](#), vol. 14, p. 6325, and vol. 15, p. 6649.

²³ Gl.: As a butter lamp depends on oil and a cotton wig, the mental events (*sems-byung*; Skt. *caitasika*) depend on the mind.

²⁴ Gl.: Appearing wrong and mistaken, they are impermanent and miserable.

²⁵ Gl.: Objects and enjoyments are nonexistent throughout the three times of past, present, and future.

²⁶ Gl.: [a star is] absent during daytime but present at night. When wisdom is present in the locus of the doctrine, ignorance is absent.

TN: “Locus of the doctrine” translates *dar-sar*, where *dar* is the phonetic transcription of the Sanskrit *dharma*.

²⁷ Gl.: like a water moon or light [reflected] in a mirror.

²⁸ Gl.: like the child of a barren woman.

²⁹ Gl.: just as water is a condition for the moon [to appear reflected in], etc.

³⁰ Gl.: that is, appearing in compatibility with unconfused cognition.

³¹ Gl.: The four are birth, old age, sickness, and death.

TN: Though these four characteristics refer primarily to a sentient being, they should be understood by extension as applying to all compounded phenomena. Indeed, in more philosophical terms, they correspond to production (Skt. *jāti*), decay (Skt. *jarā*), endurance (Skt. *sthiti*), and impermanence (Skt. *anityatā*). Cf. Paul J. Griffiths, *On Being Mindless: Buddhist Meditation and the Mind-Body Problem*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1999, pp. 52, 168, n. 20.

³² Six characteristics are arrived at by adding the four general characteristics (i.e., non-genuine relative truth is “dysfunctional, uncorroborated, neither permanent, nor nil”) to the two particular ones (i.e., it is “void when examined and has the four characteristics of compounded phenomena”).

³³ Gl.: i.e., what appears [in incompatibility with common perception is void] when examined, and so forth.

³⁴ Gl.: since the permanent essence of the heretics (*mu-stegs-pa*; Skt. *tīrthika*) is nonexistent.

³⁵ Gl.: i.e., which is grasping at that [intrinsic essence].

³⁶ My translation of this difficult passage has benefited from reflection on Donati’s rendition; cf. Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*, p. 180.

³⁷ The Tibetan term translated as “relative” is *kun-rdzob*, which, like the Sanskrit *saṃvṛtisatya* that it translates, has the etymological sense of “totally obfuscating.” Cf. Kapstein, *Reason’s Traces*, p. 216.

³⁸ This passage regarding the three obstructions for the production of wisdom is formally somewhat reminiscent of, though in no way identical to in terms of content, the *Abhidharmakośa*’s discussion of the three types of impediments (*thogs-pa*; Skt. *pratighāta*), which respectively concern the obscurations (Skt. *āvaraṇa-pratighāta*), the objects (Skt. *viṣaya-pratighāta*), and referential imaging (Skt. *ālambana-pratighāta*). Cf. La Vallée Poussin, *L’Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 1, ch. 1, pp. 51–52.

³⁹ Gl.: imaging its freedom from elaboration.

⁴⁰ Gl.: i.e., those of the afflictions and of the knowable.

TN: Cf. the obscurations mentioned by Vasubandhu in his *Madhyāntavibhāṅgabhāṣya*, ch. 2, v. 17, in Stefan Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu, the Buddhist Psychological Doctor*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008, pp. 231 (English translation), 437 (Sanskrit).

⁴¹ Gl.: i.e., the two wrong relative truths.

TN: This refers to eternalism and nihilism.

⁴² “Seeing” and “meditation” refer to the paths of seeing (Skt. *darśanamārga*) and of meditation (Skt. *bhāvanāmārga*), the third and fourth of the bodhisattva paths. According to traditional *Mahāyāna* soteriology, the bodhisattva must undergo a gradual journey comprising many lives before he reaches the state of a Buddha. This journey is classified into five paths and ten stages, corresponding to ever-increasing stages of spiritual maturity. The five paths consist of the path of accumulation (*tshogs-lam*; Skt. *saṃbhāramārga*), the path of application (*sbyor-lam*; Skt. *prayogamārga*), the path of seeing (*mthong-lam*; Skt. *darśanamārga*), the path of meditation (*sgom-lam*; Skt. *bhāvanāmārga*), and the path of no-more-learning (*mi-slob-lam*; Skt. *āśaikṣamārga*). See [Kaba Paltseg, *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms*](#), pp. 34–35. For an extensive discussion, see [Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity*](#), pp. 141, 151–176.

The ten stages (Skt. *daśabhūmi*) are called the very joyful (*rab-tu dga'-ba*; Skt. *pramuditā*), the stainless (*dri-ma med-pa*; Skt. *vimalā*), the refulgent (*'od-byed*; Skt. *prabhākarī*), the radiating (*'od 'phro-ba*; Skt. *arciṣmatī*), the difficult to train in (*sbyang dka'-ba*; Skt. *sudurjayā*), the actualized (*mngon-du byed-pa*; Skt. *abhimukhī*), the far gone (*ring-du song-ba*; Skt. *dūraṅgamā*), the unwavering (*mi-g.yo-ba*; Skt. *acalā*), the excellent intelligence (*legs-pa'i blo-gros*; Skt. *sādhumatī*), and the cloud of the doctrine (*chos-kyi sprin-pa*; Skt. *dharmameghā*). See [Csoma de Koros, *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary*](#), vol. 1, p. 11.

Among the ten stages to be traversed, the path of meditation comprises nine stages (*sgom-lam sa-dgu*), namely, the second through to the tenth stages, since after the path of seeing (*mthong-lam*; Skt. *darśanamārga*), when one achieves the first stage, namely, the very joyful (*rab-tu dga'-ba*; Skt. *pramuditā*), the remaining stages are traversed by means of meditation.

⁴³ The two obscurations refer to the obscurations of the afflictions (*nyon-mongs-pa'i sgrib-ma*; Skt. *kleśāvaraṇa*) and of the knowable (*shes-bya'i sgrib-ma*; Skt. *jñeyāvaraṇa*), and they correspond to the belief in an intrinsic essence and to craving, respectively. Here, our author explains that they include both the afflictions to be relinquished through seeing (Skt. *darśanaheyakleśa*) and those to be relinquished through meditation (Skt. *bhāvanāheyakleśa*). In this respect, the path of seeing only removes those afflictions that prevent the adept from seeing the four noble truths, the main one being the view of corporeality (Skt.

satkāyadr̥ṣṭi) or the view of the self (Skt. *ātmadr̥ṣṭi*). Such views are characterized by the fact that they are unreal (*dn̄gos-min*; Skt. *avastuka*) and unsupported (*mi rten-pa*; Skt. *anadhiṣṭhāna*), insofar as the self is nonexistent. They are therefore contrasted with the afflictions to be relinquished through meditation, also called the co-emergent afflictions (Skt. *sahaja kleśa*), such as desire, hatred, pride, and ignorance. The latter are supported, which means that their support comes in the form of attachment, aversion, satisfaction, confusion, etc. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 4, ch. 6, pp. 257–258; and Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien: Des Origines à l'Ère Śāka*, Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1958, p. 682.

⁴⁴ Literally, *phyi-rol-pa* means “outsiders” [to the Buddhist doctrine].

⁴⁵ I.e., those to be relinquished through seeing and those to be relinquished through meditation. See note 43.

⁴⁶ On the parable of the raft as an example used by the Buddha to describe the correct attitude to be adopted toward his doctrine, see the *Alagaddūpama-sutta* (*Majjhimanikāya*, *sutta* no. 22, PTS edition: I, 135–136), in Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, pp. 228–229.

⁴⁷ 'Od-srung-gi le'u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, pp. 265.7–266.1. The Sanskrit for this passage is no longer extant; see *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §69, p. 102; and *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 27. For a Sanskrit reconstruction and English translation, see Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, pp. 48 and 138–139, respectively. This analogy from the *Kāśyapaparivarta* is also quoted by Kamalaśīla in his third *Bhāvanākrama*: see Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 175 (Tibetan text), 267 (Sanskrit text). The example indicates that once virtues and reasoning have accomplished their provisional purpose of serving as conducive circumstances to the dawning of sapience (Skt. *prajñā*), they are burned in non-conceptual wisdom (Skt. *nirvikalpajñāna*).

⁴⁸ When resting in meditative equipoise (*mnyam-bzhag*), even individually discerning sapience (*so-sor rtog-pa'i shes-rab*) ceases, along with all concepts of virtue and sin (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). According to the passage in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, sapience is produced from discernment but then goes on to incinerate that discernment.

⁴⁹ In terms of *Yogācāra* philosophy, this abiding transformation (*gnas-'gyur*; Skt. *parāvṛtti*) of consciousness is to be distinguished from

the aspectual transformation (*rnam-'gyur*; Skt. *pariṇāma*). Guenther renders the latter as “surface-transformation.” See [Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity*](#), p. 276, n. 2.

⁵⁰ Gl.: The eightfold gathering becomes the five wisdoms.

TN: Cf. *sKu-gsum zhes-bya-ba'i mdo* (*Kāyatraya-sūtra*), in KH, vol. 68, pp. 265.6–266.1. The eightfold gathering refers to the eight consciousnesses, for which, see note 6. For the five wisdoms, see [Chapter 2](#), note 31.

⁵¹ Gl.: i.e., the principal body and the body of form.

⁵² Gl.: In this respect, there are listening, thinking, and meditative enquiry, as well as actual perception of relative truth, which makes four.

TN: The former three primarily concern absolute truth, whereas actual perception (*mngon-sum*; Skt. *pratyakṣa*) relates to relative truth.

⁵³ One may notice from the foregoing how it is possible both to see the absolute truth from a relative viewpoint and to understand the relative from the perspective of absolute truth. The first case is illustrated by imaging the absolute, which is why such an object of knowledge may be termed “contaminated”; the second is exemplified by knowing the relative as it is (*ji-lta-ba*), which means to understand it in its thusness (Skt. *tathatā*) or emptiness (Skt. *śūnyatā*). “All the objects of craving,” of course, refers to the ordinary worldly perception of relative truth, characterized by confusion and craving.

⁵⁴ Gl.: The objects of craving are assigned to relative truth since they are heteronomous and interdependent.

⁵⁵ Gl.: According to the authoritative scriptures and reasoning, in absolute truth the heteronomous is the [thoroughly] established [nature]; hence, discerning the heteronomous and examining it through sapience, it pertains either to the [thoroughly] established or imputed [natures]. [“Heteronomous”] refers to the undeceiving connection between the evaluated and the evaluator.

⁵⁶ Here reference is made to the *Yogācāra* teaching on the three natures (*rang-bzhin gsum*; Skt. *trisvabhāva*), or three characteristics (*mtshan-nyid gsum*; Skt. *trīṇi lakṣaṇāni*), namely, the heteronomous (*gzhan-dbang*; Skt. *paratantra*), the imputed (*kun-brtags*; Skt. *parikalpita*), and the thoroughly established (*yongs-su grub-pa*; Skt. *pariṇiṣpanna*) natures. To illustrate these three natures, we may resort to the ubiquitous example of the rope that is mistaken for a snake. The perception of the rope is called the “heteronomous nature,” since it occurs interdependently of causes and conditions, namely, of the coming

together of the sense-object (the rope), the eye-faculty, and the visual consciousness. The mistaken notion of a snake that is projected on to the rope is given the name “imputed nature.” The realization, accompanied by relief, that the snake is in fact a rope is termed “thoroughly established nature.”

The point being made in our text is that despite the confusion that they generate on account of misapprehension, the heteronomous and imputed natures are, in some sense at least, compatible with being undeceiving since they can be pursued to lead to the thoroughly established nature (the subject of absolute truth beyond elaboration, §4.2.2.2.2).

⁵⁷ Note that the Tibetan term rendered as “absolute” is *don-dam-pa*, itself a translation of the Sanskrit *paramārtha*; it has the literal sense of being “meaningful and holy.”

⁵⁸ Gl.: This is of two kinds: with respect to an essence and with respect to signs.

⁵⁹ Gl.: There are good and evil conceptions. Among good conceptions, some image relative truth, and [others image] absolute truth. When added to evil conceptions and natural conceptions, this makes four types of conceptions.

⁶⁰ Gl.: i.e., describing an essence and signs, and describing freedom from an essence and signs.

⁶¹ Cf. Byams-pa (Maitreya), *dBus-dang mtha' rnam-par 'byed-pa'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa*, in TD, vol. 123, pp. 88.6–89.2, where a number of discursively elaborated limitations are listed; and Vasubandhu's commentary on this passage: Vasubandhu, *Madhyāntavibhāga bhāṣya*, ch. 5, vv. 23–26, in Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu*, pp. 266–270 (English translation), 459–461 (Sanskrit).

For the eight elaborated limitations, see [Chapter 1](#), note 106.

⁶² Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *dBu-ma rtsa-ba'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa shes-rab* (*Prajñānāma-mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā*), ch. 18, v. 9, in TD, vol. 96, p. 21.3–4; Kenneth K. Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1993, p. 115.

⁶³ The realization that there is no self cannot be acquired extrinsically but must be understood for oneself. In his commentary on this passage of Nāgārjuna's text, Candrakīrti compares this to a person suffering from the optical condition known as “floaters” (Skt. *timira*), who sees hairs where there are none. Even if someone were to tell him that there are no

hairs, he would be unable to comprehend this. It is only by taking a remedy that the person would come to realize that in fact there were no hairs in the first place. See Zla-ba grags-pa (Candrakīrti), *dBu-ma rtsa-ba'i 'grel-pa tshig gsal-ba*, in TD, vol. 102, ch. 18, p. 238.4–7; Jan Willem De Jong, *Cinq Chapitres de la Prasannapadā*, Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1949, pp. 29–30 (French translation), 104 (critical edition). The same holds true for the concept of the self, which out of ignorance is imputed upon the fleeting phenomena of the five aggregates (form, feelings, notions, dispositions, and consciousness). The self can neither be said to be identical to the five aggregates, since in that case it would itself be subject to birth and destruction, nor can it be different from them, since one would then be forced to conclude that it does not exist. Hence, the self is nothing but a misconception. Cf. Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *dBu-ma rtsa-ba'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa shes-rab*, ch. 18, v. 1, in TD, vol. 96, p. 20; Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, pp. 113–114.

⁶⁴ Gl.: Its characteristic is to be free from elaborations.

⁶⁵ Gl.: i.e., privation for the [consciousness of the] *Cittamātrins*, negation for the [self of the] pitiful heretics and for the [atomic particles of the] auditors.

TN: Negation (*med-par dgag-pa*; Skt. *prasajyapratishedha*) refers to a refutation in which both the attribute and the subject are refuted as nonexistent (such as the notion of the self). It is to be distinguished from privation (*ma-yin-par dgag-pa*; Skt. *paryudāsapratishedha*), which merely refutes an attribute, while implicitly affirming a subject qualified by that attribute (such as consciousness). See Arguillère, *Le Vocabulaire du Bouddhisme*, pp. 74–76. They are also seen translated as non-affirming and affirming negation, respectively.

⁶⁶ The five sense-faculties (*dbang-po lnga*; Skt. *pañcendriya*) are the eye (*mig-gi dbang-po*; Skt. *cakṣurindriya*), ear (*rna-ba'i dbang-po*; Skt. *śrotrendriya*), nose (*sna'i dbang-po*; Skt. *ghrāṇendriya*), tongue (*lce'i dbang-po*; Skt. *jihvendriya*), and body (*lus-kyi dbang-po*; Skt. *kāyendriya*). See Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 251.

⁶⁷ For the eighteen kinds of emptiness, see note 9.

⁶⁸ I.e., eternalism and nihilism.

⁶⁹ I have emended *rig-pas grub-pa* to *rigs-pas grub-pa*, as the former option (“established through awareness”) makes little sense.

⁷⁰ Gl.: Being functional, it is maintained as absolute truth because it repels the hordes of ignorance, it effects release from cyclic existence,

and it increases all qualities.

⁷¹ *Chos yang-dag-par sdud-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 65, p. 19.1.

⁷² These expressions are synonyms for the self of the heretics. See Csoma de Koros, *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary*, vol. 2, p. 139. Note that I have emended *skye ba med pa'o/* (“nor birth”) to *skye bo med pa'o/* (“nor person”) for contextual reasons.

⁷³ Gl.: This should be established for the five [sense-] doors by the psyche’s individually discerning sapience. This is because there is the conception of an essence concerning the five [sense-] doors.

⁷⁴ “Grasping appearances” and “grasping certainty” refer to the provisional (*drang-don*; Skt. *neyārtha*) and definitive meaning (*nges-don*; Skt. *nītārtha*), respectively.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Lang-kar gshegs pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 49, p. 410.3–4. The citation also occurs, in a form closer to that quoted here, in Vimalamitra, *Rim-gyis 'jug-pa'i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, p. 59.2.

⁷⁶ This gloss seems to be wrong since the citation is from the *Varmavyūhanirdeśa* of the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*: *Go-cha'i bkod-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 359.2–7.

⁷⁷ See also Conze, *Perfect Wisdom*, pp. 22–23.

⁷⁸ *Go-cha'i bkod-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 367.2.

⁷⁹ In the third *Bhāvanākrama*, Kamalaśīla advises the *yogin* to examine the various phenomena of his experience through sapience, so as to deconstruct the concepts of existence and nonexistence and to realize the selflessness of the individual and of phenomena. He thereby no longer referentially images an essence. See Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 148–154 (Tibetan text), 256–258 (Sanskrit text).

⁸⁰ This could refer to the *Kun-rdzob-dang don-dam-pa'i bden-pa bstan-pa'i mdo* (*Samvṛti-paramārtha-satya-nirdeśa-sūtra*), in KD, vol. 60, pp. 488–532, or to Zhi-ba 'tsho (Śāntarakṣita), *bDen-pa gnyis rnam-par 'byed-pa'i dka'-'grel* (*Satyadvayavibhaṅgapañjika*), in TD, vol. 107, pp. 30–104. A discussion of the two truths is also found in Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṃkāra*; for the latter, along with the commentary on this text by Mi-pham 'Jam-dbyangs rgya-mtsho (1846–1912), see Shantarakshita and Mipham, *The Adornment of the Middle Way*, Translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, New Delhi: Shechen Publications, 2008, vv. 69–72, pp. 62 (root text), 294–313 (commentary).

⁸¹ Usually, two more points are added to make the seven points of the posture of Vairocana: the shoulders straight and the hands in the gesture

of meditative equipoise (*mnyam-bzhag*; Skt. *saṃāhita*). Cf. [Duff, The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary](#), s.v. *rnam par snang mdzad kyi chos bdun*.

⁸² Bhavya (Bhāvaviveka), *dBu-ma'i snying-po'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa*, in TD, vol. 98, p. 39.5; Bhavya, *Madhyamakahrdayam*, Edited by Christian Lindtner, Chennai: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 2001, ch. 5, v. 4, p. 58 (Sanskrit text).

⁸³ Bhavya, *dBu-ma'i snying-po'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa*, in TD, vol. 98, p. 7.6; [Bhavya, Madhyamakahrdayam](#), ed. Lindtner, ch. 3, v. 16, p. 9 (Sanskrit text).

⁸⁴ The TD version, in accordance with the Sanskrit *prajñāṅkuśa*, reads “with the iron hook of sapience” (*shes rab lcags kyus*).

⁸⁵ The five continua of becoming are the classes of the gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and denizens of hell. They belong to the realm of desire (*'dod-pa'i kham*s; Skt. *kāmadhātu*), where the conditions to practice calm abiding are less ideal than in the form (*gzugs-kham*s; Skt. *rūpadhātu*) and formless realms (*gzugs-med-kyi kham*s; Skt. *ārūpyadhātu*). In the latter two, it is easy to practice calm abiding and to progress along the four contemplations (*bsam-gtan bzhi*; Skt. *caturdhyāna*). The *yogin* must, of course, go beyond these contemplations and the realms of existence if he is to achieve enlightenment.

⁸⁶ Gl.: Inasmuch as one desires suppleness (Skt. *praśrabdhī*), its specific characteristic is clarity.

⁸⁷ Gl.: i.e., concentration.

⁸⁸ Gl.: i.e., mental stability is similar to a mountain.

⁸⁹ Gl.: [calm abiding] only applies if one has not attained insight.

⁹⁰ *Ting-nge-'dzin-gyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 55, p. 44.1–2; *Samādhirājasūtra*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 4, v. 13, p. 21 (Sanskrit); also quoted in the second *Bhāvanākrama*: Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 106–107 (Tibetan text), 240 (Sanskrit text).

⁹¹ By listing sinking and agitation together, gNubs-chen enumerates only five defects, rather than the six of the third *Bhāvanākrama*. See Miyazaki, “The Gradualist Chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the Teaching of Kamalaśīla,” p. 899; and Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 156–158 (Tibetan text), 259 (Sanskrit text). However, the five defects of gNubs-chen's exposition are in accord with Vasubandhu, *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya*, ch. 4, v. 4; see [Anacker, Seven Works of Vasubandhu](#), pp. 247 (English translation), 447 (Sanskrit).

⁹² Non-effort (or, in Vasubandhu's text, absence of dispositions, *anabhisamskāra*) is a defect when putting to rest sinking and agitation. However, once they have been put to rest, it is effort that is a defect. See *ibid.*, p. 247. The same point is made later when explaining intention as an antidote to non-effort and equanimity as an antidote to effort.

⁹³ The eight dispositions are also listed in Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*. See Rahula, *Le Compendium de la Super-Doctrine*, p. 121.

⁹⁴ Note that recollection (*dran-pa*; Skt. *smṛti*), often translated as "mindfulness," and attentiveness (*shes-bzhin*; Skt. *saṃprajanya*) are clearly related and sometimes counted as one. The difference between them is that attentiveness has a more constant character than recollection in that it informs the mind when recollection is lost and the mind wanders astray in meditation. For a very clear presentation of the five defects and their antidotes, see Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity*, pp. 76–77. On the importance of recollection on the path of the bodhisattva, see Śāntideva, *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 6, pp. 67–69 (concerning *Śikṣāsamuccaya-kārikā*, vv. 8–9); and Mahoney, *Of the Progress of the Bodhisattva*, p. 98. On the application of recollection and attentiveness in the context of the practice of *rDzogs-chen*, see Namkhai Norbu, *The Mirror: Advice on Presence and Awareness*, Arcidosso, Italy: Shang Shung Edizioni, 2005, esp. pp. 29–31, 33–34.

⁹⁵ In this regard, inclination is the basis upon which effort depends. Faith is the sign, whereas suppleness is the fruition. See Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu*, p. 248.

⁹⁶ Cf. a similar passage in the first *Bhāvanākrama*, which like the third *Bhāvanākrama* lists six rather than five defects: Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 43–44 (Tibetan text), 214 (Sanskrit text); José Van den Broeck (tr.), *La Progression dans la Méditation (Bhāvanākrama de Kamalaśīla)*, *Traduction du sanscrit et du tibétain*, Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Bouddhiques, 1977, pp. 26–27 (French translation).

⁹⁷ As pointed out in Dylan Esler, "Traces of Abhidharma in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (Tibet, Tenth Century)," in Bart Dessein and Weijen Teng (eds.), *Text, History, and Philosophy: Abhidharma Across Buddhist Scholastic Traditions*, Leiden: Brill, 2016, pp. 314–349, esp. pp. 333–334, this passage follows quite closely the wording found in Kamalaśīla's first *Bhāvanākrama*, so much so that it appears to be a summary or paraphrase thereof; see Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 44–

46 (Tibetan text), 214–215 (Sanskrit text); Van den Broeck, *La Progression dans la Méditation*, pp. 27–28 (French translation). Here is a translation of the section in the *Bhāvanākrama*:

When one-pointedness of mind (Skt. *cittaikāgratā*) is endowed with further competence (Skt. *karmaṇyatā*), and when it has attained the special qualities of imaging, etc., it is given the names “contemplation,” “meditative equilibrium of formlessness,” “release,” and so forth.

Thus, when it is endowed with the feeling of equanimity, as well as examination and scrutiny, it is called “absence of inadequacy,” and the intention of application of the first contemplation [is present]. When it is free from the thirst of the desire [realm] and from sinful phenomena, and is endowed with examination, scrutiny, joy, and bliss, it is called the “first contemplation.” Within the first contemplation, absence of mere examination is called the “distinctive contemplation.”

Being free from examination and scrutiny, when it is free from thirsting for the stage of the first contemplation and is endowed with joy, bliss, and thorough limpidity, it is called the “second contemplation.”

When it is free from thirsting for the stage of the second contemplation and is endowed with bliss, equanimity, recollection, and attentiveness, it is called the “third contemplation.”

When it is free from thirsting for the stage of the third contemplation, when there is neither suffering nor pleasure, and when it is endowed with equanimity and recollection, it is called the “fourth contemplation.”

Likewise, this should be applied to the particulars of the types of referential imaging pertaining to the formless meditative equilibria, releases, sense-bases of outshining (Skt. *abhibhvāyatana*), and so forth.

The Sanskrit reads,

*eṣā ca cittaikāgratā uttarottara-karmaṇyatā-samprayogād
ālambanādi-guṇa-viśeṣa-yogācca dhyānārūpi-samāpattir
vimokṣādi-vyapadeśaṃ labhate/*

*tathā hi yad(ā-u)pekṣā-vedanā-samprayuktā savitarka-
savicārā sā bhavati, tadā'nāgamyā ucyate [prathama-dhyāna-
prayoga-cittatvāt]/ yadā ca kāma-trṣṇayā [pāpa-dharmaisca]
viviktā bhavati, [vitarka-vicāra] prīti-sukhādhyātma-
samprasādaiḥ samprayuktā bhavati, tadā prathamam dhyānam
ucyate/ ata eva prathama-dhyānam vitarkamātra-rahitaṃ
dhyānāntaram-ucyate/ yadā vitarka-vicāra-rahitā prathama-
dhyāna-bhūmi-trṣṇayā viviktā ca bhavati, prīti-sukhādhyātma-
samprasādaiḥ samprayuktā bhavati, tadā dvitīyam dhyānam-
ucyate/ yadā tu dvitīya-dhyāna-bhūmi-trṣṇayā viviktā bhavati,
sukhopekṣā-smṛti-samprajanya-samprayuktā bhavati, tadā
trtīyam dhyānam ucyate/ yadā trtīya-dhyāna-bhūmi-trṣṇayā
viviktā bhavati, aduḥkhāsukhopekṣā-smṛty-abhisamprayuktā
bhavati, tadā caturtham dhyānam-ucyate/*

*evam ārūpya-samāpatti-
vimokṣābhibhvāyatanādiṣ(u-)ālambanākārādi-bhedena
yojyam/.*

⁹⁸ Gl.: Contemplation is joined to the uncontaminated. When there is no means, it is contaminated.

⁹⁹ The words in square brackets have been added according to the corresponding passage from the first *Bhāvanākrama*: Kamalaśīla, *Bhāvanākrama*, pp. 45 (Tibetan text), 214 (Sanskrit text).

¹⁰⁰ Whereas the names “contemplation” and “meditative equilibrium of the formless realm” refer to the realms of form and formlessness, respectively (see note 105), the term “release in the formless realm” signifies a deepening of the experience of formlessness and designates four attainments of formlessness similar to the four formless meditative equilibria, yet more definitive in character. While the four meditative equilibria are practiced by ordinary persons (Skt. *prthagjana*), they are merely the gateway to the four releases in the formless realm (*gzugs-med-pa'i rnam-par thar-pa*; Skt. *ārūpyavimokṣa*) that are practiced by noble individuals (Skt. *āryapudgala*). See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, pp. 1298–1299.

¹⁰¹ This is an allusion to the precursory level (*nyer-bsdogs*; Skt. *sāmantaka*) of the first contemplation, which is without inadequacy (*mi-lcogs med-pa*; Skt. *anāgamyā*). It is only when one has reached this level

that one properly engages in insight meditation. See Dalai-Lama, *Pacifier l'Esprit: Une méditation sur les Quatre Nobles Vérités du Bouddha*, Transcrit par Jigmé Khyentsé Rinpoché et traduit du tibétain par Patrick Carré, Paris: Albin Michel, 1999, p. 131. This precursory level of the first contemplation and the first contemplation per se are both endowed with examination and scrutiny (Skt. *savitarkaḥ savicāraḥ*). See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, p. 1487.

¹⁰² This is the first of the four contemplations (Skt. *caturdhyāna*) pertaining to the realm of form (*gzugs-khams*; Skt. *rūpadhātu*).

¹⁰³ The distinctive (or intermediate) contemplation (Skt. *dhyānāntara*) is defined as being “without examination but with scrutiny alone” (Skt. *avitarko vicāramātraḥ*). See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, p. 1488. Being an intermediary phase and a distinction within the first contemplation, it is “distinct from” (and superior to) the first contemplation through the absence of examination. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 5, ch. 8, pp. 180–181; p. 181, nn. 1, 2.

¹⁰⁴ From the second contemplation onward, all the concentrations are without examination and scrutiny (Skt. *avitarko 'vicāraḥ*). See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, p. 1488; also La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 5, ch. 8, p. 183.

¹⁰⁵ By practicing these four contemplations (*bsam-gtan*; Skt. *dhyāna*), the meditator gradually purifies his obscurations. He thereby progresses along ever subtler levels of experience, referred to as the realm of form (*gzugs-khams*; Skt. *rūpadhātu*), and purifies the causes of experiencing them. He then proceeds in like manner to practice the four meditative equilibria, which allow him to traverse the realm of formlessness. This is why the text says that the preceding explanation of the four contemplations can be applied analogously to the formless realm.

The four meditative equilibria (*snyoms-'jug*; Skt. *samāpatti*) associated with the formless realm (*gzugs-med-kyi khams*; Skt. *ārūpyadhātu*) are named after the four increasingly subtle notions (*'du-shes*; Skt. *samjñā*) that are their objective focus or, as here, after the four sense-bases that perceive these notions: the sense-basis of infinite space (*nam-mkha' mtha'-yas skye-mched*; Skt. *ākāśānantyāyatana*), the sense-basis of infinite consciousness (*rnam-shes mtha'-yas skye-mched*; Skt. *vijñānānantyāyatana*), the sense-basis of nothing whatsoever (*ci-yang med-pa'i skye-mched*; Skt. *ākimścanyāyatana*), and the sense-basis of

neither notions nor notionlessness (*'du-shes med 'du-shes med-min skye-mched*; Skt. *naivasamjñā-nāsamjñāyatana*).

¹⁰⁶ Unidentified source. Ironically, the quote is also found in a Dunhuang *Chan* treatise, IOL Tib J 709 (fol. 5v.3–4); for a translation, see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 145. For a description of the manuscript, see [Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*](#), pp. 302–306.

¹⁰⁷ Unidentified source.

¹⁰⁸ Gl.: Its nature is the path of seeing, the path of meditation, and the path of no-more-learning. The seven ancillaries of enlightenment, the noble eightfold path, and their wisdoms are accomplished through the eleventh state among the ten stages' ten wisdoms. These are synonyms that come to be actually grasped as non-synonyms. For the purpose of the childish, these are indeed four virtues.

TN: The translation of this gloss is tentative at best. The first stage corresponds to the path of seeing, the second through to tenth stages correspond to the path of meditation, whereas the eleventh stage here alluded to corresponds to the path of no-more-learning. On the relation between the five paths and ten stages, see note 42. For the seven ancillaries of enlightenment, see [Chapter 3](#), note 112. The noble eightfold path (Skt. *aṣṭāṅgamārga*) comprises correct view (*yang-dag-pa'i lta-ba*; *samyagdarśi*), correct conception (*yang-dag-pa'i rtog-pa*; Skt. *samyaksamkalpa*), correct speech (*yang-dag-pa'i ngag*; Skt. *samyagvāk*), correct efficiency (*yang-dag-pa'i las-kyi mtha'*; Skt. *samyakkarmānta*), correct livelihood (*yang-dag-pa'i 'tsho-ba*; Skt. *samyagājīva*), correct effort (*yang-dag-pa'i rtsol-ba*; Skt. *samyagvyāyāma*), correct recollection (*yang-dag-pa'i dran-pa*; Skt. *samyaksmṛti*), and correct concentration (*yang-dag-pa'i ting-nge-'dzin*; Skt. *samyaksamādhi*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 159.

¹⁰⁹ Gl.: of the type: compassion integrating calm abiding and insight.

¹¹⁰ This and the following passages are from the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*; see Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, ch. 8, §34, pp. 112 (Tibetan text), 228 (French translation); Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, pp. 107–108. The quotation is also found in IOL Tib J 709 (fol. 31v.2–32r.4). Cf. Vasubandhu's *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya*, ch. 5, v. 12, in Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu*, pp. 261 (English translation), 455 (Sanskrit). It is unclear why the title *bDen-pa'i khyad-par bstan-pa'i bsam-gtan* is here used, as this is not the title of the corresponding chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and as elsewhere gNubs-chen

refers to the same *sūtra* as *San-de'i mdo* (C 184.2). Perhaps it is the name of a non-extant text itself quoting the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*.

¹¹¹ I have emended “eternalism” (*rtag-pa*) to “conceptions” (*rtog-pa*; Skt. *saṃkalpa*) according to the Dunhuang manuscript, as this better suits the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*’s reading of “conceptualization” (*rnam-par rtog-pa*; Skt. *vikalpa*).

¹¹² The *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* reads “lethargy” (*rmugs-pa*) instead of “apathetic equilibrium” (*snyoms-pa*).

¹¹³ The *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* reads “body” (*lus*) instead of “hosts” (*tshogs*).

¹¹⁴ Atrophies (*gnas-ngan-len*; Skt. *daṣṭhulya*) are rigidified negative tendencies, of which twenty-four are listed. Cf. Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 173. In *Yogācāra* literature the term “atrophy” has the connotations of badness, stiffness, and subliminal uneasiness and comes to characterize the negative aspect of the universal ground consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*), especially insofar as it becomes associated with the seeds (Skt. *bīja*) of the afflictions and of suffering. See Lambert Schmithausen, *Ālayavijñāna: On the Origin and Development of a Central Concept of Yogācāra Philosophy*, vol. 1, Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2007, pp. 66–69; cf. also Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, p. 41, n. 1.

¹¹⁵ Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, ch. 8, §33, pp. 111 (Tibetan text), 227 (French translation); Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, p. 106. The quotation is also found in IOL Tib J 709 (fol. 30v.4–31r.1).

¹¹⁶ Complacency in a mere trifle of virtue (Skt. *alpamātrakuśālasaṃtuṣṭi*) is mentioned as a subsidiary affliction (Skt. *upakleśa*) in Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya*. See Rahula, *Le Compendium de la Super-Doctrine*, p. 119.

¹¹⁷ Gl.: i.e., the obstruction to calm abiding.

¹¹⁸ Gl.: i.e., the obstruction to insight.

¹¹⁹ Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, ch. 8, §33, pp. 111 (Tibetan text), 228 (French translation); Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, p. 107. The quotation is also found in IOL Tib J 709 (fol. 31r.2–3).

¹²⁰ This refers to the cessation of the auditors (*nyan-thos-pa'i 'gog-pa*) and signifies an entrancement in a state of meditative equilibrium (*snyoms-par 'jug-pa*; Skt. *saṃāpatti*), in which all progress stagnates. See Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity*, pp. 120–121.

¹²¹ This example is also found in Vimalamitra, *Rim-gyis 'jug-pa'i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, p. 683.6–7.

¹²² Unidentified source.

¹²³ I have added “blissful” (*bde*), as this addition is required both grammatically and contextually, being witnessed, moreover, in the previous line in C 83.3.

¹²⁴ Technically speaking, it should be remembered that the mental events (Skt. *caitasika*) have the same characteristic (Skt. *lakṣaṇa*) and same referential imaging (Skt. *ālambana*) as the mind. See Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*, vol. 2, Louvain: Institut Orientaliste & Bureaux du Muséon, 1949, p. 1075.

¹²⁵ For the five paths and ten stages, see note 42.

¹²⁶ In this regard, there are three kinds of dreams: those occurring in the early watch of the night are due to the imprints remaining from the previous day; those occurring at midnight are due to the influences of malevolent spirits; and those occurring at dawn are dreams of clarity. It is only the latter that can be trusted as bearing signs of one's spiritual development.

¹²⁷ *rMi-lam bstan-pa (Svapnanirdeśa)*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo (Ratnakūṭa-sūtra)*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.3; for gloss, see p. 413.5–6.

¹²⁸ The energy of truth (*bden-pa'i rlabs*) or strength of truth (*bden-pa'i stobs*) represents a very ancient Buddhist (and indeed pre-Buddhist) notion. It centers on the idea that the truth of a statement can be invoked to intercede miraculously in the present. It is important to note that the content of the statement is of no significance (so long as it is true), nor the moral stature or spiritual realization of the person invoking the truth. To illustrate this point, the *Milindapañha*, a Pali work belonging to the early Common Era, gives the example of the courtesan Bindumatī who was able to reverse the current of the Ganges by invoking the truth of the statement that she served all her clients equally, whether they happened to be aristocrats or common laborers. See [Horner, *Milinda's Questions*](#), vol. 1, pp. 170–171.

¹²⁹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.3; for gloss, see pp. 413.6–414.3.

¹³⁰ The *Triskandhaka-sūtra* expounds three aggregates, also termed “branches” (*yan-lag*), to be performed by a bodhisattva. These are the branch of prostration (*phyag-tshal-gyi yan-lag*), that of confessing one's

sins (*sdig-pa bshags-pa'i yan-lag*), and that of rejoicing in the merit accumulated by others (*rjes-su rang-ba'i yan-lag*). For an English translation, see Brian C. Beresford (tr.), *The Confession of Downfalls*, Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2003, pp. 3–7.

¹³¹ Added according to the KD version.

¹³² *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.3–4; for gloss, see p. 414.3–5.

¹³³ The KD version reads “since one has desisted from listening to the doctrine” (*chos nyan dang phral ba yin pas*) instead of “listens to them [in that capacity]; since they are ordinary beings” (*nyan dang/ phal pa yin pas*).

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 409.4; for gloss, see p. 414.5–7.

¹³⁵ This refers to arranging for a master to expound the doctrine.

¹³⁶ The KD version reads “sentient beings” (*sems can rnams*) instead of “one’s mind” (*sems*).

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 409.4; for gloss, see pp. 414.7–415.2.

¹³⁸ The KD version reads “has scrutinized” (*dpyad byas pa yin pas*) instead of “has engaged in” (*spyad pa yin pas*).

¹³⁹ The KD version reads “doctrinal manuscript repository” (*chos yig khang*) instead of “offering chapel” (*mchod khang*).

¹⁴⁰ Māra is the personification of ego-clinging in Buddhism. One of his deceptive tricks is to lure practitioners through signs of apparent spiritual progress. In cosmological terms, Māra is the head of the Paranirmitavaśavartins (the highest level of gods of the desire realm). As such, he rules the realm of desire and constantly seeks to oppose the Buddha. See [Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*](#), p. 761.

¹⁴¹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.4; for gloss, see p. 415.2–4.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 409.5; for gloss, see pp. 415.4–416.2.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 409.5; for gloss, see p. 416.2–6. The phrase about “not knowing” (*mi shes pa*) is not found in the main text of the KD version, but its equivalent “not conscious of” (*rnam par mi shes pa*) is found in the corresponding gloss.

¹⁴⁴ There are ten perfections, each of which corresponds to one of the ten stages to be traversed by the bodhisattva. The ten perfections (*pha-rol-tu phyin-pa bcu*; Skt. *daśapāramitā*) are generosity (*sbyin-pa*; Skt. *dāna*), discipline (*tshul-khrims*; Skt. *śīla*), patience (*bzod-pa*; Skt. *kṣānti*), diligence (*brtson-'grus*; Skt. *vīrya*), contemplation (*bsam-gtan*;

Skt. *dhyāna*), sapience (*shes-rab*; Skt. *prajñā*), means (*thabs*; Skt. *upāya*), aspiration (*smoṇ-lam*; Skt. *praṇidhāna*), strength (*stobs*; Skt. *bala*), and wisdom (*ye-shes*; Skt. *jñāna*). See Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, pp. 10–11. For the ten stages, see note 42.

Note that in the enumeration given in the gloss, which replicates that found in the *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 416.4–6, compassion replaces means on the seventh stage, individual genuine awareness (*so-so yang-dag-par rig-pa*; Skt. *pratisaṃvit*) replaces aspiration on the eighth stage, concentration replaces strength on the ninth stage, and strength replaces wisdom on the tenth stage.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 409.5; for gloss, see pp. 416.6–417.2.

¹⁴⁶ The KD version reads *nam mkha' la* (“in the sky”), whereas both editions of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* read *na kā ya*, presumably an error in transliterating the Sanskrit word *nāka* with the addition of the allative particle *la*. In Sanskrit *nāka* is a synonym for the sky; see [Amarasimha](#), *Amarakoṣa*, Varanasi, India: Chaukhamba, 2008, ch. 1, svargavarga, v. 6, p. 5. (Note that this edition of the thesaurus gives the title as *Amarakoṣa* rather than *Amarakośa*.)

¹⁴⁷ Added according to the KD version.

¹⁴⁸ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.5–6; for gloss, see p. 417.3–5.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 409.6; for gloss, see p. 417.5–7.

¹⁵⁰ The mention of the followers of *Bon* (*bon rnams*) in this gloss stems from misreading the *Svapnanirdeśa*, which reads “sentient beings” (*sems can rnams*) instead. It could be either a visual error due to a contraction (*seṃn*) found in one of the manuscripts in the transmission of the text—sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī’s copy β or even Tāranātha’s manuscript α—or else a psychological error. Assuming that this error goes back to the early redaction of the text, it would be a further indication that the glosses postdate the actual composition of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* itself, probably by a century or so (see Introduction, §I.5.4), since the clear identification of a *Bon* school is not corroborated before the 10th–11th centuries. See Christopher I. Beckwith, “On Zhangzhung and Bon,” in Henk Blezer (ed.), *Emerging Bon: The Formation of Bon Traditions in Tibet at the Turn of the First Millennium AD*, Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2011, pp. 164–184, esp. pp. 172–174. Nonetheless, it would be imprudent to

read too much into this error since, as mentioned, it is equally possible that it crept in at a later stage in the textual transmission.

¹⁵¹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.6; for gloss, see pp. 417.7–418.3.

¹⁵² The three pure stages (*dag-pa sa-gsum*) are the eighth, ninth, and tenth stages, whence no return is possible.

¹⁵³ On the importance of the prophecy (Skt. *vyākaraṇa*) predicting the bodhisattva's enlightenment, see Conze, *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*, pp. 321–323.

¹⁵⁴ There are several classifications of relics: some threefold, some fourfold, and some fivefold. The fivefold classification adopted by Padma 'phrin-las (1640–1718) and Kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas (1813–1899) is as follows: (1) relics of the principal body (*chos-kyi-sku'i ring-bsrel*), which signify none other than the essence of the Buddha's awakened mind and are symbolized by the *stūpa*; (2) relics of the bodily remains of the Thus-gone One (*de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i sku-gdung-gi ring-bsrel*), which also include the physical remains of great masters and bodhisattvas; (3) relics of the garb (*sku-bal-gyi ring-bsrel*), which are explained as being hair and nails, as well as objects having come into contact with the saint's body; (4) relics of the doctrine (*chos-kyi ring-bsrel*), which refer to the Buddha's injunctions, even including authoritative commentaries on his teachings; and (5) mustard-seed-like relics (*yungs-'bru tsam-gyi ring-bsrel*), which multiply themselves and emerge from the bones of great saints.

The term “relic” (*ring-bsrel*; Skt. *śarīra*) has both a general and a particular application. In its general sense, this term covers all various classifications of relics. In its specific sense, it refers to a particular type of mustard-seed-like relic (*yungs-'bru lta-bu'i ring-bsrel*), which as such is able to multiply or to emerge from other relics. In this sense, it is distinguished from the other variety of mustard-seed-like relic, the “remains” (*gdung*), in that the relics are smaller than the latter. See Yael Bentor, “Tibetan Relic Classifications,” in Per Kvaerne (ed.), *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Fagernes 1992*, vol. 1, Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994, pp. 16–30, esp. pp. 17–19 and 26, n. 15.

¹⁵⁵ Literally, “treasure-hair.” Though this tuft of hair looks rather small when rolled up, it can attain up to 4 feet when unrolled. It is counted among the thirty-two characteristics of a great person (*mtshan-bzang-po sum-cu-so-gnyis*; Skt. *dvātriṃśanmahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*); it is

listed as the 4th characteristic in the *Lalitavistara* and the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, as the 30th in the *Arthaviniścaya-sūtra*, as the 32nd in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and as the 17th in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. For a juxtaposition of these various lists, see Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, pp. 96–109.

¹⁵⁶ This tuft of hair on the crown of the head is sometimes interpreted as a protuberance. It, too, is one of the thirty-two characteristics of a great person; it is listed as the 1st characteristic in the *Lalitavistara* and the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, as the 31st in the *Arthaviniścaya-sūtra* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and as the 23rd in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. See *ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 409.6; for gloss, see p. 418.3–7.

¹⁵⁸ The KD version reads “from the sky” (*nam mkha' las*) instead of “by the roadside” (*lam ka na*).

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 409.6–7; for gloss, see pp. 418.7–419.4.

¹⁶⁰ The KD version reads “a *stūpa* made of clay” (*mchod rten 'jim pa las byas pa*) instead of “oneself not worshiping” (*mchod pa ma byas pa*).

¹⁶¹ This refers to the custom of arranging a platform consisting of eight lions, called “a lion throne” (*seng-ge'i khri*; Skt. *siṃhāsana*), under the *stūpa*, and adorning it with a parasol on top.

¹⁶² Up to the seventh stage, the *stūpas* one sees in one's dreams may be mere projections that carry no blessings. Though neither the gloss nor the *Svapnanirdeśa* say so explicitly, one would expect that on the eighth stage, too, one does not see any wrong dreams, since the eighth stage is included among the three pure stages.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 409.7; for gloss, see p. 419.4–5.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 409.7; for gloss, see pp. 419.5–420.2.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 409.7–410.1; for gloss, see p. 420.2–3.

¹⁶⁶ Here the gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “three” (*sa gsum pa*) instead of “ten stages.”

¹⁶⁷ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 410.1; for gloss, see p. 420.3–5.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 410.1; for gloss, see p. 420.5–7.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 420.7–421.3. This dream is not found on p. 410.1.

¹⁷⁰ Added according to the KD version.

¹⁷¹ The KD version reads “praising” (*bstod pa mdzad pa*) instead of “teaching” (*ston pa mdzad pa*).

¹⁷² As previously, this is due to one's obscurations and obstacles. One should therefore rely on a virtuous friend.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 410.1–2; for gloss, see p. 421.3–6.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 410.2; for gloss, see pp. 421.6–422.3.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 410.2; for gloss, see p. 422.3–7.

¹⁷⁶ The KD version reads simply “discourses on dialectics” (*mtshan nyid kyi gtam dag*).

¹⁷⁷ Added according to the KD version.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 410.2–3; for gloss, see pp. 422.7–423.1. Due to a confusion between *sad* (“to wake up”) and *zad* (“to be exhausted”), the reading for this dream is garbled in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*: “One may [hear] religious teachings knowing no exhaustion.” I have emended the text according to the KD version.

¹⁷⁹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 423.1–3. This dream is not found on p. 410.3.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 410.3; for gloss, see p. 423.3–6.

¹⁸¹ Added according to the KD version.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 410.3; for gloss, see pp. 423.6–424.2.

¹⁸³ This signifies that one has previously arranged for a master to teach the doctrine.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 424.2–5. This dream is not found on p. 410.3–4.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 410.4; for gloss, see pp. 424.5–425.3.

¹⁸⁶ Technically *bodhimāṇḍa* (*byang-chub snying-po*) refers to the actual spot under the bodhi tree where the Buddha reached enlightenment, but it may also designate the tree in a wider sense. Thus, the Buddha's proceeding to the dais of enlightenment (*byang-chub snying-por gshegs-pa*) is counted among the twelve deeds of a Buddha. Although strictly speaking, the bodhi tree is a peepul tree (Skt. *pappala aśvata*; Lat. *ficus religiosa*), the Buddha's seat was also covered by a banyan tree (Skt. *nyagrodha*), which, unlike the former, is evergreen and provides excellent shelter from both sun and rain.

¹⁸⁷ Added according to the KD version.

¹⁸⁸ I have emended *lo ma* (“leaves”) to *me tog* (“flowers”) according to the KD version.

¹⁸⁹ Added according to the KD version.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 410.4; for gloss, see p. 425.3–7.

¹⁹¹ The gift of the doctrine is counted among four types of gifts (*sbyin-pa rnam-bzhi*): the gift of things (*zang-zing-gi sbyin-pa*; Skt.

āmiṣadāna), the gift of the doctrine (*chos-kyi sbyin-pa*; Skt. *dharmadāna*), the gift of fearlessness (*mi 'jigs-pa'i sbyin-pa*; Skt. *abhaya-dāna*), and the gift of kindness (*byams-pa'i sbyin-pa*; Skt. *maitrīdāna*). Cf. mGon-po dbang-rgyal (ed.), *Chos-kyi rnam-grangs shes-bya'i nor-gling 'jug-pa'i gru-gzings*, Chengdu, China: Si-khron mirigs dpe-skrun-khang, 2003, p. 102. More generally, only three types of gifts are counted, in which case the gift of kindness is omitted; cf. Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 266.

¹⁹² *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 410.4; for gloss, see pp. 425.7–426.3.

¹⁹³ The gloss omits saying anything about the first and second stages, conflating the explanation for the first stage with that of the third; however, the passage has been translated according to the KD version.

¹⁹⁴ The KD version reads, “if one sees that above the seat there are white parasols thoroughly covered with jeweled lattices” (*gdan gyi steng na rin po che'i dra bas (sic!) yongs su g.yogs pa'i gdugs dkar po mthong na*).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 410.4–5; for gloss, see pp. 426.3–427.1. The *stūpa* mentioned here is one among eight *stūpas* commemorating events in the Buddha's life, the prototypes of which are said to contain Śākyamuni's original remains. They served to commemorate the four important moments of the Buddha's life (his birth, enlightenment, first turning of the wheel of the doctrine, and complete transcendence) and his four most significant miracles (the descent from the Tuṣita heaven, the great miracle of Śrāvastī, the miracles of Vaiśālī, and the conciliation of the schism). See Tucci, *Stupa: Art, Architectonics and Symbolism*, pp. 21–24.

¹⁹⁶ Note that *so'i rigs* has been emended to *rtswa'i rigs* and, in the following sentence, *so sngon-po* to *rtswa sngon-po*, both according to the KD version.

¹⁹⁷ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 410.5; for gloss, see p. 427.1–6.

¹⁹⁸ A set of religious robes consists of three parts (*chos-gos rnam-gsum*; Skt. *tricīvara*): (1) the upper robe (*bla-gos*; Skt. *uttarāsaṅga*), consisting of an undershirt (*rngul-gzan*; Skt. *saṃkakṣikā*) and an outer shawl (*gzan*); (2) the lower robe (*mthang-gos*; Skt. *antarvāsa*), a skirt (*sham-thabs*; Skt. *nivāsana*) that in India was a discreet item of clothing like the ubiquitous lungi but in Tibet took on greater proportions for climatic reasons; and (3) the loose mantle (*snam-sbyar*; Skt. *saṅghāṭī*),

which is only worn by the fully ordained monks (*dge-slong*; Skt. *bhikṣu*), not the novices (*dge-tshul*; *śrāmaṇera*); in Tibet, the latter is usually made of wool. Cf. Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 74; and Duff, *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, s.v. *chos gos gsum*.

¹⁹⁹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 410.5; for gloss, see pp. 427.6–428.4.

²⁰⁰ That is to say, empty.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 410.5; for gloss, see p. 428.4–5.

²⁰² Ibid., p. 410.5–6; for gloss, see pp. 428.5–429.4.

²⁰³ In India, the menials represent the lowest of the four classes (Skt. *varṇa*). Traditionally, the members of this class perform the tasks unsuited to the other classes. The *R̥gveda* states that during the primordial sacrifice, the priesthood (Skt. *brāhmaṇa*) arose from the mouth of the original person (Skt. *puruṣa*), the aristocrats (Skt. *kṣatriya*) from his arms, the gentry (Skt. *vaiśya*) from his thigh, and the menials (Skt. *śūdra*) from his feet. Cf. *Puruṣasūkta*, Edited by Janardan Shastri Pandey, Varanasi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976, v. 11, p. 9. On the Buddhist refutation of this Brahmanical theory as expounded in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, see Vincent Eltschinger, “The *Yogācārabhūmi* Against Allodoxies (*Paravāda*): 3. The Caste-Classes,” in Christophe Vielle, Christian Cannuyer, and Dylan Esler (eds.), *Acta Orientalia Belgica*, vol. 30 (*Dieux, génies, anges et démons dans les cultures orientales & Florilegium Indiae Orientalis, Jean-Marie Verpoorten in honorem*), Brussels: Société Royale Belge d’Études Orientales, 2017, pp. 203–240.

²⁰⁴ Added according to the KD version.

²⁰⁵ While technically the kings belong to the aristocracy, they are, in Buddhism, placed above the priests. In the *Ambhaṭṭha-sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* (*sutta* no. 3, PTS edition: I, 97–98), the Buddha uncompromisingly asserts the superiority of the aristocracy (Skt. *kṣatriya*) over the priestly class. See Maurice Walshe (tr.), *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995, pp. 117–118. In *Mahāyāna* terms, this is because all the thousand Buddhas choose the kingly class as their birthplace. Although the priests are learned, the kings possess virtues such as courage and determination. Furthermore, the thirty-two characteristics of a great person (*mtshan-bzang-po sum-cu-so-gnyis*; Skt. *dvātriṃśanmahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*) are identical for a Buddha and a wheel-wielding monarch (Skt. *cakravartin*). This royal dignity of the Buddha is

what has made him respected even in the fold of Hinduism, where he is considered an incarnation (Skt. *avatāra*) of Viṣṇu.

One may here recall the statement of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* that the bodhisattva of the ninth stage is born either in a priestly or an aristocratic family—the former has the advantage of sapience (Skt. *prajñā*), the latter of strength (Skt. *bala*). Both are useful to and honored by the world. See Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*, vol. 5, Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1980, pp. 2439–2440. Moreover, it is precisely because he has destroyed arrogance that the bodhisattva is born in the high castes. See *ibid.*, p. 2394.

²⁰⁶ The four great kings (Skt. *cāturmahārājakāyikas*) are the rulers of the first and lowest of the six classes of gods of the desire realm; they are Dhṛtarāṣṭra, king of the east and lord of the scent-eaters (Skt. *gandharva*); Virūdhaka, king of the south and lord of the *kumbhaṇḍa* demons, who are pictured with huge stomachs and genitals; Virupākṣa, king of the west and lord of the serpent-spirits (Skt. *nāga*); and Vaiśaravaṇa, king of the north and lord of the goblins (Skt. *yakṣa*). As protectors of the world (Skt. *lokapāla*), their function is to examine the religious conduct of human beings and report back to the Trāyatrīṃśa gods. See Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, pp. 759–760.

²⁰⁷ Śakra is an epithet of Indra, who, in Buddhist cosmology, is the lord of the gods of the Trāyatrīṃśa heavens and of the lower levels of the desire realm. Cf. *Amarasimha, Amarakoṣa*, ch. 1, svargavarga, v. 42, p. 23; Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, p. 760.

²⁰⁸ The Brahmās inhabit the Brahmakāyika heavens, on which see note 301.

²⁰⁹ In Buddhist cosmology, the ethereal classes (*gtsang-rigs*), also called ethereal levels (*gtsang-ris*; Skt. *śuddhāvāsakāyika*) or ethereal abodes (*gnas gtsang-ma*; Skt. *śuddhāvāsa*), which are five in number, are located just under Akaniṣṭha, which is at the peak of the form realm (*gzugs-khams*; Skt. *rūpadhātu*). Only those having perfected the path of seeing (*mtshong-lam*; Skt. *darśanamārga*) can be born there. The gods of the ethereal classes are incapable of going to the formless realm (*gzugs-med-kyi khams*; Skt. *ārūpyadhātu*) or of falling to the lower realms. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 2, ch. 3, p. 216; vol. 4, ch. 6, p. 223.

²¹⁰ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 410.6; for gloss, see pp. 429.4–430.1.

- ²¹¹ Ibid., p. 410.6; for gloss, see p. 430.1–6.
- ²¹² Added according to the KD version.
- ²¹³ Added according to the KD version.
- ²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 410.6; for gloss, see pp. 430.6–431.2.
- ²¹⁵ This and the following dream are given in reverse order in our gloss; the order has been emended according to the KD version.
- ²¹⁶ Added according to the KD version.
- ²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 410.6–7; for gloss, see p. 431.2–7.
- ²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 410.7; for gloss, see pp. 431.7–432.4.
- ²¹⁹ It is clear, both from the KD version and the gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, that *mar-me* (“butter lamp”) must be emended to *me-tog* (“flower”).
- ²²⁰ Ibid., p. 410.7; for gloss, see pp. 432.4–433.1.
- ²²¹ Added according to the KD version.
- ²²² This refers to a stage of development prior to the first bodhisattva stage, when one is still an ordinary individual (*gang-zag*; Skt. *pudgala*) engaged on the path of accumulation (*tshogs-lam*; Skt. *sambhāramārga*). It is only at the beginning of the path of seeing (*mtshong-lam*; Skt. *darśanamārga*), with the first bodhisattva stage, that one destroys wrong views (Skt. *mithyādr̥ṣṭi*) and becomes a noble one (*’phags-pa*; Skt. *ārya*), albeit still bound by desire (Skt. *virakta*). See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, p. 1457.
- ²²³ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, pp. 410.7–411.1; for gloss, see p. 433.1–4.
- ²²⁴ Ibid., p. 411.1; for gloss, see p. 433.4–7.
- ²²⁵ Ibid., p. 411.1; for gloss, see pp. 433.7–434.4.
- ²²⁶ Added according to the KD version.
- ²²⁷ Ibid., p. 411.1; for gloss, see p. 434.4–6.
- ²²⁸ The gloss of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “fifth stage” (*lnga par ro*), but the text has been emended according to the KD version.
- ²²⁹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.2; for gloss, see pp. 434.6–435.4.
- ²³⁰ The gloss of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously connects the last sentence to the previous dream, but the text has been emended according to the KD version.
- ²³¹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.2; for gloss, see pp. 435.4–436.1.

²³² Here, *dBang-phyug* does not stand for Īśvara, the lord of the gods, but for **Madaneśvara* (*bDud dGa'-rab dbang-phyug*), a name of Māra.

²³³ Added according to the KD version.

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 411.2; for gloss, see p. 436.1–7.

²³⁵ Cf. the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* (*sutta* no. 16, PTS edition: II, 107–109), where the Buddha lists eight causes for an earthquake. See Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, pp. 247–248. On the subject of earthquakes in the context of Buddhist cosmology and as instances of a tectonic participation in and confirmation of important events in the Buddha's life, see Eugen Ciurtin, "The Buddha's Earthquakes [I] on Water: Earthquakes and Seaquakes in Buddhist Cosmology and Meditation, with an Appendix on Buddhist Art," in *Studia Asiatica*, vol. 10, 2009, pp. 59–123.

²³⁶ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.2–3; for gloss, see pp. 436.7–437.4.

²³⁷ Note that *rgya-ngan* has been emended to *rgya-gad* (meaning *bkyon-pa*, "to chastise," according to *rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 106; and *bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, pp. 114–115). The KD version has *brgyad-bkag* ("to rebuke"), of which *rgya-gad* is held to be a corruption, at least according to Tadeusz Skorupski, Gyurme Dorje, and Tudeng Nima (eds.), *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary: A Revised Version of Bod rGya Tshig mdzod chen mo*, vol. 1, Beijing: The Nationalities Publishing House / London: The School of Oriental and African Studies, 2002, p. 701.

²³⁸ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.3; for gloss, see p. 437.4–6.

²³⁹ The last phrase is quite different in meaning from the KD version, which reads, "Therefore, when presenting worthy offerings to those individuals who expound the doctrine, if one presents them with a non-hostile mind, the obscurations of one's deeds will be utterly purified and one will renounce [the world] for enlightenment." The Tibetan reads, *des gal te chos smra ba'i gang zag rnams la ji ltar 'os pa'i mchod pa dag phul zhing zhe 'gras pa med pa'i sems kyis 'bul bar byed na/ des de'i las kyi sgrib pa de rnam par dag par 'gyur zhing/ byang chub tu nges par 'byung bar yang 'gyur ro/*.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 411.3; for gloss, see pp. 437.6–438.5.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 411.3; for gloss, see pp. 438.5–439.1.

²⁴² Only three stages are commented on in the gloss. Here, the *Svapnanirdeśa* provides little information, except to add that the first dream corresponds to the second stage, the second dream to the fifth stage, and the third dream to the sixth stage.

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 411.3–4; for gloss, see p. 439.1–6.

²⁴⁴ Added according to the KD version.

²⁴⁵ Here the gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “variegated” (*sna tshogs*) instead of “of a single kind” (*sna gcig*), but the text has been emended according to the KD version.

²⁴⁶ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.4; for gloss, see pp. 439.6–440.3.

²⁴⁷ Added according to the KD version.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 411.4; for gloss, see p. 440.3–7.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 411.4; for gloss, see pp. 440.7–441.4.

²⁵⁰ Added according to the KD version.

²⁵¹ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously adds a negative particle *mi* (“not returning through the sky”), but the translation follows the KD version.

²⁵² *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.4–5; for gloss, see p. 441.4–7.

²⁵³ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “ten” (*sa bcu par*) instead of “three stages.”

²⁵⁴ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.5; for gloss, see pp. 441.7–442.5.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 411.5; for gloss, see pp. 442.5–443.2. The “sound of concentration” refers to a subtle sound audible only in utter stillness and solitude. When all outward sounds have ceased, one may become aware of this subtle sound, properly called a soundless sound (*sgra-med-pa’i sgra*).

²⁵⁶ Added according to the KD version. The concentrations heard in this and the following two dreams refer to the first contemplation, the distinctive contemplation, and the second contemplation, respectively. These contemplations were mentioned earlier in the context of the four contemplations (Skt. *caturdhyāna*); see §4.2.3.1.2 (C 78.3–5).

²⁵⁷ The abodes of Brahmā (Skt. *brahmavihāra*) refer to the four immeasurables. The term “abodes of Brahmā” is found in both *Nikāya* Buddhism and in the context of the *Mahāyāna*. There is a threefold distinction in the *Mahāyāna* perspective on the practice of the immeasurables cum abodes of Brahmā: (1) whereas the auditor (Skt.

śrāvaka) practices the immeasurables for his own benefit, the bodhisattva's purpose is always the welfare of others; (2) whereas the auditor uses as his imaged reference the beings of the realm of desire, the bodhisattva cultivates the immeasurables for all sentient beings inhabiting the three realms; (3) finally, contrary to the auditor, the bodhisattva never loses sight of the fact that the sentient beings to whom his practice of the immeasurables is directed are in fact empty. See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, pp. 1239–1241.

²⁵⁸ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads *bkod pa* (“arrays”) instead of *dgos pa* (“needs”), but the translation follows the KD version.

²⁵⁹ Added according to the KD version.

²⁶⁰ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.5; for gloss, see p. 443.2–6. The *Vaipulya-sūtra* section referred to here is a section of the recorded discourses of the Buddha, which treats its subjects extensively. Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya* particularly identifies it with the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras* due to the vastness of their scope. See Rahula, *Le Compendium de la Super-Doctrine*, p. 139.

²⁶¹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.5–6; for gloss, see pp. 443.6–444.3.

²⁶² The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “previously seen” (*sngar mthong ba'i*) instead of “not previously heard” (*sngar ma thos pa'i*), but the text has been emended according to the KD version.

²⁶³ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.6; for gloss, see p. 444.3–6.

²⁶⁴ Added according to the KD version.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.; for gloss, see pp. 444.6–445.4.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.; for gloss, see p. 445.4–7.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 411.7; for gloss, see pp. 446.4–447.1. The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “name of a Thus-gone One” (*de bzhin gshegs pa'i mtshan*) instead of “name of a bodhisattva,” all the while giving the explanation for the dream that corresponds to hearing a bodhisattva's name (which appears next in the KD version). The text has therefore been emended according to the KD version.

²⁶⁸ According to the KD version, the consequence of venerating one's relatives is quite the opposite: “the obscurations of one's deeds will be

utterly purified and one will renounce [the world] for enlightenment.” The Tibetan reads, *des de'i las kyi sgrib pa de rnam par dag par 'gyur zhing byang chub tu nges par 'byung bar yang 'gyur ro/*.

²⁶⁹ Added according to the KD version.

²⁷⁰ For these various epithets of a highly advanced bodhisattva, see Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 12, pp. 5511–5512; vol. 3, p. 1040; vol. 1, p. 99; vol. 6, p. 2479; and vol. 11, p. 5007. Only “Attainment of Memory” (Skt. *Dhāraṇīpratilabdha*) seems to be mentioned in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*; see Csoma de Koros, *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary*, vol. 2, p. 157.

²⁷¹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 411.7; for gloss, see p. 447.1–5.

²⁷² The KD version specifies that we are here dealing with a boat made of leather (*ko-gru*).

²⁷³ Added according to the KD version.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 411.7–412.1; for gloss, see pp. 447.5–448.2.

²⁷⁵ The KD version reads “grass” (*rtwa*) instead of “earth” (*sa*).

²⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 412.1; for gloss, see p. 448.2–5.

²⁷⁷ Added according to the KD version. It is unclear why the *first* five stages are mentioned, since the gloss (following the KD version) goes on to specify that we are dealing with the sixth through to tenth stages.

²⁷⁸ The three qualities are the opposite of the three things to be relinquished just mentioned; they are specified as follows in the KD version: “One should rely on a virtuous friend, be without fickleness, and make manifold one’s belief” (*des ni dge ba'i bshes gnyen la bsten par bya zhing g.yo med pa dang mos pa mang du yang bya'o/*).

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 412.1; for gloss, see pp. 448.5–449.2.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 412.1; for gloss, see p. 449.2–4.

²⁸¹ This is a reference to the seven mountains surrounding Mount Sumeru; they are Yugamdhara, Īśādhara, Khadiraka, Sudarśana, Aśvakarṇa, Vinataka, and Nimimdhara. See Csoma de Koros, *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary*, vol. 1, p. 45.

²⁸² *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.1–2; for gloss, see pp. 449.5–450.1.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 412.2; for gloss, see p. 450.1–4.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 412.2; for gloss, see pp. 450.5–451.3.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 412.2; for gloss, see p. 451.3–7.

²⁸⁶ The verb *'gre-ba* (translated here as “pertains to the entire series”) refers to the action of slotting a repeated sentence, verse, or list (*ma-mo*; Skt. *mātrkā*) into a wider segment of text. See Dan Martin, “Comparing Treasuries: Mental States and Other *mDzod phug* Lists and Passages with Parallels in Abhidharma Works by Vasubandhu and Asaṅga, or in Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras: A Progress Report,” in Samten G. Karmay and Yasuhiko Nagano (eds.), *New Horizons in Bon Studies*, Delhi: Saujanya Publications, 2004, pp. 21–88, esp. pp. 66–67.

²⁸⁷ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.2–3; for gloss, see pp. 451.7–452.4.

²⁸⁸ The KD version reads “for the sake of the four continents” (*gling bzhi pa'i phyir*) instead of “for the sake of a continent” (*gling gi phyir*). Reference is here being made to the four continents of Buddhist cosmology; see note 350.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 412.3; for gloss, see pp. 452.4–453.1.

²⁹⁰ So that climbing it to pick the fruits is difficult.

²⁹¹ Ibid.; for gloss, see p. 453.1–6.

²⁹² Added according to the KD version.

²⁹³ Ibid.; for gloss, see pp. 453.6–454.3.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.; for gloss, see p. 454.3–6. Anavapta (mTsho Ma-dros-pa) is an epithet of Lake Mānasa. See [Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*](#), vol. 10, p. 4206. On the continued importance of Lake Mānasa in Tibetan representations of sacred geography into the 19th century (and beyond), see Toni Huber and Tsepak Rigzin, “A Tibetan Guide for Pilgrimage to Ti-se (Mount Kailas) and mTsho Ma-pham (Lake Manasarovar),” in Toni Huber (ed.), *Sacred Spaces and Powerful Places in Tibetan Culture: A Collection of Essays*, Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1999, pp. 125–153. Of related interest, see also [Alex McKay](#), “The British Imperial Influence on the Kailas-Manasarovar Pilgrimage,” in *ibid.*, pp. 305–321.

²⁹⁵ Here reference is repeatedly made to visions manifesting on the lake’s surface. Such visions may occur in sacred lakes to ordinary people and are sometimes invisible to religious specialists; they are referred to generically as “encounters with the lake” (*mtsho-mjal*) (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

²⁹⁶ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.3; for gloss, see pp. 454.6–455.3.

²⁹⁷ These are guardians of the four directions; see note 206.

²⁹⁸ The Trāyatṛimśa heavens represent the second among the six classes of gods of the desire realm and are located in the upper half of Mount Meru. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 2, ch. 3, p. 161.

²⁹⁹ Here the gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “the third” (*gsum pa'o*) instead of “the seventh stage.”

³⁰⁰ Tuṣita is the fourth among the six classes of gods of the desire realm and is located in the space above Mount Meru; it is here that a bodhisattva of the tenth stage dwells while waiting to take his final birth as a Buddha. See Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, p. 761.

³⁰¹ The Brahmakāyika heavens refer to the first among the three abodes of the first contemplation (*bsam-gtan dang-po'i gnas-gsum*) of the form realm (Skt. *rūpāvacara*). The beings here have cleaned away their sins and dwell on the four abodes of Brahmā (Skt. *brahmavihāra*), which are synonyms of the four immeasurables. The measure of the merit of the Brahmakāyika gods is that they abide blissfully in this heaven for an eon (Skt. *kalpa*). See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 3, ch. 4, p. 251.

In these heavens is found a high abode inhabited by a single sovereign, Mahābrahmā, which corresponds to the third abode of the first contemplation. The gods inhabiting the Brahmakāyika heavens are characterized by the diversity of their bodies on the one hand, and by the uniformity of their notions (Skt. *saṃjñā*) on the other. For example, although there may be differences in their height, etc., if Brahmā thinks that the other gods are created by him, his acolytes, too, will think that they are created by Brahmā. See *ibid.*, vol. 2, ch. 3, pp. 3–4, 17.

³⁰² There are five ethereal abodes; see *ibid.*, vol. 4, ch. 6, p. 223. The ethereal abodes are the highest among the seventeen abodes of the form realm. See note 209.

³⁰³ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.3–4; for gloss, see pp. 455.3–456.1.

³⁰⁴ The KD version reads, instead, “because one has denigrated those who expound the doctrine on the grounds of enjoyment, one must actually persevere in thoroughly giving up fair entities” (*de ni longs spyod kyi gzhi las chos smra ba la skur ba btab pa yin pas des sdug pa'i dngos po yongs su btang ba la mngon par brtson par bya'o/*).

³⁰⁵ The KD version reads “abiding in a hole in the forest” (*nags khung na gnas pa*).

³⁰⁶ Added according to the KD version.

- ³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 412.4; for gloss, see p. 456.1–5.
- ³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 412.4; for gloss, see pp. 456.5–457.2.
- ³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 412.4; for gloss, see p. 457.2–5.
- ³¹⁰ The last two sentences read quite differently in the KD version.
- ³¹¹ Reference is here being made to the seven precious things; for a list of these, see [Chapter 2](#), note 104.
- ³¹² An additional dream is found in the *Svapnanirdeśa*; cf. *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, pp. 412.4–5, 457.5–458.2. In the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, this dream is added as a gloss at the end of the list; see §4.2.4.108 (C 111.4–6).
- ³¹³ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.5; for gloss, see p. 458.2–6. Note that the KD version reads “rearing” (*srel bar*) flower petals instead of “spreading” (*spel ba*) them.
- ³¹⁴ One element is missing to make up the required number of stages.
- ³¹⁵ Ibid., p. 412.5; for gloss, see pp. 458.6–459.2.
- ³¹⁶ Ibid., p. 412.5–6; for gloss, see p. 459.2–6.
- ³¹⁷ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “nine stages” (*sa dgu po*), but the text has been emended according to the KD version.
- ³¹⁸ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.6; for gloss, see pp. 459.6–460.1.
- ³¹⁹ Ibid., p. 412.6; for gloss, see p. 460.1–6.
- ³²⁰ Added according to the KD version.
- ³²¹ Ibid., p. 412.6–7; for gloss, see pp. 460.7–461.3.
- ³²² The KD version reads “If one is generous” (*de la sbyin pas*) instead.
- ³²³ Ibid., p. 412.7; for gloss, see p. 461.3–7.
- ³²⁴ Ibid., p. 412.7; for gloss, see pp. 461.7–462.2. Note that the KD version reads “or a town, country or valley” (*grong ngam/ yul lam/ ljongs*) instead of “or an orchard” (*ljon shing*).
- ³²⁵ The KD version reads, instead of the last two sentences, “If the four retinues assemble there, one will view the fifth stage” (*'khor bzhi po dag 'dus na de ni sa lnga par ro/*), and thereby omits saying anything about the fourth stage. The four retinues refer to those surrounding the Buddha, comprising: (1) monks (*dge-slong*; Skt. *bhikṣu*), (2) nuns (*dge-slong-ma*; Skt. *bhikṣuṇī*), (3) laymen (*dge-bsnyen*; Skt. *upāsaka*), and (4) laywomen (*dge-bsnyen-ma*; Skt. *upāsikā*). See mGon-po dbang-rgyal, *Nor-gling 'jug-pa'i gru-gzings*, p. 68.

³²⁶ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 412.7; for gloss, see p. 462.3–5.

³²⁷ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* reads *po ga'i* (i.e., *po ga* with genitive particle), perhaps from *po-ga-ri*, meaning “joint” (*rusthigs-kyi mtshams*; cf. *bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 437), or from its variant *pog-ri*, which also means, at least according to some sources, “incense mountain” (*spos-kyi ri-bo*; cf. *Chos-kyi grags-pa, brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 498; and *rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 303). Since this does not seem to fit the sense of the passage, the text has been emended according to the KD version to read *gro ba'i* (“of birch bark”); for the latter, see *bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 95; and *Chos-kyi grags-pa, brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 134; cf. also Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 536.

³²⁸ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 413.1; for gloss, see pp. 462.5–463.7.

³²⁹ The ten virtues are: to relinquish taking life (*srog gcod-pa spong-ba*; Skt. *prāṇātighātād virati*), to relinquish stealing (*ma byin-par len pa spong-ba*; Skt. *adattādānād virati*), and to relinquish sexual misconduct (*'dod-pas log-par g.yem-pa spong-ba*; Skt. *kāmamithyācārād virati*)—these represent the threefold excellent conduct of the body (*lus-kyi legs-par spyod-pa gsum*); to relinquish telling lies (*brdzun-du smra-ba spong-ba*; Skt. *mṛṣāvādāt prativirati*), to relinquish using harsh words (*tshig rtsub-po smra-ba spong-ba*; Skt. *pāruṣyāt prativirati*), to relinquish slander (*phra-mar smra-ba spong-ba*; Skt. *paiśunyaṭ prativirati*), and to relinquish gossip (*ngag bkyal-ba smra-ba spong-ba*; Skt. *saṃbhinna-pralāpāt prativirati*)—these represent the fourfold excellent conduct of speech (*ngag-gi legs-par spyod-pa bzhi*); to relinquish covetousness (*brnab-sems spong-ba*; Skt. *abhidhyāyāḥ prativirati*), to relinquish malice (*gnod-sems spong-ba*; Skt. *vyāpādāt prativirati*), and to relinquish wrong views (*log-par lta-ba spong-ba*; Skt. *mithyadrṣṭeḥ prativirati*)—these are the three excellent trainings of the psyche (*yid-kyi legs-par sbyong-ba gsum*). See Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology*, p. 45.

³³⁰ Added according to the KD version.

³³¹ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads *'bum* (“a hundred thousand”), but this has been emended to *'bu tha* (the Tibetan

phonetic rendering of Buddha) following the KD version, which has *sangs rgyas*.

³³² “Measurements of the body” (*lus-kyi tshad*) refers to instructions for painters of icons concerning the proportions of the Buddha’s body.

³³³ The KD version reads “thorough ripening” (*yongs su smin par bya ba*) instead of “working for the purpose” (*la don byed pa*).

³³⁴ This second part of the gloss is given in a fragmentary manner in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* and so has been translated mainly after the *Svapnanirdeśa*. See *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 463.5–7.

³³⁵ Ibid., p. 413.1; for gloss, see pp. 463.7–464.4. Note that the KD version initially reads, instead, “One may observe oneself entering another town” (*grong gzhan du zhugs par kun tu shes pa*), although in the dream’s explanation the same wording is found as here.

³³⁶ The KD version reads “the genuine knowledge of things as they are” (*yang dag pa ji lta ba bzhin gyi shes pa*) instead of “the view,” which in any case amounts to the same thing.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 413.1; for gloss, see p. 464.4–7. I have emended *zab pa* (“profound”) to *zam pa* (“bridge”) according to the KD version.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 413.1–2; for gloss, see pp. 464.7–465.3.

³³⁹ The idea is that the boat is joined to and towed by another boat. Note that in this and the following sentence, the KD version reads “lined up” (*gshibs pas*) instead of “joined” (*sbyar ba*).

³⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 413.2; for gloss, see p. 465.3–6.

³⁴¹ Ibid.; for gloss, see pp. 465.6–466.1.

³⁴² Ibid.; for gloss, see p. 466.1–3.

³⁴³ The four entities of influence (*bsdu-ba’i dngos-po bzhi*; Skt. *saṃgrahavastūni*) are generosity (*sbyin-pa*; Skt. *dāna*), nice speech (*snyan-par smra-ba*; Skt. *priyavacana*), purposeful conduct (*don spyod-pa*; Skt. *arthacaryā*), and compatibility of purpose (*don mthun-pa*; Skt. *samānārtha*). See Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, p. 11.

³⁴⁴ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 413.2–3; for gloss, see pp. 466.3–467.1. In this passage, we witness how the expression “showing the path” (*lam ston pa*) is used first in a rather concrete, then in a more abstract, sense.

³⁴⁵ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads “of generosity” (*sbyin pa’i*) instead of “for riding” (*bzhon pa’i*).

³⁴⁶ Added according to the KD version. The KD version additionally reads, “One should realize that on the first six stages [these dreams may be due to] the activity of Māra and one’s karmic obscurations. The four top stages are without such flaws” (*sa dang po drug po dag la bdud kyi las dang/ las kyi sgrib pa yang rtogs par bya’o/ /sa gong ma bzhi po dag la ni skyon de dag med do/*).

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 413.3; for gloss, see p. 467.1–5.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.; for gloss, see pp. 467.5–468.3.

³⁴⁹ The gloss in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* erroneously reads *ma g.yo’i lo tog*, but this has been emended to *gam yo’i lo tog* according to the KD version. Note that *gam-yo* is archaic for *nye-’khor*. See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi’i gur-khang*, p. 32.

³⁵⁰ This refers to the four major continents surrounding Mount Meru; they are Pūrvavideha in the east, Jambudvīpa in the south, Aparagodānīya in the west, and Uttarakuru in the north. See Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, p. 81.

³⁵¹ For a brief description of the structure of the universe according to *Abhidharma* cosmology, see [Chapter 1](#), note 29. In our world-realm, Jambudvīpa (which represents India and the surrounding countries known to the early Buddhists and which I have translated as “our world”) is located to the south of Mount Meru. It is so-called because of the many rose apple trees (Skt. *jambu*) growing there.

³⁵² *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 413.3; for gloss, see p. 468.3–7.

³⁵³ Morbid pallor (*skya-rbab*; Skt. *pāṇḍu*; the Tibetan is misspelt *skya-bab* in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*) refers to a decrease in the body’s digestive warmth. This affects one’s ability to absorb the nutritional elixirs of foods, so that one becomes increasingly weak and pale. Cf. Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 178; Drungtso and Drungtso, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology*, p. 26; Jäschke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 25; Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 193; Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 616.

³⁵⁴ Vitiligo (*sha-bkra*; Skt. *śvitra*; the Tibetan is misspelt *sha-kha* in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*) refers to a condition affecting the pigmentation of the skin; it is characterized by the appearance of whitish patches on the skin. See Goldstein, *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan*, p. 1089; Jäschke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 554; Sarat Chandra Das, *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, Delhi: Book Faith

India, 1992, p. 1226; Drungtso and Drungtso, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology*, p. 480; Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 15, p. 6787; Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 1106.

³⁵⁵ The translation of *skem-nad* (Skt. *śoṣa*; the Tibetan is misspelt *skems-nad* in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*) as “tuberculosis” or “consumption” follows Goldstein, *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan*, p. 62; Jäschke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 23; Das, *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 93; Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 187; and Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 1092; cf. Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 170 (which gives “amenorrhea”). It should be noted that the term *skem-nad* can refer more generally to emaciation or to a range of wasting conditions.

³⁵⁶ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 413.3–4; for gloss, see pp. 468.7–469.4.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 413.4; for gloss, see p. 469.4–6.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.; for gloss, see pp. 469.6–470.3.

³⁵⁹ I have emended *gros* (“discussion; advice”) to *grong* (“town”) according to the KD version.

³⁶⁰ Added according to the KD version.

³⁶¹ I have emended *lam* (“path”) to *mal* (“bed”) according to the KD version.

³⁶² This dream is given as part of the main text in the *Svapnanirdeśa*, after the dream here counted as §4.2.4.85 (C 105.6–7); cf. *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, pp. 412.4–5, 457.5–458.2.

³⁶³ Here, *skye-gnas* is an abbreviation for “the four types of birthplaces” (*skye-gnas rnam-pa bzhi*; Skt. *caturyonī*), which are birth from a womb (*mngal-nas skye-ba*; Skt. *jarāyuja*), from an egg (*sgo-ngalas skye-ba*; Skt. *aṇḍaja*), birth from warmth and moisture (*drod-gsherlas skye-ba*; Skt. *saṃsvedaja*), and preternatural birth (*brdzus-te skye-ba*; Skt. *upapāduka*). See Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 14; cf. Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 132; and Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, pp. 197–198.

³⁶⁴ The hot summer season (Skt. *grīṣmakāla*) in India lasts from mid-May to mid-July. See Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 374.

³⁶⁵ Unidentified source.

³⁶⁶ I have emended *snying-po* (“quintessence”) to *gnyen-po* (“antidote”).

³⁶⁷ Cf. sPyan-ras-gzigs brtul-zhugs (Avalokitavrata), *Shes-rab sgron-ma rgya-cher 'grel-pa* (*Prajñāpradīpaṭīkā*), in TD, vol. 101, p. 152.5, p. 152.2, particularly for the first phrase.

³⁶⁸ Cf. *Ting-nge-'dzin-gyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 55, p. 94.1–2; *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, Edited by Sarat Chandra Das and Pandit Harimohan Vidyabhushan, Calcutta: The Buddhist Text Society of India, 1896, ch. 10, p. 33.9–10 (Sanskrit). The passage is not found in *Samādhirājasūtra*, ed. Vaidya.

³⁶⁹ Gl.: This is evident from the ancient annals.

³⁷⁰ Cf. *Ting-nge-'dzin-gyi rgyal-po'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 55, p. 94.3–5, of which the quote here is a paraphrase. For the Sanskrit, see *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, ed. Das & Vidyabhushan, ch. 10, p. 33.11–14. The passage is not found in *Samādhirājasūtra*, ed. Vaidya.

³⁷¹ Gl.: It pertains to a Buddha.

TN: The concentration of psychic rapidity (Skt. *manojavasamādhi*) enables the Buddha to travel vast distances with the speed of thought. More specifically, it refers to one of three subdivisions of the supracognition that is a knowledge of magical feats (Skt. *ṛddhividhijñāna*): (1) Teletransportation of the body (Skt. *śarīravāhinī*) allows one's body to fly about like a bird or a seer (Skt. *ṛṣi*). (2) Teletransportation due to belief (Skt. *adhimokṣikī*) allows one to touch the sun and moon while remaining on this continent. (3) Finally, psychic rapidity (Skt. *manojava*) is in fact the visual consciousness (Skt. *cakṣurvijñāna*) reaching the summit of the formless realm, or else, arriving in Akaniṣṭha and traversing infinite universes. Auditors realize the first; independent buddhas, the first two; only Buddhas realize all three. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 5, ch. 7, p. 113; and Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 4, p. 1819, n. 2.

³⁷² Gl.: It conquers the obscuration of the afflictions.

TN: The concentration of heroic going (Skt. *śūramgamasamādhi*) is said to know the scope (Skt. *gocara*) and characteristics (Skt. *lakṣaṇa*) of all concentrations and is comparable to a general who knows each of his soldiers. Its name refers to the non-abiding nature of all phenomena, which is shared by the Thus-gone One. Once a bodhisattva has obtained this concentration, he can no longer be harmed by Māra. The bodhisattva of the tenth stage who enters the concentration of heroic going is able to

magically manifest the twelve deeds of a Buddha in the manner of an emanation body (Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*). Nonetheless, all sentient beings are potentially endowed with this concentration, though only the Buddhas can manifest it to the highest degree. The middling degree is manifested by those who have mastered the first contemplation (Skt. *dhyāna*), whereas the lesser degree refers to the concentration of the mind and mental events in the course of the ten bodhisattva stages. See Lamotte, *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, pp. 33–35, 37–38, also §§22–24, p. 127, §48, p. 149, §128, p. 200.

³⁷³ Gl.: Unaffected itself, it can conquer anything else.

TN: The diamond-like concentration (Skt. *vajropamasamādhi*) is produced during the fourth contemplation and effects the destruction of all contaminations. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 5, ch. 8, p. 195. It is immediately followed by the path of no-more-learning (Skt. *aśaikṣamārga*), which corresponds to the stage of an arhat. See [Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*](#), p. 683.

³⁷⁴ For the ten perfections and four entities of influence, see notes 144 and 343, respectively. The ten kinds of religious conduct are: writing down the letters (*yi-ge 'bri-ba*), presenting offerings (*mchod-pa 'bul-ba*), giving (*sbyin-pa gtong-ba*), listening to the doctrine (*chos nyan-pa*), memorizing (*'dzin-pa*), reading (*klog-pa*), giving explanations (*'chad-pa*), reciting [the religious texts] (*kha-ton byed-pa*), thinking about the meaning of the doctrine (*chos-kyi don sems-pa*), and meditating on the meaning of the doctrine (*chos-kyi don sgom-pa*). See mGon-po dbang-rgyal, *Nor-gling 'jug-pa'i gru-gzings*, p. 320.

³⁷⁵ Non-extant source. On this text, see [Chapter 5](#), note 5.

³⁷⁶ Unidentified source. Nonetheless, a variant of this quotation is found in rGyal-ba bzang-po dpal sbas-pa (*Jayabhadraśrīgupta), *dBang-gi don nges-par brjod-pa (Abhiṣekārthanirukti)*, in TD, vol. 53, p. 337.4–5, though the lines are given in a somewhat different order. The *Abhiṣekārthanirukti*, a tantric work, was almost certainly unknown to gNubs-chen, since it was translated into Tibetan by Avadhūtīpa and Śākya brtson-'grus in the 11th century.

³⁷⁷ The two bodies of form are here referred to as bodies of activity since they are the basis of a Buddha's activity for the purpose of sentient beings in cyclic existence.

³⁷⁸ 'Od-zer kun-tu bkye-ba bstan-pa'i mdo, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, pp. 644.3–652.2.

³⁷⁹ The expression “these rays of light” (*’od zer de dag*) summarizes a long list of light rays given in KH, vol. 36, pp. 644.4–646.1.

³⁸⁰ The KH version reads “mixed” (*’dres pa*) instead of “to guide” (*’dren pa*). Both variants make sense.

³⁸¹ Several additional pages are found in KH. The correspondence resumes at KH, vol. 36, p. 650.6.

³⁸² Gl.: This is to be applied to the utter purity of the Buddha’s eyes, and so forth.

³⁸³ *Byang-chub sems-dpa’i sde-snod (Bodhisattvapiṭaka)*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KH, vol. 37, ch. 6, pp. 307.4–308.7. According to the *Bodhisattvapiṭaka*, gifts of luxury result in physical beauty and majesty, the giving of family members in high spiritual accomplishments, and the donating of the body in the attainment of the Buddha’s awakened body. See Ulrich Pagel, *The Bodhisattvapiṭaka: Its Doctrines, Practices and Their Position in Mahāyāna Literature*, Tring, UK: The Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1995, p. 156; for a discussion of generosity in the context of the *Bodhisattvapiṭaka*, see *ibid.*, pp. 145–160.

³⁸⁴ This refers to the highest among the four wheel-wielding monarchs (*’khor-los sgyur-ba’i rgyal-po*; Skt. *cakravartin*). They are listed as follows: (1) the golden wheel-wielding monarch (*gser-gyi ’khor-los sgyur-ba’i rgyal-po*) controls four continents, (2) the silver wheel-wielding monarch (*dngul-gyi ’khor-los sgyur-ba’i rgyal-po*) controls three continents, (3) the copper wheel-wielding monarch (*zangs-kyi ’khor-los sgyur-ba’i rgyal-po*) controls two continents, and (4) the iron wheel-wielding monarch (*lcags-kyi ’khor-los sgyur-ba’i rgyal-po*) controls one continent. See *Nor-brang o-rgyan, Chos-rnam kun-btus*, vol. 1, p. 523.

³⁸⁵ The KH version reads “a bodhisattva” (*byang chub sems dpa’*) instead of “enlightenment” (*byang chub*).

³⁸⁶ It is likely that these five topics of virtuous merit refer to the first five perfections, which pertain to the accumulation of merit (*bsod-nams-kyi tshogs*; Skt. *pūṇyasamḥāra*); the last, sapience (*shes-rab*; Skt. *prajñā*), omitted here, pertains to the accumulation of wisdom (*ye-shes-kyi tshogs*; Skt. *jñānasamḥāra*). It is also possible that the five topics refer to the five types of virtue (*dge-ba rnam-pa lnga*), viz., (1) virtue originating from generosity (*sbyin-pa-las byung-ba*), (2) virtue originating from discipline (*tshul-khrims-las byung-ba*), (3) virtue originating from meditating (*bsgom-pa-las byung-ba*), (4) virtue as the

effect of fairness (*sdug-pa'i 'bras-bu*), and (5) virtue as the effect of dissociating [from that which is to be relinquished] (*bral-ba'i 'bras-bu*). See [Nor-brang o-rgyan](#), *Chos-rnam kun-btus*, vol. 1, p. 988, quoting Thogs-med (Asaṅga), *rNal-'byor spyod-pa'i sa* (*Yogācārabhūmi*), in TD, vol. 127, p. 62.5. Alternatively, this could be a reference to the five supramundane aggregates (Skt. *lokottarapañcaskandha*; on which, see [Chapter 2](#), note 103), also called the five aggregates of merit (*bsod-nams-kyi phung-po lnga*); see Dung-dkar blo-bzang 'phrin-las, *Bod rig-pa'i tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, p. 2119. However, this third option seems unlikely, as the five supramundane aggregates do not readily lend themselves to being classified as pertaining specifically to the path of conduct.

³⁸⁷ “Universal light” (*kun-tu 'od*; Skt. *samantaprabhā*) is the level of a Buddha and corresponds to the path of no-more-learning (*mi-slob-lam*; Skt. *aśaikṣamārga*); it is counted as the eleventh of the bodhisattva stages. See Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, p. 38.

³⁸⁸ Here “*Vijñaptimātra*” refers to the *Vijñānavāda* or *Cittamātra*, whereas “*Yogācāra*” refers to the *Yogācāra Madhyamaka* synthesis usually associated with Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. gNubs-chen considers the gradual approach expounded in this chapter (referred to as *Sautrāntika Madhyamaka*) as superior to both. Cf. note 1.

5

The Simultaneous Approach of *Chan*

[C 118.4–186.4; M 80b.6–132a.2]

As for the *sTon-mun*, the simultaneous approach, its view is resolved through this example: it is like the manner of seeing everything when one has gone to the peak of the king of mountains.¹ It is maintained that in the beingness of phenomena, where both evaluated and evaluator are originally unborn, one understands that very meaning in which nothing at all is sought. It is maintained that when one has seen that meaning, understanding is like the smaller mounts [appearing] clearly without one having to look at them once one has gone to the peak of the king of mountains.² Nevertheless, without depending on a master and the definitive *sūtras*, this is not the case. [This approach] is taught according to reasoning and the authoritative scriptures.

5.1. The view

[119] In this regard, resolving its view is threefold: being free from all actions,³ it is resolved as limitless; being non-dual,⁴ it is resolved as single in absolute truth;

and, since it assembles everything in its meaning, it is resolved as being without hope for a fruition. This explanation accords with both reasoning and the authoritative scriptures. The *Sems-lon* states,⁵

First, concerning this resolution, without depending on objects, [the mind] is unborn. Without depending on the mind, objects do not appear. The knowable and the knower are mutually linked. Established appearances are unceasing: this is means. Appearances are without intrinsic nature: this is sapience.

5.1.1. The explanations of the preceptors of contemplation

The {first} preceptor Kim⁶ Chanshi⁷ explains,⁸

In the mind's equality, all phenomena too are equal. In the awareness of genuineness, there is nothing whatsoever that is not the Buddha's doctrine. When one understands the absolute, thirst and attachment are not produced. Even when one does not practice the scope of genuineness, there is the perfection of sapience, [120] since primordial equality is non-referential.

The {second} preceptor Dzing Chanshi's contemplation [sermon] states,⁹

Through thoroughly completing the concentration where the conception of recollection does not occur, sapience without discursive thought is born. One thereby transcends the three realms.

The {third} preceptor sBab Chanshi explains,¹⁰

If one is simultaneously aware of the non-conceptual meaning, one is like the lion king. Due to the resounding roar of the lion, one is not anxious about the four types of conduct.¹¹

The {fourth} preceptor Chanshi¹² explains,¹³

In the equality of the single mind, all phenomena are unborn. This is what is called transcendence.¹⁴

The {fifth} preceptor Da'u Chanshi explains,¹⁵

To wash the mind, there is no need for water. There is no need for wealth to give gifts. If one accomplishes the holy doctrine with the genuine mind, one shall obtain the Thus-gone One by sitting upright.

The {sixth} preceptor Thang-bzang Chanshi explains,¹⁶

If one is aware of a single phenomenon, no phenomena are wrong. That is called genuine alertness.¹⁷ In such alertness, none of the afflictions of one's imprints are any longer produced. For instance, it is just as cold water poured into boiling water too will boil.¹⁸

[121] The {seventh} preceptor Han-sa-ci Chanshi explains,¹⁹

By meditating on the path, one looks at a Buddha's awakening. By seeing a Buddha,²⁰ with each step one draws nearer to the Buddha.

The {eighth} preceptor A-rgya-rag Shi explains,

Entering the view of the *Mahāyāna*, all compounded [phenomena] in the world are uncompounded. All conceptions are without discursive thought. All thoughts are unthinkable. If it be asked why, it is because all phenomena are primevally utterly pure and equal.

The {ninth} preceptor Ka-la yan-par-ma explains,²¹

As for the simultaneous approach, its means consist in meditating in the nature of phenomena's beingness. In this regard, phenomena are mind, and mind is unborn.

The [tenth] preceptor Bu-chu explains,²²

To say, "All phenomena with signs are without signs," is still thinking of non-conceptuality as compatible with the absolute.

The *Sems-lon* declares,²³

All phenomena of appearance-existence are mind. Mind is the utterly pure state of phenomena's open dimension. Phenomena are partial, indefinite, and nothing whatsoever. Beyond the meaning of "nothing whatsoever," there is nothing whatsoever to be taught. [122] Therefore, one rests in [the state] which is uncontrived, uncreated, and uninhibited and which is not to be followed after, which is self-originated and self-appeased; one realizes that axioms are without intrinsic nature. Each time one is alert to the occurrence of realization, one realizes that it too is without intrinsic nature, thereby being liberated and released time and time again.

Moreover,²⁴

One must search for the mind with the mind: how is this mind? With mind one will find no mind. When one fails to find mind with mind, that not finding itself is non-imaging.

The {eleventh [preceptor]} Mahāyāna explains,²⁵

Through the view one individually distinguishes with sapience the outer and inner phenomena, one's body and mind, as to their specific²⁶ and general characteristics. One evaluates that their specific characteristic is to be impermanent and suffering, whereas their general characteristic is to be empty and selfless.

The {twelfth} preceptor of contemplation Kha Chanshi explains,²⁷

If one continually knows phenomena as empty, the wisdom capable of knowing the cognition and the cognition's emptiness is itself empty. Hence, phenomena and wisdom are all empty. In this respect, emptiness too is empty.²⁸

The {thirteenth} preceptor Dzan Chanshi explains,²⁹

There is no doctrine to obtain: that is the conduct on the religious path.³⁰ [123] If it be asked why, it is because if one sees forms with one's eyes, one cannot obtain these forms with one's eyes. It is likewise with the sixfold gathering.³¹

Therefore, the *sūtras* declare,

There is nothing whatsoever to obtain: this is taught on the scriptural authority of the Buddha. Furthermore, the inability to obtain phenomena³² cannot itself be obtained.³³

The {fourteenth} preceptor Yen Chanshi explains,³⁴

That very place which one sees with one's eyes is the limit of truth. All phenomena, too, are the limit of truth. What else is there to seek for?

The {fifteenth} preceptor A Chanshi explains,³⁵

An upright mind is the religious path. If it be asked why, it is because if there is upright distinguishing {the view}, upright recollection {meditation}, and upright conduct {conduct}, there is no need to further engage with emptiness, nor to search for other means. That is being perpetually engaged on the religious path.

The *sūtras* also state,

Upright viewing is without seeing {in terms of objects}. Upright hearing is without listening {to others' actions}. Upright recollection is without thinking {of an object}. Upright acceptance is without conduct. Upright explanation is without diffuseness.

The {sixteenth} preceptor Bo-len Chanshi says,³⁶

Concerning the essence of phenomena, there are no doubts {because it is non-duality}. [124] Do not doubt the simultaneous meditation!

The *sūtras* declare,

Since the essence of phenomena is without thought, it is thusness. Because it is thusness, the essence is without thought.

The {seventeenth} preceptor Hang Chanshi explains,³⁷

Everything that comes about and is made is thusness. Forms seen and sounds heard are thusness. All phenomena are thusness. Why? It is because they are unchanging and not different.

The *sūtras* {the authoritative scriptures} declare,

Sentient beings are thusness. The noble ones too are thusness. All phenomena, for sure, are thusness.

The {eighteenth} preceptor Kag Chanshi explains,³⁸

If one understands the mind non-discursively, that itself is the custom of this religious path. If it be asked why, it is because, when one sees a form with one's eyes, the very essence of the eyes is liberation and release. It is the same with whatever dawns in terms of the sixfold gathering.

The *sūtra* {the authoritative scripture} declares,

That is because all phenomena are not comprehended in their depth. Since³⁹ all phenomena are one, they are liberated and released.⁴⁰ Psychic phenomena and their objective scope, too, are phenomena. Phenomena cannot commit sins with respect to phenomena, nor can they do any meritorious works, so they are intrinsically liberated and released. One does not see phenomena being bound to phenomena, nor being liberated and released [from phenomena].

[125] The {nineteenth} preceptor Shi Chanshi explains,⁴¹

Phenomena are unimpeded. If it be asked why, it is because, since phenomena are uncertain, they are unimpeded and completely peaceful.⁴²

Since phenomena are peerless, their essence is liberation and release. Why? It is because, when one sees a form with one's eyes, not seeing is absent. When one becomes psychically conscious, not knowing is absent. When one is corrupted, knowing {the meaning} is absent. When knowing {confusion}, corruption is absent. When one dreams {this is an absence of genuineness}, alertness is absent. When alert {that is, when one is unconfused}, dreams are absent.

The *sūtra* {the authoritative scripture} states,

Many ordinary people, having {clearly} seen Buddha Akṣobhya,⁴³ did not see him later {in the midst of other phenomena}.⁴⁴ All phenomena are peerless concerning the eye and the ear. If it be asked why, it is because a phenomenon⁴⁵ does not see a phenomenon, nor does a phenomenon know a phenomenon.⁴⁶ Moreover, if a consciousness is not produced from the cause of a form, no form is seen.

The {twentieth} preceptor Aṃ Chanshi explains,⁴⁷

Awareness has neither filth nor cleanness. Mind is without darkness. [126] If one does not know phenomena with mind, one does not know the condition of being fettered by phenomena. One does not know corruption—this is the great cognition.

The {twenty-first} preceptor In Chanshi explains,⁴⁸

It was explained elsewhere that the six consciousnesses are untrue notions. Because of the four pairs⁴⁹ one has acted out of acceptance and rejection. The name for this is “the activity of Māra.”

The {twenty-second} great preceptor explains,⁵⁰

When one is unwavering in the midst of wavering notions, that itself is the doctrine of the Buddha. Entering into the genuine mind, the meditative equilibrium in equality, and the enlightened mind is alone compatible with the essence of the doctrine. A corrupted person is disturbed by sorrow because of his six consciousnesses.

The {twenty-third} preceptor Hya’u gya’u Chanshi explains,⁵¹

When one comprehends that the nature of mind and consciousness is genuine in essence, all the places of the mind’s reference are Buddha-fields and transcendence.⁵² By comprehending the mind’s objects, one comprehends the Buddha’s objects—there is nothing that is not the Buddha’s doctrine.

The [twenty-fourth] preceptor of contemplation Shi Chanshi explains,⁵³

The two doorways [leading] to the vulgar⁵⁴ or noble are since beginningless time of a single mode. [127] The vulgar is said to be the cause of the noble, whereas the noble is said to be the fruition of the vulgar. Since cause and effect are linked to one another, virtue does not transcend non-virtue. Virtues originate from the noble ones’ wisdom. Non-virtues originate from fools.

The *sūtra* declares,

Although neither ego nor individual exists,
Virtuous and non-virtuous activities are not scattered.⁵⁵

Therefore, if one guards the five disciplines,⁵⁶ one will certainly obtain a human body. If one engages on the religious path while discursively examining emptiness, one will certainly obtain the fruition of an arhat.

The {twenty-fifth} preceptor Shi Chanshi explains,⁵⁷

If one knows all phenomena as being the doctrine of the Buddha,⁵⁸ that itself is said to be the eye of the doctrine. All wavering and all actions are enlightenment. Therefore, in line with the mind of genuineness, one may go the path of the Buddha's doctrine. If one is neither panicked nor scared, all abodes are alike.

The {twenty-sixth} preceptor Phag-do Chanshi explains,⁵⁹

Since there is relative truth, it is not empty. Since there is no fruition of an arhat, it is not existent. As for the two truths, since they are two, they are not one. When a noble one sees them, they are non-dual since they are empty.⁶⁰

[128] The {twenty-seventh} preceptor 'Dzi Chanshi explains,⁶¹

A corrupted person sees even sinless activities as sinful. A knowing person is aware of sinlessness even as he abides among the sinful.

The {twenty-eighth} preceptor Yan Chanshi explains,⁶²

The *sūtras* and the explanations are all phenomena of mind's wavering.⁶³ If the mind [engaged on] the religious path has wavered, it is mind, the cause of wavering, that wavers—what need is there to mention anything else? If mind does not waver, what need is there to meditate on contemplation? If mind, the cause of wavering, does not waver, what need is there [to talk] of upright thoughts and afflictions? If the enlightened mind does not waver and one does not search for sapience and for knowledge, all activities and purposes will be exhausted.⁶⁴

The [twenty-ninth] preceptor of contemplation Han Chanshi explains,⁶⁵

Mind is the essence of the religious path. The body is the vessel for the religious path. The virtuous friend originates due to conditions. If the mind is comfortable, objects too are comfortable. If one is without acceptance and rejection toward the two limitations, one views the eighteen constituents.⁶⁶

The {thirtieth} preceptor Chanshi explains,⁶⁷

If one knows the genuine principle of one's psyche, [129] there is no purpose profounder than this, and there is neither wavering nor non-wavering. Since one does not contradict the religious path, one does not see any abode to attain or to stray from.⁶⁸

The {thirty-first} preceptor Hye-kha explains,⁶⁹

Know thoroughly complete transcendence to be in the five aggregates as they are present right now. Those endowed with the conduct of body and mind and who possess this great textual tradition, may, by knowing thus, see the jewel of utter purity in the midst of sorrow and eliminate the darkness of all sentient beings.

The {thirty-second} preceptor Lang Chanshi explains,⁷⁰

When one is aware of the absolute meaningfulness of phenomena, in truth there is neither compatibility nor difference. In terms of evident and non-evident words, there are two aspects: shutting down {i.e., non-diffusing} and opening up⁷¹ {i.e., diffusing}.

The meaning of “shutting down” is that one does not see the wavering mind. One does not discursively examine one’s conduct or one’s cognition and does not abide in any task. One abides in the doctrine of the essential Buddha.

When the mind is open, one steals after other objects. This is called the pith instruction of profits and service⁷² and is comprised in cause and effect. Being bound by being and non-being, one does not obtain independence: that is the meaning of “opening up.”

[130] The {thirty-third} preceptor Mahā Chanshi explains,⁷³

At the time of knowing, the worldly and the supramundane are merely empty names.⁷⁴ In truth there is nothing to obtain, neither among the worldly nor the supramundane.

The *rGya-lung chen-po* says,⁷⁵

If {without desire} one relinquishes untruth and, facing the genuine and relinquishing conceptions, one abides in effulgence,⁷⁶ there is neither self nor other. The vulgar and the noble are equal and are one. If one abides unchangingly and firmly, one need not henceforth follow after the teachings of the documents⁷⁷ {which follow designations}.

Moreover,⁷⁸

Someone {in the annals} says: “Phenomena are not existent.” You who explain this, do you see their nonexistence? If existents become nonexistents, nonexistents can become existents,⁷⁹ so that itself is your existing!

Someone else says: “I see all phenomena as unborn.” You who explain this, do you see the unborn? If what is born becomes unborn, then what is unborn can be born, so that itself is your being born!

Another person says: “I see all phenomena as non-mind.” [131] You who explain this, do you see this non-mind? If mind becomes non-mind, then non-mind can become mind, so that itself is your mind!⁸⁰

The {thirty-fourth} great preceptor explains,⁸¹

In unknowing, man follows phenomena.⁸² In knowledge, phenomena follow the man.⁸³ In knowledge, consciousness assembles in form {without conceptions}. In corruption, form assembles in consciousness {with conceptions}. Consciousness is not generated from the cause of form; that is called not seeing forms {outer reified entities being nonexistent}.⁸⁴

The same [preceptor] explains,⁸⁵

The {good} mind of the noble men is like empty space and sees without birth or halt; it is called the enlightened mind. If one’s mind is like empty space, enlightenment too is nonexistent.

The *sūtra* states,⁸⁶

Whoever sees the Buddha’s principal body with the eye of sapience, that one sees the Buddha. It is like the nun Utpalavarṇā and [the auditor] Subhūti {who meditated on emptiness}.

[132] The *Sems-lon* declares,⁸⁷

If relative and absolute truth are inseparable,
Only in relative truth does one speak of a self;
In genuine absolute truth, the self is not explained.
If all phenomena are unestablished,
From where is compassion's wisdom produced?
When one thoroughly knows the birthless and unobstructed,
One is said to be endowed with unborn wisdom.

The translator Ka-ba dpal-brtsegs⁸⁸ said the following:⁸⁹

By thoroughly giving up all worldliness
And being without the mind that grasps at mere dust,
One completes the perfection of generosity.

By the dust of faults not occurring,
One completes the perfection of discipline.

Through patience in the open dimension of phenomena,
One completes the perfection of patience.

By not wavering from absolute suchness,
One completes the perfection of diligence.

By selflessly not wavering from equality,
One completes the perfection of contemplation.

Through intrinsic awareness of the non-referential absolute,
One completes the perfection of sapience.

One should be aware of this; it is dealt with extensively
[in the relevant texts].

5.1.2. The arguments from the authoritative scriptures

In order that one may develop trust, a few accounts are
given here, taken from the *sūtras* as arguments derived
from the authoritative scriptures.

The *Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa-sūtra* says,⁹⁰ [133]

Not imaging passion, thus are neither hatred
Nor stupidity imaged.
All phenomena are said to be sky-like:
Thus one is victorious over whatever is knowable.
Both views and non-views have a single manner;
Equality and inequality are thus equal.

The *Mañjuśrīvihāra-sūtra* declares,⁹¹

The expert does not even examine a little:
His scope is emptiness as it is.
Without discursive thought, he transcends woe.
By knowing this nature of his,
He is one endowed with wisdom.
That wisdom is without discursive thought.
It is through wisdom that wisdom is expressed;
Even the descriptions of wisdom are false.⁹²
Whoever thus expresses⁹³ wisdom,
He is one with wisdom endowed.

The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* states,⁹⁴

The unsurpassed jewel is not to be sought; it will be found
on its own:
It is described as genuine wisdom
For expressible wisdom is false.

The *Rin-po-che mtha'i mdo* says,⁹⁵

It is said that the Hallowed One is meditating,
Yet there is nothing on which to meditate; this is a verbal
analogy.

The *Mañjuśrīvikurvitaparivarta* declares,⁹⁶

Devaputra said: [134] “Mañjuśrī, in equality there is nothing unequal.”

Mañjuśrī replied: “That which is equal to equality and the boundless sins are equal.”

The *Ratnakūṭa* states,⁹⁷

Kāśyapa, this mind has neither an outside nor an inside, and cannot be imaged.

The *Samantamukhaparivarta* says,⁹⁸

If passion is like the sky,
Without liberating anyone,
There is the sublimity of liberation and utter liberation;
Phenomena are like transcendence.

The *’Gyod-tshangs* says,⁹⁹

Genuinely viewing genuineness,
One is utterly liberated when genuinely seeing:
That is the supreme apology.

The *Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa-sūtra* states,¹⁰⁰

Mañjuśrī, that through which phenomena are produced, through which one is without fear, without knowing or unknowing, and through which one sees the emptiness of an intrinsic nature,¹⁰¹ that is the faculty of sapience. Mañjuśrī, because all phenomena are by nature unoriginated, if one sees them as unborn, that is the faculty of faith. Mañjuśrī, that through which one is free from the notions of near or far, whereby one does not think about but gives up phenomena, [135] that is the faculty of diligence. Mañjuśrī, that which does not think about all phenomena, that is the faculty of concentration.

Furthermore,¹⁰²

Mañjuśrī, that through which the body is seen as equal to the sky, is the close resting¹⁰³ of recollection which, with regard to the body, reviews¹⁰⁴ the body. Mañjuśrī, that through which neither outer nor inner feelings¹⁰⁵ are imaged, is the close resting of recollection which, with regard to feelings, reviews feelings. Mañjuśrī, that through which one knows the name of the mind, is the close resting of recollection, which with the mind reviews the mind. Mañjuśrī, that through which neither virtuous nor non-virtuous phenomena are imaged,¹⁰⁶ is the close resting of recollection which, with regard to phenomena, reviews phenomena.

So it is said. Moreover,¹⁰⁷

Mañjuśrī,¹⁰⁸ that through which, without dualistic action, one sees that all phenomena are without inequality and without duality, that is the correct view. Mañjuśrī, that through which, without seeing phenomena, without examining or conceptualizing [them], one sees [them] without thorough examination, [136] that is correct conception. Mañjuśrī, that through which one has veritably meditated on inexpressible equality, whereby one sees all phenomena as inexpressible, that is correct speech. Mañjuśrī, because one does not imagine an agent, there is no action, and one sees without imagining an agent; that is correct efficiency. Mañjuśrī, because one's livelihood abides in equality, all phenomena are neither accrued nor diminished; that is correct livelihood. Mañjuśrī, without seeking or accomplishing anything, all phenomena that are to be thoroughly accomplished are nonexistent; that is correct effort. Mañjuśrī, because one is devoid of the activity of recollection, one does not apprehend phenomena and is without recollection; that is correct recollection. Mañjuśrī, because one does not referentially imagine phenomena, one naturally rests in equipoise without disturbance and sees non-referentially; that is correct concentration.¹⁰⁹

This is dealt with extensively [in that text]. The *Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa-sūtra* declares,¹¹⁰ [137]

Whatever is expressed by the heretics of sinful intention
And whatever is declared by the Buddhas—
Their modalities are changelessly different:
Knowing this, one becomes a Warden.

The same *sūtra* states,¹¹¹

Mañjuśrī, as it is said that all sentient beings have the quintessence of enlightenment, so all phenomena have the quintessence of peace. All phenomena are quintessentially without birth. All phenomena are quintessentially without grasping. Mañjuśrī, that is [what is meant by] the word “quintessence of enlightenment.”

The *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra* says,¹¹²

Son of the family, since that which is called the quintessence of enlightenment¹¹³ is not contrived, it is the quintessence of thinking. Since it liberates from effort, it is the quintessence of union. Since it is especially assimilated, it is the quintessence of eminent thinking. Since it does not forget the genuine, it is the quintessence of the enlightened mind.

The *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* declares,¹¹⁴

The body of the Thus-gone One is endowed with eyes and endowed with wisdom; among the bodies of all sentient beings, he remains unwaveringly in being as it is.

[138] The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* states,¹¹⁵

The matrix of the Thus-gone One is naturally luminous and utterly pure. This primeval utter purity goes among the bodies of sentient beings endowed with the thirty-two characteristics.

The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* says,¹¹⁶

If one knows the explanations of the Buddha's doctrine, that is supreme among the many things to hear.

The *Shes-rab-kyi mdo* declares,¹¹⁷

The sapience of the Thus-gone One
Sees the characteristics of phenomena in terms of their
single taste;
Without originating, everything occurs:
That is said to be the transcendence of passion.
The same applies to hatred and stupidity;
That is the abode of the enlightened ones—
The Buddha's enlightenment is inconceivable.

And,¹¹⁸

He who desires to obtain indeed supreme enlightenment
Should not examine passion's phenomena—
Whatever be the characteristic of passion's phenomena,
The Buddha's qualities are inconceivable
And it does not enter the Buddha's doctrine.
Mind and enlightenment are birthless;
Mind and the Buddha's enlightenment are non-dual:
Knowing that, one becomes a Warden.

[139] Much has been said on this. The **Candrapradīpa-sūtra* states,¹¹⁹

Whoever is endowed with experience of a single doctrine completes all the accumulations of qualities. He thereby swiftly awakens to unsurpassed enlightenment.

It may be asked, "What is [meant by] a single doctrine?" It is said that, if one is thus aware of the essence of everything, since all phenomena are noiseless, there is no relinquishing of all sounds.¹²⁰

The *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* says,¹²¹

When the mind does not waver from emptiness, the six perfections are comprised therein.

The *Mahoṣṇīṣa-sūtra* declares,¹²²

Rather than writing, reading, and reciting the *sūtra* section of the holy doctrine during eons as numerous as there are particles of dust [in our world], if one meditates¹²³ on the uncontaminated wisdom one day or one night, one will obtain unfathomable merit. If it be asked why, it is because it is continually free from birth and death.

The *Vajracchedikā* states,¹²⁴

Subhūti, the past mind is non-referential; the future [mind] is non-referential; [140] this present mind too is non-referential.

The *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra* says,¹²⁵

When there is neither notion of the Buddha¹²⁶ [nor]¹²⁷ notion of the community, that is genuine worship.

The *Sangs-rgyas mdzod* declares,¹²⁸

It is suitable that one should know phenomena originally, through the immeasurable notionless wisdom. With regard to thinking and scrutiny, there is no capacity to know.

The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* states,¹²⁹

A bodhisattva does not see an individual inner psyche. If it is no phenomenon,¹³⁰ he does not see a psychic consciousness; that is genuinely how it is. He is called skilled in absolute truth.

The *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra* says,¹³¹

Some eat poison and do not die;
Some hold fire and are not burned;
What need is there to mention that those who are blessed by
wisdom conduct
Are not plundered by the conduct of the childish!

The *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* declares,¹³²

Anantamati, when the bodhisattvas, great heroes, verily comprehend all phenomena, they obtain the principal vision with regard to all phenomena. Thereby, they do not [merely] look at emptiness in emptiness [141] but view emptiness aside from emptiness as well.¹³³

The same text states,¹³⁴

To explain what is meant by the open dimension of
phenomena,
It is neither a dimension nor its absence:¹³⁵
That which is indeed revealed as the open dimension of
phenomena
Is genuinely non-referential.
When verily thinking about this meaning,
Thinking is indeed non-referential.
Because one relinquishes concepts,
One obtains the great principal vision.

Furthermore, it is recorded,¹³⁶

“Venerable, do you maintain that in the nature of phenomena’s open dimension there is a relative and an absolute truth?”

“Mañjuśrī, in the nature of phenomena’s open dimension, there is no imaging of a relative and an absolute truth.”

Mañjuśrī suggested: “Venerable, in that case you teach that by positing relative truth, mind is utterly liberated.”

“Mañjuśrī, is it not the case that there has never existed any mind that could be utterly liberated?”

Mañjuśrī replied: “Venerable, if there is imaging of a mind—whether it be inside, outside, or between the two—in that case there is a mind that will be utterly liberated. Venerable, if there is no imaging of a mind—whether it be inside, outside, or neither of the two—in that case there is nothing at all that could be fettered or utterly liberated.”

[142] The same source further states,¹³⁷

Devaputra, moreover, whenever a bodhisattva sees all phenomena through the wisdom of the utterly refined eye of sapience, he sees so long as he does not survey¹³⁸ any phenomenon. When he surveys a phenomenon, there is nothing whatsoever [to see].

Moreover,¹³⁹

Śāradvatīputra¹⁴⁰ asked: “O Sinful One,¹⁴¹ how should one search for enlightenment?” “Venerable, having purified the obscurations of abiding by the view of corporeality (Skt. *satkāyadr̥ṣṭi*),¹⁴² of ignorance, of enmeshment (Skt. *saṃyojana*) in the thirst for existence, and of entanglement (Skt. *pariyavasthāna*) in distortion, one should search for enlightenment.”

“Sinful One, teach as you think!”

“Venerable, if one comprehends phenomena as they genuinely are, that is due to enlightenment.”

Furthermore, teaching an example from relative truth,¹⁴³

Since all phenomena are created in dull people, they are illusory. Since there are no existent phenomena, they are dreamlike. Since all phenomena and sentient beings are nonexistent, they are like a hallucination. [143] Since phenomena are not genuine and since they are totally imputed, they are like a reflection. Since all phenomena originate interdependently, sins are like an echo. Since all phenomena are untainted, they are like the sky.

The same text continues,¹⁴⁴

Mañjuśrī, if you ask how a bodhisattva is to comprehend the hell forms of sentient beings, [it is replied that]

Being stainless, the hells are free of stains;

Pure and impure luminosity

Is without characteristics and is signless;

It is explained by me to be the quintessence of enlightenment.

Without characteristics, it is without origin

And is explained by me to be like the sky.

This is dealt with extensively [in that text].

Incidentally, McRae makes the highly interesting observation that there seem to be different types of brainwave activity corresponding to the various ways that non-meditators, practitioners of Indian yogic enstatic contemplation, and *Chan* meditators respond to auditive stimuli. Whereas non-meditators quickly become habituated to a repeated sound, practitioners of Indian-derived yoga are able to enter a state where they do not respond to the stimulus at all; *Chan* meditators, on the other hand, hear the sound each time in exactly the same way, without habituation, as if on first occurrence. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 336, n. 252.

5.2. Meditation

On account of the authoritative scriptures and reasoning, there is no searching for the unborn absolute truth. That is really so, and there is no need to seek for a fruition elsewhere. All the perfections, and so forth, are comprised in the unborn absolute truth. It is primordially free from all limitations. Having previously excellently assimilated the qualities, and so forth, of those who, viewing phenomena's open dimension, are free from an object to view, one meditates. [144] Meditating without comprehension is like entering a path uninformed and is a deviation.

5.2.1. The means of resting

Therefore, seeing absolute meaningfulness will be taught. As for approaching absolute meaningfulness, there is the means of seating one's body and the means of resting one's mind. In this regard, concerning the means of seating one's body and mind, {firstly} the *bsGom-lung*¹⁴⁵ of the monk Ye-shes dpal says,

He who desires to meditate non-conceptually on the concentration of unwavering great peace should sit on a comfortable seat. Straightening his body upright, he should look at his nose, his tongue touching the palate. He should stay with his legs tightly crossed.

The *Lung-chung* states,¹⁴⁶

Crossing one's hands on the legs, one straightens the joints and the body does not move. Reversing the mind's six doors from entering the objects of confusion,¹⁴⁷ one looks at one's mind.¹⁴⁸

{Secondly} the contemplation [sermon] of the preceptor Lu Chanshi declares,¹⁴⁹

If one searches for the quintessence of enlightenment by meditating on the path, one rests in vastness with one's body unwound from deep within. Mind being vast like the sky, one meditates in equality.¹⁵⁰

As for the yoga of the *Mahāyāna*, the simultaneous contemplation on phenomena's beingness, [145] a beginner should rest his body and mind. Straightening one's body upright, one should expand carefree and unwind from deep within, and rest in a vast and carefree [state].

Concerning the mind, the intellect gives up everything and is undistracted from phenomena's being as it is. Without constructs, the mind rests in phenomena's being as it is.

The same source continues,

When meditating non-conceptually, one should straighten the body upright, unwind from deep within, and expand carefree. All phenomena, being momentary and illusory, are devoid of an intrinsic nature. They are equal like the surface of the sky. In emptiness, they are of a single taste. Recalling the meaning which does not imagine what phenomena's suchness could be, one familiarizes oneself with undistractedly and exclusively looking at the mind.

{Thirdly} the *bsGom-lung* of Mahāyāna says,¹⁵¹

A person aware of the meaning which is like that should give up other actions. Staying alone without a second person in a solitary place without frivolity, he should cross his legs and straighten his body upright. Thus straightened, he should not lie down at dawn. As one stays in contemplation, one should look at one's mind, not thinking any thoughts whatsoever. [146] One should be alert whenever the discursive mind wavers. It may be asked, "How is one to be alert to that?" It is not that one should examine whether the wavering mind is wavering or not, nor that one should examine whether it is existent or nonexistent; it is not that one should examine virtues and non-virtues, nor that one should examine the afflictions and utter refinement, and so forth. [As a matter of fact] one should not examine phenomena at all. When one is alert to the fact that one is wavering, there is no intrinsic nature; that is engaging in the religious path.

The same text continues,¹⁵²

Having relinquished all thoughts, one stays not thinking [of anything]: that is the means of entering the contemplation of the *Mahāyāna*.

Mahāyāna's *sūtra* states,¹⁵³

In the open dimension without thinking there is no deterioration; primordially giving up [all effort], rest as it is! It may be asked, "What kind of way is this?" [It is replied that] one does not examine non-thinking, nor does one abide in non-discursiveness.¹⁵⁴

{Fourthly} Mahāyāna declares,¹⁵⁵

"Resting the mind comfortably like that" is relinquishing conception.

The same text continues,

Knowing the manner of verily resting the mind is owing to the objects and the mind! [147] Without establishing anything, one meditates genuinely without reference. Without reference, there is realization without craving for appearances. This non-referential realization without craving for appearances is skillful means.

{Fifthly} the great venerable sNa-nam ye-shes dpal states,

The purpose of meditating on the yoga of the *Mahāyāna* is as follows: since the outer objects and the inner mind originate interdependently, one comprehends through the intrinsic state of phenomena's beingness, which is free from all elaborations, without establishing an absolute nature. This is apprehended by an intellect in accord with the doctrine, as one meditates in one's intrinsic state without effort.

{Sixthly} the *bsGom-lung* of La-gsum rgyal-ba byang-chub¹⁵⁶ declares,

The means of meditating on the yoga of the *Mahāyāna*'s meaning is as follows: the object of imaging and the imaging subject are known in genuineness to be non-imaging. Therefore, when, not imaging, one rests in equipoise, one should be aware that all untrue wavering notions are originally illusory and should not abide on them. Concerning sapience without means, there is nothing to enter; neither relinquishing nor accepting anything is skillful means.

{Seventhly} the instructor gZhi-mchog-gi rgyan says,

[148] At the time of just resting in equipoise, when objects and conceptualization neither appear nor cease, that is the supreme and holy skillful means. Not grasping at signs is sapience.

{Eighthly} the instructor Le'u gzhon-nu snying-po states,

Meditating on the meaning of the *Mahāyāna Madhyamaka* is as follows: one comes to a resolution by seeing that all phenomena are without an intrinsic nature. When meditating on this non-conceptually, one does not abide on any intention. Not discursively examining anything at all is sapience. When conceptualization occurs, without establishing it as conception, there is neither eliminating nor relinquishing; when it does not subsequently occur, that is skillful means.

The instructor Myang-bran dpal-gyi rgyal-mtshan's *bsGom-lung* declares,

All phenomena of cyclic existence and transcendence appear as illusion. Having resolved that they genuinely are without an intrinsic nature, one should restrain the doors of one's sense-faculties and rest in equipoise with one's psyche bent on the definitive meaning. When one's psyche is not distracted from the definitive meaning, whatever appearances or non-appearances occur, one does not grasp at signs. Being without hope and misgiving, acceptance and rejection, one is not attached to the taste of contemplation. Therefore, one need not search for any antidotes.

[149] Cog-ro klu'i rgyal-mtshan¹⁵⁷ told Khri-srong lde'u-btsan,

First, outer and inner phenomena appear as they appear; they are seen as they are seen; they are known as they are known: this is conceptualization.

Second, outer and inner phenomena being illusory, they are known to be without intrinsic nature. Phenomena are known to be nonexistent, just like a hare's horn or a barren woman's child: this is non-conceptualization.

Third, that which is called non-conceptualization is not like the earth, which is without recollection.

Fourth, if one assimilates this, that which is called the absolute truth is not to be sought elsewhere.

It is suitable to meditate on these four instantaneously at the same time.

The *Lon* states,¹⁵⁸

Reversing the six doors, when one looks at the mind, a single untrue notion wavers about. If, while performing the deeds of birth and death, notions waver about, why think¹⁵⁹ of existence and nonexistence, clean and unclean, empty and non-empty, and so forth?

The *Lon* continues,¹⁶⁰

The meaning explained is true: one should lie down on an elevated pillow.¹⁶¹ To comfortably give up all phenomena is called engaging on the religious path. Not to see any reified entity whatsoever is called seeing the religious path. [150] Not to know a single reified entity is called meditating on the religious path.

Moreover,¹⁶²

In non-abiding equanimity, free from the concentration of exertion and effort, one should rest idly,¹⁶³ primordially giving in to the state of uncontrived clarity. One will feel sinking and lethargy, but one should not generate hope¹⁶⁴ or misgiving. Since whatever appears is conceptual, one should not examine it at all.

Mahāyāna explains,¹⁶⁵

Neither thinking nor examining, one should rest in the beingness of phenomena without thoughts.

The preceptor A-rdhan-hwer explains,¹⁶⁶

The mind's equality as it is, this is the path of the definitive yoga.

The preceptor 'Dzin-mchog-rgyan explains,

When phenomena as they are are not rectified at all, that is the entrance to simultaneous contemplation.

The chapter explained by gZhon-nu snying-po states,

Since phenomena's beingness is nothing at all, when the intellect does not posit anything, one meditates on the non-conceptual meaning.

The authoritative scripture of Ye-shes rgyal-po the Third says,

When evaluating through the view, there is nothing there;
When intrinsic awareness is born, it is inexpressible;
When meditating, there is no intellect which rests in equipoise; that is the simultaneous approach.

The *bsGom-lung* of Lang-'gro dkon-mchog 'byung-gnas states,¹⁶⁷

[151] From the inconceivable open dimension
 Phenomena are inconceivable as they are;
 Thus there is no deterioration as one rests in equipoise.
 It may be asked, “What is the meaning of this?”
 [It is replied that] although there is neither thinking nor
 examining,
 Neither does one abide in non-discursiveness;
 There is no rectifying through any antidote whatsoever.
 It may be asked, “What is the meaning of this?”
 [It is replied that] there is no dualistic action.
 If there were, how could you say “non-duality”?
 [Dualistic action] could not be established as birthless;
 Though obstructed, it could not be established as obstructed;
 Though examined, it could not be established as examined;
 Though non-examined, it could not be established as non-
 examined.
 Thus, suffering and enlightenment are not two.
 Birth and death [on the one hand] and transcendence [on the
 other] are non-dual and inseparable.
 Hence, a phenomenon, in itself,
 Is neither to be taken nor abided on,
 Neither in its beginning, in its interval nor at its end.
 Because there is not even a particle of dust to obtain,
 There is neither exterior nor interior,
 Neither center nor limit.
 Since the nature is never to be imagined,
 It is inconceivable.

The translator sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs’ *bsGom-lung*
 declares,¹⁶⁸

The *yogin* of the simultaneous approach
 Neither examines nor abides on anything whatsoever.
 Without abiding in non-discursiveness, [152]
 He rests in equipoise in the absolute principle
 Through individually discerning sapience.

Furthermore,¹⁶⁹

One can be confident that phenomena are empty
Since, when one abides in yoga,
The nature of phenomena is non-referential.
Non-abiding, non-attached, and non-discursive,
It does not abide in non-discursiveness
And is called the absolute open dimension.
This is explained in the canonical *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras*.

Moreover,¹⁷⁰

Whoever rests in uncontrived equipoise
Does not abide in hopeful or misgiving intentions;
He meditates on the genuinely non-referential absolute
And sees the *Mahāyāna*.

5.2.2. The means of resting and means of rectifying

It has been resolved that in these and other texts are found extensive means of resting, according to the experiences of numerous preceptors of contemplation. It is said that the means of resting are to be rotated with the means of rectifying. In this regard, they are mainly explained singly as one whole. The argument for having confidence in them is that the means of resting the mind have been spoken of in the *sūtras*; yet here they are just described briefly. If asked what [they are], the *sūtra* of the Licchavi Vimalakīrti declares,¹⁷¹

The bodhisattva Vikurvaṇa said: [153] “A son of the family and a worldling are dual; [yet] being unborn and unoriginated, there is nothing to fear and one attains patience for the unborn principle: this is entering non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Śrīgupta¹⁷² said: “What is called “I” and “mine” are dual; without the exaggeration pertaining to a self, there shall be no “mine.” When one is without exaggeration, one enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Śrīkūṭa spoke: “Total affliction and utter refinement are dual; when one thoroughly knows the totally afflicted, there is utter refinement, and one does not become conceited. Having excellently conquered all conceit, one is compatible with the path of liberation: this is entering non-duality.” [. . .]¹⁷³

The bodhisattva Animiṣa said: “Acceptance and non-acceptance are dual; not imaging what is non-acceptable is non-imaging; [this means that] one need not clearly distinguish between nor engage in conceptions: this is entering non-duality.” [. . .]¹⁷⁴

The bodhisattva Puṣya¹⁷⁵ said: “Virtue and non-virtue so-called are dual; [154] neither relinquishing virtue nor non-virtue, signs and signlessness are non-dual. Non-discursiveness is entering non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Simha said: “Misdeeds and absence thereof are dual; through wisdom which verily pierces like a diamond, one is neither bound nor liberated and enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Simhamati said: “Contamination and non-contamination are dual; by hearing the principle of equality, one should not distinguish between notions of contamination or non-contamination. But neither is it the case that one becomes notionless. In equality, there is no [notion of] equality to hear of; it is as if there was no inclination for notions. Without entering anywhere, one enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Sukhādhimukta¹⁷⁶ said: “Pleasure and displeasure so-called are dual; because wisdom is veritably utterly pure, one is free from numbering and one’s intellect is congruent with the sky. Detached, one enters non-duality.”

[155] The bodhisattva Nārāyaṇa spoke: “Saying “this is worldly” and “this is supramundane” is duality; the nature of the world is empty. Whoever is without likes, without entering, without going,

without non-going, whoever is without dislikes, without non-entering, without going and non-going, that one enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Dāntamati said: “Cyclic existence and transcendence are dual; by seeing the essence of cyclic existence, one neither cycles through cyclic existence nor does one transcend woe. By comprehending this, one enters non-duality.” [. . .]¹⁷⁷

The bodhisattva Samantagupta¹⁷⁸ said: “Self and selflessness so-called are dual; whoever does not imagine the reified entity of a self need not distinguish a non-self either. By seeing the essence of the self, he enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Vidyuddeva said: “Awareness and ignorance so-called are dual; whatever is meant by ignorance is indeterminate and transcends numbering. Whoever actually comprehends that [156] enters non-duality.” [. . .]¹⁷⁹

The bodhisattva Śāntendriya spoke: “The so-called Buddha, the doctrine, and the community are dual; [yet] the nature of the Buddha is the doctrine. The nature of the doctrine is the community. They all are uncompounded. The modality of all doctrines is congruent with the sky. Whoever goes after that enters non-duality.” [. . .]¹⁸⁰

The bodhisattva Suvinīta said: “The so-called vows of body, speech, and psyche are duality; whoever knows the unconstructed enters non-duality.” [. . .]¹⁸¹

The bodhisattva Śrīgarbha said: “Verily distinguishing through imaging is duality; non-imaging is non-duality. Therefore, whoever is without acceptance and rejection enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Candrottara spoke: “Darkness and illumination so-called are dual; yet absence of darkness and absence of illumination are non-duality. Whoever enters equality enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Ratnamudrāhasta said: [157] “To actually like transcendence and to dislike cyclic existence is duality; whoever is without an actual liking for transcendence as well as any dislike for cyclic existence enters non-duality.

If it be asked why, it is because although liberation from fetters is taught, how could one who is veritably unfettered seek for release? The monk who is neither fettered nor liberated generates neither like nor dislike; he enters non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Maṇikūṭarāja said: “The path and the evil paths so-called are duality; he who does not enter the path does not

engage in the evil paths either. Abiding in non-engagement, he has neither notions of a path nor notions of something which is not the path. Being thoroughly aware of notions, one's intellect does not enter duality, and that is entering non-duality.”

The bodhisattva Satyanandin¹⁸² spoke: “Truth and lying so-called are dual; if he who sees the truth does not survey the beingness of truth, where is a lie to be seen? [158] If it be asked why [this is the case], it is because however one sees, whether one sees through the eye of flesh or the eye of sapience, utterly not seeing is seeing. Without anything to see, one is utterly without seeing and enters non-duality.”

The *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* declares,¹⁸³

Anantamati, when one follows up absolute meaningfulness, one does not follow after a constructed meaning.

The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* states,¹⁸⁴

Non-conceptual and unapproachable,¹⁸⁵
When the Buddha is not seen,
That is the Buddha, without approach:
To see this is to be awakened.

This is taught extensively [in that text].

5.2.3. Meditating on emptiness and meritorious action

The [positions] maintained by the individual instructors and the meaning of the authoritative scriptures show that according to the *Tsen-min*, [the absolute] is not a tangible reference but is empty and unborn; in fact, for them “ungraspable” merely means that which is altogether unthinkable. Although there is none who can posit anything about intrinsic clarity, they still assume [that it pertains to the realm of] designations. Meditating

like that, they worship the Victorious Ones and install all sentient beings in enlightenment. However, the merit of meditation is greater still, as was amply taught earlier. [159] Moreover, the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* says,¹⁸⁶

When the Hallowed One came to the city,
He was surrounded by a retinue of many hundreds and
thousands:
Humans and non-humans
Worshiped him with admiration.
Yet compared to that, someone who, even for an instant,
Verily thinks of the inexhaustible limit
And comprehends the emptiness of signs,
Is of such superior merit
That there is not the least cause
To count it as an enumerated factor.

The same text continues,¹⁸⁷

Compared to installing the sentient beings of the three realms, as many as they may be, in release, to meditate instantaneously on the path is superior in merit. If it be asked why, it is because it is the very root of release.

5.2.4. Unifying calm abiding and insight

Meditating like that, one unifies calm abiding and insight. Being aware of appearance itself is unborn intrinsic clarity and is taught to be the essence of meditation. Without grasping at the meaning of unborn emptiness, clarity is insight. Not wavering at all or emerging [from that state] is calm abiding. [Unifying] both these purposes at one time, by being clear and unwavering, is the essence of meditation and is called a

one-pointed mind. [160] There is no second principle to referentially imagine. The *Lung-chung* states,¹⁸⁸

Non-conceptual and lambent,
Lambent and without discursive thought:
That is intrinsically aware wisdom;
It cannot be taught.¹⁸⁹

The *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra* declares,¹⁹⁰

It is called “a one-pointed mind” because it does not referentially imagine. It does not referentially imagine a quintessence with regard to the eye.

This is spoken of extensively [in that text]. The *Mi-gnas theg-chen* says,¹⁹¹

One who does not become distracted on account of any
notions,
Nor because of any misconceptions and signs,
Is one-pointed and undistracted from absolute
meaningfulness:
He possesses the way of calm abiding.

Phenomena are without essence,
Like illusions, mirages, or dreams;
Non-referential and free of conceptions,
Since one is not even attached to non-discursiveness,
One possesses the sapience of insight.

’Brom-btsun dpal-gyi zhing explains,

The beingness of phenomena is like the open dimension of the sky. When a beginner meditates just like this, all phenomena that occur are [like] dust; one neither accepts nor relinquishes [anything], one neither is attached to nor abides on [anything]. When the notions of the grasper of forms¹⁹² do not move, [161] one meditates non-conceptually, free from all limitations.

The preceptor Kim explains,¹⁹³

By meditating on the path, one does not discursively examine, and one is free from all {conceptions}; that is called “single alertness.” When one is endowed with that alertness, the afflictions of the imprints are no longer produced. That is the path of liberation and release.

By thus abiding in concentration, one completes the purposes of wandering beings. Furthermore, the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* states,¹⁹⁴

Subhūti, a bodhisattva, a great hero, abides on the three concentrations:¹⁹⁵ sentient beings who engage in conceptual notions, he verily installs in emptiness; sentient beings who engage in signs, he verily installs in signlessness; and sentient beings who engage in aspirations, he verily installs in aspirationlessness. Subhūti, a bodhisattva, a great hero, engages in the perfection of sapience, which comprises the three concentrations,¹⁹⁶ [162] and thoroughly matures sentient beings.

5.2.5. Dealing with defects

When meditating like that, generally three types of experiences may occur: [one’s mind] may be like a fierce river,¹⁹⁷ like a leisurely river,¹⁹⁸ or like an ocean: these correspond, respectively, to not staying, to being at leisure, and to great unwavering. As they abide on the occurrence of the first and intermediate experiences, all

the *Tsen-min* and common meditators are under the power of an increase¹⁹⁹ in their previous habitual craving. Therefore, when the defects of conceptions occur, identification of one's previous [habitual craving] and its rectification are commonly taught.

Even as these defects are produced, there is no need to meditate like the *Tsen-min*, who have an antidote for each and every conception. At this time, an example may be in order: like the substance of gold or the waves of the ocean, throughout the three times, the very essence of conceptions and defects is the unborn essence of phenomena's beingness. Therefore, whatever may possibly adventitiously occur, it is not relinquished; self-originated, it is self-appeased. Even to implement the meaningful principles is a defect. The *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* says,²⁰⁰

Even if the Buddha is apprehended a little, he is marked;
If that is an obscuration, what need is there to talk about anything
else!

The *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* states,²⁰¹

Without thoughts and procrastination, neither {adventitious}
emergence nor enfeeblement is produced. In this genuineness as it
is, one does not waver.

[163] The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* says,²⁰²

Son of the family, for instance, a person who feels that a thief is coming to his home is unaffected by the thief. Likewise, the bodhisattva, the great hero, feeling all the immeasurable afflictions, is unaffected by the afflictions.

The preceptor 'Gwa-lhun Chanshi explains,²⁰³

If one recollects the wavering mind and does not image any objects, there is nothing that needs subduing or containing.

sNa-nam ye-shes dpal explains the means as follows:

When untrue notions occur, through awareness of phenomena's beingness as it is, one does not follow after them. Neither inhibiting nor rectifying anything, there is neither a genuine purpose to endorse nor any wrong notions to relinquish.

As for the means espoused by Nyang 'phags-pa 'byung-gnas, they are as follows:

Whenever disagreeable [mental events] such as agitation, etc., occur, these disagreeable [mental events] are repelled through one's realization of thusness. For both crude and subtle signs, what else is needed than to rest in equanimity? As for equanimity, it is encountered as a fact of supracognition. [164]

In this regard, there are heretical theories, such as the nihilistic view upheld by the system of Bṛhaspati²⁰⁴ and the *Vaiśeṣika* system²⁰⁵ which upholds the eternalistic view. By not holding on to these, there is purity.²⁰⁶

The monk Ye-shes dpal explains the means as follows:

When one sees wavering and events due to being unaware of the birthless mind, there is not even a dust particle's worth of wavering and events with respect to mind. If it be asked why, it is because mind is thoroughly²⁰⁷ unborn. It cannot be labeled as anything, so where should one view wavering or events?

The preceptor 'Ba' Shi²⁰⁸ explains the means as follows:

It is just like the pearl oyster which, though covered in water, can be used to scoop up water. When scooping up water, it immediately parts, but as soon as the vessel is again removed, the diffused water reassembles. Likewise, as soon as one has investigated conceptions, conceptions are again produced. Hence, through analysis one probes into all the mental events and eliminates them.

[However,] those of sharp faculties need not probe into them like that. Here, rectification signifies to give in to non-discursiveness as soon as conceptions occur. Without actualizing [anything], [the mental events] are eliminated.

According to Mahāyāna's explanation, the means are as follows:²⁰⁹

There are five means, which are as follows: [165] alert to what occurs in the mind of ignorance, [one remains in a state of] indeterminateness.

Alert to what occurs in the mind of ignorance, one follows after this alertness in the manner of an ordinary sentient being.

Alert to what occurs in the mind of ignorance, one becomes aware of the defect of wavering and inhibits it: this is the cessation of the auditors.

Alert to what occurs in the mind of ignorance, it is self-appeased and intrinsically nonexistent: this is called the single direction of peace and the impregnation of emptiness.

Alert to what occurs in the mind of ignorance, one does not subsequently examine this alertness, nor does one abide in non-discursiveness.²¹⁰ The mind is liberated and released as soon as it is produced.

Therefore, do not inhibit the notions [which arise in your mind]! Just as they occur, let them be as they are, primordially giving up all attempts at rectification: self-appeased, do not follow after them.

Moreover,²¹¹

Not imaging [anything], appearances [light up]. Clearly knowing this, one is not biased toward the peace of the auditors and independent buddhas. Not imaging any knowledge whatsoever, one does not fall down toward notionlessness. Without discursive thoughts that are fancied to be unwavering thorough clarity, there is no eternalism. Not imaging an essence with regard to phenomena and without fancying non-imaging, one does not fall down into nihilism. [166]

Furthermore,²¹²

While in equipoise, wrong mental events may occur. If there are wavering conceptions, one should know that even what is [believed to be] eternal is without an intrinsic nature. When holding on to signs, one should not follow after them. When one sees defects, one should not insistently inhibit them. One should not follow after sensations.²¹³ As they are self-originated, so they are self-appeased, and there is nothing to posit.²¹⁴ If in that manner one rests on imaging, when sinking and lethargy [occur], one should, for zeal {i.e., diligence}, meditate precisely on the clear intellect without foggiess.

The preceptor La Chanshi explains,

If you look at the mind when it wavers, [the wavering] will be inhibited. If you look at the phenomenon of form, no form is to be seen.

The *Mi-gnas theg-chen* declares,²¹⁵

As long as there are the wrongs and waverings of the
psyche,
So long are there the objects of Māra.
Therefore, through individually discerning sapience
The *yogin* of the *Mahāyāna*
Should be aware that
As long as the wrongs and waverings of the psyche persist,
[So long] are there fluctuating imprints—both coarse and
fine:
They are like a water moon or a dream
And pertain to the untrue mind.
There is no need to insistently inhibit them:
Since phenomena originate in the mind,
[167] Do not imagine that they have an intrinsic nature.
Rest in the nature of mind, just as it is,
Self-originated and self-appeased.
Neither following after sensations
Nor giving in to sinking and lethargy,
Do not become attached to the taste of concentration.
Meditating on the meaning of the non-abiding *Mahāyāna*,
One has perpetually relinquished the extremes of eternalism
and nihilism
And does not become involved in heretical views.
Without inhibiting the psyche's concepts,
One rests in equipoise, self-originated and self-appeased,
And does not fall for the cessation of the auditors.
Not following after sensations,
One relinquishes the ordinary notions of the world.
Without attachment to a non-discursive absolute,
One does not fall for the independent victors' intention.
Without inhibiting the consciousness of the five doors,
One does not fall for notionlessness.
Without attachment to an absolute peace,
One does not fall for worldly contemplation.
Resting in the equipoise of the absolute beingness of
phenomena,
One is without the indeterminateness of sinking and
lethargy.

If the intellect does not waver from the unborn absolute, it is as if, for example, when the eyes are shut, one sees no substance whatsoever: all the deviations are blocked at the same time. Likewise, in awareness, there is no grasping at a body or mind, and there is not a dust particle's worth of anything to rectify. [168] Furthermore,

In the genuine absolute
Do not imagine an intrinsic nature with respect to
phenomena:
What should one abide on and to what should one be
attached?
What is there to purify and what to accept?
In the beingness of phenomena, the genuine absolute,
There is not a dust particle's worth of an entity to abide on.
If one neither examines discursively nor abides on
That which is non-abiding, non-attached, and non-
discursive,
There is not a dust particle's worth of rectification.

Therefore, if one is not free from ignorance and the craving of the three doors, there is said to be the corruption of rectification; this is not engaging on the religious path. Moreover,

However much the mental events are rectified,
One ends up inhibiting the psyche's fluctuations
Or following after sensations.
If one becomes attached to the taste of concentration,
Everything is the mind in its vulgarity.

'Gwa-lhun Chanshi explains the means as follows:²¹⁶

If one recalls the wavering mind and does not abide²¹⁷ on objects, there is nothing that needs subduing or containing, nor that needs patching over or inhibiting.²¹⁸

The *Avikalpa-sūtra* declares,²¹⁹

If it be asked how signs are to be thoroughly relinquished, [169] [it is replied that] they are relinquished by not apprehending actual appearances.

Lang-'gro dkon-mchog 'byung-gnas explains the means as follows:

Whatever subtle or gross notions occur,
If one is without discursive thought and imaging,
One will have no misgivings.
Without rectifying whatever occurs,
Give up [all] notions just as they are
In their very ownmost state.
Self-originated, they are self-appeased, so do not follow
after them.
As for the fluctuating imprints, whether coarse or fine,
Neither take hold of nor abide on them:
The open dimension which is their very essence
Is the perfection of sapience
And the simultaneous approach.

The *Mi-gnas-pa'i ting-nge-'dzin-gyi sgo* declares,²²⁰

All phenomena are like a lake's open dimension: if one does not disturb them, they are thoroughly undisturbed. If it be asked why [this is the case], it is because if one disturbs the lake, it gets shaken by waves. If one does not disturb it, it is unshaken by waves. It is likewise concerning all phenomena—they do not waver from thusness. If it be asked why, it is because all phenomena are embraced in genuineness and flow into genuineness. As they flow into genuineness, do not generate a single enumeration; [170] do not diminish anything; do not accept or reject anything; do not relinquish or actualize anything.

5.2.6. Simultaneous progress

Hence, having identified the defect of conception, one rests in [the knowledge that what is] self-originated is self-appeased. If one meditates for a long time, concepts become increasingly few and mild. As far as conceptions are concerned, it is as is said in the *Lung-chung*:²²¹

When the mind becomes perennial and suffering becomes enlightenment, cyclic existence becomes transcendence.

Now, what is the mode of journeying to that stage? It is not the difficult gradual training of the *Tsen-min*. Rather, from the first one enters simultaneously into omniscience; this is called learning without learning. Furthermore, the *Susthitamatiparipṛcchā-sūtra* states,²²²

He for whom doubts do not occur does not take up learning.
He who does not take up learning desires learning.
He who desires learning is a non-returner.
He who is a non-returner is utterly pure and free from
[learning].

And,²²³

Devaputra, whoever has learnt thus, that one does not work at learning. There is nothing at all for him to learn. When there is nothing at all to learn, one abides in genuine learning.

[171] This approach does not teach distinct steps and experiences, as it is precisely and solely concerned with the unborn principle. The *Mi-gnas theg-chen* declares,²²⁴

Once one touches the absolute,
Whatever one ponders through intrinsic awareness
Cannot be shown or described to others,
As it is inexpressible through words.

Concerning the person endowed with [this awareness], the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* states,²²⁵

At first the bodhisattva, having entered [the state of] flawlessness, obtains the non-reversible stage. By first generating the enlightened mind and [attaining] unsurpassed awakening, he turns the wheel of the doctrine. Acting for the purpose of innumerable sentient beings, he passes into transcendence in the open dimension of transcendence without residual aggregate. Having passed into transcendence, he nevertheless abides in the eon of the holy doctrine or for the remainder of the eon.

The same text continues,²²⁶

Son of the family, a bodhisattva skilled in means obtains the tenth stage without journeying from the first stage.

Hence, although [this approach is] non-gradual, it is not that one maintains that there are no stages or progress in concentration.

5.3. Conduct

It may be asked, “What should one’s conduct be when emerging from equipoise?” [172] There is no conduct that is to be inhibited in the manner of the *Tsen-min*. That is because in the very awareness that meditates on emptiness, the two accumulations are complete. There is no need to engage in anything specific since one is without grasping and attachment. Furthermore, the *Mi-gnas theg-chen* has this to say:²²⁷

Resting in equipoise, body and mind are in [a state of] virtue
And the accumulation of merit is perfected.
Through intrinsic awareness of the absolute principle,
[The accumulation] of wisdom is perfected and completed
too.
Originating from this merit and wisdom
Is the Buddha-body in which the three bodies are complete;
Having obtained this, doubts are no more.

Hence, the accumulations are shown to be completed in concentration. Without implementing effort for the sake of righteousness, one should implement non-imaging as much as possible; this is maintained to be emptiness. The *Sems-lon* declares,²²⁸

Throughout all the [types of] conduct—whether going, staying, standing, or lying—one is never free from concentration.

It is also said that²²⁹

What, it is explained, is the abode of enlightenment? If one sees the principle, even going is the abode of enlightenment; staying too is the abode of enlightenment; standing too is the abode of enlightenment [. . .].

This is what the philosophical texts that maintain the unborn have to say when one emerges [from equipoise]. [173] The instructor Nya-bran dpal-gyi snya ye-shes rgyal-mtshan explains conduct as follows:

Even as one emerges [from equipoise], one should know all phenomena to be illusory, while relinquishing sin; endowed with compassion, one engages oneself for the purpose of sentient beings.

The *Sems-lon* states,²³⁰

Even without abiding on signs, one does not give up the accumulation of merit, nor is one cut off from virtuousness. When emerging from contemplation, one does not reject virtuousness; this is one's conduct, and it is compatible with non-discursive meditation.

The preceptor De'u li Shi explains,

When one is not attached to the forms [visible through] the eyes, the eyes are liberated and released. [The same applies to the] ears, nose, tongue, body, and psyche—they are liberated and released just as they are and are called the six autonomous kings.²³¹

5.3.1. Four types of conduct

The *rGya-lung chen-po* [to which corresponds] Mahāyāna's *bSam-gtan*²³² declares,²³³

As for entering the conduct,²³⁴ there are four [types of] conduct: The first is conduct that responds to resentment. The second is conduct that is subsequent to conditions. The third is conduct that does not search for anything whatsoever. The fourth is conduct that is compatible with the doctrine.

5.3.1.1. Conduct that responds to resentment

It may be asked,²³⁵ “What is conduct that responds to resentment?”²³⁶ When sufferings occur to a person on the path of meditation, [174] he should recall in his psyche:

Since beginningless eons I have relinquished the genuine essence {through incomprehension}; following after outer objects, I have roamed about the various existences. Much resentment²³⁷ and hate has occurred, and innumerable times have I been hostile²³⁸ and harmed others.²³⁹ Even though in this life I have not harmed or been at fault, it is because of my previous evil deeds that the fruition of suffering has ripened. It has not been caused by a god or by a human being but has taken place due to my own activities. Tolerating it mentally, I shall not be annoyed {at others} but shall accept [the situation as it is].

A *sūtra* states,

When one faces suffering, one should not be sorrowful. If it be asked why, it is because one comprehends its meaning. When such an intention occurs, one does not contradict the absolute. Only [he who has the] four {types of conduct} can become [imbued with] the principal meaning.

5.3.1.2. Conduct that is subsequent to conditions

Secondly, there is conduct that is subsequent to conditions.²⁴⁰ Mind being without self, everything comes about due to the conditions of activity. [175] One should take suffering and pleasure as equal, everything being produced from conditions. Whatever visible fruits one enjoys have been presently obtained due to previous causes; one needs to know that when the conditions are exhausted, [the fruits] will become nonexistent—hence, there is nothing whatsoever to be pleased about.

All that is obtained {i.e., pleasure} and lost {i.e., the exhaustion of pleasure} comes about due to conditions. Mind {in its intrinsic essence} is without birth and without fading. When one is not shaken by the wind of joy,²⁴¹ one agrees with the meaning of the doctrine. This is conduct subsequent to conditions.²⁴²

5.3.1.3. Conduct that does not search for anything

Thirdly, there is conduct that does not search for anything.²⁴³ Worldly people being continuously corrupted, they feel attachment toward all the places of pleasure. [On the other hand,] when one realizes the absolute wisdom, one is free from all such [types of] pleasure. When one abides in the bliss of mind, there is no action. Forms may change and mutate, yet all that exists is emptiness—there is nothing to believe in or to aspire toward. Lady Auspiciousness and Lady Darkness constantly follow after each other. To give an example, permanently abiding within the three realms is just like a house that is ablaze. Whoever has a body [experiences] all kinds of suffering and does not obtain happiness. [176]

If one thus comprehends this place, one's notions regarding all that exists are pacified, and there is no searching.²⁴⁴ A *sūtra* states,

If there is searching, there is suffering. If searching is absent, there is bliss.

If one restrains oneself so that searching is absent, one engages on the genuine path.

5.3.1.4. Conduct that is compatible with the accumulations

Fourthly, there is conduct that is compatible with the accumulations.²⁴⁵ The meaningfulness of the utterly pure essence is called phenomena's beingness. Since absolute meaningfulness is empty of criteria, there is neither coating nor attachment, and one images neither self nor other. A *sūtra* declares,

Since with respect to the doctrine there is no sentient being, one is free from the stain of sentient beings. Since with respect to the doctrine there is no self, one is free from the stain consisting in the view of a self.

If the one with wisdom thus examines and trusts absolute meaningfulness, he does not contradict the doctrine. It is appropriate to thus engage therewith.²⁴⁶

Moreover, the great preceptor explains,²⁴⁷

If one desires enjoyments, such as good clothes and tasty food, one's qualities are doubtlessly slight. People {experts} of the past who meditated on the religious path did not care for good clothes.²⁴⁸

It is stated in the *Drang-srong de'u yug-gi gtsug-lag-gi yi-ge*²⁴⁹ that²⁵⁰

[177] A disciple meditating on the path should not remain in and enjoy a good house.

TN: The other versions of the text would suggest “doctrine” (*chos*; Skt. *dharma*) instead of “accumulations” (*tshogs*); cf. Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 11; Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 71; and van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 87.

5.3.2. The indications

It may be asked, “Having engaged in such conduct for a long time, how does one obtain the indications?” By entering meditation to the extent of one's capacity, one conquers sleepiness and, without food, one's sense-faculties become luminous; one is without attachment or hatred, etc., and many [such indications] occur. Mahāyāna's *bSam-gtan* states,²⁵¹

When one prolongs one's contemplation for a long time, at intervals [visions of] the Buddha and many bodhisattvas may occur. At other times one may fancy that one possesses the five supracognitions,²⁵² such as knowing the minds of others, etc. On yet other occasions, one may see various wonders, such as light [radiating from] a great lotus, and so forth. All these pertain to engaging in conceptualization. In brief, they are Māra. Therefore, one should not think about them or become attached to them.

The *rGya-lung chen-po* declares,²⁵³

When meditating, a golden-colored Buddha with sixteen hands may appear: the color of his body is like gold, and his body emits luminosity; his body is adorned and the thirty-two characteristics and eighty illustrative attributes [of a great person]²⁵⁴ are clearly visible. [178] This is a good sign, [especially] if one sees that the Buddha, while actually staying in the world, is not different [from the principal body].

When one sees [the Buddha] one should not search for the deity's hands, but instead should comfortably rest the mind. Examining phenomena as to their truth, one ponders and recalls [the following]. The Buddha has explained that

Phenomena are without going or coming. The sign and essence of all phenomena is to be empty and peaceful. The body of the Thus-gone One being liberated and released, it is genuine. Genuine phenomena cannot be seen or heard.

Pondering these words, [it is said that]²⁵⁵

When the notions of one's fancy occur, one beholds all the Buddhas. Seeing the Buddha in this way, the mind abides in effulgence, stillness, and bliss.²⁵⁶

5.3.3. Black and white deeds

Moreover, whichever of the eighteen scopes of Māra are produced,²⁵⁷ it is said that one should not become cheerful on their account. When such indications occur, one should not imagine engaging in white or black deeds for the purpose of others; thereby, there is no obscuration.

[179] The *rGya-lung* declares,²⁵⁸

The great preceptor was asked: “If all sentient beings are non-genuine, illusory, and dreamlike, then is it a sin if I take life?”

He explained: “If one takes life while seeing a sentient being, one will obtain an obscuration. If one does not see a sentient being, there is no killing.”

The great preceptor further explained: “For instance, if one kills a man in one’s dream, one does not fear the retribution of the sin of killing. Likewise, if one knows the genuine absolute, dreaming and killing are alike since during the time [of dreaming] reified entities [such as “sentient beings,” etc.] are absent.”²⁵⁹

The *Mahāyānasamgraha* declares,²⁶⁰

Neither taming nor relinquishing the afflictions,
The person endowed with the great means
Transforms the afflictions into the ancillaries of
enlightenment,
Just as poison which kills [can be transformed] through
spells.

The *Ratnakūṭa* states,²⁶¹

If a bodhisattva enjoys the five desirable sense-qualities, he goes for refuge in the Buddha, the doctrine, and the community of noble ones.

The same text continues,²⁶²

Kāśyapa, take the following example: if one drinks poison which has been thoroughly appropriated through spells and medicine, one will not die. [180] Likewise, having thoroughly appropriated the afflictions through sapience and skillful means, one may engage in them and still will be flawless.

The *Āryadaśadharmaka-sūtra* also has the following to say:²⁶³

Son of the family, for instance, a person who takes hold of a snake can, if he is endowed with the strength [deriving from] spells and medicine, embrace the snake; he will not be harmed by its malevolent [properties]. Likewise, having thoroughly appropriated the afflictions through skillful means, one may engage in them and still not be tainted by their poison.

Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying po's *Cig-car 'jug-pa'i mdo* declares,²⁶⁴

The open dimension where one's thoughts are utterly purified
Is like the flight of a bird: it engages in non-abiding.
Phenomena's beingness being [already] accomplished, in the open
dimension there is no enlightenment to obtain:
The afflictions being utterly purified, it is equal to the unborn
absolute.

The *Ratnakūṭa* states the following in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*:²⁶⁵

Kāśyapa, it is as follows: the lotus is born in the mud and yet is
untainted by the mud's negative flaws. Likewise, he who is skilled
in means is untainted by the faults of the world.

The *sūtra* also says,²⁶⁶

A small lump of iron will sink down in water
Yet when made into a vessel, however great, will float.
[181] Likewise, an unskilled person will fall down when
performing a small sin,
While the skilled person, though he performs great sins, will
not fall down.

The *sDom-pa {nyi-shu}* states,²⁶⁷

[Whatever is done] with compassion and out of kindness
Pertains to a virtuous mind and is faultless.

The *Mañjuśrīvihāra-sūtra* declares,²⁶⁸

Venerable Śāriputra, whatever might be the maturation of a phantom's deeds,²⁶⁹ such too is the maturation of my deeds. If it be asked why, it is because those [deeds] of a phantom are non-discursive and non-conceptual, and all phenomena too are non-discursive and non-conceptual.

Furthermore,²⁷⁰

Mañjuśrī continued: “Venerable Śāriputra, there is neither indicator nor deed nor maturation. Now, where could there be maturation of one's deeds?”

Śāriputra answered: “Mañjuśrī, according to your thinking and teaching, there is no maturation of one's deeds. If it be asked why, it is because among any and all phenomena there is neither deed nor maturation [to be found].”

[182] The *Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa-sūtra* states,²⁷¹

If one does not panic upon hearing this doctrine,
One is exalted, even as a householder attached to the five desirable sense-qualities.

Moreover,²⁷²

Knowing that with regard to all phenomena there are neither deeds nor maturation, one obtains the utter purification of the obscuration consisting of one's deeds.

The '*Bum-tig* declares,²⁷³

In absolute truth, there is no maturation of one's deeds. All sentient beings are the paragons of the principal body.

The *Ajātaśatru-sūtra* states,²⁷⁴

[The Hallowed One] declared: “Ānanda, you must assimilate the following: If a person having performed one of the five boundless sins were to hear a doctrinal synopsis and devoutly enter [the doctrine], I do not say that he would be obscured by his deeds.”

The *bDen-gnyis 'jug-pa* says,²⁷⁵

“Mañjuśrī, what is genuine conduct?”

Mañjuśrī replied: “Devaputra, in absolute truth, thusness and the open dimension of phenomena are veritably birthless and equal. Even the five boundless sins are equal.”

Thus, it is explained extensively according to the authoritative scriptures and to reasoning. [183] In the state of unborn absolute truth, everything is considered without imaging. The [followers of the simultaneous approach] may be incapable of conduct according to the secret *Mantrayāna*, but they can still gauge some profit in the meantime.²⁷⁶

5.4. The fruition

Thus, since there is no maturation [of deeds], there is nothing to cleanse. If it be asked how this can be the case, [it is replied that] though unborn, [obscurations appear to be] produced.²⁷⁷ For one who engages on the religious path that is uncorrupted by the intellect, neither the obscuration of the afflictions nor an individual [who could be obscured] exists.

Needless to say, when one does not hold on to phenomena and is without dualistic grasping, the knowable, too, is purified. Without protecting oneself against its flaws, these are purified through non-

imaging. Although the mode of purifying is indefinite, [the flaws] are purified in the moment of completing an action.²⁷⁸ The *Ratnakūṭa* declares,²⁷⁹

Thus, through the single discernment that apprehends them properly, the deeds and afflictions accrued over hundreds and thousands of eons come to be nonexistent.

The *Mahoṣṇīṣa-sūtra* says,²⁸⁰

Having relinquished the signs of the distortions accrued over many eons, this king adorned with the [concentration] of heroic gait has obtained, after a very long time, the non-abiding principal body.

[184] The same *sūtra* states,

Simultaneous awareness is absolute meaningfulness. One is simultaneously purified through the blessing of awareness.

And,

A mind endowed with a fleeting second of sapience
Awakens to unsurpassed enlightenment.

The *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* declares,²⁸¹

To cleanse the imprints of the atrophies, it may take three incalculable eons,²⁸² a juncture (Skt. *ṛtu*),²⁸³ a year, a month, twenty-four hours, a day, a session, half a session, an instant, a fleeting second, a minute, or an immeasurable eon.

The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* has this to say:²⁸⁴

Mahāmati, it is as follows: all the reflections of forms that appear in a mirror appear without conceptualization. Likewise, Mahāmati, while the Thus-gone One appears to the minds of all sentient beings, he is non-conceptual and yet utterly engages with their un-illuminated scope.

Extensive explanations may be found in these sources. In any case, an example [of the manner in which] the stages and paths are traversed and trodden according to the explanation of the simultaneous purification of one's obscurations is the great *garuḍa*. Just as the *garuḍa* does not dread soaring [in the sky], so the man of upright conduct on the religious path is free of hope and misgiving. [185] If it be asked whether the real fruition is obtained [in this manner], [it is replied that] the stage of universal light [is attained].²⁸⁵ It is through the strength of non-imaging that the fruition of universal light is attained. The two bodies of form naturally arise from the cause that is a meritorious conscious continuum, just as husk encloses excellent *sālu* rice.

Concerning the manner of effecting this purpose, it is produced from one's aspirations and compassion. The manner of effecting this purpose²⁸⁶ is hence likened to the sun and moon appearing in limpid water.²⁸⁷ These [points] will not be amply laid out here.

5.5. The tenfold superiority of the simultaneous approach

Compared with the *Tsen-min*, [this approach] is superior in ten ways: its means are superior,²⁸⁸ its mode of approach is superior,²⁸⁹ its conduct is superior,²⁹⁰ its

concentration is superior,²⁹¹ its rectification of concepts is superior,²⁹² its cleansing of obscurations is superior,²⁹³ its accomplishment is superior,²⁹⁴ [186] its accumulations are superior,²⁹⁵ its realization is superior,²⁹⁶ and its purposefulness for wandering beings is superior.²⁹⁷ this is its tenfold superiority.

Because at the time [of writing] the *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, I had misgivings concerning certain deviations [in understanding] arising from the similarity of the *sTon-mun* and the Great Completeness {in all [the aspects pertaining to] the view and conduct}, I have amply laid this out here.

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the fifth chapter, which {amply} explains the simultaneous mode of approach, the *sTon-mun*.

¹ The king of mountains refers to Mount Meru.

² Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guenther](#), “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,” p. 364, n. 36.

³ Gl.: the essence of its view.

⁴ Gl.: the essence of absolute truth.

⁵ Non-extant source. [Meinert](#) (*Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, pp. 138–139) quotes Nyang-ral nyi-ma ’od-zer, *Chos-’byung me-tog snying-po*, p. 397, who mentions the *Sems-lon* as the principal text among five works of Tibetan Chan. Donati, for her part, has succeeded in identifying two of the *Sems-lon* citations in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (C 149.5–150.1 and C 172.5–6) as Tibetan renditions of passages found in the Chinese Dunhuang manuscript Pelliot chinois 3018. See [Donati](#), *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*, p. 213, n. 2.

⁶ Despite some scholars’ misgivings (cf. [Broughton](#), “Early Ch’an Schools in Tibet,” p. 9), this is the Korean master Kim (680/684–762 ce),

who resided in Sichuan and transmitted three *Chan* texts to a Tibetan party. See Tanaka and Robertson, “A *Ch’an* Text from Tun-huang,” pp. 64–65; Kim’s dates are supplied according to Robert E. Buswell, *The Formation of Ch’an Ideology in China and Korea: The Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra, A Buddhist Apocryphon*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 7. For a translation of the *dBa’-bzhed*’s account of the meeting between the Tibetan envoys and master Kim, see [Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism*](#), pp. 71–72; [Wangdu and Diemberger, *dBa’ bzhed*](#), pp. 48–52, incl. n. 117. Note that the master’s name is given here as Kin-hun and as Kyin-hu in C 161.1.

⁷ The Chinese title *chanshi* (meaning “master of contemplation”) is variously rendered as *shan-she*, *shan-shi*, *shen-she*, *shen-shi*, and *shin-shi* in the Tibetan text; at times, just *shi* or *she* is given; at others, just *shan*. In the translation, I have given the standard spelling *Chanshi* or simply *Shi* (“master”).

⁸ The passage is found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r45.5–v45.1) and is translated in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 51. Cf. the French translation of this passage in Mala, “Empreinte du Tch’an chez les Mystiques Tibétains,” p. 395.

⁹ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v45.2–4); cf. the translation in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 51. The master’s name is given as Dzang in the Dunhuang manuscript. This appears to be Xiangmo Zang, a disciple of Shenxiu, who is also listed as one of Hwa-shang Mahāyāna’s teachers. He was an unconventional master, apparently renowned for his ability to tame demons, whose early studies focused on the *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-sūtra* and the *Vinaya*. Cf. McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 63, 293, nn. 154, 155.

¹⁰ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r46.6–7); see the translation in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 52. The master’s name is given as Pab-shwan in the Dunhuang manuscript.

¹¹ For the four types of conduct, see [Chapter 2](#), note 77.

¹² In the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, no personal name is given for this master other than his title of Chanshi. In the Dunhuang manuscript, however, he is called Pir Chanshi.

¹³ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v46.1–2); see the translation in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 52.

¹⁴ The Dunhuang manuscript reads, “That is the path of liberation and release” (*de ni grol thar pa’i lam yin no/*).

¹⁵ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v48.3–4); see the translation in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 55. The master’s name is given as De’u in the Dunhuang manuscript.

¹⁶ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v46.5–8); see the translation in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 53. The master’s name is given as Wang in the Dunhuang manuscript.

¹⁷ It should be noted that in Tibetan *Chan* texts the term *tshor* (*-ba*) is frequently used to translate not the Sanskrit *vedanā* (“feeling”) but the Chinese *jue* (“alertness”). See [van Schaik, “Dzogchen, Chan and the Question of Influence,”](#) p. 8.

¹⁸ The Dunhuang manuscript, through the addition of *zhi*, reads, “For instance, it is just as cold water poured into boiling water will pacify the boiling.” As the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*’s version equally makes sense, I have refrained from emending it.

¹⁹ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r47.1–2); for a translation, see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 53. The master’s name is given as Dzwang-za in the Dunhuang manuscript. This, too, may well refer to Xiangmo Zang, on whom, see note 9.

²⁰ *Mi-mthong* (“not seeing”) has been emended to *mthong* (“seeing”) according to the Dunhuang manuscript.

²¹ This passage corresponds to the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 709 (fol. 35v.2–3). For a description, see [Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*](#), pp. 302–306. This master is called ’Gal-na-yas in the Dunhuang manuscript, which would correspond to Haklenayaśas. See [van Schaik, “Dzogchen, Chan and the Question of Influence,”](#) p. 7.

²² This appears to be Baotang Wuzhu (714–774 ce). See [Chapter 3](#), note 87. Cf. a somewhat similar (though not identical) passage in [Adamek, *The Teachings of Master Wuzhu*](#), p. 150.

²³ Non-extant source.

²⁴ Cf. Mala, “Empreinte du Tch’an chez les Mystiques Tibétains,” p. 395. This passage is there attributed to Baotang Wuzhu.

²⁵ Cf. the translation in Luis O. Gómez, “The Direct and Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahāyāna: Fragments of the Teaching of Mo-ho-yen,” in Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory (eds.), *Studies in Ch’an and Hua-yen*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985, pp. 69–167, esp. pp. 118–119.

²⁶ Note that *rang-byung* must be emended to *rang-gi*, as already pointed out in [Guenther, “Meditation Trends in Early Tibet,”](#) p. 364, n.

35.

²⁷ The aphorisms that follow can be traced to the miscellanea appended to the *Damo lun*; on the composite nature of which, see Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 33–37. For translations from the Chinese of the present passage, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 45; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 137–138. This master is otherwise known as Yuan; he appears to have been a Chinese disciple of Bodhidharma, though hardly anything is known about him. Cf. Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, pp. 84–86.

²⁸ Gl.: There is nothing at all to be done.

²⁹ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 45; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 138. This master is referred to as Zang in Chinese, this being none other than Xiangmo Zang. On this master, see note 9.

³⁰ *Thogs-pa med-pa* has been emended to *thob-pa med-pa*, and the negative particle *ma* has been omitted, according to the Chinese version reported by Broughton and Faure.

³¹ The sixfold gathering (*tshogs drug*) is an abbreviation for the sixfold gathering of consciousnesses (*rnam-par shes-pa tshogs drug*); this refers to the five sensory consciousnesses (i.e., visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile) and psychic consciousness.

³² Gl.: the nonexistence of a cause to obtain something.

³³ Gl.: being nonexistent, it is non-accomplishable.

³⁴ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 45; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 138. This master is referred to as Xian in Chinese.

³⁵ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 45; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 138–139. This master is referred to as An in Chinese.

³⁶ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, pp. 45–46; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 139. This master is referred to as Lian in Chinese.

³⁷ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 46; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 139–140. This master is referred to as Hong in Chinese.

³⁸ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 46; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 140, 142–143, n. 30. This master is referred to as Jue in Chinese.

³⁹ According to the Chinese version, this part of the saying is attributed to another master, called Fan. However, the Tibetan version does not make this distinction. For translations from the Chinese, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 46; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 145.

⁴⁰ The statement that all phenomena are one signifies that despite their diversity, their nature, emptiness, is the same. Hence, for example, by understanding the emptiness of visual phenomena, one can analogously apply this understanding to auditory phenomena as well, and so forth.

⁴¹ For translations from the Chinese, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), pp. 46–47; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 145–146. According to the Chinese version, this quote actually is attributed to two different masters, Daozhi and Yuanzhi; this distinction is not made in the Tibetan translation rendered here.

⁴² In the Chinese version, the citation from Daozhi ends here, the rest being attributed to Yuanzhi.

⁴³ Given as A-sham in the text. Cf. Ashuku, the Chinese transcription of Akṣobhya; see *Hôbôgirin*, pt.1, Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1929, p. 39.

⁴⁴ This story is recounted in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras*: through his magical power, Buddha Śākyamuni creates an emanation of Buddha Akṣobhya, which the assembly beholds. He thereupon withdraws his magical power, so that the emanation disappears. This magical feat is used to illustrate the fact that all phenomena are beyond the range of the senses and are ultimately unknowable, unseeable, ungraspable, and inconceivable. See Conze, *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*, pp. 486–487.

⁴⁵ Gl.: This refers without difference to the universal ground consciousness, to the afflicted psychic consciousness, to the psychic consciousness, and to the consciousnesses of the five [sense-] doors.

⁴⁶ This phrase (“a phenomenon does not see a phenomenon”) is found in *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa stong-phrag nyi-shu-linga-pa*, in KH, vol. 28, pp. 196.3, 196.5–6. It is also found in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 710, where it is attributed (probably erroneously) to the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*; see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 81. The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* has a similar phrase, to the effect that thought cannot cognize thought, nor can phenomena cognize

phenomena. See Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, ch. 6, §4, p. 128.

⁴⁷ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 47; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 146–147. This master is referred to as Jian in Chinese.

⁴⁸ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 47; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 147. This master is referred to as Yin in Chinese.

⁴⁹ This most likely refers to the eight worldly phenomena (*'jig-rten-gyi chos-brgyad*; Skt. *aṣṭau lokadharmāḥ*), which confine a person to cyclic existence due to the perpetual push and pull of acceptance and rejection they generate; they are: gain and no-gain, pleasure and suffering, praise and blame, fame and infamy. See Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, p. 35.

⁵⁰ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 48; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 147–148. The master being referred to is Bodhidharma.

⁵¹ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, pp. 49–50; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 150–151. This master is referred to as Huiyao in Chinese.

⁵² Gl.: one should follow the Buddha.

⁵³ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 50; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 151–152. This master is referred to as Zhi in Chinese.

⁵⁴ Gl.: the vulgar mind.

⁵⁵ This instruction would seem to be a warning against using the absolute view adopted by the simultaneous approach as an excuse for reckless behavior.

⁵⁶ Gl.: namely, the five roots.

TN: For the five disciplines, see [Chapter 2](#), note 69.

⁵⁷ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 51; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 152. This master is also referred to as Zhi in Chinese, although his name is written differently (Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 156, n. 21); Broughton suggests that this personage might be identical to Daozhi quoted earlier (the nineteenth preceptor enumerated by gNubs-chen). See Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 136, n. 159.

⁵⁸ One may note the wordplay between *chos* (Skt. *dharma*) meaning “phenomenon” and *chos* (Skt. *dharma*) meaning “doctrine.”

⁵⁹ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 51; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 152. This master is referred to as Wen in Chinese.

⁶⁰ Here we witness the gradual deconstruction of intellectual propositions: first the notion of “emptiness,” which, for many who come to the *Madhyamaka* texts with expectations of discovering an absolute, becomes reified into a nihilism of one sort or the other. The possibility then remains that one could fall for the opposite extreme, that of eternalism, which is why “existence” is the next postulate to be dropped. Seeking to “transcend” these extremes while remaining confined within the limits of conceptual thought would have as its consequence the belief in an absolute one, which is the error of monism. Finally, to avoid the pitfall of being forever bound to the chains of duality, non-duality is stated, not as an abstract philosophical proposition but as a realized principle. Such intellectual postulates as the above are, precisely because of their conceptually constructed nature, *always* inadequate to capture the dynamics of reality and are hence a constant source of suffering for anyone who foolishly invests them with a naively concretistic notion of truth; they must therefore be abandoned if one is to attune oneself to the dynamics of reality.

⁶¹ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 51; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 152–153. This master is anonymous in the Chinese.

⁶² For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 51; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 154. This master is referred to as Yuan in Chinese.

⁶³ Note that according to Linji (d. ca. 867 ce), studying the moral observances (Skt. *vinaya*) or doctrinal texts is at best merely of provisional value, at worst a futile distraction. See Paul Demiéville, *Les Entretiens de Lin-Tsi: Traduits du chinois et commentés*, Paris: Fayard, 1972, p. 115.

⁶⁴ Cf. Shenxiu’s statement in his *Wu fangbian* that to perceive either wavering or non-wavering still pertains to the domain of the mind’s wavering. It is only when one perceives neither wavering nor non-wavering that one attains true non-wavering. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 184.

⁶⁵ For a translation from the Chinese, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 52; Faure's translation does not contain the section of the passage given in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* because the Chinese manuscript (Pelliot chinois 4795) breaks off at this point. This master is referred to as Lang in Chinese.

⁶⁶ The eighteen constituents (*kham*s; Skt. *dhātu*) are divided into three groups of six: (I) (1) the constituent of the visual faculty (Skt. *cakṣur-indriya-dhātu*), (2) the constituent of the auditory faculty (Skt. *śrotrendriya-dhātu*), (3) the constituent of the olfactory faculty (Skt. *ghrāṇendriya-dhātu*), (4) the constituent of the gustatory faculty (Skt. *jihvendriya-dhātu*), (5) the constituent of the tactile faculty (Skt. *kāyendriya-dhātu*), and (6) the constituent of the psychic faculty (Skt. *mana-indriya-dhātu*); (II) (7) the constituent of form (*gzugs-kham*s; Skt. *rūpa-dhātu*), (8) the constituent of sound (Skt. *śabda-dhātu*), (9) the constituent of odor (Skt. *gandha-dhātu*), (10) the constituent of taste (Skt. *rasa-dhātu*), (11) the constituent of tangibles (Skt. *spraṣṭavya-dhātu*), and (12) the constituent of [psychic] phenomena (*chos-kham*s; Skt. *dharmā-dhātu*); (III) (13) the constituent of visual consciousness (Skt. *cakṣur-vijñāna-dhātu*), (14) the constituent of auditory consciousness (Skt. *śrotra-vijñāna-dhātu*), (15) the constituent of olfactory consciousness (Skt. *ghrāṇa-vijñāna-dhātu*), (16) the constituent of gustatory consciousness (Skt. *jihvā-vijñāna-dhātu*), (17) the constituent of tactile consciousness (Skt. *kāya-vijñāna-dhātu*), and (18) the constituent of psychic consciousness (Skt. *mano-vijñāna-dhātu*). According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, groups I (i.e., constituents 1–6) and III (i.e., constituents 13–18) are internal, whereas group II (i.e., constituents 7–12) consists of the external constituents; “internal” and “external” are designated in relation to consciousness. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 1, ch. 1, p. 73.

Groups I and II taken in isolation from group III are referred to as the twelve sense-bases (*skye-mched*; Skt. *āyatana*), in which case the word “constituent” (*kham*s; Skt. *dhātu*) is replaced by the term “sense-basis” (*skye-mched*; Skt. *āyatana*). The Sanskrit term *āyatana* literally means “entrance” (Skt. *āyam tanoti*) since it is an entrance for the mind and the mental events (Skt. *citta-caitānām*). Consciousness cannot arise alone but must be supported by a sense-faculty and a corresponding sense-object. Hence, these are given the name “sense-bases.” Thus, we have: (I) (1) the sense-basis of the visual faculty (Skt. *cakṣur-indriyāyatana*), (2) the sense-basis of the auditory faculty (Skt. *śrotrendriyāyatana*), (3) the sense-basis of the olfactory faculty (Skt. *ghrāṇendriyāyatana*), (4)

the sense-basis of the gustatory faculty (Skt. *jihvendriyāyatana*), (5) the sense-basis of the tactile faculty (Skt. *kāyendriyāyatana*), and (6) the sense-basis of the psychic faculty (Skt. *mana-indriyāyatana*); (II) (7) the sense-basis of form (*gzugs skye-mched*; Skt. *rūpāyatana*), (8) the sense-basis of sound (Skt. *śabdāyatana*), (9) the sense-basis of odor (Skt. *gandhāyatana*), (10) the sense-basis of taste (Skt. *rasāyatana*), (11) the sense-basis of tangibles (Skt. *spraṣṭavyāyatana*), and (12) the sense-basis of [psychic] phenomena (*chos skye-mched*; Skt. *dharmāyatana*). The sense-bases of group I (i.e., sense-bases 1–6) are referred to as the “internal sense-bases” (Skt. *adhyātmāyatana*), whereas those of group II (i.e., sense-bases 7–12) are called the “external sense-bases” (Skt. *bāhyāyatana*). Cf. Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word “Dharma”*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970, pp. 7–10, 58.

⁶⁷ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 48; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 148–149. This master is referred to as Ren in Chinese. Although Tanaka and Robertson attribute this saying to sBa/’Ba’ Sang-shi, they seem to do so merely on the basis of the title Shan-shi (which they take to stand for Sang-shi). Cf. Tanaka and Robertson, “A *Ch’an* Text from Tun-huang,” pp. 65, 158, n. 32. However, as pointed out in note 7, this is simply the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the Chinese *Chanshi*, a title meaning “master of contemplation.” As there are many such *Chanshis* quoted throughout the text, I do not see why they should have singled out this quote as being by ’Ba’ Sang-shi. On the other hand, it seems more likely that the quote in SM 164.4 should be by ’Ba’/sBa Sang-shi since it is introduced by ’Ba’ Shi. Concerning ’Ba’ Sang-shi, see note 208.

⁶⁸ *sTong-ba* has been emended to *stor-ba* (“to stray from”) according to the Chinese.

⁶⁹ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 49; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 149. This master is referred to as Ke in Chinese.

⁷⁰ For translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 49; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 149–150. This master is referred to as Liang in Chinese.

⁷¹ The negative *med-pa* after *phy-e-ba* has been removed according to the Chinese.

⁷² Gl.: It is free from the non-duality of cause and effect.

TN: *’brel-ba* has been emended to *’bral-ba*.

⁷³ For translations from the Chinese, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 49; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 150. This master is referred to as Tan in Chinese.

⁷⁴ *Mi-stong-pa* has been emended to *ming stong-pa* according to the Chinese.

⁷⁵ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r43.1–3). The passage, which is from the *Erru sixing lun* proper, appears in almost identical form in §3.3.1.2 (C 57.6–58.2); translations from the Chinese are found in [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 9; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 69.

⁷⁶ On this term, see [Chapter 3](#), note 85.

⁷⁷ This refers to the teachings that depend on the written word, contrasted to the nonverbal transmission of *Chan*.

⁷⁸ For translations from the Chinese of this passage, which again is from the aphorisms appended to the *Damo lun*, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 15; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 79.

⁷⁹ Gl.: One can view them because they are existents.

⁸⁰ What is being refuted in each of these three cases is a conceptual construct of emptiness as being “nonexistent,” “unborn,” and “non-mind,” respectively. It is pointed out that if, for instance, one wishes to establish emptiness as being nonexistent, then one should be able to behold its nonexistence, which is already a logical contradiction since only something existent can be perceived. This would entail that something existent (i.e., perceivable) could become nonexistent, but in that case the reverse also holds true, so the primacy of nonexistence over existence as a description of the absolute becomes arbitrary. Moreover, in order for there to be a beholder of nonexistence in the first place, that beholder would have to be existent, which makes the statement that “phenomena are not existent” a fallacy. The intention here is to indicate the logical absurdities inherent in any conceptual proposition concerning absolute truth.

⁸¹ For translations from the Chinese, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 16; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 79. In the *Damo lun* this passage is attributed to the “master of the three baskets” (Skt. *tripiṭaka*), which appears to be a reference to Bodhidharma. Cf. Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 118–119, n. 3.

⁸² Gl.: Forgoing objects, one follows after cognition.

TN: “To forgo” appears to be the only interpretation of *shol* (from the verb *bshal*: “to wash out,” “to clean out”) that makes sense in this context.

⁸³ This is reminiscent of Linji’s aphorism that the true practitioner is no longer affected by objects but, rather, becomes their master because he has recognized their dreamlike nature. Cf. Demiéville, *Les Entretiens de Lin-Tsi*, pp. 84–85.

⁸⁴ Here ends the section paralleling the Chinese.

This rather cryptic passage may profitably be compared to a statement from Shenxiu’s (605–706 *ce*) *Guanxin lun*. Shenxiu holds that while it is inexact to assert that the mind is outside the body, this is nevertheless said because of the realization that the mind is none other than the open dimension of phenomena (Skt. *dharmadhātu*) and hence permeates the whole of space, including, of course, one’s physical form. It follows that mind and form in no way obstruct each other but that both pervade space. Cf. McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 155.

⁸⁵ Unidentified source. Note, however, that a somewhat distant parallel, of which the present passage seems to be a summary, is found among the aphorisms appended to the *Damo lun*; for translations from the Chinese, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 37; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 116.

⁸⁶ Unidentified source.

⁸⁷ Non-extant source.

⁸⁸ Unidentified source. This statement could not be traced in *sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs, lTa-ba’i rim-pa bshad-pa*, in NKD, vol. 23/’a, pp. 361–369. Note that a somewhat similar (though not identical) passage, attributed to the preceptor Mahāyāna, is found in Pelliot tibétain 117 (fol. r6.12–v6.6). Cf. also IOL Tib J 710, translated in van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 83.

⁸⁹ Gl.: This should be known before completing the phases of meditation.

⁹⁰ *Chos thams-cad ’byung-ba med-par bstan-pa’i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 850.5–6.

⁹¹ Quoted as *’Jam-dpal gsang-ba’i mdo. ’Jam-dpal gnas-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 61, p. 541.1–3.

⁹² Gl.: they cannot establish it as genuine.

⁹³ The KD version reads “acknowledges” (*bzod-pa*) instead of “expresses” (*brjod-pa*).

⁹⁴ Citation untraced in *Dam-pa’i chos pad-ma dkar-po’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 51, pp. 2–360. The first phrase of this quotation is found in Pelliot

tibétain 116 (fol. r42.1–2).

⁹⁵ *Rin-po-che 'i mtha 'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 53, p. 906.5.

⁹⁶ *'Jam-dpal rnam-par 'phrul-pa 'i le'u*, in KH, vol. 48, p. 790.6–7.

⁹⁷ *'Od-srung-gi le'u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa 'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 277.2; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §98, p. 144 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 35; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 154 (English translation). The *Kāśyapaparivarta*, from which this quotation stems, probably constitutes the earliest core of the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*, a voluminous collection of texts mainly preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translation, whose compilation can be dated between the 4th and 7th centuries. See K. Priscilla Pedersen, “Notes on the *Ratnakūṭa* Collection,” in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 3:2, 1980, pp. 60–66, esp. p. 64.

⁹⁸ *Kun-nas sgo 'i le'u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 624.2.

⁹⁹ Citation untraced in *Thar-pa chen-po phyogs-su rgyas-pa 'gyod-tshangs-kyi sdig-sbyangs-te sangs-rgyas-su grub-par rnam-par bkod-pa 'i mdo* (*Mahāmokṣadīśunpuṣyakrokramtya-pāpaṃśodhana-sūtra*), in KH, vol. 67, pp. 845–1011. However, the quotation is found in Vimalamitra, *Cig-car 'jug-pa rnam-par mi-rtog-pa 'i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, p. 26.1–2, as well as in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r37.6–7); it is translated in Broughton, “Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet,” pp. 48–49, n. 6. Moreover, the first two lines are quoted in several texts in the *bsTan-'gyur*; see, for example, Byams-pa (Maitreya), *Theg-pa chen-po 'i rgyud bla-ma 'i bstan-bcos* (*Mahāyānottaratantra-śāstra*), in TD, vol. 123, p. 122.6; and the previously (C 47.1–2) cited Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *rTen-cing 'brel-bar 'byung-ba 'i snying-po 'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa*, in TD, vol. 96, p. 292.6.

¹⁰⁰ *Chos thams-cad 'byung-ba med-par bstan-pa 'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 876.1–5. Note, however, that the order in which the faculty of sapience is placed differs here from that found in the *sūtra*.

¹⁰¹ Gl.: It is taught to complete the five faculties.

TN: The five faculties here referred to are the five faculties of utter refinement (*rnam-byang-gi dbang-po lnga*; Skt. *pañcendriya*), which the Buddha deemed to be the necessary faculties to progress on the path toward enlightenment; in their usual order they are: faith (*dad-pa*; Skt. *śraddhā*), diligence (*brtson-'grus*; Skt. *vīrya*), recollection (*dran-pa*; Skt. *smṛti*), concentration (*ting-nge-'dzin*; Skt. *samādhi*), and sapience (*shes-*

rab; Skt. *prajñā*). On the manner of equalizing these five faculties as taught in the *Theravāda* tradition, cf. [Buddhaghosa, Visuddhimagga](#), ch. 4, §§45–49, pp. 158–159.

¹⁰² *Chos thams-cad 'byung-ba med-par bstan-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 875.3–7.

¹⁰³ Close resting (*nye-bar 'jog-pa*; Skt. *upasthāna*) is a technical term pertaining to calm abiding meditation (Skt. *śamatha*), where it signifies the fourth of nine phases of meditative development: here a sufficient level of stability has been attained, so that the mind can rest closely on the object. See [Duff, The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary](#), s.v. *nye bar 'jog pa*. The fourfold close resting of recollection (Skt. *smṛtyupasthāna*) concerns, as explained in this citation, the body, feelings, the mind, and phenomena.

¹⁰⁴ “To review” renders *rjes-su lta-ba* (Skt. *anupaśya*). On this and the related term “to survey” (*yang-dag-par rjes-su mthong-ba*; Skt. *samanupaśya*), see Edward Conze, *Materials for a Dictionary of the Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1973, pp. 212, 258, 404. Note that since I have sought to achieve a correspondence in the etymology of the Tibetan and English roots (*-lta-ba* vs *-view*), my translation of both terms is the inverse of that suggested by Conze.

¹⁰⁵ In the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* inner feelings are explained as being the feelings produced through one’s own body, in particular through the five sense-faculties, whereas outer feelings are defined as being produced through an external body, i.e., through the five objects of sense. See Rahula, *Le Compendium de la Super-Doctrine*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁶ This phrase, which is misquoted in both the extant editions of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, has been rendered according to the KH version.

¹⁰⁷ *Chos thams-cad 'byung-ba med-par bstan-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, pp. 878.1–879.1.

¹⁰⁸ Gl.: This is the complete teaching of the noble eightfold path.

¹⁰⁹ The final phrase, which is misquoted in both the extant editions of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, has been rendered according to the KH version.

¹¹⁰ *Chos thams-cad 'byung-ba med-par bstan-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 929.2–3.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 895.2–4.

¹¹² *Dri-ma med-par grags-pas bstan-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 60, p. 386.2–3; *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa: A Sanskrit Edition Based upon the*

Manuscript Newly Found at the Potala Palace, Edited by Hisao Takahashi et al., Tokyo: Taisho University Press, 2006, ch. 3, §55, p. 37 (Sanskrit); Étienne Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti (Vimalakīrtinirdeśa)*, Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1987, ch. 3, §55, p. 200 (French translation).

¹¹³ Note the ambiguity of the Sanskrit term *bodhimaṇḍa*, well brought out by the Tibetan translation *byang-chub-kyi snying-po*: indeed, while it primarily refers to the tree of enlightenment and can be translated as “dais of enlightenment,” it also carries the sense of “quintessence of enlightenment,” i.e., the unlocalizable presence of the Buddha’s doctrine, which is none other than the principal body (Skt. *dharmakāya*). See Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, pp. 198–200, n. 105; see also Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Elements of Buddhist Iconography: New Edition Revised & Enlarged in Accordance with Author’s Notes*, Edited by Krishna Deva, New Delhi: [Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts / Manohar, 2009](#), p. 82, n. 11.

¹¹⁴ Citation untraced in *De-bzhin gshegs-pa’i snying-po’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 66, pp. 490–518.

¹¹⁵ *Lang-kar gshegs pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 49, p. 171.1; *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 2, p. 33 (Sanskrit); Suzuki, *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, ch. 2, §28, p. 68 (English translation).

¹¹⁶ Given as *Par-na-pan-gyi mdo*. Citation untraced in *Yongs-su mya-ngan-las ’das-pa chen-po’i mdo (Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra)*, in KD, vols. 52–53.

¹¹⁷ Except for the first three lines, the remainder of this quote is cited exactly in the *Chos thams-cad ’byung-ba med-par bstan-pa’i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 925.4–5. Cf. also Conze, *Perfect Wisdom*, pp. 140–141.

¹¹⁸ *Chos thams-cad ’byung-ba med-par bstan-pa’i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, pp. 928.7–929.2.

¹¹⁹ Citation found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r31.8–v31.3); for a translation, see [van Schaik, Tibetan Zen](#), p. 32. The first and last phrases are also found in Vimalamitra, *Cig-car ’jug-pa rnam-par mi-rtog-pa’i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, p. 21.1–2. This citation from the **Candrapradīpa-sūtra* was already quoted earlier in §3.2.1 (C 47.6); however, this time, it is quoted slightly differently since here the word *tshogs* (“accumulation”) appears instead of *chos* (“doctrine”) as previously. Furthermore, whereas here (and in C 48.1) the *sūtra* is referred to as the *Zla-ba mar-me’i mdo*, it is quoted as the *Zla-ba sgron-ma’i mdo* in C 47, in the *bsTan-’gyur*, and in the Dunhuang manuscript.

¹²⁰ The TD version and the Dunhuang manuscript read, “That is the relinquishing of all sounds.”

¹²¹ *rDo-rje'i ting-nge-'dzin-gyi chos-kyi rnam-grangs yi-ge*, in KH, vol. 56, p. 491.3–6. For a translation from the Chinese and Korean sources, see Buswell, *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology*, p. 193.

¹²² Citation untraced in *bCom-ldan-'das-kyi gtsug-tor chen-po debzhin gshegs-pa'i gsang-ba sgrub-pa'i don mngon-par thob-pa'i rgyu byang-chub sems-dpa' thams-cad-kyi spyod-pa dpa'-bar 'gro-ba'i mdo le'u stong-phrag bcu-pa-las le'u bcu-pa*, in KH, vol. 64, pp. 823–896; and in *gTsug-tor chen-po bam-po dgu-pa-las bdud-rtsi le'u nyi-tshe phyung-ba*, in KH, vol. 64, pp. 896–931. However, the quotation is found in Vimalamitra, *Cig-car 'jug-pa rnam-par mi-rtog-pa'i bsgom-don*, in TD, vol. 110, p. 25.2–3.

¹²³ Gl.: One should know this by looking at the qualities of meditation.

¹²⁴ *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa rdo-rje gcod-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 34, p. 460.2–3; Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, §18, pp. 51 (Sanskrit text), 85 (English translation). This *Vajracchedikā* citation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r36.7–v36.1) and is translated in van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 38.

¹²⁵ Cf. *Seng-ge'i sgra chen-po*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 43, p. 207.5–6. This citation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r37.3–4) and is translated in van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 39.

¹²⁶ According to the Dunhuang manuscript, one should here add “nor notion of the doctrine.”

¹²⁷ *Med* is added according to the Dunhuang manuscript.

¹²⁸ *Sangs-rgyas-kyi mdzod-kyi chos-kyi yi-ge ming-gcig ni chos-socog-las gdams*, in KH, vol. 54, p. 459.5–460.1. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v37.7–r38.1).

¹²⁹ Actually, this quote is from the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*; see Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, ch. 5, §6, pp. 58 (Tibetan text), 186 (French translation); Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, p. 56. The quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v39.5–7), where it is wrongly attributed to the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*.

¹³⁰ Note that the canonical version edited by Lamotte reads, “he does not see phenomena” (*chos rnam kyang mi mthong*), whereby “phenomena” must be understood as being the objects of the psychic consciousness (Skt. *manovijñāna*).

¹³¹ *rMi-lam bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 472.1.

¹³² Actually, this quote is from the *Go-cha'i bkod-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 365.1–3.

¹³³ The intended meaning is that it is not sufficient to hold on to an abstract conceptual construct of emptiness (to “look for emptiness in emptiness”), but that one must view emptiness in the midst of that which ordinarily appears other than emptiness, i.e., appearance.

¹³⁴ *Go-cha'i bkod-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, pp. 363.7–364.2.

¹³⁵ Note that *dmigs-med dbyings-med* has been emended to *dbyings-dang dbyings-med* according to the version of this quote in KH.

¹³⁶ *Chos-kyi dbyings-kyi rang-bzhin dbyer-med-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, pp. 463.6–464.3.

¹³⁷ Ibid., pp. 482.7–483.2.

¹³⁸ “To survey” renders *yang-dag-par rjes-su mthong-ba* (Skt. *anupaśya*). On this and the related term “to review” (*rjes-su lta-ba*; Skt. *anupaśya*), see Conze, *Materials for a Dictionary of the Prajāpāramitā Literature*, pp. 212, 258, 404. Note that since I have sought to achieve a correspondence in the etymology of the Tibetan and English roots (*-lta-ba* vs *-view*), my translation of both terms is the inverse of that suggested by Conze.

¹³⁹ *Chos-kyi dbyings-kyi rang-bzhin dbyer-med-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, pp. 528.6–529.2.

¹⁴⁰ I.e., Śāriputra; with Maudgalyāyana, one of the Buddha’s two chief disciples. Whereas Śāriputra is considered foremost among scholars, Maudgalyāyana is believed to have been foremost in the performance of magical feats. See [Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*](#), pp. 19, 765–766.

¹⁴¹ “Sinful One” (*sdig-pa-can*; Skt. *pāpīyān*) is an epithet of Māra. See, for example, Lamotte, *L’Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, ch. 3, §§63–65, pp. 207–210.

¹⁴² The translation “view of corporeality,” while it may somewhat depart from the Tibetan interpretation *'jig-tshogs-la lta-ba* (lit. “view of a perishing gathering”), has the advantage of corresponding etymologically to the Sanskrit *satkāyadr̥ṣṭi*. Note that “corporeal” comes from the late Latin *corporealis*; cf. [Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*](#), p. 121. Let us recall that the Sanskrit antonym *asatkāya* is glossed as follows: since the body (Skt.

kāya) is nonexistent (Skt. *asat*), there is no corporeality. Hence, the body is not a corporeality (Skt. *asatkāya*). See Conze, *Perfect Wisdom*, p. 110. Literally, the view of corporeality thus refers to the belief in a truly existing body, whereby it must be understood that the body here encompasses all five aggregates. See Steven Collins, *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, p. 93.

¹⁴³ *Chos bcu-pa'i mdo*, in *dKon-mchog-brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, pp. 558.4–559.3.

¹⁴⁴ *Kun-nas sgo'i le'u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 621.4–7.

¹⁴⁵ The term *bsGom-lung* is used as a general category to designate *Chan* texts in Tibetan. See Erik Pema Kunsang, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Culture*, Version 3, Kathmandu: Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 2003, s.v. *bsgom lung*. I suspect that here *lung* does not translate the Sanskrit *āgama* (“authoritative scripture”) but is, rather, a phonetic transcription of the Chinese *lun* (Jap. *ron*; Skt. *śāstra*), meaning “treatise”; it could even be a translation-cum-transcription of the Chinese *chan-lu* (Jap. *zenroku*), meaning “*Chan* scriptures” or “scriptures on contemplation.” Cf. Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, pp. 809, 920. It should be noted that in the Chinese context, the texts designated as “treatises” (Ch. *lun*) referred specifically to translated works composed by Indian masters; such texts were accorded near canonical status on a par with the *sūtras*. On the other hand, the commentaries (Ch. *shu*) by Chinese masters only enjoyed semi-canonical status. See Buswell, *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology*, p. 46, n. 11.

¹⁴⁶ IOL Tib J 689 (fol. 1r.2–3) and IOL Tib J 1774 (fol. r1.3–6). For a description of these two Dunhuang manuscripts, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, pp. 296–297 and 346–347, respectively. Meinert suggests that the *Lung-chung* is in fact a summary of the teachings of Hwa-shang Mahāyāna. See Meinert, “Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen*,” p. 291.

¹⁴⁷ Meinert points out that the Tibetan expression “reversing the mind’s six doors from entering the objects of confusion” is used to translate the Chinese term “reversing the radiance to the mind’s source” (Ch. *fanzhao xinyuan*), which itself is a gloss for the method of “looking at the mind” (Ch. *kanxin*). Hence, the Tibetan translation introduces the idea of an antidote to the mind’s wavering due to objects, a notion that is clearly absent in the Chinese, where the direct recognition of mind’s nature is implied. See Meinert, “Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs*

chen,” pp. 293–294; and Meinert, “The Conjunction of Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen* Thought,” pp. 245–248.

¹⁴⁸ As quoted in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*, this sentence stops short after the inessive particle *na*. Taking as a witness the Dzunguung manuscripts, the final sentence should read, “If one looks at one’s own mind, there is no entity that is the mind” (*rang gi sems la bltas na/ sems kyi dngos po ci yang ma yin pas/*).

¹⁴⁹ The first paragraph of this quotation is found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v45.8–r46.2) and is translated in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 52.

¹⁵⁰ The description of the nature of the mind as not only luminous but especially as expansive and comparable to space in its vastness is an important feature of the Northern school of *Chan*, in particular of the teachings of Shenxiu (605–706 *ce*). See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 218.

¹⁵¹ This passage corresponds to the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 468 (fol. 1v.1–2r.3). It is translated in Gómez, “The Direct and Gradual Approaches,” pp. 78, 108; and in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 141. For a description of the manuscript, see [Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*](#), p. 213.

¹⁵² This passage corresponds to the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 709 (fol. 1r.2–3). It is translated in Gómez, “The Direct and Gradual Approaches,” pp. 78, 110; and in [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 142. For a description, see [Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*](#), p. 302.

¹⁵³ Cf. the translation in Gómez, “The Direct and Gradual Approaches,” p. 119.

¹⁵⁴ Gl.: Relying on heretical preceptors, one is under the power of viewing the self, so the thesis of the singularity of eternalism and nihilism is established without any agreement and does not produce any effect.

¹⁵⁵ This and the following quotation are translated in Gómez, “The Direct and Gradual Approaches,” pp. 119–120.

¹⁵⁶ La-gsum rgyal-ba byang-chub was among the first seven monks to be ordained at bSam-yas monastery by Śāntarakṣita. He visited India several times and translated many scriptures into Tibetan. His name is spelled “La-gam rgyal-ba byang-chub” in our text.

¹⁵⁷ Cog-ro klu’i rgyal-mtshan was a great translator during the reign of Khri-srong lde’u-btsan (r. 755–797) and one of Padmasambhava’s twenty-five disciples.

¹⁵⁸ Pelliot tibétain 21 (fol. r1.2–4). Citation identified in [Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*](#), p. 241, n. 140.

¹⁵⁹ The Dunhuang manuscript reads “one does not think at all” (*cir yang myi bsam*) instead of “why think” (*ci bsam mo*).

¹⁶⁰ This quotation is found in the miscellanea appended to the *Damo lun*. For translations from the Chinese of this passage, see [Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*](#), p. 31; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 104. Donati has succeeded in finding this citation in the Chinese Dunhuang manuscript Pelliot chinois 3018. See [Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*](#), p. 241, n. 141.

¹⁶¹ The point is that there is no need to engage in effort but that one can lie down comfortably on the elevated pillow of emptiness.

¹⁶² This quote is also found in §6.2.2.4.1.3 (C 226.1–3), where it is attributed to the *Sems-lon*.

¹⁶³ The adverb *gyi-nar* (translated as “idly”) is derived from *gyi-na*, which has both the sense of being futile and of being idle. See [Chos-kyi grags-pa, *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*](#), p. 125; and [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*](#), p. 81.

¹⁶⁴ “Hope” has been added according to the version of this citation found in C 226.2.

¹⁶⁵ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v43.4). A variant of this quotation is found in §3.3.1.2 (C 58.5–6).

¹⁶⁶ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v43.1–2). A-rdhan-hwer (here misspelt “A-rngan-wor”) refers to the Indian master A-rtan-hwer, whose name is misspelt “A-ngha-na-her” in §3.3.1.2 (C 58.5), where the same quotation is found.

¹⁶⁷ Although he is here referred to as a master of the *Chan* teachings, Lang-’gro dkon-mchog ’byung-gnas is also counted among Padmasambhava’s twenty-five disciples. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 536.

¹⁶⁸ Unidentified source. This and the following two statements could not be traced in [sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs, *lTa-ba’i rim-pa bshad-pa*](#), in NKD, vol. 23/’a, pp. 361–369.

¹⁶⁹ Unidentified source.

¹⁷⁰ Unidentified source.

¹⁷¹ *Dri-ma med-par grags-pas bstan-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 60, pp. 434.6–440.4; *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, ed. Takahashi, ch. 8, §§1–31, pp. 84–89 (Sanskrit); Lamotte, *L’Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, ch. 8, §§1–31, pp. 302–316 (French translation).

¹⁷² As in *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, ed. Takahashi, §2, p. 84; cf. Śrīgandha given in Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, §2, p. 303, though Śrīgupta is given for the Chinese variant.

¹⁷³ §§4–5 of Lamotte's translation (likewise in the Sanskrit edition) are here omitted.

¹⁷⁴ §7 of Lamotte's translation (likewise in the Sanskrit edition) is here omitted.

¹⁷⁵ As in *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, ed. Takahashi, §8, p. 85; cf. Tiṣya given in Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, §8, p. 305, though Puṣya is given for the Chinese variant.

¹⁷⁶ As in *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, ed. Takahashi, §11, p. 85; cf. Śuddhādhimukti given in Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, §11, p. 306.

¹⁷⁷ §14 of Lamotte's translation (likewise in the Sanskrit edition) is here omitted.

¹⁷⁸ As in *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, ed. Takahashi, §15, p. 86; cf. Parigūḍha given in Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, §15, p. 308.

¹⁷⁹ §§17–21 of Lamotte's translation (likewise in the Sanskrit edition) are here omitted.

¹⁸⁰ §23 of Lamotte's translation (likewise in the Sanskrit edition) is here omitted.

¹⁸¹ §§25–26 of Lamotte's translation (likewise in the Sanskrit edition) are here omitted.

¹⁸² As in *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, ed. Takahashi, §31, p. 89; cf. Satyarata given in Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, §31, p. 316.

¹⁸³ *Go-cha'i bkod-pa bstan-pa*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 337.6–7.

¹⁸⁴ *Lang-kar gshegs pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 49, p. 116.4; *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 1, v. 43, p. 5 (Sanskrit); Suzuki, *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, ch. 1, v. 44, p. 9 (English translation).

¹⁸⁵ The version of this verse as preserved in the KD reads “Unapproachable conceptually . . .” (*rnam-par rtog-pa mi-'jug-cing*).

¹⁸⁶ Actually, this quote is from the *'Od-zer kun-tu bkye-ba bstan-pa'i mdo* (*Prabhāsādhana-sūtra*), in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, p. 779.3–5.

¹⁸⁷ Citation untraced.

¹⁸⁸ IOL Tib J 689 (fol. 2r.3–4). For a description of the Dunhuang manuscript, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts*

from *Dunhuang*, pp. 296–297.

¹⁸⁹ The Dunhuang manuscript reads “It cannot be labeled” (*gdags su myed pa’o*).

¹⁹⁰ Cf. *sDom-pa gsum bstan-pa’i le’u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 39, p. 63.2–3.

¹⁹¹ Unidentified source.

¹⁹² I.e., the eye.

¹⁹³ This passage is found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r46.3–6). The preceptor’s name is given as Kyin-hu in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* and as Kim-hu in the Dunhuang manuscript. On this master, see note 6.

¹⁹⁴ *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa stong-phrag brgya-pa*, in KD, vol. 23, p. 362.3–6; Conze, *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*, p. 414. This *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* citation is also found in IOL Tib J 707 (fol. r1.15–19), as well as in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v34.3–8); for a translation from the latter manuscript, see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 36. For a description of the former manuscript, see [Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*](#), pp. 301–302.

¹⁹⁵ Gl.: These pertain to the three doors to utter release.

TN: Here and in the next gloss, the Tibetan reads *rnam thar dri/*, where *dri* must be understood as a rough phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit *tri* (“three”), rather than in its usual sense of “scent.”

The three doors to utter release are utter release through emptiness (*stong-pa-nyid-kyi rnam-par thar-pa’i sgo*; Skt. *śūnyatā-vimokṣamukha*), utter release through signlessness (*mtshan-ma med-pa’i rnam-par thar-pa’i sgo*; Skt. *animitta-vimokṣamukha*), and utter release through aspirationlessness (*smon-pa med-pa’i rnam-par thar-pa’i sgo*; Skt. *apraṇihita-vimokṣamukha*). Cf. [Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology*](#), p. 157. On their designation as three concentrations, see [Chapter 3](#), note 78.

¹⁹⁶ Gl.: These pertain to the three doors to utter release.

¹⁹⁷ Gl.: i.e., a cascade.

¹⁹⁸ Gl.: i.e., a stream.

¹⁹⁹ Note that *brtas-pa* (the past tense of the verb *brta-ba*) is archaic for *rgyas-pa*, meaning “increase.” See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi’i gur-khang*, p. 46.

²⁰⁰ Citation untraced in KD and KH. This quotation is found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r35.8–v35.1); for a translation, see [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 37.

²⁰¹ *rDo-rje'i ting-nge-'dzin-gyi chos-kyi rnam-grangs yi-ge*, in KH, vol. 56, p. 489.4–5. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v38.2–3). For a translation from the Chinese and Korean sources, see Buswell, *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology*, p. 192.

²⁰² Quoted as *Par-ne-pan-gyi mdo. Yongs-su mya-ngan-las 'das-pa chen-po'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 52, p. 566.5–6. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v40.3–5).

²⁰³ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v43.2–3). The master referred to here is Wolun; for a German translation of this passage from the Chinese original, see Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen-Lehre*, p. 159. A slightly longer version of this citation reappears in C 168.5–6. On master Wolun, see Meinert, “A Pliable Life,” pp. 184–210.

²⁰⁴ Brhaspati, or rather *a* Brhaspati, is associated with the *Cārvāka* or *Lokāyata*, a Brahmanical school of materialism that denied the world beyond (Skt. *paraloka*), along with the self, yet does not seem to have otherwise been particularly anti-Vedic, despite widespread opinion to the contrary, nor indeed to have advocated hedonism in any form. This doctrine is usually called “nihilism” (Skt. *ucchedavāda*) in Buddhist works. The *Cārvākas* regarded actual perception (Skt. *pratyakṣa*) as the primary valid epistemological measure (Skt. *pramāṇa*) and accepted common-sense worldly inference (Skt. *anumāna*) as a secondary source of knowledge, so long as such inference be preceded by perception. What they consistently rejected was any non-worldly use of inference in an attempt to prove the existence of God, of the soul, of the afterlife, and of the ripening of deeds. Brhaspati, the founding figure of the school, who gave his name to the *Bārhaspatya-sūtras*, the non-extant aphorisms of the *Cārvākas*, would seem to have been named after, or even to be identical to, the mentor of the gods (Skt. *suraguru*), who is said to have tricked the titans (Skt. *asura*) by preaching materialist doctrines in order to lead them astray. See Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*, Leiden: Brill, 2007, pp. 150–159, 363–366; and Ramkrishna Bhattacharya, *Studies on the Cārvāka/Lokāyata*, London: Anthem Press, 2011, pp. 25–26, 31–32, 63, 227–229.

²⁰⁵ The *Vaiśeṣika* school is an Indian current of pluralistic realism, which emphasizes difference and particularity (Skt. *viśeṣa*) and attempts to enumerate and classify all knowable objects into six categories (Skt. *padārtha*): substance (Skt. *dravya*), quality (Skt. *guṇa*), activity (Skt. *karma*), universality (Skt. *samānya*), particularity (Skt. *viśeṣa*), and inherence (Skt. *samavāya*). This list is supposed to provide a comprehensive account of all that exists, and as such it incorporates both

commonsensical phenomena and cosmological notions postulated by prior traditions of Indian thought. Moreover, it combines different levels of discourse, namely, a cosmological enumeration of the basic components making up the world (= the first three categories) and an ontological categorization of various modes of being (= the last three categories), both of which it places on the same, horizontal, footing.

The six categories are characterized by factuality (Skt. *astitva*), by knowability (Skt. *jñeyatva*), and by denotability (Skt. *abhidheyatva*). To the above six categories was later added nonexistence (Skt. *abhāva*) in order to account for that which cannot be subsumed under the positive entities of existence; it is not merely a linguistic label but is considered a metaphysical entity in its own right. Nonetheless, nonexistence is characterized only by knowability and denotability, not by factuality. This is because, although it is possible to name and know nonexistence, there is no positive fact of nonexistence.

Let us briefly look at some of the positive categories: The category of substance (Skt. *dravya*), which in Vaiśeṣika thought signifies a substratum to which qualities (Skt. *guṇa*) are added, is itself of nine types: earth (Skt. *prthvī*), water (Skt. *jala*), fire (Skt. *tejas*), air (Skt. *vāyu*), space (Skt. *ākāśa*), time (Skt. *kāla*), direction (Skt. *dik*), self (Skt. *ātman*), and mind (Skt. *manas*). The category of universality (Skt. *samānya*) accounts for generic properties in the first three categories and for the fact that individual entities can be grouped together under a general term or concept. The category of particularity (Skt. *viśeṣa*) asserts the irreducible differentiation among individual entities; were it not for this category, there would be no distinction among the individual members of the subtle substances: for instance, it would be impossible to distinguish one self from another. Some *Vaiśeṣika* authors considered the category of particularity (Skt. *viśeṣa*) to be redundant and dispensable, in view of the fact that the various substances are particularized by their very nature. The category of inherence (Skt. *samavāya*) is used by the *Vaiśeṣikas* to explain the inseparable relation between cause and effect. As a permanent category, it is independent of particular instances of relation and constitutes the condition for any such relation to occur. See Wilhelm Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is: Classical Vaiśeṣika and the History of Indian Ontology*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992, pp. 71, 74, 77–78, 147–148, 158, 272; and ShashiPrabha Kumar, *Classical Vaiśeṣika in Indian Philosophy: On Knowing and What Is to Be Known*, London: Routledge, 2013, pp. 1, 15–16, 34–35.

²⁰⁶ Gl.: When there is non-conceptualization, the intellect is pure. Having purified one's valor of all putrid darkness, one obtains a mind that is like a crystal ball: this is said to be transcendence.

²⁰⁷ Note that *yong-gis*, as well as its variant *yong-gi*, is archaic for *yongs-su*. Interestingly, a similar sense appears to have survived in the *Tshangs-lha* dialect spoken in Padma-bkod and East Bhutan with the word *yong-'khe-ba*. Cf. Tanzin, *Tshangs-lha'i tshig-mdzod*, p. 560.

²⁰⁸ The master 'Ba' Sang-shi is mentioned in the *dBa'-bzhed* on several occasions as an eminent *Chan* preceptor. See Wangdu and Diemberger, *dBa' bzhed*, pp. 51, 64, 83, 92. He was the son of a Chinese commissioner to the Tibetan court, who reportedly headed a party sent to China in 751 ce by Khri-lde gtsug-btsan (704–755 ce) so as to obtain some Buddhist teachings for his interested son. After spending several years at the Chinese court, his party returned to Tibet. On the way back, they met the Korean priest Kim in Sichuan, the most famous *Chan* master of the day. He gave them three texts, which 'Ba' Sang-shi later used in explaining the Buddhist doctrine to Khri-srong lde'u-btsan. See Tanaka and Robertson, "A *Ch'an* Text from Tun-huang," pp. 64–65.

²⁰⁹ The first five paragraphs are found in Pelliot tibétain 117 (fol. r6.4–10). Cf. the translation in Gómez, "The Direct and Gradual Approaches," pp. 112–113.

²¹⁰ According to the Dunhuang manuscript, rather than "nor does one abide in non-discursiveness" (*mi rtog pa yang mi gnas na*), this phrase would read, "nor does one follow after [this alertness]" (*mi 'brang na*).

²¹¹ Cf. the translation of this passage in Gómez, "The Direct and Gradual Approaches," p. 120.

²¹² Cf. the translation of this passage in *ibid.*, pp. 120–121.

²¹³ There is a certain ambiguity here, depending on whether one takes *tshor* to be part of the expression *byung-tshor* ("sensation"), as suggested here, or whether one considers it to refer to "alertness" (as does Gómez), translating the Chinese term *jue*. In the latter case, the translation would have to read, "One should not follow after the alertness to what occurs." The same applies to the upcoming quote from the *Mi-gnas theg-chen* (C 167.1, C 167.3).

²¹⁴ The idea that ultimately one's ordinary perceptual activity is in fact always serene and that sapience undergoes inexhaustible transformations in response to phenomena is an important notion in the Northern school of *Chan*, one that is exemplified by the metaphor of the perfectly reflecting mirror. Indeed, the latter encompasses both the static

dimension corresponding to the realization of the Buddha nature and the dynamic dimension corresponding to the integration of this comprehension into the ongoing processes of perception and activity. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 144.

²¹⁵ Unidentified source.

²¹⁶ Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v43.2–3). This quote from Wolun (here spelt “Ga’-lung” in the Tibetan text) is also found in C 163.3; for a German translation of this passage from the Chinese original, see Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, p. 159.

²¹⁷ The Dunhuang manuscript (as well as C 163.3) reads “does not image” (*myi dmyigs*) instead of “does not abide on” (*mi gnas*).

²¹⁸ I follow the reading of the Dunhuang manuscript for “patching over” (*glan* instead of *bslan*) and the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*’s reading for “inhibiting” (*dgag* instead of *gdags*).

²¹⁹ This is the *Avikalpapraveśa-nāma-dhāraṇī*, quoted here as *rNam-par mi-rtog-pa’i mdo*; see *rNam-par mi-rtog-par ’jug-pa zhes-bya-ba’i gzungs*, in KD, vol. 57, p. 4.4. This quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r40.2–3). For a critical edition of the Sanskrit, see Matsuda, “Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇī: Sanskrit Text and Japanese Translation,” §4, p. 94.

²²⁰ Unidentified source.

²²¹ IOL Tib J 689 (fol. 1r.4–1v.1); cf. also IOL Tib J 1774 (fol. r2.2–3). For a description of these Dunhuang manuscripts, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, pp. 296–297 and 346–347, respectively.

²²² *lHa’i bu blo-gros rab-gnas-kyi zhus-pa’i mdo*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KH, vol. 40, p. 106.6–7.

²²³ Ibid., p. 107.2–3.

²²⁴ Unidentified source.

²²⁵ *Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa stong-phrag brgya-pa*, in KD, vol. 14, p. 327.5–7.

²²⁶ Citation untraced.

²²⁷ Unidentified source.

²²⁸ Non-extant source.

²²⁹ Donati has succeeded in tracing this citation to the Chinese Dunhuang manuscript Pelliot chinois 3018. See Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*, p. 258, n. 214.

²³⁰ Non-extant source.

²³¹ This alludes to the non-activation (Ch. *buqi*) of the cognitive and sensory functions. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 144.

²³² As rightly pointed out by Meinert (“The Conjunction of Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen* Thought,” p. 252, n. 55), it is highly unlikely that gNubs-chen would have wrongly attributed Bodhidharma’s *rGya-lung chen-po* to Hwa-shang Mahāyāna (as the reading *ma-hā-yan-gyi bsam-gtan rgya-lung chen-po* might at first suggest).

²³³ For translations from the Chinese *Erru sixing lun*, see Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, pp. 10–11; and Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, pp. 69–71. A Tibetan version of the text is found in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 710, translated in van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, pp. 86–87.

²³⁴ It is to be noted that in the context of the *Erru sixing lun*, the four types of conduct occur after the exposition of the two types of entrance: entering the principle (Ch. *liru*; otherwise translated as “entrance of principle”) and entering the conduct (Ch. *xingru*; also translated as “entrance of practice”): these refer, respectively, to comprehending thusness and to developing a serene form of detachment in all one’s activities.

²³⁵ The use of the term “resentment” or “enmity” (Ch. *yuan*) in the first of the four types of conduct would appear to be derived from a compound found in the *Daodejing*, ch. 63, where it is advised that one should respond to resentment with kindness. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 108; Lao Tzu, *Tao Teh Ching*, Translated by John C.H. Wu, Boston: Shambhala, 2000, p. 129.

²³⁶ Gl.: One should be without dislike whatever the sufferings one faces.

²³⁷ Gl.: grasping toward it, etc.

²³⁸ Gl.: [despite] non-dual wisdom.

TN: Non-dual wisdom might be seen as an antidote to hostility since it reveals the interdependence of causes and conditions, of self and others, and the fact that a monolithic self is just as illusory as the sufferings that seem to plague it.

²³⁹ Gl.: since beginningless times.

²⁴⁰ Gl.: While engaging on the path, one should not be mentally pleased with happiness.

²⁴¹ I take *rga-ba’i rlung* to be a homophonic error for *dga’-ba’i rlung* and have emended it according to Broughton, *The Bodhidharma*

Anthology, p. 10; Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 70; and van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 87.

²⁴² Later, Huangbo Xiyun (d. 850 ce) similarly advised his disciples to simply utilize their activity (Skt. *karma*) according to conditions (Ch. *suiyuan*), refraining all the while from making new transgressions. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 304, n. 11.

²⁴³ Gl.: The dualistic grasping at pleasure and suffering is without essence. In like manner, the nature of all existents should also be known to be unborn.

²⁴⁴ Here and in the *sūtra* quotation, *tshor-ba* (“feeling”) has been emended to *tshol-ba* (“searching”) according to Broughton’s and Faure’s translation from the Chinese, because this is more appropriate to the context of the second type of conduct. See Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 11; Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*, p. 71. The version translated by van Schaik, on the other hand, would suggest “effort” (*rtsol-ba*) instead; cf. van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*, p. 87.

²⁴⁵ Gl.: If one knows phenomena’s beingness in its pure essentiality, it is taught that one is without attachment to the authoritative scriptures or to reasoning.

²⁴⁶ Here ends the passage paralleling the *Erru sixing lun*.

²⁴⁷ Citation untraced.

²⁴⁸ Gl.: In fact, they did not even look at temporary enjoyments.

²⁴⁹ Gl.: an instruction.

²⁵⁰ Unidentified source.

²⁵¹ Citation untraced. Cf. the translation in Gómez, “The Direct and Gradual Approaches,” p. 121.

²⁵² The five supracognitions are clairvoyance (*lha’i mig-gi mngon-shes*; Skt. *divyacakṣurabhijñā*), cliraudience (*lha’i rna-ba’i mngon-shes*; Skt. *divyaśrotrābhijñā*), knowledge of others’ minds (*pha-rol-gyi sems shes-pa’i mngon-shes*; Skt. *paracittābhijñā*), retrocognition (*sngon-gyi gnas rjes-su dran-pa’i mngon-shes*; Skt. *pūrvanivāsānusmṛtyabhijñā*), and knowledge of magical feats (*rdzu-’phrul-gyi bya-ba shes-pa’i mngon-shes*; Skt. *ṛddhyabhijñā*). Cf. Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, pp. 148–149. It may be remarked that the forms **paracittābhijñā*, **pūrvanivāsānusmṛtyabhijñā*, and **ṛddhyabhijñā* seem somewhat unusual. Their standard equivalents are, respectively, *paracittajñāna* (see Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 8, p. 3467; vol. 12, p. 5244; Lokesh Chandra, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture /

Aditya Prakashan, 2001, pp. 506, 678; and Chandra, *Sanskrit-Tibetan Dictionary*, p. 355), *pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna*, or else the short form *pūrvanivāsābhijñā* (which in Tibetan is *sngon-gyi gnas mngon-par shes-pa*; see Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 3, pp. 1083–1084; cf. Chandra, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 216; and Chandra, *Sanskrit-Tibetan Dictionary*, p. 389), and *ṛddhividhijñāna* (see Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 11, p. 5098; Chandra, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 667; and Chandra, *Sanskrit-Tibetan Dictionary*, p. 140). See also Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology*, p. 71.

²⁵³ Citation untraced.

²⁵⁴ For a list of the thirty-two characteristics and eighty illustrative attributes of a great person, see Nāgārjuna, *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, pp. 50–60.

²⁵⁵ Citation untraced.

²⁵⁶ It should be recalled that, taken on its own, the expression “to abide in effulgence” (*lham-mer gnas-pa*; here, we have *lham me lhan ne bde bar gnas pa*, emended according to M 126a.4) translates the Chinese *ningzhu biguan* (“wall-scrutiny”). See Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, pp. 67–68.

²⁵⁷ For the eighteen scopes of Māra, see §7.4.4.2 (C 477–478).

²⁵⁸ According to Broughton, the Chinese version of this passage is found in three Dunhuang manuscripts: Pelliot chinois 2885, Pelliot chinois 2045, and Peking jun 84. See Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, p. 142, n. 20.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, ch. 19, §2, p. 215.

²⁶⁰ Thogs-med (Asaṅga), *Theg-pa chen po bsdus-pa*, in TD, vol. 134, p. 80.1; Étienne Lamotte, *La Somme du Grand Véhicule d’Asaṅga (Mahāyānasamgraha)*, vol. 1, Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1973, ch. 10, §28, v. 11–12, p. 92 (Tibetan text); vol. 2, pp. 312–313 (French translation).

²⁶¹ Citation untraced in *Ratnakūṭa-sūtra*.

²⁶² *’Od-srung-gi le’u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 259.2–3; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §48, p. 78 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 23; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 130 (English translation).

²⁶³ Cf. *Chos bcu-pa’i mdo*, in *dKon-mchog-brtsegs-pa’i mdo*, in KH, vol. 36, pp. 566.7–567.5.

²⁶⁴ Unidentified source. Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po (spelled Tshig-tsha Nam-mkha'i snying-po in C 180.3; not to be confused with gNubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po, the disciple of Padmasambhava, although van Schaik would seem to suggest such an identification; cf. [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), p. 167) became a monk during the reign of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan and was a disciple of the Chinese *Chan* master Man Hwa-shang. When the latter was about to return to China, he was asked who could teach the doctrine, and he replied that Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po had gained the necessary realization to do so. See [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), p. 98. Moreover, it appears from Pelliot tibétain 996 that Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po was heir to the *Chan* lineage of the Indian master A-rtan-hwer and Be'u-sing Hwa-shang. For translations of this Dunhuang manuscript, see Mala, "Empreinte du Tch'an chez les Mystiques Tibétains," pp. 415–416; and [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), pp. 170–171.

²⁶⁵ 'Od-srung-gi le'u, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 256.6; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §38, p. 67 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p. 20; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 125 (English translation).

²⁶⁶ Citation untraced.

²⁶⁷ Candragomin, *Byang-chub sems-dpa'i sdom-pa nyi-shu-pa*, in TD, vol. 138, p. 333.5.

²⁶⁸ The citation is actually from the *lHa'i bu blo-gros rab-gnas-kyi zhus-pa'i mdo*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 40, p. 138.5–7.

²⁶⁹ Gl.: Having killed and taken life, [these deeds] will come to maturation. Yet even when that time comes, I may reverse [the effects of my past deeds]: because they are illusory, I should not believe in them.

TN: The point is that a bodhisattva aware of the illusory nature of the world can perform myriad (seemingly sinful) deeds without being affected by their consequences; for him the entirety of appearance-existence is a magical show of illusion—he is beyond the range of deeds, which pertain to relative truth, and so can act in total freedom in response to the needs of others. We may here recall the example given in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* of the illusionist who conjures up an illusory crowd and then makes it disappear, without, of course, anyone being killed or hurt since the whole spectacle is a magical show. See Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, ch. 1, §4, p. 90.

²⁷⁰ *lHa'i bu blo-gros rab-gnas-kyi zhus-pa'i mdo*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 40, p. 139.2–4.

²⁷¹ *Chos thams-cad 'byung-ba med-par bstan-pa'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 60, p. 931.6.

²⁷² Ibid., p. 869.2

²⁷³ Unidentified source. The first phrase is quoted in a tantric commentary of the *bsTan-'gyur*: Rab-tu zhi-ba'i bshes-gnyen (Prašāntamitra), *dPal rdo-rje snying-po'i rgyan-gyi rgyud chen-po'i dka'-'grel*, in TD, vol. 61, p. 664.4. This Praśāntamitra is said to have been a disciple of Buddhaśrījñāna, an 8th-century exegete of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. See Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, p. 371. However, the commentary in TD is tantric in character, and it is therefore unlikely that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes would have quoted it in his chapter on the simultaneous approach of the *sūtras*. It is probable that the abbreviated title '*Bum-ṭig*' given here in fact indicates a commentary (Skt. *ṭīkā*) on the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras* (often abbreviated as '*Bum*' in Tibetan).

²⁷⁴ *Ma-skyes dgra'i 'gyod-pa bsal-ba'i mdo*, in KH, vol. 62, pp. 821.3–4, 822.1–2.

²⁷⁵ *Kun-rdzob-dang don-dam-pa'i bden-pa bstan-pa'i mdo* (*Samvṛti-paramārtha-satya-nirdeśa-sūtra*), in KD, vol. 60, p. 495.6–7. The quotation is also found in Kamalaśīla, *Chos thams-cad rang-bzhin med-par grub-pa*, in TD, vol. 107, p. 572.6.

²⁷⁶ Although the followers of the simultaneous approach do not have the capacity to practice the powerful methods of the *Mantrayāna*, their own view is very high, which can be profitable to them spiritually.

²⁷⁷ This would indicate the inseparability of appearance and emptiness; although phenomena appear, they are empty of intrinsic nature, like the perceptions in a dream (Lama Jigme Namgyal, personal communication).

²⁷⁸ The moment of completing an action (*bya-rdzogs-kyi skad-cig-ma*) is a technical term of Buddhist metaphysics. It refers to the period of time it takes to accomplish any given action. Depending on the action in question, the time needed to complete it will vary. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 1, ch. 2, p. 232.

²⁷⁹ '*Od-srung-gi le'u*, in *dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 44, p. 267.2–3; *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. von Staël-Holstein, §71, p. 106 (Sanskrit); cf. also *Kāśyapaparivarta*, ed. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, p.

27; Pāsādika, *The Kāśyapaparivarta*, p. 140 (English translation). The quotation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v39.8–r40.1).

²⁸⁰ This and the following two citations are not found in *bCom-ldan-'das-kyi gtsug-tor chen-po de-bzhin gshegs-pa'i gsang-ba sgrub-pa'i don mngon-par thob-pa'i rgyu byang-chub sems-dpa' thams-cad-kyi spyod-pa dpa'-bar 'gro-ba'i mdo le'u stong-phrag bcu-pa-las le'u bcu-pa*, in KH, vol. 64, pp. 823–896, nor in *gTsug-tor chen-po bam-po dgu-pa-las bdud-rtsi le'u nyi-tshe phyung-ba*, in KH, vol. 64, pp. 896–931.

²⁸¹ Quoted as *San-de'i mdo*. See Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, ch. 9, §30, pp. 146 (Tibetan text), 255 (French translation); Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, p. 136. This *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* citation is also found in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. v36.7–r37.1); for a translation, see [van Schaik, Tibetan Zen](#), p. 39.

²⁸² According to the *Abhidharmakośa*, an incalculable eon (Skt. *asamkhyeya-kalpa*) is not actually incalculable but merely represents an extremely high number. If one takes 1 as a starting point, the second point would be $10 \times 1 (= 10)$, the third point $10 \times 10 (= 100)$, the fourth point $10 \times 100 (= 1,000)$, etc., up to the sixtieth point (lit. “extrinsic place,” *gzhan-gnas*; Skt. *sthānāntara*), which is the incalculable eon. If this were not the case, it would indeed be impossible to speak of the bodhisattva's career as lasting three incalculable eons. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 2, ch. 3, pp. 189–191.

²⁸³ Note that *dus* has been emended to *dus-tshigs* (“junction”) according to the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*.

²⁸⁴ *Lang-kar gshegs pa'i mdo*, in KD, vol. 49, p. 152.5–6 (Tibetan); *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, ed. Vaidya, ch. 2, p. 25 (Sanskrit); Suzuki, *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, ch. 2, §14, p. 50 (English translation). This *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* citation is also found in the Dunhuang manuscripts IOL Tib J 706 (fol. r1.5: only the first phrase), IOL Tib J 707 (fol. r1.4–7), and IOL Tib J 1372 (fol. 1r.7–2v.1), as well as in Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r34.2–5); for a translation from the latter manuscript, see [van Schaik, Tibetan Zen](#), p. 36. For a description of the three Dunhuang manuscripts from the Stein collection, see [Dalton and van Schaik, Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang](#), pp. 300–301, 301–302, and 339–340, respectively.

²⁸⁵ “Universal light” (*kun-tu 'od*; Skt. *samantaprabhā*) is the level of a Buddha; it is counted as the eleventh of the bodhisattva stages.

²⁸⁶ Gl.: [which still comprises] deliberate imaging.

TN: The attribution of this gloss to this place in the text follows M 131a.4.

Whereas referential imaging (Skt. *ālambana*) is used in the initial stages of the path as a means to enter into non-conceptual wisdom (Skt. *nirvikalpajñāna*), once this non-conceptual wisdom is realized in germinal form on the path of seeing (Skt. *darśanamārga*) and subsequently matures into full enlightenment as one (gradually or, as here, simultaneously) progresses on the ten bodhisattva stages, it is characterized as being without referential imaging. See [Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*](#), pp. 68–69, 79–80.

²⁸⁷ Just as there is but a single sun and moon [for our planet], yet these can be reflected in many lakes simultaneously, so the principal body is one but appears as multiple bodies of form according to the needs of sentient beings.

²⁸⁸ Gl.: It is superior to the *Tsen-min* who implement effort and perform deliberate actions; that is [their (i.e., the *Tsen-min*'s)] limited position.

TN: The interpretation of the final phrase *tha phyogs de* is problematic; I take *tha phyogs* in the sense of *mtha' phyogs*, though this, too, is not entirely satisfactory.

²⁸⁹ Gl.: It is superior because it cognizes non-referentially, without approaching [an object].

²⁹⁰ Gl.: Since [the *Tsen-min*] have many actions relating to the three doors, its four types of conduct are superior because they are without action.

TN: For the four types of conduct, see [Chapter 2](#), note 77.

²⁹¹ Gl.: It is superior to one-pointed imaging because it does not referentially imagine the unborn intrinsic clarity that pertains to intrinsic awareness.

²⁹² Gl.: It is superior to rectification through antidotes because one rests in the [state where concepts are] self-originated and self-appeased.

²⁹³ Gl.: It is superior to the deliberate purification of that which is unclear and is likened to the fruition that [naturally arises] from the cause.

²⁹⁴ Gl.: It is superior because realization arises beyond the mind.

²⁹⁵ Gl.: It is superior to deliberately accruing merit since here the two accumulations are completed through the two concentrations.

TN: The two concentrations probably refer to the contaminated and uncontaminated concentrations (i.e., the practice of the contemplations

taken as an end in themselves and their sublimation through the realization of selflessness). Cf. [Nor-brang o-rgyan](#), *Chos-rnam kun-btus*, vol. 1, p. 54. It might be noted that these correspond in effect to calm abiding and insight, respectively, which, it will be recalled, in the simultaneous approach are practiced as the single method of “looking at the mind.”

²⁹⁶ Gl.: It is superior to the manner of [gradually comprehending] the two truths since it realizes that neither self nor other exists and that everything is unborn and uncorrupted.

²⁹⁷ Gl.: Rather than striving with one’s body and speech, it is superior because it effects the many purposes of wandering beings through concentration.

6

The Tantric Vehicle of *Mahāyoga*

[C 186.4–290.5; M 132a.2–209a.2]

Here the inner system of the great *Vajrayāna*, the vehicle of fruition, is explained. All the phenomena of cyclic existence and transcendence that comprise the world, including both objects and knowers, merely appear under the dual aspect of outer and inner phenomena, as objects and knowers, respectively. Both the systems of the *Sūtrayāna* and *Mantrayāna* hold that whatever appears outwardly and inwardly does so in conformity to one's intellect, which is craving for concepts. Outwardly, there is not a dust particle's worth of an essence to be imagined, nor is there inwardly even one instant's worth of a profound knower. [187] There is nothing that is self-sufficient. Therefore, the *Śrīguhyagarbha-tantra* declares,¹

Apart from misconceptions,
There is nothing subtle or profound that exists.

What this means, it is maintained, is that the beingness of mind is illumination. It may be held to be the same mind as is spoken of in the system of the *Mahāyāna*.

However, here it is not maintained to be momentary as in the *Vijñaptimātra* or to be unborn as in the *Madhyamaka*. If it be asked how it is, [it is replied that] all phenomena are the wisdom of intrinsic awareness, and that the specific characteristic of awareness is clarity. Unobscured, it is non-duality, whose characteristic is inexpressible.

Without relinquishing outward designations, it is free from them; therefore, it is called “inward.” The intrinsic awareness of the path is not some other purpose: it abides in a manner without abiding² and is implemented in a manner without meditative familiarization—it is therefore called “inward.” Moreover, Madhusādhū³ explains,⁴

Saying “inward” comprises everything inside the circle of phenomena’s beingness.

6.1. The view

The *Guhyagarbha* states,⁵

Total inwardness has neither outside nor inside.

This means precisely that although through this mode one abides in non-imaging, at first one should resolve the view. [188] As was explained previously,⁶ it is declared,⁷

One should unmistakably obtain the textual tradition of the vehicle of means. Moreover, obtaining the texts of the vehicle of means opens one’s eyes.

One should know absolute meaningfulness with certainty and should resolve this through examples, through the arguments {that are common and those that pertain to specific texts}, and through reasoning. Through the individually discerning sapience that originates from the cause that is the sapience of thinking, one should evaluate and examine and search for absolute meaningfulness. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,⁸

Therefore, when an omnipotent *yogin*
Utterly examines the mind's absolute meaningfulness,
He will know the root, which is the universal ground.

The same source continues,⁹

Through the nature which is not discursively examined in
terms of signs,
One understands the great meaning of profundity;
Resolving that this is the definitive meaning,
One should trust the meaning of equality.

As was explained previously, one should trust and have confidence [in this equality] because of the three arguments of the *Mantrayāna*.¹⁰ One should gladden as a source of the precepts a master who is endowed with experience of absolute meaningfulness and who is not dull and request instruction from him. Moreover, it is said that¹¹

If one desires to eliminate the suffering of cyclic existence
[189]

One should search for an instructor endowed with the pith
instructions.

Since he extracts the root of cyclic existence,
He is constantly to be respected.

As was described when discussing the modes of the view,¹² most of the philosophical texts are incompatible in their designations, though they accord in their purpose.¹³

6.1.1. The view of phenomena as the configuration of awakened body, speech, and mind

The system of *Mahāyoga* as propounded by some preceptors of *Mantrayāna* maintains the view that all phenomena are the configuration of awakened body, speech, and mind.¹⁴

6.1.1.1. Appearances as the principal body

Whatever reified entities appear or exist, they are the very essence of the unmistaken meaning. The good and evil phenomena that variously appear arise without being inhibited, and there is not the slightest hint of establishing an intrinsic essence. In any case, while they appear they are not referentially imaged, and while not being referentially imaged they appear. Hence, their inseparability from the essence is maintained to be the principal body. The *Lung-gi spyi* {an authoritative scripture} states,¹⁵

The world, the animate and inanimate universe, and so forth,
Is essenceless in its very appearance—
That itself is the great principal body.

In any case, {the reasoning is that} since everything is complete in the principal body, which is the non-duality of appearance and emptiness, everything [is allowed to] arise without being inhibited;¹⁶ hence, one is told not to inhibit absolute meaningfulness.

6.1.1.2. The five wisdoms of suchness

Absolute meaningfulness is the clarity pertaining to the five wisdoms of suchness. [190] Since clarity is untouched by the limitations of appearance and emptiness, there is the wisdom of emptiness. Since the intrinsic clarity of absolute meaningfulness is non-discursive, there is the mirror-like wisdom. Since clarity is free from the dualistic phenomena of accepting and rejecting good and evil, there is the wisdom of equality. Since clarity in this state [of equality] is without discrete general or specific characteristics, there is the individually discerning wisdom.¹⁷ Since everything is realized to be the clear wisdom of the awakened mind, it is the action-accomplishing wisdom. The *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu-'phrul drwa-ba* declares,¹⁸

The characteristics of the afflictions are taught in specific
and general terms;¹⁹
When their unmistakable meaning is comprehended,²⁰
They are transformed into the path of utter refinement:²¹
That itself and nothing else²²
Is the accomplishment of awakened body, speech, and
mind.²³

It goes on,²⁴

Conceptions²⁵ and craving are by essence illusory²⁶
appearance—
They are not produced outside the mind:²⁷
The non-duality of appearance and emptiness²⁸ is the
principal body's seal.²⁹
Without wavering from the natural open dimension,
[191] One performs the individual purposes of those to be
tamed:
This is the great seal of awakened speech.
Whatever appears as the five facts³⁰ is illusory—
It is luminous as the fivefold illusion of intrinsic awareness.
Since the two truths are inseparable,
It is concentration that wields power;
This is the luminous clarity of the five wisdoms,
The great seal of awakened mind.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* states,³¹

All Victorious Ones and sentient beings,
No matter how they are examined in terms of reified
entities,
Are all but one in the state of absolute meaningfulness:
That is the paragon of awakened body, speech, and mind.

The arguments of the pith instructions are found in the
Yon-tan bcu by the instructor dGa'-rab rdo-rje:³²

The view of *Mahāyoga*:
All Buddhas and sentient beings,
No matter what marks are assigned to them,
Are all one in the state of non-duality:
Hence, they are the paragon of awakened body, speech, and
mind.

6.1.1.3. The inseparability of awakened body, speech, and mind

Since this is established by the authoritative scriptures and pith instructions, {one is aware that} the meaning is unmistakable: although one speaks of awakened body, speech, and mind, one is not looking at the body, speech, and mind of the body of form. Their essence is liberated from singularity and multiplicity. Although their characteristic is oneness, they may appear as threefold; hence, they are absolutely inseparable. [192] The *[Guhya-] garbha* declares,³³

Awakened mind itself appears³⁴ as the configuration of awakened speech;
Awakened speech itself is the configuration of awakened body;
They are thoroughly inseparable in thusness.

Therefore, they evidently cannot be different from each other; they are neither created by the Victorious Ones nor contrived by sentient beings, nor are they temporarily examined by those on the path. In awakening, all phenomena are realized to primordially be awakened body, speech, and mind. Due to intrinsic awareness, there is no dependence on the words of the authoritative scriptures and pith instructions.³⁵

Absolute meaningfulness is not apprehensible. When this deep meaning is evaluated in one's awareness or when confidence is gained, it is said that the view is realized. The *lTa-phreng* states,³⁶

That which is termed "actual realization" does not depend on the mere words of the authoritative scriptures and pith instructions, nor does it contradict those authoritative scriptures and pith instructions. Actual realization comes about through intrinsic awareness.

This should be known according to the texts stated later. When meditating on the Buddha, who thus encompasses awakened body, speech, and mind, it may be asked whether one should meditate on these as one or as threefold? [193] The answer is that one images neither object nor subject. Since the identity of the meditating awareness is liberated from the limitations of body, speech, and mind, this may thus be intellectually resolved: intrinsic clarity is unthinkable; it is not obstructed by the aspects of enumeration and is free from them. Hence, awakened body, speech, and mind are maintained to be thusness. When this is not comprehended thus, appearances are awakened body, sound is awakened speech, and non-discursiveness is awakened mind. Those on the outer yogas³⁷ whose inferior faculties are covered [by their obscurations] do not see this meaning; for example, they are like someone who, looking with his eyes, sees the moon.³⁸

6.1.2. The view of phenomena as the enlightened mind

According to one perspective,³⁹ this is the textual system that, in awakening, views all phenomena as the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness: whatever entities appear {to awareness} in the animate and inanimate universe,⁴⁰ all such appearances are without self-sufficiency. For example, even though there is but one cause, gold, it is the dispositions of a smith's hands that make it appear either as a dismal vessel of copper or else a fine place of worship, such as a statue or a vase. [194] As in the case of gold, which is a single [cause for these various possibilities], if one does not realize that all phenomena pertain to the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness, the phenomena of the body and of suffering, as well as the various reified entities, intrinsically appear. On the other hand, in the awareness of realization, [everything] appears as the seal of awakened body, speech, and mind.

In any case, it is from a single ground that appearances [manifest] in accordance with realization or non-realization. The ground, which is the characteristic of the enlightened mind, is indefinite. The phenomena of good and evil reified entities are luminously clear in intrinsic awareness. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,⁴¹

For example, out of the single [cause which is] gold,
One can make different figures and forms,
Renowned under several names,
Yet despite being renowned [under these names], their golden
essence is one.
Likewise, from the nature of mind
There appear the distinct manners of viewing
According to confusion and non-confusion, respectively;
Although they appear, they cannot be imagined as something other
than mind.

The *Guhyasamāja-tantra* states,⁴²

If one discerns one's own mind,
That is awakening and enlightenment;
It is [also] the great elements
[195] And the three worlds.⁴³

The *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu-'phrul drwa-ba* says,⁴⁴

All the objects that appear to the sense-faculties
Are not existent as objects;
They are [modalities of] the universal ground consciousness
And appear as various entities.

And,⁴⁵

The bodies that appear to cycle through the six continua of
becoming
Appear as the deeds compatible with [individual beings'] concepts;
The supreme awakened body appears as adamantine light
And is the intrinsic illumination compatible with wisdom.

The pith instructions state,⁴⁶

From the distinct causes of⁴⁷ awareness and stupidity
Existence and utter liberation appear as cause and effect.

[Hence,] everything is in the mind, phenomena's beingness. Just as, for instance, the eye cannot see the eye, so mind cannot comprehend itself by itself. Being without an objective scope, it cannot be discursively examined. Hence, this is called co-emergent ignorance, because of which there is cyclic existence. Likewise, having found the purposes that cannot be purposefully sought elsewhere, one sees in a manner without seeing a purpose. For those who see the purpose that, though unseen, is akin to seeing, their scope is intrinsically pure. This is mind's beingness, which is established both through the authoritative scriptures and the pith instructions.

6.1.2.1. Characteristics of the enlightened mind

It may then be asked, “Well, how are the characteristics of the enlightened mind?”⁴⁸ [196] [It is replied that] the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness, is without gender or filiation. It is free from formal marks such as shape and color and is without layout. It pervades everything and is luminously clear; its characteristics cannot be imagined. It cannot at all be discursively examined, nor contrived, nor created, nor examined, nor grasped, nor corrupted. As for the arguments [establishing this], they are extensively explained in the *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu-'phrul drwa-ba*.⁴⁹

Likewise, all the phenomena of appearance
Are not concrete phenomena;
They are the luminous clarity of intrinsic awareness without
discursive thought—
That alone is knowledge.

And,⁵⁰

As for the characteristic of the enlightened mind,
It is neither male nor female, nor is it neutral.
Neither is it unmarked⁵¹ nor does it have a filiation.
It has neither color nor shape.
Neither does it abide anywhere nor is it anything at all.

Further,⁵²

As for the vehicle of the enlightened mind,
It is all-pervading and non-abiding,
Without color, shape, and filiation.

The *lTa-phreng*⁵³ declares,⁵⁴

All phenomena are the luminosity of yoga. They naturally transcend
woe.

[197] This is extensively explained in the *tantras* of *Mahāyoga*. Intrinsic awareness is not a cognizance that objectifies the open dimension but is the open dimension of phenomena. The essence is ungraspable because it is not imaginable in terms of extremes. The *tantra* continues,⁵⁵

The open dimension and the open dimension's wisdom
Are nothing other than awareness.⁵⁶

6.1.2.2. Searching for the enlightened mind

In any case, if one were to search for the enlightened mind,⁵⁷

To search for it as an existent would be exaggeration;
To search for it as a nonexistent would be denigration;
To search for it as both existent and nonexistent
Would make it indeterminateness.

What this means is that if one searches for the unmistakable meaning as an existent, that is akin to the eternalist heresy. Since there is no essence with respect to intrinsic awareness, to talk of it as an existent would be the view of exaggeration. If it is said that it is nonexistent, that is akin to Br̥haspati's system, which is the nihilist heresy. Since the enlightened mind is non-obstructed by anything at all, to talk of it as nonexistent would be the view of denigration. If it is said that it is neither of these two, that would be indeterminateness.

If it be asked [how it is], it is replied that though the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness, is neither of these two,⁵⁸ neither does it reject them. [198] It is to be sought as the nature of everything. Being the nature of everything, intrinsic awareness is non-obstructed. Hence, it is neither nil nor eternal. Luminously clear in every respect, it is non-discursive. Thus, the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness, is unmistakable thusness. It must veritably be assimilated with confidence.

6.1.3. The view of the inseparability of means and sapience

Some of the preceptors {of the *Mantrayāna*} look at the inseparability of means and sapience as being [the view of] *Mahāyoga*.⁵⁹ In this system, everything is awakening as the essence of the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness. The unobstructed occurrence of entities is signified by means. The knowledge of their nature as being, from the ground up, similar to one's intrinsic essence, is signified by sapience. The *brGyad-cu-pa* states,⁶⁰

Unceasing appearance is signified by means;
The absence of an intrinsic nature is meant by sapience.

And,⁶¹

Likewise, although all appearances
Are constantly seen through the valid measure of actual
perception,
These very appearances are without an intrinsic nature;
That in itself is great sapience.

[199] Everything pertaining to appearance-existence is the non-duality of means and sapience—that is awakening. If one solely looks at appearances, one is free from sapience. If one solely looks at the absence of an intrinsic nature, one is free from means. There is no relinquishing, nor is there any essence whatsoever—this is non-duality.

What is more, all phenomena, including the aggregates, the constituents, and the sense-bases, are of the essence of intrinsic awareness. Therefore, they are all originally the self-arising seal of the gods' and goddesses' awakened body, speech, and mind; this is

signified by means. Since they do not transcend the single essence, there is non-imaging; this is signified by sapience. Since they are non-dual, the entirety of appearance-existence does not waver from the state of the non-duality of means and sapience; this is signified by awakening. Moreover, it is said,⁶²

The father is means, the nature of the Victorious Ones of appearance-existence;
The mother is the open dimension, the absence of an intrinsic nature.

The *Lung-gi spyi* continues,⁶³

From out of the open dimension,⁶⁴ the open dimension's evolute is visualized as the seal of means.
From out of means, the evolute of the open dimension is visualized as the seal of the mother.
When the open dimension and the wisdom of the open dimension unite,
The configuration of the supreme enlightened mind is indescribable.⁶⁵

[200] If this is applied, means and sapience are distinguishable only in terms of transient designations. In essence, it is clear that the very sapience of the open dimension is means and wisdom. The very wisdom of means is by nature the sapience of the open dimension. Hence, those on the path should not divide the essential ground into heterogenous fractions through their individually discerning sapience. Because the omniscient wisdom of the Victorious Ones does not know or see individual self-sufficient [entities], absolute meaningfulness is primordially non-dual; awakening is

uncontrived, uncreated by a creator, and uncontaminated by shrewdness. When it strikes one that awakening⁶⁶ is primordial, that is realization. In such a state, self and other are non-dual oneness. Therefore, even the knowable and the knower are basically nonexistent; they are the very own clarity of intrinsic awareness. It is said that one should thus meditate on the meaning of this.

6.1.4. The view of integral being

Some of the virtuous friends professing the *Mantrayāna*⁶⁷ maintain that the view of *Mahāyoga* is the view of integral being. Whatever phenomena appear and exist, whether the aggregates, constituents, or elements, they are all the enlightened mind, which is the awareness of primordial identity. [201] If it be asked why this is, it is because everything is without self-sufficiency; since there is no other aside from a self, they are not two but identical, having a single essence. The *bKol-mdo*⁶⁸ says that the view of integral being is the view of *Mahāyoga*. The pith instructions also state,⁶⁹

For example, he who views integral being⁷⁰ is comparable to the great king among the rulers of the land since through intrinsic awareness he wields power over all phenomena. If it be asked how he wields [his power, it is replied that] he is just like a ruler in the world who enjoys his wealth and is without a second. Whatever occurs or arises is intrinsic awareness. Hence, while one is on the path, numerous emanations and configurations may instantaneously arise and occur; one may instantaneously implement non-imaging, etc. All of this is the intrinsic clarity of mind's essence; therefore, it is said that one wields power.

The [*Guhya-*] *garbha* says,⁷¹

Because it wields power and enjoys [. . .].

The *Zhus-lan* declares,⁷²

The awakened mind and body of the king of realization and concentration

[202] Are constantly dauntless and aspirationless;

He treads upon the earth like a great king:⁷³

He commands and dominates all without exception.

If one comprehends the unmistakable meaning of the five afflictions, and so forth, one should not hope [to attain] the path and the accomplishments elsewhere. In one's integral identity the three doors are luminously clear as the seal of awakened body, speech, and mind; the threefold adamant accomplishment is nothing else.

What is more, the peaceful and wrathful configurations that provide relief are all without self-sufficiency; they do not arrive from elsewhere and have not been posited by anyone else. Rather, they are the enlightened mind, intrinsic awareness. The same text continues,⁷⁴

Though there is the great seal and a body made of the elements,

Since it is equal as an aspect of mind, it is not a body.

Though the configuration's emanations may gladly laugh,

Since they are aspects of concentration, they are one's own mind.

The *Le'u-lag* states,⁷⁵

Since I am everything without exception,

I aspire for nothing and am without attachment.

6.1.4.1. What is integral being?

Everything is awakened as integral being. In that case, it may be asked, “Where is integral being?” [It is replied that] it is in the principal body, the great seminal nucleus that is the thusness of all phenomena as intrinsic awareness. Here, the phenomena of cyclic existence, one’s body, suffering and pleasure, signs, and whatever appears, are inseparable. [203] The *sGyu-’phrul bla-ma* says,⁷⁶

Even the numerous colors of appearance-existence
Are the certain path of the great seminal nucleus;
The nine [vehicles]⁷⁷ and eighty-four thousand [doctrines]
Declared for the purpose of wandering beings
Are nothing other than the enlightened mind.
All that depends on causes and conditions, including
clinging,
Is certainly the open dimension of the great seminal nucleus.

All the phenomena of the path, as well as the self and cyclic existence, are awakening.

Although⁷⁸ numerous hosts of wrathful [deities] are
absorbed and radiated,
They all dissolve into the miraculous enlightened mind.

Since all configurations and emanations are intrinsic awareness, it is taught that they are not other [than it]. These meanings are extensively explained [in the relevant texts]. The diverse phenomena of the path, such as the view, the empowerments, the pledges, the worship, the activities, and so forth,⁷⁹ the diverse sentient beings to be tamed together with their abodes,

as well as the diverse qualities of the Victorious Ones that pertain to the fruition, should not be seen as other than one's integral identity.

6.1.4.2. Characteristics of integral being

In that case, it may be asked, “What are the characteristics of integral being like?” [It is replied that] everything is its intrinsic illumination, so the aspect of the essence cannot be said to be like this [or that]. It dwells in the great purity that is untouched⁸⁰ by any limitations.⁸¹ [204] It may be asked, “Is there purity after having relinquished reified entities, or is there purity without one having had to relinquish them?” It is replied that even should one eliminate all dualistic entities, that would not be purity.⁸² According to the axiom of the nature, everything is primordially uncreated and hence pure. The *Le'u-lag* declares,⁸³

Although it is said that everything is pure,
Reified entities may be neither clear nor pure;
Yet utter purity is in the very enjoyment of appearances.

The essence of everything, integral being is primordially purified of limitations; having assimilated this fact with confidence, one should not intellectually imagine absolute meaningfulness while meditating. Thus, it is established according to these sayings.

6.1.5. The view of non-duality

Some virtuous friends remark,⁸⁴

The view of *Mahāyoga* is maintained to be non-duality. All compounded and un-compounded phenomena are intrinsic awareness. Such an essence is without any action whatsoever. Being as if nonexistent, even the divine configurations that appear are without a center. It is this very fact that is the inexpressible non-duality of existence and nonexistence.

Buddhaguhya states in [his commentary to] the *Sarvabuddha-samāyoga-tantra*,⁸⁵

[205] Neither existent nor nonexistent,
There is no reference of a center either;
He who unites with the perfection of sapience
Verily accomplishes a Buddha's enlightenment.

The *Zla-gsang thig-le* declares,⁸⁶

Transcending the meditation on all the branches [of
enlightenment],
[. . .] It genuinely transcends guidance and words:
It is called the supreme configuration.

TN: This appears to be a rough paraphrase of gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *Thugs-kyi sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, pp. 1020.6–1021.6.

6.1.5.1. Thusness as the non-duality of entities and emptiness

The essence of this absolute meaningfulness is that it is primordially ungraspable and hence unborn. Therefore, there is no reality with respect to appearances. Everything, including the aggregates, the constituents, and the sense-bases, is luminously clear as the wisdom configuration. There is no essence with respect to

emptiness. Thusness is the non-duality of entities and emptiness. The *[Guhya-] garbha* states,⁸⁷

Reified entities are nonentities;
This [fact] transcends the domain of discursive articulation
and thought,⁸⁸
[. . .] Being the wisdom of the open dimension of
thusness;⁸⁹
[. . .] Hence, entities are nonentities.

In such a state, the open dimension and wisdom are without the appearance of object and subject.

6.1.5.2. Non-duality as beyond limitations

In any case, in the enlightened mind all the aggregates, constituents, and sense-bases are liberated from the limitations of singularity and multiplicity. Therefore, although when examined it is one, whatever appears is luminously clear as the seal of the awakened body of wisdom, so it is not nil. [206] Since there is no essence, it is not eternal. Hence, nihilism and eternalism are non-dual. Likewise, since reified entities only arise as the awakened body of non-obstructed wisdom, they are baseless. This is the non-duality of production and non-production. In brief, it is clear that the limitations do not at all appear. The *Le'u-lag* says,⁹⁰

Just like the light of the shining sun,
So appearance and non-appearance are not two.⁹¹

6.1.5.3. The non-duality of cyclic existence and transcendence

If one examines the phenomena of cyclic existence, they are all without an intrinsic nature. Whatever appears, the five aggregates⁹² are naturally pure as the [Victorious Ones of the] five families, the five elements as the five female consorts, and the eightfold gathering of mind's consciousnesses⁹³ as the five wisdoms. When one comprehends this, cyclic existence need not be emptied, nor need transcendence be accomplished. Since everything is complete [as it is], cyclic existence and transcendence are non-dual.⁹⁴ The same text evidences,⁹⁵

Cyclic existence and transcendence
Do not exist as two:
When cyclic existence is thoroughly known,
One speaks of transcendence.

It is not the emptiness of cyclic existence spoken of by those whose training is fragmentary. When one knows [cyclic existence and transcendence] to be non-dual in intrinsic awareness, one is thoroughly without imaging.⁹⁶ That very purity is referred to as emptiness.

6.1.5.4. The non-duality of intrinsic awareness

[207] What is more, concerning the non-duality of intrinsic awareness,⁹⁷ although the many phenomena of realization and non-realization, of good and evil, appear, these appearances are not to be relinquished. Being pure and without essence, there is no multiplicity. The limitations of singularity and multiplicity are non-dual. The same text continues,⁹⁸

Free from singularity and multiplicity,⁹⁹
Thusness is without a center and limits;
It is unseen even by the Buddhas
And it appears as self-originated, non-abiding wisdom.

TN: This is one of five axioms used in *Madhyamaka* logic. These are the axiom of the adamant slivers (*rdo-rje gzegs-ma'i gtan-tshigs*), the axiom that refutes the production of existents and nonexistents (*yod-med skye-'gog-gi gtan-tshigs*), the axiom that refutes production in terms of the four extremes (*mu-bzhi skye-'gog-gi gtan-tshigs*), the axiom of great interdependence (*rten-'brel chen-po'i gtan-tshigs*), and, the one mentioned here, viz., the axiom of freedom from singularity and multiplicity (*gcig dang du-ma bral-ba'i gtan-tshigs*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 145; see also Stéphane Arguillère, *Gorampa Sönam Sengge—La Distinction des Vues: Rayon de Lune du Véhicule Suprême*, Paris: Fayard, 2008, p. 181. The axiom of freedom from singularity and multiplicity is developed at great length by Śāntarakṣita; see [Shantarakshita and Mipham, *The Adornment of the Middle Way*](#), vv. 1–62, pp. 51–61 (root text), 151–265 (commentary); cf. the “Translators’ Introduction,” in [ibid.](#), pp. 39–40. While the axiom of freedom from singularity and multiplicity is no doubt derived from the *Madhyamaka* context, it is reinterpreted here in the light of typically tantric concerns.

6.1.5.5. The non-duality of the two truths

The relative and absolute truths are non-dual.¹⁰⁰ The *lTa-ba'i phreng-ba* declares in the context of *Anuyoga*¹⁰¹ that from out of absolute truth without birth or halt one meditates on [the appearances of] relative truth as being gods and goddesses. Hence, both [truths] are eminently equal. According to the *Sautrāntika [Madhyamaka]*, relative truth is interdependent and illusory.¹⁰² Without refuting this, the arising of inconceivable gods and goddesses of the wisdom configuration, with their respective colors, ornaments, and attires, is relative truth. If it be asked why, [it is replied that,] being produced and destroyed when those on the path meditate, the emanations that are generated and absorbed are functional and appear in compatibility with awareness. [208] Being free from the genuine limit,¹⁰³ they are neither eternal nor nil, and they appear as signs. If one craves for genuineness,¹⁰⁴ one is not granted its sight because it is totally obscured [by one's craving].

As for absolute truth, intrinsic awareness is likewise luminously clear as the wisdom of the absence of an intrinsic nature.¹⁰⁵ Being inexpressible, it is difficult to become aware of it through the intellect—it is the thusness of phenomena.

In that case, it may be asked, “Are [the two truths] discrete or inseparable?” [It is replied that] here they are not discrete as with the *Tsen-min* and *sTon-mun*. In absolute truth, intrinsic awareness is free from limitations; without wavering from that state, intrinsic awareness may appear as a deity, just like waves [may appear from] the ocean. Being just an appearance, [the deity] is without essence, just like a water moon, and it

is inseparable [from awareness] throughout the three times. While those on the path meditate on deities, the two aspects of truth are inseparable for those of outstanding intellect. Discretely generating and absorbing [deities] is in conformity with the inferior [faculties] of neophytes on the path; that textual tradition is not complete.¹⁰⁶ According to the *sGyu-'phrul chen-po yon-tan rdzogs-pa'i rgyud-brgyad-pa*,¹⁰⁷

Absolute truth is without birth or halt;
Relative truth is all but an illusion.

And,¹⁰⁸

The nature of cyclic existence is selflessness;¹⁰⁹
Therefore, the Thus-gone One is beyond thought.

[209] The same text continues,¹¹⁰

All phenomena without exception
Are all without ground or root,
Neither existent nor nonexistent:
Inseparable are the absolute and relative truths.
The uncompounded itself appears as the compounded;
Compounded appearances are adamant.¹¹¹
Appearance itself is without essence;
Nonentities, they appear under variegated guises,
In the manner of an illusory hallucination.¹¹²

In brief, Buddhas and sentient beings, total affliction and utter refinement are non-dual. Their characteristics are inexpressible. Having comprehended that they

transcend thought and scrutiny, one meditates non-discursively whatever appears.

6.1.5.6. The faults of duality

In that case, it may be asked, “What is at fault with the diverse phenomena of duality?” [It is replied that] although the thusness of their nature is non-dual, those not endowed with means do not see it; it is like the treasure of a pauper woman or a gem among champions.¹¹³

In any case, in this system, the wretched flourishing of cyclic existence is itself the clear meaning of non-duality. Likewise, even as appearances are seen, the [two] truths are not discrete. In any case, if Buddhas and sentient beings¹¹⁴ were different, they would be unable to appear [to each other], because there would be no connection [between them]. [210] It would be like the solemn people of this southern continent of Jambudvīpa who are unable to show the path to the non-humans of the northern continent of Uttarakuru.¹¹⁵ It would be like a semi-precious stone that cannot become a jewel. There would be no benefit in the Thus-gone One expounding the doctrine of the path or the vehicles of cause and fruition. Wandering beings would not accomplish the rank of the Victorious One. In this respect, the *Le’u-lag* declares,¹¹⁶

If one knows with certainty one’s individual nature,
There is nothing to rectify through the genuine path.

Furthermore,¹¹⁷

If one did not have the primordial essence,
One would relinquish the afflictions and still be without
enlightenment.

And,¹¹⁸

The Genuinely-gone One and wrong views
Have but one essence; when abiding in it,
There is nothing to rectify or to change.
Therefore, he whose intellect is genuinely great
Explains that all are nonentities.

6.1.6. The view of equality

Some virtuous friends maintain that equality is the view of *Mahāyoga*.¹¹⁹ They expound equality as fivefold:¹²⁰ there is the equality of absolute truth, the equality of relative truth, the equality of the two truths' non-duality,¹²¹ the equality of the five great [elements]¹²² and the five Thus-gone Ones, and the equality of the eight consciousnesses and five wisdoms. [211] Their arguments shall not be amply laid out since this would take up too much space.¹²³

6.1.6.1. The equality of absolute truth

To give a short description, the equality of absolute truth is similar to what was taught earlier concerning the beingness of mind: everything is non-dual in intrinsic awareness. In the unborn essence, one originally does not imagine good and evil, or cleanness and filth. Moreover, the *Le'u-lag* states,¹²⁴

It is said that everything without exception is emptiness—
This is not the senselessness of earth and stones,
But the luminosity of intrinsic awareness without discursive
thought.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* says,¹²⁵

The path of equality does not image a center or limit;
Having only assimilated equality,
One is without objects and is free from the searching mind.
Having relinquished the limitations of acceptance and
rejection,
One abides in a non-abiding manner.
Since this is the single taste of the open dimension of
phenomena's beingness,
Knower and knowable are non-dual;
When knowing primordially and cognizing the principle,¹²⁶
Phenomena's beingness need not be contrived from
elsewhere.

Note, however, that Vasubandhu holds that only the first fifteen moments—i.e., acknowledging the cognition of the principle with regard to suffering (Skt. *duḥke dharmajñānakṣānti*) up to acknowledging the cognition of the principle in its subsequent realization with regard to the path (Skt. *mārge 'nvayadharmajñānakṣānti*)—pertain to the path of seeing (Skt. *darśanamārga*) per se. The sixteenth moment, cognizing the principle in its subsequent realization with regard to the path (*mārge 'nvayadharmajñāna*), belongs as such to the path of meditation (Skt. *bhāvanāmārga*) since here there is no longer anything unseen to be seen but merely meditation on the truth as it has been seen. Cf. La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 4, ch. 6, p. 192.

6.1.6.2. The equality of relative truth

As for the equality of relative truth, as illusion, it is the wisdom illusion: it is the very essence of illusory misconceptions. As the nature of the gods and goddesses, this wisdom illusion is the luminously clear essence of the Buddha: [212] all good and evil [phenomena] occur as the deity's configuration, without one having to imagine it through means. The *Le'u-lag* declares,¹²⁷

Concerning the equality of illusory relative truth,
All the reified compounded entities¹²⁸
Appear in the manner of an illusion.
Temporary appearances, even those that perform all actions,
Appear according to the universal criterion of conception:
They all are but reflections.¹²⁹
Without action¹³⁰ they appear, but as nonentities
They abide in the manner of a water moon—
Though everything appears, it is without intrinsic nature.

TN: Depending on the position of the annotation-insignia (*mchan-rtags*), this gloss (which reads *byed*) could be seen as a correction, emending the reading to that of KH: “As action and agent they appear . . .” (*bya byed snang zhing*) instead of “Without action they appear . . .” (*bya med snang zhing*).

6.1.6.3. The equality of the two truth's inseparability

The equality of the inseparability of the two aspects of truth: the reified entities of relative truth, appearing as good and evil, do not have an intrinsic nature to show, even when they effect some purpose. The intrinsic

enlightened mind is nothing in and of itself. Being without essence, it is not something that appears. It is difficult to examine or to show its essence, as it is inexpressible. It cannot be imagined in terms of acceptance and rejection, nor in terms of great and small. It was explained in detail earlier.¹³¹

6.1.6.4. The equality of the five great elements and five Thus-gone Ones

The equality of the five great [elements] and the five Thus-gone Ones: [213] the five great [elements] are the wisdom of thusness of intrinsic awareness. Hence, their appearance as the five elements is not a misconception, since they are the five elements of wisdom. Space is unceasing and pertains to the Thus-gone One's family. Earth is solid and unchanging and pertains to the adamantine family. The characteristic of water is that it is pliant wherever it appears, so it pertains to the jewel family.¹³² Fire being clear and non-obstructed, it pertains to Amitābha's family.¹³³ Wind being unimpeded by anything at all, it pertains to the activity family. The authoritative scripture states,¹³⁴

Space is Vairocana;
Earth is the unwavering Vajradhara,¹³⁵
Water the pliant Ratnasambhava,
Fire the luminous Amitābha, and
Wind the unimpeded Amoghasiddhi.

Since the five elements are liberated from singularity and multiplicity, they appear as the five families though

they are one. This is because the five families and their essence are not different but are inseparable. It is not the case that they become something that they are not.

6.1.6.5. The equality of the eight consciousnesses and five wisdoms

The equality of the eight consciousnesses and five wisdoms: the thusness of all phenomena, the universal ground¹³⁶ as absolute basis, is luminously clear and non-discursive; it is the wisdom of thusness. The *Le'u-lag* says,¹³⁷ [214]

It is not the universal ground of concepts,
But the absolute ground without intrinsic nature;¹³⁸
It is called phenomena's open dimension and
Is the wisdom of thusness.¹³⁹

Applied [here], since the absolute universal ground consciousness is pure by essence,¹⁴⁰ the seeds of the imprints need not be eliminated but are pure. This luminous clarity and non-discursiveness are mirror-like [wisdom].

The psychic consciousness is primordially the wisdom of intrinsic awareness, so that without relinquishing its scope, it vanishes in clarity. Since its knowing takes place without imaging general and specific characteristics, it is the individually discerning wisdom.

The intrinsic essence of the afflicted [psychic consciousness] is like the mistaken path taken by a prince [on his way home]; since it is primordial non-

duality, it is pure without eliminating self-grasping—this is [the wisdom of] equality.

The very imaging of the different objects of the five sensory [consciousnesses] is the non-obstructedness of intrinsic awareness. Without seeking for it elsewhere, this is the action-accomplishing wisdom.¹⁴¹

Thus, since it is primordially intrinsically clear, it is not that those on the path establish it after examination. In this regard, dullness is pure and so are the temporary obscurations. Maintaining the universal ground consciousness to be the five wisdoms only during the abiding transformation is similar to the female brown bear who meaninglessly counts [her prey].¹⁴² [215] Nowhere is it declared that, without seeing natural absolute meaningfulness, one can assimilate its meaning.¹⁴³

In that case, it may be asked why {, if equal,} [the wisdoms] are exactly fivefold. [It is replied that] if someone posits them as fivefold from the position that the phenomena with signs are five, this must be either a prominent or a subordinate [characteristic]. If the signs that are equal are examined in terms of this meaning, it is suitable that, despite the six [types of] wandering beings being equal, they are six; it is also suitable that, despite the universe and its inhabitants being equal, they are two. This transcends expression and is not even oneness. A detailed explanation may be found in the *gTan-tshigs brgyad-cu-pa*,¹⁴⁴ but this shall not be laid out here.

6.1.7. Reconciling the views of *Mahāyoga*

In that case, it may be asked whether these views of *Mahāyoga* are exhaustive. [It is replied that] for the time being these philosophical texts may lead to disagreement and that there are different textual traditions pertaining to the view. The *Guhyasamāja* states,¹⁴⁵

All doctrines are maintained to be like the vase of the eminent enlightened mind that is filled with the adamantite water—the non-dual enlightened mind is incalculable and indefinite.¹⁴⁶

If it be asked why, it is because whatever arises in awareness, the enlightened mind, does so [according to] the differences maintained by individuals.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, although there are different teachings, my assessment is that they appear from the essence of thusness according to the particular qualities [required under the circumstances] and hence are ungraspable. [216] Again, it may be asked how this is. [It is replied that] all phenomena are not other than thusness, which is uncontrived intrinsic awareness free from duality. Since it comprises [everything] in itself, it is called integral being. Being free from good or evil, it is also equality. Since it arises as awakened body, speech, and mind, subtleness and crudeness are inseparable, and thus it is also means and sapience. However it is examined, thus it appears. Absolute meaningfulness is certainly¹⁴⁸ difficult to examine and unsuitable to think about. It is inexpressible and unthinkable and is not some profound object. It has neither cause nor conditions, is without essence and is uncontrived, uncreated, uncorrupted and

is not examinable. It is without day or night, without self or other, yet it is not a nonexistent. It is unseen as anything [in particular]. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,¹⁴⁹

Equality and inequality are equal;
There is neither Buddha nor sentient being,¹⁵⁰
Neither imaging nor non-imaging—
Knowing thus, one is an expert.
The ways of awareness and ignorance are one—
[217] Knowing thus, one is a Victorious One.
The nature of sentient beings is the Buddha;
The nature of the Buddha is the sentient being:
Sentient beings and Buddhas are one—
Knowing thus, one is a Victor's son.

This is called non-dual thusness. All of the awakened bodies and wisdoms appear from it.

6.1.8. Seeing absolute truth

Likewise, it may be asked, “How is the sight of absolute truth to be seen?” The answer to that question is that because thusness is nothing whatsoever, it cannot be seen through thinking. It is when one does not see anything that one sees definitely. Again, the *rDo-rje bkod-pa* states,¹⁵¹

Because it is enlightenment, there is nothing to gain;
When one sees the absolute meaningfulness that is without
gain,
That is the supreme gain.

Moreover,¹⁵²

If one sees the mind through the mind,
It is through wisdom that one sees phenomena's
beingness¹⁵³—
Throughout all times, it is without birth or halt.
Seeing the meaning that was not previously seen,
One sees no reified entities whatsoever.
All [phenomena] are without intrinsic nature,
And are but the transformations¹⁵⁴ in the intellect.
When absolute meaningfulness is thus seen,
There are no signs¹⁵⁵ whatsoever to see.

[218] And,¹⁵⁶

Absolute meaningfulness is unseeable—
When it appears before the psyche,
It is called an appearance; hence it defies description.

In this respect, maintaining or seeing only the emptiness of existents is a seeing similar to definitive seeing—it is definitely flawed.¹⁵⁷ It may be asked whether an objective scope appears to a man who sees the truth in that manner. It is replied that being without thought,¹⁵⁸ [such a man] is also perdurably without seeing. The *Byang-chub sems-lon* says,¹⁵⁹

The five elements, five objects, along with the sense-faculties,
Are [characterized by] birth, old age, sickness, death, and suffering;
Whatever be their shape, color, and marks,
They are objects [perceived by] confused sentient beings
and
Do not appear in the face of seeing truth.

Some savages following the words of people who have not found absolute meaningfulness may therefore say

that the thusness of the *Mantrayāna* is maintained to be unborn emptiness. To use an example, they are similar to bees licking up [the flowers of] a flax plant. By meditating on thusness, one is lost. [219] This is veritably a deviation from the unmistakable path. [If it be asked] whether or not this is suitable, [it is replied that] in the state of the *Mantrayāna*'s thusness, one does not relinquish appearances, since they are instantaneously arising gods and emanations.

Do you maintain that they arise from emptiness? If you maintain that they do, then it is appropriate that they should come to be like a sky-flower or a rabbit's horns, so this flaw is veritably a great sin.¹⁶⁰ The *Zhus-lan* declares,¹⁶¹

Being nonexistent as anything whatsoever,
Mind's beingness would therefore be incapable of
appearance
And one would meditate on another concentration,
disconnected [from one's mind],
Whose extrinsic object would be changeless.

The *dBu-ma* therefore says,¹⁶²

The emptiness of the Victorious Ones
Certainly removes all views,
Yet the individuals who view emptiness
Are unsuitable to flaunt—thus it is explained.¹⁶³

The authoritative scripture further states,¹⁶⁴

If one's viewing of emptiness is faulty,
Those of little sapience will come to ruin.

Hence, this view cannot be looked at as anything. It cannot be imagined as anything¹⁶⁵ and is without dread or grasping attachment. It is like the flight of a bird in that it leaves no traces. [222]¹⁶⁶ The *Le'u-lag* declares,¹⁶⁷

This view is taught to be similar to the *garuḍa* soaring
through the sky.

6.2. Meditation

Having resolved the view in like manner, one may ask about its efficiency. When entering meditation, one may distinguish between the requirements and the causes of the approach.

6.2.1. The requirements of the approach

The requirements are twofold: there is an approach through accomplishing the unsurpassed fruition and an approach that eliminates extrinsic wrong views and obscurations.

6.2.2. The causes of the approach

The causes of the approach are to come to a resolution through one's sapience and to obtain the profound pith instructions. Generally speaking, the pith instructions are twofold: those with support and those without support.

6.2.2.1. The pith instructions without support

Those without support are the pith instructions of the hearing lineage that are taught so that one may meditate on thusness free from the contamination of thinking. They remain the speciality of *Atiyoga*.

6.2.2.2. The pith instructions with support

Those with support are twofold and concern the upper and lower doors.

6.2.2.2.1. The pith instructions depending on the upper door

As for those that depend on the upper door, they are based on the places of the four nexuses, [starting with] the cranial nexus.¹⁶⁸ Generally speaking, when meditating, thinking and the karmic fires and winds are incited through individually incompatible means. When milking the celestial cow, the wisdom ambrosia flows down and one examines bliss.¹⁶⁹ There are many incompatible texts, each with its individual thinking concerning the channels, {strings of} seminal nuclei, lights, and so forth.¹⁷⁰ [221]

In particular, for those of great dispositions or those who are fortunate, there are the pith instructions for the moment of passing away: in the inner casket of secret wisdom, the afflicted psyche is thought to be the celestial rabbit {i.e., the moon disk}.¹⁷¹ Thereupon, the universal ground that is free from elaborations is visualized as the sun¹⁷² {i.e., a seminal nucleus} in a phalanx. Above it is produced the white *HŪṂ*, the syllable of awakened mind as the essence of wisdom; so

one should think. From previous acquaintance with these three [images],¹⁷³ they change into non-imaging.

Alternatively, at the time of [the breath's] halting,¹⁷⁴ these three are discretely accompanied by the air; as one exhales and inhales, each one is absorbed into the other. At the end,¹⁷⁵ when they have been absorbed into the *HŪM*, one thinks that there is a wisdom *heruka* in a phalanx {of light}, exhorting him in the great Akaniṣṭha.¹⁷⁶ Once he has been absorbed into the phalanx {of light}, one images neither phenomena nor a self, and thereby interrupts all evil deeds. [220]

As for the mental events, there are the pith instructions of “faring through the sky”¹⁷⁷ as well as the pith instructions of “the unequivocally empty skull.”¹⁷⁸ In brief, these can be divided into the air's entering the upper and lower doors. They have all the worldly and supramundane tastes, so by examining them they are brought to culmination.

6.2.2.2.2. The pith instructions depending on the lower door

Concerning the [pith instructions] that depend on the lower door, as was explained previously, one should search with difficulty for a sapiential consort who is compatible with the texts. Having presented her to gladden the master who will confer the explanation, one should complete the phases [of practice]. The outer and inner [phases] being complete, one must examine the empowerment of sapience-wisdom, which is like the moon, and the [empowerment of] great bliss, which is

like the sun. Familiarizing oneself therewith, one should examine the taste of the world and the taste of the gradual supramundane path.

At first, one obtains a wavering wisdom of veritable bliss, then an attainment, then a firm approach, and then the follow-up yoga. Then, even should one be free from the support [of the consort], one's [experience of bliss] will not deteriorate; one should thereby become accustomed to the wisdom without support.

6.2.2.3. The pivot of the pith instructions

Such pith instructions pivot on the texts of the instructors Vimalamitra, Buddhagupta,¹⁷⁹ and Padmasambhava and on the oral [explanations of a] master. [223] The fifth [on which these pith instructions pivot] are those fortunate ones who engage in the *Mahāyāna* and who thereby have, as individuals, the power to tame [others]. Other than merely having the means explained to them, it is said that they need not be of extensive erudition. [However,] I posit erudition as supreme. As for dependence on hearing and thinking, this [refers to] texts such as these.

6.2.2.4. Gradual and simultaneous approaches to the *Mantrayāna*

When subdivided, the faculty of thinking is twofold: gradual and simultaneous. These [two aspects] are posited to correspond to the particulars of sharp and obtuse faculties, respectively.

6.2.2.4.1. *The gradual approach*

In this respect, the gradual approach¹⁸⁰ comprises the means of seating the body and the means of resting the mind.

6.2.2.4.1.1. *The means of seating the body*

The means of seating the body are as follows: having resolved the characteristics of self and of phenomena, when thinking one straightens one's bodily frame on a seat of clean cotton. Assuming a balanced cross-legged posture, one straightens one's body upright and focuses one's eyes on the tip of the nose. As it is said in the *Chen-po padma'i bsgom-lung*,¹⁸¹ [224]

Upon a clean and soft cotton seat,
One straightens one's frame: such is the body's mode.

And,

One sits upon a comfortable seat.

6.2.2.4.1.2. *The means of resting the mind*

Then there is the [manner of] looking at the mirror of the psyche. If one is of weak faculties, one stabilizes one's thinking [by imaging the syllables] *OM*, *ĀḤ*, and *HŪM* in white, azure, etc., at the core of one's heart. By radiating and absorbing [the light rays emanated from these syllables], one cleanses the universe and its inhabitants and then stays without imaging. When, through hearing,¹⁸² one has some slight experience of seeing,¹⁸³ one views all phenomena as unborn intrinsic awareness, which is the meaning of non-duality. Hence,

the measure of one's seeing is that one's imaged reference stays one-pointedly.

Thus, one lessens tautness and through imaging binds the inner elephant of the mind with the rope of recollection and ties it to the trunk of imaging: the fluctuations lessen and the mind becomes more stable. The mind of involvement is neither disturbed nor does it waver, and it veritably becomes without searching. For example, when learning the letters [of the alphabet], one first reads them in a row as the essence's miraculous play. As one's tongue seeks to articulate the sounds, it is all but gibberish. [225] However, if one tries to study again and again, one will be [able to read] without impediment. It is said in the preceptor dPal-dbyangs' pith instructions,¹⁸⁴

Concerning that which is to be accomplished,
It is through effort that one rests in equipoise again and
again.
Slowly becoming proficient in meditative familiarization,
[The fruition] is spontaneously accomplished, without effort.

And,¹⁸⁵

It is through striving in the cause of effortlessness that
[The fruition is] accomplished—is this explanation not self-
contradictory?
If sentient beings evidently require effort,
Then is not the spontaneous presence of the Victorious Ones
a lie?
It is like striving again and again in the script and so forth:
It is through familiarization that [literacy] occurs without
exertion.

Thus, by meditating on thusness, one becomes endowed with the fivefold enlightened mind: at first, like a ray in the darkness, the unmistakable meaning wavers in one's intellect and one emerges [from concentration frequently]. Then, having attained that [stage], one aspires toward clarity. Thereafter, one enters absolute meaningfulness. Abiding thereon, one becomes acquainted thereto. As [one's practice] is brought to culmination, there is nothing more to search for. [226]

6.2.2.4.1.3. Comparing the *sTon-mun* and the gradual approach of *Mahāyoga*

In that case, the simultaneous approach of the *sTon-mun* is unequivocally good.¹⁸⁶ Their own text, the *Sems-lon*, states,¹⁸⁷

In non-abiding equanimity, free from the concentration of exertion and effort, one should rest idly, primordially giving in to the state of uncontrived clarity. One will feel sinking and lethargy, but one should not generate hope or misgiving. Since whatever appears is conceptual, one should not examine it at all.

It might therefore be asked whether this view of imaging pertaining to the *Mantrayāna* is not rather dismal [when compared with the non-imaging of the *sTon-mun*]. The answer is that, for example, if a supernal boy is born and his body is complete with legs, etc., intact, he may perform any action unimpededly. If he is born as a king, he needs to have accrued the merit that pertains to the lineage of his birth. Although as of yet the princeling's coronation cannot be performed, being a great king by birth, there is no need for [him to separately receive] the lineage of his birth; he will wield great power in this

life. Likewise, the *sTon-mun* claim that now they are free from actions, yet they do not see the limitations of the non-dual thusness of the *Mahāyāna* and are exhausted in their non-searching of absolute truth alone. [227] Having entered [the path], suppressed [obstacles], traversed [the path], and brought it to culmination, one is empowered by the Thus-gone One, whereafter the diamond-like non-duality arises, and one beholds the spell. Thus, even if at present one's intellect is hardly able to stay firm, by learning the wisdom of diamond-like non-duality, in this life one will pass beyond to the ultimate shore, without there being anything to wipe away nor any competition.

The meaning of this view is basically superior. A bodhisattva who has attained the stages of the causal vehicle first generates the [enlightened] mind and thereby is said to outshine [all others]. Having first produced an intention, he generates the [enlightened] mind in the meaning of non-duality and thereby becomes endowed with strength. This shall be explained in detail later on.

According to one perspective,¹⁸⁸ a beginner should rest the mind and look at it as it is. At first, he should recall the meaning that is without imaging an identity and check over it but slightly. In any case, when grasping at a self is absent, [228] there is no need to dissect the phenomena that appear, nor is there any need to inhibit them; thus, it is sufficient not to referentially imagine a self. Moreover, the *Zhus-lan* says,¹⁸⁹

For as long¹⁹⁰ as there is the illusionist of self-grasping,
One shall not be liberated by calm abiding;
Having thoroughly relinquished grasping at a self,
There is no grasping at phenomena either.

The *dGongs-'dus* declares,¹⁹¹

Through knowledge which does not image a self, one verily knows
everything else without imaging. As the self is known to be equal,
so everything else is verily known to be equal.

6.2.2.4.1.4. Dealing with defects

By thus resting in equipoise for a long time, at times certain defects in comprehension are produced; these are of three kinds: [229] co-emergent defects,¹⁹² defects incited by conditions,¹⁹³ and deliberate defects.¹⁹⁴ The means to rectify the mind are threefold: they are to eliminate [defects] through antidotes, to eliminate them by making them evident through inspection, and to eliminate them without making them evident and without inspection.¹⁹⁵ If it be asked how [defects] are to be eliminated by the former two, [it is replied that] there are, generally speaking, seven defects: forgetfulness of imaging, laziness, sinking, agitation, misgiving, non-effort, and effort.

6.2.2.4.1.4.1. Relinquishing defects through antidotes

There are eight dispositions through which these [defects] may be relinquished. What are these? They are recollection, diligence, intention, suppleness, attentiveness, comprehension, effort, and non-effort. When there is forgetfulness of imaging, one relies on recollection. When there is laziness, one relinquishes it

through diligence, intention, and suppleness. One feels sinking or agitation through the watcher of attentiveness. [230] Thus, when one feels that there is sinking, one examines the sinking of one's insight and whoever it is who is sinking; making this fact [of sinking] evident, it is eliminated. This antidote uplifts the mind and generates cheerfulness through its numerous qualities. When one is agitated, one ties the rope of recollection and tautens it so as not to instigate further diffuseness. As for misgiving, the ordinary worldlings, the heretical eternalists and nihilists, the auditors, the independent victors, the *Vijñaptivādins*, and the *Mādhyamikas* rely on comprehension as an antidote to this. This shall be explained later. When there is non-effort, one's concentration being unclear, it must be tautened. If [on the other hand] there is an effort to be clear, there is the defect of being unable to stay, and one should rest in equanimity. Thus it is that [defects] are eliminated through antidotes.

6.2.2.4.1.4.2. Making defects evident through inspection

The elimination [of the defects] by making them evident through inspection is as follows: whatever defects are produced, one examines them as they are through individually discerning sapience. When one fails to establish their essence through inspection, one becomes aware of thusness, their absolute meaningfulness; this makes them clear and thereby eliminates them. [231] In this regard, the system that asserts that misgiving is eliminated through comprehension concerns the six

misgivings in the context of ordinary worldlings.¹⁹⁶ The *rNam-bkod* states,¹⁹⁷

When searching for the path of genuine absolute
 meaningfulness,
One must relinquish the five defects of conception:
The crude mountain of conceptions,
As well as signs, fluctuations, feelings,
And sensation—these five defects should be relinquished.
Conceptions are twofold
And appear either crude or subtle;
Likewise, signs are twofold, great and small,
And fluctuations may be both long and short;
Feelings too are clear and unclear,
And so do sensations as two appear,
Swift and slow:
These obscure absolute meaningfulness.
They are the great abode of great conceptions:
That is why one does not see absolute meaningfulness.
This great billowing darkness
Overcasts everything—
All is opaque and obscured.
Overcasts are both great and small:
Overcast by great clouds and dimmed,
And enwreathed by mists and blurred.
[234]¹⁹⁸ The three dismal abodes¹⁹⁹ and the abode of men,
The realm of form and the formless realm:
Auditors and independent victors fall down in these places.
Concerning the great defect of falling therein,
Six are the types of distraction through signs:
Distraction due to natural objects,
Outward distraction,²⁰⁰
Inner distraction,²⁰¹ [distraction] due to signs,²⁰²
[Distraction] due to apprehension, and that due to atrophy.
These should verily be eliminated,
For once eliminated, one may rest in equipoise upon
 absolute meaningfulness.
The obscurations of the meaning of equality
Are of five types:
To be distracted on account of sensation,
Overcast on account of sinking and lethargy,
Inhibited on account of grasping and attachment,
Eternal on account of perdurability,

Or nonexistent on account of evenness—
These are the defects pertaining to equality.

6.2.2.4.1.4.2.1. Twenty defects

From the worldling to the formless realm, there are twenty defects. What are they?

Actual discursive examination of (1)²⁰³ existents or (2) nonexistents occurs because of an increase in conceptions; these may be both subtle and crude and are like being totally overcast by darkness and great gloom. They are a cause for falling down among the denizens of hell, the hungry ghosts, and beasts. They are contingent on the cause of rumination. [233]

(3) Signs and (4) size are contingent on the cause of discursive examination and are like becoming totally opaque and obscured. If one takes birth [while in this state], one falls down into a birth among the humans of the four continents.

(5) Fluctuation and (6) its length originate from one's succession of lives and are like the size of an overcast. If one takes birth [while in this state], one falls down among the gods of the first level of the realm of desire.²⁰⁴

(7) The clarity or (8) unclarity of one's feelings is contingent on sensation. It is like being dimmed or overcast by a great cloud; one falls down among [the gods of] the second level of the realm of desire.

(9) The quickness or (10) slowness of one's sensations [is contingent on] the mind. It is like being enwreathed by mists and blurred. Coming under the

power of birth and death, one falls down among [the gods of] the third level of the desire realm.

(11) If an intention is produced, one may fall down among the gods of the fourth level of the desire realm, this being the eleventh [defect].

Above these,²⁰⁵ (12) the first contemplation has examination and scrutiny. (13) The second [contemplation] is without examination but has scrutiny and joy.²⁰⁶ (14) The third [contemplation] has no scrutiny but has joy and equanimity. (15) The fourth [contemplation] is without joy but has equanimity. [232]

(16) The fifth [contemplation] has the sinking of notionlessness. (17) The sixth [contemplation]²⁰⁷ has the sense-basis of infinite space. (18) The seventh [contemplation] has the sense-basis of infinite consciousness. (19) The eighth [contemplation] has the sense-basis of nothing whatsoever. (20)²⁰⁸ The ninth [contemplation] has the sense-basis of neither notions nor notionlessness. It should be recognized that if one takes birth while meditating on these [contemplations], one will fall down into the sidetrack consisting of the third realm, which is under the white power of these concentrations.

6.2.2.4.1.4.2.2. Five deviations

If one takes birth while grasping at either existence or nonexistence, this is the defect of falling down into eternalism or nihilism. If fluctuations have gone out, [this is the deviation of] an auditor. If one veers toward the direction of peace, [this is the deviation of] an independent victor. If one is merely concerned with

confused appearances, this is the deviation of the *Vijñaptivādin*. If one makes concepts empty, this is the deviation of the *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamika*].

6.2.2.4.1.4.2.3. Eliminating the defects of conception

Having identified these defects of conception, it is necessary not to deviate toward them. In that case, it may be asked, “How does the intent of eliminating conceptions occur when [practicing] the gradual approach?” If the means be asked about, there are numerous injunctions concerning their elimination. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,²⁰⁹

If they search for the gold of the genuine meaning,
They should hold on to the monkey who desires
comprehension
And tie up the thieving cat.
[235] Closing up all the gold mine’s windows,
They should bit by bit destroy the empty house
And open the treasury of the king’s property:
Lo, they constantly Buddhas were!

6.2.2.4.1.4.3. Eliminating defects without making them evident and without inspection

Having eliminated conceptions, one may accomplish meditation. It may be asked, “By what means are conceptions to be eliminated?” [It is replied that] one should familiarize oneself to evaluating them with one’s individually discerning sapience, so that whenever conceptions are produced, one immediately recollects sapience. When conceptions are examined as to their own being, they transform into non-imaging. In this way the mind is no longer diffuse, and there is no need to

liberate anything. This is clearly taught in the
authoritative scripture, which says,²¹⁰

An intellect endowed with the three valid measures

Probes conceptually:

Whence does the actual comprehension of existence and
nonexistence originate?

It is due to examination that conceptions are contingent on
looking.

If one verily knows conceptions to be illusory,

The mountain of conceptions is appeased

And the three atrophies²¹¹ are no more.

Whence do conceptions occur?

They are contingent on phenomena with signs.

If one verily knows signs to be illusory,

The phenomena with signs are appeased,

And that is the end of the realm of desire.

[236] Whence do signs occur?

They are contingent on rumination's fluctuation.

When rumination is known as a defect,

The flaws of fluctuation are eliminated,

And by this force the second [level of the] desire realm is no
more.

Whence do fluctuations occur?

They are contingent on feelings.²¹²

When feelings are known to be illusory,

Flawed feelings are eliminated,

And one is incapable of falling down into the third [level of
the] desire realm.

Whence do feelings occur?

They are contingent on outer and inner sensations.

When these are known to be illusory,

Inhibition and production are no longer,

And through the force of like knowledge,

One does not fall down into the fourth [level of the] desire
realm.

Whence do sensations occur?

[They are contingent on mental phenomena.]²¹³

If one verily knows the mind itself²¹⁴ to be illusory,
Mental phenomena are appeased.
Like the reflection of an aggregate,
Mind is similar to a mirage.
Liberated from the limitations of existence and
nonexistence,
The *yogin* knowing in like manner
Will not fall down into the fifth [level of the] desire realm.

Viewing mind itself neither in terms of an existent
Nor in terms of a nonexistent,
One falls down neither among the heretics,
Nor among those who are sinking and lethargic,
Nor into notionlessness.
[237] Without following after notions,
One does not cycle among the abodes of sentient beings.
Becoming familiar with the absolute meaningfulness in
everything,
One does not fall into the auditors' abode.
Without pacifying emptiness,
One does not fall down into the view of independent victors.
Without analyzing concepts into their emptiness,
One does not fall down into a bodhisattva's conduct.
Without individually differentiating
The meanings of equality and emptiness,
One does not fall down upon the phases of the stages,
Neither training gradually nor leaping across.

The same text continues,²¹⁵

If one does not waver from the meaning of equality,
One does not fall down into the realm of form.
If one is not attached to equality,
One does not fall into the formless realm.
If one actualizes equality,
One does not fall into the auditors' abode.
The absolute which is nothing whatsoever is not to be
seen.²¹⁶
That is called Buddha.

In any case, one should thus gradually rectify the defects of conceptions and abide [in a non-referential state]. In this regard, a beginner may like to relinquish the signs of his mind. If one does not like signs, [one should reflect on the fact] that this very absence of emptiness is a sign.²¹⁷ The *Le'u-lag* declares,²¹⁸

Whatever is said to exist in the state of nonexistence
Is realized to have the nature of nonexistence:
[238] Like a hare's horn or the child of a barren woman,
While mere words are suitable for labeling,
They are all but names and emptiness is nonexistent.²¹⁹

Not grasping on to emptiness is signlessness and is signified by meditating on the inseparability of existence and emptiness. Moreover, for those of small intellects, their concentration may be likened to fire and smoke: if there is much smoke, the flame is small, whereas if the flame is clear, the smoke is slight. Likewise, when concentration is clear, the oscillation of conceptions is slight, but when it is unclear, there is much [oscillation]. Therefore, like the drawn string of a bow, the intellect must be plain and undistracted. In any case, in the fire of concentration the smoke of conceptualization is self-appeased, and one does not search for absolute meaningfulness: like the unwavering great ocean, mind is fully clear. When the indications below arise and the obscurations are purified, the fruition originates of itself.

6.2.2.4.2. The simultaneous approach

6.2.2.4.2.1. Three approaches

6.2.2.4.2.1.1. In this regard, the textual tradition of the simultaneous approach²²⁰ posits that if the mind rests as it is, the absolute meaningfulness that is the thusness of all phenomena is resolved.²²¹ One's intellect rests idly as it is in the beingness of phenomena, which is just the thusness of one's own awareness.²²² [239] Neither giving up one's intellect into thusness nor losing absolute meaningfulness, one should be equanimous. Moreover, the same text states,²²³

In realization, the meaning of duality is relinquished;
As one rests in the absolute meaningfulness of natural
equality,
[This state] defies description in terms of names such as
“meditation.”

Furthermore,²²⁴

Resting one's intellect, without distraction,
In the nature of space, just as it is,
Is the great purpose of a supreme person.

According to one perspective,²²⁵

Instantaneous recollection of the mind
Cuts the continuity of the psyche's imaging.
One relinquishes the limitation [consisting in] interrupting
sensations:
Phenomena are sky-like;
Imagining them to be inexpressible and uninterrupted,
One does not distort absolute meaningfulness—
This is the supreme meditation on inexpressible
concentration.

If one unites with the absolute meaningfulness just mentioned, everything is the thusness of intrinsic awareness. If, recalling absolute meaningfulness, one continuously meditates upon it without forgetfulness, one relaxes more and more and becomes proficient.²²⁶ This is so even without sessions [of meditation].

6.2.2.4.2.1.2. According to one perspective,²²⁷ the absence of the action of thinking is maintained; this refers to not thinking anything with one's intellect, neither scrutinizing nor meditating nor examining, whereby one does not waver from intrinsic clarity. [240] To be without deliberate meditation is not a mistaken means. The *Zhus-lan* says,²²⁸

How is one to meditate on the concentration of thusness?
It is not contrived by the Victors of the three times;
One's own mind is originally birthless:
Unborn in phenomena's beingness is one's own mind.
In phenomena's beingness there is nothing on which to
meditate.
In that case, is it suitable to rest in non-meditation?
If there is a proposition,
A meditator there must be;
But if mind in truth is without birth,
How should one rest in non-meditation?

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,²²⁹

In the nature of the genuine absolute,
There is nothing on which to abide and nothing to take,
Nothing to see and nothing to hear;
Nothing to do, it is of tasks free.

And,²³⁰

Phenomena's beingness is unthinkable;
Without thinking, thus rest.
Phenomena's beingness is without intrinsic nature,
Unfeigned²³¹ and instantaneous is mind's beingness:
Unwavering, recall it continuously!

Furthermore,²³²

Free from thinking, thus rest.
This principle of resting non-discursively
Is certainly not revealed to the childish.

[241] Neither the authoritative scriptures nor reasoning contradicts this pith instruction, so that one should [accordingly] not think of anything at all. In non-thinking, whence could conceptions be produced? In the unborn, whereto could one deviate? So, one settles down into authenticity.

2.2.4.2.1.3. According to one perspective,²³³ it is maintained that, since thusness is not something other, it does not appear outside, nor can the intellect enter into it. Without the references of object or cognition, awareness itself is thus intrinsic clarity, on which one meditates non-discursively. The *Yi-ge chung-ngu* states,²³⁴

That which is disagreeable and [its antidote]²³⁵ are
inseparable—
Whoever knows this meaning relinquishes all effort;
If one rests uncontrived in great equanimity,
Meditation is described as a mere designation.²³⁶

The *brGyad-cu-pa*, which is also an authoritative scripture, declares,²³⁷

Everything without exception is the state of oneness:
As the garland of wisdom lamps,
Without view or the action of viewing,
One sees all the pure fields of the ten directions.²³⁸

One [thus] progresses in the clarity of intrinsic awareness without objects. [242] Furthermore,²³⁹

Intrinsic awareness, free from grasper and grasped,
Intrinsically appears in a non-referential manner.

Just as the ground itself is free from an objective scope,
it arises as intrinsic awareness. Moreover,²⁴⁰

Outer and inner, the universe and its inhabitants, are
primordially pure.²⁴¹
Realizing this purity is itself the open dimension;
This is adamant equality.

Since intrinsic awareness is phenomena's beingness, it is without object and intrinsically clear, without reference such as the three times. One should believe in absolute meaningfulness.

6.2.2.4.2.2. Defects

6.2.2.4.2.2.1. The defect of referential imaging

If it be asked whether imaging is a defect, it is answered that [something which suits] a boy of inferior faculties is not an object for an adult man. The *Kun-'dus* says,²⁴²

Moreover, those whose sense-doors are lowly
Insert a rope to pull the minute [seminal nuclei]
In the sky of their always [open] eyes.²⁴³
Likewise, the activities which a child performs
Are unsuitable for an adult.
It is mistaken to insert referential concentration
Into phenomena's beingness, which is without grasping at
references.

The authoritative scripture states,²⁴⁴

How could the imaging psyche be clear?
Since it becomes involved in cognition and objects,
It is the concentration of the vulgar.

[243] To meditate without having come to a resolution
through the view is a defect:²⁴⁵

Not knowing the inconceivable,
Whoever rests without thinking,
That childish one is a fool,
And his very sense-bases become darkened.

Knowing²⁴⁶ the inconceivable absolute,
Whoever rests without thinking,
That one becomes omniscient
And possessed of unfathomable qualities.

If one does not come to a resolution [through the view],
this is the cause for the occurrence of imaging.

Non-imaging is threefold: there is non-imaging
[arising] from belief,²⁴⁷ in which the view of realization
is absent; veritable non-imaging, which does not waver
from the clarity of absolute meaningfulness and which is
integrated to the view; and subsequent non-imaging—
when one sometimes senses that conceptions are

produced, this subsequent non-imaging immediately follows after the former. Thus should their essence be evaluated. There are defects when one evaluates for a long time, when one's intellect becomes a stream,²⁴⁸ and when conceptions create obstructions—it is needless to say anything else.

If one referentially images the absolute beingness of phenomena and becomes convinced thereof, this is the defect of deliberate action and is craving for the genuine. [244] The *Kun-'dus* declares,²⁴⁹

Enlightenment is without imaging;
Non-abiding, who could describe it?
Grasping at the labels of “abiding” and “imaging”
Is produced from grasper and grasped.

In any case, if this, too, is a defect, what need is there to mention anything else!

6.2.2.4.2.2.2. Other defects

Those [defects] that were explained previously, as well as those that were not, should be known thereby. These, too, can be found in the same source. If it be asked what they are, [the following is replied:]²⁵⁰

Whatever wavering ruminations one inhibits
Become obstructing:
The fools without rumination
Are on the dark path of the heretics.

If one holds alone to the mind,
This is hope, discursively examining signs.
If one resolves upon atemporality,
This is the extreme of nihilism, nonexistence.

When discursive rumination is produced while one meditates, to follow after it is [the behavior of] an ordinary sentient being.²⁵¹ [245] To inhibit it is the cessation of the auditors. If one is quite careless in recollection, absolute meaningfulness will not be clear. In sinking, conceptions do not waver, yet absolute meaningfulness is not clear: though it appears eternal, it is both impermanent and nil. If one holds on to a meaning as definitive, this grasping becomes eternalism. If one resolves on vacuousness as the mind is sinking, this becomes nihilism, which is a defect. One should neither follow after recollection {of the past} nor inhibit {defects} nor discursively examine the clarity of absolute meaningfulness.²⁵² There is nothing to hold on to, nor anything to resolve.

6.2.2.4.2.2.3. Five demons

Moreover, there are five demons that may cause obstacles. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,²⁵³

Five demons may cause obstacles

For the *yogin* of certain engagement:

- (1) The demon of opaque conceptuality,
- [246] (2) The demon of laziness with respect to thusness' equanimity,
- (3) The demon of frivolous distraction due to enjoyments,
- (4) The demon of the sharp weapon of harsh words,
- (5) And the disturbing demon of short-tempered aggressiveness.

These five demons of a *yogin*'s engagement

Will obscure a *yogin*'s purpose;

But through the supreme antidote of the enlightened mind,

They are repelled into the state of great peace.

By merely recollecting the meaning that does not image thusness, one does not relinquish whatever is produced or occurs or wields its power, since it is self-appeased.

6.2.2.4.2.2.4. Four enemies

Furthermore, there are four enemies of a *yogin*. If it be asked who they are, [it is replied that] they are as follows: (1) the enemy of disrepute occurs because of the spreading of the secrets; (2) the enemy of obstacles occurs because of lowly views, coarse conduct, and wrong textual traditions; (3) the enemy of great punishments occurs because of the deterioration of one's root and branch pledges; and (4) the enemy who wrecks the fruition [of one's practice] occurs because of laziness and slight perseverance. One should not give in to their power.²⁵⁴

6.2.2.4.2.2.5. Twenty psychic defects

Moreover,²⁵⁵ (1) apprehending an absolute meaning, (2) sinking of the mind, (3) agitation due to objects, (4) attachment to the taste of concentration, (5) hatred toward the defect of conceptions, (6) deliberate savoring [of bliss], (7) being convinced in a single absolute meaning, [247] (8) hope for clarity in concentration, (9) misgivings about deviations, (10) inhibiting the defect of conceptions, (11) the disappearance, obstructing, or erasure of the mind's purpose, (12) following after sensations, (13) pride because of the view of a self, (14) being pleased with rectifying the defect of conceptions, (15) desire for abiding, (16) deliberate referential focus, (17) making the meaning unclear, (18) inwardly

absorbing the mind's diffusion, (19) holding to perdurability, (20) being without a purpose because of evenness: if these twenty defects are produced, they should be viewed as empty. In the *sūtra* section²⁵⁶ they are a deviation: the empty notions that pertain to the vulgar mind.

6.2.2.4.2.2.6. Eliminating defects without rectifying the mind

If antidotes are taught, this is unsuitable for the simultaneous approach, [according to which] rectification is a defect. Without rectifying the mind or inspecting it, it is actualized and [the defect] is eliminated. Certainly, all phenomena are thusness as their primordial and fundamental root; what is there to examine through individually discerning sapience?²⁵⁷ What purpose is there to actualize? If there is no purpose to actualize, what need is there to talk of rectifying the defects of conceptions! By resting uncontrived in the realization of great equality,²⁵⁸ the great rectification is only not to emerge [from that state].²⁵⁹ [248] For instance, it is like miraculous appearances in the sky that, when uncontrived, are self-appeared in space. The *brGyad-cu-pa* says,²⁶⁰

It is like a child, not fully grown,²⁶¹
Who remains distracted by many affairs;
Yet these many affairs being selfless,
They can be controlled by concentration,
Signs suppressed in equality's open dimension.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* states,²⁶²

Since the dualistic view is not born,²⁶³
What dualistic notions could occur?
Self-originated, they are appeased—such is the principle of
non-inhibiting;
Primordially uncontrived, absolute meaningfulness is clear.

Also,²⁶⁴

All wavering or inhibited sensations
Occur naturally and are inherently appeased.
In brief, whatever is labeled or thought will change;
Hence, everything as the essence appears—
Uncontrived, there is no wavering.
Since variegated fluctuations are not a flaw,
One need not inhibit the miraculous [display of thoughts]:
there is no deterioration.

Not imaging anything at all, whatever oscillation of
conceptions occurs is no longer [felt to be] dreadful;
hence it need not be inhibited or patched over. [249]
Even a little rectification is a flaw, on account of which
one does not see non-duality; hence, it is called a
corruption. Furthermore, by referentially imaging the
mind, one does not see absolute meaningfulness.
Therefore, one does not inhibit anything at all; one will
feel fluctuations, but at the very time of feeling them,
they are the beingness of phenomena, so there are no
fluctuations.

Thus, if absolute meaningfulness is still extrinsic and
is not seen by oneself,²⁶⁵ one should not give up on it.
For instance, it is like a butter lamp in a vase, unseen yet
luminous. Or like a cat's claws, which can work even
though dissimulated by her soft fur. The same source
states,²⁶⁶

The nature of one skilled in yoga
Is like a luminous [lamp] in a vase or vessel;
Although endowed with a treasury of sapience,
It is like the claws of a feline:
When the meaning concealed inside is revealed,
The fools see nothing at all.
Its modality is but one, like, for instance,
A man holding a treasure in his body
Who is accompanied by paupers:
Both are concomitant, and there is no distinction [between
them].²⁶⁷

If it be asked what should be done when a flaw occurs, it is replied that it is just as, for example, if one grasps at the sky, clouds will occur on its limit. If one does not discursively examine the sky, there are no clouds to be seen. [250] Likewise, the beingness of phenomena being without any grasping, how could conceptions be produced? If when one sees the thusness of all phenomena, incongruent conceptions are still produced, that, in any case, is fluctuation. The *brGyad-cu-pa* says,²⁶⁸

If one grasps at the sky, clouds cover it up,
Yet for him who knows that the sky is nonexistent,
Even should a cloud occur, it is impossible for it to cover up
[the sky].

So if one does not hold on to anything, conceptions are not produced.

6.2.2.4.2.3. Comparing the *sTon-mun* and the simultaneous approach of *Mahāyoga*

Despite this being the case, non-inhibiting is found in numerous texts of the *sTon-mun*.²⁶⁹

Being without inhibiting,
There is nothing at all to inhibit;
One should therefore without inhibiting be.

It may be said, “What you say is not to the point.” To such similar [objections] it is replied that since on their²⁷⁰ stage they inspect but do not make evident, this must be relinquished by those of sharp faculties. Since they view sensations as empty and unborn, they rest without relinquishing anything. [251] But being of vulgar mind, it has already been described that they do not touch non-duality.²⁷¹

6.2.2.5. The indications

6.2.2.5.1. *Three experiences of meditation*

The experiences of meditation in *Mahāyoga* are explained as being threefold: there is the experience of wavering, the experience of attainment, and the experience of stability.²⁷²

The experience of wavering is like a waterfall: one is unstable, and the defect of conceptions is produced. Here one should tauten up a little.

[The experience of] attainment is like a stream: even the mind’s wandering is produced with leisure and as non-imaging.²⁷³ Although a subtle oscillation²⁷⁴ of conceptions may occur, one is relaxed at heart. [252] Here one should implement equanimity.

The experience of stability is like a deep lake: clear and non-discursive, [the mind] is veritably stable. Since conceptions are not produced, there is no need to

implement equanimity. In this regard, many indications may occur.

6.2.2.5.2. The warmth of progress

According to one perspective, the experience is as follows: whatever purpose one works toward {with effort}, one should not ponder on its outcome. With regard to substances {when there are indications}, and so forth, one should ponder that there is nothing to do. Whatever oscillation of conceptions occurs, one should ponder that it is produced again and again; even if it multiplies, it is comprised in the five.²⁷⁵

Thus, the stability of experience is shown in terms of warmth:²⁷⁶ generally, there is the sequence of wavering, attainment, and stability. In essence, outward warmth refers to fancying the lightness of one's body; inward warmth refers to not feeling the breath's inner and outer fluctuation; secret warmth refers to directly settling in absolute meaningfulness. These are similar to the experiences [described earlier as threefold]. Furthermore, it is said,²⁷⁷

When definitive warmth is experienced as threefold,
[253] Various types of indications may appear.

6.2.2.5.2.1. Outer indications

It may be asked, “What are the indications of having attained warmth?” [It is replied that] at times physical bliss is produced through concentration. Through the open sense-doors as support, one sees all entities under the aspect of form. At times one may see the seed-

syllables of awakened speech. At times one may behold the emblems and gestures of awakened mind.²⁷⁸ Moreover, one may see a dark cumulus²⁷⁹ or behold²⁸⁰ a vision of white luminescence,²⁸¹ etc. One may see smokiness or else see the exhaustive sense-bases (Skt. *kṛtsnāyatana*) of fire, of water, or of wind.²⁸² One may see the light of a great lotus in the sky or else behold a vision of particles of dust or crescent moons, etc. [254] One may see non-humans come to perform worship. One may behold the Victorious One conferring empowerment with outstretched hand and giving a prophecy or else behold the scope of Māra. All such occurrences pertain to outer indications.

6.2.2.5.2.2. Inner indications

If it be asked what the inner indications are, they are as follows: to conquer illnesses and enemies; not to sense when one is being called at; to be without the eight worldly phenomena, namely, those that are liked, i.e., gain, praise, fame, and renown, and those that are disliked, i.e., no-gain, blame, infamy, and anonymity;²⁸³ not to get angry when insulted nor to respond when hit; not to produce attachment even when seeing a divine maiden; to be without anxiety or fear even when seeing a blazing ogre; not to be attached to food and wealth; to be without discursive grasping; to have clear sense-faculties even when one is free from foodstuffs; to have attained suppleness of body and mind; [255] to be without lice;²⁸⁴ to be of pure scent; to greatly rejuvenate; to be without sleepiness; and to be liberated from illness.

6.2.2.5.3. *Why the indications are taught*

One might ponder on the need to teach these here. They are taught so that beginners may cheerfully anticipate them as they proceed onward. The ***Kun-'dus*** declares,²⁸⁵

For instance, in the world a child
For long pines after his mother,
But, even before seeing her, when he hears the sound [of her
approach],
He cheers up in anticipation.

Likewise, because of the warmth which occurs as a great
omen,
One veritably strives, and so obtains bliss.
Therefore, by knowing the presaging signs
It is appropriate to exert oneself with effort.

6.2.2.5.4. *Transcending hope for the indications*

It may be asked, “Will these [signs] occur whether or not one hopes for them? If it is possible for the indications not to occur, does this mean that one will be unable to accomplish [one’s practice]?” [It is replied that] hope to take on [something] is unnecessary. Even if these indications do not occur, this is not a flaw, and one will be able to accomplish [one’s practice] through the pith instructions. The ***Zhus-lan*** states,²⁸⁶

Just as sullied water may become limpid
And one need not search for a [separate] reflection of sun
and moon, [256]
So one’s own mind may be purified through yoga,
And one need not search [separately] for the Victorious
One’s blessing.

And,²⁸⁷

Since the Victorious One's nature is sapience and
compassion,
There is no pivoting on external indications and signs.
For example, if a man who desires fire finds it,²⁸⁸
He does not pivot on whether or not there is the fire's
indication, smoke.
Hence, the intellect craving for indications and signs
Should not fancy that they will occur from somewhere else
nor hope for them.
The two aspects²⁸⁹ of the main yoga of the Buddhas of the
three times are self-originated;
Aware of this, one strives to view the equality of mind.

It may be asked how one is to know when the indications occur. [It is replied that] one should not be attached to this. If it be asked why, it is because being attached to and liking [these indications] is the great obstruction because of which one does not attain thusness; it is the activity of Māra. Moreover,²⁹⁰

As long as there is depraved psychic wavering,
There is the activity of Māra.

[257] Thus to like and become attached to the indications is a wrong notion. If it be asked why this is the case, [it is replied with the following citation] from the pith instructions:²⁹¹

While one abides in absolute meaningfulness,
That is the thusness of intrinsic awareness.
The marvelous indication which occurs
Is that one thinks of nothing and does not examine
discursively.

Whatever indications appear, not one phenomenon as small as a particle of dust can be found that is not the thusness of intrinsic awareness. Therefore, one should not like or become excessively attached to these [indications] but should know that they are phenomena's beingness.

6.2.2.5.5. Omens in one's dreams

What is more, omens may occur in one's dreams: one may see the world-realms of the hells or see a country one has not previously seen. One may see the third-order chiliocosm flat like the palm of one's hand or see oneself being released from the executioner. One may see oneself being healed of poisoning or see oneself swimming across a lake. One may see oneself being liberated from poison or dream of oneself bleeding. One may dream of oneself riding on the sun and moon or see the disks of sun and moon setting. The occurrence of such omens signifies that one's obscurations will be cleansed, that one will see the truth,²⁹² and that one will tread the stages. [258] One should view them as mind's beingness.

6.3. Conduct

6.3.1. Four types of conduct

Now, when emerging from equality, one should engage in conduct without attachment. In this regard, there are four [types of] conduct: conduct whose means is intrepid deportment, conduct without attachment or

hatred, emulation of absolute meaningfulness, and conduct of harmonious conformity.

6.3.1.1. The conduct of intrepid deportment

The equal conduct of intrepid deportment refers to engaging in equality without particularizing such aspects as clean and filthy. What is more, he who holds the means should engage in the entities of cyclic existence as well as in whatever phenomena are posited as having to be relinquished by all [ordinary practitioners]. The *brGyad-cu-pa* says,²⁹³

The medicine which repels the conceptions of sentient
beings
Should be taken up as chief: [. . .]
The enlightened mind, the great flesh,
Feces, urine, and *rakta*—
These the adept constantly eats.²⁹⁴

And,²⁹⁵

For one who is thoroughly seized by the spells, illness
Is incapable of harming at all.
One who has realized means and sapience
Will not be harmed by suffering throughout the three times.
[. . .] [259]
For one endowed with means and sapience,
All the afflictions are the cause of enlightenment.

As for its qualities,²⁹⁶

One obtains the empowerments of adamantine body and
speech
In order [to consume] the substances of accomplishment.

It may be said, “Well, in the *Mahāyāna*, even if one has not realized means and sapience, one chiefly engages in [deeds that are] utterly white.” [It is replied that] this does not reveal liberation. The same source states,²⁹⁷

Without realizing means and sapience,
One is not liberated and cycles around the three realms.

Furthermore,²⁹⁸

If one is not seized by skillful means,
Even should one have the path’s virtuous conduct,
One will be born among the gods of the higher levels and
humans
But will not attain the stage without birth or death.

And,²⁹⁹

Brahmā and the seers eat what is clean,
And so do the serpent-spirits and priests;
But these I do not explain to be liberated.³⁰⁰
There are beasts who eat the supreme grass³⁰¹
For their entire life,
And yet these I do not explain to be liberated.

Hence, it is said that without being seized by means, one will not transcend the stage of cyclic existence. In any case, in the *Mahāyāna*, if one holds on to means, one’s conduct may be indefinite: [260] whatever one engages in will become the two accumulations. Without inhibiting one’s conduct, the truth of enjoyment is merit. Being without grasping or attachment is wisdom. If it be asked what the means really are, [it is replied that]

through sapience without imaging, one is not tainted by the imprints. The same text continues,³⁰²

The unsurpassed secret *Mantrayāna*
Is accomplished insofar as one is seized by means.

Tantric exegesis points out that the five ambrosias symbolize the five awakened families. At the same time, the transgressive nature of these substances should not be downplayed, as an important component of tantric ritual (at least in the early days of the tantric movement) was and is to allow the adept to go beyond the taboos and confines of ordinary behavior. Cf. Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 264, 291–292.

6.3.1.2. Conduct without attachment or hatred

As for conduct without attachment or hatred, the objects of one's attachment, such as one's country, serfs, jewels, and granary, horses and elephants, kingdom and parents, kin and relatives, spouse, sons and daughters, sweetheart, etc., as well as the objects of one's hatred, such as those who criticize, insult, and hit one, are without self-sufficiency. In relative truth, they are the configuration of wisdom, whereas in absolute truth, they are the enlightened mind, awareness; [both truths are] essentially inseparable throughout the three times, so that one does not referentially imagine any apparent characteristics. [261] There is not even the name of self and other, so there is nothing to become attached to or

hate [as object], no one [as subject], nor any action. Hence, one does not become attached to any enjoyment, nor does one hate anything. Again, the treasure states,³⁰³

All that appears as the objects of attachment or hatred
Is by nature without a self.
Whether one is worshiped or criticized,
There is nothing to be attached to or to recriminate.³⁰⁴

One should act in congruency with one's purpose.

6.3.1.3. The emulation of absolute meaningfulness

As for the emulation of absolute meaningfulness, one who abides in yoga may perform or engage in any of the four types of conduct.³⁰⁵ Seeing [phenomena] as illusory {in relative truth} as do the *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamikas*], there is no conduct to reject. But being superior to that [approach], even when one emerges from equality, one does not inhibit appearances. As for oneself, there are no [appearances] that have gone, nor has their coming been obstructed. At this time, one beholds the intrinsic clarity of non-dual awareness. Thereby, one will never be free from absolute meaningfulness.

In any case, one does not obstruct discursive wandering. As for oneself, there are no [appearances] that have gone, nor has their coming been obstructed, nor are there [appearances] that have come. [262] What is there to do or engage in? Not imaging, nor being attached to, nor searching for anything is non-action. This is conduct without discursive grasping; it is

conduct that is primevally equal with respect to the eight worldly phenomena. The *brGyad-cu-pa* declares,³⁰⁶

As for the way without conceptualization,
It partakes of everything without attachment.

And,³⁰⁷

Whatever one enjoys while going, lying down, or sitting,
It is important that one's meditation not deteriorate.

The same source continues,³⁰⁸

Clouds of lyrics and dance,
Clothes, ornaments, food, and drink—
If one verily enjoys these while knowing them to be *HŪM*,
One may be glad in the wondrously occurring configuration.

The *Le'u-lag* states,³⁰⁹

As for the conduct of *Mahāyoga*,
One engages with everything inseparably
And experiences the taste of bliss supreme;
Who is there to become attached?
To be detached while one enjoys is [the accumulation of]
wisdom,
Whereas to provide supreme bliss is the accumulation of
merit;
Thus is the state which one enjoys.

The authoritative scripture says,³¹⁰

Throughout appearance-existence, all the substances with
signs
Which appear as enjoyment
For those whose intellect is dulled by ignorance,
The *yogin* skilled in means enjoys them,
While being acquainted with their absence of an intrinsic
nature.

[263] The *Kun-'dus* declares,³¹¹

Without imaging, one courses through space;
Coursing like that, one enjoys everything:
This is the supreme conduct of absolute truth.

The *Kun-'dus* continues,³¹²

For example, its nature is dreamlike:
When one is under the power of sleep,
[A dream lasts] but a minute, an instant, or a fleeting second,
Though it may seem to be years.
Whatever pleasure or suffering one may experience,
Once one awakens, one imagines it no more.
Likewise is the conduct of the *Mantrayāna*:
From the nature of emptiness,
Whatever types of conduct appear,
If one examines them, one is totally free from imaging.

As for the qualities of this conduct, the *brGyad-cu-pa*
states,³¹³

It is through diligence that is without ado
That one may take hold of the quintessence of
enlightenment.

Moreover,³¹⁴

Staying unfeignedly is superior to the activities [involving]
action and agent;
Whoever engages his intellect therewith attains
enlightenment.

Abiding on this absolute meaningfulness, one is without deliberate rectification and striving. [264] There is nothing whatsoever to engage in, nor is there anything to abandon or to relinquish. If one does not hold on to conduct, whatever one does, one will not deteriorate from the expanse of absolute meaningfulness. It is said that there is no doubt that this is the quintessence of enlightenment.

6.3.1.4. The conduct of harmonious conformity

As for the conduct of harmonious conformity, whatever one engages in, one is not obscured by thought—without rejecting any conduct that is for the purpose of wandering beings, one engages therein. The *Zhags-pa* says,³¹⁵

According to one perspective, even engaging in the hells,
etc., of sentient beings does not enslave.

And,³¹⁶

What need is there to mention the auditors! One should
neither repudiate nor excessively engage in anything.

One should be without hope and should not avail oneself of religious conduct or of conduct that is utterly white or black. Whatever one accomplishes or engages in should be for the purpose of wandering beings. Even in one's

temporary conduct, one should not, like a monkey or peacock, be disdainful or run about, nor should one be impudent³¹⁷ and impertinent or perform conduct that is vulgar and insolent. If one is veritably careful, [one's conduct] will be in agreement with the thoughts of wandering beings and one will not perform any misdeeds.

As for one's speech, because of the beingness of phenomena, one should neither repeat [spells] nor recite and explain the instructions for the purpose of wandering beings. [265] One should talk little but be cordial to everyone and express oneself with certainty. One should not laugh like a parrot or elemental spirit, nor recklessly chatter.

With one's psyche one should, at all times, never be free from great purposes. Otherwise, there is attachment and hatred, as well as hope and misgiving. One should not think of the wrong views. One should pacify one's mental continuum, so that one is gallant and gentle toward everyone as if toward one's son.

6.3.2. Defects with regard to the path of conduct

It may be asked, "What are the defects with regard to the path of conduct?" [It is replied that] if, upon getting up, one sometimes engages as before in the three doors, that is a flaw. What is more, if, when sitting, [one takes] a high [seat, that, too, is a defect]. If one does not apprehend absolute meaningfulness but looks at the sentient beings in the townships like a rodent searching

for little grains,³¹⁸ such mere watching is called “meditation that watches out for signs.”

When lying down, without meditating on absolute meaningfulness, one’s mind gives in to the various objects with signs and one recollects them: this is called “meditation of a fox in a charnel ground.”³¹⁹ [266] Furthermore, when sitting, one is free from the objects of thinking, but one’s intellect gives in to the power of sinking and sleepiness: such a non-deteriorating staying of the body is called “meditation of the sleeping ox or cairn” and is meaningless. When at times one assembles with servants and companions of contemplation, one gives up the evenness of absolute meaningfulness and expresses oneself in chatter, vulgar stories, and trivial gossip: that is called “meditation that liberates in laxness and agitation.” At times, when eating or drinking, one gives in to the dwindling of non-imaging enjoyment: such relinquishing or accepting of foodstuffs and the attachment of craving is called “meditation of the hungry ghosts’ avid attachment.” When going about, one’s steps should be smooth and one’s purpose should not deteriorate; going while jumping and running is called “the meaningless meditation of goat kids.”³²⁰ When entering a place, one makes one’s great purpose incidental; for the benefactors who convey trivial possessions, one is not empty of great blessings, so much so that one collects mountain herbs and confers these to them: this is called “meditation that consults with one’s next of kin.” [267]

Moreover, if one is popular, haughty, and renowned, one becomes involved in the intention of accomplishing

one's own desires. Being committed thereto, one's purpose does not meet [with success], but one is without the power to go backward. If [success] does occur, one's mind may be pleased, yet this is called "meditation that is a prison without coercion."

What is more, if one is in a meditation hut but does not implement contemplation, and assembles all that is select in the townships, one makes one's abode as the village chieftain and gobbles up [whatever is available]: this is called "the meaningless meditation of pigs." Like an ox who sullies his horns,³²¹ one is unable [to control] one's body and becomes the ridicule of people. One should not remain there. Though one may [go there] just to refresh oneself, one should not subsequently spend one's time there. The *g.Yus-spras* declares,³²²

For a *yogin* of signs and words,
The detail is in the words, but the meaning [remains] coarse:
He does not apply himself to the genuine meaning.
When he stands, he watches out for signs.
When he goes, he jumps about and runs like a vulgar person.
When he lies down, he gives in to the scrutinizing thoughts
of signs.
When he sits, he gives in to the power of sleepiness and
sinking.
When he eats, he enjoys [foodstuffs] under the power of
avid attachment.
[268] In gatherings he indulges in rumors about others.
In his meditation hut he works for the purpose of others,³²³
Consulting his possessions and thinking of his benefactions.
Though his desire is a desire for the higher levels [of
existence] and enlightenment,
His going is a going to the abodes of cyclic existence.
Through the quality of mere belief,
It is still possible that he be released at least once therefrom:
This is called the meditation of hypocrites.

Those who meditate nowadays [are engaged in] many tasks for the sake of these [types of] conduct and are not even able to guard [their precepts]. In any case, one should not go under their power. If one accomplishes [the practice] according to the textual tradition, the accomplishments are veritably close; this is stated in numerous oral injunctions and texts. One should make conduct one's chief [concern].

6.4. The fruition

6.4.1. The completion of the accumulations and the three awakened bodies

It may be asked whether, in the system of *Mahāyoga*, one can hope for [the fruition] or not without accruing the two types of accumulation. It is maintained that if one does not hope for the accumulations, by engaging in the cause of a pure aspiration, the three awakened bodies, namely, the fruition of maturation, are accomplished—this is not a deviation. Here, through the thusness of intrinsic awareness, the aggregates, constituents, and sense-bases are primordially the wisdom configuration. [269] When meditating, those on the path, whether their intellect be great or small, generate the seal of the awakened body from out of the state of thusness—this is the accumulation of merit. The clarity of the wisdom of thusness constitutes the accumulation of wisdom.

In any case, since the two accumulations are complete in the awareness that meditates on non-duality, accruing actions and activities is unnecessary. One does not put one's hope in anything other than the identity of the three awakened bodies. The *Rin-po-che'i sgron-ma* declares,³²⁴

If one obtains the power of the concentration of the
illustrative attributes and characteristics,
One accomplishes the Victorious One's body of form
through the great accumulation of merit;
If, through supreme sapience, one cleanses the mind of all
misconceptions,
One accomplishes the Victorious One's principal body
through the great accumulation of wisdom.
Do not view it as being accomplished in the manner of
maturation:
Wisdom is not to be obtained from elsewhere.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* says,³²⁵

The body of equality is endowed with supreme wisdom;
The master's empowerment is endowed with supreme
concentration;
The conduct of one's body is endowed with the supreme
accrual of virtue;
The body of form is endowed with supreme merits:
[270] Do not view it as being accomplished in the manner of
maturation—
It is not to be attained after striving:
At the very time of the cause, the supreme fruition [is
present].

The *brGyad-cu-pa* states,³²⁶

If one clearly meditates on the deity,
One obtains the great accumulation of merit.
If one knows that it is like a water moon,
One obtains the great accumulation of wisdom.

Hence, one becomes familiar with dwelling in the
fruition itself and is primordially free from any hope [of
obtaining it] elsewhere.

6.4.2. The purification of the obscurations as transformation

It may be asked, “Well, in what manner are the
obscurations to be purified?” [It is replied that] it is like,
for example, alchemy, or like darkness and
illumination.³²⁷ However many obscurations there may
be, one is like, for instance, a butter lamp unmoved by
the wind: the less there is smoke, the more the light
becomes clear. Here, in the thusness of intrinsic

awareness, if one is not corrupted³²⁸ by the effort [involving] action and agent, the obscurations automatically become smaller and clearer, being self-pacified. Moreover, being free from the conception of grasper, the obscuration of the afflictions is purified. Being without the conception of grasped, [the obscuration of] the knowable is purified. Due to their non-duality, the obscuration of the view is purified. [271]

If it be asked whether they should be relinquished or purified, it is replied that without deliberately relinquishing the obscurations, they are intrinsically purified. Although this may be given the name “relinquishing,” both relinquishing and enslavement are absent. In this manner, a single drop of alchemical tincture suffices to turn thousands of pieces of iron and copper into gold. Thus, iron and copper are without essence. [Similarly,] a vase full of *halāhala* poison³²⁹ may be transformed into a remedy with a single drop of myrobalan medicine and be freed from its disease-causing properties. [Likewise,] a thousand years of darkness and unclarity may be purified through a single illumination,³³⁰ so that the darkness is no more. Therefore, when it [i.e., the darkness of the obscurations] dawns as wisdom, this is called “gradual relinquishing.” The [*Guhya-*] *garbha* says,³³¹

Just as illumination originates from darkness,
Such is the manner of medicine and of alchemical
transformation.

The *brGyad-cu-pa* declares,³³²

Just as white can become any color,
And even poison may be transformed into medicine,
Likewise, the three poisons³³³ are enlightenment
And the five [classes of] wandering beings³³⁴ are joined to
the path of enlightenment.

The *Zhags-pa* states,³³⁵

Without gradually relinquishing the obscurations, one is instantly
united to the rank of omniscience.

[272] The *Yon-tan bcu* says,³³⁶

Concerning the obscurations in *Mahāyoga*, everything—
Whether outwardly the objects or inwardly the mind—
Abides in equality.
“This is an obscuration, this is not”—
Such was never spoken by the king of equality.

By realizing that there is neither obscured nor obscurer,
they are intrinsically purified. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa*
declares,³³⁷

Through the force of such knowledge,
The darkness of the imprints is totally eliminated.
Like clouds swept away by the wind,
So is the aggregate of obscuration swept away.³³⁸
Just as a butter lamp eliminates darkness,
So that darkness itself becomes illuminated,
So does the instantaneous awareness of absolute
meaningfulness
Eliminate the darkness accrued since bygone times.

Furthermore, discarding an intrinsic essence and discarding craving are twofold. Ultimately, one is even free from the phenomena of the path as well as from individually discerning sapience. The same text says,³³⁹

The particulars of the means or vehicles can be discarded,
[. . .] Just like the boat which has liberated one from the
river.

[273] For instance, if one rubs two pieces of wood against each other, they both burn. Likewise, the obscurations and individually discerning sapience are both intrinsically pure.

6.4.3. Intrinsic arising of the accomplishments

It may be asked, “Well, if by comprehending this one does not relinquish [the obscurations], how is the fruition of clear wisdom to be accomplished?” [It is replied that] since the obscurations are pure, the accomplishments arise intrinsically. For example, when the sullyng dregs have been dispelled from the great lake, the reflection of the sun and moon arises therein without needing effort. Likewise, in the intrinsically limpid great lake of awareness, the awakened bodies and wisdoms arise without one having to search for them. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* states,³⁴⁰

When the sky of the mind’s clear water
Is without the sullyng clouds of the afflictions,
It is strewn with accomplishments, like the sun, moon, and
stars,
And unobscured blessings inherently arise.

The same text continues,³⁴¹

The great accomplishment, the beingness of mind,
Is a wish-granting jewel:
Whatever one imagines, [including] difficult
transformations, is accomplished,³⁴² and
[274] All the adept's great purposes are completed.
If the mind beholds the mind,
From where else should accomplishments come?
What is there to strive for, what to take on?
Without imaging effort or striving,
It is like, for instance, water, a mirror,
The sky, a sword, or crystal,
Whose very nature is to be clear.
When unsullied, etc., they are clear when looked at.
Since this is the nature of water, etc.,
It is not so by virtue of some great wonder.

The same text continues,³⁴³

Since everything is non-abiding enlightenment,
If one searches for it, it is not accomplished.
When purged of illusion,
One is of confusion free
And abides in the heart of unelaborated wisdom.

The *brGyad-cu-pa* declares,³⁴⁴

Resting uncontrived in the state as it is,
There originates the configuration of spontaneous presence.

And,³⁴⁵

In the seminal nucleus of wisdom itself
Appear the two seminal nuclei of wisdom—
Inconceivable, infinite and supreme!

[275] The *Rin-po-che sgron-ma* states,³⁴⁶

When the principal body [that is] one's integral identity³⁴⁷
is searched for
Elsewhere than in the quintessence of enlightenment, it is
not obtained.
Just as in waking from a dream, one is free from the
[oneiric] forms,
So, when relinquishing the obscurations, one attains
enlightenment: this has been said by the Victorious One.

This means that once one has reached the thusness of awareness,³⁴⁸ one has obtained the fruition of awakening.

Moreover, although for the time being the essence is taught in terms of being realized and accomplished, in fact, once one becomes one's integral identity, there is nothing to obtain, so that this [provisional teaching] is merely to purify craving.

6.4.4. Time required to accomplish the fruition

In any case, it may be asked how long it takes to attain the fruition. Those on the *Hīnayāna* say that the time of maturation can be [felt] in this [life] (Skt. *dr̥ṣṭadharmavedanīya*),³⁴⁹ in the next (Skt. *upapadyavedanīya*), after any number of rebirths (Skt. *aparaparyāyavedanīya*), or be of uncertain ripening (Skt. *aniyata vipākā*), etc.;³⁵⁰ it may be accomplished after three incalculable eons, or the deeds (Skt. *karma*) may converge in the moment of completing an action, etc.³⁵¹ In particular, they say that this solely pivots on one's deeds, so [the fruition] is veritably far away. Here,

one's integral identity is not a rationale as with the *Sautrāntika* [*Mādhyamikas*]. [276] Since it abides primordially as the spontaneously complete fruition, it does not pivot on a later accomplishment through effort. For example, if one searches for flawless seeds [and sows them] on a fertile soil, the fruits will be quick [to come forth] and be plentiful. Likewise, this can be applied to this very life. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,³⁵²

Bowing before³⁵³ the absolute meaningfulness of equality,
If one knows the simultaneous approach,
It matters not whether one's period of meditation is long or short,
Nor whether or not one is karmically predestined,
Nor indeed whether one ponders on when [the fruition] will be accomplished:
For as soon as one rests in equipoise in the absolute meaningfulness of equality,
Awareness dawns.

The *Klong-'grel* of Vimalamitra says,³⁵⁴

When karmic predestination is taught,
The neophyte may doubt,
Fancying that afterwards all will be alike
And viewing the accomplishment for later;
Yet if he perseveres in this here,
Though not karmically predestined, he becomes accomplished.

In that case, it may be asked how [the fruition] is to be accomplished in this time.³⁵⁵ Here, having entered the unmistakable meaning [277] and exhausted the contamination of the aggregates, one presently achieves,

with this body that is constituted of the remnant maturation [of one's deeds], [the stage of] an awareness-holder who dominates life.³⁵⁶ Since one may extend [one's life span] for up to 1,600 years and accomplish [the fruition within that period], one goes to the stage of genuine complete [awakening] without being dissociated from this body; it is therefore said that [the fruition] has been accomplished in this life. Furthermore, the *Zhus-lan* states,³⁵⁷

What is the meaning of accomplishing awakening in a single life?

With this body of remnant [deeds]

One achieves [the stage of] an awareness-holder dominating life.

With the life of an awareness-holder

One becomes the unsurpassed Samantabhadra.

6.4.5. The criterion of actual perception

Fifthly, there is the criterion of actual perception:³⁵⁸ when the great instructor Vimalamitra revealed the manner of passing away in Tibet, he nevertheless continued to dwell in India, as if he had not passed away.³⁵⁹ Padmasambhava later departed to tame the ogres [in Camaradvīpa]. There are innumerable scholars in India as well as in the mighty³⁶⁰ Tibetan empire who went to the [abode of] awareness-holders.³⁶¹ The nobleman of the Zhang [clan]³⁶² conversed with his tutelary deity. [278] Lotsāwa Rin-chen-mchog³⁶³ went to and enjoyed Prabhāskara.³⁶⁴ Ngan-lam rGyal-ba mchog-dbyangs attained the accomplishment of Hayagrīva.³⁶⁵ The nobleman {gNubs} Nam-mkha'i snying-po was

welcomed by sky-farers (Skt. *dākinī*) [to the celestial realm].³⁶⁶ The preceptor gNyan dPal-dbyangs was welcomed by sky-farers [to the celestial realm]. Such occurrences are innumerable, and it is explained that they will continue to occur later; this has been spoken of in the oral injunctions and pith instructions. Since it was possible for such things to occur with some of the [lineage] successors, one should not have any doubts.

If it is possible to abandon the aggregate [of the body], one should not look for this far away. There are two manners of transcendence that are found in the oral injunctions. In [the case of] the transcendence without a remainder of the aggregates, it is doubtless that the *yogin* [will attain it] as soon as he is free from the net or knot of the body,³⁶⁷ as in the example of the *garuḍa* or lion.³⁶⁸ It is therefore appropriate to veritably exert oneself in these special means that effect the exhaustion of cyclic existence.

If one were to ask for an example [to illustrate] the Great Yoga, *Mahāyoga*, [we would say] it is similar to the sun. [279] When the light of the sun rises in the sky, it illuminates everything, so that there is not even the name of darkness: thus, luminous clarity is the very essence of daytime. Likewise, in *Mahāyoga*, one's own intrinsic awareness, the enlightened mind, is the thusness of all phenomena; everything is the wisdom of intrinsic awareness, primordial intrinsic clarity, untouched by limitations. One is primordially free from such temporarily made designations as appearing and non-appearing. The *brGyad-cu-pa* declares,³⁶⁹

As with the light of the rising sun,
There is neither appearing nor non-appearing.

TN: Although the gloss reads “gNyags Jñānakumāra,” this appears most unlikely, since Jñānakumāra hailed from the gNyags clan, not the Zhang. On the other hand, his disciple Zhang rgyal-ba’i yon-tan, another of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes’ teachers, appears a likely candidate. Note that the term *drung* that is appended to the clan name (i.e., *zhang drung*, C 277.6) is an honorific suffix.

6.5. Distinguishing the *Mantrayāna* from the *sTon-mun*

In that case, it may be asked how it is that some parties say that there is no distinction between thusness in the secret *Mantrayāna* and in the *sTon-mun*; or that in reality the *Sūtrayāna* and *Mantrayāna* are incompatible only in terms of their means; or that they are alike in pertaining to the *Mahāyāna*. It is replied that nowadays, this is said by people who have not assimilated the *Mantrayāna* with confidence, who are eloquent in the *sūtra* section, and who are intellectually deluded. [280] Seeing them one becomes ill, as with a reptile³⁷⁰ drinking milk.³⁷¹ Listen, for although the ample meaning of this is indescribable, it shall be taught in brief.

6.5.1. The twelvefold superiority of the *Mantrayāna*

Since the *Sūtrayāna* and *Mantrayāna* [both] pertain to the *Mahāyāna* whose veritably definitive meaning is

unmistaken, their future occurrence was previously prophesied by numerous Victorious Ones. A sacred text of the *Madhyamaka* teaches that the secret *Mantrayāna* is the short path. There are twelve superiorities [that make the *Mantrayāna*] veritably great: (1) the superiority of the generation of the enlightened mind, (2) the superiority of the means of realization,³⁷² (3) the superiority of the view, (4) the superiority of the concentration in meditative equipoise, (5) the superiority of conduct, (6) the superiority of the mental rectification when the defect of concepts occurs, (7) the superiority of the accrual of the accumulations, (8) the superiority of the cleansing of the obscurations, (9) the superiority of engagement for the purpose of others, (10) the superiority of the mode of approach, (11) the superiority of the fruition accomplished, and (12) the superiority of the activities performed. [281]

6.5.1.1. The superiority of the generation of the enlightened mind: in the *Madhyamaka*, one first must discretely generate the enlightened mind [with regard to each of the two truths], meditating on great compassion in relative truth and generating the ungenerated in absolute truth.

Here, [on the other hand,] one generates from the beginning the non-dual enlightened mind. The *Guhyagarbha* says,³⁷³

The mind of the primordially non-dual Buddha is generated as wisdom.

The *{Dris-lan} lNga-bcu-pa* states,³⁷⁴

As for the generation of the enlightened mind in the great
Madhyamaka,
One generates the enlightened mind individually with
respect to the two truths.
But in the definitive meaning of the secret [*Mantrayāna*],
whose means are great,
One generates the non-dual enlightened mind.
It is like, for instance, the lion cub, which outshines [all
other creatures]:
That is on account of the strength of non-duality.

The *{Las-kyi} Me-long* declares,³⁷⁵

Wherever the lion cub goes, all flee,
For his superiority is overbearing.
Even without the might of the awareness of the
quintessential meaning,
[The *Mantrayāna*] outshines the *Madhyamaka* just in terms
of the generation of the enlightened mind. [282]

6.5.1.2. As for the superiority of the means of realization, it is superior both in terms of the manifoldness and the greatness of its means. For the *sTon-mun*, the means are merely those that can be gleaned through hearing and thinking. Without being schooled in the state of emptiness, which is the great means, they posit mere non-effort as supreme. Since this means of non-effort is unidirectional with regard to truth, it is not great.

Here, [on the other hand,] the means are superior because of their manifoldness and greatness. The instructions contain numerous means of concentration, whose distinction lies in these means' profound power. What is more, their paths of hearing and thinking have the distinction of coming from a real aural lineage. The

awareness that encompasses means and sapience is in the state of thusness, where mind is absent. Hence, though non-action is akin to non-effort, it is superior to it because it does not strive toward non-duality.

For example, if a small physician is unable to cure [a person], a great one may still be able to nurture [him back to health]. But if the great physician is unable to do so, neither will the small one be able to nurture [the patient back to health]. Even if the *Madhyamaka* view deteriorates and one's discipline is rent apart, there is still some basis [for practice] in the *Mantrayāna*. [283] But once the spells have been debased, not even [the corpse's] hairs will be revived through the *Madhyamaka*.

6.5.1.3. As for the superiority of the view, for the *sTon-mun*, the emptiness that is free from action and effort is the rationale for the completion of the fruition of the Victorious One.³⁷⁶ While they do not hope for the fruition, [they still] view it as an object because there is the duality [between cause and effect]. While they [profess] non-duality, among the two truths they look solely at absolute truth. The two truths are not clear to them at the same time, which is why they alternate [between them]. Hence, they do not scrutinize the fact that in the non-dual thusness of the *Mahāyāna* the fruition is spontaneously accomplished.

Here, [on the other hand,] one instantaneously visualizes the emanations of the numerous peaceful and wrathful configurations from out of the state of thusness, together with their radiation and absorption. The followers of the *sūtras*³⁷⁷ are incapable of [generating]

appearances out of emptiness: their defect is to be free from relative truth, and this constitutes the distinction [between them and *Mahāyoga*]. [284] The *brGyad-cu-pa* says,³⁷⁸

Not realizing the very meaning of equality,
One creates a duality out of the absolute and the relative.
If phenomena and individuals are without self,
That is the stage of enlightenment.
For the *Mahāyāna* of means,
Relative truth is equal and complete,
And absolute truth is endowed with seven riches³⁷⁹ —
[It all depends on] whether one's view is high or low.

This is clearly stated in the *Man-ngag spyi-bcings*³⁸⁰ and has, moreover, already been laid out before.

6.5.1.4. The superiority of concentration: for the followers of the *sūtras*, both the unwavering of awareness from the state of unborn emptiness³⁸¹ and the unwavering with regard to the non-duality of the *Mahāyāna* are alike in being unwavering; this is [like saying that] an empty bag filled with breath is just [the same as] one filled with a precious treasure! As it is said,³⁸²

When the followers of the *sūtras* meditate on emptiness,
The beingness of the meditating mind expands into
emptiness.
In the [vehicle of] great means, intrinsic awareness is non-
dual and luminously clear,
So that the superiority of its concentration transcends all
thought.

6.5.1.5. The superiority of conduct and the mode of seeing when getting up from [the state of] equality: [285] the *Mādhyamikas*, when getting up [from the state of meditative equipoise], see reified entities as illusory. Although the *sTon-mun* may fervently yearn [for release] in a single life, they only behold absolute truth.

Again, with regard to the path of conduct, conduct can be explained as fourfold.³⁸³ Here, when getting up [from the state of meditative equipoise], one beholds non-duality. The authoritative scripture declares,³⁸⁴

Recall in your psyche the absence of an intrinsic nature.³⁸⁵
That is the indication that you have realized great sapience!

The superiority of the path of conduct with regard to the four types of conduct is [illustrated by] the conduct of the fox and that of the lion, respectively.³⁸⁶

6.5.1.6. The superiority of the rectification of defects: in the great *Madhyamaka*, ultimately, whatever conceptions are produced, one should neither feel them nor inhibit them nor follow after them. As is the case with water and ice, they say that the unborn emptiness is not clear [in these conceptions].

Here, [on the other hand,] whatever conceptions occur, they are like cinnabar and its juice: both are the intrinsic clarity of non-dual awareness. Without the corrupting actions of rectification, they both are like medicine being poured into poison: the poison itself, when known to be a remedy, can be eaten.³⁸⁷ [286]

6.5.1.7. The superiority of the accumulations: the *Mādhyamikas* maintain that the accumulation of merit

[is accrued] by abiding on the virtues of body and speech, whereas [the accumulation of] wisdom [is accrued] through sapience that does not referentially image emptiness. However, they do not know the fruition other than as a mere rationale. They maintain that by engaging [in virtue] with one's body and speech to the best of one's ability and by conquering fearlessness,³⁸⁸ [the fruition] is complete.

Here, [on the other hand,] without wavering from thusness, one visualizes [oneself] as the deity: since the clarity [of the visualization] is one's intrinsic awareness, when one is competent in the meaning that is thus primordially, one no longer needs the employment of action and agent; with regard to the two self-arising [accumulations], the latter are merely like a harvest in spring being crushed by grass.

6.5.1.8. The superiority of the cleansing of the obscurations: the system of the textual tradition of the *sTon-mun* relates that without relinquishing the obscurations, [one attains] simultaneously the genuine [stage]. They consider everything to be one in absolute truth. Having the faculty to instantaneously complete the approach, gradual cleansing [of the obscurations is still required].

Here, [on the other hand,] the two obscurations are not relinquished: being the clarity of wisdom, they are intrinsically pure. [287] For instance, [the difference] is like that between something being pure after having been washed and [something being pure] without there being any need to wash it.

6.5.1.9. The superiority of [one's engagement for] the purpose of others and the superiority of the activities: in the *Madhyamaka*, one specially performs activities with one's body and speech and implements compassion. However, until one has attained the stage of concentration, one has no capacity.

Here, [on the other hand,] one instantaneously effects the purpose [of wandering beings] through the peaceful and wrathful emanations that perform the four activities.³⁸⁹ By actually engaging therein, [wandering beings] are tamed. For instance, [the distinction between both approaches] is just like the dissimilarity of the light of the stars and the light of the sun.³⁹⁰

6.5.1.10. The superiority of the mode of approach: the *Mādhyamikas* do not escape from the purpose of absolute truth and implement equanimity.

Here, [on the other hand,] everything is non-duality: without thinking of or searching for anything at all, one has entered into [non-duality] itself. For example, it is like [the distinction] between a householder and his guest, or that between entering a home filled with treasures and an empty house.

6.5.1.11. The superiority of the fruition: the *Mādhyamikas* train for eons in order to accomplish [the stage of] universal light.³⁹¹ Through the strength of their aspirations and compassion, they arise as the body of form. [288]

But [here, in the vehicle of] great means, the five awakened bodies of non-duality,³⁹² complete without striving, dwell as the integral identity of all the phenomena of cyclic existence and transcendence;

hence, emanations arise on their own, like waves in the ocean—this is their demarcation.

[The stage of] universal light is a plane of residence.³⁹³ Here, the real [fruition is the stage of an] awareness-holder of spontaneous completeness.³⁹⁴ When the Victorious One's empowerments and blessings shine forth as the natural configuration, one has gone to the stage of [an awareness-holder of] spontaneous presence.

It is needless to say that, as do the followers of the *sūtras*,³⁹⁵ there are parties [of people] who have not, as individuals, assimilated the *Mantrayāna* with confidence but are full of pretentious pride [in their prattling of] words; they say that though the *Sūtrayāna* and *Mantrayāna* [vary in terms of] the distance of the accomplishment, the fruition of [the stage of] universal light is the same. They are rash and have not themselves gained confidence in the *Mantrayāna*.

He who thus implements the spells is like a gem appointed among the rows of ministers.³⁹⁶ As for this materialistic view, it is just as if, having abandoned the bodily form, one were to chase after its shadow. [289] The *Zhags-pa* states,³⁹⁷

Transcending the stage of universal light,
When on [the stage of] the lotus endowed . . .

The *bDud-rtsi'i rgyud* says,³⁹⁸

Having transcended the stage of universal light,
One rests on the stage of the lotus endowed.

The pith instruction on the *Mantrayāna* written by the instructor Āryadeva, a preceptor of the *Madhyamaka*, declares,³⁹⁹

One views the unborn emptiness,
Free from the interdependence of singularity and
multiplicity;
While pertaining to⁴⁰⁰ matter, it transcends it
And is said to be the supreme matter.⁴⁰¹
Through this cause, one journeys to the [stage of] universal
light.
The principal body of the path of great means
Is the genuinely complete Buddha.
Like waves rising in the ocean
Or the form of the moon [reflected] in water, it neither goes
nor comes;
It does not pivot on the strength of aspirations.

If one does not pierce through matter, one has not seen absolute meaningfulness.

To blend the *Sūtrayāna* and *Mantrayāna* is a mistake with regard to [one's understanding of] the textual tradition. It is as if one were to blend butter and glue: both would be spoilt.

6.5.1.12. The superiority of the [activities] performed by the Victorious One: [290] one performs [activities] through the impulse of one's aspirations; one's intent does not pivot on anything at all. Through the blessing of spontaneous completeness, [whatever is desired] arises like a wish-granting gem, and one effects the purpose [of wandering beings].

6.5.2. Failure to comprehend the superiority of the *Mantrayāna*

There are those who do not comprehend the detailed explanations of the textual tradition that have been pursued earlier. [Nevertheless], having gone over the meaning earlier, it will not be cited here again. Nowadays there are *mantrins* who like poetry, who take pains in the victories and defeats of debate, and who, while not seeing absolute meaningfulness, teach it [to others]: it is like showing a color before the blind—they are sightless. Hence, it is veritably valuable that one should assimilate with confidence the view of the *Mantrayāna*.

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, the sixth chapter, which explains the textual tradition of *Mahāyoga*, is complete.

¹ gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 161.5. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 190 (Tibetan text), 463 (English translation).

² Gl.: [One speaks of “abiding”] merely on account of the power of labeling with designations.

³ Although both C 187.6 and M 132b.6 read *Slob-dpon Ma-dus dus-su*, it is likely that this is a corruption for *Ma-du san-du* / *Ma-du sa-du*, standing for Madhusādhū. The works of this master are preserved in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 454 and fragmentarily in a section of IOL Tib J 508. See Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, pp. 197, 234; also van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” p. 47. The transmission of Madhusādhū’s teachings to Tibet can probably be dated to the mid-9th century. See van Schaik, “The Sweet Sage and the *Four Yogas*,” p. 9.

⁴ This line is found in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 454 (IV.72–73). For a description, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang*, pp. 196–197. The line is also quoted (from

the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*) by sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī in his commentary to the *Guhyagarbha-tantra*. See van Schaik, “The Sweet Sage and the *Four Yogas*,” p. 7. For a translation of the passage from the Dunhuang manuscript, see *ibid.*, pp. 29 (English translation), 41 (Tibetan text).

⁵ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 154.1. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 183 (Tibetan text), 333 (English translation).

⁶ §1.5.2 (C 15).

⁷ Citation untraced. Nonetheless, an approximate parallel for the first phrase could be found in *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 862.3.

⁸ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 357.2.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 357.7–358.1.

¹⁰ Gl.: These are the authoritative scriptures, the pith instructions, and reasoning.

TN: I have emended *rig-pa* (“awareness”) to *rigs-pa* (“reasoning”) for contextual reasons.

¹¹ Citation untraced in *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 321–672.

¹² See §3.3.1.

¹³ Gl.: This can be ascertained through the scriptures and through reasoning with respect to Vilāsavajra’s philosophical text, and the same pertains to all those [texts] mentioned later.

TN: The Indian *Mahāyoga* master Vilāsavajra wrote an important commentary on the *Guhyagarbha-tantra*. The bibliographical reference is: sGeg-pa’i rdo-rje (Vilāsavajra), *dPal gSang-ba snying-po’i ’grel-pa rin-po-che’i spar-khab*, in NKD, vol. 23/’a, pp. 389–619. For some observations on this work, see Dalton, “A Crisis of Doxography,” pp. 128–130.

¹⁴ Gl.: One realizes this through the three seed-syllables and through the three purities.

¹⁵ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 899.1.

¹⁶ Gl.: This is to be understood as described.

¹⁷ Gl.: The arguments for the general and specific characteristics of phenomena are established on the basis of the authoritative scriptures.

TN: The point is that in the wisdom of equality the various characteristics are not considered in terms of discrete entities; however, the individually discerning wisdom does discern these characteristics. For example, the fact that various ingredients, such as tea leaves, hot water, milk, and sugar are mixed together in a cup and consumed as a single beverage does not in itself prevent one from discerning the taste of the various ingredients (Lama Jigme Namgyal, personal communication).

¹⁸ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 847.7–848.1.

¹⁹ Gl.: Because the illumination of awareness is without discursive thoughts relating to the general and specific characteristics, it is thusness.

²⁰ Gl.: The general characteristics are that even craving is impermanent, suffering, empty, and without self; hence, it is unestablished.

²¹ Gl.: Since its characteristic is momentariness, it is impermanent: [such is] blindness.

²² Gl.: Suffering is merely due to being momentarily pained.

²³ Gl.: Suffering, as a mere name in body and mind, is due to acting wretchedly.

²⁴ Citation untraced, except for some parallel fragments; cf. *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 851.2–852.1, 676.2.

²⁵ Gl.: The pith instructions and authoritative scriptures explain this in the manner of the component letters.

²⁶ Gl.: A self having the aspect of self-sufficiency cannot be established with regard to substances or with regard to the mind.

²⁷ Gl.: Since everything is one's integral identity, there is no self.

²⁸ Gl.: When the appearances relating to the afflictions are widespread, they are unestablished; hence, appearance-emptiness is unmistakably free from the center and from the three limitations.

TN: For the three limitations, see [Chapter 1](#), note 107.

²⁹ I take *chos-kyi rgya* to be an abbreviation for *chos-kyi sku-yi phyag-rgya*, following *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 851.2. An interpretation as “seal of awakened body” (*sku-yi phyag-rgya*) could also be proposed, following *ibid.*, p. 676.2.

³⁰ The five facts are the five sense-objects.

³¹ Gl.: This [authoritative scripture] establishes the axiom of integral being as well as the realization of the single cause.

TN: *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 453.3–4.

³² Gl.: This is the pillar for the axiom of integral being.

TN: This text by dGa'-rab rdo-rje is no longer extant.

³³ Gl.: This concerns the axiom of freedom from singularity and multiplicity.

TN: *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 877.6–7.

³⁴ The verb *snang* has been added according to the KH edition.

³⁵ Gl.: These are the final valid measures for comprehension.

³⁶ Padmasambhava, *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, p. 169.1–2.

³⁷ Among the nine gradual vehicles of the *rNying-ma* school, this refers in particular to *Kriyātantra*, *Ubhayatantra*, and *Yogatantra*. See Padmasambhava, *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, pp. 163–166.

³⁸ The implication is that the person in question, because he has not trained in pure vision (*dag-snang*), takes phenomena as reified entities rather than as the luminous display of deities; thus, he sees the moon without understanding it to be an instantiation of awakened body, speech, and mind.

³⁹ Gl.: i.e., Padmasambhava.

TN: Cf. Padmasambhava, *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, pp. 165.4–167.6, where the discussion, however, concerns the way of the Great Completeness (*rdzogs-pa chen-po'i tshul*). See also Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Gl.: In realizing their single cause, there are the three valid measures.

⁴¹ Gl.: This authoritative scripture [establishes] the single cause as well as the axiom epitomizing integral being.

TN: *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 366.2–4.

⁴² Gl.: Further arguments are given according to the individual annals.

TN: Citation untraced in *gSang-ba 'dus-pa rgyud-kyi rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 18/tsha, pp. 752–969. However, a variant of this quotation is found in *'Jig-rten gsum-las rnam-par rgyal-ba rtog-pa'i rgyal-po chen-po*, in KH, vol. 85, p. 138.4–7.

⁴³ The three worlds (*'jig-rten gsum*) are the world of desire (Skt. *kāmaloka*), the world of form (Skt. *rūpaloka*), and the formless world (Skt. *ārūpyaloka*).

⁴⁴ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 935.5–6.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 876.6–7. The order of these two pairs of lines is reversed in KH.

⁴⁶ *gNyan dPal-dbyangs, lTa-ba rin-po-che sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1052.1–2. Citation identified in Takahashi, “Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia,” p. 7.

⁴⁷ The NKJ version reads “from the illusory distinction between” (*sgyu ma'i khyad par las*).

⁴⁸ Gl.: This refers to the specific characteristics.

⁴⁹ Gl.: This authoritative scripture [establishes] the axiom of the nature.

TN: Cf. *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 939.1, where the third line is absent. A variant of this line is found, however, in *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i sgyu 'phrul drwa-ba gsang-ba thams-cad-kyi me-long zhes-bya-ba'i rgyud*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 546.6.

⁵⁰ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 168.2–3. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 199–200 (Tibetan text), 602 (English translation).

⁵¹ “Unmarked” (*mtshan-med*) is a technical term borrowed from Tibetan grammar, as are “male,” “female,” and “neuter,” which in that context designate specific letters of the Tibetan alphabet. In Tibetan grammar, the term “unmarked” is an intensification of the category “neuter”; it is used to refer to the letter *A*, which cannot be characterized in terms of gender at all. Cf. Duff, *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, s.v. *mtshan med*.

⁵² *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 686.2–3.

⁵³ Gl.: This [text establishes the] axiom of the nature.

⁵⁴ *Padmasambhava, Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, p. 167.4–5.

⁵⁵ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 937.2–3.

⁵⁶ See also the translation of this passage in Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, p. 238.

⁵⁷ Gl.: This is the means for searching absolute meaningfulness.

TN: *gNyan dPal-dbyangs, Thugs-kyi sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, pp. 1018.6–1019.1. This quotation from the *Thugs-kyi sgron-ma* is also

cited in van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” p. 54. On the *Thugs-kyi sgron-ma*, see Kammie Takahashi, “A Luminous Transcendence of Views: The Thirty Apophatic Topics in dPal dbyangs’s *Thugs kyi sgron ma*,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 44, March 2018, pp. 159–177.

⁵⁸ I.e., eternalism and nihilism.

⁵⁹ Gl.: This is maintained by Buddhaguhya.

TN: Buddhaguhya was one of Vimalamitra’s teachers; he is believed to have come to the Kailash region from Nālandā in the mid-8th century. He is known among the New Schools (*gsar-ma*) as a master of the *Yoga tantras*, especially the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi*, but also seems to have been involved in propagating the *Mahāyoga tantras*, such as the *Guhyagarbha* and the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, which are at the heart of the *Māyājāla* corpus. See Ronald M. Davidson, “The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī,” in Michel Strickmann (ed.), *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R.A. Stein*, vol. 1, Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1981, pp. 1–69, esp. p. 9; and Germano, “The Seven Descents,” pp. 229–231.

Karmay writes that the later *rNying-ma-pas* identified Buddhaguhya with the more obscure Buddhagupta, a master of *Mahāyoga* and *Atiyoga*, in order to defend their doctrines by identifying their lineage masters with figures accepted by the New Schools. Cf. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 61–63. However, in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* both personages are clearly distinguished: whereas Buddhaguhya (given in Tibetan as Sangs-rgyas gsang-ba) is mentioned here (§6.1.3, C 198.4) and regarding the fifth *Mahāyoga* view, that of non-duality (§6.1.5, C 204.6), Buddhagupta (spelt ’Bu-ta kug-ta) is mentioned once in the context of *Mahāyoga* (C 223.1) and twice in the chapter on *Atiyoga*: once regarding the view that is free from action and searching (§7.1.2.5, C 344.6; also C 316.2—in the latter case, the gloss is wrongly placed at C 315.5) and once regarding the fourth system of meditation (§7.2.2.3.4, C 414.1). The problem is also discussed in Norbu, *sBas-pa’i rgum-chung*, pp. 37–38.

⁶⁰ Gl.: This [authoritative scripture establishes the] axiom of the non-duality of means and sapience.

TN: gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 935.7–936.1.

⁶¹ gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa, in KH, vol. 98, p. 938.5–6.

⁶² Gl.: This quote is from the *sGrub-pa’i lung*.

TN: Citation untraced in *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 2–617, notwithstanding the gloss.

⁶³ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 830.2–3.

⁶⁴ Gl.: This is not a cause in an ablative sense but the cause of thorough completeness.

⁶⁵ The process of tantric visualization is being described. The fount of all the deities (the evolutes of the open dimension) imagined in the course of tantric practice is none other than the open dimension, i.e., emptiness (the gloss is careful to remind us that the open dimension does not stand in an ordinary cause–effect relationship to its evolutes). From out of emptiness, arises the “seal of the father,” i.e., the male deity, from which in turn manifests the “seal of the mother,” i.e., the female consort. The unification of the open dimension (the female aspect as all-pervading spaciousness) with wisdom (the actively knowing male aspect) generates the configuration of deities.

⁶⁶ Gl.: i.e., intrinsic awareness.

⁶⁷ Gl.: This [view] is maintained by sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs.

⁶⁸ Gl.: a pith instruction.

TN: A text of this designation, consisting of excerpts from the *dGongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo*, is mentioned by Dudjom Rinpoche as having been written by Dharmabodhi, an Indian master of the *Anuyoga* lineage and one of gNubs-chen's teachers. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 489. A text of the same name is mentioned again in §7.2.2 (C 406.2), where it is commented on by the translator dPal-brtsegs.

⁶⁹ Unidentified source.

⁷⁰ Gl.: i.e., awareness.

⁷¹ Gl.: This [authoritative scripture establishes] the axiom of integral being.

TN: *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 161.6. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 191 (Tibetan text), 463 (English translation).

⁷² gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. R4.6–7). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” pp. 108 (English translation), 132 (Tibetan text).

⁷³ The Dunhuang manuscript reads, “The great king treads on the stage of the view” (*rgyal po chen po lta ba’i sa mnan nas*).

⁷⁴ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa’i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. R4.2–3). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa’i zhus lan*,” pp. 108 (English translation), 132 (Tibetan text).

⁷⁵ Gl.: This [authoritative scripture establishes] the axiom of the nature of integral being.

TN: This quote is a contraction of two lines found separately in *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 910.6, 938.2.

⁷⁶ Cf. *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa sgyu-’phrul drwa-ba bla-ma chen-po*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, pp. 405.7–406.1, 407.6–7, 408.5, 416.4. The order of the lines is different in NGM.

⁷⁷ This is a reference to the nine vehicles of the *rNying-ma* school: (1) the vehicle of auditors (Skt. *Śrāvakayāna*), (2) the vehicle of independent buddhas (Skt. *Pratyekabuddhayāna*), (3) the vehicle of bodhisattvas (Skt. *Bodhisattvayāna*), (4) *Kriyātantra*, (5) *Upatantra* (alias *Ubhayatantra*), (6) *Yogatantra*, (7) *Mahāyoga*, (8) *Anuyoga*, and (9) *Atiyoga*. The three lower vehicles pertain to the path of relinquishing (*spong-lam*), the three outer *tantras* to the path of cleansing (*sbyong-lam*), and the three inner *tantras* to the path of transformation (*sgyur-lam*). Nevertheless, *Atiyoga* stands apart in that it actually represents the path of intrinsic liberation (*grol-lam*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 164; Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, pp. 725–726.

⁷⁸ *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa sgyu-’phrul drwa-ba bla-ma chen-po*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 408.1–2. The order of these two lines is reversed in NGM.

⁷⁹ This is a casual reference to the ten topics of the *tantras* (*rgyud-kyi dngos-po bcu*). For a listing of these, see [Chapter 7](#), note 28.

⁸⁰ Gl.: not having relinquished them.

⁸¹ Gl.: Being free from a center, it transcends and is liberated from [limitations].

⁸² This is because as long as one believes that purity is to be achieved by eliminating something extrinsic to it, so long does primordial purity elude one. This is similar to the emptiness of emptiness, which in the context of the *Mahāyāna sūtras* is taught in order to destroy the disciple’s conceptual reification of emptiness.

⁸³ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 923.4–5.

⁸⁴ Gl.: This [view] is maintained by gNyan dPal-dbyangs.

⁸⁵ *Sangs-rgyas thams-cad dang mnyam-par sbyor-ba zhes-bya-ba'i rgyud-kyi rgyal-po* (**Sarvabuddha-samantayogi-tantra-rāja* = *Sarvabuddha-samāyoga-tantra-rāja*), in NGM, vol. 18/tsha, p. 194.1–2. Citation untraced in *Sangs-rgyas thams-cad mnyam-par sbyor-ba zhes-bya-ba rgyud-kyi rgyal-po* (*Sarvabuddha-samāyoga-tantra-rāja*), in NKJ, vol. 4/nga, pp. 201–256, notwithstanding the fact that Sangs-rgyas gsang-ba (Buddhaguhya) contributed to the translation of this shorter version of the *tantra*. Moreover, while Buddhaguhya is associated by Tibetan historians with the *Mahāyoga* tradition, to which the *Sarvabuddha-samāyoga-tantra* belongs (see [van Schaik](#), “The Early Days of the Great Perfection,” p. 187), I could not locate a commentary by Buddhaguhya on this specific *tantra*.

⁸⁶ *Zla-gsang thig-le'i rgyud*, in KH, vol. 84, p. 17.2–3.

⁸⁷ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 168.1–3. For a critical edition and translation, see [Dorje](#), *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 199–200 (Tibetan text), 601–602 (English translation).

⁸⁸ This line, while absent from the *Guhyagarbha*, is found in the *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 26, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 98.6; cf. [Norbu and Clemente](#), *The Supreme Source*, p. 165.

⁸⁹ The order of the last two lines is reversed in NGM, with several additional lines occurring between them.

⁹⁰ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 812.5.

⁹¹ Gl.: This refers to the inseparability of darkness and illumination.

⁹² For the five aggregates, see [Chapter 4](#), note 19.

⁹³ For the eight consciousnesses, see [Chapter 4](#), note 6.

⁹⁴ Cf. Nāgārjuna's statement that cyclic existence is not different from transcendence in Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *dBu-ma rtsa-ba'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa shes-rab*, ch. 25, vv. 19–20, in TD, vol. 96, p. 33.1–2; Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, p. 158. In the tantric context that concerns us here, the identity of cyclic existence and transcendence is no longer a speculative question but an experienced fact.

⁹⁵ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 853.7–854.1.

⁹⁶ Gl.: [Imaging refers to] the two kinds of craving.

TN: These are craving for entities and the craving for emptiness, both of which need to be overcome.

⁹⁷ Gl.: Awareness is free from singularity and multiplicity.

⁹⁸ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 705.3.

⁹⁹ Gl.: This authoritative scripture establishes the axiom of freedom from singularity and multiplicity.

¹⁰⁰ Gl.: This is the axiom of the three eminent truths.

TN: The three truths are relative truth, absolute truth, and their non-duality or inseparability.

¹⁰¹ This paraphrase is a contraction of two passages from the *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, discussing *Ubhayatantra* and the way of completion (*rdzogs-pa'i tshul*, i.e., *Anuyoga*), respectively; cf. *Padmasambhava, Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, pp. 164.2, 165.2–3.

¹⁰² Gl.: The aggregates and constituents are merely illusory.

¹⁰³ The genuine limit (*yang-dag-pa'i mtha'*; Skt. *bhūtakoṭi*) refers to the release of an auditor or an independent buddha. It is so-called because it is the genuine limit of reality as experienced by ordinary people. However, from the perspective of the *Mahāyāna*, it is a limitation and, if realized midway, an impediment for the obtainment of full enlightenment. The bodhisattva is protected from attaining the genuine limit by his skillful means. Cf. Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, ch. 20, pp. 222–225.

¹⁰⁴ Gl.: [Craving refers to] the ninety or eighty mountain-like conceptions.

TN: They are termed “mountain-like” because, when one is caught under their spell, they take on the importance of mountains and obscure genuineness. They come to a halt in sex, at death, and in enlightenment.

¹⁰⁵ Gl.: with regard to the properties pertaining to relative truth.

¹⁰⁶ “Not complete” means that it does not reveal the complete truth.

¹⁰⁷ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 811.6–7.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 853.3–4.

¹⁰⁹ Gl.: This is the axiom of the nature.

¹¹⁰ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 931.6–7.

¹¹¹ This line is omitted in KH.

¹¹² Gl.: [It is described as a hallucination] because it appears without existing.

¹¹³ The first example refers to the treasure that a pauper woman owns yet of which she is unaware. The second refers to an athlete of great merit whose existence is ignored. This example of the gem among champions is also found in the *sPros-bral don-gsal*. See [Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*](#), pp. 184–185, n. 145.

¹¹⁴ Gl.: Since class and cause are nonexistent, [Buddhas and sentient beings] are not different.

¹¹⁵ I have emended *mi-ma-legs* (“ghastly”) to *mi-ma-lags* (Skt. *amānuṣa*: “non-humans”), thus correcting the interpretation formerly proposed in Esler, “Traces of Abhidharma in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*,” p. 321. The fact remains that, according to the *Abhidharmakośa*, the non-human (*not* “ghastly”) inhabitants of Uttarakuru cannot detach themselves from the realm of desire and so are unable to enter contemplation. Furthermore, they are also incapable of taking up the vows of individual release (Skt. *pratimokṣa*). See La Vallée Poussin, *L’Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 2, ch. 3, p. 183; vol. 3, ch. 4, p. 104.

¹¹⁶ *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 847.5.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 847.2.

¹¹⁸ This quote is a contraction of lines found separately in *ibid.*, pp. 687.1–2, 847.2, 847.5–6.

¹¹⁹ Gl.: This is maintained by the instructors Padmasambhava and Madhusādhū.

TN: On the latter master, see note 3.

¹²⁰ Gl.: Equality [is established] through axioms, authoritative scriptures, and pith instructions.

¹²¹ The equality of absolute truth, of relative truth, and of their inseparability is indeed discussed by Madhusādhū in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 454 (VI.133–134). See van Schaik, “The Sweet Sage and the *Four Yogas*,” pp. 8, 33 (English translation), 45 (Tibetan text).

¹²² Although the equation of the five elements with the five Thus-gone Ones might seem surprising in view of the correlation between the elements and female consorts mentioned earlier (cf. C 206; also [Padmasambhava, *Man-ngag lta-ba’i phreng-ba*](#), in NKD, vol. 23/’a, p.

166), the present more unusual analogy is supported by and developed in C 213.

¹²³ Literally, “too many letters” (C 211.1: *yi-ge mangs-te*).

¹²⁴ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 938.7–939.1.

¹²⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 358.3–5.

¹²⁶ “Cognizing the principle” (*chos-shes*) carries important connotations, which, though not explicitly relevant to the tantric context of the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, nevertheless inform the background of the expression and thus deserve to be mentioned here. In the *sūtra* system, each of the four noble truths (suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation) is realized in a sequence of four moments. These are acknowledging the cognition of the principle [of the truth in question] (*chos shes-pa'i bzod-pa*; Skt. *dharmajñānakṣānti*), cognizing the principle (*chos shes-pa*; Skt. *dharmajñāna*), acknowledging the cognition of the principle in its subsequent realization (*rjes-su rtogs-par shes-pa'i bzod-pa*; Skt. *anvayadharmajñānakṣānti*), and cognizing it in its subsequent realization (*rjes-su rtogs-par shes-pa*; Skt. *anvayadharmajñāna*). Taking, for example, the truth of suffering, the first moment, acknowledging the cognition of the principle, is still tainted by doubt and affliction; the *yogin* considers the fact that in the desire realm all phenomena are impermanent, suffering, empty, and selfless. Since he thereby removes a certain type of doubt and affliction, this acknowledging is called “path of relinquishing” (*spong-ba'i lam*; Skt. *prahāṇamārga*) and “path without obstacle” (*bar-chad med-pa'i lam*; Skt. *ānantaryamārga*). Through this relinquishing he stops being an ordinary person and becomes a noble one (Skt. *ārya*). In the second moment, cognizing the principle, the *yogin* truly comes to possess this certain knowledge without doubt and affliction; this cognition is hence called “path of utter liberation” (*rnam-par grol-ba'i lam*; Skt. *vimuktimārga*). Whereas the first two moments acknowledge and cognize the truth in the realm of desire, the latter two acknowledge and cognize it in the two higher realms, i.e., the realms of form and of formlessness. This entire process is realized through the operation of wisdom. Since there are four moments for each of the four noble truths, this yields sixteen moments, which are collectively termed “the sixteen moments of wisdom on the path of seeing” (*mthong-lam-gyi ye-shes skad-cig bcu-drug*; Skt. *ṣoḍaśadarśanamārgakṣaṇa*). See [Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*](#), pp. 681–682; [Cornu, *Dictionnaire*](#)

Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme, p. 709; and Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 11.

¹²⁷ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 931.4–6.

¹²⁸ Gl.: They lead astray and deceive people's intellect.

¹²⁹ Gl.: This is because they are mere imputations that appear.

¹³⁰ Gl.: i.e., task.

¹³¹ See §6.1.2.1 (C 195–196).

¹³² Note that although the adamantine family of Akṣobhya is associated with the color white, Akṣobhya's consort Buddhālocanā is connected to the element earth and its corresponding solidity. Likewise, although the jewel family of Ratnasambhava is associated with the color yellow, Ratnasambhava's consort Māmakī is connected to the water element and its pliant fluidity. For these correspondences, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 185 (Tibetan root text), 437 (root text, English translation), 444 (Klong-chen-pa's commentary); Guenther, *Matrix of Mystery*, pp. 106–109.

¹³³ This is the lotus (Skt. *padma*) family.

¹³⁴ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 350.5–6. This citation, which reappears in §7.1.2.3.1 (C 338.3–5), is here quoted somewhat differently than in the NGM version. Note in particular the association (apparently influenced by the system of the *Guhyagarbha*) of Ratnasambhava with water and of Amitābha with fire, which reverses the correspondences of the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, where Ratnasambhava is connected to fire and Amitābha to water. A similar ambivalence in the elemental associations of Ratnasambhava and Amitābha is found in the various recensions of the *Thabs-kyi zhags-pa padma 'phreng-ba* (commentary), ch. 6; see Cathy Cantwell and Robert Mayer, *A Noble Noose of Methods, the Lotus Garland Synopsis: A Study of a Tibetan Tantric Scripture and Its Commentary*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2012, pp. 70, 252 (diplomatic edition).

¹³⁵ I.e., Akṣobhya. See note 132.

¹³⁶ Gl.: i.e., the real ground of all.

¹³⁷ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 932.3.

¹³⁸ Gl.: This is specific to the *Mantrayāna*.

¹³⁹ This quote should make it unequivocally clear that, despite the similarity of diction, the universal ground is not to be equated with the universal ground consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*) of the *Vijñānavāda*.

¹⁴⁰ Gl.: [On the other hand,] the universal ground [consciousness endowed with] the two imprints is the characteristic of the common universal ground.

TN: The “two imprints” most likely refers to the obscurations of the knowable and of the afflictions.

¹⁴¹ For an interesting parallel from the context of the *Mahāyāna*, cf. *sKu-gsum zhes-bya-ba'i mdo* (*Kāyatraya-sūtra*), in KH, vol. 68, pp. 265.6–266.1.

¹⁴² The reference is to a small bear peculiar to Tibet, called *Dred-mong* in Tibetan, which is infamous for its stupidity. It sits outside the marmot’s burrow, waiting for its prey to appear. As soon as it catches a marmot, it puts its prey in the cleft of its bottom, waiting for the next marmot to appear. While so waiting, the first marmot escapes. When it catches its second prey, it again inserts it in the cleft of its bottom, not noticing that the first marmot has escaped! It is said to spend the entire day in this fashion, with little to eat at the end of it. Tibetan authors frequently use this as an illustration for particularly stupid behavior. See [Duff, *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary*](#), s.v. *dred mong*.

¹⁴³ The point is that without an immediate intellectual intuition of absolute meaningfulness, it will continue to elude one’s grasp. It is in effect impossible to gradually progress from a state of ignorance to one of awareness—only when the vase of unknowing is shattered can wisdom dawn.

¹⁴⁴ Gl.: which one should look at.

TN: This refers to the *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa* (*Guhyagarbha-tantra*), in KH, vol. 98, pp. 645–944, which is repeatedly quoted under the title *brGyad-cu-pa* (frequently misspelt *brGya-bcu-pa*) in our text, due to its division into eighty (*brgyad-cu*) chapters.

¹⁴⁵ Gl.: [This view] is maintained by the instructors Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti.

TN: This seems to be more of a free paraphrase than an actual citation. An approximate parallel is found in *gSang-ba 'dus-pa*, in KD, vol. 81, p. 293.4, though that is in the context of a discussion of sexual yoga. See also *gSang-ba 'dus-pa rgyud-kyi rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 18/tsha, p. 934.6–7; *Guhyasamājatantra*, ed. Bagchi & Tripathi, ch. 17,

p. 118.1–2 (Sanskrit); Fremantle, *A Critical Study of the Guhyasamāja Tantra*, p. 139 (English translation). For a commentary on this passage from the *Ārya* tradition, see Zla-ba grags-pa (Candrakīrti), *sGron-ma gsal-bar byed-pa zhes-bya-ba'i rgya-cher bshad-pa* (*Pradīpoddyotana-nāma-ṭīkā*), in TD, vol. 30, pp. 393.7–394.2. A closer parallel to our present passage is found in another *Guhyasamāja* commentary by Dri-med sbas-pa (*Vimalagupta), *dPal gSang-ba 'dus-pa'i rgyan zhes-bya-ba* (*Śrīguhyasamājālaṃkāra-nāma*), in TD, vol. 40, p. 294.6–7. Van Schaik notes that in the period predating the later propagation (*phyi-dar*) of Buddhism in Tibet, this gloss is a rare instance of knowledge of the so-called *Ārya* tradition of *Guhyasamāja* exegesis associated with Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti. See van Schaik, “A Definition of Mahāyoga,” p. 56, n. 45.

¹⁴⁶ Gl.: This is the example.

¹⁴⁷ Gl.: This is the meaning [indicated by the example].

¹⁴⁸ *Yong-ye* must here be read as an archaic synonym for *nges-par*. See rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 514.

¹⁴⁹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 423.4–7.

¹⁵⁰ The NGM version inserts the following line: “There is neither cyclic existence nor phenomena’s beingness” (*'khor ba med cing chos nyid med*).

¹⁵¹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 423.7–424.1.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 363.4–6.

¹⁵³ Gl.: This concerns assigning designations.

¹⁵⁴ The NGM version reads “stirrings” (*'gyus pa*).

¹⁵⁵ Gl.: i.e., the grasping at notions.

¹⁵⁶ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 364.1.

¹⁵⁷ This criticism is directed against the *sTon-mun*, whose meditation consists in viewing absolute truth, identified as emptiness.

¹⁵⁸ Gl.: Because appearances pertain to intrinsic awareness, they are unceasing and one is without craving.

¹⁵⁹ Non-extant source.

¹⁶⁰ According to the *Mantrayāna*, the source of all appearances as deities and their configurations cannot be emptiness conceived as an inert void. Here, emptiness is inseparable from luminous clarity (*stong-gsal dbyer-med*), a vibrant potency that allows for free-flowing manifestation.

¹⁶¹ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. R3.11–12). Note that the two pairs of verses in this citation are

given in reverse order in the Dunhuang manuscript. For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” pp. 105 (English translation), 127 (Tibetan text).

¹⁶² Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *dBu-ma rtsa-ba'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa shes-rab*, ch. 13, v. 8, in TD, vol. 96, p. 15.6–7; Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, p. 93.

¹⁶³ According to the TD edition, the last two lines would be translated as follows: “Those who view emptiness/ Have nothing to achieve—thus it is declared” (*gang dag stong pa nyid lta ba/ de dag bsgrub tu med par gsungs/*).

¹⁶⁴ Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna), *dBu-ma rtsa-ba'i tshig-le'ur byas-pa shes-rab*, ch. 24, v. 11, in TD, vol. 96, p. 29.2; Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, p. 146.

¹⁶⁵ Gl.: Emptiness is endowed with all the supreme aspects.

¹⁶⁶ The next three pages of the Tibetan text appear in a muddled form in C 220–222 but are given in the right order in M 157b.4–159a.3.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 922.4, where the example of a great bird (*bya-chen*) soaring through the sky is used, rather than the *garuḍa* as here. What exactly this “great bird” refers to is unclear. The term is attested in the *Tshangs-lha* dialect as referring to a beautiful bird inhabiting the upper reaches of Padma-bkod, somewhat similar to a peacock yet lacking tail feathers. Cf. Tanzin, *Tshangs-lha'i tshig-mdzod*, p. 412. In the present context, it may, however, be a synonym for the *garuḍa*.

¹⁶⁸ The Tibetan text here transcribes the Sanskrit word *śiraścakra*.

¹⁶⁹ “Milking the celestial cow” is a cryptic reference to the downward flow of ambrosia from the cranial nexus, which is triggered by the generation of the ferocious heat (*gtum-mo*; Skt. *caṇḍālī*). See bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *dNgos-grub 'dod-'jo*, pp. 407, 412–413, edited and translated in Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments*, pp. 43–44, 50.

¹⁷⁰ Gl.: It is supremely valuable to hold on to the winds.

¹⁷¹ Here C 221.4 has *zla-das* and M 158b.5 has *zla-des*, but I have emended these readings to *zla-dal* (“moon disk”), which better fits the context. Cf. note 175.

¹⁷² The word “sun” is given in C 221.3 as *dpra-ba-ka-ru*, transcribing the Sanskrit word *prabhākara*, yet M 158b.4 introduces the variant *dpal he-ru-ka*, presumably based on the occurrence of the word *he-ru-ka* a

few lines below. I am grateful to Prof. Jacob Dalton for his perceptive comments on this passage.

¹⁷³ I.e., the moon, the sun, and the white syllable *HŪM*.

¹⁷⁴ I.e., at the time of death.

¹⁷⁵ Gl.: once the disk [has been absorbed] into the seminal nucleus and the seminal nucleus [has been absorbed] into the syllable.

¹⁷⁶ In the tantric context, Akaniṣṭha refers not so much to the apex of the realm of form (cf. [Chapter 4](#), note 209) but, rather, to the pure field of the body of enjoyment (Skt. *saṃbhogakāya*), a dimension of great bliss and luminosity. See [Cornu, Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme](#), p. 40.

¹⁷⁷ Given as *na-pa* in the text, which transcribes the Sanskrit *nabha* (“sky”).

¹⁷⁸ *Tshogs-ma* can refer to the cranial aperture, or aperture of Brahmā (Skt. *brahmārandhra*), but here more generally means a skull. An empty skull would signify a non-conceptual state (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

¹⁷⁹ Spelled *'Bu-ta kug-ta* in the text (C 223.1). Kapstein notes that this spelling correctly reproduces the archaic Tibetan transcription. See Matthew T. Kapstein, “The *Sun of the Heart* and the *Bai-ro-rgyud-'bum*,” in *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 15, November 2008, pp. 275–288, esp. p. 281, n. 19.

¹⁸⁰ Gl.: [This approach was expounded by] Vilāsavajra and Vajrahasa.

¹⁸¹ Unidentified source. Note that this text is referred to as *Chen-po padma'i man-ngag* in §1.3 (C 6.6).

¹⁸² Gl.: i.e., through renovating the castle of listening, thinking, and faith.

TN: I take *gnyan* to be an error for *mnyan*. The activities described refer to studying the doctrine.

¹⁸³ Here, “seeing” (*mthong-ba*) must be understood as insight into thusness (Skt. *tathatā*).

¹⁸⁴ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V3.10–11). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” pp. 107 (English translation), 130 (Tibetan text).

¹⁸⁵ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V3.12–14). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” pp. 107 (English translation), 130–131 (Tibetan text).

¹⁸⁶ Note that *brdos-bzang yang-bzang* could be an error for *los-bzang yang-bzang*.

¹⁸⁷ This quote from the *Sems-lon* (an apparently non-extant source) is also found in §5.2.1 (C 150.1–2).

¹⁸⁸ Gl.: The preceptor dPal-dbyangs states that by looking at one's own mind, there is neither awareness of a self nor definitive awareness. Therefore, one's conscious continuum is without definitive awareness so that whatever arises cannot be grasped as definitive and transcends articulation and thought.

¹⁸⁹ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V3.3–5). Note that the two pairs of verses in this citation are given in reverse order in the Dunhuang manuscript. For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, "Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*," pp. 106 (English translation), 129 (Tibetan text).

¹⁹⁰ Gl.: One should not meditate immediately upon waking up from sleep, nor when one feels overcast or darkened. After washing and strolling up and down, one should straighten one's bodily frame and meditate. At times one may feel irritable, one's psyche may be unable to enter [meditation], or one's heart's desire may be to go out; one should visualize as before and recall the potent authoritative scriptures and pith instructions. If one is still incapable of regaining clarity, one may be nauseated and repulsed. Since one is in poor health, one should purge oneself [of detrimental influences] and apply oneself to those virtues that are agreeable to one's psyche. Thereafter, one may approach [meditation again].

¹⁹¹ Cf. *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 72.5–7, of which the quote here is a paraphrase.

¹⁹² Gl.: i.e., conceptions and the afflictions.

¹⁹³ Gl.: i.e., the mind being temporarily diffused.

¹⁹⁴ Gl.: i.e., hope, and so forth.

¹⁹⁵ Here, *'byed-pa med-pa* must be understood as a contraction of *rab-tu 'byed-pa med-pa*.

¹⁹⁶ It is not clear what these six misgivings (*dogs-pa drug*) refer to. Perhaps they are the same as the six types of distraction through signs mentioned in the quote below.

¹⁹⁷ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 403.7–405.3. Citation untraced in Sangs-rgyas gsang-ba (Buddhaguhya), *Lam rnam-par bkod-pa*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, pp. 5–133. In fact, the name *rNam-bkod* is short

for *Chos-kyi rnam-grangs rnam-par bkod-pa*, an alternative name for the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*; see gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 1, in NKD, vol. 50/wi, p. 23.1, quoted in [Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*](#), p. 308, n. 90.

¹⁹⁸ The next three pages of the Tibetan text appear in a muddled form in C 232–234 but are given in the right order in M 166b.1–168b.5.

¹⁹⁹ I.e., the denizens of hell, hungry ghosts, and animals.

²⁰⁰ Gl.: This refers to [distraction due to] the five objects [of the senses].

²⁰¹ Gl.: due to qualities.

²⁰² Gl.: due to the signs that are shown generally.

²⁰³ The enumeration of the twenty defects given in the glosses to this section appears somewhat arbitrary; it is further confused by the fact that the numbering starts again at 1 with the first contemplation. I therefore provide my own enumeration in brackets, which is, in any case, based to a large extent on that found in the glosses.

²⁰⁴ There are six gods of the desire realm: the Cāturmahārājakāyikas, the Trāyatrimśas, the Yāmas, the Tuṣitas, the Nirmānaratis, and the Paranirmitavaśavartins; the passage here refers only to the first four levels. Like their human counterparts, the gods of the first four levels enjoy the desirable sense-qualities that are at their disposal. It is only the gods of the fifth and sixth levels of the desire realm who can emanate the objects of their desire. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 2, ch. 3, pp. 164, 166.

²⁰⁵ The four contemplations (viz., 12–15) detailed in this paragraph lead the adept to the limit of the form realm.

²⁰⁶ This description does not tally with the classical presentation found, for instance, in the *Abhidharmakośa*, where the second contemplation is characterized by the removal of examination and scrutiny. See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 5, ch. 8, pp. 133, 183. It should be noted that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes accepts the classical description in §4.2.3.1.2 (C 78.4–5). On this inconsistency, see Esler, “Traces of Abhidharma in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*,” p. 338.

²⁰⁷ The next four contemplations (viz., 17–20) are usually referred to as the four meditative equilibria; they pertain to the formless realm.

²⁰⁸ Gl.: [when these nine contemplations are added to the] eleven [defects, viz., 1–11], there are twenty [defects].

²⁰⁹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 403.5–7.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 405.5–407.3. This citation was already quoted in §3.2.2 (C 49.5).

²¹¹ The three atrophies (*gnas-ngan-len*; Skt. *dauṣṭhulya*) pertain to the epidermis (*lpags-shun-la yod-pa*; Skt. *tvaggatam*), the dermis (*spri-la yod-pa*; Skt. *phalgugatam*), and the heart (*snying-po-la yod-pa*; Skt. *sāragatam*). See Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 174; and Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, vol. 2, p. 396. Their names indicate that they correspond to ever deeper levels of spiritual stagnation. Cf. Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, ch. 9, §29, p. 254, nn. 40–43; Cornu, *Soûtra du Dévoilement du Sens Profond*, p. 136. An alternative interpretation would be to take *gnas-ngan gsum* not as an abbreviation for *gnas-ngan-len gsum* but, rather, as referring to the three dismal abodes as in the previous quote from the *rDo-rje bkod-pa* (C 234.1): the denizens of hell, the hungry ghosts, and the animals. Note that the NGM version reads *gnas-nag gsum* (“three black abodes”).

²¹² This and the following line appear in reverse order in C 236.2 and in M 169b.4.

²¹³ Both C and M omit this line, but I have supplied it according to *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 406.4.

²¹⁴ It should be noted that here the particle *nyid* merely serves to emphasize the preceding word. Hence, *sems-nyid* means “[dualistic] mind itself” rather than referring to the [non-dualistic] beingness of mind.

²¹⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 409.3–4.

²¹⁶ The NGM version reads “When one sees the absolute which is nothing whatsoever” (*/ci yang med pa’i don mthong na/*).

²¹⁷ It should be noted that this sentence would be more readily intelligible if, instead of “this very absence of emptiness is a sign,” it read, “signlessness itself is a sign.” However, both editions read *stong-pa med-pa* where one would expect *mtshan-ma med-pa*. It is nevertheless possible to make sense of the sentence if one considers the “absence of emptiness” to refer to the desire to relinquish signs. For while emptiness is often used as a synonym for signlessness, if signlessness is grasped on to and one seeks to relinquish signs, this is certainly a flawed understanding of emptiness (i.e., an “absence of emptiness”), which still pertains to the domain of signs. Here one might recall the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*’s statement that there is no difference between signs and signlessness. See Patrick Carré (tr.), *Soûtra des Dix Terres, Dashabhūmika*, Paris: Fayard, 2004, p. 207.

²¹⁸ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 938.6–7.

²¹⁹ Emptiness is here said to be nonexistent because emptiness itself, if conceptualized, is grasping on to signs.

²²⁰ Gl.: i.e., the *Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba* of the instructor Padmasambhava and other texts.

TN: Cf. *Padmasambhava, Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, pp. 166–167. Note that in Padmasambhava's text the discussion occurs in the context of the way of the Great Completeness (*rdzogs-pa chen-po'i tshul*).

²²¹ Gl.: For example, this is similar to the fruit of the walnut tree.

²²² Gl.: This concerns meditation on the characteristics of the beingness of phenomena and of intrinsic awareness.

²²³ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 358.7–359.1.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 367.1–2.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 354.5–7.

²²⁶ Gl.: Whether entities are seen, heard, felt, tasted, touched, or recollected, the so-called “pith instruction concerning the condition of recollection” is to think that whatever appears, one is aware without looking for appearances elsewhere.

²²⁷ Gl.: i.e., [gNyan] dPal-dbyangs.

²²⁸ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V2.3–7). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” pp. 103–104 (English translation), 124 (Tibetan text).

²²⁹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 407.3–4.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 407.4–5.

²³¹ The expression *gyin-'da'* (translated as “unfeigned”) refers to that which moves freely and extemporaneously, without artificial purpose. See *rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 81; cf. *Chos-kyi grags-pa, brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 125.

²³² *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 348.1.

²³³ Gl.: i.e., as said by the preceptor gNyan dPal-dbyangs.

²³⁴ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *lTa-ba yang-dag sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1047.4–5.

²³⁵ Inserted according to the version of this quote in NKJ.

²³⁶ Gl.: It is said that when lethargy and sleepiness are pacified, there is the utter purity of the path of calm abiding. When utter agitation and

regret are pacified, there is the utter purity of the path of insight.

²³⁷ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 862.4.

²³⁸ Gl.: This corresponds to meditation on omniscience.

²³⁹ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 937.2.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 878.6–7.

²⁴¹ Gl.: The open dimension and awareness being non-dual, this is called the adamantine awareness in thusness.

²⁴² Cf. *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 355.5–7, where the order of the lines is somewhat different.

²⁴³ These two lines are very obscure: *then cer* [*cer* em. : *rtser* M 175a.1 : *rcer* C : *tsher* NGM] *mig gi nam mkha' la/ /phra rab* [*phra rab* NGM : *'phra rab* C, M 175a.2] *'then thag* [*'then thag* em. : *then thag* NGM : *'theg thag* C, M 175a.2] *'jug pa ltar/*. An alternative interpretation (which has the disadvantage of taking the genitive after *mig* for an ergative) would be “[Look at] the sky with their eyes always pressed, / Straining them upward to see the minute [seminal nuclei].” Whichever translation is chosen, this seems to refer to an exercise whereby the practitioner strives to squint in order to behold the seminal nuclei.

²⁴⁴ Citation untraced in *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 321–672.

²⁴⁵ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 605.6–7. This citation previously appeared in §3.2.2 (C 48.6–49.2).

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 605.5.

²⁴⁷ Gl.: This originates from hearing and thinking.

²⁴⁸ I.e., an uninterrupted succession of discursive thoughts.

²⁴⁹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 361.5–6.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 365.2–3.

²⁵¹ Gl.: Attachment toward one's body and enjoyments is an obstruction to calm abiding. Never to attain satisfaction with regard to the doctrine, without hearing the noble one's religious discourse, is an obstruction whereby insight does not evolve. Remaining frivolous and being complacent when one has heard but a little doctrine is an obstruction to both. Agitation and regret are obscurations of calm abiding. Lethargy, sleepiness, and doubt are obscurations of insight. The thirst of desire, as well as malice, are obscurations of both. If one's calm abiding is great but one is without insight, this is a mistaken defect: one

is like a person who has entered the dark. Sinking and indeterminate, one is biased toward the cessation of notionlessness and toward calm. One falls into the limitation of the meditative equilibria of cessation, etc. If one's insight is great but one is without calm abiding, this is a defect in that one becomes diffuse and wavers because of the merest imaging of outer or inner objects, like a butter lamp moved by the wind.

TN: This gloss is an abbreviated version of a passage discussing calm abiding and insight found in §4.2.3.3.1 (C 81.1–82.5). One point is worth noting: *chog-par 'dzin-pa* (“complacent”) has become *phyogs-par 'dzin-pa* (“partisan”), the two words being pronounced identically in Tibetan; I have nevertheless here translated “complacent,” taking *phyogs-par 'dzin-pa* to be an error.

²⁵² Gl.: Thinking neither about what may occur later nor about what has formerly been.

²⁵³ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 451.2–5.

²⁵⁴ Cf. *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 451.5–452.3.

²⁵⁵ Gl.: [Here are listed] twenty psychic [defects].

²⁵⁶ Gl.: This refers to the *Madhyamaka*: being empty, they are inexpressible and do not at all appear.

²⁵⁷ Gl.: since objects and cognition are non-dual.

²⁵⁸ Gl.: This refers to realization.

²⁵⁹ Gl.: in [which defects are] self-appeased.

²⁶⁰ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 913.1–2.

²⁶¹ For the expression *shed ma phye ba* (and its variant *shed ma phyed pa*, here erroneously given as *shed mi bya*), see *Chos-kyi grags-pa, brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 885; *rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 559. The word *shed* is also attested in the *Tshangs-lha* dialect with the sense of “physical strength.” See Tanzin, *Tshangs-lha'i tshig-mdzod*, p. 640.

²⁶² *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 359.1–2.

²⁶³ Gl.: It cannot be established discursively through the axiom of an intrinsic nature.

²⁶⁴ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 366.6–367.1.

²⁶⁵ Gl.: when one meditates.

²⁶⁶ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 442.4–7.

²⁶⁷ The interpretation of the last three lines is somewhat uncertain.

²⁶⁸ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 722.6–7. This citation is also found in Sangs-rgyas gsang-ba (Buddhaghya), *Lam rnam-par bkod-pa*, in NKD, vol. 23/'a, p. 39.5–6.

²⁶⁹ Unidentified source.

²⁷⁰ Literally “his” (*kho'i*). The non-honorific pronoun *kho* indicates that, writing as he is from the perspective of *Mahāyoga*, the author presently does not place the *sTon-mun* on a very high footing.

²⁷¹ See §3.3.2.2 (C 62.3).

²⁷² Gl.: Since there are four extremes in the phases of the development of concentration, it is also admissible to explain [the experiences] as fourfold: wavering, attainment, meditative familiarization, and stability.

²⁷³ Gl.: When the mind of means settles down in quiddity, one examines one's experience: whether long [streams of] water issue forth from one's mouth and nose because one's complexion (*bzhin-mdog*) has deteriorated; whether one is light-headed (*mgo-bo yangs*; probably for *mgo-yang*, “unsteady,” “light-headed”) or bent down (*gug-pa* according to M 182a.2; variant in C 251.5 reads '*ug-pa*, “an owl”), arched forward (*dgye-ba*) or collapsed (*'gyel-ba*), whether one's sense-faculties are reverted [inward] or whether one is supine (*gan-rkyal*), face turned downward (*kha-sbub*), or upright (*drang-po*): this means that calm [abiding] and sinking are great. [On the other hand,] if one's sense-faculties are more than trillionfold (*khrag-khrig*, “trillion”), one rectifies (*'shes-so*; probably for '*chos-so*) this again and again. If one is distracted, if one stays, or if one's actions are many, one's agitation and insight are great. If one's actions are few and one is radiant (*bkrag*), there is equality.

²⁷⁴ Gl.: Being discontented, one will again deteriorate.

TN: The translation of this gloss (C 251.4–6) is tentative at best. The parts of the Tibetan that are particularly difficult to interpret are given in brackets.

²⁷⁵ It is not clear what the five are (or what the fifth item of this unspecified group is; the Tibetan reads *lnga par 'dus so/*, suggesting an ordinal number); this could perhaps be a reference to the five afflictions (since they are the causes of the oscillation of conceptions in the first place), but this is very uncertain. Alternatively, it might be a reference to the five demons, for which, see §6.2.2.4.2.2.3 (C 245–246).

²⁷⁶ On the bodhisattva path, warmth occurs on the path of application as an indication that one is about to reach the path of seeing, as if one

were approaching a fire. In the *Vajrayāna*, the indication of warmth is more specifically linked to the yoga of the ferocious heat (*gtum-mo*; Skt. *caṇḍālī*). See bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *dNgos-grub 'dod-'jo*, p. 409, edited and translated in Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments*, p. 46.

²⁷⁷ Unidentified source.

²⁷⁸ Gl.: At times one is blessed by the Victorious Ones, the bodhisattvas, and the awareness-holders. Being considered as a son and relative by the supremely holy ones, they grant their blessings.

²⁷⁹ “Dark cumulus” would seem to be the sense of *mun-pa'i phung-po* (Skt. *tamaḥskandha*). Cf. Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 10, p. 4455.

²⁸⁰ Whereas C 253.5 has *snang-ba ma-mthong-ba*, here I follow the reading of M 183a.6, which omits the negative particle *ma*.

²⁸¹ “White luminescence” (*'od dkar-po*; Skt. *śubhrāṃśu*) is an epithet of the moon. See Amarasiṃha, *Amarakoṣa*, ch. 1, digvarga, v. 14, p. 47; Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 12, p. 5589.

²⁸² These are three among ten exhaustive sense-bases (*zad-par-gyi skye-mched*; Skt. *kṛtsnāyatana*; P. *kasiṇa*) that are signs (Skt. *nimitta*) focused on by the practitioner in order to develop contemplation (Skt. *dhyāna*). Their name derives from the fact that they penetrate their imaged reference exhaustively (Skt. *ālambanakṛtsnaspharaṇāt*). They are not objective perceptions but arise on the basis of an apprehension of predilection (Skt. *adhimuktimanasikāra*) or notion of predilection (Skt. *adhimuktisaṃjñāna*): this means that by consciously wanting to see the element of earth, for instance, everything becomes the element earth. The ten exhaustive sense-bases are as follows: (1) the exhaustive sense-basis of earth, (2) the exhaustive sense-basis of water, (3) the exhaustive sense-basis of fire, (4) the exhaustive sense-basis of wind, (5) the exhaustive sense-basis of blue, (6) the exhaustive sense-basis of yellow, (7) the exhaustive sense-basis of red, (8) the exhaustive sense-basis of white, (9) the exhaustive sense-basis of space, and (10) the exhaustive sense-basis of consciousness. See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 3, pp. 1286–1287, 1304; cf. Kaba Paltseg, *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms*, pp. 65–66.

In practical terms, the *Visuddhimagga* explains that in order to develop the exhaustive sense-basis of earth, the *yogin* should make a clay disk (P. *mattika-maṇḍala*) to use as a sign of the earth since only a minority of particularly gifted *yogins* will be able to spontaneously use a

ploughed field for this purpose. The clay disk can be either portable or fixed but should be dark in color and as neutral as possible. The *yogin* then retires to a quiet spot, places the clay disk at the required distance, and focuses his entire attention on the sign. He concentrates on the sign, with his eyes at times open and at others closed, all the while mentally repeating “earth” or one of its synonyms. When he is able to perceive the sign spontaneously, whether his eyes are open or closed, he has achieved the acquired sign (P. *uggaha-nimitta*).

The meditator must focus on the acquired sign until the reflected sign (P. *paṭibhāga-nimitta*) emerges therefrom, like a mirror drawn from its case. The reflected sign is much brighter than the acquired sign, yet it has neither shape nor color, for it is not a sense-object, being perceptible only to the meditator. Eventually, the *yogin* trains to extend the reflected sign, which always has a well-delimited shape, by gradually expanding it mentally, until it attains cosmic proportions. See [Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*](#), ch. 4, §§22–31, pp. 152–155; §§127–128, p. 181.

The process is similar for the other exhaustive sense-bases, except that in each case the sign used as a support, as well as the resulting acquired and reflected signs, will differ. For example, in the case of water, the *yogin* will use a bowl filled with pure water as a sign to support his focus; while the acquired sign may be somewhat ruffled like the natural element of water, the reflected sign will be without vibration, like a crystal mirror. In the case of fire, the practitioner should light a fire, in front of which he places a cloth with a hole allowing him to look at the flames without being able to see the wood or the smoke produced by the fire; the acquired sign is the appearance of a flickering flame, but the reflected sign is unwavering, like a piece of red cotton held in space or a golden fan. In the case of wind, the *yogin* should observe the movement caused by the wind in trees and bushes or on his own body; the acquired sign wavers like the vapor arising from a warm dish of rice, whereas again the reflected sign is utterly immobile. See [ibid.](#), ch. 5, §§1–11, pp. 201–203.

²⁸³ The list of the eight worldly phenomena given here diverges from the standard one: pleasure and suffering are here replaced by renown (*grags-pa*) and anonymity (*ma-grags-pa*). Given that they appear next to fame (*snyan-pa*) and infamy (*mi-snyan-pa*), they are somewhat tautological.

²⁸⁴ It might at first seem perplexing to see this detail listed among the inner indications. However, this is less surprising when one considers lice as a sign of one’s unrepaid karmic debts to other sentient beings.

This may be illustrated by a story told in connection with rGyal-sras thogs-med bzang-po (1295–1369 ce), the author of the *rGyal-sras lag-len*. It is said that once he came upon a beggar whose ragged clothes were full of lice. Overwhelmed with compassion, he exchanged his own brocade dress for the beggar’s rags. However, a few days later when he met the beggar again, he saw that the lice had left his own tattered clothes and made their new home in the brocade garment. He was forced to realize that even his great compassion could do nothing in the face of the beggar’s unrepaid karmic debts (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

²⁸⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 428.6–7.

²⁸⁶ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa’i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V1.14–16). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa’i zhus lan*,” pp. 101 (English translation), 120 (Tibetan text).

²⁸⁷ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa’i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V1.6–10). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa’i zhus lan*,” pp. 100–101 (English translation), 119 (Tibetan text).

²⁸⁸ One syllable is missing to make up the required meter.

²⁸⁹ Although it is not specified what these two aspects are, we may assume that they refer to propitiation (*bsnyen-pa*; Skt. *sevā*) and evocation (*sgrub-pa*; Skt. *sādhana*), the two main phases in tantric deity yoga.

²⁹⁰ These lines are also quoted in a (presumably 9th-century) work by Lakṣmī (alias Lakṣmīṃkarā), *lHan-cig skyes-grub-kyi gzhung-’grel*, in TD, vol. 52, p. 30.5–6. They are also cited in a (10th- or 11th-century) work by Bhavyakīrti, *sGron-ma gsal-bar byed-pa dgongs-pa rab-gsal zhes-bya-ba’i ṭī-kā*, in TD, vol. 32, p. 209.6. On the latter text, see Toru Tomabechi, “Bhavyakīrti’s Sub-commentary on the *Pradīpoddyotana* as a Doxography: Some Preliminary Remarks and a Synopsis,” in *Oriental Culture*, vol. 96, 2016, pp. 81–94.

²⁹¹ Unidentified source.

²⁹² This is the first bodhisattva stage and pertains to the path of seeing.

²⁹³ *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 855.2–3, 855.6–7.

²⁹⁴ This is a reference to the five ambrosias consumed as part of the tantric feast gathering (Skt. *gaṇacakra*): semen (Skt. *bodhicitta*; “the

enlightened mind”), human flesh (“the great flesh”), feces, urine, and menstrual blood (Skt. *rakta*). Note that, among the five ambrosias, human flesh is often replaced by marrow (*rkang-mar*), in which case it appears listed under the five meats (cow flesh, dog flesh, horse flesh, elephant flesh, and human flesh). See [Nor-brang o-rgyan](#), *Chos-rnam kun-btus*, vol. 1, pp. 1097, 1282.

²⁹⁵ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 852.5–6, 853.3.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 854.3.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 852.5.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 852.6–7.

²⁹⁹ *Thams-cad bdud-rtsi lnga'i rang-bzhin dngos-grub chen-po nye-ba'i snying-po mchog bam-po chen-po brgyad-pa*, in KH, vol. 99, p. 627.2–3.

³⁰⁰ The first three lines of this verse (or variants on this theme) are recited during the feast gathering (Skt. *gaṇacakra*) when presenting the offerings before the master (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). These verses are also used as the basis for rituals of medicinal accomplishment (*sman-sgrub*), which involve the consumption of medicinal pills (Dr. Cathy Cantwell, personal communication, January 12, 2016). In both cases we are dealing with rituals involving the partaking of sacramental substances in a state beyond the notions of purity and impurity. For an account of the ritual context of the latter use in present-day Bhutan, see Cathy Cantwell, “The Medicinal Accomplishment (*sman sgrub*) Practice in the Dudjom Meteoric Iron Razor (*gnam lcags spu gri*) Tradition: Reflections on the Ritual and Meditative Practice at a Monastery in Southern Bhutan,” in *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, no. 8, 2015, pp. 49–95, esp. p. 67.

³⁰¹ Although “supreme grass” (*rtswa-mchog*) frequently refers to *kuśa* grass, a sacred grass used during religious ceremonies, here it appears not to have this specific sense (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

³⁰² *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 853.5.

³⁰³ Unidentified source. Without wanting to read too much into this designation, since it could, after all, simply be the abbreviation of the text’s title, the fact that the text is referred to as “treasure” (*gter*) is interesting in regard to the history of the later tradition of revealed

treasure texts. Although it lacks the *gter-shad* characteristic of such literature and although the first treasure revealer is generally held to be Sangs-rgyas bla-ma (1000–1080 ce), whose dates make him posterior to gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, it should not be forgotten that even before the treasure tradition was formalized, many of the root *tantras* that became part of the *rNying-ma* canon were revealed, mostly anonymously in this case, in ways quite similar to the later discovery of treasure texts by named individuals. Indeed, there are cases where gNubs-chen himself seems to have participated in the process of recovery/redaction of these *tantras*. I am grateful to Dr. Cathy Cantwell for her insightful comments on this issue.

³⁰⁴ Gl.: i.e., one should neither desire nor hate anything.

³⁰⁵ For the four types of conduct, see [Chapter 2](#), note 77.

³⁰⁶ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 942.1.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 939.4.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 714.2–3.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 922.5–6.

³¹⁰ Unidentified source.

³¹¹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 353.7.

³¹² Ibid., p. 344.4–6.

³¹³ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 939.7–940.1.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 722.4.

³¹⁵ This and the following citation paraphrase a passage in the *Thabs-kyi zhags-pa padma 'phreng-ba* (commentary), ch. 1; see the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 321 (fol. 8v.4–5) and the diplomatic edition in [Cantwell and Mayer, *A Noble Noose of Methods*](#), p. 239.

³¹⁶ *Thabs-kyi zhags-pa padma 'phreng-ba* (commentary), ch. 1; see IOL Tib J 321 (fol. 8v.3) and the diplomatic edition in [Cantwell and Mayer, *A Noble Noose of Methods*](#), p. 239.

³¹⁷ Although *gar-log* usually refers to the people of Turkestan, the meaning intended here is a behavior that is rebellious and impudent.

³¹⁸ I have been unable to identify the animal called *ye-tshe*; though the qualifier *bye'u* can refer to a small bird, it can also be used for a small mouse. This latter interpretation would be confirmed if we took *ye-tshe* to be a corruption of *ye(?)-tsi*. In any case, whether it is a bird or a rodent, the meaning indicated is that the animal *ye-tshe* / *ye-tsi* searches for little grains (*khra* being short for *khra-ma*; see [Duff, *The Illuminator*](#)

Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary, s.v. *khra ma*). Furthermore, I am uncertain as to the meaning of the expression *kha tshe rgyus yan chad*, which I have left untranslated, so the translation here is tentative.

³¹⁹ It is said that at the time of lying down, in order for one to recognize the luminosity as one goes to sleep, one's imaging should be focused on a single point (*dmigs-pa gcig-la gtad*), such as a white syllable *A*. Cf. 'Jam-mgon kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas, *Thun-mtshams rnal-'byor-la nye-bar mkho-ba gsar-rnying-gi gdams-ngag snying-po bsdu-s-pa dgos-pa kun-tshang*, in 'Jam-mgon kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas (ed.), *rGya-chen bka'-mdzod*, vol. 12/na, Paro, Bhutan: Ngodup, 1975, pp. 289–367, esp. p. 341; bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *dNgos-grub 'dod-'jo*, p. 418, edited and translated in [Dudjom Rinpoche](#), *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments*, p. 56 (the latter source uses the syllable *BAM* due to the focus of the text); [Norbu](#), *Guruyoga*, pp. 60–62; and Namkhai Norbu and Michael Katz (ed.), *Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light*, Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2002, pp. 56–57, 92–93.

³²⁰ *sNe-phrug* most probably refers to a young goat (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

³²¹ By fighting with other oxen, his horns become covered in mud.

³²² Unidentified source.

³²³ This refers to performing rituals for the sake of others. While this is not forbidden per se, such rituals should only be engaged in once one's own practice has been brought to culmination.

³²⁴ *gNyan dPal-dbyangs*, *lTa-ba rin-po-che sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1054.2–4. The order of the first two pairs of lines is reversed in NKJ.

³²⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 360.7–361.2.

³²⁶ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 917.5–6.

³²⁷ When a source of light is brought into a dark chamber, the state of darkness is not separately removed but is instantly illuminated. In alchemy, base metal is transformed into gold, a process that is used as a symbol for spiritual transformation.

³²⁸ Gl.: in one's meditation.

³²⁹ This is a particularly deadly poison, otherwise called *kālakūṭa*, which originated when the gods and titans were churning the ocean in their quest for ambrosia. As they endlessly churned the ocean with Mount Mandara as their churning rod and the giant serpent

Ananta/Vāsuki as their churning rope, various treasures, including the sun and moon, emerged from the ocean, and so did the *halāhala* poison. In some versions of the myth, the latter was swallowed by Śiva out of compassion lest it destroy the world, thereby causing his throat to become blue in color. See Bandana Chatterji, “The Story of Samudramanthana,” in *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, vol. 5, 1971–1972, pp. 56–77; and Kramrisch, *The Presence of Śiva*, pp. 145–152. On the close connection between poison and ambrosia in this myth and on the ambivalent nature of poison, which can itself be a potent medicine, see Jeanine Miller, “The Myth of the Churning of the Ocean of Milk (Amṛtamanthana),” in Peter Connolly (ed.), *Perspectives on Indian Religion: Papers in Honour of Karel Werner*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1986, pp. 63–85, esp. p. 70; and Ira Stubbe-Diarra, *Die Symbolik von Gift und Nektar in der klassischen indischen Literatur*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1995, p. 13. I am grateful to Prof. Christophe Vielle for drawing my attention to several of the references here cited.

³³⁰ Gl.: without having to be relinquished.

³³¹ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 167.5. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 199 (Tibetan text), 601 (English translation). A longer version of this citation is found in §2.5.2 (C 40).

³³² *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 892.1.

³³³ I.e., stupidity, hatred, and passion.

³³⁴ These are the classes of the gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and denizens of hell.

³³⁵ *Thabs-kyi zhags-pa padma 'phreng-ba* (commentary), ch. 1; see the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 321 (fol. 9v.6–10r.1) and the diplomatic edition in Cantwell and Mayer, *A Noble Noose of Methods*, p. 241.

³³⁶ The *Yon-tan bcu* is a non-extant text attributed to dGa'-rab rdo-rje. Note that apart from the first line, the remainder of this quote is found in the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 454.1–2.

³³⁷ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 408.1–3.

³³⁸ The NGM version has this additional line: “By a mere instant of concentration” (*/skad cig tsam gyi ting 'dzin gyis/*).

³³⁹ The quotation is actually from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 459.6–7.

³⁴⁰ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 356.5–6.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 356.2–5.

³⁴² For example, one is able to transform fire into water, as illustrated by the case of Padmasambhava, who, when thrown in a fire by the king of Zahor because of being accused of having sullied Mandāravā, the king's daughter, transformed the burning pyre into a lake. See Gustave-Charles Toussaint (tr.), *Le Dict de Padma*, Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1994, pp. 178–184; Philippe Cornu, *Padmasambhava: La Magie de l'Éveil*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1997, pp. 89–93.

³⁴³ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 359.5–6.

³⁴⁴ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 878.4–5.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 704.7–705.1.

³⁴⁶ *gNyan dPal-dbyangs, lTa-ba rin-po-che sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1052.5–6.

³⁴⁷ Note that the NKJ version reads “the principal body [that is] selflessness” (*bdag med chos sku*).

³⁴⁸ Gl.: i.e., when it is actually perceived by oneself.

³⁴⁹ In the *Abhidharmakośa*, the transcendence obtained visibly in this life (Skt. *dr̥ṣṭadharmanirvāṇa-prāpta*) is defined as the transcendence with a remainder of the aggregates (*phung-po lhag-ma dang-bcas-pa'i mya-ngan-las 'das-pa*; Skt. *sopadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa*). See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 4, ch. 6, p. 211.

³⁵⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, vol. 3, ch. 4, p. 115.

³⁵¹ For a definition of “the moment of completing an action,” see [Chapter 5](#), note 278.

³⁵² *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 409.1–3.

³⁵³ The NGM version reads “complying with” (*bstun te*).

³⁵⁴ Citation untraced in Vimalamitra, *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug rgyud-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 109/dze; and in *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 394–467.

³⁵⁵ I.e., in this life.

³⁵⁶ There are four types of awareness-holders counted in *Mahāyoga*, among which this is the second. The four are the awareness-holder of maturation (*rnam-smin rig-'dzin*), the awareness-holder who dominates life (*tshe-dbang rig-'dzin*), the awareness-holder of the great seal (*phyag-*

rgya chen-po'i rig-'dzin), and the awareness-holder of spontaneous presence (*lhun-grub rig-'dzin*). See [Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*](#), p. 694. It might be recalled that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes himself is credited with having attained the accomplishment of an awareness-holder dominating life. See [Guru bKra-shis, *Gu-bKra'i chos-'byung*](#), p. 246.

³⁵⁷ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan*, IOL Tib J 470 (fol. V4.11–13). For a translation and critical edition, see Takahashi, “Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,” pp. 110–111 (English translation), 136 (Tibetan text).

³⁵⁸ The criterion of actual perception is here mentioned because the masters listed to illustrate the accomplishments were contemporaries or near-contemporaries of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. A similar concern with accomplishment as a criterion for the effectiveness of the tantric path is found in Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *rNam-thar zangs-gling-ma*, p. 65.3–5; see also the corresponding passage in the earliest recension of the text, two exemplars of which are reproduced in [Doney, *The Zangs gling ma*](#), pp. 143 (ZLh, fol. 42b.5–43a.2), 259 (ZLi, fol. 35a.1–2).

³⁵⁹ This does not tally with the standard account of Vimalamitra's departing for Wu Tai Shan in China.

³⁶⁰ Before referring to a particular region in western Tibet, *mNga'-ris* was used to designate any area where the might of the Tibetan empire held sway; it hence could be used to designate the Tibetan empire itself (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). Here it has simply been translated as “mighty.”

³⁶¹ The abode of awareness-holders is a synonym for the celestial pure field (*mkha'-spyod*; Skt. *khecara*).

³⁶² Gl.: i.e., gNyags Jñānakumāra.

³⁶³ I.e., rMa Rin-chen-mchog. Among the nine outstanding translators (*lo-tsā-ba rab-dgu*), he is counted as one of the three middle-aged ones. Together with Vimalamitra, he was responsible for translating the *sGyu-'phrul drwa-ba* into Tibetan. He is also counted among the seven trial men (*sad-mi mi-bdun*), who were the first to be ordained as monks in Tibet. See [Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*](#), vol. 1, pp. 515, 533.

³⁶⁴ This is one of the great charnel grounds; Vimalamitra is also said to have practiced there. See [ibid.](#), p. 501; [Tulku Thondup, *Masters of*](#)

Meditation and Miracles, p. 70; Nyoshul Khenpo, *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems*, p. 41.

³⁶⁵ It is held that the head of a horse appeared from rGyal-ba mchog-dbyangs' head and that neighing resounded everywhere. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 535. Cf. Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *rNam-thar zangs-gling-ma*, p. 122.6, including the oldest recension of the text, two exemplars of which are reproduced in Doney, *The Zangs gling ma*, pp. 174 (ZLh, fol. 74a.3) and 285 (ZLi, fol. 60b.3).

³⁶⁶ Dudjom Rinpoche mentions that through his propitiation of Yangdag Heruka, Nam-mkha'i snying-po was able to ride upon the rays of the sun. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p. 535. Cf. the account given by Klong-chen-pa, which relates that Nam-mkha'i snying-po flew into the sky and departed for mKhar-chu in lHo-brag; see Klong-chen rab-'byams, *Chos-'byung rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod*, p. 281. The same story is found in Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer, *rNam-thar zangs-gling-ma*, pp. 73.6–74.1, including in the oldest recension of the text, two exemplars of which are reproduced in Doney, *The Zangs gling ma*, pp. 149 (ZLh, fol. 49a.1–2), 264 (ZLi, fol. 39b.4).

³⁶⁷ Cf. Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, where the transcendence without a remainder of the aggregates (*phung-po lhag-ma med-pa'i mya-ngan-las 'das-pa*; Skt. *nirupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa*) is said to be obtained after death. This is contrasted with the transcendence with a remainder of the aggregates (*phung-po lhag-ma dang-bcas-pa'i mya-ngan-las 'das-pa*; Skt. *sopadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa*), which is given as a definition of the transcendence obtained visibly in this life (Skt. *drṣṭadharmanirvāṇa-prāpta*). See La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, vol. 1, ch. 2, p. 284; vol. 4, ch. 6, p. 211.

³⁶⁸ Gl.: This is spoken of in numerous oral injunctions of the secret *Mantrayāna*.

³⁶⁹ *gSang-ba'i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, p. 812.5.

³⁷⁰ Gl.: i.e., a snake.

³⁷¹ In India it is commonly held that feeding milk to a snake in no way ensures that the creature will not at some point try to bite its benefactor (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). While snakes are said to delight in milk and while feeding them with milk is sometimes held to appease their irritable nature, they are also believed to transform this purest of substances into poison and thus to amplify their poisonous potency. See Stubbe-Diarra, *Die Symbolik von Gift und*

Nektar, p. 134. Indeed, the unpredictable nature of snakes is probably one of the reasons the serpent-spirits are worshiped. See Jean Philippe Vogel, *Indian Serpent Lore, or the Nāgas in Hindu Legend and Art*, London: Arthur Probsthain, 1926, pp. 7, 19–20, 247. Furthermore, it is believed that serpents can cause illness by their mere gaze or through the breath issuing forth from their nostrils. See *ibid.*, pp. 15, 17.

³⁷² The Tibetan text (C 280.4) has “strength” (*stobs*), which I have emended to “means” (*thabs*) according to C 282.1.

³⁷³ *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in NGM, vol. 20/wa, p. 157.6. For a critical edition and translation, see Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, pp. 186 (Tibetan text), 438 (English translation).

³⁷⁴ Unidentified source.

³⁷⁵ *rNal-’byor grub-pa’i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 286.1–2.

³⁷⁶ Gl.: The beingness of phenomena is absolute truth. Absolute truth is without characteristics or essence; [the latter are] totally imputed. Production is without essence; absolute truth is without essence. Emptiness being without any notions, to maintain anything is mere appearance.

³⁷⁷ Here and in the next section (§6.5.1.4, C 284.3, 284.5), this expression refers not to the *Sautrāntika Mādhyamikas* but to the *sTon-mun*.

³⁷⁸ This quote is a contraction of lines found separately in *gSang-ba’i snying-po de-kho-na-nyid nges-pa*, in KH, vol. 98, pp. 920.4–5, 923.2–4.

³⁷⁹ This is a reference to the seven properties of absolute truth; for an enumeration of these, see [Chapter 1](#), note 5.

³⁸⁰ Liljenberg has recently succeeded in restoring the text of the *sPyi-chings* from a commentary attributed to gNyags Jñānakumāra, the *sPyi gsang-sngags lung-gi ’grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, pp. 439–483, in which the text is embedded as lemmas. See Karen Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*, Two of the *Thirteen Later Translations* of the rDzogs chen Mind Series,” in *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 24, October 2012, pp. 137–156, esp. p. 141. For a translation and critical edition of the relevant passages, see, concerning a critique of the *Chan* approach of mere emptiness, *ibid.*, pp. 147 (English translation), 152 (Tibetan text), and, concerning the enduring superiority of the *Mantrayāna* even after it has been mixed up with *Chan*, *ibid.*, pp. 149 (English translation), 153 (Tibetan text).

³⁸¹ Gl.: where appearance is absent.

³⁸² Unidentified source.

³⁸³ For the four types of conduct, see [Chapter 2](#), note 77.

³⁸⁴ Unidentified source.

³⁸⁵ Gl.: One does not relinquish appearances, for which one is, at the same time, without craving.

³⁸⁶ Interestingly, this same example of the lion and the fox is found in the Dunhuang manuscript Pelliot tibétain 116 (fol. r46.6–8, fol. r47.8–v47.3), where it illustrates, however, the superiority of *Chan*-style non-conceptuality by highlighting the fearlessness with which the *Chan* practitioner engages in the four types of conduct when compared with the mediocre conceptual distinctions that habitually prevent one from achieving enlightenment. See [van Schaik, *Tibetan Zen*](#), pp. 52, 54.

³⁸⁷ One might recall this verse by the Indian *yogin* Tilopa (988–1069): “Like a poison expert / partaking of poison, / delight in existence / but don’t get hooked on existence.” See Roger R. Jackson, *Tantric Treasures: Three Collections of Mystical Verse from Buddhist India*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, v. 24, p. 137.

³⁸⁸ This is an allusion to the four fearlessnesses (*mi-’jigs-pa bzhi*; Skt. *caturvaiśāradya*) of a Buddha. For a list of these, see [Chapter 2](#), note 50.

³⁸⁹ The four activities are those of pacifying (Skt. *śānti*), increasing (Skt. *puṣṭi*), dominating (Skt. *vaśa*), and fiercely exterminating (Skt. *māraṇa*).

³⁹⁰ Gl.: Though both tame [wandering beings] without bias, [*Mahāyoga*] is greater than [*Madhyamaka*].

³⁹¹ “Universal light” (*kun-tu ’od*; Skt. *samantaprabhā*) is the level of a Buddha; it is counted as the eleventh of the bodhisattva stages.

³⁹² The five awakened bodies are the principal body (*chos-kyi sku*; Skt. *dharmakāya*), the enjoyment body (*longs-spyod rdzogs-pa’i sku*; Skt. *saṃbhogakāya*), the emanation body (*sprul-pa’i sku*; Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*), the body of actual enlightenment (*mngon-byang-gi sku*; Skt. *abhisambodhikāya*), and the adamant body (*rdo-rje sku*; Skt. *vajrakāya*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 141.

³⁹³ The implication is that it is an immobile place where the bodhisattva can rest after his exertions in cyclic existence over a period of eons and whence he can emanate bodies of form (Skt. *rūpakāya*) for the sake of sentient beings.

³⁹⁴ On the issue of a relative correspondence versus radical distinction between the stage of universal light and the level of an awareness-holder of spontaneous presence (*lhun-grub rig-’dzin*), see Dylan Esler, “The

Fruition in a Comparative Perspective,” in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 40, 2017, pp. 159–188, esp. pp. 172–174.

³⁹⁵ As discussed earlier (§6.5.1.3, §6.5.1.4), this expression must here be understood as referring to the *sTon-mun*.

³⁹⁶ The implication is that it is useless.

³⁹⁷ *Thabs-kyi zhags-pa padma 'phreng-ba* (root text), ch. 5; see the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 321 (fol. 13v.1–2) and the critical edition in Cantwell and Mayer, *A Noble Noose of Methods*, p. 113. The same two lines cited here are also quoted in Klong-chen-pa's *Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*. See Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, p. 673.

³⁹⁸ Cf. *Thams-cad bdud-rtsi lnga'i rang-bzhin dngos-grub chen-po nye-ba'i snying-po mchog bam-po chen-po brgyad-pa*, in KH, vol. 99, p. 618.6, where the stage of universal light (*kun-tu 'od*) is replaced by the “densely adorned” (*stug-pos brgyan*, Skt. *ghanavyūha*), which is the name of a pure field.

³⁹⁹ Unidentified source. The citation could not be found in the *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, in Christian K. Wedemeyer, *Āryadeva's Lamp that Integrates the Practices (Caryāmelāpakapradīpa): The Gradual Path of Vajrayāna According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*, New York: The American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007.

⁴⁰⁰ Literally, “inside.”

⁴⁰¹ The meaning of the last two lines is somewhat unclear, so the translation is tentative.

7

The Vehicle of Effortless Spontaneity of *Atiyoga*

[C 290.6–494.2; M 209a.3–356b.1]

Here will be taught the meaning of *Atiyoga*, which is the mother of all the Victorious Ones, the acme of yoga, the supreme vehicle. [291] If it be asked why it is called by the name of “Great Completeness,” [it is because] it teaches in detail the absolute meaningfulness in which all the inconceivable doctrines are spontaneously complete without striving, in order that naked liberation be understood.

Likewise, the meaning of this state of spontaneity is the essence of the great ancestor, the treasury of all vehicles. Having assimilated the actual perception of intrinsic awareness, the great meaning that is without assumptions will be made clear to one’s intrinsic awareness.¹ If it be asked how it is to be known, [it is replied that] in this vehicle of *Atiyoga*, according to its textual tradition consisting of *tantras*, authoritative scriptures, and pith instructions,² it is not that one first evaluates through individually discerning sapience a phenomenon to be evaluated. If it be asked why, it is

because everything renowned as phenomena is primordially and originally, without exchanging a single hair or changing color, by nature awakened in the expanse of the great seminal nucleus of self-originated wisdom. Who could see an entity to be evaluated? Who could teach it through arguments? [292] What are the tenets to search for? What would be their evaluator? Since individually these are without essence, [self-originated wisdom] is without imaging. Moreover, the *mDzod* declares,³

Searching for an essence to reified entities,
Where would one search for this single purpose?
Whoever searches like this is confused:
In the state of non-action, there is nothing at all [to search for].

Applying this meaning, if one evaluates and searches for tenets, one's intellect is confused. Evidently, such a one's mind is grasping at duality. Furthermore, the *Yul-kun-la 'jug-pa'i rgyud* says,⁴

Splitting apart a single particle of dust, it is free from all the ten directions.

Thus, one is free from being imperiled by arguments.

7.1. The view

7.1.1. Six questions regarding the view

7.1.1.1. The *Srog-gi 'khor-lo* states,⁵

Abiding in the sky-like state, neither relinquishing nor accomplishing anything,
If one examines the three realms, there is neither cyclic existence nor transcendence.⁶
If one is imperiled in one's positioning, that is not the matrix of the Bliss-gone One.

It may be asked, “Well, since here too it says that one should examine the three realms, is there something to be evaluated (Skt. *prameya*)?” [293] It is replied that it may be so in the ignorance of suchness. Through the meaning of “neither relinquishing nor accomplishing anything,” the clarity and non-duality [pertaining to] the state where everything is spontaneously accomplished [is indicated]; the term “if one examines” is different [in meaning] and does not refer to evaluation. One is struck by intrinsic awareness, neither thinking nor examining nor scrutinizing;⁷ this is the upright path and is maintained to be the supernal evaluation. Furthermore, the pith instructions state,⁸

The scrutinizing intellect does not approach the sky-like essence without thinking, since it transcends scrutinizing and thinking. Transcending the objects of thought, it is without thinking and reference. If one rests, not scrutinizing anything, one does not waver. If one rests, not thinking of anything, one is uncontrived.

Moreover,⁹

Not entering scrutiny: that is uprightness.

And,¹⁰

In the non-dual nature of the sky
The thinking and scrutinizing intellect does not enter.
[294] It will not be found nor met with through thought.
Not thinking about it, one will neither stray nor be
dissociated from it.

In any case, if it is compatible with absolute meaningfulness, it is the upright path without deviation. Since it settles in quietude,¹¹ the great evaluation is without evaluating; it is the great non-examining.

Thus, absolute meaningfulness is free from evaluating through arguments. Therefore, individuals do not perform effortful actions, since [absolute meaningfulness] is not pierced through effortful conduct. The *rDo-rje sems-dpa' nam-mkha'-che* declares,¹²

Unborn, it¹³ is indestructible:¹⁴
Originally in quintessential enlightenment,
Effortful thinking does not move the open dimension.

The *rTsal-chen sprugs-pa* states,¹⁵

In the non-dual open dimension of phenomena, wherein
examination and scrutiny are utterly pure,
Some¹⁶ are deceived by the childish conduct of
misconceptions.

In any case, reified entities are primordially in the expanse of great bliss; those who are temporarily on the path should neither scrutinize nor dissect them—unmistakenly, they will tear them asunder. [295]

7.1.1.2. It may be asked, “Well, can the mind be liberated by neither examining nor scrutinizing

anything?” [It is replied that] the absence of any liberating action is itself liberation. If it be asked why this is, it is because, transcending examination and scrutiny, one is without imaging any fetters. As a mere designation¹⁷ one speaks of “liberation.” Moreover, the *rDo-rje sems-dpa’ nam-mkha’-che* says,¹⁸

One’s purposes, as they are, do not move;
One is liberated through liberation without action;
Without seeking for it, one is liberated through self-
originated wisdom,
Which reveals the path of liberation.

Since there is no purposeful action, one is liberated in intrinsic awareness as it is through non-action itself.

7.1.1.3. It may be asked, “Well then, through what might this absolute meaningfulness,¹⁹ for the time being, be indicated?” [It is replied with this citation from] the *sPyi-bcings*,²⁰

This great ocean of the secret *Mantrayāna*
Cannot be comprehended
Through examples, valid criteria, and arguments,
Nor through inferential sapience.

Hence, the integral being of the secret *Mantrayāna*,
With its great billowing waves of accomplishments,
Is infinitely deep and difficult to fathom;
[296] It is accomplished by those who have obtained the
authoritative scriptures and pith instructions.

The *Sems-bsgom rdo-la gser-zhun* declares,²¹

It is difficult to teach and examine and free from describable designations.

It cannot be arrived at through words and is neither the scope of others²² nor of childish ones.

This meaning here can be viewed through the Teacher's definitive authoritative scriptures and through the master's pith instructions.

Thus, even in the mode of teaching it through the authoritative scriptures and pith instructions, it is revealed to be without evaluation, without discursive examining, without learning, and without thinking and scrutiny. That is the unmistakable axiom of genuineness.

Hence, if one shows a clod [of earth] to someone desiring to view gold, he shall not see it, but if he is shown gold, he will recognize it. Likewise, the absolute meaningfulness that is without scrutiny and that is liberated from speaking and thinking is not found through the inference of searching and scrutinizing. Being without action and effort, when it is understood as it is revealed, that is the supreme valid measure of actual perception. Furthermore, the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung chen-po* says,²³

[The Hallowed One] declared: "Holy person, where is the quintessence of enlightenment to be sought?"

[297] He replied: "Nowhere is it to be sought."

Spoke [the Hallowed One]: "Why is it not to be sought?"

"Because the quintessence of all enlightenment abides nowhere."

The same source continues,²⁴

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Holy person, through what example is the quintessence of enlightenment taught?”

He replied: “O holy virtuous friend, there is no example that would be compatible with it. Any example generated would be unfitting.”

[The Hallowed One] declared: “Can it not be indicated through an example?”

He replied: “If one were to take somewhat compatible examples, these would be: the sky, the sun, a precious gem, precious gold, a lamp, a poison-transforming juice, the alchemical juice, beryl {marked with light}, the great ocean, the heart of the diamond,²⁵ suppression through dynamism,²⁶ involvement in objects, the precious golden diamond, and the generation of eagerness.”

[298] Therefore, it is not to be sought for as a tenet. It is not to be indicated. If it is indicated, it should be indicated through examples as being non-dual and free from action and agent, thinking and scrutiny. The *rMad-du byung-ba'i rgyud* states,²⁷

It destroys all the schoolings,²⁸
Without any schooling
Such is my, the expert's, schooling.

Hence, it is inherently free from deliberate examining and scrutiny. This means that, having already encountered the unmistakable meaning of genuineness, it is the supreme means. This meaning is the scope of the former men whose purpose was the good doctrine, so one should believe it.

Nowadays, there are *mantrins* who, not assimilating the crucial points of the view, say, “Although the ground of phenomena may be thus [as you say], the faculties of individuals are not so. Still more, those who lack

proficiency evaluate and search for entities through argumentation. In any case, they find the meaning of the enlightened mind in the tenets. [299] One should, in the context of the pith instructions, chiefly implement the examination and scrutiny of individually discerning sapience.”

These are veritably *not* the crucial points of the view. It is like a monkey licking honey. {If it be asked why,} [it is replied that] the engagement with the great meaning is without dwindling or staying; it is without action and thinking. The blind who insert [therein] their examination and scrutiny produce the limitations of conceptions. Whatever they do, it becomes but a limited view. If it be asked why, [it is replied that,]²⁹ making non-dual the phenomena one has evaluated as dualistic entities is itself duality. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] by making³⁰ something non-dual, there occurs duality.

Examining and scrutinizing the phenomena that are not free from effortful action, one’s desire to be free from the searching for tenets is itself not free from searching. If this were a freedom from effort,³¹ there would not be freedom from searching owing to this.

The blind maintain that there is spontaneous presence because they examine phenomena that are not spontaneously accomplished [in the first place]; yet this is not spontaneous presence. [300] If it be asked why, [it is replied that] if there were a spontaneous presence that originated from someone’s examining that which is not spontaneously accomplished, it would not be accomplished owing to this.

The Great Completeness maintained as a tenet by those who scrutinize phenomena that are not thoroughly complete is itself not thoroughly complete. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] if there were a thorough completeness [which is as they claim], it would not be complete owing to this.

Some, having examined the phenomena of causes and conditions, maintain their tenets to be self-originated wisdom, yet these are not self-originated wisdom. If it be asked why, it is because they originate from the examination of causes and conditions.

Some maintain that the single seminal nucleus is a tenet effected through many scrutinizing thoughts and numerous designations, yet it is manifold. If it be asked why, it is because it originates from the evaluation of phenomena that are manifold and multiple. [301] If that were [the seminal nucleus], it would be [manifold] owing to them.

Some, having examined and scrutinized the phenomena pertaining to self and others, maintain integral being; yet this is a dualistic phenomenon. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] if integral being were a tenet to be examined³² among [the phenomena pertaining to] self and others, it would, owing to this, be extrinsic.

Some, thinking about thematic phenomena, [maintain that] the view is without thematic foci; yet this is itself a thematic focus.³³ If it be asked why, it is because they maintain an absence of thematic foci.

Again, some, examining the phenomena to be established, maintain that there is nothing to establish,

yet this is itself an establishing. If it be asked why, it is because, since they pursue an absence of establishing, it is a phenomenon [of establishing] owing to this.

Some, examining the phenomena pertaining to suffering and the afflictions, maintain the tenet of great bliss, yet this itself is suffering. [302] If it be asked why, it is because they do not desire suffering and the afflictions, desiring great bliss instead,³⁴ yet if there is the one, there is the other.

Again, some, by scrutinizing the phenomena of tenets, maintain that there is freedom from all the limitations of tenets, yet this itself is a limitation. If it be asked why, it is because, if there is freedom from limitations, there are limitations, too. Hence, their very desire to be without limitations is itself a limitation.

Some, thinking about and scrutinizing the sentient beings in cyclic existence, maintain that the Buddha is unestablished, yet [the Buddha so maintained is] itself a sentient being. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] if the Buddha were established by relinquishing cyclic existence, he would be but a sentient being.

Some, thinking about and scrutinizing the phenomena of deliberate involvement, maintain the absence of involvement in limitations, yet this itself is effortful involvement. If it be asked why, [it is because] they deliberately effect the absence of involvement: if there is absence [of involvement], there is involvement, too.

Again, some, examining the phenomena to be meditated on, maintain that there is nothing on which to meditate, yet this itself is effortful meditation. [303] If it

be asked why, it is because they have made the absence of meditation into a great purpose.

Some, scrutinizing the phenomena of attainment, maintain that the fruition is without attainment, yet this itself is attainment through effort. If it be asked why, it is because, when there is absence of attainment, there is the hope of attaining it.

Some, scrutinizing the phenomena that rectify the defects in contemplation, maintain that there is absence of rectification, yet that itself is rectification through effort. If it be asked why, it is because maintaining the purpose of the absence of rectification is itself rectification.

In any case, because all that is created is a limitation, by being confused through examination and scrutiny one implements the cause of further discursiveness and becomes incapable of ever seeing absolute meaningfulness. Therefore, the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,³⁵

Liberation, non-liberation, etc.—

All that is discursively examined dualistically is a limitation.

Hence, it is confusion. Furthermore, the pith instruction states,³⁶

Where there are many limitations of examination, there is
the great limitation of scrutiny.

[304] And,³⁷

Much examination and scrutiny is like the host of stars in
the sky.

The pith instruction continues,³⁸

If, in the essence of space without thoughts,
One's intellect becomes involved in scrutinizing and
thinking,
This is a great flaw for the space without thoughts.
One does not strike it by scrutinizing it,
Nor does one meet absolute meaningfulness by thinking
about it.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* says,³⁹

The very actions of indicating and examining
Produce grasping because [the absolute] is grasped in terms
of criteria.
Hence, one's mental continuum is encircled by indicators.

Therefore, if one examines discursively, a cognition convinced in the absolute is born, and one is encircled by the effortful accomplishment so produced. The *Khyung-chen lding-ba* declares,⁴⁰

According to the Teacher's authoritative scriptures, if one sees the limitations of words as the path of conduct, one is following the continuum of discursiveness, which is like chasing after a mirage.

In the context of the Eminent Yoga, it is evident to the great persons that the purposes of effortful examining and scrutinizing are confused and meaningless. Therefore, this is not how the great persons view [absolute meaningfulness].

7.1.1.4. It may be asked, “Well, if they are confused, how is the unmistakable meaning?” [305] [It is replied that] primordially,⁴¹ it is without the designation of non-duality.⁴² It is inherently already free from searching, yet

there is no exaggeration in terms of being free from searching.⁴³ Originally, there is no name of spontaneous presence,⁴⁴ and the primordial Great Completeness is free from the intellectual label of Great Completeness.⁴⁵ Originally, self-originated wisdom is without the labeling as self-originated wisdom.⁴⁶ In the great seminal nucleus that is the primordial and fundamental root,⁴⁷ one does not label “a great seminal nucleus.” Throughout the three times, the signlessness of integral being is without exterior or interior,⁴⁸ being {primordially} free from thematic foci, yet it is not designated as free from thematic foci. Primordially, it is already accomplished, yet this absence of anything to accomplish is not exaggerated. Abiding in the great bliss of this state, it is without designations; it is originally non-dual, yet this “uninvolvement” is uncorrupted. [306] Primordially, it does not waver from intrinsic clarity, yet this “non-meditation” is uncontrived. This state is limitless, yet it is not designated as being “free from limitations.” It is without even the name of “concepts,” yet being uncontrived, it cannot be shown. It is naturally already awakened, yet this “Buddha” cannot be created or examined.

If it be asked why, [it is replied that,] since it is already primordially accomplished, it is now unexamined, uncontrived, uncorrupted, ungrasped, and uncreated. It does not temporarily originate from the examination through sapience. This is because it is primordially and intrinsically free from symbols and designations. It is difficult to comprehend. The *gSal-ba'i sgron-ma* states,⁴⁹

Illusory, it is primordially birthless
And is not exaggerated through such designations as
“birthless.”⁵⁰

And,⁵¹

It is not that there is phenomena’s beingness {on the one side} and
the non-imaging of itemized phenomena [on the other].
Unless it is explained as a condition⁵² in order to repel craving,
The open dimension of phenomena is without words and without
description.

[307] One must assimilate the crucial points with regard
to the meaning of such a view.

7.1.1.5. [It might be asked,] “In any case, absence of
strain is said to be a great purpose. Yet how is one to see
the truth of the genuine meaning through the means of
not examining anything at all?” It is replied that all
phenomena are without the duality of self and other and
without the duality of the knowable and the knower.
Therefore, “seeing” is merely an analogy for not seeing
anything and not viewing anything. Certainly, there is
nothing at all to see aside from this. Moreover, it is said
in the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung chen-po*,⁵³

The beingness of mind⁵⁴ is unoriginated, unborn and birthless—
primordial being as it is.⁵⁵ Being by nature spontaneously
accomplished, it is the root, the holy enlightened mind. Assimilating
it with certainty such as it is, one experiences the Buddha’s intent:
the mind and all mental events are like the sky.

[308] The same source says,⁵⁶

Whatever forms are seen, they are not found subsequently;
Since not seeing is certain seeing,
One gains the inexpressible experience of intrinsic
awareness—
Yet gaining a sight is merely a designation.

The same source continues,⁵⁷

“Hail, holy persons! Who beholds the enlightened quintessence?”

They replied: “O holy virtuous friend, this quintessence of enlightenment is beheld by us without seeing it.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “How does one see without seeing?”

They answered: “Without seeing this quintessence of enlightenment, everything is seen as the quintessence of enlightenment.” [. . .]

[The Hallowed One] spoke:⁵⁸ “Holy persons, do you see the nature of everything?”⁵⁹

They replied: “O holy virtuous friend, this nature of everything is not seen by us.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Why do you not see it?”

They answered: “Because it is without imaging.”

[The Hallowed One] enquired: “Do you, then, not see the nature of everything?”

[309] They replied: “O holy virtuous friend, we do see it.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Holy persons, how do you see it?”

They answered: “How is the nature of everything? It is uncontrived, uncreated, uncorrupted, unoriginated, primordially as it is, suchness: we see it as the configuration of primordial being as it is.”

[The Hallowed One] spoke: “Do you behold the Buddha?”⁶⁰

They replied: “We do not see him.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Why do you not see him?”

They answered: “Because he is without imaging.”

[The Hallowed One] enquired: “Do you, then, not see him?”

They replied: “We do see him.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “How do you see him?”

They answered: “Since, as thusness, the Buddha pervades everything, we see him as the configuration of natural spontaneous presence.”

[The Hallowed One] spoke: “Do you see all sentient beings?”⁶¹

[310] They replied: “We do not see them.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Why do you not see them?”
They answered: “Because they are without imaging.”
[The Hallowed One] enquired: “Do you, then, not see them?”
They replied: “We do see them.”
[The Hallowed One] asked: “How do you see them?”
They answered: “We see everything as the configuration of the root, the enlightened mind.”

The same source says,⁶²

Whether seen or unseen, appearances are without intrinsic nature.
As for the profound engagement with the all-embracing secret intent,
When it includes the vision of actually perceiving self-originated intrinsic awareness,⁶³
It is said to see that very self-originated wisdom.

What this means is that to deliberately see [something] is to deviate both from the *tantras* and the authoritative scriptures and is the defect of not knowing one’s integral identity. Because in this great religious system,⁶⁴ there is nothing to see deliberately, everything is integral being; hence, one does not search for it, and it is without seeing yet is intrinsically clear—it is the supreme eye. [311] Therefore, only this absolute meaningfulness actually draws forth the intent of the Victorious Ones.

Some individuals, not knowing this and free from confidence in the view, are without the lineage’s pith instructions as their source yet are eloquent in the [vehicles] below; such individuals say, “Intrinsic awareness does not comprehend the thusness of the unborn and empty essence of phenomena’s beingness, as it is without action and referential grasping. Hence, it is

without the object of wisdom, and while referentially imaging there is non-duality. That alone is the Great Completeness. It is without action and seeing.” Affirming this as the Great Completeness, they are committed to the support of *Madhyamaka* contemplation. The *sPyi-bcings* declares,⁶⁵

Affirming this as the unsurpassed Great Completeness,
They merely commit to the support of the *sTon-mun*’s
contemplation;
[Like] a prince falling to [the rank of] subject, this contradicts the
authoritative scriptures.

Therefore, this is like a holy prince falling to [the rank of] subject and contradicts the authoritative scriptures. [312] These confused personal views appear as the Great Completeness. For example, when the eyes move due to obscurations or fever, different forms appear, yet they are not true. The dull intellectually pursue and commend them as a source.

7.1.1.6. It may be asked, “In that case, what is the intent of the meaning of the Great Completeness, the vehicle free from action?” [It is replied that] the mother who generates all the Victorious Ones is the antidote to all effortful activities. Whatever means and paths one accomplishes, if this is not realized, there is no awakening. This is because one works for awakening and invests all activities with great meaning. If it be asked how this is the case, [it is replied that,] all the way up to *Anuyoga*, the meaning of equality is not seen since one distinguishes between an exterior and an interior, becomes accustomed to [a specific purpose], indicates

the meaning through indications, and hence is not free from actualizing the meaning through effort. For instance,⁶⁶ the ocean may be sullied and shaken by waves, in which case it is sullied. Yet when it is unsullied, it is intrinsically limpid, so that all reflections appear and it is unnecessary to search for them. [313] If one searches for [the meaning in the vehicles] below,⁶⁷ one will not meet with it again, since these are incompatible⁶⁸ with the unwavering essence. Here, in this great system, [enlightenment] comes about through non-action itself. Because the fundamental root Buddha appears without one having to search for him, from the purified and cleansed continuum of the Victorious One up to the Avīci hell,⁶⁹ it is through this meaning that one is rescued. Therefore, all the Victorious Ones were awakened by understanding this meaning. The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,⁷⁰

It is thanks to the amazing enlightened mind
That I too, Vajrasattva,
Reawakened in Vajrāsana.

The *rDo-la gser-zhun* says,⁷¹

Since she is the mother of all the Bliss-gone Ones without exception, there is but a single path for all the Buddhas.

She is the basis for the oceans of engagements with the path of the perfections, such as discipline, etc.

In all the doctrinal explanations concerning the utter liberation of the noble ones,⁷²

It is from the completeness of this very enlightened mind that its qualities occur. [314]

The deathless great family of noble ones, and all the bodhisattvas, Would not be accomplished without it. Therefore, this is the supreme path for utter liberation.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,⁷³

The quintessential enlightenment is the universal domain:
Unelaborated, it is thus still.

The *Thig-le drug-pa* states,⁷⁴

However the path of utter liberation is explained, she is the mother of the Bliss-gone Ones, the universally congruent path. Without her, they would not occur. Therefore, it is the supreme path of utter liberation.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* says,⁷⁵

If it were not for the enlightened mind,
There would be no other remedy to benefit
The sentient beings in the abodes of the three realms;
If one is aware of the meaning of this enlightened mind,
The phenomena of cyclic existence are without cause,
And one quickly attains enlightenment.

The *Khyung-chen lding-ba* declares,⁷⁶

If one does not implement the great medicine that naturally abides unwaveringly,
The cause of journeying to the higher levels is already afflicted.

[315] If this path did not exist,⁷⁷ the Victorious Ones would not occur. Those on the path would not be released from the dungeon of effortful accomplishment. There would be no time for wandering beings to dry out the ocean of cyclic existence. Hence, in order to install them in bliss through non-action without installing them, it is necessary to depend on this path. Without encountering any means, it is the view encountered. Without realizing anything, it is the great realization.

7.1.2. The nine views concerning the ground

Generally,⁷⁸ [the ground] is nothing but oneness and transcends thought.⁷⁹ Here will be shown a few textual traditions maintained by some virtuous friends:⁸⁰ though they may seem to be incompatible systems,⁸¹ however [the ground] is taught, it is essentially alike.⁸² (1) Some⁸³ teach it as being free from thematic foci. (2) Some⁸⁴ teach the view that, as thusness, it is spontaneously present. (3) Some⁸⁵ view it as integral being. [316] (4) Some⁸⁶ view it as self-originated wisdom.⁸⁷ (5) Some⁸⁸ view it as being free⁸⁹ from action and searching. (6) Some⁹⁰ view it as being great bliss. (7) Some⁹¹ view it as non-duality. (8) Some⁹² view it as the great seminal nucleus. (9) Some⁹³ view it as the great intrinsic mode, which, without relinquishing them, is free from all limitations.

7.1.2.1. The view that is free from thematic foci

In this regard, the view that is free from thematic foci⁹⁴ has a mistaken and an unmistaken mode. When it is not

realized as it is, this is explained as the defect of deviation.

7.1.2.1.1. Comprehension

Its unmistakable meaning is that Buddhas and sentient beings, cyclic existence and transcendence, are all nothing but designations. In their essence, the various appearances are without abode. Through this state in which everything is the scope of self-originated wisdom, one is free [from stains] without having to eliminate them. There is neither the theme of something to pursue on the side of enlightenment, nor the theme of desiring to clarify the meaning through awareness. [317] In the nature of oneness, how could there be a referential focus, where there is none? It is not that [this view] originates from clarifying thematic foci, but neither is it explained⁹⁵ by the mere name of “being primordially free from thematic foci.” Since this very absolute meaningfulness is myself, there is no deliberate pursuing of it. For example, the sun does not search for the light of glow-worms.⁹⁶ The *Khyung-chen* states,⁹⁷

In the nature of great ambrosia,
There is no touching the means of thematization.

The *Byang-chub-kyi sems rin-po-che kun-'dus* says,⁹⁸

When one knows this to be the supreme quintessential
enlightenment,
How could there be an object of thematization and focusing?
When one verily realizes the state of completeness without
action,
One transcends the domain of thematization and journeying.

Therefore, if one assimilates with confidence the meaning that is without thematization, how could one implement thematic tasks or conduct? Neither obstructing nor implementing any task, one is liberated from the scope of thematic foci. The *Byang-chub sems-tig* declares,⁹⁹

[318] Without the domain of thematization, it is empty of the faculty of effort.

According to what is taught extensively [in these sources], a thematic focus is referential imaging. Here, “to be without thematic foci” has the meaning of non-imaging; it refers to the intellect’s abiding without action. The pith instruction states,¹⁰⁰

If one does not even abide on signlessness,
What need is there to mention non-abiding on signs!¹⁰¹

One should resolve to be without abiding on any thought whatsoever.¹⁰²

7.1.2.1.2. Incomprehension

As for the defect of not seeing the meaning without thematic foci, the blind try to actualize [this meaning] and search for a fruition. Not knowing that absolute meaningfulness and the fruition are their integral identity, they are like deer chasing after a mirage; how despairing! The *rMad-du byung-ba* also says,¹⁰³

For him who desires enlightenment, there is no
enlightenment—
The stages and the utterly supreme enlightenment are far
away.
Whoever knows phenomena's beingness, which is like a
cause,
Is certain that "This enlightened mind am I"—
He enters the quintessence of enlightenment.
[319] Hence, there is nothing to obtain or to relinquish:
Designations, such as "the enlightenment of the Buddhas,"
Are not the meaning.

Thematization being confusion, there is no
thematization here. The *Khyung-chen lding-ba*
declares,¹⁰⁴

Since there is no path, to enter a path is the great illness of
the path.
To desire to go [somewhere] is similar to deer chasing after
a mirage.
There is no object to gain, nor will one occur among the
entirety of the three worlds.
Even the abodes associated with the ten stages are an
obscuration to enlightenment.

It is said in the *Nam-mkha'-che*:¹⁰⁵

A path which cleans ever more
Is incompatible with the principle free from action.
Like the sky's limit, it cannot be reached,
No matter how one journeys on the path.

Hence, thematization and journeying are confusion. In
this context, the *Klong* states,¹⁰⁶

In the enlightened mind, which is uncontrived just as it is,
To have a thematic focus is not meditation.
The Hallowed One, Samantabhadra, has knowingly spoken
this.

[320] Thus, one should gain certainty in this regard.

7.1.2.2. The view of spontaneous presence

Concerning the great state of spontaneous presence,¹⁰⁷
there are both its defects and its meaning.

7.1.2.2.1. Comprehension

In this regard, the unmistakable meaning refers to the essence, i.e., the nature of the entire objective scope pertaining to Buddhas and sentient beings. Being in all aspects¹⁰⁸ nonexistent from the origin, it is nonexistent at the end: as the nature of the great state of the spontaneously present beingness of phenomena, there is awakening without remainder.

If it be asked what its characteristics are like, [it is replied that,] by way of example, it is like the precious wish-granting gem.¹⁰⁹ Through the power of enjoying it and one's own slight merit, whatever one thinks of appears. Is it the case that these [appearances] are inside [the gem], or outside it, or in between, or nowhere, or all three?¹¹⁰ Is it the case that these appearances, being mingled together, then appear? Can one examine and reveal their individual whereabouts? Though it is difficult to say, whatever one needs and desires appears. Likewise, the beingness of phenomena, the great state of spontaneous presence, has this quality, that it rests with

all phenomena. [321] It is difficult to examine and reveal the whereabouts of its qualities' blessings as being one or multiple, or as being in any of the cardinal or inter-cardinal directions. Nevertheless, this great blessing is uninterrupted as one's intrinsic illumination. What is more, the essence of this jewel may be neared through this example, taken from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*,¹¹¹

It is non-conceptual, without action; it is the fount of desirables; it fulfills one's needs and hopes; it is uninterrupted; it generates joy; it is inexhaustible; it installs one in bliss; it accomplishes everything; it is unimpeded; it is unwearied; it is very generous and accomplishes one's needs. O ruler of Lañka, although these phenomena may be marginally compatible, they are examples of intrinsic awareness, which itself is unbiased.

What this means is that the spontaneously present state of great bliss, being timelessly throughout the three times, is free from all objective scope. There being neither examiner nor object of examination, it is the great non-discursiveness. [322] Effecting the purposes of all those on the path and all those to be tamed, it fulfills one's needs and hopes. Being the accomplishment of all one's wishes, it is the fount of desirables. Through this accomplishment, all those of outstanding or middling faculties shall possess complete [awakening] without remainder. This may or may not occur in this life. For those to be tamed, it generates joy; its qualities are inexhaustible. It installs all those on the path in genuine bliss. Throughout all times it accomplishes all actions. It appears unimpeded by

anything whatsoever.¹¹² Effecting all purposes, it requires no props. Being agreeable to all thoughts,¹¹³ it verily grants one's desires.¹¹⁴ Accomplishing all intents and thoughts, whatever occurs is without interruption.¹¹⁵ The same source states,¹¹⁶

It is continuously possessed of qualities,
Continuously possessed of actions.

[323] The absolute meaningfulness of this state is without characteristics to reveal. Without picking out anything, it pervades everything. It is difficult to touch it with one's intellect. It does not co-inhere in anything. That is why it is expressed analogically as the state of spontaneous presence. It is not that it is, temporarily, made by the Victorious Ones, or examined by those on the path, or created through luck or by an omnipotent god. It is primordially spontaneously present. The *Khu-byug* declares,¹¹⁷

Since all is already finished, one relinquishes the illness of effort.
Abiding spontaneously, one rests.

Having seized the fruition that is spontaneously accomplished, it reveals itself without searching. The entire path and fruition are complete in the great wisdom, without searching for it. Therefore, it is said in the *Nam-mkha'-che*,¹¹⁸

It is a benefactor to the thoughts of one's psyche:
It exhibits its folded strength.
When seen, it is the accomplishment:
It is the completion of meditative equipoise.

The *Srog-gi 'khor-lo* states,¹¹⁹

The baskets, the *tantras*, and the important [pith instructions]¹²⁰ are complete in the awakened mind.

[324] The *rTse-mo byung rgyal* declares,¹²¹

Being nothing whatsoever, it is the open dimension of
variegated phenomena;
Having knowing awareness, the quintessence of
enlightenment
Realizes the meaning of non-duality; the *yogin* endowed
with great means¹²²
[Reaches] the limit of the spontaneously present union with
utterly pure wisdom:
In this open dimension without hope or misgiving is open-
dimensional clarity.

The meaning here is that the spontaneously present essence of both cyclic existence and transcendence is revealed as being without hope or misgiving. The *Rin-po-che kun-'dus* says,¹²³

There being nothing to pick out, all hopes are fulfilled:
It is the great vehicle which realizes equality.
All-pervading, there is not the least phenomenon that is not
completed.

Thereby is meant that the qualities and blessings of spontaneously complete awareness are self-originated without being sought for. Since it is taught to be the integral identity of everything, it is said that there is nothing to eliminate or to obtain. The *bDe-'byams* states,¹²⁴

The great dimension of the seminal nucleus of inseparable
spontaneous presence
Cannot be generated: it is the primordial jewel;
[325] Being without action, it is the great seminal nucleus of
spontaneous completeness.

Furthermore,¹²⁵

Changeless, it is like black wool;¹²⁶
If examined, it is the dimension of black wool:
Since it abides spontaneously, it cuts through all ranks.

The *sPyi-gcod* declares,¹²⁷

Originally, there is nothing other than it:
The state of spontaneous completeness
Is without the times of death, mutation, and change;
Being unchanging and stable, it is like gold.

Hence, it is taught as being the unchanging state in
which there is no need for searching. The *rMad-du
byung-ba* has this to say:¹²⁸

O great being, though the victorious awakened body of the
Victors
May appear in variegated guises,
It is like the universal jewel.

And,¹²⁹

However the awakened body appears in its colors, however it is
displayed, it is like a jewel: whether a jewel's color be white, or
whether the jewel be red, yellow, green, and so forth, it is still a
jewel. [326] It is not the case that it is a jewel and then is not a
jewel. Likewise, the awakened body of the Victorious Ones,
whatever its color or shape may be, is the Victorious One's body. It
is never the case that it is not an awakened body.

In this regard,¹³⁰ all the qualities are complete, as in reality [this state] is the configuration of the awakened bodies and wisdoms. The fortunate sons who comprehend this meaning realize it in the manner of non-action. In this awareness whose modality is an absence, it is primordially just as it is. Hence, by merely gaining absolute meaningfulness, the entirety of one's objective scope is clarified as the spontaneously complete jewel. The same source continues,¹³¹

A man having found the jewel of the three realms
Would have all his desires accomplished:
It would become the wish-granting gem of this realm.

It is not the case that¹³² it becomes something that it is not. Rather, being means that it is self-arisen. Therefore, it is not temporarily accrued in the manner of an accumulation, nor is it sought for. Whatever one does or engages in, it can neither be wasted nor accumulated. Therefore,¹³³

[327] The enlightened mind, enlightenment itself,
Is simultaneously completed without accruing the
accumulations.
Since it is intrinsically extolled as its own quintessence,
There is no comprehending of a quintessence to be
accomplished.
Since it is self-created as its own quintessence,
It is the awakened body that spontaneously accomplishes
whatever is thought of.

If one is endowed with this meaning, there is no doubt about it. The same source continues,¹³⁴

For those made by the enlightened mind
And for novices, it is like the wishing tree:
Through the constant bliss of enlightenment,
They become enlightenment's supreme quintessence.

These meanings are extensively dealt with in this source. In any case, self and others are spontaneously primordially accomplished. In this regard, who is there to referentially image? What is there to look at? When there is nothing to look at, think of, or pursue, one views through spontaneous seeing; this is unmistakable alpha-purity.¹³⁵

7.1.2.2.2. Incomprehension

Concerning the defect of not realizing this, even though parties of individuals close to the [last] five hundred years¹³⁶ may be such as to yearn to present the doctrine, there will be no benefit since they overstate their ground. [328] They say that they have pleasant means to practice and instructions for referential imaging but are like someone who would go to open the storehouse lock with the key for its fence.¹³⁷ To hope for spontaneous presence through pith instructions concerning referential fixation is a deviation. It will not be realized thereby; these are no means to release since they are encircled by effort. Moreover, the *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* states,¹³⁸

The great means is primordially spontaneously
accomplished;
Engaging in causes and rectification is not a great means.
If one is not free from engaging with causal means,
What can one do with the great means of non-
discursiveness?

Hence, it should be evident that this is veritably a deviation.

7.1.2.3. The view of integral being

In this regard, the view of the great Eminent Yoga, the view of integral being,¹³⁹ again has an unmistakable meaning, and, when this meaning is not comprehended, a deviation.

7.1.2.3.1. Comprehension

If it be asked what the unmistakable meaning is, [it is replied that] all phenomena¹⁴⁰ without exception included in self and other—[329] everything that appears in terms of “I” and “mine”—without being transformed or corrupted, are primordially intrinsically clear as the integral identity of intrinsic awareness’ non-abiding wisdom; [this is so] even without labeling them with the designation of “integral being.” They primordially transcend the designations expressed through words and letters. In that case, it may be asked whether it is not unnecessary to label it with words. [It is replied that words are used] in order that neophytes, individuals who believe in the great vehicle,¹⁴¹ should repel their craving for other paths and their hope in a fruition from somewhere else.¹⁴² Yet in its essence it is inherently without the exaggeration and denigration pertaining to self and other.

Therefore, in the state of integral being one does not pick out phenomena pertaining to others, and these are

abolished in one's integral identity. If it be asked why, [we reply with] the *sPyi-bcings*:¹⁴³

I exist; others do not. Integral being exists because it is spontaneously present. Since it is one in the state of Samantabhadra, there is no other.

This means that the grasping at appearances in terms of self and others is inherently pure. [330] The great I that is not an I is integral being. Moreover, the meaning of “self” is that there is no fruition to be accomplished. Since there is no other path to search for, this is expressed as integral being.¹⁴⁴ If there is an essence to the fruition, the so-called Buddha, it is not other than oneself. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung chen-po* declares,¹⁴⁵

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Holy persons, how is the quintessence of enlightenment to be accomplished?”

They replied: “There is nothing to be accomplished.”

Spoke [the Hallowed One]: “How is there nothing to be accomplished?”

They answered: “It is because it is primordially accomplished.”

[The Hallowed One] queried: “How can it be primordially accomplished?”

They said: “Since it does not originate from another but originates from oneself, since it is without effortful action and is self-originated, it is certainly the case that it has primordially been practiced.”

Therefore, it is unnecessary to accomplish it or search for it. The *lTa-ba chos-nyid sprin* also says,¹⁴⁶

Sentient beings originated from confusion
[331]¹⁴⁷ And Buddhas originated from realization—
They are my essence;
Everything without exception
Is included within myself.

Furthermore, it is not the case that there is a single extrinsic existent that is included in one's identity. The *Nam-mkha'-che* states,¹⁴⁸

Whatever there is, whomsoever it [belongs to], wheresoever
it is—
All that enslaves and all that is enjoyed—originates in me.

Everything that appears or is exhausted in its appearance is the intrinsic illumination of integral being. In one's integral identity it is exhausted as the enjoyment of the integral identity. Furthermore,¹⁴⁹

Its limits are equal to the sky;
It is not a phenomenon that is associated with any other:
Through its unparalleled wisdom,
Through its intrinsic force, there is awareness,
Which does not occur from some extrinsic phenomenon.

From [the perspective of] the wisdom of integral being, the path is taught as being nothing other than the fruition. The '*Phra-bkod* declares,¹⁵⁰

The glorious all-embracing integral being
Is included everywhere, being the supreme life force.

The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* states,¹⁵¹

Being the all-embracing chief among the hosts of Victorious
Ones,
It is the ruler of all the outer, inner, and secret
configurations.

[332] The *bDe-'byams* declares,¹⁵²

Without aspirations, it is intrinsically completed;
Without designations, it is the custodian of *yogins*.

The *rJe-btsan dam-pa* says,¹⁵³

Atiyoga is the divinity among gods,
The supreme yoga among yogas.
Being the noblest among the noble,
He is the adamant ancestor of all the Victorious Ones:
Such is the holy revered one,¹⁵⁴ Samantabhadra.

The integral being of everything¹⁵⁵ is the general ancestor of all the Victorious Ones and is declared to be the origin of all vehicles. Thus, for the great person who, without action, encounters it in the realization of the meaning of awakening, all the Victorious Ones are complete in the primordial awakening of awareness, it being their very flesh. The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,¹⁵⁶

By realizing the meaning of the enlightened mind,
This is the very flesh of all the Buddhas.
I am the grave of all the Buddhas,
The great charnel ground is me.

This is because¹⁵⁷ all the Victorious Ones are included in and originate from [one's integral identity]. Since integral being is peerless, it is possessed of great pride. Being without antidotes and being the identity of all

qualities, it is great pride. [333] “I” is here an analogical expression.

In that case, it might be asked, “How can it be that integral being is said to be the origin of everything?” [It is replied that] everything that is examined and that appears—whether good conceptions or bad ones—is adventitious appearance; since integral being is not examined by anyone, it is non-appearance. Therefore, since it originates and abides before all else, everything arises from it, yet it is without beginning. The same source states,¹⁵⁸

O great being! Hundreds of thousands of eons ago,
It is alone that I originated,
Originating before the elements.
Since the Buddhas’ awakened body, speech, and mind
Originate in me,
Your very heart, O great being,
Is my own great blessing.
Hence, all the Buddhas of the three times
And all the great *yogins* are included [in me];
They shine forth, like rays of light to actual perception.

Whether one is ignorant or aware of this absolute meaningfulness, the fruition is because of the integral being of one’s identity, not due to the Buddhas’ support. The same source continues,¹⁵⁹

[334] The *yogin* aware of absolute meaningfulness
Does not abide on the stage of awakening;
The omnipresent stage is my awakened mind.
All sentient beings are born from me.

Furthermore,¹⁶⁰

Even if one were to rapidly flee for a time without limits,
One would get to nowhere aside from me, phenomena's
open dimension.
Bow down to me, who transcend existence, nonexistence,
and emptiness!

Therefore, I must realize that the enlightened mind is
liberated from all limitations. Moreover,¹⁶¹

When through the gaping wisdom mouth of all the supreme
awakened bodies,
The universal ground of the many trillion hearts that
maintain
The disturbing dullness, stupidity viewing reified entities,
Is ruined perpetually, bow down before me, who ruins it!

All the afflictions and their imprints are conquered
without having relinquished them—that is integral
being. After all that has been said in this regard,¹⁶²

The lord of death is here, who kills some gods and men.
Because he kills, as “the fearsome” he is everywhere
renowned.
Consuming all those in the entire animate and inanimate
universe,
The terrifier am I called.
[335] Even if I consumed all the Buddhas, there would be no
solace¹⁶³ for me.
Still more, consuming all wandering beings, veiled I drink
them up: bow down before me!
I have spread my many sons, who go forth into intrinsic
awareness.¹⁶⁴
It is difficult to bypass me: Samantabhadra am I called.

Although everything originates in it,¹⁶⁵ it is merely in
relative truth¹⁶⁶ that the Buddhas actualize its realization.
Since they have already encountered it, they have

already become integral being and been consumed by it. Since it rescues sentient beings, it is taught that “Still more, consuming [all wandering beings],” yet in essence [Buddhas and sentient beings] are, without exception, nonexistent. Therefore, it is the mother of all the Victorious Ones. Moreover,¹⁶⁷

Being called the configuration of all configurations,
The configuration of completeness is included in me.

Thus, concerning the integral being of self-originated wisdom, one neither relinquishes nor generates causes and conditions. It is everywhere without abode as intrinsic illumination. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,¹⁶⁸

[336] Genuine wisdom originates from the mind;
So do pleasure and suffering.¹⁶⁹
The doctrine and the Buddha’s wisdom,
As well as the community, originate likewise.
From it [i.e., the mind] do the perfections, and so forth,
originate,
As well as enlightenment, like a lotus.¹⁷⁰

Further on,¹⁷¹

Thus, all that is engaged in or not,
Everything will occur like this.

Thus,¹⁷² if one is aware of integral being, corruptions are naturally clarified in awareness itself by one’s arriving at this state; it is endowed with five greatnesses.

7.1.2.3.1.1. All phenomena without the slightest exception are included in the five elements. Since all phenomena are included in the essence of integral being,

there is the greatness of awakening to phenomena's open dimension that is without extremes.

7.1.2.3.1.2. The same source mentions that all limitations and karmic obscurations are inherently pure. Since they are intrinsically pure in phenomena's open dimension, all that appears in terms of the five great elements originates in great wisdom as the actual perception of intrinsic awareness. This is the greatness of awakening as actual perception.¹⁷³

7.1.2.3.1.3. There is the greatness of awakening as integral being [337] since the integral being of intrinsic awareness is complete in wisdom.

7.1.2.3.1.4. As for the greatness of awakening to that which is, the five elements are primordially the five families, spontaneously without striving for them. Therefore, the actions of a Buddha and the phenomena of reified entities are of just this nature.

7.1.2.3.1.5. There is the greatness of the nonexistence of awakening any-and-everywhere since in the identity of the enlightened mind as primordial great emptiness one is liberated from the very designation of awakening. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* says,¹⁷⁴

For those who awaken to the open dimension,
Whatever appears as the five great [elements]
Is the Hallowed One, continuous in the elements.
The Buddha whose compassion is examined
Naturally abides pervading all.
Whatever is desired and appears desirable
Is revealed as an encounter, being natural emptiness.

As for awakening as actual perception,
Space is always a dimension without extremes;
All the entities and nonentities throughout the three realms,
as well as
[338] All the bodies and places throughout the cardinal and
inter-cardinal directions,
Abide as empty existents, the universal opportunity.¹⁷⁵

Thus are its five verses.¹⁷⁶

As for awakening as integral being,¹⁷⁷
It accommodates all and glides about,¹⁷⁸ being
Samantabhadra.
It is the universal vehicle, the massive form of wisdom;
Accommodating all, it is the concentration of the union in
equality.
Eliminating obscurations, it is the blazing sapience of
insight:
Unimpeded, in it the knowable is complete without dullness.

As for awakening to that which is,
Space is Vairocana,
Earth is the unwavering Vajradhara,¹⁷⁹
Fire Ratnākara,¹⁸⁰
Water, in its pliant clarity, is Amitābha
And air is doubtlessly Sarvakarṣṇa.¹⁸¹

As for the nonexistence of awakening's whereabouts,
As everything, being empty, is primordially dispelled,
That which unfolds, pervading yet unmixed,
Is uncontrived primordial awakening:
The great elements are the Hallowed Ones.

The *Nam-mkha'-che lcags-'grel* states,¹⁸²

Commenting on the intent of the quintessential enlightened
mind,
It dwells endowed with the five greatnesses.

[339] Hence, it is superior. Thus, integral being is liberated from viewer and viewed. Being without any referential focus, it is the supreme view.

7.1.2.3.2. Incomprehension

As for the danger of not seeing its meaning, nowadays there are individuals who, while having referential

imaging, claim that “Your saying: ‘If everything is myself, what need is there to accomplish anything?’ is natural and refers to the intent of the Thus-gone One. [Yet] individuals who are inept at seeing [absolute meaningfulness] need [something] to accomplish; if they exert themselves with effort, they will be awakened.”¹⁸³ It is because their experience is dismal that they say this. Putting up a [tent] on a meadow when one has a renovated castle is despairing. If it be asked why, it is because, if awakening is myself, there is no time to gain it from some extrinsic hope. The *Khyung-chen* declares,¹⁸⁴

In the abode of actual perception, wherein primordial awakening is one’s integral identity,
Conceptions occur: they are like, for example, the forms of a shadow.

Again, it becomes the ground of the afflictions. [340]
The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* says,¹⁸⁵

If one’s integral identity is primordially the actual perception of awakening,
Whence would one pray to a Buddha?
The wretched [beings] cycling in confusion are like deer chasing after a mirage.

Therefore, the fortunate sons should be glad about the great means whereby they encounter the absence of searching; having received them, they should safeguard them like their heart.

7.1.2.4. The view of self-originated wisdom

As for the system¹⁸⁶ pertaining to the view of self-originated wisdom,¹⁸⁷ all the phenomena included in birth and destruction¹⁸⁸ are originally in essence self-originated wisdom, inherently free from causes and conditions. There being neither outer nor inner with regard to awakening, they are intrinsically clear as great wisdom, like the luminous sky.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, the *Yon-tan bcu* states,

Earth, water, fire, and air,
The vessel of the world and its inhabitants—
All is by nature the open dimension of wisdom;
There is no wisdom apart from that.

7.1.2.4.1. *Comprehension*

[341] Since this great wisdom is inherently free from objective scope, it is primordially without any discursive grasping toward a view. For example, the sky neither discursively examines nor grasps at the sky. The *Khyung-chen* declares,¹⁹⁰

Self-originated wisdom always abides as it is in non-discursiveness.

The *Yon-tan bcu* has this to say:

In terms of expression, the view in which
There is neither viewed nor view,
That alone is the sacred view.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* states,¹⁹¹

Without the intellect that is intrinsic to the sense-faculties, it is free from an objective scope.

Hence, it is without imaging in terms of objects. Its characteristics [are found] in the pith instructions in which its crucial points can be assimilated: they cannot be picked out in terms of the signs of existence or nonexistence, permanence or nihility, or in terms of coming or going; being free from [such characteristics], it is inexpressible. The *Khyung-chen* declares,¹⁹²

Self-originated wisdom is free from the limitation of words.

If it is one's integral identity, what is there to imagine or to see? It cannot at all be discursively examined. The same source continues,¹⁹³

Always abiding as it is in the self-originated domain,
[342] It is the wondrous eye which sees without an object of sight.
Since it cannot appropriately be heard from anywhere, it is free
from all explanations.¹⁹⁴

In that case, it might be asked, "What is at fault if [wisdom] be born from various causes and conditions? It would even be according to the valid measure of actual perception." It is replied that when realizing the essence of causes and conditions, causes and conditions themselves are like the sun and its rays; being self-originated wisdom, there is nothing to be relinquished, and it is born from causes and conditions. Yet it is to the extent that the essence is without birth anywhere that it is the adamantine wisdom. The *Nam-mkha'-che*¹⁹⁵ says,¹⁹⁶

The cause itself is like an adamantine condition:
Being unborn, it is indestructible.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* states,¹⁹⁷

Since the open dimension of the wish-granting wisdom is
limitless,
It is non-apparent and transcends expression.

It is said that this great wisdom is limitless because it is not empty in the sense of being ephemeral. The *bDe-ba 'phra-bkod* declares,¹⁹⁸

It is not inconsistent
Like the heart of a rotten plantain tree;¹⁹⁹
[343] Like the moon or like sunlight,²⁰⁰
Its quintessence occurs as an absence of entities.

This means²⁰¹ that the hosts of qualities are self-arisen, without one searching for them. Since it pervades and suffuses²⁰² everything, it is said in the authoritative scripture of the *rMad-du byung-ba* that²⁰³

This enlightened mind of mine is subtle and uncontaminated. It is free from seeds and dustless. Being free from dustiness (Skt. *rajas*), it is stainless. It abides in all the Bliss-gone Ones and sentient beings.

When one hits upon the depth of the awareness of this meaning, that which appears as a dismal scope is itself the stage of awakening; such is the greatness of the qualities of one's realization! The same source continues,²⁰⁴

For instance, as for the realization of the wondrous meaning of the enlightened mind, it is like the light of a beryl, even the [size of] a tick, among a mountain of agates²⁰⁵ and semi-precious stones, or among a mountain of gems, or among great gems: it is the beryl that is evident among all these mountains and gem-mounds. Likewise for the enlightened mind, throughout the first-order chiliocosm (Skt. *sāhasracūḍika-lokadhātu*)²⁰⁶ it plays about in the sky of wisdom; how wondrous! [344] It is seen to be a jewel among the three realms, the most precious thing among the three existences.²⁰⁷

7.1.2.4.2. *Incomprehension*

Those without such certain confidence desire the birth and clarity of the domain of wisdom. Yet what is there to clarify effortfully in the meaning of wisdom? That is confusion. If one searches for self-originated wisdom through self-originated wisdom, it is like, for example, a doctor pursuing a remedy. One becomes embroiled in the net of suffering. As the *Nam-mkha'-che* says,²⁰⁸

Because of the confusion of corruption through
childishness,²⁰⁹
One is like a doctor searching for a remedy.

7.1.2.5. **The view that is free from action and searching**

7.1.2.5.1. *Comprehension*

As for the view that is free from action and searching,²¹⁰ it is maintained to be like this: with the system of the great Eminent Yoga, the world—i.e., the vessel—is the uncontrived seraphic mansion, and, through the self-originated adamantine light, the world's six types of wandering beings—i.e., the inhabitants—are Buddhas.

The three realms have the identity of the awakened body, speech, and mind. The afflictions are conveyed to phenomena's beingness. [345] Suffering is spontaneously present as great bliss. The obscurations intrinsically blaze forth as wisdom. Birth and dying are transformed into the perennial. In the primordial awakening to the essence that is without aging, decay, or mutation, what could there be to temporarily search for?

(1) Since in this absolute meaningfulness sentient beings are installed [on the stage of] Buddhas, the purpose of wandering beings is already implemented primordially. (2) Since in self-originated thusness all the Victorious Ones are unmixed yet thoroughly complete, the configurations are already primordially arrayed. (3) Since by nature the third-order chiliocosm is thoroughly liberated, the offerings have already been presented primordially. (4) Whatever is done is the Buddha's action; since it becomes Samantabhadra's action, conduct is already primordially engaged in. (5) Since in great wisdom everything is intrinsically clear without grasping and discursiveness, the view is already realized. (6) Since in the state of great bliss one is free from the occurrence of and involvement in the three times, meditation is already implemented. (7) Since, whatever one does, there is no transcending the great seminal nucleus, the pledges have already been guarded. [346] (8) Since it is spontaneously complete, all other purposes without exception are already accomplished. (9) Since appearance-existence intrinsically arises as the awakened bodies and wisdoms, the accomplishments have already been obtained. (10) Since the three

awakened bodies are present as the enlightened mind itself, the accumulations are already complete. (11) Since throughout the three times one does not deteriorate from the wind of equality, the accomplishments are already comprised therein.²¹¹ (12) Since the king of self-originated wisdom does not journey anywhere, the stages [of the path] have already been trodden on. (13) Since everything is suffused²¹² in integral being, the powers are already complete. (14) Since this wisdom that does not relinquish any limits coexists with nothing whatsoever, the obscurations have already been cleansed. (15) Since whatever appears is by essence the seal, the meditation that binds one to the seal has already been implemented. (16) Since all the sounds that appear are the Victorious One's awakened speech, the incantatory repetition (Skt. *japa*) has already been pronounced. (17) Since one is in symbiosis²¹³ with the mnemonic queen of primordial non-duality, union has already been effected. (18) Since the conceptions pertaining to sinking and agitation are clarified in wisdom, wherein not even the name of "concepts" exists, the defects of thinking have already been rectified. (19) Since great intrinsic awareness is non-obstructed and arises as anything whatsoever, the indications [of realization] have already been manifested. [347] (20) Since intrinsic awareness is non-dual as the wind of equality, the warmth [of realization] has already been gained.

Having ascertained [this view]²¹⁴ through the twenty meanings of that which is "already finished," who could search for it and where could it be sought? The seeker

and that sought for are both alpha-pure. As confirmation of one's trust in this meaning, one may cite the *Khyung-chen*:²¹⁵

Since all is already finished, it is free from attachment and peaceful.
Being without reified entities, it is utter relinquishment.
In the nature of great ambrosia,
There is no touching the means of thematization.

The *Khu-byug* has this to say:²¹⁶

Since all is already finished, one relinquishes the illness of effort.

The *Thig-le drug-pa* declares,²¹⁷

Through the ambrosia of all being already finished, one conquers the suffering of effort
And always abides, free from action, in the domain of being as it is.

The *rTsal-chen* says,²¹⁸

Without the aspirations of deceitful endeavors,
Absolute meaningfulness is, as before, spontaneously complete without action.

The *Rin-po-che kun-'dus* states,²¹⁹

[348] Since it is thus already primordial ambrosia,
It will not be seized through making.
If one realizes the open dimension, wherein everything without exception is already finished,
It is all utterly and totally done: such is the supreme state of enlightenment.

It is said in the *bDe-'byams*,²²⁰

Blissful is the seminal nucleus without action;
Blissful is the seminal nucleus without the three times;
Blissful is the seminal nucleus without searching.
Even desired through effort, the open dimension does not
move.

The *Yid-bzhin nor-bu* declares,²²¹

Self-originated and primordially uncontrived luminosity
Is without effortful striving; such is its quintessential
meaning.²²²

The *rJe-btsan dam-pa* states,²²³

To embark thereon is a cloud of offerings;
To abide in the expanse is an evocation.
Through the accomplishment which is inherently non-
revertible,
All the meanings are complete in the seal.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* says,²²⁴

One needs neither incantatory repetition nor to present
propitiation,
Nor does one need to generate the enlightened mind.
One need neither call out to a god from elsewhere,
Nor worship an extrinsic recipient,
[349] Nor beg for accomplishments from somewhere else.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* declares,²²⁵

Since it is free from the awakened body, speech, and mind, it is the
supreme greatness.
Being free from spells (Skt. *mantra*) and emblematic gestures (Skt.
mudrā), it is without deterioration.

The *Sems-bsgom* has this to say:²²⁶

Apprehending nothing whatsoever, it is free from knowing or unknowing.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,²²⁷

[The Hallowed One] spoke: “Holy persons, do you desire to thoroughly journey to the pure fields?”

They replied: “We do not thoroughly journey [anywhere].”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Why do you not journey?”

They answered: “Because all the classes of sentient beings are the utter purity of the Buddha’s pure field.”

Spoke [the Hallowed One]:²²⁸ “Holy persons, do you desire to accomplish the quintessence of enlightenment?”

They replied: “O holy virtuous friend, it is thoroughly ripened [so we desire it not].”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Why do you not desire it?”

They answered: “Whoever is called a “holy person” [350] and whoever, being sentient, is called a “sentient being,” none wavers from the quintessence of enlightenment.”

[The Hallowed One] enquired:²²⁹ “Holy persons, do you desire spontaneous presence as the principal body?”

They replied: “We do not seek to accomplish it.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Why do you not desire to accomplish it?”

They answered: “Because it would originate from something assembled.”²³⁰

The Hallowed One spoke: “Holy persons, do you desire to thoroughly traverse the stages?”

They replied: “We do not thoroughly traverse [any stages].”

[The Hallowed One] enquired: “Why do you not traverse them?”

They answered: “Because everything, without journeying anywhere, is installed on the stage of the Buddha.”

According to one perspective,²³¹ concerning the endorsement of the meaning that is free from actions, even if one presented as offerings the third-order

chiliocosm, this would not gladden the noble ones. Even if one journeyed for eons, the stages would not be trodden. No matter what virtues one implemented with one's three doors, one would not awaken. Even if one sought for it throughout the four times, one would not gain awakening. Even if one meditated continually, absolute meaningfulness would not be made clearer. [351] Even if one writhes about with one's head upside down, rolling around,²³² one cannot trespass against the quintessential meaning, namely, that absolute meaningfulness is intrinsically clear.

In that case, it may be asked whether there is nothing to do. It is replied that if virtues and effortful action are called defects, how could it be possible to toss them away or give them up? They are not to be discarded. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] this great system that is free from actions is neither about abandoning [actions] nor about deliberate striving. Since it is not free from absolute meaningfulness, it is effortless.

If one thus knows it, one does not inhibit whatever it is one is doing, nor is there a cause for action and searching. In any case, the persons in former times who engaged in this great system neither rejected nor took on anything whatsoever. They did not so much as pursue freedom from action nor effect such freedom [from action]. The later fortunate ones who engage in this religious system should do likewise! This is called the manner of lying down in the great meaning: in the state of phenomena's open dimension, the king of awareness lies down without rejecting anything.

7.1.2.5.2. *Incomprehension*

[352] The decline of the wisdom of absolute awareness refers to one's being carried in the direction of the continuous river of effort and one's becoming distracted.²³³ Some blind-like individuals who assert the Great Completeness speak the words “effortless” while deliberately pursuing effort. They search for what is meant by non-action through purposeful actions. They are like maidens who hope to be favored because of their dance. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,²³⁴

If one searches for its aspects here and there,
As such it will not occur.

The meaning that is here resolved and revealed is that by searching for it, one does not establish it.

7.1.2.6. **The view of great bliss**

As for the system²³⁵ of the view of great bliss,²³⁶ the diverse phenomena contained in suffering, namely, {awareness'}²³⁷ activities, afflictions, as well as their effects rest, when examined as to the nature of doing and tasting, in nonexistence and yet occur as anything whatsoever. [353]

Therefore, since the essence is primordial absence, the enlightened mind is a pure expanse of great bliss. Without relinquishing pain, it intrinsically arises as great bliss. Though described as “great bliss,” it is non-obstructed and inexpressible. It is primordially free from being grasped by the intellect as being “great bliss.” In

its very appearance, it is not to be sought for elsewhere.
The *Khyung-chen* says,²³⁸

A butcher, a prostitute, and those having committed the five
boundless sins,²³⁹
Are the juice of the principle of thorough completeness—
They are nothing other than great bliss.

7.1.2.6.1. *Comprehension*

Having assimilated²⁴⁰ the crucial points of this meaning,
intrinsic awareness is luminously clear as great bliss.
Since cycling in the evil destinies is itself luminously
clear as great bliss, there is purity without picking out an
objective scope. Therefore, the *Nam-mkha'-che*
states,²⁴¹

In the domain of understanding there is great bliss;
In this, the world is utterly pure.

This state is inherently free from deviations,
obscurations, and the birthplace of nihilism and is
without hope and misgiving. [354] It is said in the
'*Phra-bkod*,²⁴²

Since the enlightened mind is great bliss,
Distraction so-called is perpetually removed;
The abyss itself is the enlightened mind.

And,²⁴³

In the great bliss of the awakened body, speech, and mind,
Where could one deviate toward?
Who would pursue a deviation?

The *rMad-du byung-ba* declares,²⁴⁴

All the third-order chiliocosms are, through awakening, complete great bliss. The great enlightenment is completeness. The Buddha's pure field is great bliss; it is the stage of enlightenment. The enlightened mind is the essence of the amazing occurrences.

Furthermore,²⁴⁵

In the third-order chiliocosm, there is not even the name of cyclic existence and of the afflictions. Apart from the occurrence of Buddhas, there is not even the name of the cause of sentient beings' birth. [. . .] Apart from the Buddha's great bliss, there is not even the name of the phenomena pertaining to sentient beings and to suffering.

This is stated extensively. [355] Moreover,²⁴⁶

In this third-order chiliocosm, there is neither cyclic existence nor transcendence. It is the configuration which originates from the greatly blissful beingness of phenomena.

In this state,²⁴⁷ one shakes up the depths of hell and removes the shapes of cyclic existence, sweeping the evil destinies. [Even] the distortions arise as the path to enlightenment. The third-order chiliocosm is installed in bliss. Deviations and obscurations are shifted to great bliss. Suffering is transformed into enjoyment. Throughout the three times, one dwells unsupported in the spontaneous²⁴⁸ happiness of great bliss. The same source continues,²⁴⁹

On this path, the mind of complete enlightenment
Is blissful in this life
And blissful in the next.
The bliss of the Buddhas
Becomes complete in awakening:
Its fortune is equal to the Buddha's.

This means that,²⁵⁰ should one implement the pith instructions for intrinsic awareness, there is nothing else than one's integral identity; being without mental diffuseness and without evident joy, one does not discursively examine anything whatsoever.

7.1.2.6.2. Incomprehension

[356] Those without the fortune of this meaning, the individuals born at the end of time, whose dark intellects are like a closed fist, may focus their minds on the Great Completeness and desire to be free from suffering, pursuing and searching bliss alone, yet they do not see the fact that their integral identity is blissful and so turn their backs thereon. They are similar to someone riding an elephant who searches for his elephant and has no time to find it. The *Khyung-chen* says,²⁵¹

Desiring bliss, one turns one's back thereon;
Where there is already bliss, {one's awareness}²⁵² searches
for bliss with bliss.
Confused about enlightenment, one's primordial greed casts
doubt on the doctrine:
Such a subject does not see the Buddha.

This is a veritably serious deviation. Those who engage upright in the meaning should not view it like that.

7.1.2.7. The view of non-duality

There are those on the great Eminent Yoga²⁵³ who [maintain] the view of non-duality: the great bliss of the primordially abiding enlightened mind is free from effort;²⁵⁴ [357] this means that however diverse the limitations one enumerates, they are all non-dual. If it be asked how this is the case, [it is replied that,] if one examines the essence of the enlightened mind as to its essence, it is nonexistent. [Yet] if one thinks about it, it appears as everything. Hence, existence and nonexistence are non-dual.

7.1.2.7.1. *Comprehension*

Since its nature is indefinite, it rests with all phenomena, which are its qualities. Hence, eternalism and nihilism are non-dual. Since in the state of great bliss without extremes the essence transcends names, enumeration, and expression, it is not imaged as anything. Hence, singularity and multiplicity are non-dual. Likewise, since the essence of intrinsic awareness appears as anything whatsoever, there is nothing to grasp at. Hence, that which is produced and that which is unborn are non-dual. Since the sun of awareness' self-originated wisdom expands without bias, day and night are non-dual. Since the six classes of wandering beings are primordially self-originated adamant light, they are free from the analogical name of "Buddhas." Hence, Buddhas and sentient beings are non-dual. Since the spontaneously complete beingness of phenomena is primordially self-arisen as the awakened bodies and

wisdoms of the fruition, [358] it is inexpressible in terms of the mere name of the fruition. Hence, cause and effect are non-dual.

Since integral being is primordially uncontrived and clear in itself, the exterior and the interior are non-dual. Since in the original great bliss that is inherently free from effortful action there is no need for temporary searching, effort and non-effort are non-dual. Since it is self-arisen as the accomplishment of the great qualities, obtainment and non-obtainment are non-dual. Since the percipient wisdom is self-originated, realization and non-realization are non-dual. Since great stupidity is clarified in the unwavering and detached enlightened mind, meditation and non-meditation are non-dual. Since whatever is possible appears and is possible as the mind's nature, being endowed with the sensation pertaining to concepts and not being endowed with it are non-dual. Since the great ocean of awareness is inherently unwavering and free from designations, resting in equipoise and not so resting are non-dual.

Because great bliss pervades everything, enumeration and non-enumeration are non-dual. [359] Because everything in the state of Samantabhadra is without exaggeration and denigration, good and evil are non-dual. Because the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death originate as the enlightened mind, cyclic existence and transcendence are non-dual. Because the non-dual enlightened mind is originally self-arisen without causes and conditions, obstructing and non-obstructing are non-dual. Because this state is intrinsically free from support and supported, abiding

and non-abiding are non-dual. Because the phenomena of mutuality and reciprocity²⁵⁵ arise as the expanse of wisdom, going and coming are non-dual. Because all is clear as the awakened body of phenomena's beingness, the great seminal nucleus, in which there is no imaging of the universe and its inhabitants, outer and inner are non-dual.

Because all limitations are relinquished from the ground up, bias and partiality are non-dual. Because in the natural state the integral being of luminous clarity is peerless, self and other are non-dual. Because in the view of *Atiyoga* everything is clear as the general ancestor of the Victorious Ones, great and small are non-dual. [360] Because in the great open dimension of equality there are no names of lord and slave, grandee and servant, high and low are non-dual. Because all the apparent affairs of the universe and its inhabitants arise as the behavior of the Victorious Ones, conduct and non-conduct are non-dual. Because all designations are the path of the unmistakable meaning of the truth of great wisdom, being and non-being are non-dual. Because the view of spontaneous completeness is non-obstructed throughout the three times and free from phases, beginning and end are non-dual. Because, being free from the analogies of eternity and nihility that pertain to existence and nonexistence, it does not find a middle, the limits and middle are non-dual. Because the Great Completeness is free from generation and completion, spreading and fading are non-dual. Because the afflictions of the five fetters²⁵⁶ arise as the percipient awareness of wisdom, liberation and non-liberation are

non-dual. Because in the inexpressible beingness of all phenomena the unceasing sound is without resonance, expression and non-expression are non-dual. [361]

Since, without relinquishing them, it is free from shape and color, appearance and non-appearance are non-dual. Since it transcends designations without picking out the phenomena of enumeration, the many and the few are non-dual. Since it is inherently free from and rejects the pain of concepts and the afflictions, peace and non-peace are non-dual. Since in self-originated wisdom darkness and appearance are eliminated without being relinquished, clarity and non-clarity are non-dual. Since all dual entities are suffused by the enlightened mind, like the oil of a sesame seed, pervading and non-pervading are non-dual. Since there is no seeing or hearing the non-obstructed objective and cognitional phenomena, imaging and non-imaging are non-dual. Since, without having to gain it,²⁵⁷ all that is designated a defect is the configuration of self-originated purity, purity and impurity are non-dual.

Since the view of *Atiyoga* is inherently without basis or root, support and supported are non-dual. Because the essence of the path and of the teaching is one's integral identity, learning and non-learning are non-dual. [362] Because whatever one does is without imaging, virtue and sin are non-dual. Since dual deeds are not apportioned, there is nothing to obtain; hence, the higher levels and the evil destinies are non-dual. Since in the spontaneously complete nature one rejects neither eternalism nor nihilism, what is wrong and not wrong are non-dual. Since in the essence of great equality there

is nothing whatsoever to seize on to, one is free from seeds and their companions;²⁵⁸ hence, causes and conditions are non-dual. Since in the textual tradition of *Atiyoga* apparent forms, resounding sounds, and discursive rumination are self-arisen as the awakened body, speech, and mind, searching and not searching for a fruition are non-dual. Since in the state of Great Completeness the third-order chiliocosm—including the three continua of the evil destinies—is awakening, treading and not treading the stage of the Buddha are non-dual. Since in the state of non-duality there is no trespassing or deterioration, guarding and not guarding [pledges] are non-dual.

Since the six continua of becoming are seized by self-originated awakened compassion, compassion and its opposite are non-dual. [363] Because one is free from analyzing or liberating the great stupidity of everything, kindness and its opposite are non-dual. Since in essence everything is the pure field of the Bliss-gone One, accomplishing and non-accomplishing are non-dual, and so are joy and non-joy. Since, while being free from the occurrence of and involvement in the three times, one's actions are uninterrupted, implementing equanimity and not implementing it are non-dual.

Since even in the birthplace of nihilism one focuses one's path on great bliss, deviations and non-deviations are non-dual. Since even the hells are on the stage of the Great Completeness, falling down and not falling down are non-dual. Since grasper and grasped are alpha-pure in their inseparability, being obscured and non-obscured are non-dual. Since anything whatsoever is suitable,

acceptance and non-acceptance are non-dual. Since in this [state] that which is imaged and that which images are liberated, that which is viewed and that which views are non-dual. Since from the ground reified entities are not imaged, that which is evaluated through arguments and non-evaluation are non-dual. Since the phenomena of cyclic existence and transcendence are unestablished and non-obstructed, the [two] truths are non-dual. [364]

Thus, all phenomena are non-dual; they are non-obstructed by anything whatsoever. Though they are nonexistent, they appear, so that there is nothing to grasp at in terms of “This is it.” Yet the very designation of “non-duality” is primordially not found. There is nothing whatsoever to think of or scrutinize. In any case, not thinking of or imaging anything, one strikes the point. Since intrinsic awareness is nonexistent as anything whatsoever, it has the meaning of being non-obstructed. Yet, as the nonexistence of appearance, it appears. One should veritably assimilate this with certainty, without having doubts. Although it is difficult to amply describe the arguments for trusting it, a hint shall be given here. The *Nam-mkha’-che* declares,²⁵⁹

Being one, it is utterly and entirely nonexistent;
The *yogin* abides like a bird’s flight in the sky,
Quintessentially unoriginated and unborn.
How could there be the phenomena of exaggeration?
As for outer and inner, the outward itself is inward:
There is no object to be realized as a profound part.

Moreover,²⁶⁰

In this regard, the outer and inner oath
[365] Is to naturally abide according to the aggregates and
constituents;
Without being free from the three times,
One does not assign to it the name of “oath.”

The *sPyi-gcod* states,²⁶¹

Being white, there is no white sun,
Nor a black darkness to eliminate.
There is no existent eminent god,
And all phenomena are alone.
There are neither the six continua of becoming nor the
Buddhas;
There is neither awareness nor abode,
Neither diminishing nor developing.
There is nobody to benefit nor anyone to harm.
There is neither appearance nor change,
Neither sapience nor means.
There is neither enlightenment nor path
Nor truth: this is the quintessential meaning.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* says,²⁶²

Everything is unborn and uncontaminated:
There is neither enlightenment nor actual realization.
There are neither constituents nor elements;
Being signless, [all] is unchanging, like the sky.
Not dual, it is not non-duality.

Moreover,²⁶³

There are no syllables that have not originated from you;
For those who generate the purpose of the secret
Mantrayāna,
Being endowed with all aspects is without any aspect;
[366] Being without branches, it transcends reckoning.

Furthermore,²⁶⁴

In this regard, there is neither path nor going,
Neither Buddha nor cause.
There is neither enlightenment nor even its name,
Nor are there stages of enlightenment.
There are neither sentient beings nor life force,
Neither bliss nor fruition.
There is neither hope nor misgiving,
Neither abode nor domain.
There is neither vehicle nor entry.
Being aspirationless, there is nothing to accomplish.
There is nothing to relinquish nor anything to accept.
Since there are no objects where the mind can abide,
The enlightened mind is without anything to meditate on.

And also,²⁶⁵

Non-originated and uninvolved, it is without object and empty of sense-faculties. Since there is neither inside nor outside, neither exterior nor interior, it is extensive inwardness.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* declares,²⁶⁶

The two truths pertaining to the provisional meaning of illusory individuals are nonexistent.

It is said in the *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa*,²⁶⁷

Though existent, it is not an entity,
For, like a water moon, it is without intrinsic nature.
Though nonexistent, it is not nil,
[367] For, like the open dimension of space, it appears as
anything whatsoever.
Though it is one, it is not an aspect,²⁶⁸
For absolute truth comprises one and all.²⁶⁹
Though it is non-dual,²⁷⁰ it is not evenness,
For the awakened body is thoroughly all-pervading and
everywhere expanding.

Moreover,²⁷¹

Though it can be shown as anything, it is nothing [in
particular];²⁷²
It is not nonexistent, being felt by recollection.
It is not eternal, not being an entity,
Nor is it dual, being unexamined.²⁷³
It cannot be established as one, since it is all-pervading.
Since there is no first cause which generates it,
There is neither death nor mutation in the end.
Since at present it is without the substantiality of entities,
It is without attachment to permanence and is ungraspable.

The *Sems-bsgom* states,²⁷⁴

It is owing to existence that there is nonexistence, which too is
nonexistent. Thus, even the nonexistence of nonexistence is
nonexistent.
Since it is without limits, it has no center, so that one does not abide
on any center.

And,²⁷⁵

Since it is without birth or death, it is neither eternal nor nil, neither
self nor other. There is neither confused cyclic existence nor
transcendence.

Therefore, with regard to being intrinsically aware, this means that one cannot make awareness actual. [368] When it is neither imaged nor contaminated nor divided nor examined, realization is self-arisen.

7.1.2.7.2. *Incomprehension*

Not knowing this meaning, there are nowadays *mantrins* on the path whose view is referential; they speak of non-duality and focus on a limitation. Even though it may be unchanging, it is still a limitation. Referentially imaging like this, although they may merely desire non-action and non-duality, is a limitation. Not finding absolute meaningfulness, they deviate toward positions. They are similar to the blind entering a path. The *Nam-mkha'-che* says,²⁷⁶

It being universal equality,
It cannot be established through biased views.

This shows that it cannot be comprehended through the views of those who crave for limitations. The *Khyung-chen* declares,²⁷⁷

Phenomena and phenomena's beingness are constantly mingled and inseparable.
The principal knowledge of absolute truth cannot be eminently explained.
By discursively examining confusion and the path to enlightenment, one is without attainment.

This means that, without gaining confidence in the non-duality that transcends thought, how could one focus on absolute truth? [369] As for craving for limitations, this

refers to holding as a valid measure the confused appearances [that occur to] one's own awareness. It is like a person with floaters who holds a cairn to be a person. Hence, the people of upright conduct who are born in this dismal time exert themselves for the purpose of non-duality with a diligence pertaining to action and agent.

7.1.2.8. The view of the great seminal nucleus

Some²⁷⁸ people²⁷⁹ [maintain] the system of the view that the nature is the single great seminal nucleus. If it be asked how this [view] is, [it is replied that,] in terms of elaborations, the nature of all phenomena merely appears to be different for those with misconceptions and for those on the path. Yet in awakening to the nature of the great seminal nucleus that is inherently free from all elaborations, the enlightened mind of intrinsic awareness, without relinquishing the dualistically elaborated phenomena, does not referentially image them. Therefore, since it is peerless merely in terms of designations, it defies description as being “one” and is {even} free from the name of {a single} essence. [370] Moreover, since it repels grasping at duality, this fundamental root principle is without exaggeration or denigration.

7.1.2.8.1. Comprehension

If this meaning is to be realized as intrinsic awareness, do not think of it as being something other! The nature of the integral identity merely appears as oneself, yet

there is no essence to be revealed, for it is neither self nor other. When imaging objects and dissecting reified entities, there is nothing to search for. Hence, without scrutinizing, look at it upright! It may be asked, “How is one to look at it upright?” [It is replied that] one does not waver toward any thought whatsoever. Thus, one personally gains an experience of the great seminal nucleus.

As for stabilizing this mode, the arguments are as follows: The *Nam-mkha'-che*²⁸⁰ states,²⁸¹

Since it is pervaded by the principal body, it is one.
Therefore, being great, it abides as the nature of greatness.

It is said in the *sPros-pa med-pa'i tig*,²⁸²

Wisdom, being utterly pure, is one.
Therefore, the path of liberation is not an existent.
Transcending the limitations of singularity and multiplicity,
The characteristic of phenomena's open dimension is its
absence of glitter.
[371] Throughout the three times, the universal integral
identity does not waver from the open dimension.

The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* declares,²⁸³

The great means equalizes the enumerated rows of vehicles,
Being the thoroughly complete ornament of the unmixed
doctrines.
Just like the effervescent current of a vast stream or of the
ocean,
So the anointing coronation is the treasury of omnipotent
ones.

Also,²⁸⁴

The self-originated Hallowed One Samantabhadra
Is verily alone, the supremely great principal body.

Moreover,²⁸⁵

Since in the unborn open dimension of phenomena sentient
beings are nonexistent,
The phenomena of existence are spontaneously
accomplished.
The cause being spontaneously complete, in the open
dimension of the enlightened mind
One abides in the fruition of non-abiding transcendence
(Skt. *apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa*):
Like the full moon, it has no elaborations.
It is primordially similar to the swirling dimension of the
ocean:
Even as it radiates, so it absorbs.
Merit and wisdom are complete in the awakened body,
speech, and mind.

Furthermore,²⁸⁶

[372] The self-originated Hallowed One Samantabhadra
Is verily alone, the supremely great principal body.
He is the great seal of the spontaneously complete awakened
body, speech, and mind.
As for the primordial quintessence of the spontaneously
present enlightenment,
One enters the supreme rank of the unsurpassed Victorious
One.

The *Rin-chen kun-'dus* says,²⁸⁷

The principal body is utterly pure and verily solitary;
Relinquishing the enumerations²⁸⁸ and objects pertaining to
the ocean of cyclic existence,
All the limitations of existence and nonexistence are one in
and as the open dimension.

The *bDe-'byams* states,²⁸⁹

In the unimpeded womb²⁹⁰ of thorough completeness
Is the great open dimension of the spontaneously complete
seminal nucleus of inseparability,
Its circumference and core arising as awakened body,
speech, and mind.²⁹¹

The *rMad-du byung-ba* declares,²⁹²

Stupidity²⁹³ inseparably assimilates the individual views regarding
all the phenomena that originate from integral identity. Since it does
not possess the intent that analyzes them individually, it is stupidity.
[. . .] Since all phenomena become the awakened mind of the
Bliss-gone One, [373] in this gladness of the supreme secret,
everything dwells in the single identity. Since it does not possess
[the intent that] analyzes the stages and their phases, it is stupidity. [. . .]

Furthermore,²⁹⁴

Like the precious wish-granting gem,
The awakened body of unthinkable spontaneous presence
Abides alone throughout the three realms.
Alone on this very great stage,
In the gladness of the supreme secret,
Everything dwells in the single identity.

Through such extensive arguments,²⁹⁵ one will come to a
resolution concerning what it is and is not. The meaning
is that there is no entity whatsoever to relinquish. Not
accomplishing anything, [the seminal nucleus] is free
from everything, yet it is unique and has relinquished
nothing. It is said in the '*Phra-bkod*,²⁹⁶

The mind is free from form, yet forms are complete therein;
It is without colors and shapes to grasp.

The meaning disclosed is the Victorious One's intent. For the great person who thus abides, [374] appearance-existence is luminously clear as the utter purity of the Victorious One's pure field. For example, in the golden island of Jambudvīpa, even if one searches for earth and stones, one does not find any. The same source continues,²⁹⁷

Whatever is seen as appearance-existence is a field of purity,
Abiding in the holy enlightened mind.

7.1.2.8.2. Incomprehension

Unknowing individuals ignorant of this, as if pouring something into a reduced and tattered sack, mutate toward and strive in referential imaging.²⁹⁸ When those desiring oneness assemble phenomena as one, their minds implement oneness; they are deviated, like someone desiring the sun who would chase after darkness. The *Nam-mkha'-che* states,²⁹⁹

Therefore, it is said in this authoritative scripture
That to do anything obscures it;
When discursively examining it,
It is not accomplished.

One comprehends nothing whatsoever. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] the great seminal nucleus dwells endowed with six seminal nuclei. (1) Since such a state is without extremes and is the universal origin, it is the seminal nucleus of the open dimension. [375] (2) Since

it is not enslaved by limitations and is pure, it is the seminal nucleus of the utterly pure open dimension. (3) Since the great seminal nucleus is free from bias and is without contrivance and corruption, it is the seminal nucleus of phenomena's beingness. (4) Since everything is self-arisen without causes and conditions, it is the seminal nucleus of great wisdom. (5) Since the evil destinies of cyclic existence have great consistency, there is nothing to reject; hence, it is the seminal nucleus of Samantabhadra. (6) Since everything, from the Victorious One's rank at the upper limit up to the worlds of hell at the lower end, is spontaneously complete and is without limits or center, it is the seminal nucleus of spontaneous presence. While it appears to be sixfold without being one, it is difficult for those with referential imaging to see it.

7.1.2.9. The view concerning the ground of all phenomena as it is

As for the view³⁰⁰ concerning the ground of all phenomena as it is,³⁰¹ it is especially unmistakable. If it be asked why this is the case, [it is replied that,] since the very suchness of reified entities is uncontrived and uncontaminated, it is the Great Completeness of *Atiyoga*. [376] Concerning the enumeration of its names, the parts of its qualities as they appear transcend numbering. Since suchness is without referential grasping, it is renowned as “free from thematic foci.” Since everything is complete in the fruition, it is also renowned as “spontaneous presence.” Since as such

there is not even the name of suffering, it is also renowned as “great bliss.” Since it is without extrinsic phenomena, it is also renowned as “integral being.” Since it is without peer or elaboration, it is renowned as “the great seminal nucleus.” Since it is without limiting phenomena, it is also renowned as “non-duality.” Since as such everything is luminously clear, it is also renowned as “self-originated wisdom.” Because there is no hope for a fruition and it is non-effort, it is also renowned as “free from effortful action.”³⁰² Since the indications may be different while the essence is non-different, and since though it is one it is everything, and though it is everything it is one, these are the enumerated names of the ground as it is.

7.1.2.9.1. Comprehension

[377] Thus should one comprehend the suchness of reified entities. If it be asked in what manner one is to do so, [it is replied that] primordial freedom from thematic foci is without freedom from thematic foci. Primordial integral being is without any view. Primordial spontaneous presence is without viewing spontaneous presence. Primordial non-duality is without viewing non-duality. Primordial freedom from effortful action is without any view concerning freedom from effortful action. Primordial great bliss is without viewing great bliss. The primordial view of the great seminal nucleus is without viewing the great seminal nucleus. Primordially self-originated wisdom is without viewing self-originated wisdom. Therefore, the very

principle of the suchness of reified entities, just as it is, is not viewed. If it be asked why, it is because there is neither viewer nor object to view. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* says,³⁰³

Because cyclic existence is neither relinquished nor picked out nor comprehended, it is inseparable from spontaneous presence; hence, there is neither viewer nor viewed.

Therefore, in this great mode are liberated all the thoughts and corruptions due to action. [378] In this regard, it might be asked, “Is one able [to gain] liberation without doing anything at all? Although even the Avīci hell³⁰⁴ does not waver from equality nor is picked out therefrom, not comprehending this, there is cyclic existence. Therefore, it is appropriate that one should exert oneself for suchness. If one does not exert oneself, how is one to be liberated?”

It is replied as follows: that is true—although the corporeality of the hells does not waver from equality, cyclic existence is true. Yet you ignore that in the wretched flourishing of hells, even should one exert oneself for the purpose of bliss, one would not find it.³⁰⁵ If it be asked why, [it is replied that] the unknowing follow after the purpose of being free from the mind’s effortful action and make it evident, maintaining this as realization. For the knowing, there is nothing to follow after; freedom from effortful action itself is followed after in intrinsic awareness, which is one’s integral identity.

Likewise, in unknowing one follows after an absence of the intellect's thematic foci. Yet if known, it is one's integral identity. Those who are unknowing follow after the purpose that is the mind's spontaneous presence. Yet if known, integral identity is spontaneously present. Those who are unknowing follow after the self-originated mind. [379] Yet if known, it is self-originated wisdom. Those who are unknowing follow after great bliss. Yet if known, it is one's integral identity. Those who are unknowing follow after the great seminal nucleus. Yet if known, the great seminal nucleus is followed after as one's identity. Those who are unknowing follow after non-dual integral being. Yet if known, integral being is followed after in oneself. Those who are unknowing mentally follow after the purpose of being as it is and make it evident. Yet if known, one's integral identity is being as it is, so one does not follow after it. There is no thinking and nothing to maintain.

Therefore, the *Atiyogin* does not plant or dissect arguments; he neither thinks nor makes evident, neither examines nor scrutinizes nor evaluates. Being without any action whatsoever, he rests in non-resting. In the thusness of being as it is, he is aware of that of which he was ignorant, he gains the non-gained, he accomplishes the unaccomplished, sees the unseen, realizes the unrealized, obtains the unobtained, clarifies the unclear, and tastes the untasted. [380] For example, it is as if one desires [to see] the planets and stars in the sky. By clearing away the clouds, there is unclarity and one cannot see anything. Yet once these are appeased, having rested in and of themselves, one comes to see

[the planets and stars]. Likewise, since there is neither an agent of realization nor anything to realize deliberately, there is nothing to inhibit realization, nor any grasping at [those meritorious deeds] performed. In any case, the great persons who abide on the meaning of the unmistakable doctrine and who act like this will be among the many to tread through the rows of the awareness-holders.

Nowadays, most individuals denigrate this view, relinquishing, refuting, and abolishing it. Since the majority do not recognize what is good and what is evil, it is neither rejected nor accepted nor relinquished. Even the few who desire to engage in it do not understand it, except for a few fortunate ones. Vacillating, they make it dependent on accepting a conduct and meditate on it as being permanent.³⁰⁶

If at this time one abides in it, one is veritably close to accomplishing it. It does not pivot on the length of one's meditation or on karmic predestination. Therefore, if there are a few successors [to this teaching], they must comprehend this in the abodes of the wilderness.

7.1.2.9.1.1. Elusiveness of the ground as it is

As for “phenomena's beingness,” the ground as it is,³⁰⁷ [381] it cannot be grasped as being this or that.³⁰⁸ When held to be a variety, it is anything³⁰⁹ yet nothing whatsoever.³¹⁰ While it is maintained to show itself as such-and-such,³¹¹ it is not maintainable.³¹² It is easy to veritably examine it yet difficult to do so.³¹³ While one is to familiarize oneself with it, it is an absence.³¹⁴ It is to be examined and scrutinized yet is nonexistent.³¹⁵

Various appearing,³¹⁶ it abides;³¹⁷ it is and is not³¹⁸ different {in essence}.

While eternal, it is impermanent; while impermanent, it is eternal. While nil, it is uninterrupted; while uninterrupted, it is nil. While single, it is multiple; while multiple, it is single. While indefinite, it is certain; while certain, it is indefinite. While originating as various occurrences, it is without origination. While existing in thought, it is nonexistent; while nonexistent, it is existent. While it is present as recollection, it is absent; while absent, it is present. While it is present as an indicator, it is absent; while absent, it is present. While present as expression, it is absent; while absent, it is present. While it is present as an approach, it is absent; while absent, it is present. While it is present as meditation, it is absent; while absent, it is present. Hence, being beyond thought, it is veritably difficult to reveal it through mere analogies. [382]

As for “freedom from all limitations,” it is owing to not being free from limitations that there is freedom from limitations. Because however it is described is flawed, the word “inexpressible” does not strike the point. Hence, the *rGum-chung* declares,³¹⁹

However much it is described with profound words,
These are incompatible with its meaning.

This means one appreciates it through awareness. How is a man, like you, to think of suchness? How is one to psychically engage in, view, or enjoy it? How is one to examine it? Who is there to enter it? What is there to

meditate on? One should resolve that there is nothing that is to be done with mere words.

In that case,³²⁰ it might be asked, “If you do not maintain that it is to be indicated through words, these descriptions are unnecessary.” It is replied that when we described it in detail before, even though the meaning is like that, it was indicated by our expressive language; hence, there is a need and aim³²¹ [in doing so].³²² The following arguments are a confirmation of one’s trust in this system as being genuinely without exaggeration and denigration;³²³ the *Khyung-chen* says,³²⁴

If examined, it is an absence; if rested in, it is the great excellence that variously occurs. [383] While it does not appear as a reified entity,³²⁵ it reveals itself³²⁶ in all the attires of lust.³²⁷

Furthermore,³²⁸

Given in to and rested in, this nature
Is without desire and without acceptance.
It produces not a dust particle’s worth of alarm,
Like the great *garuḍa* soaring through the sky.³²⁹
There is nothing to radiate, nor anything to absorb;
Being empty, it is not needy and is without thematization.
Primordially abiding like the ocean,
It occurs as various phenomena.
Its qualities are equal to the limits of space;
As a place of absorption, it is without certainty.

The *Nam-mkha’-che* states,³³⁰

The beingness of phenomena, the supreme secret,
Cannot be heard through the ear or through another faculty.
Likewise, there is not a dust particle's worth that could be
expressed
Through the faculty of the tongue.

The '*Phra-bkod* declares,³³¹

It is nothing in itself³³² and yet apt at anything.

It is said in the *Srog-gi 'khor lo*,³³³

This ambrosia, the great deathless remedy,
Is complete in wisdom and need not be searched for
elsewhere.
A single cause for all, it is equal to the state of phenomena's
open dimension.
It does not come from elsewhere, so it is impossible for it to
go anywhere.
Everything is thus clear in the enlightened mind.

[384] The *rMad-du byung ba* states,³³⁴

The limpid aspect of the five great [elements] is the stainlessness of
the enlightened mind. It is difficult to veritably examine the
quintessence of non-reified clarity; that wisdom is awakened mind
itself.

Furthermore,³³⁵

The infinite, limitless third-order chiliocosm is the thorough purity
of the Buddha's field.

This shows that Buddhas and sentient beings are
nonexistent yet originate; while existing, they are
nonexistent. Also,³³⁶

Being unborn, it does not die. Being originally non-originated, it does not go anywhere. Since it abides nowhere, it is transcendence. Being free from grasper and grasped, it is primordially empty.

This means³³⁷ that it exists without birth and death, yet while existing, it is nonexistent. It exists without coming or going, yet while existing, it is nonexistent. It exists without abiding anywhere, yet while existing, it is nonexistent. It exists without cyclic existence or transcendence, yet while existing, it is nonexistent. It is not dissociated from grasper and grasped, yet it is free from them; while being free, it is not dissociated. All phenomena are shown to be empty yet existent, existent yet empty. Therefore, its characteristics are indefinite. It can be thought of as anything yet produced as nothing whatsoever. [385] The *Nam-mkha'-che* says,³³⁸

Since the nature alone is indefinite,
It appears however it is examined.

Thus, the luminosity of the mind's configuration is the essence, just as it is, of the secret spell: that is the supreme view. In order to amply teach this meaning, it shall here be shown through arguments. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,³³⁹

O ruler of Lañka, that which is called mind is uncreated, uncontrived, and variously occurring. That which is called the configuration is the seminal nucleus. That which is called light is appearance. That which is called clarity is unobscured by anything else than unknowing. That which is called secret does not become an objective scope and is unspeakable. That which is called the spell is described as the origin of all qualities. That which is called the essence is unmistakable and unchanging.

Moreover,³⁴⁰

Since it is without searching through action, it is uncreated. Since it is the ground as it is, it is uncontrived.

This means that, apart from suchness as it is, it is a mere analogy since it is renowned as an inconceivable principle. [386] The same source continues,³⁴¹

O ruler of Laṅka, it is called the unsurpassed enlightened mind. It is called the principal beingness of phenomena, their thusness. It is called the emptiness of mind, as well as the transcendence of limitations. It is called the non-imaging of a center. It is called the reality of all the Buddhas, as well as the origin of all emanations.

Further on, it is said,³⁴²

O ruler of Laṅka, for whatever purpose one examines it, there is no assigning names to suchness; one should be aware of these as mere analogies.³⁴³ If it be asked why, [it is replied that] even the Buddha is an analogy. The doctrine, too, is an analogy, and so is enlightenment an analogy. Likewise, one should be aware that the open dimension and wisdom, the principal body and the different awakened bodies, sentient beings, the world, etc.—everything that one labels and is attached to—are all mere analogies. What are analogies? They are adventitiously assigned [to things], yet are not primordial endowments. [387] If they were primordial endowments, nothing would occur adventitiously. Being adventitious refers to that which is cloud-like, which is not perdurable. Not being primordial endowments, they do not tolerate examination. Therefore, if names, symbols, designations, signs, labels, deeds, karmic maturation, etc., were not adventitiously assigned, they would be called thusness, which would be unsuitable. One should be aware that one cannot gain proficiency over thusness through analogies. Therefore, all phenomena are nameless, wordless, and inexpressible, as they cut through the range of words.

As it cannot be discursively examined, to gain an experience of it is called “great non-discursiveness.” The same source continues,³⁴⁴

“O custodian of the secret,³⁴⁵ do you not examine the basis of assigning names as the absolute ground?”

He replied: “O ruler of Lañka, not examining anything as the absolute ground is non-conceptuality. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] even should the Buddha search for the absolute ground, he would not find it. [388] That is why adventitious examination and non-discursiveness, Buddhas and sentient beings, are exhausted as labels. As regards thusness, it is without the slightest [designation such as a] Buddha or sentient being. In any case, the childish are obscured by adventitious clouds and deliberately implement adventitiously pure principles. They discursively examine cyclic existence and enlightenment as dual, as well as sentient beings and Buddhas.”

Therefore, with regard to examining non-discursiveness, one should not distinguish codes in absolute meaningfulness.

7.1.2.9.1.2. Characteristics of suchness

What is more, suchness, as it is, is without causes and conditions and is unimpeded by anything whatsoever. (1) Since it is spontaneously accomplished, it does not pivot on anything. (2) Since it is free from a support, it is without abode. (3) Since it is groundless, it is unsupported. (4) Being non-obstructed by anything whatsoever, it is not nil. (5) Since its nature is certainly not perdurable, it is not eternal. (6) Being isolated from the phenomena of enumeration, it is not heaped up. (7) Being without the root of generation, it does not originate from a cause. (8) Being inherently

unaccompanied and unassisted, it is without conditions. [389] (9) Being unestablished through both causes and conditions, it is not generated from either of them. (10) Since the essence is unseizable and without peer, it is not generated extrinsically. (11) It is not an extrinsic phenomenon, (12) nor is the essence other than them. (13) Since it is not delimited either in terms of a Buddha or of a sentient being, it is classless. (14) Since it is originally without a single class, it is without filiation. (15) Since the essence appears as everything yet is without appearance, it does not mutate. (16) Since it is liberated from all limitations, it does not appear. (17) Since it is without a main part, it is essenceless. Thus, it is shown to be liberated from the seventeen designations. The same source declares,³⁴⁶

(1) Not pivoting on anything, (2) the mind is without abode; (3) being without support, (4) it is neither nil (5) nor eternal. (6) It is neither heaped up, (7) nor does it originate from a cause. (8) It is not generated through conditions, (9) nor is it [generated] from [causes and conditions]. (10) It is not [generated] from something other. (11) It is neither itself (12) nor another. (13) It is classless and (14) without filiation. (15) It neither mutates (16) nor appears. (17) It is essenceless. So it is seen as it is.

According to one perspective, suchness, as it is, is shown to be liberated from the fifty designations.³⁴⁷ [390] Moreover,³⁴⁸

It is free from all scrutiny. (1) It neither images limitations³⁴⁹ nor a center.³⁵⁰ (2) It is without exaggeration or denigration.³⁵¹ (3) It is without acceptance or rejection.³⁵² (4) It transcends cause and effect.³⁵³ (5) It is primordially pure.³⁵⁴ (6) It is primordially finished.³⁵⁵ (7) It is without action.³⁵⁶ (8) It is effortless.³⁵⁷ (9) It is without anything to accomplish.³⁵⁸ (10) It is without searching.³⁵⁹ (11) It does not originate extrinsically.³⁶⁰ (12) It is without antidotes.³⁶¹ (13) It is without an agent.³⁶² (14) It is uncreated.³⁶³ (15) It is non-imputed.³⁶⁴ (16) It is without self.³⁶⁵ (17) It is uncontrived.³⁶⁶ (18) It is uncorrupted.³⁶⁷ (19) It is that which is.³⁶⁸ (20) It is certain.³⁶⁹ (21) It is unmistakable.³⁷⁰ (22) It is as it is.³⁷¹ (23) It is non-obstructed.³⁷² (24) It is unborn.³⁷³ (25) It is non-declining.³⁷⁴ (26) It is neither smashed,³⁷⁵ (27) nor does it appear.³⁷⁶ [391] (28) It does not originate,³⁷⁷ (29) nor does it go anywhere.³⁷⁸ (30) It abides primordially.³⁷⁹ (31) It is all-pervading.³⁸⁰ (32) It is without name.³⁸¹ (33) It is without form.³⁸² (34) It is signless.³⁸³ (35) It is without designation.³⁸⁴ (36) It is not viewable.³⁸⁵ (37) It is ungraspable.³⁸⁶ (38) It is not indicated.³⁸⁷ (39) It is without example.³⁸⁸ (40) It is immeasurable.³⁸⁹ (41) It is without examining.³⁹⁰ (42) It transcends sophistry.³⁹¹ (43) It is unfathomable.³⁹² (44) It is unthinkable.³⁹³ (45) It is inconceivable.³⁹⁴ (46) It is the origin of all.³⁹⁵ (47) It is everywhere and always equanimity.³⁹⁶ (48) It is the only self-originated³⁹⁷ awareness of emptiness.³⁹⁸

According to one perspective, we find in the same source:³⁹⁹

(1) It is everywhere and always⁴⁰⁰ without the signs pertaining to class. (2) It is without {verbal} designations. (3) It is without aspects.⁴⁰¹ [392] (4) It is without object {of generosity}. (5) It is without approach.⁴⁰² (6) It is without Buddha.⁴⁰³ (7) It is without authoritative teaching.⁴⁰⁴ (8) It is without the attainment of certainty.⁴⁰⁵

(1) Throughout all {times}, it is enlightenment.⁴⁰⁶ (2) It is the quintessence.⁴⁰⁷ (3) It is suchness.⁴⁰⁸ (4) It is genuineness.⁴⁰⁹ (5) It is absolute certainty.⁴¹⁰ (6) It is not another.⁴¹¹ (7) It is birthless.⁴¹² (8) It is unobstructed.⁴¹³ (9) It is thusness.⁴¹⁴ (10) It is unmistaken.⁴¹⁵ (11) It is phenomena's beingness.⁴¹⁶ (12) It is phenomena's open dimension.⁴¹⁷ (13) It is unthinkable because it is inconceivable.⁴¹⁸ (14) It is the genuine {ultimate} limit.⁴¹⁹

The meaning revealed is that it is liberated from the eight designations and is endowed with the fourteen characteristics. Furthermore, the same source continues,⁴²⁰

It is without characteristics or intrinsic nature {which would be like an essence}. (1) It is without imaging.⁴²¹ [393] (2) It has been familiarized with. (3) It has been examined as certain and thoroughly scrutinized.⁴²² (4) It appears as anything whatsoever.⁴²³ (5) It is certainly not [anything in particular].⁴²⁴ (6) It occurs universally.⁴²⁵ (7) It is comprised everywhere.⁴²⁶ (8) It is entirely pervading.⁴²⁷ (9) It is thoroughly producing.⁴²⁸ (10) It is utterly pure.⁴²⁹ (11) It is unestablished as anything whatsoever.⁴³⁰ (12) It is non-pervading (13) yet not non-pervading.⁴³¹ (14) It is without high or low.⁴³² (15) It is without great or small.⁴³³ (16) It is without good or evil.⁴³⁴ (17) It is without vastness or narrowness.⁴³⁵ (18) It is without cause or effect.⁴³⁶ (19) It is without gender.⁴³⁷ (20) It is without filiation.⁴³⁸ (21) It is without form.⁴³⁹ (22) It is without deeds and their maturation.⁴⁴⁰ (23) It is without outer and inner.⁴⁴¹ (24) It is birthless.⁴⁴² (25) It is immutable and changeless.⁴⁴³ (26) It is without darkness or illumination.⁴⁴⁴ (27) It is without temporality.⁴⁴⁵ (28) It is without limitations or center.⁴⁴⁶ [394] (29) It is without self or other.⁴⁴⁷ (30) It is without effortful accomplishment.⁴⁴⁸ (31) It is without acceptance or rejection.⁴⁴⁹ (32) It is inherently uncontrived.⁴⁵⁰ (33) It is thorough luminosity.⁴⁵¹ (34) It is uncorrupted.⁴⁵² (35) It is unoriginated.⁴⁵³ (36) It is unborn.⁴⁵⁴

O ruler of Lañka, if it be asked what its characteristics and nature are like, [it is replied that] the quintessence of enlightenment transcends appearance and non-appearance, it does not referentially image either characteristics or a nature.

Here it is taught to be endowed with thirty-eight characteristics.⁴⁵⁵ The same source says,⁴⁵⁶

[The Hallowed One] asked: “What is the quintessence of enlightenment?”

He replied: “O holy virtuous friend, the quintessence of enlightenment is the supernal intent of all the Buddhas.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “O holy person, what is this supernal intent?”

He answered: “It is the nature of everything, suchness.”

Spoke [the Hallowed One]: “Why is the nature of everything called the secret spell?”

He replied: “It is because, whatever the nature of everything might be, it is neither seen nor comprehended by anybody;⁴⁵⁷ it does not become an objective scope;⁴⁵⁸ [395] it is unspeakable;⁴⁵⁹ it transcends expression;⁴⁶⁰ it is unthinkable;⁴⁶¹ it is inconceivable;⁴⁶² it is difficult to examine;⁴⁶³ and it is difficult to show.”⁴⁶⁴

Moreover,⁴⁶⁵

[The Hallowed One] asked: “How does this quintessential enlightenment appear?”

He answered: “It is impossible for this quintessential enlightenment to appear for even an instant.”

[The Hallowed One] spoke: “Does it not appear at all?”

He replied: “It appears however it is looked at.”

[The Hallowed One] asked: “How does it appear everywhere?”

He answered: “It is like this: since it is all-pervading, there is no appearance.⁴⁶⁶ {Quintessential enlightenment} is not concealed anywhere but is unseen.⁴⁶⁷ Primordially undissociated,⁴⁶⁸ it is unrecognized. If examined {intellectually}, it is unseen but appears as anything.⁴⁶⁹ Though appearing variously, it is a nonentity.⁴⁷⁰ Though roaming for eons {in cyclic existence}, it is without straying or dissociation.⁴⁷¹ [396] Though variously tainted {by imprints}, it is changeless.⁴⁷² Being without so much as a dust particle’s worth of a part, it pervades appearance-existence.⁴⁷³ Variety originates from emptiness. Being without a main part, it can be labeled as anything whatsoever. {The quintessential enlightenment being intrinsic, it is without action and can be labeled any name.} There is no abode {from which the fruition can be}⁴⁷⁴ sought; however it is accomplished, it is established.⁴⁷⁵ Being without form or marks,⁴⁷⁶ it appears however it is looked at.⁴⁷⁷ Without being anything, it is the awareness of anything.⁴⁷⁸ Its consummate realization being all-pervading and everywhere expanding, it is one⁴⁷⁹ yet infinite.⁴⁸⁰ Being dissociated from all and unique, it relinquishes nothing. Being without outer and inner, it is totally inward. Though infinitely occurring, it is inexhaustible.⁴⁸¹ While it is not to be grasped⁴⁸² or labeled,⁴⁸³ it is situated {everywhere}. Being without concreteness,⁴⁸⁴ it falls toward permanence. [397] Without being hoisted, it fares through the sky.⁴⁸⁵ Without having any branches, it traverses the stages.⁴⁸⁶ Without wavering at all, it has gone everywhere.⁴⁸⁷ Without moving⁴⁸⁸ anywhere, {instantaneous intrinsic awareness} is swift and unimpeded.⁴⁸⁹ While it radiates difference, it does not {in its essence} waver from oneness. While it does not waver from oneness,⁴⁹⁰ it variously appears. Since it enters everywhere,⁴⁹¹ it is the path. Since there is nothing whatsoever to relinquish,⁴⁹² it is cyclic

existence. Since there is confusion due to unknowing {of absolute meaningfulness}, it is a sentient being. Since it liberates from the four rivers,⁴⁹³ it is a boat. Since it is utter movement,⁴⁹⁴ it journeys. Since it is non-referential, it is enlightenment. Since it is utter variety,⁴⁹⁵ it is mind's beingness. Since it is skilled in all {that is knowable}, it is sapience.⁴⁹⁶ Since everything is clear, it is concentration. Since {the ground} goes without journeying {anywhere}, it is an abode. Since it is without peer,⁴⁹⁷ {the principal body} is outstanding. Since it is wondrous,⁴⁹⁸ it is supreme. Since it is utterly noble,⁴⁹⁹ it is exquisite. Since it is without powers and antidotes,⁵⁰⁰ it is unsurpassed. [398] Since its depths⁵⁰¹ cannot be found and since it is unfathomable, it is secret.⁵⁰² Since it is subtle,⁵⁰³ it is unclear.⁵⁰⁴ Since it occurs everywhere,⁵⁰⁵ it is a phenomenon.⁵⁰⁶ Since it is unchanging, it is suchness. Because of its rank,⁵⁰⁷ it is the bodhisattva. Since it continuously dispels⁵⁰⁸ and pervades,⁵⁰⁹ it is the Buddha.⁵¹⁰ Since it is the ground,⁵¹¹ it is the root. Since it generates everything,⁵¹² it is the mother. Since it originates therefrom, it is the father.⁵¹³ Since it holds the bone lineage,⁵¹⁴ it is the son. Since it is self-originated, it is the powerful ruler.⁵¹⁵ Being thusness, it is the great joist.⁵¹⁶ Being difficult to trespass against, it is the great heart pledge.⁵¹⁷ Being utterly nurturing, it is the life force.⁵¹⁸ Knowing no exhaustion,⁵¹⁹ it is a great treasure. Since it accomplishes one's desires,⁵²⁰ it is wealth. [399] Since it implements the actions {for wandering beings} through its continuous compassion, it is recollection. Since it is utterly resplendent, it is the awakened body.⁵²¹ Since it is spoken and expressed,⁵²² it is awakened speech. Since it knows everything,⁵²³ it is awakened mind. Since it occurs as everything desirable,⁵²⁴ it is awakened quality. Since it implements actions,⁵²⁵ it is awakened activity. Since it goes toward objects,⁵²⁶ it is desire. Since it enjoys itself {just as it is}, it is the great enjoyment.⁵²⁷ Since it becomes the cause {of everything}, it is the great requisite. Since [in it] all requirements are whole, it is the great accumulation. Since it is without effortful action, all purposes are accomplished. Since it emanates a variety,⁵²⁸ it is a great miracle. Since it occurs as signs {of the awakened body}, it

is the seal.⁵²⁹ Since it is not searched for elsewhere,⁵³⁰ it is the propitiation (Skt. *sevā*). Since it is self-originated, it is the close propitiation (Skt. *upasevā*). Since it is quintessential, it is the evocation (Skt. *sādhana*). Since it is the fruition, it is the great evocation (Skt. *mahāsādhana*).

The meaning revealed is that with regard to the quintessential enlightenment, which is suchness as it is, everything—whether cyclic existence, the phenomena of the path, or the fruition—is self-arisen yet without any abode whatsoever. [400] Moreover,⁵³¹

In the sky of unwavering,
One does not discursively examine such designations as
 wavering and dust.
In the great wisdom ocean,
There are no aspects apart from the one.
The spontaneously present nature is the great configuration.

And,⁵³²

Even appearance-existence, the oral lineage of cyclic
 existence,
Has never gone away from the quintessential open
 dimension.
Having journeyed to limitless pure fields,
There is no wavering from the quintessence.
Though it generates all the unfathomable Victorious Ones,
The quintessence is thoroughly without development.
Though limitless sentient beings may originate,
There is no obscuration.

The same source continues,⁵³³

“O custodian of the secret, is everything that appears the secret spell? Or is the non-apparent nature of everything the secret spell? If it is neither, then what is the secret spell?”

The custodian of the secret replied: “O ruler of Lañka, it is not that everything that appears is the secret spell. If appearances were the secret spell, that would contradict the expression ‘secret spell.’ There would be no distinction between the notions of sentient beings and the intent of the Buddha. [401] Other than that, there is no secret spell. If there were something other than that that were the secret spell, it would not be comprised in the beingness of all phenomena.

It is not that the non-apparent nature of everything is the secret spell. If this non-appearance were the secret spell, then those who uphold the extreme of nihilism would be genuinely complete [Buddhas].

It is not that neither of the two are the secret spell. If neither of the two were the secret spell, then, having searched for that which is called the secret spell, there would be no other place to find it.

O ruler of Lañka, that which is called the secret spell is the non-duality of appearance and non-appearance. It is liberated from the essence of both and does not referentially image a middle; it is the suchness of whatever is.”

7.1.2.9.1.3. Concluding remarks concerning suchness

In any case, suchness as it is, the luminous nature of mind, is non-obstructed by any such characteristics since it is not maintained to be graspable in terms of being this or that. Abiding in the great Eminent Yoga, since one is dissociated from all thoughts without inhibiting them, appearances are not discursively examined. Why is this so? Everything is the self and the self appears as everything. [402] Therefore, the meaning of not imaging appearances is that, at one time, there is clarity without referential focus. If it be asked whether one is able [to realize this, it is replied that,] for example, an illusionist may emanate infantrymen,

illusory horses and elephants, 'Gro-ba bzang-mo, etc.⁵³⁴ Whether [these characters] quarrel among each other or perform pleasing music, the confused spectators are in wonderment. The illusionist, [on the other hand,] is without wonderment, for [the emanated characters] stand there yet are illusory: the army, the infantrymen, etc., are there while being nonexistent, and [the illusionist] is free from cognizing both.⁵³⁵

Likewise, the great person who assimilates the crucial points is without intellectual involvement in meditation; being uninvolved, he is dissociated. There is neither meditation nor distraction nor view. He has already realized and accomplished [that which was to be realized and accomplished]. Whatever occurs as being endowed with signs is intrinsically clear in the self-originated open dimension. What could harm that person whose intellect and body are without self? It should be known that for him there is nothing wretched whatsoever.⁵³⁶ Therefore, it is veritably valuable that at first one should cut through with the view of absolute meaningfulness that which is unresolved.⁵³⁷

7.1.2.9.2. Incomprehension

[403] The dull will deviate from the position of this view. If one maintains the view that just this entity as it appears is being as it is, affirming this as the Great Completeness, then one abides on the stage of an ordinary person. One deviates toward referential grasping, as has already been shown before.

7.2. Meditation

As for the efficiency⁵³⁸ of those holding the gold of absolute meaningfulness,⁵³⁹ they meditate without intellectual involvement.⁵⁴⁰ Moreover, in terms of meditation, there are the means of resting, which concern seating [of the body], and the means of the mind's approaching [suchness].

7.2.1. The means of resting the body

In this regard, concerning the means of resting the body, up to the yoga of generation, the body is rectified as a deity,⁵⁴¹ so none can be posited. Because one is free from the notion of grasping toward the body, there are definitely no means of seating the body that are posited. In that case, it may be asked, “Does this refute the cross-legged posture of the [vehicles] below?” [It is replied that,] as long as one does not referentially image a body, [the cross-legged posture] is not refuted. If there is no deliberate taking up [of a posture], there is no contradiction in being in a cross-legged posture, in being supine or facing downward. The *yogin* should do whatever is comfortable, yet his actions should not be due to sloth. As a confirmation of one's trust in my [words], [404] the *rGum-chung* states,⁵⁴²

Since body and mind are unborn and without basis,
They are sky-like, and rectifying them is useless.⁵⁴³

And,⁵⁴⁴

If one knows the body to be illusory,
Even without sitting straight or upholding the cross-legged
posture,
Whichever of the three types of conduct⁵⁴⁵ one abides on,
There is neither deliberate action nor agent.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,⁵⁴⁶

Since wherever one abides has neither ground nor support,
It is useless to rectify the body in a comfortable place.

Furthermore,⁵⁴⁷

Neither contemplation nor the body nor solitude should be
contrived;
In this regard, uncontrived solitude
Is the abode of primordial solitude,
The domain of the supreme *yogin*.

And,⁵⁴⁸

Because one's body is an infinite pure field,
One is free from the body's dismal aspect without
relinquishing it.
Because the body, even in its solitude, is void,
There is no sitting straight in a cross-legged posture.

This means that since the means of resting the body is non-action, it is maintained that this does not inhibit doing things. In that case, it might be asked what the defect of rectification is like. [It is replied that] however one rectifies the body, that is still grasping toward the body. Due to this grasping, one will never see absolute meaningfulness. Therefore, the *rGum-chung* says,⁵⁴⁹

To rectify body and mind according to criteria:
Therein is the peg of grasping.

[405] The *Grub-pa'i lung* declares,⁵⁵⁰

Whoever rectifies through craving the path of conduct,
That one contaminates his physical conduct.

That is a deviation. What is more, since, as was shown previously, without deliberately taking to the wilderness, wherever one abides is the great primordial solitude, the six kinds of wandering beings are the self-originated Buddha; even should one encounter a man, it is the inner countenance of the Buddha. One should therefore relinquish deliberate attachment to wilderness. Moreover, it is not that one stays in seclusion or in a township after having recourse to mere words.⁵⁵¹ Having assimilated this with confidence, one may abide in a sanctuary without relinquishing or accepting anything. Moreover,⁵⁵²

The enormous cave is not to be rectified;
Being unfathomable and uncontrived,
It is primordially amazing, without
Evaluation and self-originated.

This means that wherever one abides is good. Hence, even if one meets people, one should neither uphold conceptions nor forsake them, nor referentially imagine whom one is to meet. At present there are many who, craving for a township, hold a view of mere eyes in their mouth⁵⁵³ and deride those who engage in the great

purpose in sanctuaries—this is indeed a great cause of downfall.

7.2.2. The means of the mind's approach

As for the means of the mind's approach, one enters [suchness] without entering.⁵⁵⁴ [406] With regard to suchness as it is, one does not referentially image anything whatsoever. Since it is clear as the great non-discursive identity, it is maintained that it is entered in the knowledge of non-approaching. The translator dPal-brtsegs explains [in the context of] the *bKol-mdo*,⁵⁵⁵

One enters *Atiyoga* through the strength of non-referential wisdom.

Hence, there is no deliberate entry. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,⁵⁵⁶

[The Hallowed One] asked: “Holy person, do you abide unwaveringly in non-discursiveness?”

He replied: “I do not enter non-discursiveness.”

[The Hallowed One] spoke: “Why do you not enter it?”

He answered: “Because I myself am non-discursiveness, I do not seek to enter non-discursiveness yet further. If I were not primordially non-conceptual, there would be for me an entry into the non-conceptual. That is because everything is primordially non-conceptual.”

What this means is that one enters the [state] where no scrutinizing thoughts are produced in the intellect. This should be evident from the *Mi-rtog-pa'i lung*, which says,⁵⁵⁷

One enters the nature of non-discursive space
By means of the awareness without discursive thought.
One enters the nature of non-referential space
[407] By means of the awareness without thoughts.

7.2.2.1. Three defects

In this regard, there are three defects concerning the resting of the intellect. What are they? They pertain to the concentration of conviction and are the concentration that apprehends, the concentration that thoroughly searches, and the hybrid concentration.

7.2.2.1.1. As it is, absolute meaningfulness is without any thoughts whatsoever; to be convinced “This is it!” is to apprehend it. The genuine absolute cannot be seen thereby. One can trust that this is said to be a defect of grasping.

7.2.2.1.2. Concerning thorough searching, the vast expanse of phenomena’s beingness is inherently free from scrutinizing thoughts; resting in equipoise therein, one searches for the mind’s locus of resting. For example, notions are like a fly searching for a hollow; discursive thoughts that ponder “Is it comfortable to meditate like that?” or “Is it suitable to rest like that?” are a defect that creates thoughts. The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,⁵⁵⁸

A second's wavering from the ground's absolute
meaningfulness
Is produced and halts;
Recalling it, it develops more.
If one enumerates one's searching for the path,
The path of enumeration develops more,
Yet how could this be the meaning of phenomena's
beingness?

[408] This means that thereby obstacles are caused, and one is incapable of really seeing it.

7.2.2.1.3. As for the hybrid concentration, in the expanse of equality, concepts are alpha-pure; phenomena's beingness is without action or searching. Because one's intellect does not assimilate the crucial point of non-duality, at times the meaning of signlessness is clear, whereas at others the conceptions of signs fluctuate. When such a medley occurs, there is hybrid [concentration]; one thereby does not realize meditation without thematic foci.

Furthermore, this is evident from the following quote:⁵⁵⁹

If one does not see the bliss of mind's beingness,
The meaning of signlessness may be clear to one's psyche,
While still one fluctuates in the confusion of signs.
In this medley of the two,⁵⁶⁰
One is not free from implementing the [karmic] causes.

Moreover, [this explanation] has come down to us indirectly.

7.2.2.2. Meditating correctly

In any case,⁵⁶¹ by being free from these [defects], there are, in terms of mere intellectual designations, means of resting.⁵⁶² Generally, these [means of resting] are the means of attaining,⁵⁶³ the means of stabilizing,⁵⁶⁴ and the means of thoroughly not grasping.⁵⁶⁵ These are adapted within the fold of the view. The eminent *yogin* [409] meditates as has been resolved earlier: such is absolute meaningfulness. Because⁵⁶⁶ absolute meaningfulness and the meditator are not delimited and are one, they are the essence of phenomena's beingness as it is. Hence, one rests {in knowledge} without deliberately resting the intellect. Likewise, since phenomena's beingness is spontaneously accomplished, intrinsic awareness, too, rests in spontaneous presence.⁵⁶⁷ Since phenomena's beingness is luminously clear as the essence of the great seminal nucleus, intrinsic awareness, too, rests as the great seminal nucleus. Because absolute meaningfulness is free from effortful action, intrinsic awareness is free from effortful action. Since phenomena's beingness is non-dual, awareness is non-dual. Since phenomena's beingness is free from thematic focus, awareness is free from thematic focus. Since intrinsic awareness is self-originated wisdom, intrinsic awareness is self-originated wisdom. Since in phenomena's beingness everything is integral being, the intellect is integral being. Since in phenomena's beingness there is no thinking of anything whatsoever, the intellect does not think at all. Since in phenomena's beingness there is no wavering whatsoever, the intellect does not waver. Because phenomena's beingness does not approach anything, the intellect has nothing to approach. Since phenomena's

beingness is not entered, the intellect does not enter anywhere. Since phenomena's beingness does not appear as anything whatsoever, the intellect does not appear at all. [410] Since in the state of phenomena's [beingness] there is nothing to examine, to scrutinize, to search for, or to accept, the intellect neither examines nor scrutinizes nor searches for nor accepts anything. Since phenomena's beingness is neither produced nor obstructed, one's own intellect is neither produced nor obstructed, nor does it abide. Since in the state of phenomena's beingness there is neither deliberate doing nor contriving nor corrupting, one's own intellect does not do anything deliberately, nor does it contrive nor corrupt. Since phenomena's beingness is clear and non-discursive, intrinsic awareness, too, is clear and non-discursive. Since phenomena's beingness neither originates nor enters and is free from notions, intrinsic awareness neither originates nor enters and is free from notions. Since phenomena's beingness is without abode even in the [state that is] non-discursive, unwavering, and non-imaging, one's own intellect, too, does not abide even in the [state that is] non-discursive, unwavering, and non-imaging. Since the suchness of phenomena is primordially constant and free from pauses, intrinsic awareness, too, has the great constancy throughout the three times and is without pauses.

If it be asked why this is the case, it is because awareness is just as is phenomena's beingness. In this great system, one abides without even thinking of a simultaneous [approach]. The *rMad-du byung-ba* says,⁵⁶⁸

When entering the quintessence of enlightenment,⁵⁶⁹
There are neither empty phenomena nor the object of emptiness, so
one does not abide [anywhere].

[411] It is clear that there is no object. In that case, it might be asked, “Speaking in terms of contextual time, when entering [meditative equipoise],⁵⁷⁰ one dwells without object; but when not resting in meditative equipoise, one engages in objects—is there not thereby a pause?” [It is replied that] absolute meaningfulness is without occurrence or involvement, and this is taught for those to be tamed. In any case, there are no fractions that can be examined into hourly sessions. Whoever meditates on being as it is, which is primordially equal, is without action. Having thus resolved it, though his arousal through recollection is non-obstructed, there is no recollection. The same pith instruction states,⁵⁷¹

Though the man is without recollection, he does not continuously
create cyclic existence.

The aural lineage says,⁵⁷²

If not forgotten for a long period,
Entry is experienced in agreement with the words and the
meaning.

In brief, even sessions are not to be refuted as being defects. If, without accepting them, one knows that there are no sessions, even if one has sessions, this is not a flaw. The period of abiding in the quintessential enlightenment of such meditation is indefinite. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,⁵⁷³

O ruler of Laṅka, always indefinite are [412] a juncture, a month, a fortnight, twenty-four hours, a day, a session, half a session, an instant, a minute, a fleeting second, immediacy, primordiality, an eon, and an immeasurable eon.

In the awareness that appears to those on the path, periods and time may appear, yet both are united in self-arisen quintessential enlightenment.

7.2.2.3. Eight systems of meditation according to different instructors

7.2.2.3.1. According to one perspective,⁵⁷⁴ *Atiyoga* meditation is the realization⁵⁷⁵ of the expanse. The *rGya-mtsho klong* declares,⁵⁷⁶

Realizing the meaning of the great primordially present expanse, one is undistracted;

The great mind of enlightenment is the expanse's meditation.

What this means is that, having previously come to a resolution through the view, there is nothing whatsoever to be aware of. Hence, in awareness one neither deliberately gives in to the mind, nor does one lapse therein. If one intrinsically rests with recollection where there is nothing to recollect, one's meditation is unmistakable. Furthermore, if one prolongs [one's meditation] with the diligence of non-action, the fundamental root, phenomena's beingness, becomes actual.

7.2.2.3.2. According to one perspective,⁵⁷⁷ meditation on the view of *Atiyoga* is settling in quietude. One should meditate as the *Khyung-chen* states,⁵⁷⁸

The veritably quick wisdom is free from all thoughts.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* says,⁵⁷⁹

It is through contemplation itself that one is without thoughts;
[413] According to the principle of neither thinking nor cleansing,
It is from concepts themselves that wisdom is produced.⁵⁸⁰

What this means is that the self-originated wisdom of awareness is free from an objective scope. Since it is inherently unthinkable, intrinsic awareness is without any scrutinizing thoughts. Unfurled in the expanse of wisdom, grasping discursiveness is absent, and awareness is like the sky. Since the sky neither thinks of anything nor abides anywhere, one rests without assuming anything. However one engages in absolute meaningfulness, it is said that there will be no deterioration.

7.2.2.3.3. Moreover, according to one perspective,⁵⁸¹ it is through the great meditation that consists in abiding in the Great Completeness that one rests the intellect. The *Khyung-chen* declares,⁵⁸²

Appearances are like the great ocean;
Non-discursiveness is vast like the end of space.

What this means is that whatever phenomena appear from intrinsic clarity in the great ocean of awareness' wisdom should neither be inhibited nor held on to nor apprehended. Just as one does not grasp toward the planets and stars [reflected] in the limpid ocean,⁵⁸³ so whatever intrinsically arises before intrinsic awareness is neither inhibited nor discursively examined nor

thought of intellectually; intrinsically clear, it is without vastness or narrowness. Hence, the intellect is said to rest without difference. Throughout the four types of conduct, one should apply oneself without deteriorating from the wind of absolute meaningfulness. [414]

7.2.2.3.4. According to one perspective,⁵⁸⁴ it is as stated in the *Nam-mkha'-che*.⁵⁸⁵

As for the non-apparent beingness of phenomena,
Resting therein without searching is meditation.

What this means is that quintessential enlightenment, just as it is,⁵⁸⁶ is untouched by limitations. The appearances one experiences as objects throughout the three times are essenceless in absolute meaningfulness, so that one should not make them into referential foci. Whatever is contrived is corrupted. Since it is without action, when it is naturally clear without positing anything, that is resting and is the supernal means.

7.2.2.3.5. According to one perspective,⁵⁸⁷ it is as said in the *Sems-bsgom*.⁵⁸⁸

The stupidity of wisdom that analyzes nothing whatsoever and the butter lamp of unimpeded clarity are free from all thoughts. Inherently unwavering, one abides in lethargy and in the king of concentration.

What this means is that the spontaneously complete wisdom, just as it is, is free from all bias and partiality. It is untouched by limitations and is intrinsically clear. Hence, it is without any thoughts whatsoever, is without concept-endowed loci, and does not imagine wavering

objects. [415] In this great unwavering there is clarity without clarifying; it is like the sun. The sun does not need to [deliberately] make anything clear. Therefore, it is similar in that it does not deliberately make clear and is the supreme meditation.

In this regard, following after spontaneous presence through one's intellect does not make it evident. Meditation expands unmistakably into the expanse. It is sufficient to merely recall it. When recalling it, one is free from all that is apprehendable and resolves the phenomena of birth and death in the nonexistence of the three times.

7.2.2.3.6. According to one perspective,⁵⁸⁹ it is as declared in the *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*:⁵⁹⁰

Since the beingness of phenomena is without thoughts, it is
great space:

Being free from all thoughts about the sky,
One is without thoughts, so space is purified of thoughts—
The sky is without imaging and without reference.
Space verily transcends all characteristics:
Being nonexistent, the sky is without sky.
Since space is without anything on which to meditate,
The inexpressible sky transcends non-meditation.

What both these [stanzas] mean is that the space of the suchness of entities is primordially clear as expanding spontaneity. [416] Throughout the three times, one does not imagine a meditator nor anything on which to meditate. Hence, one thinks neither of a meditating intellect nor of a sky to meditate on; one neither discursively examines nor accepts or maintains anything nor meditates—nor are any of these to be imagined

referentially. Although there is nothing to meditate on, there is a clarity that is without referential imaging and careful recollection. Since the intellect does not waver from phenomena's beingness, this is called "resting in equipoise."

7.2.2.3.7. According to one perspective,⁵⁹¹ the eminent *yogins* should rest their intellect as is said in the *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*:⁵⁹²

Without an object on which to meditate, one does not abide in meditation;

Attachment to meditation and desire for bliss are self-grasping and suffering.

If, without the abode of meditation, one verily realizes purity,

One's meditation is flawless, like the sky of phenomena's open dimension.

This means that if one practices this, the principle is free from effortful action; when one resolves to be free from an object of meditation, one's meditation is non-inhibited. In the absolute meaningfulness that is free from all actions, one's body and mind unwind from deep within, and one carefully rests in vastness. Through the diligence of non-action, one is inwardly not free from absolute meaningfulness. In this absence, one meditates on intrinsic clarity. [417]

As for its characteristics, by meditating, one is without grasping toward the conception of meditating and without grasping toward the conception of imaging or non-imaging. One does not obstruct that with which one is to familiarize oneself meditatively, nor is there anything to do. That is the supreme means.

7.2.2.3.8. According to one perspective,⁵⁹³ if one rests at the core of the expanse of the unmistakable meaning of meditation, one should rest as is stated in the *rMad-du byung-ba*:⁵⁹⁴

O great being, the supreme meditation of the Omniscient One is in essence non-referential. My physical application is without enlightenment and without meditation.⁵⁹⁵

What this means⁵⁹⁶ is that in the expanse of self-originated wisdom without extremes, there is intrinsic clarity without self or other; without wavering, it is the supreme meditation. If it be asked what its characteristics are like, [it is replied that] in the state of great wisdom everything is suffused in one's integral identity. Therefore, awareness does not become involved hither, nor do objects appear thither, nor are there any grasping conceptions whatsoever. As for absolute meaningfulness within which adventitious afflictions are inherently not produced, it evidently occurs as the Victorious One's intent and is the hearing lineage.

Moreover, beginner *yogins* should rest their intellect as is declared in the same source:⁵⁹⁷

[418] Unborn phenomena
Are essenceless and without meditation.
It is by verily uniting in the manner of the sky
That one is indeed renowned to always have
accomplishment.

Furthermore,⁵⁹⁸

The phenomena which occur from intrinsic awareness are without any thoughts whatsoever. Abiding in that meaning is the amazing enlightened mind.

This means⁵⁹⁹ that everything being without essence, both object and awareness are nonexistent. Being unborn, intrinsic awareness intrinsically expands and is luminously clear like the sun shining in the sky. When there is neither staying nor recollecting, neither making actual nor deliberately meditating, neither distraction nor freedom therefrom, that is called “resting the intellect.” If one thus abides in this meaning, engaging in the path of conduct and upright viewing are called the performance of yoga. The Victorious Ones and one’s objective scope are one. It is said in the pith instructions of the aural lineage,⁶⁰⁰

While appearances are just as they are, one neither scrutinizes objects thither, nor does cognition become involved hither. Though sensations cease, they are unceasing. The intellect does not become involved in anything. Being without wavering, one strikes the point. Powerlessly,⁶⁰¹ there occurs the taste of great bliss.

7.2.2.3.9. Synopsis of the eight systems of meditation

[419] However the systems of meditation are taught, the intellects of individuals are incompatible [among each other]. Hence, there is no meaning that is profound or not merely with respect to the supreme persons and the doctrinal texts. However one meditates, one will strike the point.

In brief,⁶⁰² for the practitioner of the Great Completeness of *Atiyoga*,⁶⁰³ all phenomena are the

intrinsic mode of the ground's identity.⁶⁰⁴ Without exchanging a single hair or changing color, being is just as it is. Therefore, the intellect does not become involved⁶⁰⁵ in or meditate on anything, nor does it become distracted. Without inhibiting the conceptions pertaining to the sixfold gathering [of consciousnesses], there is neither seeing nor hearing, neither sensation nor cause of occurrence. One neither relinquishes nor follows after occurrences. [420] In the expanse of great wisdom, there is intrinsic clarity without thinking or scrutiny. There are many concentrations that thus pertain to the *Mahāyāna*: there is the exalted concentration,⁶⁰⁶ the concentration of great autonomy,⁶⁰⁷ the concentration of integral being,⁶⁰⁸ the outshining concentration,⁶⁰⁹ the concentration of great unwavering,⁶¹⁰ the concentration that glides into⁶¹¹ clear illumination,⁶¹² the concentration of great stupidity,⁶¹³ and the concentration of the great conquering⁶¹⁴ —these eight are ascertained.

7.2.2.4. Defects in a beginner's meditation

If this is so and such be the case, beginners dislike signs and like signlessness; they dislike the mind's diffusion and like its absorption; they dislike wavering and like unwavering. This so-called absence of thoughts creates thoughts. By making evident this so-called freedom from an objective scope, one does not see absolute meaningfulness, and sensations are again produced. To give an example, [421] it is like fire and smoke: if one is clear, the other is obscured. It is like water and sludge: when [the water] is ruffled by waves, [the sludge]

emerges; when [the water] is unruffled, [the sludge] does not emerge. It is like rain and mist: when it rains, the mist is dispelled; when the rain stops, there is mist. Likewise, until absolute meaningfulness has been somewhat made clear to the beginner's mind, there may be non-fluctuation of conceptions. However, when merely giving up [one's meditation], [conceptions] will re-emerge. The *Khyung-chen* declares,⁶¹⁵

Because "being as it is" is a concept, one meditates on a conception.
Desiring great bliss is the illness of attachment.

If one does not gain confidence in the meaning of thorough equality, even if one is unwavering while one rests the intellect, conceptions will later appear due to the cause of not having come to a resolution. If one scoops up the water containing pearl oysters and inserts therein a ladle, the pearl oysters disperse to the edge. As soon as one draws out [the ladle], they assemble again and are covered in water. Likewise, if one follows after and desires phenomena's beingness, that is just the cause of defects. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states the following:⁶¹⁶

Qualities originate from seeing in equality.

And,⁶¹⁷

If it be asked whence demons originate,
[It is replied that] they originate due to constantly accomplishing
[something].

[422] Why is [the fruition] not achieved? Such is Māra.

This concerns the emergence of defects. The fortunate persons who engage in this doctrinal system neither intellectually examine anything⁶¹⁸ nor think of anything;⁶¹⁹ they are without apprehension⁶²⁰ and they do not pursue anything.⁶²¹ They do not make it evident,⁶²² nor do they desire clarity.⁶²³ They do not deliberately implement the beingness of phenomena,⁶²⁴ nor do they imagine⁶²⁵ or hold on to it.⁶²⁶ They meditate neither {deliberately} striving nor accepting anything.⁶²⁷

Thus, it is a mistake to become intellectually involved in effort,⁶²⁸ and it is slaughter to think and scrutinize.⁶²⁹ If one probes into signs, they sprawl.⁶³⁰ If one intellectually follows after a purpose, one deviates.⁶³¹ If awareness does not shine forth from within, one is a god falling toward the demons.⁶³² The Buddha is aroused as an enemy,⁶³³ and one fears⁶³⁴ one's own conduct.⁶³⁵ Even if one meditates,⁶³⁶ the whirling wind of conceptions tears asunder the air's going about. [423]

With regard to this meaning, nowadays there are lax individuals possessing the pith instructions on imaging who say, “Through the pith instructions which I have from India, one can [attain] awakening within twenty-four hours or a month. Merely flinging them away as you do, one is without focus.”

In this regard, it is evident that the great meaning has not arisen for them. Without knowing a Khams-pa woman,⁶³⁷ one would not undertake [to build] a clay statue [of her]—it is likewise with ascertaining the great meaning through a few means of imaging. In any case,⁶³⁸ if you have the means of awakening, it is clear

that I myself do not need such an awakening! Thus, this vehicle [of *Atiyoga*] is superior to *Mahāyoga*. It is sufficient to recall what was previously explained concerning the meaning of the unsurpassed crest in the *tantra* section.⁶³⁹

7.2.2.5. Pith instructions for the moment of passing away

The unmistakable pith instructions for the moment of passing away: in this regard,⁶⁴⁰ neither inhibiting nor imaging one's passing away, one does not come under the power of the activity with signs. The *rMad-du byung-ba* says,⁶⁴¹

[424] Unborn is amazing enlightenment
And untainted by the afflictions.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁶⁴²

Its distinction is that it is congruent with anything;
Conceptualizing it as “activity,”
One comes under the power of deeds
And does not have self-originated wisdom.

It is said in the *sPyi-gcod*,⁶⁴³

It is not a mere designation,
Such as the direction of virtue or that of sin.

Thus are the pith instructions for the moment of passing away to be understood.

According to one perspective, one abides in the concentration for the moment of passing away as stated

in the pith instructions from the lineage of the three *ācāryas*. Moreover, the *Man-ngag bde-klong* states,⁶⁴⁴

The greatly secret pith instructions are for the moment of
passing away:
With regard to the uncontrived sphere of the seminal
nucleus,
It is hidden at the center of three secret treasuries.
Becoming confident in planting the mind's vitality,
One ambles about in the open dimension of the three peaks.
Since its depth is unfathomable, it is vast
Like a treasure of utterly pure jewels.
In the seraphic mansion of *bodhicitta*,⁶⁴⁵
One plants the deathless vitality
And shows the path without deviation.
In the phalanx-sized jeweled seraphic mansion,
The king of the fruition's vitality rides
The stallion of the unhoisted breath.
[425] Raised through *A* and *YA*,
It radiates without birth and death
In the pervasive expanse of the seminal nucleus of
Akaniṣṭha,⁶⁴⁶
In the pervasive expanse without hope and misgiving.
Just as, when pouring molten gold [over a statue], its form
becomes luminous,
So when appearance-existence is luminously clear as the
mind, it is integral being.
As for both meditation and non-meditation, they are just the
path of words;
Becoming proficient is the king of meditation.

This means that it is through the mind's relinquishing of avarice that one presents up to one's physical vitality and requests [the pith instructions] from one's master.

7.2.3. Defects in meditation

When one thus abides on this meaning and meditates, the defects of thinking may occur, just as there may be clouds in the sky or sludge in water. In this regard, there should be no deliberate contrivance of one's three doors. The defects are similar to those of *Mahāyoga* and of the common [vehicles], but there is a distinction with regard to the mode of rectification.

The co-emergent defect refers to the conceptions of grasper and grasped that occur of their own accord without deep causes or temporary conditions. The defect occurring due to conditions refers to the adventitiously aroused temporary objects, like an echo that is conditional on a sound. [426] The defect of deliberate acting refers to the defects of temporarily rectifying one's three doors. The defect of experience refers to fancying that absolute meaningfulness can be made into an object. The defect of impulsive appearance is like a mirror adorned with [reflected] stars, seeing which one is pleased. The root defect is to meditate having posited the ruling subject as the ground [of one's meditation]. These defects may not emerge at one time but, rather, occur gradually.

First of all, requirements are defects if they obscure equanimity.⁶⁴⁷ When the approach [of suchness] is obscured, one should recognize that the first occurring obscuration pertains to requiring the approach. In this regard, there are general or common defects⁶⁴⁸ and special defects, to which belong the defects pertaining to the requirements since they are not seen to be compatible with the general ones and since they are manifold downfalls.

Occasionally, such defects as these may occur: desiring to enter absolute meaningfulness, there is the defect of non-entry. Desiring to deliberately clarify absolute meaningfulness, fancying that it can be posited as being this or that, is the defect of mere fancy. To make it evident, [427] strive toward it, and experience it are, briefly speaking, called the defect of corruption. For example, like with a butter lamp moved by the wind, one deteriorates from the wind of non-action. In any case, by instantaneously recalling the meaning that has thus been resolved, it intrinsically shines forth, without having to do anything.

Some, although they assimilate with confidence the view of purity and resolve it without assuming anything, are unable to meditate in non-meditation,⁶⁴⁹ so that many [conceptual] signs [occur]. Recalling⁶⁵⁰ sapience as the cause of insight, many [concepts] fluctuate powerlessly. Even if one may have previously heard and thought about the *Mahāyāna*, since one has not meditated, the aspect of unwavering is slight.

In this regard, one relaxes from deep within and expands somewhat; since one is without any purpose to perform, one proceeds without tightening oneself up.⁶⁵¹ Resting, one is naturally stable. One neither thinks about thoughts nor inhibits them. Without scrutinizing the yield {the state of being as it is}, one {notionally} does the farming.⁶⁵² In this regard, even the other means of stabilization are not to be obstructed, [428] since everything is a means.

7.2.3.1. Demons of concentration

Moreover, there are six demons of concentration:⁶⁵³ (1) the demon that causes obstacles through great laziness and manifold action; (2) the demon that causes the obstacles of distraction and agitation, like a butter lamp moved by the wind; (3) the demon that causes the obstacles of slight effortful accomplishment⁶⁵⁴ and great sleepiness; (4) the demon that causes obstacles through lethargy and great desire; and (5) the demon that causes obstacles through following after thoughts.

7.2.3.2. Obscurations

Furthermore, there are ten obscurations: (1) the obscuration of lethargy when sapience is unclear; (2) the obscuration that brandishes agitation [when there is] clarity; (3) the obscuration of being overcast, like a person entering a dark house; (4) the obscuration of attachment to the taste of the bliss of contemplation; (5) the obscuration of grasping and grasped, [whereby] cognition is produced when there is wisdom; (6) the obscuration [consisting in the belief] that the supracognitions are suitable; (7) the obscuration that is not free from the mental desire for magical feats; and (8) the obscuration that, because of the pretentious view of a self, discursively examines cognition as an ego.⁶⁵⁵

7.2.3.3. Six defects of contemplation

There are six defects of contemplation: (1) the defect of taking to thirst, whereby great passion abruptly emerges;

[429] (2) the defect of acrimony, whereby great hatred occurs; (3) the defect of malice, whereby great jealousy occurs; (4) the defect of haughtiness and great pride; (5) the defect of mental dullness and great stupidity; and (6) the defect of ego-grasping, which is the pretentious holding on to one's own view.

7.2.3.4. Deviations

There are also many deviations:

7.2.3.4.1. The deviation of the extreme of nonexistence

The deviation of the extreme of nonexistence consists in the heretical view of nihilism.⁶⁵⁶ Since in the state of the enlightened mind's great bliss the view of individual intuitive awareness (*so-sor rang-gis rig-pa*; Skt. *pratyātmavedya*) is without unclarity and since awareness' wisdom is clear, the deviation consisting in the extreme of nonexistence is eliminated.

7.2.3.4.2. The deviation of distracted evenness

The deviation of distracted evenness consists in being without focus because one does not know any meaning whatsoever. Since the enlightened mind that is free from what is worldly does not follow after existence, nonexistence, and signs, the deviation of distracted evenness is eliminated.

7.2.3.4.3. The deviation of unclarity

The deviation of unclarity with respect to the single absolute meaningfulness consists in maintaining as non-discursive the view of eternalism that appears as the self, whereby the genuine absolute meaningfulness is unclear. The awareness of enlightenment's great bliss being autonomous, [430] since the great vision of wisdom arises on its own, it is clear that there is no seizing attachment toward anything whatsoever. In this regard, the *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* declares,⁶⁵⁷

Whichever of eternalism and nihilism the intellect craves for,
Both are said to be deviations from what is maintained to be the
quintessence of absolute meaningfulness.

Hence, it should be identified as a defect.

7.2.3.4.4. The deviation of ordinary worldlings

If one follows after the signs pertaining to what occurs as recollection, that is the deviation of ordinary worldlings. Since intrinsic awareness is nothing whatsoever, it is by realizing the absence of action pertaining to discursive rumination that it is clear. For fools, the absence of all that which occurs to recollection is the deviation of notionlessness; yet when great wisdom is realized to be unbiased intrinsic clarity, it is clear.

7.2.3.4.5. The deviation of the four contemplations

The deviations of the four contemplations have already been explained. Here they shall be taught in brief, according to the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*.⁶⁵⁸

All those whose belief is slight
See selflessness as a support.
Inhibiting {desire, sin, and the sixfold gathering of
consciousnesses}, there is examination but no scrutiny:
That is the first contemplation.
Abiding in the universally empty and subtle emptiness,
There is no examination but merely scrutiny: this is the
second [contemplation].
Definitely resting in emptiness,
Joy is generated: that is the third [contemplation].
Revealed through the force of self or other,
[431] One abides in flawless⁶⁵⁹ unwavering: that is the
fourth [contemplation].

Here, awareness is pure since it is without objective scope, free from effortful action, without the action pertaining to examination and scrutiny, without the joy that is attached to the taste [of contemplation], and without grasping toward equanimity.

7.2.3.4.6. The deviation of the auditors

Moreover, to inhibit conceptual sensations and pacify them is the deviation of the auditors: one inhibits the sixfold gathering of consciousnesses, [in the belief that] the nature is without seeing or hearing. The same source says,⁶⁶⁰

The signs pertain to the objective scope of the six [sense-faculties];
When these signs appear as reified entities,
One rests however one pleases, and there is nothing to repel.

The same source continues,⁶⁶¹

Whatever signs pertaining to the six [sense-faculties] are
produced,
They are uncontrived, self-originated thusness:
Since they are unborn, there is nothing to repel;
Self-originated and self-appeased, one rests however one
pleases.

7.2.3.4.7. *The deviation of the independent victors*

If one inhibits conceptions and is attached to the taste of peace, one is unidirectionally biased toward peace and the extreme of transcendence: that is the deviation of the independent victors. The *Khyung-chen* states,⁶⁶²

Because one desires to obtain the actual perception [of absolute meaningfulness], one constantly meditates on its cause;
The meaning of equality does not originate in the bliss of attachment to meditation.

[432] The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* declares,⁶⁶³

Abiding in attachment to the taste of concentration's bliss,
One does not abide on the cause of unwavering—such is
phenomena's beingness.⁶⁶⁴
Hence, this concentration which abides in attachment⁶⁶⁵
Is the stage of peace and does not transcend woe.

Whatever one is attached to in the state of non-duality, one does not savor. That is why the *Mi-rtog-pa'i lung* says,⁶⁶⁶

When the intellect of the psyche wavers,
 There are coarse and delicate fluctuations of the imprints:
 When these signs are discursively examined,
 They are the objective scope of Māra.
 These coarse and delicate fluctuations of the imprints
 Are not the mind's oscillation,
 And there is nothing to accomplish aside:
 Since the recollection of non-referential sapience arises,
 One verily embarks on the open dimension without
 thoughts.
 Not following after sensations,
 One does not give in to the power of sinking and lethargy.
 If one is unattached to the taste of concentration,
 One non-discursively meditates on non-discursiveness.
 Since one is unstructured by the four extremes⁶⁶⁷ pertaining
 to eternalism and nihilism,
 One does not fall down into the views of the heretics.
 Since the secret wisdom actually shines forth,
 One does not fall down into the view of cessation.
 Since one verily abides on the quintessential meaning
 And follows after neither singularity nor duality,
 [433] One does not fall down into the view of the
 independent victors.
 Since in the quintessential meaning there are no
 obscurations and wisdom is clear,
 One is not controlled by sinking and lethargy.

7.2.3.4.8. *The deviation of the Cittamātra*

To maintain that there are confused appearances in the
 state where reified entities are great bliss and to view
 that the purity of non-dual wisdom is worldly and that
 non-conceptual wisdom is instantaneous is the deviation
 of the *Cittamātra*. The *Sems-bsgom* states,⁶⁶⁸

Seeing confusion in the principle should indeed be comprehended
 as confusion.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁶⁶⁹

Turning one's back upon actual perception
Is the defect of appearance.

Hence, it is evident that the third-order chiliocosm is sealed as great bliss. Since there is no objective scope, it is clear that there are no instants, both with regard to confused appearances and to wisdom. The *Sems-bsgom* continues,⁶⁷⁰

Since the adamantine peaks of phenomena's open dimension are without bias, they are not instantaneous.
Since the virtuous roots of purity are nonexistent like a reflection, the world and wisdom are not existents.

7.2.3.4.9. *The deviation of the Sautrāntika Madhyamaka*

If, [considering that] absolute meaningfulness is primordially without the four extremes, one views relative truth as merely illusory and absolute truth as unborn, that is the deviation of the *Sautrāntika [Mādhyamikas]*. [434] The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* says,⁶⁷¹

This great beingness of phenomena, which is without characteristics,
Is without the characteristic of illusoriness, being phenomena's open dimension.
Though as phenomena's open dimension, it is the dance of illusion,
It is not extolled by the Victorious Ones as the illusory path.

The nature of all phenomena being empty, whatever flaws pertain to body, speech, and psyche are emptiness.

Therefore, the body is empty and void, and so are both speech and psyche; hence, one abides in the threefold sanctuary.

7.2.3.4.10. The deviation of the sTon-mun

If one views [absolute meaningfulness] as established, that is the deviation of the *sTon-mun*. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁶⁷²

Since it is named the subtle gateway,
One searches for the path with a solitary mind
And holds on to solitude as the sanctuary's continuum.
If one examines it discursively, one's meditation becomes
conceptual.

Here in the state of great wisdom, concepts are empty; it is through this non-action that it is pure. The *Khyung-chen* states,⁶⁷³

Free from action, it does not abide on objects and is not
rectified through antidotes.

The pith instructions of the three *ācāryas* say,⁶⁷⁴

Rectifying when one unwinds from deep within: one unwinds from deep within, like the sky and opens up thereby. [435] It is through the absence of an intrinsic nature that everything is comprised in the enlightened mind, so there is no opening up in phenomena's beingness.

7.2.3.4.11. The deviations of Mahāyoga

7.2.3.4.11.1. The deviation of the *Mantrayāna*: whereas here in the expanse of suchness, being as it is, there is no graspable essence, one meditates holding on to a

permanent nature of the bodhisattva's lights and seminal nuclei;⁶⁷⁵ one's body thereby tremors, etc.,⁶⁷⁶ and this consists in the deviation of the *Mantrayāna*. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁶⁷⁷

Through the fierce intrepid deportment,
There is no name⁶⁷⁸ on which one could abide.
If one is utterly endowed with *A* and *PA*,
This is maintained to generate illusory bliss.
It is, moreover, the defect of grasping.

The pith instruction of Āryadeva clearly states,⁶⁷⁹

From the enlightenment of non-dual great bliss,
The heart is neither disturbed nor does it tremor.
Accepting and rejecting, praising and rattling—
Neither does one sweat nor do one's hairs stand up.

7.2.3.4.11.2. According to one perspective,⁶⁸⁰ one meditates on the aggregates, constituents, and sense-bases as gods. A first conception⁶⁸¹ having occurred, one does not abide on approaching it:⁶⁸² this is the deviation pertaining to the sign of the *Mantrayāna*. Moreover, the *Nam-mkha'-che* states,⁶⁸³

Even if one unites with the three existences,⁶⁸⁴
[436] Their mere names appear as illusion.
Even the great abode of the wheel-wielding monarch
Is a residence of illusory concoction.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* declares,⁶⁸⁵

The lineage of the Noble One's awakened body is illusory
like a rainbow—
If even generated merit is illusory and impermanent,
On the spontaneously present great path of utter purity,
One accomplishes [the fruition] even without merits—thus
do the Victorious Ones declare.

It is clear that the merit of *Mahāyoga* cannot be depended on.

7.2.3.4.11.3. The deviation of the thusness of *Mahāyoga*: in *Mahāyoga* all phenomena are, throughout the three times, the great equality of intrinsic awareness' wisdom. If one is endowed with an intellectual approach to thusness and with meditation, one does not know the non-action pertaining to integral being. The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal po* says,⁶⁸⁶

If one is not free from attachment to non-action,
Throughout the three times there is occurrence and
involvement even in equality.

Hence, it is a defect.

What should be clear is that here, in the greatness of self-origination, one is free from thoughts; hence, there is neither occurrence nor involvement, and that is great constancy. The same source continues,⁶⁸⁷

Since self-originated wisdom does not depend on any [outer]
power,
It utterly pacifies all the limitations pertaining to hope and
misgiving.

7.2.3.4.12. *The deviation of Anuyoga*

[437] The deviation of *Anuyoga*: although *Anuyoga* is clearly superior to the deliberate acting of *Mahāyoga*, and although it talks of resting in equanimity and of being without deliberate acting, one sees, owing to the foregoing, that it distinguishes male and female consorts, strives toward numerable colors, examines absolute meaningfulness, distinguishes an exterior and an interior, instantaneously generates innumerable deities from out of the state of non-imaging, and implements a purpose—these are deviations. Since here it is taught that in the context of the view there is nothing that could be distinguished in terms of a system of meditation, etc., *Atiyoga* is pure. These [features of *Anuyoga*] are deviations.

7.2.3.4.13. *The deviations of the heretics*

According to one perspective, there are three deviations: resting on that which dwindles away, on meaningless evenness, and on one-pointed imaging. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,⁶⁸⁸

Those who wrongly thirst for that which is debased
Are blind since they look
Toward dwindling, evenness, and one-pointed imaging.
It is depending on me that the limit is accomplished.
Through the belief in nonexistence, one fancies that there is
nowhere to go,
Yet one immediately wanders to the evil destinies.

These are the deviations of the heretics.

7.2.3.5. Fourteen defects of contemplation

Moreover, there are fourteen defects of contemplation that may occur:⁶⁸⁹ (1) great laziness,⁶⁹⁰ (2) numerous actions,⁶⁹¹ (3) mental agitation, [438] (4) coming under the power of the six distractions⁶⁹² of the intellect,⁶⁹³ (5) mental lethargy, (6) desiring the view and concentration to be clear, (7) great sleepiness, (8) the hope for the fruition, (9) the misgiving about falling from one's previous path,⁶⁹⁴ (10) doubting,⁶⁹⁵ (11) absorption within the mind,⁶⁹⁶ (12) being outwardly diffused in objects⁶⁹⁷ and desiring to engage in numerous actions pertaining to religious conduct, (13) desiring the occurrence of activities for the purpose of sentient beings, and (14) liking clamor.⁶⁹⁸ It is by resolving equality and being without action or thinking that [these defects] do not emerge. Moreover,⁶⁹⁹

Causing obstacles to one's approach are
Laziness, numerous actions, and agitation,
Distraction, lethargy, and desire,
Sleepiness, hope, misgiving, and doubt,
Absorption, diffuseness, engagement, occurrence, and
liking:
Thus is their nature.

7.2.3.6. Twelve obscurations

Furthermore, there are twelve obscurations: (1) to make the mind unwavering;⁷⁰⁰ (2) to desire that the single meaning be clear;⁷⁰¹ (3) to like mental bliss;⁷⁰² (4) [to desire to be free from]⁷⁰³ the suffering required due to incompetence;⁷⁰⁴ [439] (5) to produce much thinking and scrutiny;⁷⁰⁵ (6) to desire that the supracognitions be clear;⁷⁰⁶ (7) to desire to perform magical feats;⁷⁰⁷ (8)

being convinced that “there is nothing besides this,” to think that it is sufficient;⁷⁰⁸ (9) to disparage the views of others;⁷⁰⁹ (10) to be pretentious about one’s own view;⁷¹⁰ (11) to have the mind originate⁷¹¹ from objects;⁷¹² and (12) to desire to appease concepts.⁷¹³

When these are thus explained, the last two concern rectification: they are maintained to be self-origination and self-appeasement. In any case, it is certain that ten defects have been explained previously. Especially as regards pretentiousness,⁷¹⁴ it is said in the *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*,⁷¹⁵

On this great rank of the omnipotent secret *Mantrayāna*,
Those not endowed with the outer, inner, and secret
meanings [. . .]
Are not attached to caution, being under the power of
stupidity.
The arrogant who compellingly posit as higher the warmth
of recollection
Maintain that there is no other like them, that they are
superior to comparison.
[440] Desiring to scorn others, one meditates on oneself as a
god.
Because this contradicts the meaning of the king of equality,
One’s view and conduct become the activity of Māra.

The *Sems-bsgom* declares,⁷¹⁶

Making holy one’s own knowledge, one is pretentious
because [one thinks that] it is victorious over all.
Passion and hatred are produced, and quarrels occur. This is
stupidity; absolute meaningfulness is not seen.

It is also said,⁷¹⁷

These obscure the absolute:
[To like]⁷¹⁸ unwavering; [to desire] clarity; [to desire to
obtain] bliss; [to desire freedom from] suffering;
To produce [many conceptions]; [to desire the
supracognitions] to be clear; to perform [magical feats];
To be convinced [due to one's craving for an absolute
meaning]; disparaging [the views of others];
pretentiousness [about one's own view];⁷¹⁹
{Self-} origination and appeasement.

7.2.3.7. Non-rectification of defects

These [defects] are explained in the context of the
Mahāyoga of generation; when they are produced, in
this system there is nothing to rectify, as stated in the
rGum-chung.⁷²⁰

If mind is nonexistent like a mirage,
How can it be non-abiding and non-imaging?
[Since] space is said not to abide aside from itself,
Meditation is not meaningful.

The *Sems-bsgom* declares,⁷²¹

Without deliberately relinquishing emergence or non-emergence,
one does not set up a support for the mind, nor does one [make it]
evident.

If there is a dust particle's worth of wavering that is not Mañjuśrī,
[441] it is [Mañjuśrī], yet one does not remain therein.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* says,⁷²²

Everything is the principal beingness of mind;
If one resolves this through the view that is without words,
One [enters the] equilibrium which is uncontrived and
undistracted, yet can endure distraction.
Where is the hope and misgiving linked to effortful
accomplishment?
There is no need to meditate on incompatible antidotes.

Also,⁷²³

Even the mainspring of the five poisons, etc.,
Is self-originated and self-appeased thusness.

The *Don-drug* states,⁷²⁴

Whatever conceptual signs occur,
If one knows conceptions to be the beingness of phenomena,
One need not meditate on phenomena's open dimension
elsewhere.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,⁷²⁵

For example, its nature is like the sky:
Whether clouds, mist, and haze appear,
Or else the moon, sun, and stars,
The sky remains as such.
It is likewise with whatever miraculous signs occur
Within the sky of the mind.

Since one is free from thinking and scrutiny, thoughts
are instantaneously appeased; they are incapable of
emerging [again],⁷²⁶ and one need not think of an
antidote for each [thought]. It is like {for example} the
soaring *garuḍa* that holds sway over all the
contaminated mountains and uncomfortable slopes.

[442] Here, there is not even the name of deviations or obscurations. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* says,⁷²⁷

For the mind of great bliss which is detached and does not
decline,
There is nothing else whatsoever
Except for mind's open dimension.
Who is there to pursue these deviations and obscurations?
Where are the deviations and obscurations found?
The deviations and obscurations themselves are the open
dimension.

Thus, there are no deviations in this meditation on the
unmistaken meaning.

7.2.4. Characteristics of meditation

If it be asked how one is to meditate,⁷²⁸ the same source
replies,⁷²⁹

(1) It is genuine,⁷³⁰ (2) unwavering,⁷³¹ (3) void,⁷³² and is not seen
in the slightest; (4) utterly unseen,⁷³³ (5) it is non-discursive⁷³⁴ (6)
and non-conceptual;⁷³⁵ (7) it is unmoving⁷³⁶ (8) and unthought
of;⁷³⁷ (9) being non-diffuse, mind is formless.⁷³⁸ (10) Although it
occurs as anything whatsoever,⁷³⁹ it is formless. (11) Since it is
without any form whatsoever,⁷⁴⁰ (12) enlightenment is formless.
The nature of mind is enlightenment.⁷⁴¹ [443] The nature of
enlightenment is all phenomena. The nature of all phenomena is
suchness.

Hence, it is taught that meditation is endowed with
twelve characteristics.

In particular, the nature of non-duality is like the sky:
(1) it is of a single nature, (2) untained, (3) open, (4)
without shape or color, (5) uncompounded, (6) without

grasping at forms, (7) without center or limit, (8) without developing or fading away, (9) without wavering or quivering, (10) without happening or abiding, (11) without destruction or emptiness, (12) changeless, (13) without non-pervasion, (14) without non-origination, (15) without incapacity, (16) birthless, (17) without decline, (18) without characteristics, (19) without cause, (20) without condition, (21) without fruition, (22) without effort, and (23) without construct: these thirty-four⁷⁴² characteristics unite the example [of the sky] and its meaning.

If one abides like this for a prolonged period, the indications [mentioned] below intrinsically arise. Not knowing this, one deliberately rectifies one's three doors and strives: this is the peg of grasping and is an obscuration, as was taught in detail earlier. [444] The same source states,⁷⁴³

Without reference to the objects of thought,
For the *yogin* of great equanimity,
Being, just as it is, is as it is.
To isolate the body and rectify the mind is involvement in
deviations.

Hence, in [the state] without contrivance, rectification is the peg of discursive grasping.

7.3. Conduct

The conduct pertaining to the meaning of *Atiyoga*: since it is free from pauses, in primordially self-originated intrinsic clarity, concepts are inherently unwavering and

do not emerge. One expands into the principal body, the great state of primordial spontaneous presence. There is neither emergence from temporary discrete concentrations, nor entering them nor meditating, as these [concepts] are torn asunder. It may be asked, “Well, how should one see the conduct [which consists in] emerging [from contemplation]?” [It is replied that] one does not deliberately engage in the path of conduct. Why? It is because all is performed by the Bliss-gone One.

7.3.1. Four types of conduct

However, for the time being, [we may admit that] there are four types of conduct pertaining to *Atiyoga*: (1) the conduct of great compassion; (2) the conduct that, being free from effortful action, is compatible with its purpose; (3) the conduct of great means; and (4) the conduct of spontaneous completeness.

7.3.1.1. The conduct of great compassion

Concerning the behavior of great compassion, since it becomes the great origin of the compassionate means, [445] great compassion shines forth without bias and effects the purpose [of wandering beings]. If it be asked in what manner this takes place, [it is replied that] by sending forth [emanations] in order to lead [sentient beings] away from cyclic existence,⁷⁴⁴ one’s non-obstructed mind is aware without imaging: this great compassion is not one to be primordially finished. The uninterrupted actions and emanations [that manifest]

from self-originated wisdom are the behavior of one's integral identity. He who knows this effects the purpose [of others] without searching for great compassion and without reference. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁷⁴⁵

Maitreya, since his purpose is utterly refined,
Does not implement great compassion at all.⁷⁴⁶

The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* says,⁷⁴⁷

Unborn and non-abiding, its nature is like the sky:
It reveals the miracles and great marvels of compassion.

Furthermore,⁷⁴⁸

Without wavering from the open dimension of self-
originated wisdom,
Your compassion thoroughly equalizes the realms of the
third-order chiliocosm,
O variegated glorious warden of wandering beings,
Samantabhadra!

Also,⁷⁴⁹

In this ocean of conduct of harmonious conformity,
The purposes of self and other are primordially
spontaneously accomplished.
The purpose of wandering beings has been completed
through great compassion.

Moreover,⁷⁵⁰

Being thus aware of phenomena's open dimension,
[446] One generates great compassion for the ignorant
And, having produced compassion, one engages through an
illusory concentration
In the variegated conduct of salvific means for the purpose
of wandering beings.

The *Rin-chen kun-'dus* states,⁷⁵¹

All that which is desirable, as well as the compassionate
means, should not be relinquished.

The *Srog-gi 'khor-lo* declares,⁷⁵²

In order to install cyclic existence in transcendence,
Compassion occurs, thoroughly equalizing the realms of the
third-order chiliocosm,
Yet without wavering from the open dimension of self-
originated wisdom.

Furthermore,⁷⁵³

The open dimension of phenomena, selfless and unbiased, is
equal to the sky:
Leading all sentient beings, one installs them in the open
dimension of enlightenment.

In brief, the great compassion that does not deliberately
do anything does not vanish throughout the three times.
Because whatever one does or engages in and whatever
appears is the behavior of self-originated wisdom, one
completes the purpose of wandering beings without
wavering from the state that is equal to oneself. In the
state of great compassion, any objectifying or referential
imaging is liberated as self-originated wisdom. When

abiding in such knowledge, it is as mentioned in the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*,⁷⁵⁴

Abiding in emptiness is abiding on great kindness.

It is thereby evident that the four immeasurables are complete without having to search for them. [447]

7.3.1.2. The conduct free from effortful action

Because it is free from effortful action,⁷⁵⁵ this conduct does not act following a purpose. As in *Mahāyoga*, it is only according to concentration that one acts competently. Therefore, one does not deliberately implement anything and hence does not deliberately take up anything. If one were to take up non-action, that would again be a conduct with action and agent. Therefore, here there is inherently nothing to do, nor anything to take up whatsoever.

In that case, it might be asked, “If there is nothing whatsoever to do, is one to stay without doing anything?” It is replied that one should not even referentially imagine staying. If there is such a thing as staying, then there is also its absence. Because one neither obstructs nor images anything throughout the four types of conduct,⁷⁵⁶ whatever one does, there is no doing; there is nothing to do; there is neither existence nor freedom therefrom. If one assimilates such conduct with confidence, there is no deliberate performance of worship, recitation, etc., [actions that pertain to] the lower [vehicles]. Moreover, the *bDe-'byams* says,⁷⁵⁷

Whatever might be the various activities one performs,
They are not relinquished by the seminal nucleus.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,⁷⁵⁸

In all the Buddhas' pure fields,
It is I who am the universal deity.
Hence, it is I who am worshiped through all offerings.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁷⁵⁹

[448] Since it is equal, there is no gradual array,
And it is free from dedication to a single direction.
Although exhibited as the ornaments of the gathering,
There is no proceeding anywhere since it abides naturally.
Since it is spontaneously accomplished, there is nothing to
dedicate;
Since it is originally pure, it is ambrosia.

Also,⁷⁶⁰

Since it is given away without grasping, it is the oblation;
Since there is no action, the activities are finished.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* says,⁷⁶¹

Since phenomena's beingness is free from all effortful
action,
It is without the reference of accomplisher and that to be
accomplished.

The *rNal-'byor chos-gzhung chen-po'i yon-tan*
states,⁷⁶²

Since all that appears in terms of body and form is primordially unwavering, it does not change. Since it is non-discursive, it is not referentially imaged. Since it does not appear, it is not grasped. In the state of the principal body of everything, one transcends the efforts pertaining to grasper and grasped. That is the doctrinal text concerning the body. Hence, what is there to accomplish? All phenomena being primordially spontaneously accomplished without effort, they are already awakened.

Moreover,

The activity of speech is the repetition of the quintessential [spells]. When one knows that all phenomena are words and letters and that everything is the wisdom of awakened mind, everything that one repeats is the repetition of phenomena's beingness. [449] When one knows that it is the non-dual meaning of the wisdom miracle, whatever one repeats is a doctrinal text.

According to the text concerning one's mind, the five poisons, emerging under the power of ignorance as formative dispositions, as well as malice, malevolence, wrong views, etc., are not wrong views or deviated thoughts. Since in phenomena's beingness there is neither gentleness nor roughness, and since the peaceful and gallant mind, the Buddha, is unbiased, the great equalizing equality accommodates everything. Since it is vast and carefree, it is compatible with all and disapproves of nothing whatsoever. Being impartial, it is without intolerance of what is negative and is without attachment to and craving for what is positive. Hence, although all the phenomena of cause and effect are possible⁷⁶³ in non-duality, in the unchanging open dimension one does not abide covertly in the equanimity of the undistracted intellect: this is the text concerning the *yogin's* mind.

The *Bya-bral rdzogs-pa'i lung* declares,⁷⁶⁴

Since in mind's beingness nothing whatsoever appears, there is no conduct whatsoever to engage in. Biased debates over what is clean and filthy, attachment and hatred, acceptance and rejection concerning what is great and small [450]—if these are not particularized, where is the yoga of the *Mahāyāna*?

The *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba rang-la gnas-pa* says,⁷⁶⁵

If one discursively examines bliss and suffering,
What are the phenomena of victory for oneself and defeat
for others?
If one is confused by good and evil,
How can one, out of desire, teach what is not allowed?
In the equality which is without great or small,
Who is there to praise oneself and blame others?
How can that wherein there is nothing to relinquish or
accept
Be described in terms of acceptance and rejection?

One should trust this because of these arguments.

7.3.1.3. The conduct of salvific means

As for the conduct of Samantabhadra's salvific means,⁷⁶⁶ all phenomena without exception are primordially in the state of Samantabhadra; in this awakening, there is neither relinquishing nor accepting. There is not even the name of deviations and obscurations.⁷⁶⁷ Having assimilated this with confidence, one's conduct does not deviate, without there being anything to reject: this is the conduct of Samantabhadra's salvific means. As a confirmation of one's trust in this, it is said in the *Sems-bsgom*,⁷⁶⁸

Because {both} the conduct of sapience and {the conduct of} means are not abided in, to engage therein is akin to Māra's [activity].

Even the teachings of the six [heretical teachers]⁷⁶⁹ and the activities of Māra are not rejected, nor are they discursively examined as evil.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,⁷⁷⁰

Whichever of the four types of conduct one engages in,
This shall be a means of liberation, not of fettering.

[451] The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,⁷⁷¹

Engaging in intrepid deportment is not conduct;
The mind embarked on the mind is the conduct of display.
The vastness of great means is the supreme conduct.

The *Chos-gzhung* says,⁷⁷²

For instance, if a doctor skilled at nurturing [patients] enters a forest during the full moon of the first month of autumn,⁷⁷³ at which time the vegetation is luxuriant, there is nothing growing there that cannot be used as a remedy for one of the illnesses pertaining to the four assemblages.⁷⁷⁴ Likewise, due to the knowledge that there is neither good nor evil, neither relinquishing nor accepting, neither great nor small, one trusts that everything is good. This being the genuine injunction, by comprehending its meaning, one engages therein without doubting; that is the doctrinal text concerning the yoga.

Moreover,

For example, just like the doctor Kumāra Jīvaka,⁷⁷⁵ by joining poison to other substances, transformed it into beneficial ambrosia, so for a *yogin* skilled in the meaning of the doctrine, no matter what phenomena of cyclic existence and transcendence he engages in, there is no fault; everything becomes the nature of great bliss.

The *Khyung-chen* states,⁷⁷⁶

When one's enjoyment of desirables⁷⁷⁷ is dampened by
compassion,
Whatever one likes is enlightened conduct.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁷⁷⁸

[452] Enjoying all, even the five [desirable sense-] qualities
Are said to be the ornament of the open dimension of
phenomena's beingness.

Furthermore,⁷⁷⁹

Even if there be vast hundreds and thousands of enjoyments
in number,
Whatever one enjoys is a blossoming flower.

The *Thig-le drug-pa* says,⁷⁸⁰

Labeled because of grasping, the apparent phenomena
Appear because of one's own conditions; hence, they are
neither desired nor relinquished.
By means of not considering anything at all, one partakes of
them.

The *'Phra-bkod* states,⁷⁸¹

It is especially through the realization of wisdom
That, whichever of the four types of conduct one engages in,
One is not fettered but completely liberated.

It is said in the *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*,⁷⁸²

The purposes of self and others are spontaneously
accomplished; without relinquishing [anything],
One blissfully engages in a variegated ocean of conduct.
The cause for the lotus' growth is mud,
Yet untainted by mud is the lotus.
If one realizes that phenomena's beingness is without
attachment,
Then one's wisdom is non-attached and without even a dust
particle's worth of deterioration.
However much compassionate conduct is beyond thought,
The *yogin* thus engages in the conduct of salvific means.

The *sPyi-gcod* declares,⁷⁸³

Enjoying without misgiving,
Whatever one engages in is a blossoming flower.

The *sPyi-bcings* states,⁷⁸⁴

Uninhibited, whatever is comfortable is free-floating
enlightenment.⁷⁸⁵

[453] The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,⁷⁸⁶

One's enjoyments are one's emanations,
So that one's own emanations can partake of these
enjoyments.

And,⁷⁸⁷

The phenomena that totally originate from one's body are enjoyed.
The phenomena that totally originate from one's mind are enjoyed.
The phenomena that totally originate from one's speech are
enjoyed. The phenomena that totally originate from phenomena are
enjoyed. This is assimilated ceaselessly, like the colored garments
of Vārāṇasī.

The same source continues,⁷⁸⁸

As for the Buddha, the Hallowed One, he knows because he has genuinely accrued the unfathomable accumulations of immeasurable merit.

Since this is declared in these sources, one should neither relinquish nor accept anything whatsoever.

7.3.1.4. The conduct of spontaneous completeness

As for the conduct of spontaneous completeness,⁷⁸⁹ all is awakening, and there is not even the name of cyclic existence. The fruition is ephemerally clear, like the full moon of the middling month of autumn;⁷⁹⁰ such is the conduct.⁷⁹¹ Since in all directions there is nothing that is not the action of the Buddha, all conduct is the behavior [of the Buddha]. The *Yon-tan chen-po bcu* declares,

Concerning the conduct of *Atiyoga*,
One engages naturally and spontaneously in the Great
Completeness
Of the conduct of the heretics and of *Kriyātantra*,
[454] As well as [of the conduct of] all sentient beings of the
three existences
And of all those belonging to the four types of
birthplaces.⁷⁹²

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* says,⁷⁹³

Since in this conduct there is neither doing nor engaging,
All that appears as the conduct
Of existence, of the heretics, and of the world
Is the behavior of spontaneous completeness.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,⁷⁹⁴

Concerning the tasks and conduct of many sentient beings,
They are the meaning, secret and supreme:
They are the actions of the Buddha.

This backing by arguments will be welcomed by those who are aware. Since this is not contradicted by a second, you can trust it and should have no doubts. The four [types of] conduct are not different in essence; they can appear to be one or four. Thus, there is no deliberate, fractional conduct, and in everything one's conduct is equal. Whether or not one emerges from equality, there is no distinction in one's mode of seeing.

Moreover, the *Kun-tu bzang-po rang-gnas-pa* declares,⁷⁹⁵

Appearances have no intrinsic nature:
They are like a water moon, a mirage, or an illusion.
They are not sheer nonexistence,
Yet neither are they existent.
Transcending both existence and nonexistence,
When one recalls in one's psyche the absence of an intrinsic
nature,
[455] That is the indication of realization through great
sapience.
When one abides in sky-like equality,
That is the indication that one is pervaded by great sapience.
When one's unwavering equipoise is uncompounded,
That is the indication of accomplishing great sapience.
When one engages in everything through the means of non-
attachment,
That is the indication of attaining great sapience.

Hence, without deteriorating from absolute meaningfulness, illusory appearances are ceaseless.

7.3.2. The deviations of conduct

As for the deviations pertaining to conduct, nowadays there are *mantrins* free from extensive erudition, who mouth the view without having assimilated it with confidence. Saying “I am Samantabhadra,” they perform licentious conduct, [engaging] in sexual union, killing, and coarse comportment, all the while shouting *PHAT*; they are like stones falling to the depths of hell. It is said in the *Sems-bsgom*,⁷⁹⁶

If the virtuous phenomena, whatever they may be, have not been seized through the conduct of Samantabhadrī,
Then even Samantabhadra’s conduct is the activity of Māra; it is exhausted and meets its end.
Concerning the deeds endowed with [the enlightened mind], even the activities of Māra are said to be the conduct of enlightenment.

The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* states,⁷⁹⁷

Those in whom the ground of activities is without
compassion
Are as if speaking the mere word “Samantabhadra”:
[456] They contradict the quintessential meaning, which is
not accomplished.

The *Klong-’grel* says,⁷⁹⁸

There is no coarser conduct than when the view is in the mouth and is absent from the heart.

Hence, [such conduct] is a deviation. It is needless to say that if the righteous deeds are not seized by salvific means, it is taught that one will not be liberated. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁷⁹⁹

All such merits, [consisting of]
Worshiping the master and giving [donations],
If they are without the unwavering strength of detachment,
Are a fetter even as they are performed.

The *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po* states,⁸⁰⁰

Without this view, conduct is bound by illusion;
Without being seized by this view, one does not transcend
cyclic existence.

7.3.3. Proper conduct

Therefore, if one has the confidence [in the view], it is proper that one should veritably avoid sin. The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* says,⁸⁰¹

It is beyond avoiding sins, generating [compassion], and the
myriads of merits.

As for the qualities of believing in this conduct, the *Chos-gzhung* declares,⁸⁰²

Even if one is not endowed with realization, through the strength of believing in those [types of] conduct [mentioned] in the texts, the blessing of compassion will intrinsically appear. Just as when black vitriol is applied to gold, this meaning is unmistakable, and the textual tradition is unimpaired. Since it is not childishly squandered away, [457] the concentration of one's psyche is made clear. Blessing the ambrosia through the pith instructions of the skilled masters, one awakens to non-duality.

Generally speaking, the great meditator of the secret *Mantrayāna* of the *Mahāyāna* assimilates with confidence the view just as it is. However, if he does not see it thus, he acts properly with uprightness. Therefore, please act accordingly.

7.3.3.1. The conduct of the body

In this regard, the conduct of the body is as follows: in the state where all phenomena are equal, there is no cause for one to be on a high stage, so one does not hope to be good through hypocrisy. Since everything is integral being, one is detached from companions and remains alone. Like the elephant, one should act with great prudence and with resplendent stability.

In terms of one's physical conduct, one does not deliberately rectify anything. Constantly staying in the wilderness, any place will be suitable. One should not make many improvements nor become attached [to the place]. Throughout the four types of conduct, one restricts⁸⁰³ one's physical actions and is never free from one's purpose. In terms of one's garments, one is not pained by cold, nor does one learn to modify them through ornaments in the hope of bettering them. In terms of one's food, one is not deliberately attached to tasty dishes. One neither [sits] up high nor decorates oneself, nor does one swagger. [458] As arguments for trusting this, the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,⁸⁰⁴

As for the conduct of the adamantine body,
Going nowhere, one is without hypocrisy
And remains alone in oneness.
One's gaze should be like an elephant's,
As one abides authentically.
Whatever the place, one constantly abides
Without attachment to that place.
Throughout the four types of conduct,
Uncontrived, one abides authentically.
One is not pained, whatever the torment,
And purifies the weariness of harm.
Without implementing good [clothes] or ornaments,
Wherever one is, one is united to blissfulness.

In terms of one's food, it is the nurturing support that holds together one's body. It is good and suitable when one has the requisites; when not, that is bad yet suitable, too. One should not deliberately acquire, beside one's assets, [foodstuffs] whose taste is supreme because of attachment. However, if one's winds are about to cease⁸⁰⁵ and it is necessary, one may accept [such foodstuffs] in order to hoard some warmth and to eliminate deterioration.⁸⁰⁶

Enjoyments are to be engaged in insofar as they are endowed with absolute meaningfulness, just as it is, yet one should not have the thoughts of ordinary people who are contented [with sense-objects] in and for themselves. [459] Whether they be tasty or not, he does not think in terms of acceptance and rejection. Nor should he beg for alms, which is the conduct of the *Hīnayāna*. The same source continues,⁸⁰⁷

The contemplative of the definitive yoga
[Regards] the food of the adamantine spell
As a mere support for holding together his body.
Besides the assets he is already endowed with,
He does not deliberately accomplish [anything] for the sake
of food—
How could he [do so] for the sake of hoarding [provisions]
or of smugness?
He eats in uncontrived authenticity
And does not modify anything for the sake of his livelihood.
He is without attachment and detachment, without
relinquishing and accepting.
He does not accept anything,
Nor does he live by begging.
Why? Because he does nothing purposefully,
His livelihood is thoroughly pure.

7.3.3.2. The conduct of speech

As for the conduct of speech, one should purposefully listen to and speak of the doctrine; one should not indulge in loud laughter like a horse's neigh; one should not speak despotically or lie; and one should not speak laxly. Whatever one says should be connected to the purpose of self and others. When there is no requirement or aim, when the time is not right, when assembling with companions of contemplation, one should not indulge in lax talk. When indicating [the meaning of] one's utterances through examples, one should speak while meeting the understanding of one's interlocutors. Since everything is great bliss, [460] one's speech should be spoken measuredly. Since all that is said is the inexpressible meaning, without hoping that one's speech be great or suitable, one is not free from absolute

meaningfulness as one speaks. Moreover, the same source says,⁸⁰⁸

As for the scope of adamant speech,
One listens to and speaks for the sake of truth.
Moreover, neither flattering nor jesting,
All that one expresses is certain.
One speaks sincerely and one's words are unchanging.
One acts according to one's expression
And does not always speak to everyone.
Whatever one expresses is connected to the purpose [of self
and others].
Unless the time is right and there is a requirement and aim,
One will not indulge in lax [talk].
By indicating [the meaning] with examples, one strikes the
point.
Everything [that one says] is measured according to valid
criteria.
For the *yogin* of the uncontrived state,
Thus is explained the conduct of adamant speech.

7.3.3.3. The conduct of the psyche

Concerning the conduct of the psyche, [the same text] further states,⁸⁰⁹

As for the scope of the adamantine psyche,
 It is uncontrived,⁸¹⁰ undistracted,⁸¹¹ and free from
 thought.⁸¹²
 It is neither distracted⁸¹³ nor lethargic but is clear⁸¹⁴ and
 abides.⁸¹⁵
 Being detached from {the disorder of} desire, it is free from
 exaggeration⁸¹⁶ and denigration.
 It is without acceptance and rejection, as well as without
 attachment and hatred.
 There is neither hushing up {of faults} nor boasting, [461]
 as it is not an asset that can be gained.⁸¹⁷
 Being free from bias, it is without extremes and is
 thoroughly pure.⁸¹⁸
 Wearing the armor, the path itself is straight and upright.⁸¹⁹
 Rearing the remedy that transforms poison,⁸²⁰ it is endowed
 with weaponry.⁸²¹
 Its preference is for the adamantine fortress,⁸²²
 And it is endowed with intelligence, like a wish-granting
 gem.⁸²³
 It neither transforms into⁸²⁴ nor becomes anything.⁸²⁵
 In this open dimension, it is at one with all.⁸²⁶
 Because it is evident to one's intellect,⁸²⁷
 It is thoroughly beautiful⁸²⁸ and careful.
 Being dominated, it has embarrassment,⁸²⁹
 Yet there is no "I" or ego.⁸³⁰
 It is thoroughly endowed with all⁸³¹
 And is gallant in everything.
 Since it is empty, it is non-discursive.
 Being appeased,⁸³² it is without disturbance.⁸³³
 Since it does not originate from anywhere,⁸³⁴
 [462] There is no searching for it⁸³⁵ elsewhere.
 Since it is without material things,⁸³⁶ it is not hypocritical.
 Since it is without longing,⁸³⁷ it is without desire.
 Since it is the occurrence of detachment, it is complacent.⁸³⁸
 Since it does not hold on to any {discursive} signs
 whatsoever,
 It is without cleanness or filth and without the three times.
 Though it is supernal, it is not an existent.

What this means is the conduct. Thus, as regards this proper conduct, though the great *yogins* may perform these actions, they do not mentally hold on to their austerities, grasping at that which they have done. Rather, it is by being natural and without thematic foci that they engage [in conduct]. Being inherently free from relinquishing and accepting, one engages in all [types of] conduct. In this regard, one does not inhibit mere incitement by recollection; [yet] when incited, one transcends the apprehension of deliberate recollection.

7.4. The fruition

In this intent, one is free from any hope and misgiving concerning the fruition, as well as the indications and signs. However, the warmth of experience ceaselessly arises.

7.4.1. Experience as beyond experience

[463] As far as experience is concerned, it is suitable for the mind as it is shown in the context of *Mahāyoga*. Thus, though [experiences] occur, one is not taught to fancy their essence, since they are referentially imaged as objects of experience. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁸³⁹

As for being easy and difficult, it is because it is easy that it
is difficult.

Not abiding in direct perception, it is all-pervading.

As for revealing its name,

It is not so indicated by Vajrasattva.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* states,⁸⁴⁰

Unborn, when absolute meaningfulness is touched upon,
It amounts to nothing other than oneself.
Intrinsic awareness cannot be described
Or shown to others, [saying] “I fancy it is this.”
It cannot be indicated through words.

According to one perspective, the *Sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud* says,⁸⁴¹

Profound, it is without discursive examining;
If one craves for clarity as a state of the intellect,
How can one experience the profound meaning of non-
discursiveness?
Because it is experienced, it is non-discursive.

Assimilating with confidence this meaning that cannot be experienced is designated “experience.” However, it cannot be taught.

7.4.2. The warmth of experience

According to one perspective, the warmth of experience [464] is first wavering, then attainment and stability. It is said in the pith instructions of the three *ācāryas*,

As for the first feeling of the mind, there are notions that originate and cease. As for the intermediate feeling of the mind, notions are produced, yet one comprehends that they are illusory, [saying] “This is illusion.” In this regard, one should neither inhibit nor follow after them. As for the final feeling of the mind, the open dimension without birth or halt is the open dimension of non-conceptuality. One should not abide thereon. There are three aspects to settling in meditation. In this regard, the first experience is that one pacifies notions once one feels their occurrence. The experience of meditative familiarization is that, once notions are produced, one becomes aware that they are illusory. Neither inhibiting nor following after them, they are the open dimension of equality. As for the final feeling, it is the feeling [that consists in] not even abiding on the equality of the open dimension.

The pith instructions of the hearing lineage state,

In absolute meaningfulness, the meaning lies not in words; when the intellect reaches the immanent character, three great warmth occur: outer warmth, inner warmth, and secret warmth. Outer warmth: the outer and inner fluctuations of the breath are no longer felt. [465] Inner warmth: when the actual perception of equality appears, the aggregate of form, like a bale of cotton tossed about by the wind, is no longer seen as having an aggregate. Secret warmth: when the mother Samantabhadrī becomes the clear mother-like sky, one experiences the great bliss which is the taste of phenomena’s beingness. When this bliss occurs, it is not just oneself who becomes blissful. Since there is no phenomenon that is not pervaded by the universal ground, everything is transformed into the fragrant taste of great bliss.

The same source continues,

There are three warmths that strike the point. Having cut through the fluctuating imprints that pertain to the appearance of signs, the intellect is limpid and remains like the sky. Being without the wavering of signs, bliss occurs: this is one aspect of warmth. From another perspective, when one is aware that all the phenomena of outer and inner existence that appear in actual perception are without dread, one is said to be unmoved by appearance: this is the second warmth. According to one perspective, without engaging in anything, one thoroughly gives in to the great pervasion. [466] By thus anointing the awareness of phenomena as they are, one's mind comes to meet the doctrine, without the *tantras* having been elucidated in detail. Like water mixed with milk, one's intellect becomes great bliss. As before, without experiencing the occurrence of this in one's intellect, one's psyche is petrified. It is through the occurrence of resolution⁸⁴² that all the obscurations of the afflictions are instantly swept away.

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* declares,⁸⁴³

Abiding on this meaning for a long time,
If one knows and becomes acquainted with it,
There is the experiential warmth of seeing absolute
 meaningfulness:
The great indications that one has encountered the meaning
Arise as eight, according to the pith instructions and
 authoritative scriptures.
One definitely experiences absolute meaningfulness as
 threefold.
The great warmth that strikes the point
Is shown as indications:
There is the warmth that occurs incidentally,
Produced as the enlightened mind
Of compassion for the phenomena of cyclic existence.
Toward the phenomena discursively examined as signs,
There originates the notion of distrust.
Toward all such phenomena,
There originates the notion of marvelous engagement,
That such confusion is a great wonder.
For wandering beings who do not know absolute
 meaningfulness,
[467] There is the fruition that is accrued
Over long hopes on the path searching for the genuine
 meaning
Through the great means of difficult effortful
 accomplishment.
However, absolute meaningfulness they do not see,
For such notions as these occur.
As for the experiential warmth of knowing,
For the fortunate person,
Without having to elucidate through words the processes of
 the *tantras*,
Everything is clear in his gateway of speaking:⁸⁴⁴
The doctrines that occur in his mind are beyond a hundred
 thousand,
And he is capable of indicating through words
The definitive axioms of absolute meaningfulness.

Also,⁸⁴⁵

Due to the distinctions in intellectual dexterity,
Presages of the warmth of concentration may occur.
When the meaning of genuine truth is shown,
Joy is produced, without trepidation or panic.
When one certainly views the genuine meaning,
Weariness is produced toward the phenomena of cyclic
existence.
When one becomes acquainted with the genuine meaning,
One is without faith in the doctrines of enumeration.
When one sees genuine absolute meaningfulness,
There is no liking produced for words.
When one closely holds on to absolute meaningfulness,
One sees the meaning, and wisdom is produced.
When wisdom is produced,
All that appears as reified entities
Is known to be like an illusion.
Depending on one's knowledge that it is a mere illusion,
When one views the meaning of phenomena's beingness,
[468] That is the meaning of the absence of appearances.
Seeing this absence of appearances,
One sees existence without appearance.
At that time, everything occurs as miraculous fluctuation:
That is the presage of [seeing] the truth.
There then occurs the sign that is like particles of dust
[Appearing] due to the rays of the sun:
This is the presage of wavering.
There then occurs [the sign that is] like a mirage:
This is explained as the first warmth.
There then occurs [the sign that is] like the ocean's waves:
This is explained as the intermediate warmth.
There then occurs, unimpededly,
[The sign that is] like the wind:
This is explained as the final warmth.
There then occurs the warmth that radiates from the seed-
syllable,
Like a great downpour of rain:
This is explained as the warmth of attainment.
Then, like clouds soaring in the sky,
The dynamism of concentration becomes elevated:
This is the warmth of veritable stability.

Then, as if it were a mere palm leaf,
One's body, powerlessly,
Leaps across the sky and strives upward:
This is the warmth of veritable clarity.

The *rNal-'byor-gyi chos-gzhung* states,⁸⁴⁶

Having entered meditation, whether or not one's comprehension is suitable, first the notion of dislike will occur. Then will occur dissection and anxiety; then indolence toward everything. Thereafter, [469] one will fancy that one is small and tamed. One will then ponder that all the phenomena that thus appear are spurious, illusory, and dreamlike. One then generates compassion toward those who hold on to the phenomena of appearance, to reified entities, to suffering, and to bias, and one ponders that these are worthless deviations. Thereafter, one ponders that one is not attached to anything, and is without even a sesame seed's worth of fear and misgiving. One's body is light like a bale of cotton, and one does not even fancy that it exists. One's psychic consciousness is like the spring flowers hoisted by the goddess Generation. When everything is comprised in this accurate experience, the slightest appearance of distraction is the dynamism of the concentration that does not establish any aspect with regard to all phenomena.⁸⁴⁷ One meditates however one desires, and one is able to transform anything according to one's desire. Henceforth, because one reaches the warmth of meditating on the enlightened mind, this is the great bliss of Samantabhadra.

Even should this warmth not arise, if one slowly meditates like this to some degree, one will become an awareness-holder of spontaneous presence and then become Samantabhadra himself.⁸⁴⁸

The same source continues,

Where there is neither mutation nor change with respect to genuine absolute meaningfulness, one abides in obviousness: this is obtaining the warmth, according to the doctrinal texts. [470]

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* says,⁸⁴⁹

When from the body's warmth originates dexterity,⁸⁵⁰
The conception of sleep is conquered,
And one obtains patience with respect to the body:
This is the first warmth.
Even if one's constitution is free from food,
One's luster and faculties are clear:
This is the second warmth.
Light like cotton,
One's constitution is without discomfort,
And one is free from illnesses:
This is the stability of great warmth.

This should be clear, so it will not be further elucidated and explained.

7.4.3. Omens in one's dreams

At the times when one abides on the earlier and later [stages of] warmth, there are omens in one's dreams. These signs should be examined, as is mentioned in the same source:⁸⁵¹

The dream omens that are prognostic signs
Can be veritably extensive.
Known by the *yogin*,
There are presages of having cleansed one's imprints:
To be constantly naked
Or be constantly performing great ablutions;
To be purified of all smells
Or be crossing over a river;
To swim in a pure lake
Or be washed by rain;
To be pouring over one's body
The water with which another has filled a vase;
[471] To be incinerated by fire
Or be on a veritably high peak,
Tossed about and scattered by the wind—
These are the omens that one's imprints have been cleansed.

There are presages of being free from fear:
To return from battle
Or be released and healed from illness;
To be released from prison
Or escape from the executioner's hands;
To flee from a predator
Or be healed from poisoning;
To be liberated from fetters
Or cut through a rope—
These are the great omens that are good signs.

There are presages of attaining the stages:
Climbing a staged throne
Or climbing an ordinary ladder;
Climbing a tree
Or veritably walking uphill;
Climbing a mountain peak
Or climbing a jeweled staircase;
Climbing a *stūpa*
Or climbing a sky-ladder—
These are presages of absolute meaningfulness.

There are presages of treading the stages:

To be seated on a high throne
Or to ride an elephant;
To ride a lion
Or a soaring great *garuḍa*;
To arrive in front of a *stūpa*
Or be seated on a mountain peak;
[472] To be seated in the open dimension of space,
Have one's body enwreathed in clouds,
Or dwell at the core of the sun—
These are indications that one abides on the stages of yoga.

There are presages that one is a son of the Buddhas:
Issuing the king's injunctions
Or being appointed as plenipotentiary;
Conferring empowerments on others
Or commanding the world;
Overwhelming the governors of others
Or being victorious over great hordes;
[Dreaming that] one becomes a king
Or that one wears a crown of flowers upon one's head—
These are omens that one will be a son of the Buddhas.

There are presages that one obtains power over the doctrine:
Finding a profound volume
Or likewise writing it down
And engaging in it;
Explaining and teaching it to others
Or ascertaining absolute meaningfulness;
Looking in a mirror
Or looking at, examining, and drinking from
A full crystal vase;
Collecting precious gems
Or turning a wheel with one's hand;
Seizing the sun and moon in one's hand
Or circumambulating above Mount Meru—
These are presages that one obtains power over the doctrine.

There are presages of seeing the truth:
To see a country one has not seen before
Or to see the extensive third-order chiliocosm;

To go to other islands
Or to arrive in front of Mount Meru;
[473] To see the extensiveness of space
Or to go to the depths of the ocean;
To bear a lamp in one's hand,
To look at the heart of the sun,
Or to engage with appearance-existence—
These are the great omens of seeing the truth.

There are presages of obtaining a prophecy:
To hear the sounds of music
Or [dream of] the resounding sound of thunder;
To hear the lion's resounding roar
Or the discourse of those discussing the doctrine;
To [dream of] the smiling face of one's reflection
Or to hear the Buddha's speech without seeing his body;
To hear goddesses intoning melodious tunes
Or sounds occurring in seraphic mansions;
To hear the expression "Companion! Companion!"
Or [dream of] discussing the doctrine—
These are presages of a prophecy.

7.4.4. Indications of warmth

Concerning the teaching of the omens that are indications of warmth, the *Sems-bsgom* declares,⁸⁵²

When one no longer apprehends effort, one is undisturbed by anything and knows equality;
When one is not scared⁸⁵³ of being attached to anything⁸⁵⁴ or intoxicated by objects, one is neither free from [objects] nor does one abide on them;
Facing the four unassailable cognitions of equality, the perfections are known.

These are said to be the indications that thus occur. The *Chos-gzhung* further states,⁸⁵⁵

Not to grasp toward all the inner and outer phenomena is the indication of realization. [474] To be spacious toward everything, without temporarily relinquishing or accepting anything, is the indication of familiarization. Not to view defects whatever one looks at and not to discursively examine reified entities is the indication of knowledge. To be without discursive thought toward defects and without attachment to qualities is the indication of meditation. Neither relinquishing the phenomena of cyclic existence nor holding on to those of transcendence is the indication of practice. Neither producing desire for bliss nor holding on to suffering as a flaw is the indication of accomplishment. Being undistracted day and night and being changeless, both earlier and later, is the indication of proficiency. Trusting in the absence of birth and death because one has transcended the signs of eternalism and nihilism is the indication of proficiency. By playing in the wisdom without discursive grasping in the expanse of phenomena's beingness, which is without an intrinsic nature, one's intellect does not change due to effortful accomplishment, nor is the universal ground corrupted by cause and effect; effulgently and obviously clear, this is the indication of the culmination of one's pristine and lambent realization.

The *Don-drug-pa* says,⁸⁵⁶

Thus, throughout all the aspects of the three times,
The principal body is undistracted from itself;
[475] When one begets this strength, the world has no
intrinsic nature.

After a prolonged period, [indications] may occur. When one is without biased grasping toward phenomena, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of the principal body. Whether one be benefited or harmed, one is not pleased with those who benefit one, nor does one hate those who harm one: one experiences the intent of non-duality. Even should one behold the Buddha in a halo of light, one does not hold on to this as being good;

even should one see a vale⁸⁵⁷ of female ghosts among sentient beings, one does not produce an evil intent: that is the indication that one experiences the intent of equality. When one is without acceptance and rejection toward all that is high or low, good or evil, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of the absence of bias. When one's mind does not waver, whether there be pleasure or suffering, good or evil, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of great bliss. When, whatever one does or engages in, there is neither grasping nor attachment, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of Samantabhadra. When, whatever illnesses or disagreeable enemies and obstructors occur, one does not seek for a blissful fruition apart from them and is without dislike, that is the indication that one experiences the accomplishment that need not be sought after. [476] When, being free from temporality, the notion of suffering does not occur with regard to death, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of perennial life. When one is aware that in all of appearance-existence there is nothing other than oneself, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of integral being. When one does not produce passion even when seeing a daughter of the gods and when one's mind does not waver in fear even when seeing a blazing ogre, that is an indication that one experiences the intent of being as it is. When, whatever one does with one's body and speech, one is without the notion of burden and does not grasp at anything that is done, that is the indication that one experiences the intent that is free from effortful action. When one does

not ponder about weariness, even should one remain for eons in the abodes of cyclic existence, that is the indication that one experiences the intent of unimpaired great compassion.

7.4.4.1. Nine indications

There are nine such [indications] that may occur: (1) whatever one engages in, one's concentration does not deteriorate; (2) one has no hope for a fruition; (3) even if one sees the worlds of hell, one is without misgiving about falling there; (4) even if one sees the Buddha's pure fields, one does not produce any admiration; (5) even if one sees demons and ogres, one's mind does not waver in fear; [477] (6) even if one sees a daughter of the gods, one is not attached; (7) whatever one does, since there is nothing that does not become the accumulation [of merit], one's virtue is uninterrupted; (8) one is without relinquishing or acceptance concerning the aspects of positive and negative deeds; (9) whatever conduct one performs, whether one hits or is dirty, one's mind is without disturbance. The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* declares,⁸⁵⁸

When the great contemplation definitely appears,
One is always unimpaired, without hope and misgiving;
One neither produces admiration nor does one waver [in
fear];
Detached, [one's virtue is] uninterrupted, and one is without
accepting anything;
One is without disturbance: that is its nature.

7.4.4.2. Eighteen scopes of Māra

What is more, there are eighteen scopes of Māra:⁸⁵⁹ (1) to see many Buddhas and bodhisattvas standing before one; (2) [to see] oneself teaching them the doctrine;⁸⁶⁰ (3) to see that one's own mind instantaneously is capable of giving off many emanations; (4) to clearly see all the doctrines spoken by the Victorious Ones; (5) to clearly know all earlier and later times; (6) to see all those abiding on the paths of the six continua of becoming;⁸⁶¹ (7) to powerlessly produce great compassion toward them; (8) to see lambently,⁸⁶² without [difference between] day and night; [478] (9) to go unimpeded through rocks, mountains, and water {with one's body}; (10) to {have the capacity and force to} go through and stand in the sky, as if it were the earth; (11) to see the Victorious Ones {of the ten directions} placing their hands upon the crown of one's head and giving a prophecy;⁸⁶³ (12) to know how to teach the doctrine in the languages of all wandering beings; (13) to see oneself as a place of worship among the worlds of the universe and its inhabitants; (14) to see the third-order chiliocosm as being equal, like the palm of one's hand; (15) to see the universe and its inhabitants as lambent;⁸⁶⁴ (16) to go unimpeded through anything;⁸⁶⁵ (17) to be commanded by the gods, ogres, and awareness-holders to teach the doctrine; and (18) to [see] Brahmā, Indra, etc., coming to worship one.

Moreover,⁸⁶⁶

The scopes of Māra [experienced by] the *yogin* are as follows:
 To see one's holy inclination or to speak the sacred [doctrine];
 To see innumerable emanations;
 To clearly see all the holy [doctrines];
 To clearly see that one knows all times;
 To illuminate all those abiding on the paths of the six continua of becoming;
 [479] To automatically be tormented for them;
 To clearly see universal illumination;
 To go unimpeded through anything;
 To go through and stand in the sky, as if it were the earth;
 [To see] the Holy Ones stretch out their hands and give a prophecy;
 To speak the doctrine in the languages of all;
 To see [oneself as] a residence [of worship] amidst the reified entities of the animate and inanimate universe;
 [To see] everything as an equal array;
 [To see all] as being by nature clear and illuminating;
 [To see oneself] as being unimpeded because of one's competence;
 To be commanded to [teach] absolute truth;
 To be worshiped by the chiefs of the world—
 If one knows their nature, they are sacred indications;
 Those [whose nature is] not known are demons of wrongfulness.

Furthermore,⁸⁶⁷

For whatever is positive or negative
 Throughout past, present, and future,
 One should be without liking or regret—
 As it is, it is self-originated and self-appeased.

Thus, they may arise. The *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag* states,⁸⁶⁸

The signs of mind and appearances
Are without the limitations of both ego and self.
Therefore, all appearances are qualities,
And one is without the notion of joyful relishing.
Because of the pride which is pretentious due to [perceived]
 qualities,
[480] One is arrogant and haughty and produces an intention
 [which differentiates] high and low.
It is by not definitely seeing the truth
That there are said to be the scopes of Māra.
When one verily knows them to be illusory,
That is the Buddha free from conceit.

One should neither be attached to nor hold on to them.

7.4.4.3. Further indications

The *rDo-rje bkod-pa* mentions five [signs],⁸⁶⁹

There are the presages of the apparent body;
The indications concerning the manner of obtaining
 wonderful substances;
The dreams that are prognostic signs;
The presages of many inclinations;
And the [signs] of the distinct intellectual dexterities.

[The same source continues,]⁸⁷⁰

Wherever the leaves of cinnabar grow,
There is a mine of gold; likewise,
Whenever the presages and signs occur,
The fruition, high or low, will come.
He who is skilled in the causes
Will apply this, whatever signs occur.

Thus should one exert oneself. The same source says,⁸⁷¹

It is just as when the great earth shakes,
It veritably quakes and shivers.⁸⁷²
That is called the first indication.
If one then cultivates concentration,
Whatever one imagines is accomplished:
If one meditates on the sense-basis of fire,
One becomes the very nature of fire.

A few lines further down, it is said that⁸⁷³

If one meditates on the sense-basis of substance,
[481] That too one will become:
That is the attainment of the great indication.
[When the dexterity of the intellect's concentration is
complete,]⁸⁷⁴
There occurs the dexterity of truthful speech:
When one sees the sense-basis of existence,
By saying "Become peaceful!"
It is appeased.
Should there be a harmful stream,
By saying "Stop!"
It will stop indeed.

The winds are pacified, all kinds of aches are appeased
by snapping one's fingers, and things become just as one
says. [The same source continues,]⁸⁷⁵

Even without depending on food for one's constitution,
One's sense-faculties have a dazzling luster and are veritably
clear—

This is the indication that one feels the taste of
concentration.

Moreover, there are presages concerning the body:

Assuming the cross-legged posture,

One leaps up a full cubit,

Then up to a full fan palm⁸⁷⁶—

This is the omen of a great indication.

Moreover, when one can traverse with one's steps and walk
through

The sky of appearances,

When one does not sink in water but can slip into the earth,

When one is not burned by fire but can bind the wind—

These too are great presages.

When the dexterity which is the body's truth is complete,

The dynamism of force occurs.

The blessing of this force is inconceivable:

[482] Whatever one desires or needs,

One can transform earth, stones, and sand

Into gold, silver, and so forth.

From barren earth water is provided;

Charcoal is transformed into trees;

Thus, whatever may be needed

Or desired is accomplished.

When the force and dexterity of one's conduct is complete,

The qualities of all assets become complete:

There occur delightful riches,

And all one's thoughts of desire are accomplished

And transformed into substances supreme,

Which one wondrously gains—

These are presages of one's competence.

There are presages of assembling [disciples] wherever one
goes:

One is honored and liked by all,

Being delightful to all;

One becomes the supreme tamer

And controller of everyone—

These too are great presages. [. . .]

To⁸⁷⁷ go riding the sun and moon;
To flaunt Mount Meru, [having seized it] halfway;⁸⁷⁸
To hurl the world over great distances;⁸⁷⁹
To turn off the incinerating eon—
All these miraculous manifestations
Are miracles of magic.
There are the miracles pertaining to education:
To all the wandering beings to be tamed,
[483] [One teaches] compatible doctrines in their individual
languages;
Through the various doors of taming,
One is capable of teaching them in their individual
languages.⁸⁸⁰
Concerning the appearance of the doors of the doctrine,
Due to the distinction in the dexterity of one's concentration,
Even if the world-realms shake,
Everything produces wonders;
Rejoicing with one's mind's thoughts,
One savors the joys individually.
From the garland of secret letters
Expressed everywhere and always,
The miraculous sounds of the doctrine resound.
In whatever is seen and in all the phenomena of appearance
and resonance,
There is nothing that does not become the spell.

Thus do these [signs] occur.

7.4.4.4. The role of indications in *Atiyoga*

In that case, it may be asked, “There are parties that say that since *Atiyoga* does not pivot on anything and is without essence, the occurrence of indications and signs is not maintained [in this system]. Is that true?” It is replied that generally the indications occur to the *Mahāyogin* of the Great Yoga. Here, concerning the enlightened mind as it is, one does not relinquish any of

the signs of cyclic existence and transcendence. Since [the enlightened mind] is the origin of all marvelous appearances, [484] it can be illustrated in the manner of the ocean and its waves: from the essence of the unborn beingness of phenomena, the self-arising miracles producing indications and signs are ceaseless. The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁸⁸¹

It is because of the quintessence
That great wonders occur.

And,⁸⁸²

This wondrous amazing display
Is free from action and is like the sky:
Not imaging anything whatsoever, it is from stupidity
That [wonders] immediately self-originate.

The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* states,⁸⁸³

It is from the birthless open dimension
That the miracles are produced;
They radiate forth from the utterly pure open dimension of
the enlightened mind.

The same source continues,⁸⁸⁴

Because illusory phenomena are clear to actual perception,
There are various miracles pertaining to illusory
concentration;
They do not referentially image anything and they are
indefinite.

As it is said in the *rMad-du byung-ba*,⁸⁸⁵ having revealed amazing miracles, there is no doubt concerning

the occurrence of the indications and signs; [doubts] can be cut asunder. In any case, since they are the miracles of one's mind, one should not be attached to them. For example, it is like the signs appearing in the sky, [485] such as rainbows or lightning; however they appear, one does not referentially imagine them.

7.4.5. The fruition as spontaneously accomplished

When such indications occur, one purifies the obscurations of involvement. If it be asked how this designation “attaining the fruition” [applies, it is replied that the fruition] is spontaneously accomplished and that its nature is like the sky. What this means is to be found in the authoritative scriptures, such as the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*.⁸⁸⁶

It⁸⁸⁷ is already seen, cleansed,⁸⁸⁸ and implemented;
Desires⁸⁸⁹ are already accomplished, and it boasts {the
greatness of absolute meaningfulness};
Being thus really established,
[Miracles] occur from its attainment.

What this means is as follows: being “already accomplished” has six [topics], which were explained in detail earlier.⁸⁹⁰ Of those, the following will be taken up here:

Concerning the fact that obscurations are already cleansed, the *yogin* of *Mahāyoga* deliberately conquers [the obscurations] without relinquishing them, as if transforming poison into medicine.⁸⁹¹ Here, as was explained previously, in the state where everything is suchness, just as it is, cyclic existence and

transcendence are the primordial Buddha. The distortions are entrusted to the path of enlightenment. Suffering is produced as the panoply of phenomena's beingness. The afflictions arise as great bliss. The obscurations are intrinsically clear as great wisdom. [486] The three evil destinies, without being rectified or transformed, primordially awaken as the holy abodes of the higher levels. It is not the case that, as in alchemy, what at present are temporarily obscurations are transformed into wisdom. In the knowledge of inherent alpha-purity, there is not even the name of that which obscures. Like the limpid ocean, this abode is free from all the seeds of the impregnations. The *rTse-mo byung-rgyal* says,⁸⁹²

The overcasting gloom accrued over eons
Is instantaneously clarified in a fleeting second
Due to the wisdom sunrays of the king of awareness.

Those on the path have nowhere to journey; they should be aware of absolute meaningfulness. The *Rin-po-che kun-'dus* declares,⁸⁹³

The *yogin* for whom [thoughts] arise as the wisdom expanse
Does not accomplish this supreme stage, as it is
spontaneously present.
All the flaws of the impregnations without exception
Are verily clarified by the luminosity of wisdom.
This great vehicle is like the sun shining in the sky:
The darkness of the limitations is said to be primordially
nonexistent.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,⁸⁹⁴

Even should there be thirty Mount Merus,
Through the amazing enlightened mind
[487] These could be smashed to gravel through meditation.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* says,⁸⁹⁵

As for this ocean of suffering consisting of deeds and
afflictions,
All is nonexistent when the secret instantaneously appears.

Furthermore,⁸⁹⁶

Through a moment's seeing of the secret meaning,
There is the aspectual transformation of everything apparent.

The *rMad-du byung-ba* declares,⁸⁹⁷

The enlightened mind is like a razor blade,
Like a sword annealed in sesame oil.
The enlightened mind is the entire path;
Like a lotus, it is untainted by flaws.
It is like the fire blazing [at the end of an] eon:
Whatever suffering and sins he engages in,
The *yogin* accomplishes unsurpassed awakening.

Therefore,⁸⁹⁸ since in this context there is no attachment seizing anything whatsoever, deeds and their maturation, as well as the obscurations pertaining to the places of rebirth, are primordially pure. Since throughout the three times one is free from self-grasping, the afflictions are inherently birthless, and the obscuration of the afflictions is purified. Since non-duality primordially expands everywhere and pervades all, since it is just as it is, one does not grasp toward suchness, and one is originally free; hence, the obscuration of the knowable

is purified. In any case, in primordial purity there is no need for the effort of the antidotes. [488] Since it is pure in itself, one encounters it without encountering the meaning that is seized. In terms of its designation, this is labeled “purification of the obscurations.”

The fact that it is free from accruing the accumulations has already been explained. The accomplishments are primordially present: because intrinsic awareness dwells as the identity of all that is to be attained, although there is nothing to eliminate or to obtain, one encounters the meaning of non-attainment without searching for it. In terms of its designation, this is labeled “the arising of attainment.” In essence, the accomplishments intrinsically arise, so they are without the designation of arising. Moreover, in the face of such boons, the *Sems-bsgom-pa* states,⁸⁹⁹

As for the special qualities of meditating in the state of the
utterly pure enlightened mind,
If an intelligent person actualizes this sacred mind,
This is declared by the Victorious Ones to be the principal
body, supreme among the three bodies.
It is also called “the eye of sapience” because of its supernal
knowing.
It is the supreme adamantine peak, non-discursive wisdom.

The *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* says,⁹⁰⁰

The sky-like state is without intrinsic nature;
Being eternally nonexistent, it is free from reified entities.
There is nothing other than this quintessence,
Yet it continuously arises in variegation.
[489] Appearing as a lamp, it eliminates darkness.
The wish-granting gem originates from it.
Being without birth or halt, it is free from fear;
It is indefinite as anything whatsoever and is without dread.
When it is consummately realized, it is free from all effortful
action.
It does not journey to the objects of understanding.
While elsewhere one investigates with the three roots,⁹⁰¹
The secret meaning is self-originated.

The *Nam-mkha'-che* declares,⁹⁰²

The strengths and all qualities
Immediately self-originate
From this subtle realization of being as it is.

This was already described in detail in the context of the view. Therefore, since the accomplishments and the fruition cannot be obtained from elsewhere, they are said to be “self-originated.” When one assimilates with confidence that there is neither attainment nor non-attainment, that is the attainment. The *rMad-du byung-ba* states,⁹⁰³

There is renunciation through the three vehicles,⁹⁰⁴
But one abides on the fruition of the single vehicle.

Renunciation⁹⁰⁵ is implemented concerning the three phases of non-discursiveness.⁹⁰⁶ Yet the end that accomplishes them all is this vehicle of spontaneous completeness. It has been described in detail that

without realizing this, there is no means whereby one could be awakened through something else.

7.5. Distinguishing *Atiyoga* from the other vehicles

[490] Therefore, it is certain that there is a great distinction even with regard to the description of its names. In this regard, since everything is already accomplished, it is maintained to be, for example, like the sky. Concerning the explanation of the distinctions between the vehicles, the twenty meanings of that which is “already finished,” if inwardly elucidated, should be sufficient.⁹⁰⁷ In this regard, [the distinction of *Atiyoga*] is confirmed by the arguments pertaining to the pith instructions and authoritative scriptures. Since [this distinction] is established through the intellectual arguments of the challenger, it can be trusted.⁹⁰⁸ The condensed root will be expounded here in a way that is well understood.

7.5.1. *sTon-mun* and the Great Completeness

As for the *sTon-mun*, its language is compatible with that of the Great Completeness. Although it teaches that there is nothing to do or to accomplish, it considers the ground to be unoriginated and thoroughly established and speaks of the ground as being unborn and empty, i.e., as being absolute truth. If one examines this, the [two] truths are still discrete. In becoming acquainted with the state of emptiness, there is effort; although one engages in the non-duality of the two truths, one does

not experience it. One is obscured by one's own view and needs to enter non-duality anew.

7.5.2. *Mahāyoga cum Anuyoga* and the Great Completeness

The direction of *Mahāyoga* is the same as that of *Atiyoga* with regard to absolute meaningfulness; [yet in *Mahāyoga*,] one does not know absolute meaningfulness non-dually as one's integral identity. In familiarizing oneself therewith, one is not free from implementing great effort. When *Anuyoga* is associated with *Mahāyoga*, its distinction is great. [491] However, while it pretends to rest without implementing effort, it deliberately implements the equanimity of non-effort.

Furthermore, in *Mahāyoga* one gradually generates deities from out of thusness and effects the purpose of wandering beings. In the context of *Anuyoga*, one effects their purpose having generated [the deities] instantaneously. One thereby does not see the great behavior of the non-action of self-originated wisdom. It is by resting in non-discursiveness that the purposes of self and others are completed; [in *Mahā-* and *Anuyoga*,] one deviates therefrom. This means that it is owing to the foregoing that the [two] truths are still discrete [in *Mahā-* and *Anuyoga*].

According to one perspective, there is a distinction with regard to the essence of absolute meaningfulness. Concerning the thusness of the *Mantrayāna*, non-dual intrinsic awareness is universal luminosity. As for the Great Completeness, since spontaneously complete

thusness is the ultimate, since great non-duality is without dividing, and since this is the stage of exalted wisdom, the distinction is veritably great.

7.5.3. Questions

7.5.3.1. Question of the *Yogācāra Mādhyamika*

Moreover, according to one perspective, the *Yogācāra Mādhyamika* asks {the *Atiyogin*}, “All phenomena appear in one’s mind⁹⁰⁹ and are comprised in one’s mind. Furthermore, it is maintained that {in absolute truth} [the mind] is free from the four limitations. What view could be more eminent than this?”

7.5.3.2. Question of the *Sautrāntika Mādhyamika*

The *Sautrāntika Mādhyamika* asks {the *Atiyogin*}, [492] “However the {mere} phenomena of interdependent origination {illusorily} appear {in relative truth}, their essence {in absolute truth} is the unborn great voidness that is free from eternalism and nihilism. What could be more eminent than this noble meaning?”

7.5.3.3. Question of the practitioner of the simultaneous approach

The practitioner of the simultaneous approach, the *sTon-mun*, asks {the *Atiyogin*}, “In the state where all phenomena are primordially unborn and empty, the truth is non-dual.⁹¹⁰ I, too, maintain that absolute meaningfulness is without effortful accomplishment and

without hope and misgiving. Where could there be a more noble meaning?”

7.5.3.4. Question of the *Mahāyogin*

The practitioner of the inner *Mantrayāna* says, “In the state of non-dual thusness of intrinsic awareness, there is clarity: if something appears {in relative truth}, it is nothing but appearance. The aggregates, constituents, and sense-bases are the configuration of deities. What more eminent meaning could be sought?”

7.5.3.5. Question of the *Anuyogin*

The *Anuyogin* says, “All phenomena are the sons of non-duality: from the state of great bliss of the enlightened mind, they instantaneously and inherently emanate as awakened bodies and configurations, whereby the two purposes⁹¹¹ are accomplished. What could be more eminent?”

7.5.4. Replies

7.5.4.1. Reply to the *Yogācāra Mādhyamika*

In light of these questions, the *Atiyogin* replies to the *Yogācāra Cittamātrin*, “To view all phenomena as being comprised in mind and mind as momentary is a mistake. [493] By viewing absolute truth as unborn and empty, you are confused. Because it transcends momentariness and emptiness, [*Atiyoga*] is superior.”

7.5.4.2. Reply to the *Sautrāntika Mādhyamika*

He replies to the *Sautrāntika Mādhyamika*, “Because you view the nature of the great seminal nucleus of all phenomena as being the two truths, you are confused. I do not hold on to non-duality as dual. Therefore, thanks to my consummate realization that expands everywhere and pervades all, I am greater.”

7.5.4.3. Reply to the practitioner of the simultaneous approach

He replies to the *sTon-mun*, “Although non-duality, empty and unborn, is free from action, you do not see the non-duality that is free from action and have not even heard of it. To me {i.e., the *Atiyogin*} [it seems that] you need eons to rectify and see your hat-like⁹¹² freedom from action; hence, I am superior and greater.”

7.5.4.4. Reply to the *Mahāyogin*

He replies to the practitioner of the inner *Mantrayāna*, “Since in thusness and non-duality you insert the generation of awakened bodies, as well as effort in effecting the purpose [of wandering beings], you are mistaken. With regard to the purpose of the concentration of non-action, you are incapable. Therefore, it is for me alone that the king of spontaneous presence occurs.”

7.5.4.5. Reply to the *Anuyogin*

He replies to the *Anuyogin*, “Just as it is, it is uncorrupted and without any cause that can be sought. Since you are not free from generating configurations which comprise an exterior and an interior, you are mistaken. You do not even marginally know the state that is primordially free from entry and production. For me, self-origination is superior.”

7.5.5. Conclusion

[494] Having thus replied to them, I have differentiated the views of each of the vehicles and come to a resolution concerning their respective views. This originates from the aural lineage of pith instructions and from the *lTa-ba-la shan*.⁹¹³

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the seventh chapter, which amply lays out the textual tradition of the Great Completeness.

¹ See also the translation of this passage in [Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*](#), p. 238.

² Cf. [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), p. 108, and [Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*](#), p. 248, which would suggest a translation along these lines: “it is not that one first evaluates through individually discerning sapience a phenomenon to be evaluated according to the textual tradition consisting of *tantras*, authoritative scriptures, and pith instructions.”

³ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *Bang-mdzod 'phrul-gyi me-long*, in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 763–780, nor in the following two sources, both of which are known by the alternative title *Bang-mdzod 'phrul-gyi lde-mig*: *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-chen 'phreng-ba*,

in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 659–739; *Man-ngag thams-cad-kyi sdom*, in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 739–763.

⁴ *Yul-kun-la 'jug-pa*, in BG, vol. 1, p. 23.2. The citation is also found in *rDzogs-pa chen-po byang-chub-kyi sems kun-la 'jug-pa rnam-dag ston-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 5/ca, p. 83.2.

⁵ *Srog-gi 'khor-lo*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 599.2–3.

⁶ I take *mya-ngan* to be an abbreviation for *mya-ngan-las 'das-pa* (Skt. *nirvāṇa*), unlike Baroetto, who translates it as “sofferenza.” Cf. Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atīyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 1, p. 68.

⁷ Gl.: That is why it is said in the *Sems-bsgom rgyud* that for some the Victorious Ones may originate from non-examining, examination being confusion.

TN: See *Sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 628.1.

⁸ Unidentified source.

⁹ Unidentified source.

¹⁰ Unidentified source. Cf. *Byang-chub-kyi sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 648.7, where a distant parallel for the last two lines is found.

¹¹ Cf. *Chos-kyi grags-pa, brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 477, where *mnal-du 'bebs-pa* is found under the perfective form *mnal-du phab-pa* and is defined as *bsam-pa skyid-po* (“happy”).

¹² *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 177.6; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 44.

¹³ Gl.: i.e., the essence.

¹⁴ Gl.: [through] arguments.

¹⁵ *rTsal-chen sprugs-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 423.4–5; *Nyi-zla dang mnyam-pa dri-ma med-pa'i rgyud*, ch. 4, in BG, vol. 2, p. 32.2–3; cf. *rTsal-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 527.4–6. The citation is also found in *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 27, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 99.4; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 165; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 4.

¹⁶ Both Clemente and Dowman interpret *'ga'-zhig* (variant: *ci-zhig*) as intending a question; Clemente: “How could this dimension ever be deceived [. . .]?” Dowman: “[. . .] how can we innocents do any wrong?” While this is no doubt an elegant solution, I see no grammatical justification for such an interpretation, since *'ga'-zhig* signifies “some” and *ci-zhig* “one which” or “whatever,” both being indefinite pronouns.

¹⁷ Gl.: [intended for] those who at present are beginners.

¹⁸ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 176.3–4; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 37.

¹⁹ Gl.: of the words taught here.

²⁰ Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” pp. 149 (English translation), 153 (Tibetan text).

²¹ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 20–22, pp. 56–57 (English translation), 116 (Tibetan text).

²² I.e., non-Buddhists.

²³ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 108.3–5.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 110.1–5.

²⁵ Gl.: i.e., the origin of the evil spells.

²⁶ Gl.: the origin of an army.

²⁷ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 832.5–6; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 131.

²⁸ Gl.: i.e., the three schoolings of the causal vehicle and the ten schoolings of the *Mantrayāna*.

TN: The three schoolings (*bslab-pa gsum*; Skt. *triśikṣa*) are discipline (*tshul-khrims*; Skt. *śīla*), concentration (*ting-nge-'dzin*; Skt. *samādhi*), and sapience (*shes-rab*; Skt. *prajñā*). See Dorje and Kapstein, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 2, p. 112. Furthermore, there are ten topics of the *tantras* (*rgyud-kyi dngos-po bcu*): the view (*lta-ba*), conduct (*spyod-pa*), configuration (*dkyil-'khor*), empowerment (*dbang*), commitments (*dam-tshig*), activity (*phrin-las*), evocation (*sgrub-pa*), concentration (*ting-nge-'dzin*), worship (*mchod-pa*), and the spell (*sngags*). See [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 275, n. 146.

²⁹ Many of the themes alluded to here will later (§7.1.2) be taken up and discussed in detail as the nine views of the ground.

³⁰ Gl.: i.e., grasping.

³¹ Gl.: The searching for tenets is itself effort.

³² Gl.: Integral being would be the subject that realizes.

³³ “Thematic focus” (*gza'-gtad*) is a technical term used in *rDzogs-chen* instructions to point out a fault in meditation: instead of resting in abidingness and dropping all the intellect’s foci, the beginner often finds himself wondering whether or not he has found the mind’s essence. He thereby becomes once again caught up in a focus that thematizes these possibilities. Cf. the definition for *gza'-gtad* given in [bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*](#), p. 806: “that which is focused on upright” (*drang-po gtad-pa*), i.e., a focus that is ready-at-hand for straightforward thematization. Meinert translates “grasping

toward an object.” See [Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*](#), p. 256.

³⁴ Here, the author plays on the double meaning of the verb *'dod-pa*, which in Tibetan can mean both “to maintain” and “to desire.”

³⁵ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 587.8–588.1.

³⁶ Unidentified source. Cf. *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 247.6, where a distant parallel is found.

³⁷ Unidentified source.

³⁸ Unidentified source.

³⁹ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 602.5–6; *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 89b.5–6.

⁴⁰ Citation untraced in *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, pp. 419–423. However, Baroetto (*La dottrina dell'atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 22, n. 2) notes that it is found in the *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 26, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 97.3–4; cf. [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 164.

⁴¹ Here again, the themes making up the nine views of the ground (see §7.1.2) are briefly touched upon.

⁴² Gl.: since it is not that from a temporarily existing duality one effects the absence [of duality].

⁴³ Gl.: There is not even the aspect of being free from effortful action.

⁴⁴ Gl.: It is not that one accomplishes that which was not accomplished.

⁴⁵ Gl.: It is not that one makes complete that which was incomplete.

⁴⁶ Gl.: which is merely the assignment of designations.

⁴⁷ Following a suggestion from Jacob Dalton, I read *ye-phyi-ma* as *ye-phyi-mo*.

⁴⁸ Gl.: since there is no other.

TN: Signlessness is one of the three doors to utter release; for these, see [Chapter 5](#), note 195.

⁴⁹ *gNyan dPal-dbyangs, mTha'-yi mun-sel sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1048.2–3. For a translation, see [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), p. 81.

⁵⁰ Gl.: In any case, without relinquishing appearances, one is connected to causes and conditions; whatever appears, one cannot grasp an essence. That is because it does not occur adventitiously and is continuously birthless.

⁵¹ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *lTa-ba rin-po-che sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1052.2–3.

⁵² Gl.: which is merely the assignment of designations.

⁵³ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 88.2–3.

⁵⁴ Gl.: the three jewels.

⁵⁵ Gl.: in leisure.

⁵⁶ Gl.: [This concerns] the quintessence of enlightenment.

TN: *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 103.7–104.1.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 105.7–106.2.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 106.6–108.1.

⁵⁹ Gl.: [This concerns] the configuration of primordial being as it is.

⁶⁰ Gl.: [This concerns] the configuration of natural spontaneous presence.

⁶¹ Gl.: [This concerns] the configuration of the root, the enlightened mind.

⁶² *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 445.3–4.

⁶³ Gl.: as in beginners' actual perception of intrinsic awareness.

⁶⁴ Gl.: here, one does not deliberately do anything.

⁶⁵ Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” pp. 150 (English translation), 154 (Tibetan text).

⁶⁶ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 182–183, n. 11.

⁶⁷ Gl.: This emerges as the craving that effects the sense-basis of dualistic examination.

⁶⁸ Gl.: i.e., they contradict it.

⁶⁹ In Buddhist cosmology, this is the hell realm with the most intense and unbearable sufferings and where the denizens' sojourn is the longest; those having broken their tantric pledges are reborn there. See Cornu, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, p. 564.

⁷⁰ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 778.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 79.

⁷¹ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 7–8, pp. 55–56 (English translation), 115 (Tibetan text).

⁷² Ibid., vv. 14–17, pp. 56 (English translation), 115–116 (Tibetan text).

⁷³ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 104.3–4.

⁷⁴ This text has recently been identified by Liljenberg as the third chapter of the *rDzogs-pa chen-po chos-nyid byang-chub-kyi sems thig-le rgya-mtsho gnas-la 'jug-pa*. See Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” p. 139; see also Baroetto, *La dottrina dell’atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 370. For a translation and critical edition, see Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” pp. 143 (English translation), 145 (Tibetan text).

⁷⁵ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 816.6–7; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 117.

⁷⁶ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, pp. 420–421; see also *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, 89.2; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 16; *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 541.1–2.

⁷⁷ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 213, n. 99.

⁷⁸ The gloss mentioning Buddhagupta is wrongly placed here and should instead be attached to the fifth view (freedom from action and searching). This is clear from the gloss given later in the explanation of this view (C 344.6). Cf. also Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*, p. 259, and Reynolds, *The Golden Letters*, p. 249.

⁷⁹ Gl.: and enumerating.

⁸⁰ Gl.: individually distinguished in terms of their terms.

⁸¹ Gl.: appearing as though the enlightened mind had different names and qualities.

⁸² Gl.: in their know-how.

⁸³ Gl.: This is maintained by Vimalamitra and Oḍḍiyāna Mahārāja.

TN: Oḍḍiyāna Mahārāja is mentioned in the *Bai-ro 'Dra-'bag chen-mo* as the disciple of the Kashmiri preceptor Rab-snang; he is made the master of Gomadevī. See g.Yu-sgra snying-po, *Bai-ro'i rnam-thar 'dra-'bag chen-mo*, Chengdu: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1995, p. 53; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 39.

⁸⁴ Gl.: This is maintained by dGa'-rab rdo-rje.

⁸⁵ Gl.: This is maintained by Vairocana.

⁸⁶ Gl.: This is maintained by the nun Ānandā.

TN: As well as being Vimalamitra's master, she is also counted among Padmasambhava's teachers. An emanation of the sky-farer Guhyajñānā, she is said to have transformed Padmasambhava into the syllable *HŪM* and swallowed him, thereby granting him the four empowerments. See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School*, vol. 1, p.

469. In the *Bai-ro 'Dra-'bag chen-mo*, the earliest parts of which go back to the 13th century (Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 18), she is described as the daughter of a prostitute; her own master is given as Śrīsimha. See g.Yu-sgra snying-po, *Bai-ro'i rnam-thar 'dra-'bag chen-mo*, p. 61; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 45.

⁸⁷ Gl.: free from causes and conditions.

⁸⁸ Gl.: This is maintained by Buddhagupta.

TN: See note 78.

⁸⁹ Gl.: i.e., having finished [action and searching].

⁹⁰ Gl.: This is maintained by Śrīsimha and Kukkurāja.

TN: Note that two Kukkurājas are mentioned in the *Bai-ro 'Dra-'bag chen-mo*. See g.Yu-sgra snying-po, *Bai-ro'i rnam-thar 'dra-'bag chen-mo*, pp. 55, 57–58; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, pp. 41, 43.

⁹¹ Gl.: This is maintained by Mañjuśrīmitra.

⁹² Gl.: This is maintained by the crown prince Rājahastin.

TN: This probably refers to Prabhāhasti (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication). In the *Bai-ro 'Dra-'bag chen-mo*, Rājahastin is said to be the son of Dhahenatalo; he received direct teachings from dGa'-rab rdo-rje and deepened his understanding through his father's instructions. See g.Yu-sgra snying-po, *Bai-ro'i rnam-thar 'dra-'bag chen-mo*, pp. 49–50; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 36.

⁹³ Gl.: This is maintained by King Dhahenatalo and dGa'-rab rdo-rje.

TN: According to Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin (personal communication), Dhahenatalo is probably an *Apabhraṃśa* name. In the *Bai-ro 'Dra-'bag chen-mo*, Dhahenatalo is said to have been a direct disciple of dGa'-rab rdo-rje, from whom he received the essence of the *rDzogs-chen* teachings. He then went on to study more detailed instructions under Mañjuśrīmitra's guidance. See g.Yu-sgra snying-po, *Bai-ro'i rnam-thar 'dra-'bag chen-mo*, pp. 48–49; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 35.

⁹⁴ Gl.: which is maintained by Oḍḍiyāna Mahārāja and by Vimalamitra.

⁹⁵ Note that *bsnyad-pa* is archaic for *bshad-pa*, meaning “to explain.” See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi'i gur-khang*, p. 44; and bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 233.

⁹⁶ Cf. Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, ch. 3, §22, p. 161, where Vimalakīrti warns that the sun's radiance should not be confused

with the glow-worm's light.

⁹⁷ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 422.1; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 90.3; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 160; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 20. This quote is repeated later, §7.1.2.5.1 (C 347).

⁹⁸ Cf. *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 624.7, where only a variant of the first two lines is given.

⁹⁹ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 604.1–2. Citation identified in Liljenberg, A Critical Study of the Thirteen Later Translations, pp. 124–125, 179 (English translation).

¹⁰⁰ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *mTha'-yi mun-sel sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1049.2–3. Citation identified in Takahashi, “Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia,” p. 12. See also the translation in Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 81.

¹⁰¹ Here one might recall what the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sāstra* says about the signless concentration of signlessness (Skt. *animittānimittasamādhi*): it is comparable to a fire that, having burned up its fuel, ends up destroying itself. In like manner, this concentration, having destroyed all the signs of phenomena, destroys itself. See Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, vol. 2, p. 1100.

¹⁰² Gl.: this not meditating [on anything].

¹⁰³ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 779.1–780.2; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁴ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 421.1–2; see also *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 89.2–3; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 17; *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 540.6–7.

¹⁰⁵ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 172.2; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 54.

¹⁰⁶ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in Vimalamitra, *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug rgyud-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 109/dze; in *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 394–467; and in *rGya-mtsho klong*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 370–415.

¹⁰⁷ Gl.: The axiom of the nature and integral being [is maintained by] dGa'-rab rdo-rje.

¹⁰⁸ *Yong-ye* must here be read as an archaic synonym for *rnam-pa kun-tu*. See rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 514.

¹⁰⁹ The simile of the wish-granting gem is developed in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*; see Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, ch. 4, §2, pp. 117–118. The illustration of spontaneous presence with the simile of the wish-granting gem is also used by Klong-chen-pa; see Dowman, *Old Man Basking in the Sun*, pp. 145–146.

¹¹⁰ I.e., inside, outside, and in between.

¹¹¹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 252.4–7.

¹¹² Gl.: i.e., by the attachment to reification.

¹¹³ Gl.: of those on the path and of all wandering beings.

¹¹⁴ Gl.: being accomplished whatever arises.

¹¹⁵ Gl.: there is neither coming nor going in either cyclic existence or transcendence.

¹¹⁶ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 100.7. The order of the two lines is reversed in NGM.

¹¹⁷ *Rig-pa'i khu-byug*, IOL Tib J 647 (fol. 1r.3); Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 50–51 (English translation), 56 (critical edition).

¹¹⁸ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 186.6; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 80.

¹¹⁹ *Srog-gi 'khor-lo*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 601.1.

¹²⁰ The text reads *gal-po*; while this could be a reference to the *Gal-po bsdus-pa*, also known as the *Khrag-'thung 'dus-pa rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 24/ya, pp. 617–664, or to the *Khrag-'thung gal-po-che*, in NGM, vol. 33/gi, pp. 223–492, this is probably not the case: the latter two texts are among the *Mahāyoga tantras*, so their being quoted by a mind section *Atiyoga* text seems improbable. In this regard, note that Klong-chen-pa mentions a *He-ru-ka-yi gal-po 'jig-rten 'das-pa'i mdo* among the texts studied by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. See Klong-chen rab-'byams, *Chos-'byung rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod*, p. 397. This could refer either to the *dPal he-ru-ka'i gal-po dur-khrod mngon-par 'byung-ba'i rgyud phyi-ma*, in NGM, vol. 33/gi, pp. 190–223, or to the *'Jig-rten-las 'das-pa'i mdo*, in NGM, vol. 33/gi, pp. 492–568. Again, as both are *Mahāyoga tantras*, it is unlikely that they are being referred to here. Rather, it seems that *gal-po* must be taken in its primary sense of “important,” hence alluding to important pith instructions. Cf. Chos-kyi grags-pa, *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 116, which glosses *gal-po-che* with *don chen-po* (“of great significance”). In that case, the baskets would refer to the *Sūtrayāna*, the *tantras* to *Mahāyoga*, and the important pith instructions to *Atiyoga*.

¹²¹ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 612.5–7; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 7 (English translation), 43–44 (commentary).

¹²² Note that the NGM version reads “the *yogin* of the Great Completeness” (*rdzogs chen rnal ’byor pa*).

¹²³ Cf. *Rin-po-che kun-’dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 625.5–6, where only an approximate parallel is found.

¹²⁴ *bDe-’byams*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 618.7.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 620.2–4.

¹²⁶ I.e., the wool of black sheep, which cannot be dyed to another color.

¹²⁷ *rDzogs-pa spyi-gcod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 634.6–635.1.

¹²⁸ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 801.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 101.

¹²⁹ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 801.4–802.2; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 101.

¹³⁰ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 200, n. 64.

¹³¹ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 818.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 119.

¹³² Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 216, n. 107.

¹³³ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 819.7–820.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 120.

¹³⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 821.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 122.

¹³⁵ Gl.: Thus, one only meditates on intrinsic clarity.

¹³⁶ This refers to the last of the ten periods of five hundred years (*lnga-brgya-phrag bcu*) into which the duration of Śākyamuni’s doctrine is divided. It is traditionally considered a period of spiritual decline. See Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 941.

¹³⁷ I have emended *dang re’i lde mig* to *dang rwa’i lde mig*, with *dang-rwa* being attested as archaic for “fence” (*rwa-skor*) in *rNam-rgyal tshe-ring*, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 243; and *bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims*, *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 317. The expression is also found, with almost identical wording, in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa’i go-cha*, vol. 1, in NKD, vol. 50/wi, p. 513.5–6, in a

similar passage criticizing those who say that one can be liberated through pith instructions having referential imaging as their means: *thabs dmigs pa can gyi man ngag gis 'grol zhes smra ba ni/ de nyid kyi don gyi gding ma rnyed par gsal te/ mdongs pa de ni dper na dong rwa'i lde'u mig gis bang mdzod tha ram 'byed par 'dod pa dang 'dra 'o/*. The passage is translated in Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons*, p. 53; and Higgins, *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen*, p. 32, n. 40. Note that Dalton translates *dong-rwa'i lde'u mig* (the variant found in NKD) as “bone,” whereas Higgins renders it as “yak-horn key.” As far as the word *tha-rams* (spelled *tha-ram* in C 328.2 and *tha-ram* in M 234a.2) is concerned, it seems to refer to a lock; cf. bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 284 (the example given mentions “being constrained by iron locks,” *lcags-kyi tha-rams-kyis bsdams-nas . . .*); and especially Dan Martin, *Tibetan Vocabulary*, Version 29, August 2017, s.v. *tha rams*.

¹³⁸ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 90b.6–7. Cf. *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 605.5, where only the first two lines are given.

¹³⁹ Gl.: which is maintained by Vairocana.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 217, n. 114.

¹⁴¹ At times, the expression “great vehicle” (*theg-pa chen-po*) designates *rDzogs-chen* rather than, as conventionally, the *Mahāyāna*. Cf. Jean-Luc Achard, *Les testaments de Vajradhāra et des porteurs-de-science*, Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1995, p. 94, n. 26; Giacomella Orofino, *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation*, Bridport, UK: Prism Press, 1990, p. 84, n. 87.

¹⁴² Gl.: Hence, there is the designation “intrinsic purity.”

¹⁴³ Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” pp. 147 (English translation), 151–152 (Tibetan text).

¹⁴⁴ The literal translation of this term would be “great self” (Skt. *mahātman*).

¹⁴⁵ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 114.2–5.

¹⁴⁶ Unidentified source.

¹⁴⁷ The Tibetan folio numbers of C are reversed at this point, mistakenly giving 168a for C 331 and 166a for C 333. However, the Arabic numerals (followed throughout this translation) are correct.

¹⁴⁸ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 182.7–183.1; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 64.

¹⁴⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 189.1–2; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 71.

¹⁵⁰ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu 'phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. Although none of the '*Phra-bkod*' citations could be traced in the NGM edition of the text (nor, indeed, in any of the other editions: *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, pp. 453–455; *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 96a–97a; *bDe-ba 'phra-bkod*, in BG, vol. 1, pp. 463–467), they are found as lemmas embedded in gNubs-chen's commentary to the '*Phra-bkod*'. This goes to show that the version of the text that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes had before him differed from that of the extant editions of the text. The present citation is found in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*](#), in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 308.3–4.

¹⁵¹ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 610.3; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 5 (English translation), 31–32 (commentary).

¹⁵² *bDe-'byams*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 619.2–3.

¹⁵³ *rJe-btsan dam-pa*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 593.1–2.

¹⁵⁴ Note that *rje-btsan* is archaic for *rje-btsun*. See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi'i gur-khang*, p. 42.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), pp. 188–189, n. 18.

¹⁵⁶ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 781.1–2; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 82.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), pp. 189–190, n. 21.

¹⁵⁸ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 781.7–782.2; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 83.

¹⁵⁹ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 782.3–4; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 83.

¹⁶⁰ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 805.5–6; for this and the following two quotes, see [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 105.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 805.6–7.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 806.4–6.

¹⁶³ Note that *zhos* must here be read as an archaic synonym for *sems-gso* (“solace”). See [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-*](#)

mdzod, p. 473.

¹⁶⁴ Note that Guarisco translates this phrase as follows: “[. . .] who causes the departure of the individual consciousness and spawns many children” (*rang rig gshegs byed sras mang spel mdzad ma*).

¹⁶⁵ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 203, n. 75.

¹⁶⁶ Note that *bri-ta* transliterates the Sanskrit *vr̥ta*, which means “obfuscating” but also denotes relative truth (Skt. *saṃvṛtisatya*).

¹⁶⁷ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 827.2–3; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 126.

¹⁶⁸ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 349.6–7.

¹⁶⁹ Gl.: In fact, the labeling in terms of designations is intrinsic illumination.

¹⁷⁰ The last line (*byang chub dang ni padmo 'byung*) is not readily intelligible and could also be translated as follows: “As well as enlightenment, and the lotus.” In that case, the lotus would probably have to be taken as a symbol of the feminine principle of sapience, which is the mother of all Victorious Ones.

¹⁷¹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 350.3–4.

¹⁷² Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 191–192, n. 29.

¹⁷³ Gl.: On this stage, [one manifests] miracles and has the conduct of a king.

¹⁷⁴ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 349.3–6.

¹⁷⁵ Empty existents are called a “universal opportunity” since their emptiness provides a spaciousness within which all possibilities can unfold.

¹⁷⁶ This interpolation is intended to indicate that the two verses just quoted and the three that follow illustrate the five greatnesses just evoked.

¹⁷⁷ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 350.3–7.

¹⁷⁸ The expression *yel-'phyo* (“to glide about”) is illustrated as “the mind wandering about and gliding toward the heavens” (*sems g.yel te gnam du 'phyos pa lta bu*) in Chos-kyi grags-pa, *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 802. Note that it also carries the sense of “unification” (*zung-'jug*). Cf. bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 853.

¹⁷⁹ I.e., Akṣobhya.

¹⁸⁰ I.e., Ratnasambhava. Note that, unlike in the previous occurrence of this quote in §6.1.6.4 (C 213.3–4), the association of Ratnasambhava with water and Amitābha with fire is here reversed; this thus corresponds to what is found in the NGM version.

¹⁸¹ “The universal doer,” i.e., Amoghasiddhi.

¹⁸² *lCags-’grel*, in BG, vol. 5, p. 398.2–3.

¹⁸³ My translation of this passage differs from that proposed by Meinert, who takes it to mean that gNubs-chen recommends effort as a last resort for those still subject to referential imaging. Moreover, her interpretation does not seem to tally with the explanation that follows in the text. Cf. [Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen-Lehre*](#), p. 258.

¹⁸⁴ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 420.4–5; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 88.5; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 159; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 14.

¹⁸⁵ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 613.1; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 7 (English translation), 44 (commentary).

¹⁸⁶ Gl.: i.e., awareness.

TN: Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 229, n. 162.

¹⁸⁷ Gl.: [which is maintained by] the nun Ānandā.

¹⁸⁸ Gl.: the entities with the arguments related to their specific histories.

TN: the word “history” (*lo-rgyus*) must here be taken to refer to the fact that each entity has a specific story of its birth and destruction, which is its characteristic (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

¹⁸⁹ Although Nima (*Bod-rgya tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, p. 1520) gives “firefly” (*srin-bu me-khyer*) as an equivalent for *nam-mkha’i ’od*, it is clear from the context that here “luminous sky” is to be understood. Cf. also [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), p. 115.

¹⁹⁰ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 419.5; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 87.5; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 158; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 9; *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 540.1.

¹⁹¹ *Nam-mkha’i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 89b3–4. Cf. *Nam-mkha’i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 602.2–3, which reads “without

the scope of objects and sense-faculties” (/yul dang dbang po’i spyod yul med pa la/).

¹⁹² *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 420.4; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 88.5; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 14.

¹⁹³ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 420.2–3; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 88.3; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, pp. 13–14.

¹⁹⁴ Note that *bsnyad-pa* is archaic for *bshad-pa*, meaning “explanation.” See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi’i gur-khang*, p. 44.

¹⁹⁵ Gl.: an authoritative scripture.

¹⁹⁶ *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 177.5–6; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 44.

¹⁹⁷ *Nam-mkha’i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 91b.1–2. Cf. *Nam-mkha’i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 606.1.

¹⁹⁸ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu ’phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa’i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba ’phra-bkod-kyi don-’grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 324.3.

¹⁹⁹ The stem of the plantain tree (*chu-shing*; Skt. *kadalī*) withers as soon as it produces fruit; it is therefore often used as a metaphor for the empty nature of phenomena, and also to illustrate the case of a deed that produces an effect once and then disappears. For example, the *Suvikrāntavikrāmi-pariprcchā*, a *Prajñāpāramitā* text, compares the perfection of sapience to a plantain tree: although it has no essence, it continues to perform its function. See Conze, *Perfect Wisdom*, p. 44.

²⁰⁰ Note that in the text the words for “sun” and “moon” are given in the Tibetan transliteration of the Sanskrit terms *sūrya* and *candra*.

²⁰¹ Cf. the translation of this phrase in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 196, n. 48.

²⁰² Note that *blums* has been emended to *snums*, meaning “to suffuse.”

²⁰³ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 791.7–792.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 93.

²⁰⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 853.6–854.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 157.

²⁰⁵ Agate (*mchong*), an opaque gem with white and blue stripes, is held to cure epilepsy and other diseases caused by malefic influences. See Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 1148.

²⁰⁶ For an explanation of this *Ābhidhārmika* concept, see Chapter 1, note 29.

²⁰⁷ The three existences (*srid-pa gsum*) are those of the gods, of the humans, and of the serpent-spirits (Skt. *nāga*).

²⁰⁸ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 189.7; cf. Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, pp. 74, 89, n. 35.

²⁰⁹ Klong-chen-pa, too, compares ordinary conditioning to childish games. See Dowman, *Old Man Basking in the Sun*, pp. 77–79.

²¹⁰ Gl.: [maintained by] Buddhagupta.

²¹¹ Note that *brtsams* must here be read as an archaic synonym for 'du-ba ("to comprise," "to assemble"). See rNam-rgyal tshe-ring, *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 439.

²¹² "Suffused" translates *snums*. On this term see Chapter 1, note 32. Baroetto translates this term as "incluso"; cf. Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atīyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 1, p. 112. Donati translates it as "dissolved"; cf. Donati, *The Lamp Is Burning Bright*, p. 383.

²¹³ "Symbiosis" translates 'du-'bral med-pa; literally, the expression means "neither coalescing into nor dissociating from."

²¹⁴ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 214–215, n. 102.

²¹⁵ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 422.1; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 90.3; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 160; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 20. The last two lines of this verse are cited in §7.1.2.1.1 (C 317).

²¹⁶ *Rig-pa'i khu-byug*, IOL Tib J 647 (fol. 1r.3); Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 50 (English translation), 56 (critical edition).

²¹⁷ Liljenberg, "On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*," pp. 144 (English translation), 146 (Tibetan text).

²¹⁸ *rTsal-chen sprugs-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 423.4; *Nyi-zla dang mnyam-pa dri-ma med-pa'i rgyud*, ch. 4, in BG, vol. 2, p. 32.2. Cf. *rTsal-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 529.6, where only the second line is found. The citation is also found in *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 27, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 99.3–4; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 165; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 4.

²¹⁹ Cf. *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 625.6–7, where only an approximate parallel is found.

²²⁰ Cf. *bDe-'byams*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 620.4–5, where an approximate parallel is found.

²²¹ *Yid-bzhin nor-bu*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 721.6. This corresponds to the *'Khor-ba rtsad-nas gcod-pa rin-po-che dang mnyam-pa skye-ba med-pa'i rgyud*, ch. 10. See Karen Liljenberg, “On the History and Identification of Two of the Thirteen Later Translations of the Dzogchen Mind Series,” in *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*, no. 17, Octobre 2009, pp. 51–61, esp. p. 57.

²²² These lines are explicated as follows in gNyags Jñānakumāra, *gSang-ba bde-ba'i 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, pp. 356.4–357.1: “‘Self-originated and primordially uncontrived luminosity’—self-originated wisdom is primordially uncontrived, which means that its luminosity is uncreated. Since it is neither destroyed nor changed by anything, and since it is controlled by nothing whatsoever, the nature of its clarity is awakening.

“Without effortful striving [NKJ reads “searching”]; such is its quintessential meaning”—the Great Completeness is free from effortful accomplishment; its quintessential meaning transcends hope and misgiving. When one abides in the state which is without occurrence and involvement [of thoughts], it is originally accomplished and there is no need to search for anything.” The Tibetan reads, */rang byung ye nas ma bcos 'od gsal ba/ /ces pa/ rang byung gi ye shes ye nas ma bcos la/ ma byas par 'od gsal ba/ cis kyang mi shigs cis kyang mi 'gyur ba/ gang gis kyang dbang du mi 'gyur bar gsal ba'i rang bzhin ni sangs rgyas yin no/ /rtsol bas btsal du med de snying po don/ /ces pa/ rdzogs pa chen po ni rtsol sgrub dang bral ba dang/ re dogs las 'das pa ci yin pa'i don kyi snying po las/ 'byung 'jug med pa'i ngang du gnas pa'i dus na/ gdod sgrub cing btsal mi dgos so/*.

²²³ *rJe-btsan dam-pa*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 593.3–4.

²²⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 817.5–6; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 118.

²²⁵ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 603.3–4; *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 90a.3.

²²⁶ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, v. 117, pp. 65 (English translation), 120 (Tibetan text).

²²⁷ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 108.5–6.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 108.1–3.

²²⁹ Ibid., pp. 109.5–110.1.

²³⁰ The implication is that anything that is assembled is compounded and hence conditioned.

²³¹ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 215, n. 102.

²³² I have emended 'gro-log to 'gre-log, *spyid-tshugs* (M 248b.3 has *spyod-tshugs*) to *spyi-tshugs*, and *gang-'dres* to *gar-'gres*; for the latter two emendations, I follow Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atīyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, pp. 100–101. In this regard, according to Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin, the meaning of 'dres and 'gres partially overlaps. This is confirmed by the fact that 'dre-ldog is attested with the meaning of 'gre-ldog/'gre-log in [Chos-kyi grags-pa, *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*](#), p. 441.

Note also that the above phrase appears in almost identical form as a gloss in C 398.5 and in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*](#), in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 309.5–6.

²³³ This passage (“This is called the manner of lying down . . . and one’s becoming distracted”) is repeated dittographically in both C 352.1–3 and M 249a.5–249b.1.

²³⁴ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 175.5–6; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 41.

²³⁵ Gl.: It is the axiom of the nature.

²³⁶ Gl.: [maintained by] Kukkurāja and Śrīsimha.

²³⁷ Here “awareness” (*rig-pa*) must simply be understood as subjective consciousness, *not* in its special *rDzogs-chen* sense of non-dual intrinsic awareness.

²³⁸ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, pp. 422–423; *Kunbyed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 91.3–4; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 160; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 25.

²³⁹ For the five boundless sins of immediate retribution, see [Chapter 2](#), note 36.

²⁴⁰ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 199, n. 59.

²⁴¹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 185.2; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 75.

²⁴² Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu 'phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found

embedded as lemmas in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*](#), in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 322.2–4. In the second line, *byung* has been emended to *phyung* (“to remove”) according to the NKJ version.

²⁴³ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu 'phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found embedded as lemmas in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*](#), in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 323.2–3. Here are gNubs-chen's comments on these verses: “Having awakened to everything as the awakened body, speech, and mind, deviations are intrinsically alpha-pure. [. . .] Since [deviations] are nonexistent, no searching for them occurs.” The Tibetan reads, *thams cad sku gsung thugs chen por sangs rgyas pas gol sa ka nas rang dag pa'o/ [. . .] med bzhin tshol ba mi 'byung ba'o/*.

²⁴⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 798.4–5; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 98.

²⁴⁵ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 800.4–6; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 100.

²⁴⁶ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 814.7–815.1; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 115.

²⁴⁷ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), pp. 211–212, n. 95.

²⁴⁸ According to Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, *lhun* is archaic for *ngang* (“state”).

²⁴⁹ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 819.3–5; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 120.

²⁵⁰ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 216, n. 105.

²⁵¹ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 421.6; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 89.7–90.1; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 160; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 19.

²⁵² See note 237.

²⁵³ Gl.: [This is maintained] by Mañjuśrīmitra.

²⁵⁴ Gl.: One ascertains this through the axiom that synthesizes integral being.

²⁵⁵ The terms “mutuality” and “reciprocity” are used to render the two Tibetan expressions *phun-tshun* (literally “to and fro”) and *yan-man* (literally “above and below”), respectively.

²⁵⁶ This appears to be a reference to the five afflictions; for a list of these, see [Chapter 2](#), note 35.

²⁵⁷ Note that *snyed-pa* is archaic for *rnyed-pa*, meaning “to gain,” “to find.” See [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring](#), *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 193.

²⁵⁸ I.e., causes and conditions.

²⁵⁹ *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 182.2–3; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, pp. 60–61.

²⁶⁰ *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 182.3–4; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 62.

²⁶¹ *rDzogs-pa spyi-gcod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 635.2–6.

²⁶² *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 778.5–6; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 79–80.

²⁶³ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 791.2–3; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 92. The last two lines are found in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*; cf. Davidson, “The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī,” v. 145, pp. 36 (English translation), 60 (Sanskrit text); Alex Wayman, *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī: The Mañjuśrī-Nāma-Saṃgīti*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2006, ch. 10, v. 3, p. 107.

²⁶⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 829.1–5; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 128.

²⁶⁵ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 843.6; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 145.

²⁶⁶ *Nam-mkha’i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 89b.4. Cf. *Nam-mkha’i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 602.3.

²⁶⁷ *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa’i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 4/nga, p. 224.3–4.

²⁶⁸ The NGM version reads “it is not permanent” (*rtag pa ma yin te*).

²⁶⁹ The NGM version reads “comprises all in one” (*gcig tu thams cad ’dus*).

²⁷⁰ The NGM version reads “Though it is dual [. . .]” (*gnyis te*).

²⁷¹ *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa’i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 4/nga, p. 225.1–3.

²⁷² The first line appears to be a contraction of two lines found separately in the NGM version.

²⁷³ The NGM version reads “being without permanence” (*rtag pa med*).

²⁷⁴ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 93–94, pp. 63 (English translation), 119 (Tibetan text).

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, vv. 72–73, pp. 61 (English translation), 118 (Tibetan text).

²⁷⁶ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 172.7–173.1; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 56.

²⁷⁷ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 420.3–4; see also *Kun-byed rgyal po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 88.4–5; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 14; *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 540.3–4. Note that the version in the *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud* would suggest, for the last line, a translation as follows: “By realizing that confusion and non-confusion are the path of enlightenment, there is nothing to obtain” (*'khrul dang ma 'khrul byang chub lam de rtogs pas thob pa med*). Furthermore, both the version in the *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud* and that in the *Kun-byed rgyal-po* read, for the first line, “religion and irreligion” (*chos dang chos min*) instead of “phenomena and phenomena’s beingness” (*chos dang chos nyid*).

²⁷⁸ Cf. the translation of this passage (§§7.1.2.8–7.1.2.8.1, up to “experience of the great seminal nucleus”) in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 219–220, n. 118.

²⁷⁹ Gl.: This is maintained by the crown prince Rājahastin, whose axioms are free from limitations.

²⁸⁰ Gl.: this is the authoritative scripture of the axiom of the nature.

²⁸¹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 181.1–2; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 58.

²⁸² Cf. gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *rDo-rje gzong-phugs-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, pp. 384.3–385.2, where these lines are found embedded in further text. Passage identified in Liljenberg, *A Critical Study of the Thirteen Later Translations*, p. 126.

²⁸³ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 607.3–4; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 3–4 (English translation), 19–20 (commentary).

²⁸⁴ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 609.6; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 5 (English translation), 30 (commentary).

²⁸⁵ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 607.7–608.2; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 4 (English translation), 22–23 (commentary).

²⁸⁶ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 609.6–7; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 5 (English translation), 30 (commentary).

²⁸⁷ *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 624.4–5.

²⁸⁸ Note that *bla-dwags* (otherwise translated as “analogy”) can be archaic for *rnam-grangs*, meaning “enumeration.” See [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring](#), *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 365.

²⁸⁹ *bDe-'byams*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 620.6–7.

²⁹⁰ The Tibetan text transliterates the Sanskrit word *bhaga*, meaning “womb.”

²⁹¹ The NGM version reads, “Its circumference arising as awakened body, speech, and mind, its configuration blissful.”

²⁹² *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 788.4–789.1; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 90.

²⁹³ Here the affliction of stupidity (*gti-mug*; Skt. *moha*) takes on a spiritually “positive” sense in that it is principally identified with the wisdom of phenomena’s open dimension (Skt. *dharmadhātu-jñāna*), which is beyond all discursiveness and conceptualization.

²⁹⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 828.2–3; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 127.

²⁹⁵ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 220, n. 118.

²⁹⁶ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu 'phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found embedded as lemmas in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes](#), *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 317.2–3.

²⁹⁷ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu 'phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found embedded as lemmas in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes](#), *Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 311.4–6. Here are gNubs-chen’s comments on these verses: “Since essentially the three realms are not depraved other than in their name, the world is utterly pure. [. . .] That is why all that is desired is complete within oneself without one having to search for it.” The Tibetan reads, *khamsum ni ming tsam las ngo bo ma log pa'i phyir rnam par dag pa'i 'jig rten no/ [. . .] des na 'dod dgur rang la rdzogs pas mi tshol ba ste/*.

²⁹⁸ A very similar criticism of *mantrins* who are pleased with referential imaging is found, with almost identical wording, in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 1, in NKD, vol. 50/wi, p. 675.3: “[. . .] Present-day *mantrins*, as if pouring something into a reduced and tattered sack, are pleased with referential imaging [. . .].” The Tibetan reads, [. . .] *dus deng sang gi sngags pa blo phod rdul* (sic! = *glo phad hrul*) *du snyung blugs pa ltar dmigs pa la dga' ba dag/* [. . .]. For a translation of the larger passage, see Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons*, p. 53.

²⁹⁹ Cf. *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 188.4–5. The first line is not attested in the version of the *rDo-rje sems-dpa' nam-mkha'-che'i rgyud*. See, however, Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 83.

³⁰⁰ Previously, this view was called “the great intrinsic mode which, without relinquishing them, is free from all limitations.” Cf. §7.1.2 (C 316.2–3).

³⁰¹ Gl.: It is maintained by dGa'-rab rdo-rje and King Dhahenatalo, as well as by myself, the small venerable.

³⁰² Here the text reads *bya-rtsol bral-ba* (“freedom from effortful action”), whereas previously the expression *bya-btsal dang-bral-ba* (“freedom from action and searching”) was given; cf. C 316.1, C 344.4, and M 249a.1 (correcting C 351.1 *brtsal* to *btsal*). I have resisted the temptation of standardizing the expression, as the meaning is, in any case, quite similar. There is indeed a close connection in *rDzogs-chen* between the notions of non-searching (*ma-btsal*) and non-effort (*mi-rtsol*) or effortlessness (*rtsol-med*). See Achard, *L'Essence Perlée du Secret*, p. 63, n. 6.

³⁰³ Citation untraced in *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 321–672.

³⁰⁴ See note 69.

³⁰⁵ Gl.: The hells being stable, there is certainly no filiation [of happiness] that could be established there.

³⁰⁶ Gl.: Yet it is indefinite as anything whatsoever.

TN: The above translation (“meditate on it as being permanent”) is only tentative, as the expression *rtag go sgom ste* (C 380.5) is not readily intelligible and probably indicates a corruption in the text. Furthermore, the relation of the gloss to the main text is questionable.

³⁰⁷ Gl.: If it be asked what the characteristics of enlightenment are, [it is replied that] it is free from the three limitations, without having had to relinquish them.

TN: For the three limitations, see [Chapter 1](#), note 107.

³⁰⁸ Gl.: There is no essence to be shown.

³⁰⁹ Gl.: Those who do not hold that it is grasped do not relinquish anything.

³¹⁰ Gl.: It is nothing in itself.

³¹¹ Gl.: appearing differently.

³¹² Gl.: Not maintainable, it is maintained, being without intrinsic nature.

³¹³ Gl.: since it is without an object.

³¹⁴ Gl.: Unseen before, it is nonexistent as an object yet existent.

³¹⁵ Gl.: Being already established as everything and as itself, it is unseen; hence, it is nonexistent yet existent.

³¹⁶ Gl.: being examined as anything.

³¹⁷ Gl.: As a single essence, it is nonexistent yet existent.

³¹⁸ Gl.: according to whether it is or is not examined.

³¹⁹ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *Man-ngag rgum-chung*, in TD, vol. 211, p. 769.7; [Karmay](#), *The Great Perfection*, pp. 83–84; [Norbu](#), *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*, pp. 99–100. On the seamless incorporation of Buddhagupta's teachings into gNyan dPal-dbyangs' works, see Takahashi, "Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia," p. 14.

³²⁰ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 190–191, n. 27.

³²¹ Note that Guarisco translates "[. . .] there is no need [to talk about reality]," whereas the Tibetan text reads, *dgos-ched yod-do*.

³²² Gl.: Like searching for gold in a dark mine with a lamp, one penetrates the treasury of quintessential secrets.

TN: This gloss is actually a quotation from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 148.7.

³²³ Gl.: this means that it is [like] drawing forth the gold of the holy ones.

³²⁴ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 421.3–4; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 89.5; [Norbu and Clemente](#), *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 18.

³²⁵ Gl.: with an intrinsic essence.

³²⁶ Gl.: appearing as anything whatsoever.

³²⁷ Gl.: everything being undivided.

³²⁸ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 422.3–5; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 90.5–7; *Norbu and Clemente, The Supreme Source*, p. 160; *Dowman, Eye of the Storm*, pp. 22–23.

³²⁹ This metaphor is also used by Klong-chen-pa to illustrate the view of the Great Completeness. See *Dowman, Old Man Basking in the Sun*, pp. 235–236.

³³⁰ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 176.7–177.1; *Dowman, Eye of the Storm*, p. 41.

³³¹ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu 'phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found in *gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, Byang-chub sems bde-ba 'phra-bkod-kyi don-'grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 321.5.

³³² The NKJ version reads “It is anything . . .” (*ci yang yin no*) instead of “It is nothing in itself . . .” (*ci yang min no*).

³³³ *Srog-gi 'khor-lo*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 600.2.

³³⁴ *rMad-du byung ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 786.1–2; *Guarisco, The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 87.

³³⁵ *rMad-du byung ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 814.6–7; *Guarisco, The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 115.

³³⁶ *rMad-du byung ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 834.7–835.1; *Guarisco, The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 134.

³³⁷ Cf. the translation of this passage in *Guarisco, The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 223, n. 128.

³³⁸ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 183.5; *Dowman, Eye of the Storm*, p. 66.

³³⁹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 51.7–52.4.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.6.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.3–5.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 53.7–55.2.

³⁴³ As pointed out by Coomaraswamy in a different context, one should guard against interpreting analogical expressions in a literal fashion. See Coomaraswamy, *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*, p. 108, n. 134. Whatever names are assigned to suchness, they can be no more than analogies that point toward its ineffable dimension and should not be mistaken for suchness itself.

³⁴⁴ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 55.2–6.

³⁴⁵ Guhyapati, an epithet of Vajrapāṇi.

³⁴⁶ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 71.5–7.

³⁴⁷ Although fifty designations are mentioned, I have only been able to count forty-eight in the passage below.

³⁴⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 86.3–87.2.

³⁴⁹ Gl.: being free from existence, nonexistence, eternalism, and nihilism.

³⁵⁰ Gl.: being without examination.

³⁵¹ Gl.: being neither [eternal nor] nil.

³⁵² Gl.: good and evil being non-dual.

³⁵³ Gl.: For those on the path, it is the primordial fruition.

³⁵⁴ Gl.: being untouched by limitations.

³⁵⁵ Gl.: [this refers to the] twentyfold finishing.

³⁵⁶ Gl.: since it is already finished.

³⁵⁷ Gl.: since it is without action.

³⁵⁸ Gl.: since it is integral being.

³⁵⁹ Gl.: Being primordially accomplished, [there is nothing to search for] temporarily.

³⁶⁰ Gl.: Since it is one's integral identity, it does not pivot on anything.

³⁶¹ Gl.: There is nothing whatsoever to outshine.

³⁶² Gl.: to undertake anything.

³⁶³ Gl.: since there is no agent.

³⁶⁴ Gl.: being free from designations.

³⁶⁵ Gl.: being free from objective scope, this pertains both to phenomena and individuals.

³⁶⁶ Gl.: since it is the ground just as it is.

³⁶⁷ Gl.: which would invert primordial great bliss.

³⁶⁸ Gl.: i.e., the suchness of everything.

³⁶⁹ Gl.: being undeceiving and unchanging.

³⁷⁰ Gl.: since it is certain.

³⁷¹ Gl.: being without contrivance and corruption.

³⁷² Gl.: arising as anything whatsoever.

³⁷³ Gl.: since the essence is without likeness.

³⁷⁴ Gl.: since it does not change throughout the three times.

³⁷⁵ Gl.: since it is non-declining.

³⁷⁶ Gl.: since it is liberated from existence and nonexistence.

³⁷⁷ Gl.: since it does not appear.

- 378 Gl.: since it is without an instantaneous continuum.
- 379 Gl.: being temporarily uncreated.
- 380 Gl.: being the suchness of everything.
- 381 Gl.: being free from expression.
- 382 Gl.: being without shape and color.
- 383 Gl.: since it is without form.
- 384 Gl.: since it cuts through the range of words.
- 385 Gl.: as it is unknown.
- 386 Gl.: while the essence appears as anything whatsoever, it cannot be established.
- 387 Gl.: through examples, since it is ungraspable.
- 388 Gl.: since there is nothing that is like it.
- 389 Gl.: being ungraspable.
- 390 Gl.: through the intellect.
- 391 Gl.: by engaging with it, one is primordially liberated.
- 392 Gl.: through the intellect.
- 393 Gl.: in terms of the psyche.
- 394 Gl.: being free from the extremes and characteristics of a thinker.
- 395 Gl.: being the mother of everything.
- 396 Gl.: Continuously, throughout the past and the future, it is without pauses.
- 397 Gl.: Clarity being non-obstructed and without causes and conditions, [some] exert themselves in another direction.
- 398 Gl.: of existence and nonexistence.
- 399 *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 99.3–7.
- 400 Gl.: throughout all times and circumstances.
- 401 Gl.: pertaining to the essence.
- 402 Gl.: i.e., a cognition that could approach it.
- 403 Gl.: since there is no [Buddha] elsewhere.
- 404 Gl.: since there is no Buddha.
- 405 Gl.: since there is no extrinsic purpose.
- 406 Gl.: since circumstances are primordially the principal body.
- 407 Gl.: since it is the fruition.
- 408 Gl.: unmistakable and uncontrived.
- 409 Gl.: since it is certain.
- 410 Gl.: since it is genuine.
- 411 Gl.: it is the intrinsic awareness of everything.

- 412 Gl.: being free from causes and conditions.
- 413 Gl.: appearing as anything.
- 414 Gl.: being uncontrived.
- 415 Gl.: being upright.
- 416 Gl.: being unbiased.
- 417 Gl.: being without extremes.
- 418 Gl.: if one does not think about it, one is pervaded by it.
- 419 Gl.: it is without generation or repetition.
- 420 *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 104.7–105.6.
- 421 Gl.: since one's integral identity is unswerving and since it is established as intrinsic awareness.
- 422 Gl.: since it does not transcend absolute meaningfulness.
- 423 Gl.: according to however it is examined.
- 424 Gl.: Unmistaken, it does not anticipate obstacles.
- 425 Gl.: since it is everywhere.
- 426 Gl.: since it cannot be picked out as anything.
- 427 Gl.: since it is comprised everywhere.
- 428 Gl.: since it originates as anything.
- 429 Gl.: since it is together with nothing whatsoever.
- 430 Gl.: since it is without characteristics.
- 431 Gl.: since it covers up everything.
- 432 Gl.: since Buddhas and sentient beings are inseparable.
- 433 Gl.: since there is neither high nor low.
- 434 Gl.: since it is without great or small, it is the domain of Samantabhadra.
- 435 Gl.: since it is without association.
- 436 Gl.: since it is not produced through activities and is the quintessence.
- 437 Gl.: since it interrupts the family.
- 438 Gl.: i.e., that which appears as anything with the four characteristics.
- TN: The four characteristics are birth, abiding, old age, and destruction. See Dung-dkar blo-bzang 'phrin-las, *Bod rig-pa'i tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, p. 1723.
- 439 Gl.: being free from shape and colors.
- 440 Gl.: being non-imaged.
- 441 Gl.: since outer and inner are both clear as intrinsic awareness.

442 Gl.: in the temporary.

443 Gl.: being free from antidotes.

444 Gl.: as the sun of wisdom expands.

445 Gl.: being liberated from the continuum of the three times.

446 Gl.: being liberated from the eight, four, or two [limitations].

TN: For the eight limitations, see [Chapter 1](#), note 106. For the four limitations, see [Chapter 3](#), note 3. The two limitations are eternalism and nihilism.

447 Gl.: since appearances are mind's beingness.

448 Gl.: since the fruition is already accomplished.

449 Gl.: since there is neither good nor bad.

450 Gl.: since it effects the axiom of the nature.

451 Gl.: being unobscured by anything whatsoever.

452 Gl.: distortions [themselves] are enlightenment.

453 Gl.: since it is without diffusion.

454 Gl.: since it is unoriginated.

455 Although thirty-eight characteristics are mentioned, I have only been able to enumerate thirty-six.

456 *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 106.2–6.

457 Gl.: It is unseen up to *Mahāyoga*.

458 Gl.: of those implementing imaging.

459 Gl.: since, being intrinsic awareness, it is non-referential.

460 Gl.: being indefinite as regards its characteristics.

461 Gl.: (1) Cutting through the range of expression, it is indescribable. (2) It is psychically without action.

462 Gl.: being the expanse without extremes.

463 Gl.: its depths being veritably profound.

464 Gl.: to another as being similar to anything.

465 *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 111.3–114.2.

466 Gl.: suchness [cannot] be grasped as being just this.

467 Gl.: being without the action of looking, it is unseen.

468 Gl.: Since it is one's integral identity, it is as if it cannot be seen through one's eyes.

469 Gl.: Since the essence is like this, the difference is between realization and non-realization.

470 Gl.: Being thus free from limitations, existence is empty.

471 Gl.: since it is the enlightened mind.

472 Gl.: Such is the faculty of the essence.

473 Gl.: If an essence is grasped, it is because everything is the enlightened mind. It is inconceivable and unceasing both in terms of [the essence and] the absence of an essence.

474 In the Tibetan text there is but a single gloss, which is to be read as linking both sentences. As this could not adequately be rendered into English, I have had to split up the gloss in two parts in the translation.

475 Gl.: There is a difference in the accomplishment according to whether [the faculties] are outstanding or middling.

476 Gl.: i.e., neither abandoning nor dissociating from an essence.

477 Gl.: i.e., it is known as an essence.

478 Gl.: like stars appearing in a limpid lake.

479 Gl.: being liberated from limitations.

480 Gl.: being intrinsic illumination.

481 Gl.: since it is that which originates.

482 Gl.: as an essence.

483 Gl.: as a name.

484 Gl.: Since it is together with nothing, it cannot be picked out in terms of designations. Being dissociated without relinquishing anything, everything is thusness. Therefore, since accomplishments and the phenomena of reified entities are one, whatever essence is examined in terms of designations and reified entities is essentially unchanging.

485 Gl.: Due to phenomena's beingness, intrinsic awareness glides along.

486 Gl.: without coming or going.

487 Gl.: since it is everything.

488 Gl.: i.e., without going [anywhere].

489 Gl.: since it pervades everything.

490 Gl.: in terms of objects.

491 Gl.: as quintessential enlightenment.

492 Gl.: with regard either to the universe or its inhabitants.

493 Gl.: of birth, old age, sickness, and death.

494 Gl.: having gone everywhere.

495 Gl.: intrinsic awareness being anywhere.

496 Gl.: everything being clear.

497 Gl.: who would rival with it.

498 Gl.: as the essence of the awakened bodies and wisdoms.

499 Gl.: pervading all reified entities.

⁵⁰⁰ Gl.: in thusness, there is nothing to obtain.

⁵⁰¹ Gl.: i.e., its limits.

⁵⁰² The NGM version reads, “Since its depths cannot be found, it is profound. Since it is unfathomable, it is secret.”

⁵⁰³ Gl.: because the essence is difficult to grasp.

⁵⁰⁴ Gl.: for a viewer.

⁵⁰⁵ Gl.: throughout cyclic existence and transcendence.

⁵⁰⁶ Gl.: The essence [is without] any limitations whatsoever.

⁵⁰⁷ Gl.: Since the principal body, which is to be accomplished, is non-dual.

⁵⁰⁸ Gl.: without having relinquished the continuity of conceptions.

⁵⁰⁹ Gl.: suffusing everything.

⁵¹⁰ It should be recalled that the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term Buddha has the sense of “dispelling [of afflictions] cum unfolding [of awakened bodies and wisdoms].” Whereas the Sanskrit term *buddha* carries with it the sense of “awakening” (or, when used as an epithet, of “the Buddha”), the Tibetan interpretation as *sangs-rgyas* implies the idea of a simultaneous process of dispelling cum unfolding. Cf. [Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity*](#), p. 14.

⁵¹¹ Gl.: for the origination of all phenomena.

⁵¹² Gl.: [including] all the Victorious Ones and the phenomena of the path.

⁵¹³ Gl.: of all the four [classes of] Victorious Ones.

⁵¹⁴ Gl.: of the Victorious Ones without decline throughout the three times.

⁵¹⁵ Gl.: Being uncreated by anyone, it pivots on nothing.

⁵¹⁶ Gl.: Because it is an uninterrupted continuum, it is independent.

TN: The expression *rang-par* is a colloquial idiom connoting “independence” (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication).

⁵¹⁷ Gl.: There is no trespassing against suchness, even if one writhes about with one’s head upside down, rolling around.

TN: A phrase very similar to this gloss appears in C 351.1 and in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Byang-chub sems bde-ba ’phra-bkod-kyi don-’grel*](#), in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 309.5–6. I have emended *’bre-log* to *’gre-log* and *gar-’dres* to *gar-’gres*.

⁵¹⁸ Gl.: All examples may be held for suchness.

⁵¹⁹ Gl.: in terms of all its qualities.

⁵²⁰ Gl.: on the path.

- ⁵²¹ Gl.: by looking at it, one does not lack satiation.
- ⁵²² Gl.: I.e., all that is expressed is spontaneously accomplished.
- ⁵²³ Gl.: Being without objective scope, it is intrinsically clear.
- ⁵²⁴ Gl.: I.e., it is compatible with the thoughts of those to be tamed.
- ⁵²⁵ Gl.: I.e., its actions are unchanging.
- ⁵²⁶ Gl.: Having reached all objective phenomena, it is non-dual.
- ⁵²⁷ Gl.: as one's integral identity without objective scope.
- ⁵²⁸ Gl.: arising however it is looked at.
- ⁵²⁹ Gl.: [of things] in their diversity.
- ⁵³⁰ Gl.: as a fruition of those on the path.
- ⁵³¹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 143.1–2.
- ⁵³² Ibid., p. 149.5–6.
- ⁵³³ Ibid., pp. 245.3–246.4.

⁵³⁴ 'Gro-ba bzang-mo is the name of a famous Tibetan opera as well as of the play's heroine. The daughter of an elderly priest from the Mon district, 'Gro-ba bzang-mo is forcefully married to the king. Unable to bear the conspiracies of the demoness Hwa-shang-ma, she departs for the land of the sky-farers. Her son and daughter survive various plots prepared by the demoness, and the son, upon growing up, finally succeeds in killing her. See Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, pp. 687–688. This casual reference to what seems in this context to be a dramatic performance of the story is highly interesting, especially since Tibetan opera is generally traced no earlier than Thang-stong rgyal-po (15th century). Cf. Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy, *Le Théâtre Ache Lhamo: Jeux et enjeux d'une tradition tibétaine*, Leuven: Peeters, 2017, pp. 74–78, 91–102, 161–162 (for a historical perspective on Tibetan opera) and 258–259 (on 'Gro-ba bzang-mo specifically).

⁵³⁵ This means that he does not cognize their being apparent and their nonexistence as two separate realities.

⁵³⁶ Gl.: Whether actually perceived or seen as increasing omens in dreams, one is not anxious due to evil devils or suffering, nor does one fear Māra, nor birth and death. One is not weary due to cyclic existence, and one unites sensual enjoyment with the open dimension, without having faith in words.

⁵³⁷ Cf. the translation of this sentence in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 191, n. 27.

⁵³⁸ Gl.: efficiency refers to meditation.

TN: *mtha'* must here be taken to be short for *las-kyi mtha'*.

⁵³⁹ Gl.: This is an example of the view.

⁵⁴⁰ Gl.: This is taught as the system of meditation and the common crucial points.

⁵⁴¹ Meinert's emendation of *lhang* to *lha* seems accurate; I have further added the terminative particle *-r*, i.e., *lhar*. Cf. [Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*](#), p. 265, n. 690.

⁵⁴² gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *Man-ngag rgum-chung*, in TD, vol. 211, p. 770.2; [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), pp. 84–85.

⁵⁴³ *Kha-na med* is defined as “useless” in [Chos-kyi grags-pa, *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*](#), p. 70.

⁵⁴⁴ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *Man-ngag rgum-chung*, in TD, vol. 211, p. 770.2; [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), pp. 84–85.

⁵⁴⁵ Three types of conduct are arrived at by eliminating “sitting” (*'dug-pa*; Skt. *niṣadyā*) from the four types of conduct mentioned in [Chapter 2](#), note 77.

⁵⁴⁶ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 452.3.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 452.4.

⁵⁴⁸ Citation untraced in *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 2–617.

⁵⁴⁹ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *Man-ngag rgum-chung*, in TD, vol. 211, p. 770.2–3; [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), pp. 84–85; cf. [Norbu, *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung*](#), pp. 100–101 (the latter corresponds in part only).

⁵⁵⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 452.3–4. The NGM version reads, “Whoever rectifies through craving the religious path, / Thereby contaminates his body through rectification.”

⁵⁵¹ The point is that, whether one stays in the wilderness or in a town, to justify either through verbal argumentation is unsuitable since it merely increases conceptual activity.

⁵⁵² *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 452.4–5.

⁵⁵³ This means that though their view is shallow and lacks the profundity of realization, they brag about it to all and sundry.

⁵⁵⁴ Gl.: This is knowledge.

⁵⁵⁵ Unidentified source. This statement could not be traced in [sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs, *lTa-ba'i rim-pa bshad-pa*](#), in NKD, vol. 23/'a, pp. 361–369. The *bKol-mdo* is mentioned earlier in §6.1.4 (C 201.2). Regarding this text, see [Chapter 6](#), note 68.

⁵⁵⁶ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 108.6–109.2.

⁵⁵⁷ Unidentified source.

⁵⁵⁸ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 365.3–5.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 364.2–3.

⁵⁶⁰ Gl.: While fluctuating, one maintains that one is a Buddha.

⁵⁶¹ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), pp. 203–205, n. 79.

⁵⁶² Gl.: It should be known that, in knowledge, there is nothing to rest.

⁵⁶³ Gl.: In the absolute, all designations are the path of enlightenment.

⁵⁶⁴ Gl.: Without inhibiting any of the six doors, the objects of appearance are loose and without thought.

⁵⁶⁵ Gl.: Being liberated from the three limitations, one is free from objects. Having realized these words and incidentally meditated on them, you must practice! Intrinsic awareness will intrinsically shine forth.

TN: For the three limitations, see [Chapter 1](#), note 107.

⁵⁶⁶ This passage (“Because absolute meaningfulness [. . .] free from thematic focus”) indicates that when meditating correctly the previously listed nine views concerning the ground (§7.1.2) are integrated in the *yogin*’s realization.

⁵⁶⁷ Gl.: because it is without duality and difference.

⁵⁶⁸ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 808.1; [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 107.

⁵⁶⁹ Gl.: at the time of being a person on the path meditating.

⁵⁷⁰ Gl.: This is called the time of dwelling.

⁵⁷¹ Citation untraced in *rMad-du byung-ba*.

Gl.: Since it is merely labeled in all the pith instructions as being continuous, [absence of recollection] appears as awareness.

TN: The translation of this gloss is tentative.

⁵⁷² Unidentified source.

⁵⁷³ *rNal-’byor grub-pa’i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 104.5–6.

⁵⁷⁴ Gl.: This is maintained by Ācārya gSal-ba rgyal.

TN: This personage is an Indian master also known as gSal-ba’i rgyan (Prakāśālamkāra) and bDe-ba gsal-mdzad (Sukhodyotaka), who is connected to the lineage of the *dGongs-pa ’dus-pa’i mdo* and who was one of gNubs-chen’s teachers. See [Dalton, *The Gathering of Intentions*](#), p. 70.

⁵⁷⁵ Note that *phol-ba* is archaic for *rtogs-pa*. See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi’i gur-khang*, p. 58.

⁵⁷⁶ Citation untraced in *rGya-mtsho klong*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 370–415.

⁵⁷⁷ Gl.: This is maintained by the nun Ānandā.

⁵⁷⁸ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1, p. 421.2; see also *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 89.4; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 159; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 17.

⁵⁷⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 178.2–3; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 45.

⁵⁸⁰ When recognized, concepts liberate upon arising (*shar-grol*), giving birth to wisdom. The notion of liberation upon arising is elucidated in Dowman, *Old Man Basking in the Sun*, pp. 126–127, 211. See also dPal-sprul Rinpoche's explanation in Jean-Luc Achard, *Le Docte et Glorieux Roi: Commentaire de Peltrül Rinpoche sur le Testament de Garab Dorje*, Paris: Les Deux Océans, 2001, pp. 43–46.

⁵⁸¹ Gl.: This is maintained by gSal-ba rgyal.

TN: Meinert notes that it is unclear whether or not this personage is identical to the preceptor of the first system of meditation mentioned in §7.2.2.3.1 (C 412.4). Cf. Meinert, *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre*, p. 268, n. 699. However, I consider it highly likely that we have in fact a single master teaching two approaches of meditation since the name gSal-ba rgyal (alias gSal-ba'i rgyan and bDe-ba gsal-mdzad) is sufficiently rare to exclude any confusion and since a similar case occurs with dGa'-rab rdo-rje, who in the section on the view is associated with two different views; cf. §7.1.2.2 (C 320.2) and §7.1.2.9 (C 375.6). See the table in Esler, "The Exposition of *Atiyoga* in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*," p. 110.

⁵⁸² *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 422.5; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 91.1; Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 160; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 23. This quote is also found in §3.3.1.4 (C 60.6).

⁵⁸³ The simile of the reflections appearing in water is also used by Klong-chen-pa; see Dowman, *Old Man Basking in the Sun*, p. 106.

⁵⁸⁴ Gl.: This is maintained by Buddhagupta.

⁵⁸⁵ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 175.5; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 41.

⁵⁸⁶ Gl.: Since it has all aspects, one cannot say that its apparent aspect is like this [or like that].

⁵⁸⁷ Gl.: This is maintained by Mañjuśrīmitra.

⁵⁸⁸ Citation untraced in Mañjuśrīmitra, *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag nges-par lung-bstan-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 108/tshe, pp. 386–438; in Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*; and in *Sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 592–645. However, it is found in the *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 26, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 97.5–6; cf. Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, p. 164; and Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 30.

⁵⁸⁹ Gl.: This is maintained by Vimalamitra.

⁵⁹⁰ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 89b.1–2. Cf. *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 601.5–7. Cf. the translation of this quotation in Wilkinson, *Beyond Secret*, p. 41.

⁵⁹¹ Gl.: This is maintained by Vairocana.

⁵⁹² Cf. *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 625.4–5.

⁵⁹³ Gl.: This is maintained by dGa'-rab rdo-rje.

⁵⁹⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 778.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 79.

⁵⁹⁵ Note that Guarisco translates this phrase: “For the one who unites with my body, there is no enlightenment and no meditation” (*nga yi lus su sbyor ba la/ byang chub med cing bsgom pa med/*), which is equally plausible.

⁵⁹⁶ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 185, n. 13.

⁵⁹⁷ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 780.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 81.

⁵⁹⁸ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 785.2–3; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 86.

⁵⁹⁹ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 187–188, n. 17.

⁶⁰⁰ Unidentified source.

⁶⁰¹ This alludes to the fact that one cannot prevent the taste of great bliss from occurring.

⁶⁰² Gl.: This is maintained by myself, the small venerable. One should resolve that all outer and inner phenomena are self-originated wisdom.

⁶⁰³ Gl.: Outwardly, there is no intellectual diffusion; inwardly, there is nothing to anticipate; in between [the two], there is nothing to rest—such is intrinsic clarity. Whatever misgivings or conceptions may derive from the experience of those on the path, these misgivings are clarified.

⁶⁰⁴ Although I have chosen to translate *bdag* as “identity,” thus interpreting it as short for *bdag-nyid*, it is also possible to understand it as “ownership” (*bdag-po*)—this would then be an allusion to the ground’s ownership of all phenomena.

⁶⁰⁵ Gl.: There are two modalities of non-contact: non-contact that is conducive and non-contact that is not conducive. (1) Non-contact that is conducive is non-contact through halting and pacifying the six gatherings of consciousness. [It consists of] non-contact of notions, non-contact of equanimity, and non-contact of the appearances that have been obstructed. In its essence, it is non-contact through non-discursiveness. (2) Non-contact that is not conducive is not experienced by grasping toward apprehension, hybridity, feelings, and notions.

TN: The translation of this gloss is somewhat tentative.

⁶⁰⁶ Gl.: since there is nothing above it.

⁶⁰⁷ Gl.: since it does not inhibit anything, whatever appears.

⁶⁰⁸ Gl.: since everything is complete in oneself.

⁶⁰⁹ Gl.: It holds sway over absolute meaningfulness.

⁶¹⁰ Gl.: since even when the three existences clash, it is unwavering.

⁶¹¹ Gl.: i.e., is all-knowing.

TN: The expression *yel-'phyo* (here rendered as “gliding”) can be glossed as follows: *yel* refers to a spacious attitude without particular discrimination, whereas *'phyo* signifies the mind’s gliding along, i.e., its all-pervading nature (Lopon P. Oyan Tanzin, personal communication); see also note 178. The association with omniscience is particularly apt since it is precisely when the mind is free from any discursive focus that it can pervade the nature of reality and hence be all-knowing.

⁶¹² Gl.: A thousand suns cannot chase after the sun of intrinsic awareness’ wisdom, which is without rise or decline.

⁶¹³ Gl.: It is a concentration that, being without partial division, does not divide anything.

⁶¹⁴ Gl.: since the cycle of effortful action is alpha-pure.

⁶¹⁵ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 420.7; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 89.1–2; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 159; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 16.

⁶¹⁶ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 406.1.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., p. 405.7.

⁶¹⁸ Gl.: since it is free from examined and examiner.

⁶¹⁹ Gl.: since it is without aspectual object.

⁶²⁰ Gl.: since intrinsic awareness is intrinsically clear.

⁶²¹ Gl.: since phenomena's beingness, just as it is, is one's own mind.

⁶²² Gl.: since one actually perceives intrinsic awareness in its primordiality and it is intrinsically clear.

⁶²³ Gl.: temporarily, since it is primordially clear.

⁶²⁴ Gl.: after having abandoned reified entities.

⁶²⁵ Gl.: since there is no aspect whatsoever.

⁶²⁶ Gl.: as being some absolute.

⁶²⁷ Gl.: This is because the beingness of phenomena is essentially such that there is nothing whatsoever aside it that could ruffle or distract it.

TN: The translation of this gloss is tentative. The Tibetan text reads, *logs nas chos nyid gcig gang gis mi g.yo ba ma yengs pa'i ngo bo bas/*.

⁶²⁸ Gl.: One deviates because of effortlessness.

TN: Here, effortlessness must be understood not as a transcendence of effort but merely as its opposite—hence, it still pertains to the realm of conceptual dualities.

⁶²⁹ Gl.: Conceptions are produced.

⁶³⁰ Gl.: It becomes the grasped [aspect] of the grasper.

⁶³¹ Gl.: It comes to be a subject.

⁶³² Gl.: under the power of grasping at duality.

⁶³³ Gl.: that punishment has come.

⁶³⁴ Gl.: Being fettered, suspicion occurs.

⁶³⁵ Gl.: due to conceptions.

⁶³⁶ Gl.: as soon as one shuts one's eyes, conceptions emerge.

⁶³⁷ I.e., a woman from Khams, the province of eastern Tibet.

⁶³⁸ Gl.: [to all those who hold that] it is through imaging anything that there is the residence of awakening, that there is the Buddha or complete awakening.

⁶³⁹ This, of course, refers specifically to the *tantras* of *Atiyoga*.

⁶⁴⁰ Gl.: i.e., concerning birth and death.

⁶⁴¹ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 819.6–7; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 120.

⁶⁴² *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 177.5; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 43.

⁶⁴³ Cf. *rDzogs-pa spyi-gcod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 635.2.

⁶⁴⁴ Unidentified source.

⁶⁴⁵ The Tibetan text gives the word *bodhicitta* as transliteration from Sanskrit.

⁶⁴⁶ On the tantric sense of Akaniṣṭha, see [Chapter 6](#), note 176.

⁶⁴⁷ Gl.: If, striving with diligence, one strives for equanimity, that is identified as a defect.

⁶⁴⁸ Gl.: These defects are such that they range from the *sTon-mun* and *Tsen-min* up to *Ati-* and *Anuyoga*, passing through *Mahāyoga*.

⁶⁴⁹ Gl.: saying that they are contraries.

⁶⁵⁰ Gl.: i.e., thinking of.

⁶⁵¹ Gl.: this is the diligence of non-action.

⁶⁵² The translation here is tentative, especially concerning the exact interpretation of *so-gzud* and *so-thub* in this context, both terms refer to farming (*so-nam*), with *so-gzud* being presumably an alternative spelling for *so-bsod*. Cf. [bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims](#), *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, pp. 975, 977.

⁶⁵³ Gl.: one demon [is missing].

⁶⁵⁴ Gl.: i.e., laziness.

⁶⁵⁵ Gl.: and the two obscurations [of the afflictions and of the knowable].

⁶⁵⁶ Gl.: This view holds exclusively to the existence of the adventitiously produced phenomena of the present; there is no future life, no deeds, no maturation, and no rebirth.

⁶⁵⁷ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 612.5; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 7 (English translation), 42 (commentary).

⁶⁵⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 572.4–6.

⁶⁵⁹ Gl.: [the flaws here] refer to the intellect's desiring equanimity.

⁶⁶⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 573.2–3.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., p. 575.4–5.

⁶⁶² *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 420.1–2; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 88.1–2; [Norbu and Clemente](#), *The Supreme Source*, p. 158; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 12.

⁶⁶³ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 602.6–7; *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 89b.6.

⁶⁶⁴ Cf. the NGM version, which reads, “Phenomena’s beingness is not associated with the causes of existence and nonexistence . . .” (*yod med rgyu la mi ltos chos nyid ni*).

⁶⁶⁵ This line is not attested in the NGM version.

⁶⁶⁶ Unidentified source.

⁶⁶⁷ This is a reference to the four limitations; see [Chapter 3](#), note 3.

⁶⁶⁸ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, v. 96, pp. 63 (English translation), 119 (Tibetan text).

⁶⁶⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 180.4–5; cf. [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 57.

⁶⁷⁰ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 83–84, pp. 62 (English translation), 119 (Tibetan text).

⁶⁷¹ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 90b.7–91a.1. Cf. *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 605.6–7.

⁶⁷² *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 178.3–4; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 46.

⁶⁷³ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 419.5–6; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 87.5; [Norbu and Clemente, *The Supreme Source*](#), p. 158; *Khyung-chen-gyi rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 540.1–2.

⁶⁷⁴ This text, briefly alluded to in §7.2.2.5 (C 424.3–4), appears to be no longer extant. It evidently does not refer to the *Mahāyoga*-style *Phur-'grel 'bum-nag*, despite a similarity in the designation of that text's title (which is held to represent the teachings of Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and Śīlamañju). Cf. [Boord, *A Bolt of Lightning from the Blue*](#), pp. xiii, 109.

⁶⁷⁵ Gl.: This deviation pertains to the completion phase.

⁶⁷⁶ Gl.: as one desires the production of bliss.

⁶⁷⁷ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 183.4–5; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 65.

⁶⁷⁸ Note that the version in the NGM reads *gzhi-med* (“there is no ground . . .”) instead of *ming-med*.

⁶⁷⁹ Unidentified source. The citation could not be found in the *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, in Wedemeyer, *Āryadeva's Lamp that Integrates the Practices*.

⁶⁸⁰ Gl.: This deviation pertains to the generation phase.

⁶⁸¹ Gl.: i.e., wrong imputation.

⁶⁸² Gl.: grasping at the genuine.

⁶⁸³ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 181.4–5; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 58.

⁶⁸⁴ I.e., the gods, humans, and serpent-spirits.

⁶⁸⁵ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 605.2–3; *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 90b.4–5.

⁶⁸⁶ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 90a.6. Cf. *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 604.2, where only the last line could be traced. However, the meaning of this line as given in the NGM version is different since it reads, 'byung 'jug med instead of 'byung 'jug go.

⁶⁸⁷ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 603.1; *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 89b.7.

⁶⁸⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 572.3–4.

⁶⁸⁹ Gl.: causing obstacles.

⁶⁹⁰ Gl.: it is purified through one's purposefulness.

⁶⁹¹ Gl.: [it is purified through] the absence of distraction or non-distraction.

⁶⁹² Six distractions are mentioned earlier in a citation from the *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 404.7–405.1 (there called *rNam-bkod*) in §6.2.2.4.1.4.2 (C 234): distraction due to natural objects, outward distraction, inner distraction, distraction due to signs, distraction due to apprehension, and distraction due to atrophy.

⁶⁹³ Gl.: Distraction concerns the apprehension of the meaning of *Mahāyoga* and *Anuyoga*, as well as the apprehension of the unclear meaning of *Atiyoga*.

⁶⁹⁴ Gl.: [it is purified] by knowing non-distraction.

⁶⁹⁵ Gl.: [it is purified] through certain confidence.

⁶⁹⁶ Gl.: It is purified through the absence of grasping something inward.

⁶⁹⁷ Gl.: It is purified through freedom from the notion of outward.

⁶⁹⁸ Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 1, p. 185, nn. 678, 681, 682, signals a parallel commentary to the quote just below from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung* in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, p. 558.4. The following differences should be noted: “desiring the occurrence of activities for the purpose of sentient beings” is replaced by “generating downheartedness concerning the purpose of meditation” (*bsgom-pa'i don-la yid-'byung skyed-pa*). Furthermore, “liking clamor” becomes no. 15 since no. 14 is given as “attachment to the joyful bliss of the taste of concentration” (*ting-nge-'dzin-gyi ro dga'-bde-la chags-pa*).

⁶⁹⁹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 574.3–4.

⁷⁰⁰ Gl.: since it is inherently unwavering.

⁷⁰¹ Gl.: since one's integral identity is radically without anything to clarify.

⁷⁰² Gl.: since non-duality is without anything to experience.

⁷⁰³ This explanation is added according to gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, p. 559.6.

⁷⁰⁴ Gl.: Being primordially clear, it is already accomplished.

⁷⁰⁵ Gl.: since it is without action.

⁷⁰⁶ Gl.: Mingling with intrinsic awareness, they are completely clear.

⁷⁰⁷ Gl.: since there is no greatness to draw forth.

⁷⁰⁸ Gl.: since phenomena's beingness is without essence.

⁷⁰⁹ Gl.: since there is neither self nor others.

⁷¹⁰ Gl.: since one is free from self-grasping.

⁷¹¹ Gl.: the intellect's [concepts] occur [and distract one] from meditation.

⁷¹² Gl.: since there is neither occurrence nor involvement.

⁷¹³ Gl.: since one is inherently free from [concepts].

⁷¹⁴ Gl.: This need not be taught to others. While [what was said concerning the] disparaging of others' views and the pretentiousness of one's own view can be trusted, these axioms [of *Atiyoga*] are generally cited from the pith instructions and so are a great cause of trust.

TN: The point of this gloss is to explain that one's trust in the superiority of the axioms of *Atiyoga* need not be seen to contradict what has been explained concerning the disparaging of others' views and the pretentiousness of one's own view. Indeed, without trying to convince others, one simply trusts in the superiority of the *Atiyoga* vehicle.

⁷¹⁵ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 616.3–6; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 9–10 (English translation), 56–57 (commentary).

⁷¹⁶ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 99–100, pp. 63 (English translation), 120 (Tibetan text).

⁷¹⁷ Gl.: These are general arguments.

TN: *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 574.4–5.

⁷¹⁸ The explanations in square brackets are from gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, pp. 559–560; they are quoted in Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 1, p. 187, nn. 688, 689, 690.

⁷¹⁹ Gl.: which is like one's own mirage.

⁷²⁰ gNyan dPal-dbyangs, *Man-ngag rgum-chung*, in TD, vol. 211, p. 770.1; [Karmay, *The Great Perfection*](#), pp. 83–85.

⁷²¹ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 109–110, pp. 64 (English translation), 120 (Tibetan text).

⁷²² *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 573.3–4.

⁷²³ Ibid., p. 574.4.

⁷²⁴ *Don-drug*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 697.4. This *Don-drug* is equivalent to the *sGom-pa don-grub*, itself identical to the third chapter of the *'Khor-ba rtsad-nas gcod-pa'i nyi-zla-dang mnyam-pa dri-ma med-pa'i rgyud*. See Liljenberg, “On the History and Identification of Two of the Thirteen Later Translations,” p. 54.

⁷²⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 350.4–5.

⁷²⁶ Gl.: They are neither inhibited, nor do they emerge.

⁷²⁷ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 406.3–5.

⁷²⁸ Gl.: showing the risks of the mistaken meditation of the *Yogācāra Mādhyamika*.

⁷²⁹ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 71.7–72.1.

⁷³⁰ Gl.: When one arrives at the unmistaken meaning, there [is no] object whatsoever.

⁷³¹ Gl.: i.e., beyond sinking and agitation.

⁷³² Gl.: i.e., there is nothing whatsoever to hold on to.

⁷³³ Gl.: i.e., in terms of individual particularities.

⁷³⁴ Gl.: with regard to anything whatsoever.

⁷³⁵ Gl.: It is non-discursive in its very non-discursiveness.

⁷³⁶ Gl.: [there are no] objects whatsoever.

⁷³⁷ Gl.: i.e., without apprehension.

⁷³⁸ Gl.: [it is without] shape or color.

⁷³⁹ Gl.: [since] mind [can occur as] the phenomena of appearance.

⁷⁴⁰ Gl.: that would pertain to all phenomena.

⁷⁴¹ Gl.: i.e., they are inseparable.

⁷⁴² If one adds the twenty-three characteristics listed here to the twelve found in the preceding quote from the *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, one arrives at thirty-five characteristics.

⁷⁴³ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 413.3–4.

⁷⁴⁴ Baroetto's insertion of a negative particle, emending *btang* to *ma-btang* (Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 261) seems unnecessary; cf. Meinert's translation, which would confirm the interpretation of the phrase proposed here, in [Meinert](#),

Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre, p. 275. Furthermore, my interpretation of the following phrase (*thugs rje chen po ye zin pa yang min*) differs both from Baroetto's (who emends *min* to *yin*) and from Meinert's (who does not seem to see the link between both phrases, signaled by the emphatic particle *ni* that follows *rig-pa*).

⁷⁴⁵ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 176.2–3; cf. Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 36.

⁷⁴⁶ Gl.: Since there is no deliberate action, it appears as anything.

⁷⁴⁷ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 608.3; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 4 (English translation), 24 (commentary).

⁷⁴⁸ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 610.4–5; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 5 (English translation), 32 (commentary).

⁷⁴⁹ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 612.1; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 6 (English translation), 41 (commentary).

⁷⁵⁰ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 615.2–3; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 9 (English translation), 51–52 (commentary).

⁷⁵¹ *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 625.1–2.

⁷⁵² *Srog-gi 'khor-lo*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 599.4–5.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 600–601.

⁷⁵⁴ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 56.2.

⁷⁵⁵ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 202, n. 69.

⁷⁵⁶ For the four types of conduct, see Chapter 2, note 77.

⁷⁵⁷ *bDe-'byams*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 619.3–4.

⁷⁵⁸ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 805.2–3; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 104.

⁷⁵⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 186.1–2; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, pp. 78–79.

⁷⁶⁰ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 187.3–4; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 81.

⁷⁶¹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 352.2–3.

⁷⁶² Unidentified source.

⁷⁶³ Gl.: in themselves.

⁷⁶⁴ Unidentified source. Citation untraced in *rGya-mtsho klong*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, pp. 370–415, even though this title is mentioned on p. 371.2 of the text.

⁷⁶⁵ Citation untraced in *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 4/nga, pp. 187–245.

⁷⁶⁶ Cf. the translation of this passage in [Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*](#), p. 195, n. 46.

⁷⁶⁷ Gl.: pertaining to one's deeds.

⁷⁶⁸ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 98, 97, pp. 63 (English translation), 120 (Tibetan text). Note that here the verses are given in reverse order.

⁷⁶⁹ Gl.: The six are Kakuda Kātyāyana, Ajita Keśakambala, Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, Maskarī Gośālīputra, Nirgrantha Jñātiputra, and Sañjayī Vairāḍīputra.

TN: Their Sanskrit names are given according to Negi, *Dharmasaṅgraha-Kośaḥ*, p. 115. These six heretical teachers were contemporaries of the Buddha. The latter criticized their teachings because they were unable to lead to release from cyclic existence. According to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* (*sutta* no. 2, PTS edition: I, 52–59), their respective doctrines can be summarized as follows: Kakuda Kātyāyana taught that various entities exist as uncreated and indestructible monads, so that one cannot talk of killing anyone but merely of inserting a blade in the space between these monads. Ajita Keśakambala maintained the doctrine of nihilism, according to which there is no consciousness that can be said to survive death. Pūraṇa Kāśyapa held that virtuous and non-virtuous deeds have no karmic effect. For Maskarī Gośālīputra all of man's actions are predetermined by fate, so there is no free will. These four teachers completely denied karmic retribution. While Nirgrantha Jñātiputra accepted karmic cause and effect, he maintained that self-mortification is the way to release. Finally, Sañjayī Vairāḍīputra would not commit to any position whatsoever. See Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, pp. 93–97; also Anukul Chandra Banerjee, *The Splendour of Buddhism*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1991, pp. 6–11.

⁷⁷⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 406.6.

⁷⁷¹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 363.3.

⁷⁷² Unidentified source.

⁷⁷³ This refers to the seventh month of the Tibetan lunar calendar, called Śrāvaṇa in Sanskrit and Gro-bzhin in Tibetan, which falls in

August–September. Cf. Cornu, *L’astrologie Tibétaine*, p. 161; [Monier-Williams](#), *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 1097; [Duff](#), *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, s.v. *gro bzhin zla ba*.

⁷⁷⁴ Usually, three assemblages are counted, these being the three humors of Tibetan medicine: wind (*rlung*), bile (*mkhris-pa*), and phlegm (*bad-kan*). If blood (*khrag*) is added to these three, we have four types of diseases, as mentioned in the *Bya-khyung glog ’gyu’i las-kyi rgyud* studied in Gregory Hillis, “*Khyung* Texts in the *rNying ma’i rgyud ’bum*,” in Helmut Eimer and David Germano (eds.), *The Many Canons of Tibetan Buddhism: Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000*, Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 313–334, esp. p. 329. Alternatively, the expression “four assemblages” (*’du-ba rnam-bzhi*) could signify the four elements: earth, water, fire, and air.

⁷⁷⁵ Kumāra Jīvaka was a physician who was a contemporary of the Buddha. He became a follower of the Buddha’s doctrine and the Buddha’s personal physician. The *Jīvaka-sutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya* (*sutta* no. 55, PTS edition: I, 368–371), which concerns meat eating, is addressed to him; see Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, pp. 474–476.

⁷⁷⁶ *Khyung-chen ldings-pa*, in NGT, vol. 1/ka, p. 422.7; *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, ch. 22, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 91.3; [Norbu and Clemente](#), *The Supreme Source*, p. 160; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 25.

⁷⁷⁷ It should be noted that in Tibetan the expression *’dod-spyod* (translated as “enjoyment of desirables”) has the connotation of sexual enjoyment.

⁷⁷⁸ *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 179.5; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 49.

⁷⁷⁹ *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 184.1–2; cf. [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 70.

⁷⁸⁰ Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” pp. 143 (English translation), 146 (Tibetan text).

⁷⁸¹ Citation untraced in *bDe-ba phra-bkod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 621–624; and in *Nor-bu ’phra-bkod rang-gi don thams-cad gsal-bar byed-pa’i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 712–777. However, it is found in [gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes](#), *Byang-chub sems bde-ba ’phra-bkod-kyi don-’grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe, p. 323.3–4. Here are gNubs-chen’s comments on these verses (p. 323.4–5): “Having encountered the depths of self-originated wisdom, whatever enjoyments one engages

with while going about, lying down, sitting, or standing, there is nowhere to deviate insofar as they have already ripened as the behavior of genuineness.” The Tibetan reads, *rang byung ye shes gting phyin par mjal bas 'gro nyal 'dug sdod longs spyod du spyod pa ril la spyad kyang gol ba med de yang dag pa'i mdzad spyod nyid du smin zin to/*.

⁷⁸² *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, pp. 608.6–609.1; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 4 (English translation), 25–26 (commentary).

⁷⁸³ Cf. *rDzogs-pa spyi-gcod*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 635.6–7.

⁷⁸⁴ Liljenberg, “On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*,” pp. 151 (English translation), 154 (Tibetan text).

⁷⁸⁵ The phrase *yan du khye* (translated as “free-floating”) is highly problematic and is not readily intelligible. Liljenberg (*ibid.*, p. 151) suggests “roams freely” as a possible translation. This makes good sense since the related expressions *yan pa* and *yan du chug* mean “to roam”; see Chos-kyi grags-pa, *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, p. 790. Cf. Baroetto (*La dottrina dell’atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 279), who proposes to emend *khye* to *khyer*.

⁷⁸⁶ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 791.3–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, pp. 92–93.

⁷⁸⁷ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 833.6–834.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 132.

⁷⁸⁸ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 830.7–831.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 130.

⁷⁸⁹ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 215, n. 103.

⁷⁹⁰ This refers to the eighth month of the Tibetan lunar calendar, which falls in September–October. It is ruled by the Pegasus constellation (*khrooms*; Skt. *bhādrapada*). Cf. Cornu, *L’astrologie Tibétaine*, p. 161; Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 752; Duff, *The Illuminator Tibetan-English Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, s.v. *khrooms*.

⁷⁹¹ It is not quite clear to me why the ephemeral clarity of the fruition should be likened to the full moon of the middling month of autumn: the moon at that time appears in its full splendor. Perhaps part of the difficulty lies in a lost phrase, as the sentence gives the impression of being incomplete.

⁷⁹² For the four types of birthplaces, see Chapter 4, note 363.

⁷⁹³ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 455.7–456.1.

⁷⁹⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 818.1–2; [Guarisco](#), *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 118.

⁷⁹⁵ *Kun-tu bzang-po che-ba-la rang-gnas-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 4/nga, p. 216.3–6.

⁷⁹⁶ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 129–131, pp. 66 (English translation), 121 (Tibetan text).

⁷⁹⁷ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 618.1–2; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 11 (English translation), 62 (commentary).

⁷⁹⁸ Citation untraced in Vimalamitra, *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug rgyud-kyi 'grel-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 109/dze; and in *Kun-tu bzang-po klong-drug-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 12/na, pp. 394–467.

⁷⁹⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 188.1–2; [Dowman](#), *Eye of the Storm*, p. 82.

⁸⁰⁰ *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGD, vol. 6/cha, fol. 90a.7. Cf. *Nam-mkha'i rgyal-po*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 604.4, where the second line is not attested.

⁸⁰¹ Cf. *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 618.4; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 11 (English translation), 64 (commentary).

⁸⁰² Unidentified source.

⁸⁰³ This sense of *skyr-ba*, the perfective form (*bskyur-ba*) of which is given here, is attested in bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *dNgos-grub 'dod-'jo*, p. 404.3, edited and translated in [Dudjom Rinpoche](#), *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments*, pp. 39–40.

⁸⁰⁴ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 450.7–451.2.

⁸⁰⁵ Gl.: This is only if one has misgivings about being nauseous.

⁸⁰⁶ Note that Baroetto emends *sel* to *bskyed* (Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atīyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 291). Although he bases himself on the *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, p. 197.6, the emendation seems unnecessary, since the sentence makes perfect sense as it stands.

⁸⁰⁷ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 451.5–452.1.

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 452.5–453.1.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 453.1–7.

⁸¹⁰ Gl.: through mental effort.

⁸¹¹ Gl.: from concentration.

⁸¹² Gl.: i.e., apprehension.

⁸¹³ Gl.: It is without the six distractions.

TN: For the six distractions, see note 692.

⁸¹⁴ Gl.: i.e., without sinking and lethargy.

⁸¹⁵ Gl.: It appeases discursive grasping.

⁸¹⁶ Gl.: since one does not think.

⁸¹⁷ Gl.: It is detached from wealth and substances.

⁸¹⁸ Gl.: from any inner flaws.

⁸¹⁹ Gl.: Due to diligence, one's three doors do not contradict the doctrine.

⁸²⁰ Gl.: [through] the means relating to the view and through the pith instructions.

⁸²¹ Gl.: The greatness of its view is sapience.

⁸²² Gl.: Once it is gained, it is not dissociated from.

⁸²³ Gl.: The enlightened mind connects calm abiding and insight.

⁸²⁴ Gl.: [it is not] under the power of the objects of thought.

⁸²⁵ Gl.: [it transcends] the purpose of the reified entities of thought.

⁸²⁶ Gl.: Through the power of absolute meaningfulness, it is compatible with all.

⁸²⁷ Gl.: The man of religious conduct [makes evident] the conduct of others.

⁸²⁸ Gl.: in terms of its conduct.

⁸²⁹ Gl.: It is one's own mind that one takes as witness.

⁸³⁰ Gl.: There is neither self-grasping nor pride.

⁸³¹ Gl.: It unites agreeably.

⁸³² Gl.: Everything [is appeased] in intrinsic awareness.

⁸³³ Gl.: i.e., [without] hatred and anger.

⁸³⁴ Gl.: Throughout all directions, it is the outstanding accomplishment.

⁸³⁵ Gl.: i.e., the fruition.

⁸³⁶ Gl.: It desires nothing whatsoever.

⁸³⁷ Gl.: for any of the objects of desire.

⁸³⁸ Gl.: Anything is sufficient.

TN: Here "complacent" (*chog-'dzin*) must be understood in a positive sense akin to contentment (*chog-shes*).

⁸³⁹ *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 189.2–3; [Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*](#), p. 73.

⁸⁴⁰ Citation untraced in *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 2–617.

⁸⁴¹ *Sems-bsgom-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 603.3–4. Note that a somewhat abbreviated form of these lines in seven-syllabic meter is found in [gNyan dPal-dbyangs](#), *mTha'-yi mun-sel sgron-ma*, in NKJ, vol. 82/zu, p. 1049.4.

⁸⁴² Note that *phywad-chad* has been emended to *phyang-chad*, which is archaic for *thag-chad* (“resolution”). See [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring](#), *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 333.

⁸⁴³ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 367.2–368.2.

⁸⁴⁴ The “gateway of speaking” (*smra-ba'i sgo-mo*) is an epithet of the mouth. See [Negi](#), *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 10, p. 4655.

⁸⁴⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 429.1–430.3.

⁸⁴⁶ Unidentified source.

⁸⁴⁷ This passage is very difficult to understand, so the translation is tentative. In particular, the words *teg-teg* (rendered as “accurate”) and *yeng-yeng* (rendered as “distraction”) are not easy to interpret—they would appear to be onomatopoeia.

⁸⁴⁸ On the difference between the awareness-holder of spontaneous presence and the stage of Samantabhadra, see [Esler](#), “The Fruition in a Comparative Perspective,” p. 180.

⁸⁴⁹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 431.5–7.

⁸⁵⁰ Gl.: From here onward there is no itching, something that does not [occur] on the lower [vehicles].

⁸⁵¹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 433.2–436.1.

⁸⁵² Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 120–122, pp. 65 (English translation), 121 (Tibetan text).

⁸⁵³ Gl.: Being without stupidity, even if one sees a blazing ogress, one does not suffer.

⁸⁵⁴ Gl.: i.e., to the daughter of the gods.

⁸⁵⁵ Unidentified source.

⁸⁵⁶ *Don-drug-pa*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 697.5–6.

⁸⁵⁷ Baroetto’s emendation of *lung* to *rlung-tshub* (Baroetto, *La dottrina dell’atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 322) seems unnecessary, providing we take *lung* to signify “vale” as done here.

⁸⁵⁸ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 574.5–6.

⁸⁵⁹ Although some of these may, on superficial examination, seem to be positive indications, they are all characterized by a sense of spiritual pride. It is as reflections of ego-grasping that they are called the scopes of Māra.

⁸⁶⁰ Gl.: Having become an illuminator, one [thinks that one] is a bodhisattva.

⁸⁶¹ Gl.: To one's psyche, all is seen as lambent.

⁸⁶² Gl.: i.e., [to see] a great light.

⁸⁶³ Gl.: fancying that one has this capacity.

⁸⁶⁴ Gl.: i.e., to see light occurring in the ten directions.

⁸⁶⁵ Gl.: At times, certainty is actualized, and one [accomplishes] the purpose of all wandering beings unimpededly; that is to say, one's capacity is equalized.

⁸⁶⁶ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, pp. 574.6–575.4.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 575.5.

⁸⁶⁸ Unidentified source. The citation could be found neither in Mañjuśrīmitra, *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag nges-par lung-bstan-pa*, in NKJ, vol. 108/tshe, pp. 386–438, nor in any of the following sources: *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-po-che sgron-ma 'bar-ba'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 5/ca, pp. 267–338; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag rin-chen 'phreng-ba*, in NGM, vol. 7/ja, pp. 659–739; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag khyung-chen lding-ba*, in NGM, vol. 8/nya, pp. 19–22; *Byang-chub sems-kyi man-ngag seng-chen mchongs-pa'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 8/nya, pp. 23–25.

⁸⁶⁹ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, p. 427.5–7.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 428.2–3.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid., p. 430.3–5.

⁸⁷² Note that *yal yol mar mer* (C 480.5, M 346a.3–4) has been emended to *yam yom mer mer* according to Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atīyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 2, p. 330. Cf. the NGM version, which gives *yab g.yom mer mer*. Cf. [bTsan-lha ngag-dbang tshul-khrims](#), *brDa-dkrol gser-gyi me-long*, p. 837 (s.v. *yam mor byed pa*).

⁸⁷³ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 430.6–431.3.

⁸⁷⁴ This line is omitted in C 481.1 and M 446a.6.

⁸⁷⁵ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 431.7–433.2.

⁸⁷⁶ The species of fan palm referred to in the text is the *tāla* tree (also known as the palmyra), which yields a wide variety of useful products, including its fruit, timber, and leaves; the latter are used both as a surface for writing and as a fan. See [Monier-Williams](#), *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 444.

⁸⁷⁷ *rDo-rje bkod-pa*, in NGM, vol. 15/ba, pp. 436.4–437.4.

⁸⁷⁸ Following the NGM version, I have emended *snyegs* to *rked* (an alternative spelling of *sked*), meaning “halfway point.” See Skorupski, Dorje, and Nima, *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, pp. 128, 170; Goldstein, *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan*, pp. 42, 62.

⁸⁷⁹ Cf. Lamotte, *L’Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, ch. 5, §12, p. 253, where the inconceivable release (Skt. *acintyavimokṣa*) enables the bodhisattva to throw the third-order chiliocosm across a distance of universes as numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges and then to put it back in its place; all this takes place without the beings inhabiting this world noticing anything.

⁸⁸⁰ Of course, this echoes the famous stanza in the *Samantabhadra-caryā-praṇidhāna*, where the bodhisattva vows to teach the doctrine in all languages, whether those of gods, serpent-spirits, humans, etc. See *bZang-po spyod-pa’i smon-lam*, in *sDong-pos brgyan-pa zhes-bya-ba chos-kyi rnam-grangs*, in *Sangs-rgyas phal-po-che zhes-bya-ba shin-tu rgyas-pa chen-po’i mdo* (*Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaipulya-sūtra*), in KD, vol. 38, p. 718.5–6; *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, Edited by P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, India: The Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 2002, ch. 56, v. 18, p. 430 (Sanskrit). For an English translation from the Chinese, see Cleary, *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, p. 1513.

⁸⁸¹ *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 172.6; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 55.

⁸⁸² *Nam-mkha’-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 189.6; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 73.

⁸⁸³ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 609.2; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 5 (English translation), 27 (commentary).

⁸⁸⁴ *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 615.7; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 9 (English translation), 53 (commentary).

⁸⁸⁵ Cf. *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, p. 784.2–4; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 85.

⁸⁸⁶ *rNal-’byor grub-pa’i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 404.6.

⁸⁸⁷ Gl.: i.e., the truth.

⁸⁸⁸ Gl.: of obscurations.

⁸⁸⁹ Gl.: i.e., qualities.

⁸⁹⁰ Indeed, twenty meanings are given earlier, in the context of the view free from action and searching (§7.1.2.5.1, C 345.2–347.2).

⁸⁹¹ Cf. §6.4.2 (C 270.4, 271.2–4).

⁸⁹² *rTse-mo byung-rgyal*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 614.3–4; Valby, *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak*, pp. 8 (English translation), 49 (commentary).

⁸⁹³ *Rin-po-che kun-'dus*, in NGM, vol. 1/ka, p. 625.2–4.

⁸⁹⁴ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 836.7–837.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 136.

⁸⁹⁵ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 285.5–6.

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 285.2.

⁸⁹⁷ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 827.6–828.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 126.

⁸⁹⁸ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 218, n. 116.

⁸⁹⁹ Norbu and Lipman, *Primordial Experience*, vv. 9–13, pp. 55–56 (English translation), 115 (Tibetan text).

⁹⁰⁰ *rNal-'byor grub-pa'i lung*, in NGM, vol. 16/ma, p. 405.2–5.

⁹⁰¹ Baroetto, *La dottrina dell'atiyoga nel bSam gtan mig sgron*, vol. 1, p. 228, n. 812, points out that the *Mun-pa'i go-cha* explains the three roots here alluded to as the intellect (*blo*), discussion (*gros*), and means (*thabs*); see gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *Mun-pa'i go-cha*, vol. 2, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi, p. 17.2–3.

⁹⁰² *Nam-mkha'-che*, in NGM, vol. 3/ga, p. 175.4–5; Dowman, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 40.

⁹⁰³ *rMad-du byung-ba*, in NGM, vol. 2/kha, pp. 820.7–821.1; Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 121. This verse is found in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*; cf. Davidson, “The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī,” v. 135, pp. 35 (English translation), 59 (Sanskrit text); Wayman, *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī*, ch. 9, v. 17, p. 104.

⁹⁰⁴ One would expect this to refer to the vehicles of the auditors, of the independent buddhas, and of the bodhisattvas. However, considering the explanation given later, it must, rather, be taken to signify the threefold non-discursiveness explained in Chapter 3; see note 906.

⁹⁰⁵ Cf. the translation of this passage in Guarisco, *The Marvelous Primordial State*, p. 217, n. 110.

⁹⁰⁶ These are worldly non-discursiveness, supramundane non-discursiveness, and exalted non-discursiveness. See §3.2.2.2 (C 54).

⁹⁰⁷ These twenty meanings are explained in §7.1.2.5.1 (C 345.2–347.2).

⁹⁰⁸ Indeed, it will be seen (in §7.5.3) that gNubs-chen's method is first to let the proponents of each of the lower vehicles expound their reasons in establishing the superiority of their respective contemplative approach; he then answers each in turn, pointing out the flaws and limitations in the arguments invoked.

⁹⁰⁹ Gl.: in relative truth, intrinsic awareness is instantaneous non-dual wisdom.

⁹¹⁰ Gl.: i.e., there is one absolute truth.

⁹¹¹ The two purposes (*don gnyis*) are those relating to oneself (*rang-don*; Skt. *svārtha*) and others (*gzhan-don*; Skt. *parārtha*). They are accomplished by means of the two accumulations, which are those of wisdom (*ye-shes-kyi tshogs*; Skt. *jñānasambhāra*) and of merit (*bsod-nams-kyi tshogs*; Skt. *puṇyasambhāra*). These result in the principal body (*chos-kyi sku*; Skt. *dharmakāya*) and the body of form (*gzugs-kyi sku*; Skt. *rūpakāya*).

⁹¹² Gl.: the discreteness of the [two] truths.

TN: According to gNubs-chen, the *sTon-mun* fail to realize the inseparability of the two truths. While absolute truth—unborn emptiness—is realized during meditative equipoise, this realization is not integrated to the experience of appearances during post-attainment (Skt. *praṣṭhalabdha*). Hence, this one-sided pursuit of emptiness as being over and against appearances is compared to a hat, which can be put on and taken off as one enters into and emerges from meditative equipoise.

⁹¹³ This is perhaps a reference to the *lTa-ba-la shan chen-po rin-chen sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, in NGM, vol. 10/tha, esp. pp. 77.7–83.4 (= ch. 7 on the different vehicles).

8

Dedication of Virtue

[C 494.3–499.6; M 356b.1–360b.3]

8.1. Dedication of the roots of virtue

These roots of virtue are dedicated so that for myself and others non-imaging may be non-obstructed. In this borderland empire, this Tibetan country of red-faced ogres, the great vehicle of the secret *Mantrayāna* was once propagated and increased. By the strength of these conditions, at a time when there are many individuals who abide in sanctuaries in pursuit of enlightenment, may my injunctions found in this extensive commentary, *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, be propagated. By the potent force and blessings of trusting it, may those fortunate ones who engage in yoga, as well as all the *yogins* who are supreme persons entering [its practice], be free from the four [nets], i.e., the single net,¹ the half net,² the great net,³ and the net.⁴

Having purified, refined, and abandoned the obscurations, [495] may their veritably limpid conscious continuum meditate on the meaning of gaining the eye of sapience and thereby attain the stage of supreme wisdom. I dedicate [this virtue] so that, having thus

attained the fruition, they may guide infinite wandering beings to enlightenment and effect their purpose. May this *Contemplation of Yoga*, my teaching that comprises outer, inner, and special injunctions, be stable and unchanging throughout all time!

This is the dedication of the roots of virtue.

8.2. Concerning the vessels of this teaching

Well, now follows the teaching of the defects of the vessels, which concerns the individuals in whose hands this [teaching] can later be entrusted.

To those who are arrogant, of evil character,⁵ and sectarian,
Who are eloquent, unaffectionate, and egotistical,
Who are free from a [good] bone lineage, have great
attachment, and are crafty,
Who look toward human principles and do not listen to the
doctrine,⁶
Who are surrounded by wives, sons, and evil ruffians,
Who speak out their desires and are without pledges—
To these this should never be taught,
Even if one be thrust from the empire, be repelled, or have
one's heart removed.

Therefore, one should not spread [this teaching among such people]. Generally, everyone is the self-originated supreme Buddha, so one cannot referentially imagine good or bad vessels. However, just as [in the example of looking at] the fingertip [rather than at the moon], there are inconceivable [numbers of] individuals unaware of their intrinsic characteristic who may appear non-obstructedly. [496] If this [doctrine] is taught to them, it

is like giving nutritious food to someone with
concretion: it will be vitiated.

Those who are arrogant, egocentric, and self-posing,
Who are of evil character, of difficult conduct, and whose
words are not compelling,
Who are sectarian and whose grasping toward form is
veritably great,
Are not vessels for this teaching.
Regarding those having a taste for eloquence, who inveigle
[others],
Who are unaffectionate, and who are free from the mind of
longing,⁷
Those who think “Since I am great and a grandee, I am
high,”
And those who are free from a [good] bone lineage,
unaffectionate, and who trespass against [the injunctions]
before one’s very face—
Before these one should not so much as propitiate [the
deities], so that not even a marginal wind [might blow
their way].
Those who, bound by attachment and avarice,
Use their three doors’ cunning and craftiness [to obtain] the
pith instructions,
Are [like] a swindler in the king’s depository:
Knowing this, it is appropriate to perpetually relinquish
them.
Individuals who do not follow the doctrine
Are occupied with human principles and look toward their
relatives;
Owing to this, they do not gladden [the master].
They do not even listen to a corner of the injunctions.
Their wives are fierce ogresses,
And their own body’s sons have no sense of hierarchy.
Even if they undertake [to practice], they are unaffectionate
and surrounded by evil ruffians.
Though they desire the pith instructions, they are without
pledges;
They speak out without [distinguishing between] outer and
inner.
Having obtained the pith instructions, [such people] are
without durability;
They erase their sources⁸ to aggrandize themselves.

Even should the people of the empire assemble and take
one's life,
[497] One should never teach individuals such as these—
If one teaches them, one will fall into the adamantine hell.

Moreover,

Dismal students who are hungry
Carry the doctrinal parchments⁹ on their shoulders;¹⁰
They are like the uninformed seeking the yeast of white
sesame.¹¹
They are not profound, yet they indicate where [their
teachings] abide.
They look toward material things and are concerned about
appearances;
Such students who deliberately hope [for worldly
phenomena],
Because of their pride, arrogance, and haughtiness,
Do not request [the teachings] respectfully; desiring the
means,
Once they have obtained them, they claim to be grandees or
experts.
They do not resolve to repay [the master's] kindness,
But are quick for benefactions and hasty in searching for
them.
When you meet them, they desire the doctrine and then
spread it—
To such persons, you should never¹² teach.
Like [two] calves connected to each other tumbling into an
abyss,
Once both have fallen in the place of incineration and
obscurations,
An opportunity for release will be impossible.

It is further said that

Sangs-rgyas, the small venerable of gNubs,
Gladdened the oral lineage of the scholars of India, Nepal,
Tibet, Gilgit, etc.
He opened the door of the *paṇḍitas*' awakened mind
And obtained the pith instructions of the authoritative
scriptures of the pinnacle.

I, a beggar, the venerable of gNubs, Sangs-rgyas ye-shes
Rin-po-che, [498] distributed offerings to the many
scholars of the various empires, such as the scholars and
paṇḍitas of India, the king of Nepal Vasudhara, Lotsāwa
Che-btsan-skyes from Gilgit, etc. Having gladdened
them, the *paṇḍitas* were pleased and they imparted [their
pith instructions], which I obtained. Opening the door of
their awakened mind, I obtained the king of pith
instructions and the ultimate meaning of their intent. I
became the king of pith instructions. As it is said,

The empowerment was conferred on me by the gods and
ogres;¹³
Hence, I wrote down the meditative familiarization of my
own experience.

Once, as in the crystal cave¹⁴ I was lying down in
luminosity,¹⁵

While psychically repeating¹⁶ the number of incantations,
When my intellect was clear in phenomena's beingness,

The eight classes of gods and ogres conferred on me
their empowerment and clamored.¹⁷

Since those having the supracognitions have
commanded this to me, this has been composed for the
purpose of my sons, namely, sPa-gor¹⁸ Blon-chen

'phags-pa, etc., for those who are the holders of a bone lineage¹⁹ and who bear the indications [of realization], and for those sons who engage in the lineage of oral injunctions.

O sons, you supreme persons holding the bone lineage of the Victorious Ones,

It is by meditating perpetually and by relinquishing frivolity²⁰

[499] That you must practice, O heirs of your father!

O sons, entrust this [text] only to those who are successors of the family!

If it is given to the many, you will be born in the adamantine hell.

Having thus been enjoined, those who do not dare to let [this text] decline will transmit it personally in a lineage. If it is given to the many, one will be born in hell, and the secret door will become lax. Should it become well known²¹ among unrighteous persons,²² some will denigrate it, others will deride and blame it, whereas still others will obstruct and abolish it. Without understanding it, they will not reckon with nor listen to it.

That which is assembled here from other authoritative scriptures and pith instructions is an eye for those of later epochs; it is for the supreme *yogins*. Whoever has faith and belief in it will, by just hearing it, empty cyclic existence. By just believing in it, one will realize the beingness of phenomena. By just understanding it, one will be awakened.

May all those who subsequently engage with it abide on the stage of inseparability!

Of the extensive commentary called *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*, this is the eighth chapter, which teaches the dedication of the roots of virtue and the vessels [fit to receive this teaching].

¹ Gl.: pertaining to the *Mādhyamikas*.

² Gl.: pertaining to the auditors and independent victors.

³ Gl.: pertaining to ordinary persons.

⁴ Gl.: pertaining to the heretics.

⁵ Note that *phyi-lang* is archaic for *gshis ngan-pa*; see [rNam-rgyal tshe-ring](#), *Bod-yig brda-rnying tshig-mdzod*, p. 335.

⁶ The version of this verse appearing in the author's colophon (Colophons, §C.1.1.8, C 502.4) reads "injunctions" (*bka'*) instead of "doctrine" (*chos*).

⁷ Such persons lack the devotion necessary to open the heart and to render the mind receptive to the master's transmission. On the role of devotion as a catalyst for spiritual realization, see Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, *The Wish-Fulfilling Jewel: The Practice of Guru Yoga According to the Longchen Nyingthig Tradition*, Boston: Shambhala, 1988, pp. 51–57, 83; Ron Garry (tr.), *Wisdom Nectar: Dudjom Rinpoché's Heart Advice*, Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2005, pp. 47, 118–119; Thinley Norbu, *A Cascading Waterfall of Nectar*, Boston: Shambhala, 2006, pp. 165–166, 198–199; [Low](#), *The Collected Works of C.R. Lama*, pp. 122–123; Tülku Tsullo, *Manuel de la Transparation Immédiate*, pp. 169–170; and Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, London: Rider, 1992, pp. 133–149. Cf. also Philippe Cornu, "Le Yoga du Maître: La Pratique du Cœur dans le Bouddhisme Vajrayana et le Dzogchen," in *Connaissance des Religions*, nos. 57–59, January–September, 1999, pp. 266–286; and Robert Mayer, "Early Guru Yoga, Indigenous Ritual, and Padmasambhava," October 7, 2013, <http://blogs.orient.ox.ac.uk/kila/2013/10/07/early-guru-yoga-indigenous-ritual-and-padmasambhava/> (accessed November 9, 2017). See also, in a somewhat different yet related context, Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, "Guru-Devotion in the bKa' brgyud pa Tradition: The Single Means to Realisation," in Roger R. Jackson and Matthew T. Kapstein (eds.), *Mahāmudrā and the bKa'-brgyud Tradition*, PIATS 2006, Andiast,

Switzerland: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2011, pp. 211–255.

⁸ This includes both written sources and teachers.

⁹ Given as *dar-ma shog-shog* in the text.

¹⁰ There is a Tibetan tradition of carrying the scriptures on one's right shoulder while circumambulating a temple, a custom observed, for instance, during consecration ceremonies. It is very unlikely that this tradition would be the focus of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' criticism. Rather, "carrying the doctrinal parchments on one's shoulder" appears to refer to the ostentatious display of religious learning, done with the purpose of impressing the gullible.

¹¹ Given as *nyung-zhi* in the text (C 497.2), this appears to stand for *nyungs-zhi*, itself a synonym for *nyungs-kar*, signifying "white sesame"; it yields an expensive oil characterized by its mild taste (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, personal communication); cf. Tshe-brtan zhabs-drung, *Dag-yig Thon-mi'i dgongs-rgyan*, New Delhi: Champa Chogyal, 1969, p. 131; also Nima, *Bod-rgya tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, p. 958.

¹² Note that *nam-zhar* is archaic for *nam-yang*. See sKyogs-ston rin-chen bkra-shis, *Li-shi'i gur-khang*, p. 53.

¹³ This must be understood as referring to non-human protectors of the doctrine.

¹⁴ According to gNubs-chen's hagiographies, the crystal cave where this visionary experience occurred was located in Bodhgayā. See Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, *bKa'-ma mdo-dbang-gi bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*, pp. 164.6–165.2; *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, pp. 704–705.

¹⁵ This alludes to the mind's luminosity (*sems-kyi 'od-gsal*; Skt. *prabhāsvara-citta*): transcending the ordinary mind's conceptual processes, this state of luminosity is uncompounded and beyond karmic cause and effect. This most fundamental state of the mind becomes manifest at the time of death and at the moment of falling asleep, when the habitual psychic processes that obscure the mind's true nature fall away. Through the practice of specific yogas it becomes possible to recognize the dawning of the mind's luminosity as soon as it arises. See Philippe Cornu, *Les Évolutions de la Notion de Bar do: ses origines indiennes et son développement au Tibet*, PhD thesis, Paris: Université de Paris VII, 2005, pp. 190–194.

¹⁶ This psychic repetition (*vid-la bzlas-pa*), also known as the adamant repetition (*rdo-rje bzlas-pa*), is a particular type of incantation (Skt. *japa*), which involves the silent repetition of the spell

(Skt. *mantra*) in unison with one's breath; as can be seen from the passage, Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' practice had reached such a level that his incantation of the spell continued uninterrupted even during his sleep.

¹⁷ These lines appear (with some variants) in the *rGya-bo-che*, in a passage describing how gNubs-chen was given the name Sangs-rgyas ye-shes by Vajrapāṇi in a vision. Cf. *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 705.1–3.

¹⁸ The spelling “sPa-gor” is according to bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, *Chos-'byung*, p. 298.6. It refers to a place name, alternatively spelled “Pa-gor.” Our text gives “dPa'-bor” (C 498.5, M 359b.6), which seems to be an error.

¹⁹ Gl.: i.e., Khu-lung Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, Sru Legs-pa'i sgron-ma, and So Ye-shes 'byung-gnas.

TN: Note the following variants in *ibid.*, pp. 298–299: Sru-ston legs-pa'i sgron-me, So Ye-shes **dbang-phyug**.

²⁰ Here 'du must be taken as an abbreviation for 'du-'dzi (“frivolity”).

²¹ *Cha-yod* is attested with the sense “well known” in Goldstein, *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan*, p. 351.

²² The expression *mi-nag* (lit. “black people”) must be understood as referring to unrighteous persons who break their commitments. The same term occurs in the *rGya-bo-che* in a warning not to reveal the tantric teachings to those who break their pledges. Cf. *bKa'-shog chen-mo*, p. 738.4. I am grateful to Prof. Jacob Dalton for pointing this out to me (personal communication, December 11, 2012).

Colophons

[C 499.6–505.2; M 360b.4–365a.4]

C.1. Author's colophon

C.1.1. Summary

C.1.1.1. Chapter 1

First are the defects and qualities of the place, the making of a commitment, and the undertaking of the [preliminary] activities. In undertaking the preliminary activities, there are requirements and the relinquishing of psychic attachment to one's wealth and friends. [500] When one is weary of the sanctuary, one thinks of the defect consisting in the frivolity of towns. By recalling the meaning of natural solitude and the sanctuary's qualities, one purges oneself [of weariness].

C.1.1.2. Chapter 2

When approaching absolute meaningfulness, one should obtain the means¹ and great means.² Then there are the [four] compatible reliances, the repelling of [contrary] conditions, and the requisites. Because one's body is a ship, one should implement extensive [physical] treatments yet not become attached thereto. Then come

the defects of not meditating. Those with ample knowledge of the qualities [of meditation] should rest in equanimity [rather than implementing] righteousness.

C.1.1.3. Chapter 3

He who has accordingly come to a resolution with regard to absolute meaningfulness and comprehended its nature is like the king of predators. Abiding on being as it is, because he knows that thinking is an abyss, there is the non-imaging of the *Tsen-min* and of the *sTon-mun*, the thusness of inner non-discursiveness,³ and the non-discursiveness of spontaneous completeness;⁴ these distinctions should be assimilated as being like [the rungs of] a ladder.

C.1.1.4. Chapter 4

The *Sautrāntika* [*Madhyamaka*] meditating on emptiness indeed first meditates on the four immeasurables. He views and posits relative truth as illusory and posits that absolute truth is non-imaging. Some will generate insight after having meditatively familiarized themselves with calm abiding. Focusing their referential imaging, they rectify defects and pacify them, thereby integrating [calm abiding and insight]. Gradually traversing [the stages], they cleanse their obscurations and accrue the accumulations.

C.1.1.5. Chapter 5

The *sTon-mun* come to a resolution [concerning absolute meaningfulness] in the manner of [a person who] sees everything when he has gone to the peak of the king of mountains. Even as this approach [concerns] simultaneous integration, which is idle, unborn, and intrinsically clear, [501] in the state of absolute truth, one does not relinquish whatever defects are produced; it is maintained that the latter are self-originated and self-appeased. Hence, there is no [gradual] traversing [of stages]. Without [gradually] training, one treads [the stages] like the great *garuḍa*.

C.1.1.6. Chapter 6

As regards the inner [*Vajrayāna*], there is referential imaging, coming to a resolution [through the view], and meditating. Furthermore, there is mental rectification, which pertains to the gradual approach; in the simultaneous approach, rectification is a flaw. Then there occur the indications and signs of experience. One should not become attached to them; whatever omens occur in one's dreams, one should not be attached to them. Without each of the accumulations [having been accrued individually], they are accomplished as one, like an alchemical tincture [a drop of which suffices to transform all kinds of iron into gold]. [The fruition of *Mahāyoga*] is self-arising, like the sun.

C.1.1.7. Chapter 7

When one actually assimilates the state of the Great Completeness, there is nothing to posit; great absolute meaningfulness is intrinsically clear. Without there being anything to evaluate, great realization is free from involvement and is without meditation. Whatever defects occur, one's three doors are without rectification. To hold on to rectifying one's intrinsic mode is the dagger of obscuration. Since [suchness] is free from pauses, one neither wavers from nor emerges from it. Since this great state is the seminal nucleus, there is no conduct that discretely emerges from and enters into it; everything is the behavior of the Bliss-gone One. Being inherently free from anything to relinquish or accept, in relative truth⁵ mere recollection is not inhibited, yet there is no recollection. Being free from hope and misgiving, whatever omens in dreams or indications arise as [signs of] the warmth of experience, one is without any attachment toward them. [502] Since they are just like the signs appearing in the sky, the nature of spontaneous presence is like space.

C.1.1.8. Chapter 8

Once in this borderland empire
The great vehicle was propagated; by the strength of these
conditions,
There are many who abide in sanctuaries.
By the force of propagating these injunctions of mine,
May all abandon the four nets⁶ and,
Gaining the eye [of contemplation], attain the supreme
stage!
May they be guides for infinite sentient beings!
May the teachings be compelling for all time!

To those who are arrogant,⁷ of evil character, and sectarian,
Who are eloquent, unaffectionate, and egotistical,
Who are free from a [good] bone lineage, have great
attachment, and are crafty,
Who look toward human principles and do not listen to the
injunctions,⁸
Who are surrounded by wives, sons, and evil ruffians,
Who speak out their desires and are without pledges—
To these this should never be taught,
Even if one be thrust from the empire, be repelled, or have
one's heart removed.

Sangs-rgyas,⁹ the small venerable of gNubs,
Gladdened the oral lineage of the scholars of India, Nepal,
Tibet, Gilgit, etc.
He opened the door of the *paṇḍitas*' awakened mind
And obtained the pith instructions of the authoritative
scriptures of the pinnacle.
The empowerment¹⁰ was conferred on me by the gods and
ogres;
Hence, I wrote down the meditative familiarization of my
own experience.

O sons,¹¹ you supreme persons holding the bone lineage of
the Victorious Ones,
[503] It is by meditating perpetually and by relinquishing
frivolity
That you must practice, O heirs of your father!

O sons, entrust this [text] only to those who are successors
of the family!
If it is given to the many, you will be born in the adamantine
hell.

May this heart pledge of the emanated small venerable
Be held in the ears of one or two disciples!

It is complete. Let there be virtue! Auspiciousness!
Felicity!¹²

C.2. Editor's colophon

This was copied from a manuscript belonging to sMin-
gling mkhan-chen Dharmaśrī. The original was made
from a manuscript that belonged to the Jo-nang-pa
[master] rJe-btsun Kun-dga' snying-po.¹³

What is written here pertains to the matrix of
omniscient joy.¹⁴

This *Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga*,
composed by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, is
renowned as the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*.
Although the pagination is incomplete on the hundredth
folio,¹⁵ the meaning is intact.¹⁶ The fourth chapter
[explains] the system of Kamalaśīla, and the fifth
chapter clearly teaches the tradition of Hwa-shang
Mahāyāna. The first followers of *Mahāmudrā* in Tibet
said that these two systems are not *Mahāmudrā*. Later
on, at present there are those who would like
[*Mahāmudrā*] to be one with the system of Kamalaśīla.
Although they may think that they are both one and the
same, their cocoon will cave in [when confronted with]
the textual tradition. There is continuity between the

system of Hwa-shang Mahāyāna and the present-day
Mahāmudrā. Please consider this. May there be virtue!

1. Om svasti. You are, in your realization, the real likeness
of the primal Buddha,
Samantabhadra, provider of the elixir of the deathless stage,
[Bearer of the] garland of the drops of the ultra-profound
Holy doctrine of the definitive secret that in existence is
difficult to find.

[504] 2. Depending on this supreme *contemplation*¹⁷ of the
Victorious Ones,
You gained the good *eye* of supreme enlightenment:
You are a *lamp* clarifying the thick darkness of the three
existences,¹⁸
The only great light of sapience-wisdom.

3. For the authoritative injunctions of the masters, the
awareness-holders of the three lineages,¹⁹
You, Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, were the receptacle of their
awakened mind.
You retained the casket of gems,
Excellent drawing it forth for the purpose of those
fortunate ones of future generations, endowed with
outstanding faculties.

4. The doors of concentration of the gradual and
simultaneous approaches
You excellently opened with the precious key to
The hundred thousand *sūtras* and *tantras*—this adamant
tablet
Is a certain end to existence for those who see or hear it.

5. Among the awareness-holders of bygone days, you were
renowned as the wind,
But later, I ponder, you were almost sealed on the shores of
the sky.²⁰
At present, the omniscient master of Kaḥ-thog²¹
Has victoriously found this great treasure²² in the blissful
pure field.²³

6. It is in order to complete the intent of the awakened mind
of

The sovereign Vajradhara, Padma Vijaya,²⁴ that the great
dGe-legs rgya-mtsho²⁵
Sent forth his wealth, a hovering great cloud,
Gliding along the summer sky with the eminent thoughts of
the pure field's protectors (Skt. *kṣetrapāla*).

7. Regarding this great printing mechanism that
inexhaustibly provides the doctrine,²⁶
To excellently persevere in it emulates the snowy
mountains;
Through the Victorious Ones' and their heirs' great means
of thorough dedication,
I dedicate this [merit] in order to verily gladden the
profound dimension of my masters' [awakened mind].

8. May animate beings beyond enumeration and equal to the
sky
Obtain the bliss of contemplation, the joy of the Thus-gone
One:
In the empire of the principal body, the peace of utter
liberation,
May they attain the force of going forth in blissful ease!

9. May this way of the doctrine²⁷ increase without decline!
May those on this supreme path, whose great dexterity in
concentration
Is swifter than the sun and moon, actualize the absolute
truth,
And may the holder of gems²⁸ be pervaded by those of
supreme accomplishment!

10. Pacifying the torment of the decay of the universe and its
inhabitants
[505] And excellently prolonging the warmth of this
doctrine's blessings,
Just as with the new ears of corn in the fortunate age of
completeness,²⁹
May the auspiciousness of enjoying whatever one likes be
without decline!

Having been nurtured by the ambrosial speech of the great lord of refuge from Ze-chen holding the name Padma,³⁰ I, 'Jam-dbyangs blo-gros rgya-mtsho,³¹ the last among the subjects of the victorious master of Kaḥ-thog,³² being committed to the performance of the activities of 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse'i [dbang-po],³³ wrote down these words of aspiration. May there always be virtuousness!³⁴

¹ I.e., the gradual and simultaneous approaches.

² I.e., the approaches of *Mahāyoga* and *Atiyoga*.

³ I.e., *Mahāyoga*.

⁴ I.e., *Atiyoga*.

⁵ Note that *bri-ta* transliterates the Sanskrit *vr̥ta*, which means “obfuscating” but also denotes relative truth (Skt. *saṃvṛtisatya*).

⁶ The four nets are explained in the glosses (C 494.6) as pertaining, respectively, to the ordinary persons, to the heretics, to the auditors and independent victors, and to the *Mādhyamikas*.

⁷ This stanza appears in almost identical form in §8.2 (C 495.3–5).

⁸ The version of this verse appearing in §8.2 (C 495.4) reads “doctrine” (*chos*) instead of “injunctions” (*bka*’).

⁹ This stanza appears in §8.2 (C 497.5–6).

¹⁰ This stanza appears in §8.2 (C 498.3–4).

¹¹ This stanza appears in §8.2 (C 498.6–499.1).

¹² Given in Sanskrit: *maṅgalaṃ*.

¹³ I.e., Tāranātha (1575–1634).

¹⁴ Given in Sanskrit in the text: *sarvajñānanda-garbhasya lekhaṃ*.

¹⁵ This refers to the hundredth folio of manuscript β (sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī), on which basis the block print γ was prepared by 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros. See C, preface. Both C 199 (= folio 100a) and M 100a (respectively direct and indirect descendants of block print γ) have their pagination intact.

¹⁶ Although there occurs a slip in the pagination of manuscript β, none of the text has been lost.

¹⁷ The words given in ***bold italics*** make up the name of this treatise: *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*.

¹⁸ I.e., the gods, humans, and serpent-spirits.

¹⁹ The three lineages are the intentional lineage of the Victorious Ones (*rgyal-ba'i dgongs-brgyud*), the symbolic lineage of the awareness-holders (*rig-'dzin brda-brgyud*), and the individuals' aural lineage (*gang-zag snyan-brgyud*).

²⁰ This is a poetic way of saying that gNubs-chen's work was almost forgotten.

²¹ This is a reference to Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho (1880–1925), the founder of the seminary (*bshad-grwa*) at Kaḥ-thog monastery, who was one of 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros' masters. See [Nyoshul Khenpo, *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems*](#), pp. 297–298, 440.

²² I.e., the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.

²³ This seems to be a reference to Sukhāvātī, the blissful pure field of Amitābha, an allusion to the bKra-shis lhun-po library of the sixth Paṇ-chen bla-ma, Thub-bstan chos-kyi nyi-ma (1883–1937). When Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho visited bKra-shis lhun-po in 1919, he was instructed by an old woman identified as the protectress Ekajaṭī to go to the library, where he discovered a number of rare texts, including gNubs-chen's other major work, the *Mun-pa'i go-cha*. See [Dalton, *The Gathering of Intentions*](#), pp. 124–125. It is possible that the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* was discovered on the same occasion. See [sGo-chen sprul-sku gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, *gNam-lcags chos-'byung*](#), vol.1, p. 35.

²⁴ I.e., Ze-chen mKhan-chen Padma rnam-rgyal (1871–1926), who was both a teacher and student of Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho, and a teacher of 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros. See [Nyoshul Khenpo, *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems*](#), pp. 299, 440.

²⁵ This dGe-legs rgya-mtsho, about whom nothing seems to be known otherwise, was the benefactor who sponsored the carving of the woodblocks for block print γ. He was probably linked with Ze-chen monastery in one way or another.

²⁶ This alludes to the technique of xylographic reproduction: it is in order to fulfill the vision of his teacher, Ze-chen mKhan-chen Padma rnam-rgyal, that 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros prepared the block print γ of the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.

²⁷ I.e., the teachings expounded in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*.

²⁸ The “holder of gems” (*nor-’dzin*; Skt. *vasuṃdharā*) is an epithet of the earth. See [Amarasimha](#), *Amarakoṣa*, ch. 2, bhūmivarga, v. 3, p. 161; [Negi](#), *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 7, p. 2897.

²⁹ The age of completeness (*rdzogs-ldan-gyi dus*; Skt. *kṛtayuga*) is a term derived from Indian cosmology, where it represents the first of the four ages. The name indicates that during this golden period the four sublimities (*phun-tshogs sde-bzhi*)—viz., wealth (Skt. *artha*), marital love (Skt. *kāma*), the doctrine (Skt. *dharma*), and release (Skt. *mokṣa*)—were complete and that the human life span lasted ten thousand years. The image of the new ears of corn alludes to the fact that during this age food was abundant: sentient beings had no need to work for their subsistence and there was no notion of ownership. See Alex Wayman, “Male, Female and Androgyne per Buddhist Tantra, Jacob Boehme, and the Greek and Taoist Mysteries,” in Michel Strickmann (ed.), *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R.A. Stein*, vol. 2, Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1983, pp. 592–631, esp. pp. 594, 599.

³⁰ I.e., Ze-chen mKhan-chen Padma rnam-rgyal.

³¹ I.e., ’Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros.

³² I.e., Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho.

³³ ’Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros was considered the activity emanation of ’Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse’i dbang-po (1820–1892). See [Nyoshul Khenpo](#), *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems*, p. 296.

³⁴ Given in Sanskrit in the text: *sarvadā kalyāṇaṃ bhavatu*.

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¹ According to Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, it is probable that this remarkable dictionary was actually compiled by the brilliant scholar dGe-'dun chos-'phel but was subsequently recuperated by his Mongolian student Chos-grags and published under the latter's name. The introductory verses would give some clues supporting this hypothesis. Unfortunately, the above-mentioned Beijing edition does not reproduce these verses, and the older (Indian) edition, which contains the verses, gives no publication information (Kalinpong might be surmised as the place): Chos-kyi grags-pa, dGe-bshes (attributed to), *brDa-dag ming-tshig gsal-ba*, n.p., n.d., pp. 1–6. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that dGe-'dun chos-'phel helped dGe-bshes Chos-grags in the compilation of this dictionary. See Heather Stoddard, *Le Mendiant de l'Amdo*, Paris: Société d'Ethnographie, 1985, p. 332; cf. Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *The Madman's Middle Way: Reflections on Reality of the Tibetan Monk Gendun Chopel*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006, p. 42.

² See Arguillère, *Profusion de la Vaste Sphère*, pp. 176–177; also, [Martin, Tibetan Histories](#), p. 58.

³ This title is given by Namkhai Norbu in his edition of the text.

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