



A Glowing Light of Scripture and Reasoning

Lamp Illuminating the Essentials of the Four Seals that Authenticate the View

By

Gen Lamrimpa Ngawang Phuntsok

TRANSLATED BY GESHE GRAHAM WOODHOUSE

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Bodhicitta Land

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Translator's Introduction

Looking back on the days of my Buddhist training among Tibetans I feel fortunate to have been guided in my education by masters who had reached maturity in free Tibet, who had thrived for a large part of their education in the atmosphere of dialectic and spiritual endeavour in one of its great monastic universities, not in exile, but on the roof of the world. I treasure that distant personal link to how it used to be back then, to that old scholarship, set apart from modern concerns and catastrophes. The author of the text translated here, Gen Lamrimpa Ngawang Phuntsok (1922-1997), son of a poor family from Rongyul Nagteng, Gyalthang, was also one of the last generation to complete a considerable portion of their studies in free Tibet. He was a monk of Loseling College, Drepung Monastery, a classmate in fact of my first teacher of Buddhist philosophy in England, who remembered Gen Lamrimpa as an extraordinarily dedicated student and practitioner.

In contrast to my teachers in India and the west though, as the old order shattered Gen Lamrimpa remained in Tibet. He did not flee and somehow survived there all the rigours of the prolonged crisis, doing all he could, in the most fraught of circumstances and at great personal risk, to encourage others by keeping a little flame of Dharma, of civilization, of sanity glowing through the darkest of times.

Eventually I went to study Buddhist philosophy in Dharamsala, India, residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, centre of the Tibetan exile community. There my progress was at a snail's pace. How could I catch such a cascade, such an outpouring in an exotic foreign language of bright Dharma knowledge with just my own two bare hands? Debate was whirled swiftly along by my classmates, many freshly arrived in exile in India from Tibet, who seemed rich with the gold of deep Dharma imprints and who at any rate had youth on their side!

However, later on, some few of the more central and fundamental of those key elusive points, embedded in the challenging great texts of the geshe curriculum, that I did not quite understand at the time, I most fortunately found skilfully condensed and clarified in the pithy composition translated here. They have given much food for thought. I was inspired to make my own summary of them in the verses below. I was directed towards Gen Lamrimpa's works when researching an earlier translation, of *Praise for Dependent Relativity*, by Je Tsongkhapa, and came across the text that way.

Not to speak of the sacred mystery of nirvana or of the indefinable subtlety of selflessness, how to demonstrate impermanence and how to identify suffering in the Buddhist perspective are truly knotty challenges. But, apart from penetrating these key issues, how else to develop even the beginner's determination to forsake our desire realm home and head for liberation? I rejoiced to find Gen Lamrimpa loosening those knots and arguing vigorously for some plausible solutions, in a clear, understandable, reliable and decisive way, the product of a mastery of the sūtras and the classics of the tradition no doubt, but forged through his own shrewd reasoning, fresh insight and literary skill.

The evidence accumulates that society, as we have known it, will not sustain the impact of exponentially increasing climate heating much longer. Are we not like the Tibetans living in the last interlude before the breakdown of their cherished way of life, except this time it is on a global scale? So not only this life dwindles away but also these clement times dwindle rapidly away in the jagged onset of a new era, in geological terms, the Anthropocene. What

may sustain us somewhere in the future beyond is right now cultivating a thorough acquaintance with the four seals, bringing them all into the bodhisattva path. To use Gen Lamrimpa's phrase, we must lay down whatever imprints we can.

Numbers in curved brackets in the body of the text refer to page numbers of the woodblock edition of Gen Lamrimpa's text. It contains no publication data. Anything in square brackets is my own addition. For Indian names in the main text *ch*, *sh* and *ṣh* are used instead of the more common *c*, *ś* and *ṣ* for the sake of ease of pronunciation by non-specialists. In the notes and bibliography the usual transliteration system for Sanskrit is used.

In my Four Seals Chant that completes the Introduction, of the five verses on nirvana, beginning, 'Nirvana far beyond the reach...', the first two concern the Hearer School tenets version of nirvana, the third turns aside onto the Mind-only version of non-abiding nirvana, i.e. buddhahood itself, and the fourth and fifth describe the Consequentialist view of the nirvana of individual liberation.

Four Seals Chant

by
Graham Woodhouse

*Through Lama's kindness this time they're revealed,
The foes that harm, the fourfold grasping at
The pure, the pleasant, permanence and self.
Who will not take the steps to stop all that?*

*A person who's possessed of sense will not
Do down this short life's enemies but still
Ignore the ones that last from life to life.
Ought they not to be stopped with all our skill?*

Gen Lamrimpa

Compounded things are all impermanent,
What is contaminated, suffering,
The aggregates lack self, nirvana is
The utmost peace that Buddha's teachings bring.

When life runs through the fingers like dry sand...
All worldly hopes and fears, the plans we lay,
Sandcastles circled by the lapping tide;
Birth, aging, sickness, death what more to say?

Sound is impermanent because produced,
As is the final moment of a flame.
Produced, right then it must disintegrate
For all effects in this are just the same.

The glories of this world disfigured by
Its causal flaw, the worm within the bud;
What's flung by karma, from affliction sprung,
Brings suffering assured, no lasting good.

If flame's produced, the fuel its cause has ceased.
These two events are simultaneous.
But when fuel ceases so must its effect:
If no more fuel, then no more flame of course.

Not just that death is certain, even now
Remorseless degradation towards death:
Impermanence of gross and subtle kinds,
Sheer instability in every breath.

A butter lamp's last moment gleams and dies.
Fuel ends in flame without an interval.
Between fuel's end and flame's though here there is
A moment, time infinitesimal!

Continuum of similar type or not?
From gross, the suffering of change we know,
From subtle, compositional suffering,
So let revulsion for samsara grow.

So merely from its causes ceasing then
Immediately it must also cease,
No other cause required—impermanence!
Reflecting thus seek out the road to peace.

Impermanence dissolve all fantasies
Of this life's comfort, wealth, prowess or power;
Let me, determined to forsake the world,
With focussed effort fill the fleeting hour.

As if a nature from within itself,
Own-being—that which by its own power is there:
Fixating on a self like this is sheer
Delusion; reason chokes and passions flare.

What's grasped this way as not depending on
Conditions, parts or designating thought
Appears as *really* bad, *supremely* good,
By vaunting self-importance we are caught.

Misgrasping, wrong attention, lust and hate,
We're lost within the fictions of a dream,
Blind alleys of self-pity, selfishness,
But how to know things are not what they seem?

We lack inherent being since we are not
Inherently one with, nor different from,
Our aggregates, like bicycle and parts.
Through contemplating this may insight come!

The parts removed, what bicycle remains?
Yet it and they are not identical.
They're always found together, even so,
The bike is one, its parts are multiple.

—They're utterly one nature, bike and parts.
Contriving your distinction does not stand.
Same weight, same feel, same look: *I am* my parts.
You're splitting hairs—conceptual sleight of hand!

But one or many, self or aggregates?
Right there, it's your choice which you apprehend.
From its own side the object's neither, so
Here on conception we indeed depend.

No whole though that does not rely on parts
And parts on whole the same, so you must own
That neither whole nor parts are truly there;
No ultimate but voidness, that alone.

Lines inspired by Gen Lamrimpa Ngawang Phuntsok's *A Glowing Light of Scripture and Reasoning, Lamp Illuminating the Essentials of the Four Seals that Authenticate the View* and by the dear, late Nalanda tradition guru. They both indicated impermanence. Dated the day after the passing away of the latter, 27th January 2017.

Nirvana far beyond the reach of grief,
Gone to samsara's ocean's farthest shore.
Afflictions all abandoned, so the round,
The spinning wheel of rebirth is no more.

With impure bodily remainder first,
And when that's shed complete extinguishment
Within the Unconditioned, the Unmade.
The power of *all* becoming there is spent.

All subject-object otherness dissolves,
The mind and ultimate reality
In Dharmakāya no more seen apart;
Enlightenment is non-duality.

Nirvana is the suchness of the mind
From all afflictions and their seeds released.
Remainderless nirvana, that is where
All true appearances have likewise ceased.

Not mere cessation of afflictions then
And not obscurer truth but ultimate;
Not just the adventitious stains dissolved,
The natural ones as well, the wise ones state.

I douse the dream blaze with dream water, why?
To quell my fright, much better to awake!
May I cut through with stainless reasoning
And shake dull sleep off for all beings' sake.

I put away the world. I'll follow in
The heroes' footsteps till my race is run,
Forsake addiction and backslide no more;
'Bone in the heart' resolve till birth is done.

O Bodhicitta, sweetest of all fruits,
O Bodhicitta, noblest of all minds,
Inspire me to the greatest of all deeds,
Enlightenment, for creatures of all kinds.

A Glowing Light of Scripture and Reasoning, Lamp Illuminating the Essentials of the Four Seals that Authenticate the View

Gen Lamrimpa Ngawang Phuntsok

Namo Guru [I bow to the Guru].

A sphere of noble qualities grown full,
Beneath whose power dark defects never thrive,
Sweet Lord, whose smile shines forth in helpful deeds,
Your moon of speech I worship with my crown.

What confidence have I that I can loose
The knot of the four seals on reason's path?
I'll not take refuge just in scripture though:
With factual reasoning I shall analyze.

(301) In that regard, the four false graspings at the pure, the pleasurable, the permanent and at a self are responsible for the suffering of embodied beings wandering in cyclic existence. By mistaking the impermanent to be permanent, the impure to be pure, what is suffering to be happiness, and what is selfless to be a self, we in this way become attached and cling to outer and inner phenomena and accumulate various evil actions, as the effect of which we have to experience these varieties of fierce suffering for a long time. They do not arise without cause, nor from inappropriate causes, so, if we want definitely to be free from suffering, we must abandon the four fallacies. Therefore we must meditate thoroughly on their antidotes, impermanence and so forth and at least lay down whatever imprints we can. For this purpose I have engaged in some slight analysis here.

Here then there are four

1. Compounded things are impermanent [p. 10]
2. Contaminated phenomena are suffering [p. 36]
3. The aggregates are selfless [p. 45]
4. Nirvana is peace [p. 60]

1. Compounded Things are Impermanent

With regard to the first, there are three

- A. The indicator, compounded things
- B. The indicated, impermanence [p. 19]
- C. The indicator-indicated relationship [p. 29]

A. The indicator, compounded things

With regard to the first, there are two

- [1] A general explanation by the way of the meaning of the term
- [2] Particular explanations by way of their nature [p. 11]

[1] The general explanation

As it is said [in the *Teaching on the Armour Array Sūtra*¹ f. 111a2-3]:

Conditions manifold compound:
Through this phenomena arise.
Conditions manifold compound
And so there's no inherent being.

As it says, outer and inner phenomena are not produced without causes, from inappropriate causes, or from partial causes but they are produced from the compounding together or meeting of their own many appropriate causes and conditions, hence compounded things.² In a word they arise in dependence upon their mere collection of dependently related causes and conditions.

In this way, just as a green shoot will not arise from the empty sky, nothing whatever arises without a cause, so we may desire a particular result but we have to make effort at the cause. In the same way that a rice shoot will not arise from a barley seed, nothing whatsoever will arise from an inappropriate cause. So we may desire a particular result but we have to rely on the appropriate causes.

If all the causes and conditions, seed, water, manure, and so forth are not complete, then the shoot will not arise. Just so, nothing whatsoever arises from an incomplete collection of causes, so we may desire a particular result but we have to amass the complete collection of its causes.

If we mix up the order of ploughing the field and spreading the manure and so forth, then a bountiful harvest will not arise. Likewise nothing whatever arises if the order of the causes is mixed up, so we may desire a particular result, but we have to make sure we do not mix up the order of the causes.

Even if all the conducive conditions like water and manure are complete, if they are not free of opposing conditions like frost and hail, the crop will not arise. In this fashion (305)

¹ avarmavyūhanirdeśasūtra, go cha'i bkod pa bstan pa'i mdo.

² 'dus byas, literally, compounded products.

nothing whatsoever arises if overcome by opposing conditions, so we may desire a particular result but we have to clear away the opposing conditions.

So, as far as hindrances are concerned, we clear away the opposing conditions and, as far as coming to fruition is concerned, we rely on the conducive conditions, and as above, if we rely on them properly, not mistaking their nature, not muddling their order and not missing any of their number out, then the particular effect we desire will arise unstoppably. This is the reality of compounded things. [Dharmakīrti's] *Commentary on [Dignāga's] 'Compendium of Valid Cognition'*¹ [II 224 ab] says:

If nothing missing from the cause
What is there to prevent the effect?

Thus, from the great result, buddhahood, to the small, the crops of this world on downwards, if what we desire does not come about, the fault is either that we have not made effort at the causes of whatever, or we have made effort but at causes inappropriate to the effect, or they were appropriate but they were incomplete, or the causes were complete but the order was mistaken, or else it was not mistaken but opposing conditions overcame. In proof of which there is, 'If it's not like that, there's nowhere it will not arise!'

[2] Particular explanations by way of their nature [fr. p. 10]

Here there are three: in dependence on essential features of compounded things

- a. The way to establish certainty with regard to the nature of a path and so forth
- b. The way to establish past and future lives and so forth [p. 16]
- c. In summary, the stages of putting this into practice [p. 17]

a. The way to establish certainty with regard to the nature of a path

The first has three: how to establish certainty with regard to

- (1) The nature of a path
- (2) The number of the paths [p. 12]
- (3) The order of the paths [p. 13]

(1) How to establish certainty with regard to the nature of a path

For instance, a barley shoot arises from a barley seed. There is no case of it arising from any other, wheat, beans, or the like. Just so all compounded things arise from causes appropriate to them. There is no case of them arising from inappropriate causes. Thus the two, the truth and the form bodies, also arise from their causes, the paths of method and wisdom. There is no case of them arising from any other. All varieties of that to be achieved and that which achieves it are illustrated by this. In this way we have to posit the difference between a path and a non-path by whether it is appropriate or not appropriate to its effect. In the Middle Way and Valid Cognition texts also the refutation of production from inappropriate causes is with a view to identifying non-mistakenly the nature of a path.

¹ *pramāṇavārttikakārikā*, tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa. Verse numbers for Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* are according to Yusho Miyasaka, 1971/2, but the chapter order is according to the Tibetan arrangement.

(2) How to establish certainty with regard to the number of the paths [fr. p. 11]

The essential that if the causes are incomplete, the effect does not arise, indicates that if the path, the means of achievement, has some factor incomplete, then the effect, the achieved, will not arise. Tsongkhapa says with great emphasis:

If we wish to achieve the full effect, we have to practise the full causes; partially will not do.

Further, he also says:

However much fine grain of various types comes forth in autumn is the result of how much we planted in spring. Just so, how many fine qualities come forth at the time of the result is the impress [lit. handprint] of how much we have practised at the time of the path. Therefore we have to lay down excellently well a vast foundation of practice that accords with such good qualities as are possessed at buddhahood, our object of achievement. Do not study satisfied with something lesser or partial.

Generally the reason for certainty with regard to number is ‘more are not needed, less won’t do.’ One such as I is not capable of doing even a partial something as it should be done, let alone the complete sūtras and tantras. Even so, we make all the object of our prayer. Like a thirsty person craving water, again and again we have to develop the aspiration. ‘How wonderful if the day would arise when I can practise fully, not dawdling along in a partial practice.’ If we do that, before long the occasion when we are able to do the entire practice will definitely arise. The *Heap of Gems*¹ says:

It’s like a cause for everything,
That you full well keep close the wish.
Whoever makes whatever prayer,
A like result will come to pass.

If we know how to proceed in accordance with the *Warm Oral Nectar of Jetsun Manjushri*, the heart advice passed on through the foremost Father and Sons, we make it an object of our prayers, but with some way of practising it.

As [Tsongkhapa] says [in his letter, *Basis of Happiness and Fulfilment*²]:

Who knows, ‘Keep Buddha’s path omitting nought
(310) But doing all,’ is best of all the wise.

Otherwise, if you indulge in pseudo-certainty about some single aspect, seeing all the rest as unnecessary, you are in great danger of abandoning. If you go that way, you will separate yourself from the fortunate opportunity of practising the full path in future lives as well, so you are doing something extremely pointless, it is said.

¹ Within the *Heap of Gems* category of sūtras in the bka’gyur, in the *Qualities of Mañjuśrī’s Buddha Land Sūtra*, mañjuśrībuddhakṣetraguṇavyūhasūtra, ‘jam dpal gyi sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi yon tan bkod pa’i mdo, f. 279a4-5.

² phan bde gzhi ’dzin ’phrin yig, a verse letter of affectionate advice to Namkha Pal. Gen Lamrimpa has abbreviated three lines to two.

In short, if the causes and conditions, water, manure and so forth are incomplete, the shoot will not arise no matter what we do. If on the basis of this directly perceivable example, we can reach a proper certainty with regard to the essential of the causality of compounded things, that if the collection of causes is incomplete then the effect will not arise no matter what we do, then, knowing that if all components of the path of method and wisdom are not complete, buddhahood will not arise no matter what we do, we will engage in the practice of sūtra and tantra in full. Engagement comes about when we apply our mind with confidence, not otherwise, so we should become well versed in the way of the causality of compounded things.

(3) How to establish certainty with regard to the order of the paths [fr. p. 11]

Certainty about the order of the paths through the essential feature of the reality of compounded things that everything from the root cause up to the final effect arises in an orderly sequence is set forth here by means of four examples.

Regarding them, the first

For instance, a tree grows in an orderly sequence from the roots to the crown. There is no case of growing the other way round or all at once. Just so, we proceed from the root of the path, faith, up to the buddha ground in an orderly sequence. There is no case of proceeding the other way round or all at once. Why not? Because each lower path is the cause and each higher one the effect and there is no case of production when causes and effects are mixed up. Thus if each lower thing, root or stem and so forth of a tree arises, then each higher one will grow and if not, it will not. Similarly with each higher and lower path, as it says in [Maitreya's] *Ornament of Sūtra*¹ [XVIII 36, 37, 40 bcd]² from,

Compassion plus forbearance and intent,
And prayer and birth and ripening sentient beings,
The first the root, the last the fruit supreme:
The great tree of compassion – this is it.

Without the root, compassion, then
No bearing hardship; one who's bright
Who can't bear suffering will not have
The intent to work the good of beings.

up to

... Leaves fall and grow, and you will know,
Through two conditions being fulfilled,
The flowers and productive fruit.

There are many more quotations besides this.

Thus if without a realization of the lower in our continuum, we knowingly proceed to the higher, hoping to generate it, it is like hoping that the stem and so forth will grow, even

¹ *Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras Verse Treatise*, mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārikā, theg pa chen po mdo sde'i rgyan tshig le'ur byas pa.

² Following the Tibetan method of counting the chapters.

though we can see that the root of the plant has not been planted. It is hoping in vain for an effect without a cause. So then if we wish for the fruits of a plant, there is no way but to begin with the root and grow them gradually and similarly if we wish for the higher to come about, beginning with the lower we generate it gradually, on which essential [Tsongkhapa, in the] *Great Stages of the Path*¹ [p. 116], says:

In the case of inferior beings, they may take their practices from the higher trainings but no higher mind arises. And having neglected the lower ones nothing comes about whatsoever.

The second example

Using the illustration of climbing a staircase, if we start on the lowest step and climb gradually, we can climb to the top without difficulty. On the other hand, if in a hurry we right away try to jump to the top, we are heading for nothing but a fall. Just so, if we begin with the least path, faith, and develop gradually, we can proceed to the highest, the buddha ground, without difficulty. But if, concerned by the delay in doing it that way, we indulge in the pursuit of the highest from the first, we are heading for nothing but a blunder; meaning that if the lower has not ripened in our continuum, this is a complete obstacle to our being led to or our entering into the higher.

(315) Furthermore, having arrived at the lower steps, we can climb to the higher without difficulty. Just so, if we have generated the lower paths in our continuum, we will generate the higher without difficulty. Thus, though we wish to generate something higher, we have to follow the method of generating the lower first, just as, whatever step we wish to reach, we must follow the method to reach the lower ones first.

Seeing the great importance of this point Jetsun Wheel of Firmness [Manjushri] said [to Tsongkhapa] that one should thus initially put to one side the ‘profundities’, tantra and such like, and perform investigative meditation on determining to forsake the world [renunciation].²

Also in [Nāgārjuna’s] *Five Stages*³ [f. 45a6] it says:

The full Enlightened One compared
This method to a flight of steps.

Furthermore, the former also said that through the high Dharma alone it is not possible, for one needs something by which to arrive on high. Without such it is like when one puts lioness’s milk in an ordinary container: the container and the contained are both in danger of being spoiled.

The third example

¹ *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path lam rim chen mo.*, vol. 1, p. 139 in the Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee English translation.

² Panchen Losang Yeshe reports this advice in his *Swift Path to Omniscience, Bare Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, byang chub lam gyi rim pa’i dmar khri thams cad mkhyen par bgrod pa’i myur lam, p. 357 in byang chub lam gyi rim gyi khri yig, glegs bam gsum pa.

³ pañcakrama, rim pa lnga pa. In Gen Lamrimpa’s text the title is mistakenly given as rim snga instead of rim lnga.

Once while a king was away somewhere the most beautiful of his queens passed away. His minister was concerned that if he told him from the first that she had passed away the king would be so choked with grief that he would swoon, so he thought of a plan. First he said that a boil had come up on her forehead. Later he said that the boil had grown so big that it was covering half her face. Later he said that it was covering her entire face, so unsightly had it become. The thought arose in the king's mind, 'In that case wouldn't it be better if she died before I arrived back there?' By [the minister] saying, 'She has altogether passed away,' at that time, the king was not struck down with grief at all.

As in the story, so when a lama is teaching a student, the skilled teacher must do likewise, it is said. Thus we should realize that this example is of great significance. In a similar vein it says [Āryadeva's *Four Hundred*,¹ VII 15]:

At first reverse the lack of merit
And in between reverse the self,
Then finally reverse all views
Who realize this have expertise.

So, since the disciple should be taught gradually, he should not be introduced at the very beginning to the profound and subtle Dharma his mind cannot train in but he should be introduced to the easy and gross, just up to the level his mind can train in. Āryadeva [*Four Hundred*, V 10] says:

What brings delight, let him at first
Engage in that, No way that he
Who falls away could ever be
A vessel for the holy Dharma.

Ārya Asanga says [*Bodhisattva Grounds*, from the *Levels of Yogic Practice*,² f. 119b7] :

Because he will gradually establish them correctly in the way of virtue, a bodhisattva at first teaches the easy Dharma to those sentient beings with immature wisdom. He directs them and engages them with easy instructions.

There are many like this.

The fourth example

Among food ingredients there are many different levels of ease or difficulty in becoming cooked. Accordingly we have to add them gradually and also we have to look whether it is the right time to add this or that one in or not. Likewise with regard to the way of Dharma that is our object of engagement: there are many different levels of ease or difficulty to be encompassed by the mind which engages. Accordingly, the mind has to be taught gradually and also we have to look whether it is the right time or not to teach this or that topic.

In short, a doctor does not just give out some or other medicine as he fancies. He must give it having scrutinized this or that patient's illness. Likewise it is said that a lama does not

¹ *Treatise of Four Hundred Stanzas*, catuḥśatakaśāstrakārikā, bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa.

² yogācārabhūmaubodhisattvabhūmi, rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa las byang chub sems dpa'i sa.

explain some or other Dharma topic as he fancies. He must explain in accordance with this or that student's mental level. Thus in [the *Descent into Laṅkā*] sūtra¹ also [f. 174a1]:

A doctor gives out medicines
To patients variously. Just so
The Buddha taught the Dharma that
Each sentient being could absorb.²

The foregoing remarks are to be sure from the point of view of a lama teaching a student but it is the same for those who are teaching themselves; the reasons are identical.

Thus, when we are mistaken about the nature of the causes, or when the causes are incomplete in number, or when the order is mixed up, if not even an ordinary effect, a plain shoot will arise, what need to speak about omniscient wisdom? Seeing this, ascertaining the entity of the paths, ascertaining their number and ascertaining their order is said to be extremely important. (320) Here the meaning of ascertaining is understanding.

b. The way to establish past and future lives and so forth has three [fr. p. 11]

- {1} The way to establish the existence of past and future lives
- {2} The way to establish the existence of karma and effects
- {3} The way to establish the existence of liberation and omniscience

{1} The way to establish the existence of past and future lives

As we have described above, one measure of compounded things is that they are not produced from inappropriate causes. That being the case, the awareness of a newborn child is not produced from such, so it must be produced from an appropriate cause, in which case it must be produced from a previous continuum of awareness. Thus this is the reason that proves the existence of former lives and, if the existence of former lives is established, then later ones are established implicitly. Such is the way of inferring the existence of past and future lives from the causal process of compounded things.

{2} The way to establish the existence of karma and effects

In accordance with the way, for instance, that a barley shoot is produced from a barley seed, in general appropriate effects arise from appropriate causes. Employing that reasoning in this particular case then, anyone can understand that it is with positive or negative karma, good or evil, as cause, that the effect positive or negative, happiness or suffering, comes about.

Thus, as it set forth [in Shāntideva's *Compendium of Trainings*,³ f. 61a6]:

Whatever action that you did,
Like that alone the effect comes forth,

through reflecting on an essential feature of compounded things, we can understand that karma and its effects are infallible.

¹ laṅkāvatārasūtra, lang kar gshegs pa'i mdo.

² The last line of Gen Lamrimpa's quotation differs from the verse as found in the Dege and Lhasa editions of the sūtra.

³ śikṣāsamuccaya, bslab pa kun las btus pa.

{3} (A) The way to establish the existence of liberation and [fr. p. 16]

(B) The way to establish the existence of omniscience

(A) The root of cyclic existence is self-grasping and by the reason that the wisdom realizing selflessness is able to eliminate it, there is the opportunity for liberation, it is said. The *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*, for instance, declares [II 190 cd]:

It's not forever more because

There's stoppage of the cause and such.

Thus the statement that there is the attainment of liberation also depends on an essential feature of compounded things, that if the cause is stopped, the effect is reversed. That is sufficient for the time being.

(B) The way to establish the existence of omniscience

[*Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*, I 7]:

The causes all collected, then

The effect's produced. From what inferred?

—Because no other thing's required.

This is their nature, it is said.

As it says, the nature, that is to say, the reality of compounded things is that if the collection of causes is complete, the effect is produced. Employing that [observation] we can understand that, since there is the opportunity to complete the two causal collections, so there is also the opportunity to attain the effect, buddhahood.

Moreover, just as we established above that in general the effects, happiness and suffering, come about from their causes, good and evil, in this particular case we can establish also that the greatest happiness and suffering effects come about from the two greatest good and evil causes. By this we can also infer the existence of buddhahood. The two greatest effects of good and evil are the happiness of a buddha and the *duḥkha* of the Unrelenting Hell, which I think completes this topic.

c. In summary, the stages of putting this into practice [fr. p. 11]

We should come to know the cycle of objects of observation of the paths, and the entity, definite number and order and so forth of the causes which generate the paths, firstly determining them well though hearing and contemplating. Then, as we have understood, so we have to meditate, fixing it in our continuum. If we practise properly, without doubt we will produce all the experiences and realizations of the grounds and paths. The effect is under the power of another, the cause, so when the collection of the causes, whatever they are, is complete, the effect, whatever it is, is powerless not to be produced.

While we are meditating like that we should strongly cherish acting in accordance with the advice that comes down from Maitreya and Manjushri, the three-fold practice and the dual application. For instance, when we want to produce a crop from a new field we have to clear away the opposing conditions, the debris and so forth, then we supply the conducive conditions, water and manure and so forth and we plant the appropriating cause, the grain. In the same way, to produce experience and realizations in our continuum we have to do

the three-fold practice of cleansing away sins and obstructions, the opposing conditions, of amassing the conducive conditions and of sustaining object and aspect,¹ the appropriating cause, just as Manjushri (325) told Tsongkhapa. While sustaining object and aspect we have to apply ourselves not occasionally and without devotion but constantly and devotedly² as it says in the *Ornament of Sūtra* [XV 10]:

With constancy, devotion too
You must apply yourself to that.

An illustration here is rubbing a chafing stick for instance. If we rub continuously and in the proper manner, fire will quickly start; otherwise there is no chance of fire occurring. Likewise, as in that example, he says that from our applying ourselves with constancy and devotion or not, we will generate realizations in a timely fashion or not, so this is a salient point. In sum, the effect is ‘other-powered’ by the cause, so there is no discarding or taking hold of an effect other than by discarding or taking hold of whatever cause. Therefore, however much we can, we must abandon endeavouring at the all too afflicted causes, attachment and the like, and have resort to endeavouring at the pure causes, faith and the like. For if we do that, through the working of infallible karma and effect, our faults and suffering become less and less, our good qualities and happiness increase more and more, until finally we become a buddha with faults all eliminated and good qualities all complete.

Verses of Interlude

The knowing how compounded things abide:
A dart to pierce a hundred bafflements.
This marvel by myself I could not see.
The lama’s kind compassion is the means.

Though knowing nothing of causality,
By muddled meditation on its own
They seek to generate the path and fruits:
The demon dullness hoodwinks them, that’s all.

Forever venturing virtuous deeds and thus
The best of happiness grows like the moon.
Forever dealing sinful deeds and thus
The unwanted comes like thunder crashing down.

Just he sees as they are causality
Compounded things and relativity,
So Buddha’s teachings on causality
Have not an atom’s stain of a mistake.

¹ For example, the five contaminated aggregates, being true sufferings, should be extensively meditated on as impermanent, suffering, empty and selfless. Here the five contaminated aggregates are the observed objects, i.e. the objects focussed on in the meditation, and impermanent, suffering, empty and selfless are the aspects or characteristics they will be seen to have.

² The dual application spoken of just above, evidently. Being found in the *Ornament of Sūtra*, this is Maitreya’s advice then.

B. The explanation of the indicated, impermanence [fr. p. 10]

With regard to it there are three

[1] Nature

[2] Divisions [p. 25]

[3] Dispelling doubts [p. 28]

[1] Nature

In accordance with how it appears in the *Close Placement of Mindfulness Sūtra*¹ [f. 256a3]:

Impermanence, which operates in a single moment and...²

the defining characteristic of impermanence is momentary. Of the two, infinitesimally momentary and establishment-time momentary, the latter is as it says in [Tsongkhapa's] *Explanation of [Nāgārjuna's] 'Treatise on the Middle': Ocean of Reasoning*³ [commenting on VII 24]:

The momentary that we state to be the defining characteristic of impermanence is not remaining for a second time after the time of its establishment. Not remaining for more than an instant is not the meaning of momentary.

How then to posit the two [types of] momentary? An infinitesimal moment is the very last, briefest moment of time. Alternatively there is the phrase least, briefest moment, which means the same thing. The duration of this: in the Lesser Vehicle⁴ they assert that sixty-five subtle moments operate in the duration of a finger snap, in the Great Vehicle three hundred and sixty-five. However it is, such a moment is taught as the duration of an infinitesimal moment.

Establishment-time momentary is a term that seems not to figure in the Indian texts, but implicitly it may be culled from there, so with that in mind it is used in the Tibetan texts. To illustrate it by means of a year for instance: the time of its establishment is from the first month up to the twelfth. After that is a second establishment-time, so this is called the momentariness of not abiding for a second establishment-time, the reason being that it abides from the first month to the twelfth and does not abide after that. From this illustration others may be understood also, the quotation just cited above continuing:

For a year to come to completion, twelve months must come to completion (330) and a year does not abide after that, so all continua also are momentary in the sense of not remaining for a second time after the time of their establishment.

¹ *Noble Close Placement of Mindfulness on the Supreme Dharma*, āryasaddharmasmṛtyupasthāna, 'phags pa dam pa'i chos dran pa nye bar gzhag pa.

² Gen Lamrimpa gives the quotation as *skad cig ma gcig tu 'jug pa'i mi rtag pa dang...* The Dege and Lhasa editions of the sūtra both have *skad cig ma gcig nas gcig tu 'jug pa mi rtag pa dang...* which might be translated as 'impermanence operates from moment to moment and...'

³ dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho.

⁴ In the standard presentation of Buddhist schools of tenets the Great Exposition School and the Sūtra School are classed as Lesser Vehicle Schools or, avoiding a term with pejorative associations, as Hearer Schools. Within the Buddhist fold their tenets are mainly distinguished from the those of the self-styled Great Vehicle or Bodhisattva Vehicle.

The phrase ‘... after that,’ is saying that it does not abide once twelve months are completed. Implicitly it is asserting that it does abide until they are complete. Thus any functioning thing that is a continuum necessarily also abides until the continuum possessing moments, however many there are, are complete.¹ There are two sorts of continuum, type continuum and substantial continuum, but the basis for our analysis on these occasions is just the type continuum.²

Well then, does such as a great aeon abide until eighty intermediate aeons have come to completion or not? If it does not, that is contradictory with a year abiding until twelve months are complete. If it does so abide, that is contradictory with its being an impermanent which does not abide for more than a moment, since it abides for an interval of eighty intermediate aeons without disintegrating.

Regarding this qualm Āryadeva [*Four Hundred*, XIV 22] says:

While false views of continua
Persist, ‘They’re permanent,’ you’ll say
While false views of collections too
Persist, ‘They’re real things,’ you’ll say.

‘False views of continua’ is saying that if we do not know how to posit them as having parts, then there is the danger mistaking them to be permanent. As it says, there does appear to be the fault of not knowing how to posit continua as having parts, so we will explain a little [under two headings]:

- a. The actual way to posit continua as having parts
- b. Supplementary to that, the mode of positing generalities as having parts [p. 21]

a. The actual way to posit continua as having parts.

¹ Discussions of impermanence in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition take their lead from, among others, the Indian master Dharmakīrti’s critique. In the remarks quoted here, Tsongkhapa, though he does not say so, counters what may be called the ‘standard’ interpretation of Dharmakīrti, where the longest anything ever lasts is for one infinitesimal moment. All compounded things go out of existence just as soon as they have been produced. This is the infinitesimally momentary view. Any sense of further duration is mistaken. It is mistaken due to the arising in rapid succession of discrete phenomena that appear alike to a mind dulled by the imprints of grasping at permanence. Contrast this with Tsongkhapa’s interpretation where there certainly is, for instance, a tree that lasts for a hundred years, though it abides only by changing as it goes. This tree is not merely the pseudo-object of a deluded consciousness. It exists and is a functioning thing in its own right. Tsongkhapa’s explanation of impermanence in terms of establishment-time momentary is with this in mind. It is a formulation that seeks to embrace the impermanence of an enduring continuum of moments as well as of the constituent moments themselves. The main upholders of Tsongkhapa’s view are the Gelugpas and Gen Lamrimpa is firmly in the Gelugpa camp but, as we shall see, he has questions to raise about Tsongkhapa’s formulation of the meaning of impermanence. ‘Revisionist’ is Georges Dreyfus’ epithet for the Gelugpa interpretation of Dharmakīrti on this topic. See his very thorough work on the Tibetan reception of Dharmakīrti, *Recognizing Reality*.

² As long as a thing such as a pot continues to be recognisable as a pot, it maintains its continuity of being the same type. If it smashes, its continuum of same type, i.e. type continuum, is at an end. What was once a pot is now broken pieces. Those pieces are the continuation of the substance of the pot though, in the sense that the pot has transformed into them, so the substantial continuum of what was once a pot continues to evolve.

Outsiders indeed assert that continua, generalities and so forth are partless. Our own system asserts the opposite, that they have parts. If we illustrate with a year for instance, then it has twelve months for parts. Since parts and whole¹ are the same entity, through the disintegration of a part, the first month, we posit the disintegration of the whole, the year. Through that reasoning, the first month also, through the disintegration of the first day, disintegrates, and so forth, down to the first moment. Extending the reasoning we establish that through the disintegration of a part, the first moment, the whole, a year disintegrates. A great aeon and so forth are also illustrated by that.

Thus any continuum, being a functioning thing, merely by the disintegration of the first continuum-possessing moment, disintegrates, and there is no time when a moment is not disintegrating and it abides permanently. Just as there is a part disintegrating concurrent with the former moment, so there is a part produced concurrent with the later moment and so there is no severance of the continuum. The single essential of having parts altogether abandons the two extremes of permanence and severance. This is the way.

b. Supplementary to that, the mode of positing generalities as having parts² [fr. p. 20]

If we do not know how to posit generalities as having parts, faults will arise as it says [Commentary on 'Valid Cognition', I 152]:

Not going, nor existent there,
Not having any later part,
Not parting from the former base,
Cause but to be bereft alas!³

If an ox newly arises in a certain place we have to accept that the generality ox pervades that place. The mode of pervasion is not that it [the generality] arises there [having come] from another place; i.e. it does not go there [to that new place]. Nor was it previously already existent in that place. It neither possesses a later part, nor, in moving to that place, does it leave behind its former base, so if we ask how it pervades, you [the opponent] are bereft of an answer.⁴

¹ The Tibetan word for whole is *cha can*. Translated literally it means 'part-possessor'.

² When the topic under investigation is impermanence, is a discussion of generalities and instances germane? In fact, in providing a coherent account of impermanence, the advantage may well lie in doing equal justice both to the moments and the continuum that possesses the moments, and the same for instances and generalities likewise. A discussion of the latter may well throw light on the former and vice versa therefore. And is not the relation between, say the Atlantic Ocean of today and the Atlantic Ocean a relationship of instance and generality as well as a relation of moment and continuum anyway?

³ The translation of this verse follows Gen Lamrimpa's commentary beneath it. In the *Cloud of Offerings Delighting the Impartial, a Note on Valid Cognition*, tshad ma'i brjed byang gzur gnas dgyes pa'i mchod sprin, his word commentary on the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*, Gen Lamrimpa expands the second line slightly differently. See *Collected Works*, vol. 4, p. 74.

⁴ To a non-Buddhist opponent: You who assert partless generalities: where there is a new-born ox, the generality, ox, obviously pervades there. The generality, ox, does not go there by arriving from another place. It cannot already have been in the place of the new-born ox at a time when there was no ox there. You insist that the generality is partless, so it cannot develop a later part in order to be in the place of the newly arisen ox. Nor

In our own system we assert that the generality ox has the ox which come into existence as its part so no fault arises. In brief, the Outsiders¹ do not know how to posit generality and instance as one entity but different isolates,² so they have to accept a generality which is objectively other, and partless to boot. Since in our own system we know how to posit them as the same entity but different isolates we assert that the parts which are its manifestations participate in the generality. We further accept that as much as the instances are produced and disintegrate, like that the generality is produced and disintegrates. Thus as with continua, we assert generalities that are functioning things also, free from the extremes of permanence and severance.

(335) Earlier scholars asserted generality and instance to be objectively other and on the strength of that were unable to posit that through the instance being produced and disintegrating the generality is produced and disintegrates. Because they were unable to do that they were obliged to assert the generality to be a permanent thing. Not only Outsiders but later [Buddhist] sophists professed this. [Sophist opponent] ‘Absolutely no common base between generality and functioning thing. If there were, faults would follow, in this fashion: the generality pillar, does it pervade the pillar in front or not? If it does not, this is contradictory with its pervading all pillars. If it does, then you should show us the where and the how of the generality pillar which is not *this* pillar, and yet you have nothing to show. Thus if it is a generality, it has to be a non-thing, conceptually imputed. A specifically characterized pillar which is a generality is impossible among objects of knowledge,’ they claim, with necks upstretched. Even there appear some vaunting scholars contributing, ‘It is like that. Since it is like that...’

Alas, alack, this is the way you are but still you vaunt yourselves even as the very acme of logicians. You are worthy of love and compassion, so I will explain to you the intention of the glorious Dharmakirti as it is.³ Please lend an ear and listen therefore. The generality

can it abandon the oxen it already pervades over elsewhere in order to be there. So how does your partless generality manage to pervade the new-born ox calf then?

¹ Non-Buddhist thinkers, more particularly those of the traditional Indian milieu with whom the Buddhist commentators of old disputed.

² Having no separate appearance to perception, but distinct to conception.

³ In Gen Lamrimpa’s presentation of generalities and instances here, the generality ‘pillar’, the one that pervades over all the individual instances of pillar, is a functioning thing. It supports beams. It appears to ordinary direct perception when we see an individual pillar in front of us, though in no way separately from the pillar in front. When we see this or that individual pillar in the monastic assembly hall, do not we see ‘pillar’, just in as seeing an individual instance of red, as when we look at a ripe strawberry for instance, do we not see red, and for that matter colour also? The conceptual mind on the other hand has a means to distinguish between pillar in general and the individuals in which it is instantiated. The former and the latter appear differently to it. The conceptual mind generalizes from the individual pillars and, reversing away from all that is not just pillar itself, knows the type, pillar, not only differentiated from chair, feather, mountain and so on, but also divested of the contingent features of the individual instances of pillar, made of stone, wooden, round, square, painted red and so forth. This quality that pillar has of being the mere reverse of what is not pillar, *ka ba ma yin pa las ldog pa*, the mere absence of all that is not just ‘pillar’, is what Gen Lamrimpa appears to mean here by the generality part of pillar, the permanent part as opposed to the pillar part(s). This is just to touch on the

pillar has both a generality part and a pillar part. Which perspective are you taking? If you are thinking of the generality part when you ask such a question, you are satisfied with the aspect of one who does not know reasoning, for in the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* [I 169 ab] it says:

Reverses have no entity,
So don't enquire, 'Abides or not?'

As it says, since the generality part is a non-thing, there is no applying a functioning thing line of enquiry to it and your method of analysis is an enquiry which is from the perspective of functioning things. If you are thinking of the pillar part when you ask such a question, there again you are satisfied with your own fault of dullness because, in [his] treatise on conduct [*Treasury of Good Advice*¹ III 94 cd, Sakya Paṇḍita] says:

Again to question what's directly seen,
Cowed down and following—signs of a fool.²

Seeing the pillar part of the pillar in front is accomplished by direct perception. Thus this debate and those like it are mistaken because of not knowing how to posit the difference between the general isolate and the self isolate parts³ which is the fault of not knowing the deep difference between an object having and not having parts. Those spokespersons also admit decisive contradictions in this fashion: well then [we say], it follows that the pillar in front is also a non-thing because it is a generality; because the pillars of the former and later moments are its particulars. To 'three circles!' you have no answer.⁴

Furthermore if, after you have analyzed in the above manner whether the generality exists on the instances or not, it is correct that generalities are established as pervaded by being non-things, then when we analyze in the above manner also whether wholes exist or not upon their parts, it should be correct that they are established as non-things. So then call your head and hand and leg and so forth non-things also and be hugely embarrassed!

Gelugpa exploration of the involved topic of other elimination, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's presentation of the role of negation in conceptual awareness and in apprehending generalities. See also note 1, p. 24.

¹ sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan, *A Jewel Treasury of Good Advice*, legs par bshad pa rin po che'i gter.

² The fool persistently asks questions about what is perfectly obvious (the fault the opponent here is criticized for), has no courage to stand up for anything and is easily duped into following swindlers and hoaxers.

³ Usually general isolate, *spyi ldog*, and self isolate, *rang ldog*, mean the same, here, pillar isolated or reversed away from everything that is not one with pillar itself. See Yongzin Purbuchok's *Magical Key to the Path of Reasoning*, rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig, vol. 1, chapter 3, debate 8. Perhaps Gen Lamrimpa meant to say illustration isolate, *gzhi ldog*, instead of self-isolate. Illustration isolate refers to the individuals which instantiate the generality, here the various individual pillars. In that way Gen Lamrimpa would be indicating the contrast between the generality and its parts, the instances.

⁴ In debate the challenger says 'three circles' to the defender when he has brought him to the point of contradicting himself. For instance, suppose that the defender first of all accepts that the pillar in front is a functioning thing and that whatever is a generality is necessarily a non-thing. If the challenger can then demonstrate to the defender that the pillar in front is indeed a generality, the defender will be left maintaining three views that are incompatible with each other. Whatever is a generality is a non-thing, but the pillar in front is on the one hand a thing and also a generality. The three circles of contradiction!

Moreover, since such as fire's performing the function of burning and water that of cooling is established by direct perception, asserting that they are non-things empty of the ability to perform a function is contradictory to direct perception. If they are not non-things, then that is contradictory with generality being pervaded by non-thing. We could digress for an aeon inflicting such damages as these and still not be finished.¹

¹ Above Gen Lamrimpa cites the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* at a point where Dharmakīrti responds to an objection by an Outsider School opponent, a Sāṃkhya. 'You Buddhists say our generality is faulty because it persists unchanged in spite of what happens to the instances but does not your other-elimination type of generality have just the same flaw?' Dharmakīrti responds:

Reverses have no entity,
So don't enquire, abides or not?

Gen Lamrimpa, in his *Cloud Offering* explanation of the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*, (Collected Works, vol. 4, p. 83), interprets Dharmakīrti's reply to be that reverses, i.e. other-eliminations, do not have any entity of being 'positive autonomous phenomena.' As a negative, being a merely relational, conceptually imputed phenomenon, there is no question of whether such a reverse 'abides or not' enduring as a separate substance from its instances, remaining unaffected even if they change or disintegrate. It does not. The generalities these other-eliminations enable conception to distinguish then, such as pillar, chair, fruit, space, are likewise not different in substance or nature from their instances and have no existence over and above them.

On the other hand the generality, pillar, has a 'pillar part' also. We see the general pillar when we see the pillar in front, just as we touch water when we dip our hand into a hot bath or a rushing river. This responds to the debate of the other, Buddhist, opponent. Our body consciousness (i.e. our touch consciousness) cannot discriminate between the feel of water in general and the feel of the particular hot water in a bath. It feels them both, undifferentiated. Our conceptual consciousness on the other hand can indeed discriminate, between wet and moistening per se and wet and moistening that happens to be warm, or cold, or flowing, or still.

How similar to its instances can we expect the general pillar to be? How possible is it indeed for colour, for instance, simply to embody the general character shared in common by the instances (such as this shade of green or that shade of orange) shorn of their uncommon individual qualities? In Gen Lamrimpa's opinion generalities do have the shared characteristics of their instances, in the sense that colour, for instance, has all the qualities required to be in the set of colour. Blue belongs in the blue category just as the individual instances of it do. He criticizes the Outsider (non-Buddhist) exponents and the other Buddhist exponents not of his Gelugpa persuasion alike for positing generalities that are in some way too much divorced from their instances. The generality posited by Outsiders he rejects for being a separate substance from the instances, not determined by what they are, able to exist independently of them. Other Buddhist schools he reproves for positing generalities that are mere convenient conceptual fictions, categories designated by thought that have no existence external to the mind, in sharp contrast therefore to the many real individuals that exist out in the world.

Amongst Tibetan Buddhist schools the question of generalities is most thoroughly taken up at the time of analysing Dharmakīrti's works in order to discover whether a world view founded on essence or intrinsic nature is viable or not. In the Consequentialist Middle Way view, recognized as Buddha's final view, essence or intrinsic nature is rejected as altogether impossible. All phenomena are alike in being merely imputed by conception. But, if one does strive to articulate as coherently as possible a world view in which there are both intrinsic nature and externally established objects, as the Sūtrarians (Sautrāntikas) do, then it seems most suitable, not least because closest to the common sense of the world, to defend the position that generalities such as pillar, water and colour are indeed functioning things. However, if we ask which of the two Buddhist

[2] Divisions [fr. p. 19]

Here there are two

- (1) Division by way of nature
- (2) Division by way of establisher [p. 27]

(1) Division by way of nature

In sūtra it says:

The end of birth is death,
The end of meeting, parting,¹

and so forth. In accord with this statement indeed there are many divisions, the impermanence of death, the impermanence of parting and so forth. Condensing these, we may include them in the two, gross impermanence and subtle impermanence. To illustrate how, with Devadatta [Gift of God] for instance: his not remaining after his death any herder can ascertain with direct perception, so this is extremely gross. Subtler than that is the Devadatta at the time of the first moment not remaining for a second moment. Subtler than that again is his disintegrating right from the very time of the first moment. To realize the ultimate subtle impermanence you definitely must realize this one.

Thus, if merely realizing that the Devadatta at the time of the first least, briefest moment does not remain for a second such moment does not complete the mode of realizing subtle impermanence, then (340) how will merely realizing that he does not remain for a second establishment time complete the mode of realizing that? It surely will not. But it would seem that that, latterly, in the main, has been proclaimed as the measure of realization of it, so please analyze.

Query: Well, by what can we understand disintegrating right from the very time of the first moment then?

Response: Here there are two

- (a) Scripture
- (b) Reasoning

views compared here by Gen Lamrimpa is actually closer to Dharmakīrti's account of generalities, that is a different question. Different ways of unfolding Dharmakīrti's highly condensed arguments in the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* developed even amongst his early followers in India. Dreyfus again describes the standard Gelugpa interpretation that Gen Lamrimpa relies on as 'revisionist' (p. 123), whatever its other possible merits as a component of a theoretical defence of essentialism. John Dunne in *Foundations of Dharmakīrti's Philosophy* (p. 127), examining earlier Sanskrit layers of commentary on Dharmakīrti's work, quotes the verse cited above in the process of denying that generalities are for Dharmakīrti anything more than conceptual fabrications that do not meet the criteria for actual existence.

¹ The exact wording has not been traced to a specific sūtra but there are similar verses in several places, for example in the impermanence chapter of the collection of *Utterances*, udānavarga, ched du brjod pa'i tshoms, f. 209b6.

(a) Scripture

The *Sūtra of Being Trained by the Sky-coloured One*¹ [f. 150b2] says:

It disintegrates in that very moment, the moment it is produced; there is no abiding in the continuum of a moment. Produced in the first moment, it disintegrates in that very moment.

There are many others.

(b) Reasoning

Here also there are two

- {1} Reasoning which damages
- {2} Reasoning which establishes

{1} Reasoning which damages

If it did not disintegrate from the very time of the first moment, then it follows that it would be permanent at that time and that would be contradictory with there being no occasion when compounded things are permanent. Whenever a phenomenon is not disintegrating, at that time it must abide permanently. The *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* confirms this [II 204 cd]:

No nature of disintegration;
The experts call that permanent.

{2} Reasoning which establishes

The subject, Devadatta: he disintegrates at the very time of the first moment of his establishment because he is created at that very time, which is similar to 'being impermanent because of being a product.' Moreover, similar to the way in which from a lamp's having been extinguished, the light of the lamp ceases, merely from something's cause having ceased that something ceases. So then the cessation of something is established merely from its having been produced, since the production of something and the cessation of its causes are simultaneous. These remarks are according to the thought of Master Sthiramati [blo gros brtan pa].²

¹ *Forbearance of Being Trained by the Sky-coloured One in the Way of Proper Conduct Sūtra*

samyakcaryāvṛttagaganavarṇavinayakṣāntisūtra, yang dag par spyod pa'i tshul nam mkha'i mdog gis 'dul ba'i bzod pa'i mdo.

² In *The True Meaning, Extensive Commentary on the 'Treasury of Manifest Knowledge'*, abhidharmakoṣabhāṣyaṭīkā-tattvārtha, chos mngon pa mdzod kyī bshad pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa, don gyi de kho na nyid, vol tho, f. 126a6-126a7, Master Sthiramati writes, 'If someone says, just as the cessation of a butter lamp immediately [occasions] that of the light, when the cause of sound has ceased, the sound which is its effect ceases...' This passing interlocution is the closest remark found to Gen Lamrimpa's summary above of what he takes to be Sthiramati's own position. For Gen Lamrimpa the idea it contains is a key to why being produced guarantees impermanence and so one that warrants attention. Below, p. 32, as a suitable reasoning for newly realizing impermanence, Gen Lamrimpa provides the standard syllogism he has just given above, but with a further helpful illustration: the subject, sound: it is impermanent because it is a product, for instance, just like the final moment of the flame of a butter lamp. It is not so difficult to ascertain that sound is a product, i.e. produced from causes and conditions.

Thus 'gags, with secondary suffix [i.e. the terminal letter *sa*, a past tense signifying suffix for Tibetan verbs] should be understood as meaning ceased and 'gag, without it, means ceasing. In the occurrences here though we should give greater authority to the meaning in context. We should not mainly go by the mere signification of the letters, otherwise there is a danger of misconstruing.

Having shown many [arguments] which damage [the position that] disintegration relies on a later arising cause and having established that it is indeed suitable [*os med* amended to *os mod*] that a thing disintegrates by itself, for Dharmakīrti, in his system of reasoning then, 'disintegrating by itself,' 'disintegrating merely through the cause of being produced,' 'disintegrating from its own time,' 'disintegrating from the time of the very first moment,' 'disintegrating from merely having been created' and so forth are equivalent, an enumeration of synonyms.

(2) Division by way of establisher [fr. p. 25]

There are a great many here, the fourteen from the *Ornament of Sūtra* [XIX 85-89] and so forth but the reasoning of 'compounded thing' is the principal one. The sūtras and the tantras, together with their commentaries, it seems, give sole emphasis to this one. Product, *byas pa*, is a contraction of compounded thing, 'dus byas [literally, compounded product], so it is not the meaning of the texts to speak of these two as different 'attestors' [signs].

But how does a thing being so produced necessitate that it disintegrates just as soon as it has come into existence, throughout its existence, however short a moment we select, being always different at the end of that moment from what it was at the beginning of it?

Firstly, we must understand that any cause and its effect are sequential. The effect occurs right when the causes cease. So here the fuel ends and immediately the flame begins. Then, on the example of the last flicker of the flame of a butter lamp that is running out of fuel, we should contemplate how in the next infinitesimal moment after the cause, the fuel, ceases, the effect, the flame, also ceases. Why? If no more fuel, then no more flame of course. Moreover, each previous moment of flame was the same as the last in this regard. They too required a fresh drop of fuel to be drawn up the wick to combine with fresh oxygen, combust and produce each of them in a continuous series. The momentariness of a flame, whether we speak of one that lasts for an instant or an hour, becomes clear. Each moment requires a fresh set of causes to produce it. All things whatsoever are like that though, right from the very point of production incapable of persisting unchanged, always falling away from what they are. This is Master Sthiramati's uncommon inkling: production guarantees disintegration because if something has been produced, its causes have ceased, and if its causes have ceased, it cannot persist. Fresh causes are needed all the time. The stream of change is unabating.

Qualm: When the fuel that is the cause of the last moment of flame is exhausted, thereupon the flame indeed rapidly goes out. However, when the blue and yellow paint that we mix together to make green paint are consumed upon the arising of that green paint, the green paint does not necessarily cease to exist in a moment. Some lasts for years, so the case is different.

Response: How different? When the lamp goes out the change from light to dark is manifest. As one moment of green paint gives up its entity into the next the process of change is similarly thoroughgoing and similarly without pause, just not so obvious. If it is not as we describe, you, the opponent, should explain why the flame does not last for years after the fuel is finished, like the green paint of your example. Let us posit a location for the flame where no contrary external condition such as a gust of wind intervenes.

[3] Dispelling doubts [fr. p. 19]

Qualm: Do phenomena which are compounded things abide or not during their own time? If they do not so abide, since they do not abide at any other time either, compounded things have no time of abiding. If they do so abide, that is contradictory with their disintegrating in their own time since the two, abiding at that time and disintegrating at that time, are altogether contradictory.

Response: It is true enough that having disintegrated at that time and abiding then are contradictory but being in the process of disintegrating is not contradictory with that. Saying 'disintegrating in its own time' is from the point of view of being in the process of disintegrating, so there is no fault of contradiction between abiding and disintegrating.

Well then, what is the meaning of being in the process of disintegrating or being in the process of ceasing?

[Chandrakīrti in] the *Introduction to [Nāgārjuna's] 'Treatise on the Middle'*¹ [VI 19 b] explains thus:

While ceasing it exists, disintegration-bound though we assert.

While ever a thing is ceasing it indeed must abide at that very time, but it must be proceeding towards [the state of] having disintegrated. Thus the interval between a compounded thing's having been created and its cessation is nothing more than the interval between a lamp having been extinguished and the cessation of its light.

Thus there has to be an interval between a lamp having been extinguished and the cessation of its light but being extremely short (345) it cannot be ascertained by direct perception [of an ordinary being]. Likewise the interval between a compounded thing having been created and its cessation cannot be so ascertained and this is why subtle impermanence is a hidden phenomenon for ordinary beings.

The inferences realizing that pot and so forth are impermanent are said to be affirmative realizers; this is by the way of their taking as their actual object that same subtle moment that is the interval between something's having been created and its cessation. If that is not the case and it is by way of taking 'not abiding for a second establishment time' as the actual object, then why would it not be a negative realizer? For not abiding for a second time is stated to be an affirming negative. The interval between something's having been produced and its ceasing is a hidden phenomenon from the point of view of a functioning thing which possesses a continuum. The last moment is not the same. This we can understand from the explanation below.

Thus, considering that, having been created, a thing does not remain stably even for the duration of an infinitesimal moment, it is said that all compounded things are by essence wavering in the extreme, like the [reflection of the] moon in water ruffled by the wind. If you think that this mode of being is correct from the point of view of the momentary parts but not correct from the point of view of the continuum per se because some functioning things which are continua, having been created, remain even until the end of cyclic existence without having disintegrated, it is as we have conclusively explained: since the

¹ madhyamakāvatāra, dbu ma la 'jug pa.

moments disintegrate so does the continuum. From the point of view of the continuum something may be suitable to remain as long as space but it does not so remain without momentarily changing. From the Lama's lips concerning this: he says:

Householder Palkye, for instance, indeed remains for a hundred years but how could his remaining be without him changing? It could not.

By means of this very explanation thus that the mode of being of subtle impermanence is that of disintegrating from merely having been produced, we can understand implicitly its opposite, the object that subtle grasping at permanence fixates on. Above there was the statement for instance that one should take the entity of momentary to be not remaining for a second establishment-time and, as applied to a whole such as a year, its not remaining after the completion of its parts, twelve months. Do not, mistaken about this, suppose that the measure of subtle impermanence on a year is its merely not abiding after twelve months are completed, nor that the mere opposite of that is the object adhered to by subtle permanent-grasping. Otherwise it would follow that the impermanence of a year would be a manifest phenomenon and other such incalculable damages would accrue to your position.

C. The third root outline, the explanation of the indicator-indicated relationship¹ [fr. p. 10]

Here there are two

(A) The actual

(B) The reasoning which newly establishes impermanence [p. 31]

(A) The actual

The nature of production is creation and the nature of impermanence is disintegration, so the former indicating the latter is that being created indicates disintegrating. The manner of that: like smoke indicates fire for instance, an effect indicates a cause, or like the tangible object hot indicates fire for instance, an essence indicates a possessor of that essence. Of these two, the latter. For as it says in sūtra [*A Former Life As Golden Colour*,² f. 53a5]:

Whatever things slightly possess the essence of being created, they all possess the quality of ceasing.

And the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* says, [I 39 ab]:

For natures too, no this, that won't occur.

Relationship of mere existence just.³

Reasoning refutes a cause of disintegrating which is other. By the cause of being created alone something necessarily disintegrates. Thus merely from having been created it

¹ Gen Lamrimpa had mistakenly written second root outline here.

² kanakavarṇapūrvayoga, gser mdog gi sngon gyi sbyor ba.

³ Not only for the type of correct reasonings that rely on the existence of an effect to prove the existence of a cause, as when we ascertain fire in dependence on smoke, for correct nature signs too, there has to be an invariable 'No this, that won't occur' relation: no fire, then no smoke; likewise, for instance, no impermanence, then no production of anything. The relationship of sign (product) to predicate (impermanent) in the latter case is an integral one, where the sign is the same nature as the predicate, such that just something's mere existence as a product means that it has the nature of being impermanent.

necessarily disintegrates by itself for in 'relationship of mere existence,' mere is an eliminative term [indicating] just that.

Qualm: If the very cause that creates it causes it to disintegrate, it follows that disintegrating does have a cause, while at this point Master Sthiramati explains by means of an example: if we shoot an arrow into the sky, it needs effort to shoot it upwards but it needs none for it to fall back down.¹ A cause is needed for pot's coming into creation but none is needed for its ceasing. Is there not a contradiction here?

Response: The thought behind saying the above is that the falling back down does not need any additional effort separate from the shooting upwards: it falls back down by itself. As the example illustrates, something's ceasing does not need a cause separate from its being brought into creation; it disintegrates by itself. It is saying simply that. (350) It is not saying that in general it does not require a cause. And other occasions where it says disintegrating has no cause are also like that.

Not to speak of Outsiders, even among our own schools the Great Expositionists [Vaibhāṣikas] could not mentally encompass the simultaneous working of creation and disintegration and thereby it seems they were obliged to assert that they operate serially. Seeing that, it is evident that it is most difficult indeed to realize that in general creation and disintegration are simultaneous and, on top of that, the way that they are indivisible in terms of object, time and nature. The reason why that is so difficult to realize is that when someone says 'creation' something such as 'previously non-existent, newly established' appears to mind and when someone pronounces 'cessation,' 'previously existent, subsequently non-existent' appears, so we understand them as quite incompatible like heat and cold, hence the difficulty in their appearing indivisible in nature, equivalent. It is also the reason why the relation between production and impermanence is said to be a point which is extremely difficult to realize.

In this vein, at the time of the Middle Way, we think: if whatever object is established here by external causes and conditions, it is pointless then for it to be posited there by internal conception and if it is the latter, then it is pointless for it to be the former, so that, not to speak of them being equivalent, even just making a common base between them seems unfitting. Just as in the case of emptiness and dependent arising, which seem only contradictory, so that it is very difficult to have them appear non-contradictory and supportive, so here also we think that whenever something has come into creation, that is contradictory with it at that very time disintegrating away from here, while if it is the latter, that also is contradictory with the former. And if we think just making a common base between the two is implausible then how much more is talk of them being indivisibly equivalent, hence the situation that it is very difficult to posit product and impermanent, seemingly only contradictory, as indivisible in nature, equivalent.

Thus our arriving at certainty or not regarding the way in which the sign product establishes sound as impermanent is a question of looking at whether, on the base of qualities, sound, created and ceasing, the meanings of the two qualities, appear or do not

¹ *The True Meaning, Extensive Commentary on the 'Treasury of Manifest Knowledge'*, vol. tho, contains a brief discussion on the flight of an arrow from f. 233a1.

appear as indivisible one taste, since the way of ascertaining or not ascertaining on sound the pervasion that if it is a product, it is necessarily impermanent, is a question of looking at whether they appear or do not appear in that fashion.

(B) The reasoning which newly establishes impermanence [fr. p. 29]

Here there are three

I Refuting others' systems

II Presenting our own system [p. 32]

III Dispelling objections to it [p. 32]

I Refuting others' systems

Someone says, 'The subject, sound: it is impermanent because it is a product, for instance just like a pot.' Stating this as the reasoning which establishes subtle impermanence for the first time is not correct because [a] having something harder to ascertain as the example and something easier to ascertain in the syllogism, is the fault of the example not being satisfactory, and [b] to establish the forward pervasion here we must prior to that have realized that a pot is impermanent and that we would have to realize in dependence on a sign also.¹ Thus two faults occur together here which make it incorrect as a reasoning which newly establishes impermanence.

Also, a latter-day buffoon says, 'The subject, grasping that sound is permanent: it is a wrong consciousness because its conceived object is not established as either of the two, one or many.' Saying this is still more incorrect because such a syllogism is bereft of any reason for stating it. It never was set forth in any authentic text, and to realize that grasping at sound to be permanent is a wrong consciousness requires a prior realization that it [sound] is impermanent and that we would have to realize in dependence on another sign and syllogism.

Not only that, the conceived object of, for instance, the conception apprehending pot, is necessarily not established as either of the two, single or different, since it is not established as different. So if at this point we say, 'The subject, the conception apprehending pot: it is that because it is that [it is a wrong consciousness because its conceived object is not established as either of the two, single or different],' he will be left with no answer to our 'three circles!' This is the fault of not differentiating between the two, not established as either of the two, single or different, and established as neither of the two, which may be known from the more extensive analysis below.²

¹ So the reasoning proving that a *pot* is impermanent would be the reasoning newly proving subtle impermanence, not the one proving that *sound* is impermanent that follows on from it.

² See p. 49. Do the two 'not either of the two single or different' and 'neither of the two, single or different' have different meanings? The Tibetan phrases being translated here, *gcig dang tha dad gnyis gang rung ma yin pa* and *gcig dang tha dad gnyis gang yang ma yin pa*, do, Gen Lamrimpa insists. That a number of Tibetan writers incautiously assumed them to have the same meaning is a possible indicator that the former phrase has a degree of ambiguity!

II Presenting our own system [fr. p.31]

The subject, sound: it is impermanent because it is a product, for instance, just like a butter lamp about to go out. This may be known from the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* if the quotations are arranged in order. [IV 22 bcd, IV 283 cd]

Saying, 'Sound's produced and all such are
Impermanent,' from these facts too
(355) There's knowledge it disintegrates...

Just as what's on destruction's brink
None claims' relied on to remain.¹

III Dispelling objections to it [fr. p. 31]

Qualm: Well then, does the correct other party to whom the syllogism is set realize that the butter lamp that is about to go out is impermanent or not? If he does not, since he will be one for whom the forward pervasion is not established, it will not be suitable as a correct sign for him.² If he does realize that, is that a direct realization or by means of a sign? If the former, then it follows the other party would be a superior being. If the latter, then as above it would not be correct as a reasoning which newly establishes impermanence.

Response: Let us explain: the example is manifestly impermanent, so although he directly realizes it there is no fault of it following from that that he would be a superior. The reason why he directly realizes that is because of the fact that he directly realizes that it [the butter lamp about to go out] is in the process of ceasing; because the way something appears in the aspect of impermanence is none other than its way of appearing in the aspect of being in the process of ceasing.

¹ Gen Lamrimpa, in his *Cloud Offering* explanation of the 'Valid Cognition', (Collected Works, vol. 4, p. 452): 'By saying, "Sound is produced and all such as are produced are impermanent," from these facts, i.e. through the force of the statement, the awareness that knows that sound is disintegrating will be produced too...' (p. 548) 'For example, it is just like that thing which is on the brink of destruction that not even the opponent will claim can be relied upon to remain for a second establishment-time moment.'

² The correct other party is one who is primed to realise that sound is impermanent on hearing our own system's syllogism just given. He is about to realize impermanence on sound. Since the syllogism is put forward by our system as a reasoning for *newly* realizing impermanence, his realization of impermanence on sound will be his first ever, breakthrough realization of (subtle) impermanence. Prior to realizing that sound is impermanent, he has already realized that sound is a product and that if it is a product it is necessarily impermanent. (The latter realization, simply speaking, is the ascertainment of the forward pervasion.) How does he realize that any product at all just has to be impermanent? By means of understanding the connection between impermanent and product on a suitable similar example, the last moment of the flame of a butter lamp, for instance. But how does he realize all that without realizing impermanence and so that he is still wondering, 'Is sound impermanent or not?' I.e. how does product become the forward pervasion for him? It is a delicate issue.

As it says in Gyaltsab-je's *Clarifying the Path to Liberation*, p. 235:¹

... because a colour being impermanent is also established by sense direct perception; because the two, a functioning thing which is a colour that is about to cease and the impermanence which is not other than it in terms of establishment and abiding are both equally objects which the sense direct perceiver apprehending the last [moment of] colour is able to induce ascertainment of.²

Thus the one quality impermanence, depending on the individual base of qualities can be variously gross or subtle. Selflessness and so forth are similar in that respect too.

Then there are those who, not understanding this point, speak themselves hoarse thus, 'In the reasoning to newly establish impermanence, whatever is held as the similar example, we have to realize its impermanence. That also we have to realize by means of a sign. That being so, the similar example of that [sign] we also have to realize by means of a sign and so forth, so there will be an infinite regress!' Loud and clear though it is said, 'Just as you had no effective answer to the former [objection] so also you will have none to [this] latter either!' there is no lack whatsoever of an effective answer because, since the example is established by direct perception, we can say it is very much not established that it has to be proved by a sign. However, there is no certainty that by means of our perception of the last moment of a butter lamp we will realize impermanence. This we can understand from how it is in the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* [III 104]:

Since there are other similar ones,
Some do not understand at all.
Because of error, former ones
Though different are not seen as such.

Qualm: No way is it tenable that the measure of a functioning thing is to be moment-by-moment and arising-passing. Some functioning things like mountains and so forth we directly see remain starkly without ever changing.

Response: Seeing like that is simply seeing wrongly, no more, due to conditions such as an internal cause for error, the imprints of permanent-grasping, and an external cause for error, the uninterrupted sequence of similar type.

It is not that the object does not change. If we illustrate this with a functioning thing that has duration of five moments, for instance: merely from the cessation of a part, the first moment, it gives up its nature of five and becomes something with the duration of four.³

¹ rnam 'grel thar lam gsal byed/ tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa'i rnam bshad thar lam phyin ci ma log par gsal bar byed pa. On this occasion Gen Lamrimpa gives a page reference, to a woodblock edition, downloadable at www.asianclassics.org. Gyaltsab-je is commenting on *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*, III 101, 102.

² Gyaltsab-je is not saying that the impermanence of any colour can be established by direct perception, just the impermanence of such as a colour that is obviously on the very brink of cessation, for instance, the colour of a soap bubble about to pop.

³ Gyaltsab-je, *Clarifying the Path to Liberation*, commenting on Dharmakīrti's verse I 193, says:

A product does not have any substantial entity of non-disintegration because it is not possible for such to exist like that [even] for a moment or two. /cont'd

Similarly a mountain or whatever proceeds changing in that fashion, for there is no time when it remains changelessly.

For that party their [the former and later mountains] being one is a repudiation of direct perception because the mountain that is green in summer ceases in winter and is no more, and the white mountain of winter in summer ceases and is no more. Suchlike gross transformations are established even by direct perception. He may then think, 'There appears a factor of green on the mountain in summer. That does not abide in winter. But as regards the mountain factor there is no transformation. Why? Because we see directly that same mountain of summer remaining just exactly as it is in the winter.'

This is just the 'by nature permanent, incidentally impermanent' philosophical position. Thus: the subject, the nature of the mountain: it follows that it is not produced because it is permanent, will refute that.¹

(360) In short, any functioning thing such that what is there at an earlier time appears to abide at a later time is like the appearance of a circle of a whirling firebrand, which comes about when, in the case of an uninterrupted sequence of former and later moments of similar type, we mistake the former and later times to be the same. It is said that the source of mistake for Outsiders' claims that some functioning things like atoms and so forth are permanent is from this happening also. The way we grasp the times to be mixed is also just this. The mode of observing something and grasping the times to be mixed and the mode of observing something and grasping at permanence are the same. Thus we should know that on whatever base a valid cognizer realizes subtle impermanence, on that base it will differentiate former and later times, without mixing them.

Here if we explain taking the words, 'All compounded things are impermanent' as our example, it will be easy to understand. This sentence, the whole, has ten [in Tibetan seven]

Qualm: That is not established. There is one that has a substantial entity of not disintegrating for a duration of five moments – and then it disintegrates.

Response: Well then, at the time of the fourth moment has it given up abiding in the substantial entity of not disintegrating for five moments or not? If it has, then its abiding in the substantial entity of not disintegrating for five moments falls apart because it could not remain beyond the duration of three moments and by the time of the fourth moment that [substantial entity] has disintegrated. If it has not given that up, its abiding without disintegrating for five moments and necessarily having disintegrated by the time of the sixth falls apart because previously it abided for three moments without disintegration and at the time of the fourth moment also it abides in the substantial entity of not disintegrating for five moments so it will abide for a duration of eight moments!

¹ Qualm: After having been produced the new stainless steel bowl rests in a steady state of non-change in its packaging in the factory warehouse. Then, once sold and used, it becomes scratched, heated up, cooled down, i.e. it changes.

Response: But your permanent, unscratched bowl has to change *in order to* become a scratched bowl.

Qualm: First it ceases to be permanent and, having done that, then it changes.

Response: We accept that certain permanents do not last forever and do go out of existence. A leopardess is mortal. Even so she cannot change her spots.

Qualm: Essentially it stays the same while superficially there are changes.

Response: So a change to a part is not necessarily a change to the whole? Please investigate.

syllables for parts. The ten operate in order, one by one. As each later one is established, the former one ceases and is no more. It is established by direct perception that as the syllable 'pound' is established, the syllable 'com' ceases and does not abide. As much as the ten syllables are moment-by-moment¹ and arising-passing, to that extent all compounded things included within the continuum, in a moment-by-moment and arising-passing fashion, operate joined up into a continuum. It is not a case of each former moment without changing joining to each latter one, operating in the manner of a stone passing from hand to hand, since the syllable 'com' does not pass unchanging into the entity of the syllable 'pound'.

Qualm: Well then, the ten syllables you speak of operate swiftly but direct perception is able to induce ascertainment that at the time of the later ones the former ones have ceased and do not abide. However, with regard to a pot, for instance, on former and later days, even though a long period of time comes between, [our] direct perception is unable to ascertain that the former [pot] does not abide at the later time. How is this?

Response: The point is that the pots of the former and later days are of similar type, but the former and later syllables are not like that. Sound has no continuum of similar type and so for this very reason the impermanence of it is said to be easier to realize than that of other phenomena.

Qualm: Well then, ascertaining that the former syllable does not remain [at the time of] the later, is that the ascertainment of subtle impermanence on the former syllable or not?

Response: It is not. To ascertain that we have to ascertain that the former syllable disintegrates from merely being established because just ascertaining that after having been established it will not remain does not suffice.

Oh my, compounded things disintegrate
From merely being created; it's their way.
O goof, not understood yet? Hoodwinked by
The demon permanent-grasping, are we?

¹ Text amended by inserting skad cig ma.

2. Contaminated Phenomena are Suffering

With regard to the way in which contaminated phenomena are suffering there are two

- A. The actual
- B. The elimination of doubts [p. 38]

A. The actual

With regard to the first, in many sūtras it says:¹

Compounded things are all impermanent. What is impermanent is suffering.

Thus the import of the scriptures is that we should infer impermanence from the sign product and suffering from the sign impermanent. And the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* says [II 254 cd]:

Thus suffering from impermanence.
From suffering, selflessness, it's said.

So then, what is the suffering that is to be known by way of impermanence, and what is the way to know it? With regard to that, there are two

- [1] Identifying the suffering that is to be known
- [2] The way to know it

[1] Identifying the suffering that is to be known.

The *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* says [II 252 cd]:

When 'meditate on suffering's said
Then compositional suffering's meant.

That is, the suffering we are told to meditate on or to know by way of impermanence is compositional suffering. The reason is from the fact that the two, the feeling of suffering and the suffering of change, are known even by animals and by Outsiders respectively, so it is not necessary to know them by way of subtle impermanence.

[2] The way to know the suffering that is to be known.

This is a point of difficulty. We can see this when we look at Master-scholar Tendar Lharampa's sorrowful admission:

(365) We should indeed establish suffering through the sign of impermanence but, however much I think about the way to do that, not so much as a hair's worth appears to mind.

¹ These two precise phrases have not been found together in any one sūtra. The first occurs, for instance, in the *Great Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, mahāparinirvāṇasūtra, yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa chen po'i mdo, vol. nya, f. 217b1. The second occurs, for instance, in the *Miraculous Concentration Certain for Peace Sūtra*, praśāntaviniścayaprāṭihāryasamādhisūtra, rab tu zhi ba rnam par nges pa'i cho 'phrul gyi ting nge 'dzin mdo, f. 187a6.

Well then, with regard to the way to do it, there are two

- a. General by general
- b. Specific by specific

a. General by general

It is as Master Prajñāvarman says in his *Commentary on [Udbhaṭasiddhasvāmin's] 'In Praise of Superiors,'*¹ [re v. 28]:

Since they are moment-by-moment and compositional even the aggregates of the Peak of Existence² are only undesirable. If superiors view *them* as suffering, what need is there to even mention down as far as the hell realms?

There is no need to mention this, that or the other contaminated splendour; even such as the aggregates of the Peak of Existence are not a state conducive to happiness because moment by moment and through the process of creation and disintegration their continuum exhausts itself and they connect up with some other suffering, for instance, just like hell realm aggregates. This explains how general impermanence establishes that compounded things generally are suffering. Thus 'state which causes the superiors revulsion,' 'state not conducive to happiness' and 'undesirable state' are all equivalents of suffering here, an enumeration of synonyms.

b. Specific by specific

- (1) The way of establishing the gross by the gross
- (2) The way of establishing the subtle by the subtle [p. 38]

(1) The way of establishing the gross by the gross

To illustrate this with reference to such as the axiom:

The end of birth is death,

although we live happily now, one day without doubt we will die. Thinking closely about this state of affairs we become miserable, due to the power of the impermanence of death to make us understand living as suffering.

So, it may be said then, 'The subject, living happily now: it is suffering because it is impermanent in that at a certain point we will die, for instance, like a criminal who, having the enjoyment of a fine house, lives happily now but who is definitely going to be executed at a certain point.'

The end of meeting, parting,

and so forth may also be brought to bear here.

In brief, whatever worldly splendour it is, it is nothing that will not be included in ruination. Thinking this way and developing a sense of misery is the way to meditate on mere gross compositional suffering by way of gross impermanence.

¹ viśeṣastavanāmaṭikā, khyad par du 'phags pa'i bstod pa'i rgya cher bshad pa.

² The highest realm in cyclic existence, with the least suffering therefore.

Previously Our Teacher, when he saw the predicament of old age, death and so forth, thought to himself, 'I am just such a one.' Having seen that there is no essence in youth and freedom from sickness, his performing the deed of abandoning a royal position and going forth was because of this, which shows that if, at the beginning, we can generate just this in our continuum, it is a very good sign indeed.

(2) The subtle by the subtle [fr. p. 37]

Like the criminal being led to the execution ground if we contemplate how, moment by moment, we are drawing nearer to our death, we become even more miserable than before, which happens because subtle impermanence brings subtle suffering clearly to mind.

So the subject, the situation of living now, it is great suffering because not only does it just end in death, but also, having been born, without the power to stay even for a moment we are led by time's messenger into the presence of the Lord of Death, for instance, just like a criminal being led to his place of execution whose every step brings him nearer to death. The way subtle impermanence establishes subtle suffering we may apply to others as appropriate.

In short, not only are all the good things of the world included in ruination, from this point onwards they are approaching nearer to ruination. Thinking in this fashion and seeing that not one of the world's splendours is mentally trustworthy even for a moment, then we will develop a misery that is from the bottom of our heart and from deep within our bones. When we have done that then our purpose in meditating on subtle suffering by way of subtle impermanence will be fulfilled.

If we realize this point, then we will develop an awareness of the contaminated meditative stabilizations of the higher realms as suffering in their own time. This is reinforcing omniscient Gyaltsab-je's oft-repeated remark that we should definitely rely on having realized subtle impermanence beforehand [when generating these stabilizations].

(370) For these reasons, to achieve liberation we need a fiercely strong wish for liberation. For that to arise we need a fiercely strong sense of revulsion that is sickened by compositional suffering and for that we need a fiercely strong ascertainment seeing compounded things as impermanent. Nothing will foster an understanding of compositional suffering except impermanence because the depth of our revulsion with the former follows from the strength of our ascertainment of impermanence.

Realizing the power of these truths, our Teacher at the beginning generated the supreme mind of enlightenment, in the middle collected the collections for three countless aeons and finally reached manifest, complete buddhahood. When he taught the Dharma to free embodied beings from cyclic existence and establish them in the state of liberation, at the very first he taught:

Compounded things are all impermanent.

It is a salient point indeed.

B. The elimination of doubts [fr. p. 36]

If its impermanence establishes something as suffering, then is there not the fault that omniscience and so forth are not accounted for? I think there are many who, befuddled by this doubt, have been rendered helpless in the face of the fact that the scriptures teach that whatever is impermanent is suffering. The omniscient Gorampa is obliged to observe:

In general impermanence is pervaded by suffering
while Tendar Lharampa spoke as mentioned above and so forth, also giving the appearance
of not having cleared up this doubt.

So then, how should we think? Here there are six

- (1) Identifying the impermanence taught here
- (2) From that, the way to infer it to be suffering
- (3) Identifying those persons who do or do not comprehend compositional suffering [p. 40]
- (4) The measure of having generated revulsion once we have understood its faults [p. 40]
- (5) Connecting with earlier accounts [p. 41]
- (6) In dependence on that, an explanation of how to attain final liberation [p. 42]

(1) Identifying the impermanence taught here

It is like this: embodied beings being bound in cyclic existence is mainly the fault of their grasping the aggregates of their continuum to be permanent, pleasurable and so forth; whereas omniscience and so forth are not so bound by the power of grasping at those. Thus what we take as the main basis to be determined as impermanent and so forth should be just the contaminated, appropriated aggregates contained within our continuum. Since we should do that, when, in order to release embodied beings from cyclic existence, the Teacher Buddha taught that all compounded things are impermanent and so forth, it is established by the context that we should interpret that not simply as compounded things in general but those compounded by karma and the afflictions. The authoritative explanations that interpret it in that fashion are many. So, since we should take the compounded things indicated here as being those *compounded* by karma and the afflictions, i.e. produced by the power of those, then we should also take the impermanents indicated here to be not just impermanents in general but those that *disintegrate* by the power of karma and the afflictions, since that is established by the power of its counterpart.

(2) From that, the way to infer it to be suffering

Having done that, the way the impermanence indicated here is established as suffering: since it disintegrates through the power of others, karma and the afflictions, without any power of its own to remain, then it is a state that is an object of the superiors' revulsion. Being established thus there is no fault whatsoever of [the sign being] contradictory, not ascertained or not established and so forth.

Since it is like that, we have to consider the intention of many sūtras that explain [e. g., *Great Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, vol. nya, f. 323a3]:

Since impermanent, suffering; since suffering, empty; since empty, selfless.
and

What is compounded is impermanent.

What is impermanent is suffering.

If we state, 'It is impermanent because it is a compounded thing,' we should definitely state in addition, 'It is suffering because it is the impermanent *that is indicated here*,' because it is not suitable to be biased with regard to the meaning of the sūtras. And we should consider well the reason why in many texts it is stated like the former and not like the latter. (375)

(3) Identifying the persons who do or do not comprehend compositional suffering. [fr.p. 39]

Just as we notice when a fine hair gets into our eye but not when there is one on the palm of our hand, so superiors notice subtle compositional [suffering] but the childish do not. It says in sūtra:¹

The childish like a hand-palm do not feel
The hair of compositional suffering.
Superiors though are like an eye because
It causes them revulsion in the extreme.

Thus directly perceiving compositional suffering or not meets back to whether we directly perceive subtle impermanence or not. The reason may be known from what we have said above.

(4) The measure of having generated revulsion once we have understood its faults. [fr. p. 39]

Once we have understood compositional suffering, the measure of having generated a corresponding sense of revulsion towards it [*Four Hundred* VII 14]:

The wise feel similar misery
For high states and the hells alike.

As it says, it is appropriate to develop a like sense of revulsion towards such as the happiness of Brahma in the higher states and the sufferings of hell because both are alike in being compositional suffering and because we should realize just how similar they are in fact.

Thus the measure of having generated uncontrived renunciation has to be like that. Other than that, waffle about generating renunciation by being sickened by some negative conditions in this life and merely feeling revulsion because of them is seriously mistaken because such as that is revulsion due to the feeling of suffering and even animals have that.

So then, do the childish – ordinary beings – develop an authentic thought of renunciation or not? If not, they will not develop even just the small path of accumulation of any of the three vehicles. If they do, it follows that they have a proper understanding of the faults of compositional suffering and if we accept that, it says in the *Four Hundred* [VII 15]:

The childish, if they understood
Samsara's faults in all respects,
That very moment, both at once,
Their minds and hearts would crack apart.

If childish ordinary beings understood compositional suffering, that would happen to them, which implicitly indicates they do not understand it. Is there not a contradiction here? Please investigate.

For these reasons a single contaminated aggregate, because it is compounded by karma and the afflictions is compositional suffering; because it disintegrates by the power of others, karma and the afflictions, it is impermanent suffering and because it is established by the

¹ Cited by several earlier masters, modern scholars report this verse's source as untraced.

power of those others it is created suffering. These are all one entity, differentiated merely by being different isolate phenomena. However, the latter two terms are only from former days. Having become defunct they are not seen in later times.

(5) Connecting with earlier accounts [fr. p. 39]

Once our understanding of impermanence has reached the crucial point then we will see any of the world's splendours as qualified by being impermanent, inconstant and illusory and so from the depth of our mind there will be misery, but there will be no place for attachment and clinging. As previously when our Teacher performed the deed of living in the palace, the buddhas of the ten directions performed the deed of urging him on to liberation with an aphorism on impermanence [*Extensive Sport Sūtra*,¹ f. 88a2]:

The triple world's impermanence, like autumn clouds,
The birth and death of beings, like looking at a show...²

and so forth. Accordingly our Teacher himself also, seeing the triple world to be impermanent and inconstant by nature, put aside his royal position and performed the deed of going for liberation.

Similarly when previously he was a trainee on the path and he took birth in the form of a Brahmin child [Āryaśūra, *Garland of Birth Stories*,³ f. 128b2]:

Alas, the afflictions of the world,
Inconstant and unhappy so.
Kumuda's⁴ glory even this—
Soon just a thing of memory.

Knowing that the great show of the Kumuda festival would be over in an instant and in an instant just a thing of memory, he evinced great misery. From such bygone episodes also we can understand and not only from those, for there are the accounts of how the peerless, great, foremost one, Atisha, and so forth saw a royal position as impermanent and cheerfully cast it aside. Also in the words of Tsongkhapa:⁵

(380) When others show me reverence and arrange fine seats and so forth, thinking that these are all qualified by being impermanent, inconstant and illusory, I am oppressed with a sense of misery. Having developed non-attachment over a long period of time, now from the first it is naturally there.

Also Lama Vajradhara⁶ used to say:

How like a big show such as a musical or a religious opera,

¹ lalitavistarasūtra, rgya cher rol pa'i mdo.

² The passage continues:

The passage of a life, like lightning in the sky,
So swiftly rushing, like a mountain waterfall.

³ jātakamāla, skyes rab.

⁴ Nymphaea esculenta? Possibly nymphaea pubescens or nymphaea rubra, white and red water lilies.

⁵ Similar wording found in Tsongkhapa's biography in *Biographies of the Lamas of the Lam Rim Lineage*, lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar, by Yongzin Yeshe Gyaltsan, vol. 1, f. 346b.

⁶ Abu Dorje Chang, Tenzin Trinley Kunkhyen, Gen Lamrimpa's spiritual master.

and

Kumuda's glory even this—
Soon just a thing of memory.

Turn these words from the *Birth Stories* over in your mind and solely out of a sense of thorough misery let your perception of a show appear until it cannot get any stronger, and so forth.

In short, whoever's liberation story we look at, from the perfect, complete Buddha's to our root lama's, through revulsion at seeing the triple world's impermanence straight they went for permanent, constant, immutable buddhahood. Thus the excellent ones cast aside even a royal position like spit or snot, trained on the path to enlightenment and long ago achieved buddhahood, i.e. their fulfilment of the two purposes has occurred. But I and people like me could not pass up even trifling pleasures and, attached to them, collected various negative actions, as a result of which we previously had to undergo a variety of sufferings in like measure and not only that, still, even now, there is no certainty whatsoever that we will not have to undergo some remainder of that previous karma.

These great faults in the end come down to the fault of not knowing impermanence so, if we have a mind and we do not take the practice of impermanence as our footing, then we will not have any place to take a stand, it is said.

(6) In dependence on that, an explanation of how to attain final liberation [fr. p. 39]

How should we proceed, then? As follows: knowing that all worlds are qualified by being impermanent, inconstant and illusory and then knowing there is nothing fit to be trusted in the least except liberation and omniscience alone, the definitive level of renunciation will easily develop. If that arises, it will arouse us on to the path of liberation from within and our ability to travel to the abode of liberation will mature in a short time.

Otherwise, if we do not know impermanence, we will not know compositional suffering. If we do not know that, we will not develop the wish for liberation. If we do not have the wish for liberation, we will not establish ourselves on the path to liberation. What way then to attain the state of liberation? None at all.

Thus, as much as we know impermanence, to that extent we will know compositional suffering and our appetite for worldly pleasures must decrease thereby as our aspiration for the joy of uncontaminated liberation increases. If it were not like that, then understanding of impermanence would have no significance.

So say the precious lamas. Furthermore, they say that if our knowledge of impermanence reaches the critical point, whatever contaminated happiness it is, having previously merely felt it as happiness, we will come to feel it as compositional suffering.

If we do not know the impermanence of this life, we will not develop a striving for the next. Just like that, if we do not know the impermanence of cyclic existence we will not develop a striving for liberation. If we do not develop that, let alone liberation, we will never have occasion even to hold to a portion of the path to liberation.

The assertion that in dependence on Outsider paths we cannot enter onto even the small path of accumulation is also for this reason.¹ So, whoever we mention, if they do not know the fine and subtle divisions of impermanence, there is no scope for them but to plunge on ever further and deeper into cyclic existence. Thus impermanence is a path travelled by all the buddhas of the three times alike. There is nothing whatever more important than this, they say.

In short, the fact of the matter is that, all whatever that we are attached to and cling to, we must bring to bear the reasoning of it being impermanent and cut off that attachment and clinging. The exhaustive coverage of the impermanence of compounded things in the scriptures and commentaries is for that very purpose. Thus, by the fact that births are beginningless, previously in this cyclic abode there is not one contaminated pleasure we have not experienced; indeed we have experienced them incalculable times but their nature is exhausted in this, that let alone their being a cause of present benefit, they do not even appear as a thing of memory. And the pleasures of this life will become just like that in the next as well.

(385) In short, whatever contaminated pleasure it may be, it is like tossing dust into water, just experienced, experienced then finished, with not the slightest subsequent benefit. As an example of this, yesterday's pleasures are today but a thing of memory; this is their non-beneficial nature. Since the previous moment of happiness will not even benefit the next moment what need to speak of this and that other examples?² We must categorically meditate that attachment and clinging to contaminated, worldly happiness, in every moment impermanent and inconstant, is more foolish than foolish.

It would seem that most people have some idea of a partial method of cutting through attachment and clinging to this life by way of the reasoning of the impermanence of death, but they have absolutely no idea of the practice of cutting attachment and clinging to the next by way of the reasoning of the impermanence of the triple world so, apart from just the Dharma theme of the impermanence of death, the other Dharma themes of impermanence are unable to appear to them as instructions.

The happiness of uncontaminated liberation is indeed impermanent in general. However, from the point of view of its continuum not changing, in this context it is suitable to be included in the permanent class, as may be known from [Maitreya's] *Ornament for Clear Realizations*³ [VIII 11]:

There's no exhaustion of it so
It also is called permanent.

¹ The small part of the path of accumulation is the very first stage of the path to liberation. Outsiders' clinging to permanence prevents them from understanding subtle impermanence, without which they cannot develop the uncontrived determination to be free from cyclic existence, i.e. renunciation. Who can claim to be on the path to liberation without that? Who can claim to be on a path that leads somewhere until they have left home?

² Just as one moment of the shadow on the ground of a bird flying overhead does not produce the next moment of the shadow.

³ abhisamayālaṅkāra, mngon rtogs rgyan.

Contaminated worldly happiness on the other hand is not like that at all; its continuum is extremely impermanent and unstable. However superb contaminated happiness is, one moment passes, two pass and its continuum quickly runs its course. Since the exhaustion of happiness is itself suffering, by that also we can understand the contaminated feeling of happiness as suffering.

So also we say:

Since they're inconstant and impermanent,
These worldly splendours are but essenceless,
By nature suffering. The fortunate
Seek joy in freedom, constant, permanent.

3. The Aggregates are Selfless

With regard to the explanation that the aggregates are selfless, there are three

- A. The way we proceed from suffering to selflessness
- B. Why we have to proceed like that [p. 46]
- C. What reasoning we employ in order to proceed [p. 46]

A. The way we proceed from suffering to selflessness

With regard to first

Thus suffering from impermanence;
From suffering, selflessness, it's said.

Since it says that we must proceed from suffering to selflessness, in what way do we do so? Here there are three different methods.

[1] Since the suffering indicated here is being under the power of others, karma and affliction, and that is contradictory with an 'own-powered' [stand-alone] self, through refuting the latter by reason of the former we realize selflessness. This way of proceeding from suffering to selflessness is the thought of the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*.¹

[2] The meaning of selflessness is 'not suitable to be taken as belonging to self.' Thus since the aggregates are suffering they are not suitable to be taken as self. This way of proceeding from the former to the latter is the thought of the root *Four Hundred* and commentary.²

[3] Just in dependence on knowing that cyclic life is suffering, one proceeds to the yoga of selflessness, the path to liberation. This is said to be the way one proceeds from suffering to selflessness according to the thought of [Chandrakīrti's] root *Introduction to the 'Treatise on*

¹ Gyaltsab-je supplies a reasoning establishing a person as selfless that incorporates the sign 'because of being under the power of karma and affliction,' i.e. because of being suffering, in his *Clarifying the Path to Liberation*. The following is adapted from his commentary on Dharmakīrti's verse II 190 cd: the subject, an own-powered person: he does not exist because he is neither one nature with nor different nature from the aggregates, for example, just like the horn of a hare. Establishing the reason on the subject: an own-powered person is not one nature with the aggregates because they are other-powered by their causes [karma and affliction and so forth]. An own-powered person is not a different nature from the aggregates because if he were, he would be suitable to be observed like that, but such is not observed.

² Since the aggregates are suffering, i.e. under the power of their causes, karma and affliction, they themselves are selfless as well, not just the person. Grasping at 'mine' as well as grasping at 'me' have to be overcome in order to be free from cyclic existence. This is indicated in the *Four Hundred*, at XIV 25 for instance:

Awareness is samsara's seed,
All objects objects of its use.
The selflessness of objects seen,
Seed of the world will be no more.

the Middle' and its *Autocommentary*.¹

Which of these should one follow then? Since each informs the others, it is suitable to agree with all three.

B. Why we have to proceed like that [fr. p. 45]

- a. Identifying the root of cyclic life
- b. In dependence on that, establishing that there is no option but to meditate on emptiness

Aging and death, grief, lamentation and so forth, whatever sufferings of cyclic life there may be, there is no case of them arising without a cause or from inappropriate causes, so they all must arise from appropriate causes. They arise from karma, in accordance with the twelve links of dependent relativity in forward mode and karma in the end arises from self-grasping ignorance. As it says in the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* [II 219 cd, 220 ab]

If self exists, then other's known;
From self and other, greed and hate.

From being all too involved in these
All faults there are will come to be. (390)

This assuredly establishes that the root of all faults is self-grasping ignorance.

b. In dependence on that, establishing that there is no option but to meditate on emptiness

If we are unable to bear even the slightest appearance of suffering in this life, how will we be able to bear the definitive sufferings of a succession of lives? We will not. Since we will not, we must abandon self-grasping, the root of suffering and if we do not realize selflessness, we will not be able to abandon it, so it is right for anyone who has a mind to make effort by every means there is at the method of realizing the selflessness that has not been realized, and increasing more and more that which has been realized. Moreover, this is not just as I fancy, for we should follow Protector Nāgārjuna because, as the glorious Chandrakīrti has decisively pronounced [*Introduction to the 'Treatise on the Middle'*, VI 79 ab]:

No means of peace for one who's off
The path that Master Nāgārjuna trod.

C. What reasoning we employ in order to proceed [fr. p. 45]

This way that's empty, peaceful and unborn,
Oblivious to it beings wander on.
With hundreds of techniques and reasonings
The master of Compassion draws them in.

As it says here, in the *Questions of Rāṣṭrapāla Sūtra*² [f. 252b2], the reasons set forth in the scriptures and treatises to establish emptiness are unlimited in number. From those, in view of their being easy to understand and of great importance, I will confine my remarks to the

¹ *Autocommentary on the "Introduction to the 'Treatise on the Middle'"*, madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya, dbu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa.

² *rāṣṭrapālapariṣcchāsūtra*, yul 'khor skyong gis zhus pa'i mdo.

two reasonings, that of neither one nor distinct and that of dependent arising, and say the little that is in my mental capacity.

So here then there are two

- (1) The neither one nor distinct reason¹
- (2) The reason of dependent relativity [p. 51]

(1) The neither one nor distinct reason

This sign is complete in four essentials, it is said

- (a) Ascertaining the object to be refuted
- (b) Ascertaining the pervasion [p. 48]
- (c) Ascertaining freedom from being one [p. 49]
- (d) Ascertaining freedom from being distinct [p. 49]

(a) Ascertaining the object to be refuted

With regard to the first there are two

- {1} The reason why it is necessary to ascertain the object to be refuted
- {2} The way it is ascertained [p.48]

{1} The reason why it is necessary to ascertain the object to be refuted

Just as, for example, it is pointless to shoot off an arrow without identifying the target, so it is meaningless to refute something without identifying the object to be refuted. We must identify it then. We can illustrate this by taking the person as the basis of refutation. In fact, in just the same way that a snake is imputed onto a striped rope, a person is merely imputed there by conception in dependence on the aggregates, no more. But the way he appears to mind is that he appears to be established from his, the object's, own side. Just this is the way of appearing of the self that is to be refuted.

Thus we must refute that factor of its being established in the way it appears to the mind apprehending it. It is not correct to refute just what appears because if we refute that then we fall to the extreme of severance. To be explicit: we must refute the person that exists from his own side. It is not correct to refute just the person, the reason being that, if we do not refute the former, we fall to the extreme of existence, while if we refute the latter, we fall to the extreme of non-existence and to find the perfect view we must be free from both those extremes. So Jetsun Manjushri's dictum that bias towards either appearance or emptiness is altogether unsuitable is because of this essential. Understand therefore that the mind that tilts towards emptiness disparages appearance and the mind that tilts towards appearance disparages emptiness and both remain to be refuted by the Middle Way.

¹ *gcig du bral gyi rigs pa*. This would usually translate as the neither one nor many reason, or the reason of being neither one nor many, and would establish the subject's lack of true existence by way of its being neither a truly established one (unity) nor a truly established many (plurality). However, below, Gen Lamrimpa establishes the subject's lack of true existence through its being neither truly one with the aggregates nor truly distinct from them. He appears to use the Tibetan word *du ma* in its secondary sense of distinct, i.e. different, rather than in its more familiar sense of many.

To give an example, due to the fact that milk and water, when present in a pool, are not separate, no other creature save the swan is able to separate them. Just so here, on account of the basis of refutation and the object to be refuted's non-separate way of appearing, except for the Consequentialist no one is able to separate them, for, it is said, they do not escape either falling to the extreme of existence through still leaving the object to be refuted when they posit the basis of refutation, or falling to the extreme of non-existence by repudiating the basis of refutation when refuting the object to be refuted. For these reasons identifying the object to be refuted distinct from the basis of refutation is an extremely difficult business.

In short, one who would have it that it is acceptable to refute the object to be refuted without identifying what that object is will not escape falling either to the extreme of existence or that of non-existence, so with that in mind, when it is said that it is necessary to identify the object to be refuted before we refute with reasoning, it is an essential of very great importance. Even so, (395) vaunting scholars are seen who disagree with this and seek to reject it but there seems to be nothing more to say apart from what I have said, so better to leave the matter aside with equanimity.

{2} The way it is ascertained [fr. p. 47]

This should be done in accordance with the oral instructions of Jetsun Manjushri. Firstly, arouse a strong sense of the innate grasping at I and bring about the appearance. Then with a corner of the mind gently investigate, pondering just how the I is that appears there. Having investigated like that, if an identification of the way it appears arises through the power of experience, then we can be said to have identified the object to be refuted.

Which of the seven types of awareness is this awareness identifying the object to be refuted?¹ One scholar supposes that if it was a valid cognizer that explicitly identified true existence as the object to be refuted, then non-true existence would be implicitly identified as the object to be proved, in which case there would be the fault that merely by identifying the object to be refuted the object to be proved would be established, so he says that it is a correct assumption. However, refuting something trusting to what is a mere identification by a correct assumption is altogether absurd, so this is rather feeble. Therefore, in our own system, it is suitable to accept it as an inferential valid cognizer, I think. Why? I presume so because that awareness is produced through consideration of the reasons why true establishment is the object to be refuted.

Well then, how should we think? In identifying with valid cognition that true existence is the object to be refuted, is it thereby automatically refuted or not? No, it is not. For example, if a tree is identified as one to be cut down, it is not thereby automatically cut with the blade. Likewise, even though true existence is identified as the object to be refuted by reasoning, it is not thereby automatically refuted by reasoning. The case is similar, I think.

(b) The second essential: the way to ascertain the pervasion [fr. p. 47]

One and different are directly contradictory in the sense of abiding in mutual exclusion, so

¹ The division of awareness into seven: direct perceiver, inference, subsequent cognizer, correct assumption, appearing but not ascertained, doubt, wrong consciousness.

in general if it exists, it is necessarily either one or different. Therefore, the self previously identified, if it existed, it would have to be truly one with or different from the aggregates. We must study to acquire in double measure the certainty about this that valid cognition brings.

(c) The third essential: the way to ascertain freedom from being one [fr. p. 47]

Meditate until one acquires the certainty that it is not established as one with the five aggregates because of the harm done by the consequence that if the self were one with them, there would either be many selves or the five aggregates would be one and so forth.

(d) The fourth essential: the way to ascertain freedom from being distinct [fr. p. 47]

Ascertain that it is not truly different from the aggregates either, because of many faults, such as the consequence that, if the self were established as truly different from the aggregates, then they would be unrelated, discrete others. If so, then the self would be identified on its own apart from the aggregates and the self would not be helped or harmed by the aggregates being helped or harmed and so forth.

In short, think that the I that appears tightly, tightly, from the centre of the heart when we think 'me, me,' if it existed, would have to be either one with or different from the aggregates and it is neither. When we have done that, because the three modes¹ or the four essentials will be complete, we will be able to realize the object to be proved, selflessness, quite naturally.

Having ascertained that if pot exists in a certain place, it either exists in the east or the west [of that place], if one then ascertains that it exists in neither of those two, that is sufficient to induce the ascertainment that it does not exist there. Merely ascertaining that it does not exist in either is not sufficient for that. Likewise, having ascertained that if self exists, it must be either one with or different from the aggregates, if one then ascertains that it is neither of those two, that is sufficient to induce the ascertainment that it does not exist. Merely ascertaining that it does not exist as either is not sufficient for that.

Therefore, it is proper to set 'established as neither', rather than 'not established as either' as the sign. In line with that, in the writings of Je Tsongkhapa and his spiritual sons there is the former only. (400) Not a snippet of the other way of setting it or the meaning of that will be found. But amongst his camp followers the 'it does not truly exist because it is not established as either truly one with or as truly distinct from' style of setting the syllogism has come up. With repeated usage over time of the above-mentioned 'if it truly exists, it is either truly one with or distinct from the aggregates but it is neither,' what comes first and what comes after became mixed up. Thus that way of formulating it is unquestionably

¹ I.e. the realization of the three modes will be complete. In a correct reasoning the sign is the three modes, that is, it fulfils the following three criteria

1. It is established on the subject (the property of the subject).
2. It is pervaded by the predicate of the probandum (the forward pervasion).
3. The negative of it pervades the negative of the predicate of the probandum (the counter pervasion).

In the reasoning: the subject, on the smoky pass, there is fire because there is smoke, 'on the smoky pass' is the subject, 'there is fire' is the predicate of the probandum and 'there is smoke' is the sign.

faulty, but, most people not having had doubts about it, has it not become a widespread fault? Let those with impartial discernment investigate.

This question may be put to those who use ‘either’ in the reason: does merely ascertaining that a person is not truly one with the aggregates suffice to ascertain this sign or does it not? If it suffices, then it follows that even a Materialist [*cārvāka*, *rgyang ’phen pa*] can ascertain this sign. If so, it follows that he can realize the meaning of the selflessness of persons. Why? Due to the fact that this sign is stated to be one that proves only a term.¹ If it does not suffice, then merely ascertaining ‘not established as either one with or different from’ does not suffice to establish this sign and so this ‘either’ sign is useless.

Some recalcitrants, unwilling to acknowledge their mistake, speak thus: if you say that such as a gold pot, for the reason that it is not a pillar, is not either a pot or a pillar, then it is correct to say that, for the reason that it is a pot, it is either a pot or a pillar all the same, so in that case you will have to say that there is a common base of the two, being and not being either a pot or a pillar! Therefore, if it is not either a pot or a pillar it has to be neither of the two, so there is not even the faintest difference between not either of the two and neither of the two. In the absence of that, likewise there is no difference at all between not either truly one or different and neither truly one nor different. It is correct to set the former as the sign because if it were not, it would not be correct to set the latter as the sign either!

If that is the case, incalculable faults will arise, such as that if one takes birth as any of the six types of migrator, one necessarily takes birth as all six. What could be more unreasonable than that? You, who have figured out that if it is not either one of Devadatta or Yajñadatta [Gift of Worship/Sacrifice] it is neither of them, are the greatest figurer out ever, because, apart from you, even a cowherd knows that the two, not either and neither, do not have the same meaning. Thus our system: taking gold pot as the basis, one may say that it is both either and not either a pot and a pillar but there is no fault, the point being that the words ‘either a pot or a pillar’ apply equally to the either a pot or a pillar which it is and the either a pot or a pillar which it is not, but what they mean is different [in each case]. For example, if one says, ‘Some people are present and some people are absent,’ the words ‘some people’ apply alike to the some people who are present and to the some people who are absent but who they mean are different!

It appears that, as a result of not paying proper attention to this point, awkward statements have occurred, even in some major monastic textbooks, so it should definitely be understood. The omniscient Khedrub [*Gelek Pelsang*, *dge legs dpal bzang*] asserts that this sign

¹ An example of a sign proving only a term is the sign momentary in the proof that sound is impermanent because it is momentary. The person for whom this reasoning is a correct proof, having already realized the three modes, knows that sound is momentary, which is the meaning of impermanent. When he realizes the probandum he is realizing not much more than the fact that ‘impermanent’ is the term which best describes and demarcates momentary things. Compare the moment when a child realizes that all the events that happen on the next day after this one happen ‘tomorrow’. The reasoning: the subject, Susan: she does not truly exist because she is neither truly one with her aggregates nor truly distinct from them, is often classified as reasoning in which the sign proves only a term, so one in which realizing the property of the subject amounts to realizing the meaning of the probandum.

is a sign proving only a term but Jamyang Gawai Lodroe [*'jam dbyangs dga' ba'i blo gros*]¹ raised a doubt that such is contradictory with a statement by Je Tsongkhapa. However, when his refutation of [the wrong] and presentation [of the correct] are examined closely, his refutation is on the basis of the 'either' sign, hence the need for caution, it seems. Many later scholars have responded with various refutations to eliminate the doubt raised in Gawai Lodroe's writings but the reason why the root cause of it, 'either', is not the sign needed to be identified. That none could do so is a clear indication that their stance was similar to that of the earlier scholar on this.

A lamp dispells some darkness underground
Unreached by sun or moon; that's no surprise.
Just so, a problem experts could not solve:
That such as I could, who need be surprised?

(405) (2) The reason of dependent relativity [fr. p. 47]

- (A) The scriptural sources
- (B) The syllogism derived from those [p. 53]
- (C) The way to cultivate it [p. 58]

(A) The scriptural sources

With respect to the way of explaining the meaning of the sūtra(s) teaching dependent relativity,² there are two, one mode of explanation from the version that goes:

'di yod pa na 'di 'byung. 'di skyes pas 'di skye.

When this is existent, this occurs. Due to this arising, this arises,

and another mode of explanation from the version that goes:

'di yod na 'di 'byung. 'di skyes pas 'di skye.

Since this exists, this occurs. Due to this arising, this arises.

It is evident that it is suitable to take the first as the Middle Way system and the second as the system of Mind-only and so forth. In any event, I think that there is no impediment to both latter sūtra segments [*'di skyes pas 'di skye*] being in the fifth [ablative] case so I think it would be preferable to amend them to:

'di skyes pa las 'di skyes.

From this arising, this arises.

¹ 1429-1504 CE. Also known as Jamyang Lekpa Chönjor. A prominent teacher in the early days of Drepung Loseling Monastic College.

² There is the *Rice Seedling Sūtra*, śālistambasūtra, sā lu'i ljang pa'i mdo, and the *Initial and Extensive Teaching of Dependent Relativity Sūtra*, pratītyasamutpādādivibhaṅganirdeśasūtra, rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba dang po dang rnam par dbye ba bstan pa'i mdo, for instance. It is difficult to see a difference in meaning between the two formulations *'di yod pa na 'di 'byung* and *'di yod na 'di 'byung*. I have translated them differently in accordance with Gen Lamrimpa's explanations. The latter formulation occurs in the *Initial and Extensive Teaching of Dependent Relativity Sūtra*, f. 3b5. The Sanskrit as given by Candrakīrti in his *Clear Words Commentary on the 'Treatise on the Middle'*, mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā, dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel ba tshig gsal ba, is *asmin satidam bhavatyasyotpādā idam utpadyate*. See Anne MacDonald, *In Clear Words*, vol. 1, p. 237 and vol. 2, p. 204, n. 405.

The reason is that *pas* [translated as due to] is not a fifth case particle¹ and because we may also know through the example used by Vasubandhu [*Commentary on the 'Initial and Extensive Teaching of Dependent Relativity'*,² f. 4a1]:

dper na me dang 'brel ba las 'tshod³ par 'gyur ba...

For example, it cooks from being in contact with fire...

The two words *na* in the former sūtra segments [the first translated as when and the second as since] in general are the same in being seventh [locative] case particles, but within that there is a difference between them because the former is a seventh case of time and the latter is a seventh case of reason. The *Ocean of Reasoning* says [p. 55]:

Here the *la don* seventh-case particle [i.e. the word *na*] in '*di yod pa na 'di 'byung*' is a seventh case of time, as explained in the *Autocommentary on the "Introduction to the 'Treatise on the Middle'"* [hence our translation, 'When this is existent, this occurs'].

Master Vasubandhu says [*Commentary on the 'Sūtra on Dependent Arising'*, f. 3b6]:

'di yod pa na, 'Since this is existent', means 'Since this comes into existence' and '*di 'byung*', 'this occurs' means 'this arises.' Thus it should be understood as a seventh case of cause. For example, *char 'bab na lo tog skye bao*, since rain falls, the crops will grow.

In view of that I think any different versions such as:

*'di yod pas 'di 'byung. 'di skyes pas 'di skye.*⁴

Through this existing, this occurs. Through this arising, this arises.

and

'di yod pa'i phyir 'di 'byung. 'di skyes pa'i phyir 'di skye.

Because this exists, this occurs. Because this arises, this arises.

are corruptions because no authentic references to them are to be found. Just as in the works quoted above, we should distinguish between three types of seventh case, the seventh case of time, the seventh of reason and the seventh of location, but it is not certain whether grammarians are aware of this these days. However, in this [Consequentialist] system it should mainly be taken as a seventh case of time I assume, because this may be known from how it appears in Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*,⁵ [v. 48]:

When this exists, then this occurs,
Like there is long when there is short.
Through this arising, this arises,

¹ In Tibetan Gen Lamrimpa prefers *las*, which is a fifth case particle, to *pas*, better to convey the meaning of the original Sanskrit where the fifth, ablative, case is used. Here he concurs with Vasubandhu, though not below. The basic sense of the ablative case is source, origin 'from'. *Pas* is a third, instrumental, case particle. The basic sense of the instrumental case is means by which, instrument, agent, 'by'.

² *pratityasamutpādādivibhaṅganirdeśa*, rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba dang po dang rnam par dbye ba bshad pa.

³ reading *'tshod* for *'tshos*.

⁴ This is the version in the *Rice Seedling Sūtra*, f. 180b7-181a1.

⁵ *ratnāvalī*, rin chen phreng ba.

Like from a lamp's arising, light.

To be clear, the former has the full meaning of being established in mutual dependence but the other not.¹ We should consider whether these two different interpretations are due to there being gross and subtle objects of refutation. It is a situation that requires a close investigation.

(B) The syllogism derived from those [fr. p. 51]

I Setting the sign

II Establishing the modes

III Final analysis

I Setting the sign

The way to establish that a sprout is not truly existent by the sign of dependent relativity: the subject, a sprout: it is not inherently produced because it is produced from conditions, for example, just like a reflection. It is stated like that in accordance with sūtra [*Questions of Nāga King Anavatapta Sūtra*,² f. 230b2]:

What from conditions is produced, is not produced.

II Establishing the modes

If a sprout were produced inherently, that would be contradictory with production in dependence on other causes and conditions, seed, water, manure and so forth, hence the reasoning that whatever is produced from conditions is necessarily not produced inherently.

III Final analysis

Here there are four

[a] Investigation of the manner of imputation by conception

[b] Investigation of the manner of being produced from conditions [p. 55]

[c] Investigation of the manner of eliminating the two extremes [p. 55]

[d] Investigation of the manner of appearance to awareness [p. 57]

[a] Investigation of the manner of imputation by conception

Qualm: In the case of such as a sprout, if all the causes and conditions of it, seed, water, manure and so forth are complete, it will be produced even if it is not imputed by conception. In other cases (410) there is imputation but no production, so being posited by conception is a meaningless requirement.

¹ Just as long and short, so also other pairs of opposites such as far and near, hot and cold and self and other, and also pairs such as goer and going, observer and observed, producer and produced, part and whole, and instance and generality are *mutually* reliant, no more. The aim of Gen Lamrimpa's fine shadings of grammatical distinction seems to be to make sure that the translation of Buddha's celebrated dictum into Tibetan encompasses this wonder of relativity too, i.e. the Middle Wayers' fuller appreciation of dependent arising.

² anavataptanāgarājaparipṛcchānāsūtra, klu'i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa'i mdo.

Response: In response to this line of thought, one scholar says that even though we do not actually weigh it as a *srang*¹ it is still suitable to call something that amounts to a *srang* in weight a *srang*. Just so, even though we do not actually impute something with our own conception, if the way it exists is similar to some other phenomenon which is imputed, it is correct to call it a phenomenon that is imputed by conception. So a phenomenon that is imputed by conception is not necessarily actually imputed by it. This makes considerable sense but the *Four Hundred* says [VIII 3 ab]:

Without conception there is no
Existence of desire and such.

And in [Chandrakīrti's] commentary² to that it says [f. 133a6-133a7]:

The existence of those is only through the existence of conception and without conception there is no existence of them. Without a shadow of doubt, like a snake imputed onto a coiled rope, definitely they are not established through their own entity.

It seems that further investigation in accordance with these observations is required. A dream person and a rope-snake and such are merely mistaken appearances to the credulous conceptions apprehending them, so there is no way at all to posit them independent of their appearance to those conceptions. Just so, the way form and so forth are posited by conception is similar, it is said. So how can anything be posited that does not appear to conception? Not the slightest such mode of positing exists.

Thus a dream person and all his actions of speech and so on, being merely posited by dream conception, appear as long as awakening has not occurred. On awakening they appear no more but vanish into their own oblivion. Likewise, as long as we are numbed by the sleep of dull-witted ignorance, sundry dream-like appearances of form and so forth arise, and once we have abandoned the imprints for them they arise no more but vanish into their own cessation, for as it says in the *Introduction to the 'Treatise on the Middle'* [VI 53 d]:

Just so awakening from confusion's sleep.

In this way, all whatever that appears in the perspective of dream awareness is only the appearance factor of that awareness. Just so, all whatever that appears in the perspective of worldly conventional awareness is only the appearance factor of such and such an awareness, without even a trace of establishment in reality. It is with this in mind that these present appearances are said to be false and dream-like.

Qualm: So then it follows that neither form nor sound and so forth appear at all to a buddha who has abandoned ignorance.

Response: This being a critical issue I have set out some detailed ideas in my *Medicinal Ear of Corn*.³

¹ A Tibetan unit of weight, especially for silver coins.

² *Commentary on the 'Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas'*, bodhisattvayogācāracatuṣṭakaṭikā, byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa bzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa.

³ *Medicinal Ear of Corn, A Well-turned Word of Commentary on [Abu Rinpoche, Tenzin Trinley Kunkhyen's] 'Medicinal*

[b] Investigation of the manner of being produced from conditions [fr p. 53]

Qualm: Well then, for the production of a sprout are water, manure and so forth categorically required or not? If not, that is nothing but a brazen flouting of direct perception. If they are required, that is contradictory with its being established through mere imputation by conception.

Response: If seed, water, manure and so forth were truly real, it truly would be contradictory but since they are false they do act as assisters. The *Precious Garland* [I 29 cd] says:

Whatever is the product of
A false seed, how could it be true?

I.e. it is saying that by reason of it arising from a false cause it is untrue, merely imputed. Through this illustration we can understand all, such as that a hell denizen's being the two, established from the cause of his own negative karma and established as merely posited by his own conception, are non-contradictory and so forth.

[c] Investigation of the manner of eliminating the two extremes [fr. p. 53]

Qualm: Does the reasoning of dependent relativity eliminate the two extremes simultaneously or serially?

Response: There are many who assert that it eliminates them simultaneously. It seems they say that if it eliminated them serially, it would have no special ability to eliminate the extremes of permanence and severance compared to other reasonings, in which case praising it as the king of reasons would have no point. However, this is worthy of investigation. The utter non-existence of such as a sprout is the extreme of severance. Merely ascertaining with valid cognition that sprout exists eliminates that, so it will have been eliminated before the sign is set. On the other hand the inherent existence of sprout is the extreme of permanence here (415) and that is not eliminated until we realize sprout's lack of inherent existence, so how can the two extremes be eliminated simultaneously? There is no way to eliminate them thus.

Qualm: But it says in the *Ocean of Reasoning* [commentary on X 10]:

Through the existence of one thing necessarily depending on that of another, there is no establishment by way of 'own entity' and since utter non-existence like that of a hare's horn is contradictory with dependence, freedom from the two extremes—existence by way of entity and utter non-existence—is established.

Does this not indicate that the two extremes are eliminated simultaneously?

Response: It does not. This quotation merely demonstrates how an individual dependent arising is free from the two extremes of existence and non-existence. It does not demonstrate in the slightest that the two extremes are eliminated simultaneously. Please discriminate.

Sprout that Frees from Pain, Song of the View, Ita mgur gdung sel sman gyi myu gu'i rnam 'grel legs bshad sman gyi snye ma. See *Collected Works*, vol. 2, p. 81.

Moreover, it says in [Tsongkhapa's] *Smaller Stages of the Path*¹ [p. 340]:

...because, through ascertainment of the sign, the view of severance, and through ascertainment of the assertion, the view of permanence are repudiated from the root.

In accordance with that we should accept that the two extremes are eliminated serially, because the two ascertainments that do the eliminating are produced serially. However, the statement that the ascertainment of the sign eliminates the extreme of severance merely indicates that it has the ability to eliminate the extreme of severance. In no way does it say that we cannot eliminate it prior to setting the sign and must necessarily newly eliminate it at that time.

Qualm: In [Tsongkhapa's] *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*,² the line [v. 12]:

When not in turn but simultaneously...

indicates that the two extremes *are* eliminated simultaneously.

Response: There are many who mistakenly take that as evidence that the two extremes are eliminated simultaneously so it should be explained in detail. Thus the meaning of simultaneously here is as indicated in the lines that follow:

Through merely seeing that relativity
Is non-deceptive,...

When just from something being realized as a dependent arising, that [realization] itself, by its own power, is able to induce ascertainment of [the thing's] mode of no inherent existence, without need of another intervening valid cognizer, then analysis of the view is complete. That is the meaning of the lines, so then how can they be taken as a source for the simultaneous elimination of the two extremes?

Furthermore, appearance-of dependent relativity, is that which proves, and emptiness-of inherent existence, is that which is proved, so there is no scope for simultaneous realization. Though [the quotation] may give a sense that there is such, it is not a source for simultaneous elimination of the two extremes because there is no escaping the fact that, as above, the extreme of non-existence is eliminated first and the other extreme later. It is similar to when, thinking of twins being born, we say they were born at the same time. Thinking that the two valid cognizers ascertaining appearance and emptiness arise without anything intervening between them, [the author] says they ascertain simultaneously. This is simultaneous in a rough sense then. For these reasons it is established by way of scripture and reasoning that the two extremes are eliminated serially. So although in several texts there are claims that they are eliminated simultaneously, they should not be relied upon.

So why is the sign of dependent relativity praised as the king of reasonings? Because it promotes ascertainment of both appearance and emptiness equally. I have written

¹ A.k.a. *Middling Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, byang chub lam gyi rim pa bring po. Hopkins translation see p. 91

² lam gyi gtso bo rnam gsum.

extensively about this elsewhere.¹ Again, if the two extremes are eliminated simultaneously, then the two eliminating ascertainments must be produced simultaneously and then two conceptions must be produced simultaneously. There are many such harms, so say that dependent arising easily eliminates the two extremes, not that it simultaneously eliminates them.

[d] Investigation of the manner of appearance to awareness [fr. p. 53]

In a place that is illuminated there is no opportunity for darkness to descend. Just so, whatever we see as dependently arising, there is no opportunity for developing an extreme view towards that base. It says in sūtra:²

Arisings in dependence all they see:
The wise depend not on extremist views.

In the *Introduction to the 'Treatise on the Middle'* it says [VI 115] (420):

Because things do dependently arise
These theories can't withstand analysis.
Dependently arising reasonings
Will sever all the net of evil views.

In the *Four Hundred* it says [VI 11 ab]:

No ignorance for one who sees
Dependent relativity.

[Nāgārjuna's] *Treatise on the Middle*³ says [VII 16]:

For what dependently arise
The peace of no inherent being.

Then there is the pith instruction to look at whether or not the proper realization of the presentation of dependent relativity on anything is responsible for the disappearance or not of what is objectified by the grasping at an extreme.

Qualm: So, do those of our affiliation who propound real existence realize the dependent arising of sprout or not? If not, that is contradictory with their realizing that it arises from causes and conditions, seed, water, manure and so forth. Not only that, it contradicts their pronouncement that the sign of dependent arising is a contradictory sign.⁴ If they do realize

¹ See Gen Lamrimpa's *Medicinal Ear of Corn* vol. 2, p. 42.

² Citing this verse in both his *Middling Stages of the Path* and his *Great Treatise* on the same, Tsongkhapa gives the version found in Candrakīrti's *Clear Words*, commenting on Nāgārjuna's verse XXIV 18. Tsongkhapa identifies its source as the *Questions of Nāga King Anavatapta Sūtra*. The precise wording has not been found there in the Dege edition but there is a verse similar in meaning at f. 203b2.

³ madhyamakaśāstra, dbu ma'i bstan bcos/ dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya.

⁴ The opponent here holds that dependent arising is a contradictory sign in the proof of sprout as not inherently existent. A contradictory reason has to be the property of the subject. This means that the realist opponent accepts that the reason, dependent arising, is true of the subject, a sprout, but he erroneously thinks that the reason proves the opposite of what it is supposed to prove, i.e. he thinks that something's being a dependent arising only shows that it is inherently existent.

that, then the Middle Wayers do not need expressly to break down what is objectified by their grasping at an extreme.

Response: There are two answers here. One is to say they accept dependent relativity but do not realize it with valid cognition and the other is to say that they realize it but do not fully realize it. It seems suitable to adopt the latter as our own system. Why? Because they realize the presentation of coarse dependent relativity merely to the extent that it prevails in their own tenets but they do not realize it in the subtle and refined form that the Middle Wayers understand it. To give an example: they know how to posit the person in dependence on the aggregates but not how to posit the aggregates in dependence on the person. Thus it says in [Tsongkhapa's] *Praise for Dependent Relativity*¹ [v. 24]:

Best door to no inherent being
Dependent relativity:
Those nominally for it but
Who grasp at its inherent being,...

We should take this to refer to those who have a mere partial realization, not a complete one. It is not suitable to take theirs as a total realization. If it is not like that, we would have to prove dependent relativity to the opponent just as we would emptiness, but nowhere is that spoken of. In line with that, [Tsongkhapa's] *Great Stages of the Path* [p. 743]² speaks of these opponents not realizing dependent relativity as it is and we should understand that as not realizing it completely.

(C) The way to cultivate it [the reason of dependent relativity] [fr. p. 51]

If we ascertain the three modes which establish non-true existence, we will be able to ascertain the object to be proved, non-true existence, quite naturally. Otherwise, no matter what we do, there will be no footing for the ascertainment of it. Cultivate the view they say, but first we must cultivate the three modes, and the way to do that is as it says:

Conditions manifold compound.
Through this phenomena arise.
Conditions manifold compound
And so there's no inherent being.

Like that we think how inner and outer phenomena merely arise from the coming together of causes and conditions. If they so arise, necessarily they are not established inherently. Were they inherently established, there would be no point in their being established through causes and conditions. In short we think, 'If it is established through causes and conditions, it is necessarily not inherently existent, for example, like a reflection. A sprout also is established through causes and conditions.'

However, there is a point that requires investigation: whether here being established through other causes and conditions or not is the meaning of relying on another or not, and whether that is the meaning of being established as a self or not. This can be understood from [Chandrakīrti's] *Four Hundred Commentary* where it says [190b2-190b3]:

¹ rten 'brel bstod pa.

² Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee English translation, vol. 3, p. 318.

With respect to that, a self is an entity or nature which does not rely on other things. The non-existence of that is selflessness.

In that case then, merely by ascertaining that such as a sprout is produced from other causes and conditions we should ascertain the absence of an ‘own-powered’ self, so then there would be the fault that simply by ascertaining the property of the subject in the proof that sprout is not truly existent by the sign dependently related, we would ascertain the object to be proved.

(425) [Tsongkhapa’s] *Great Special Insight*¹ [p. 648] says that here the meaning of relying or not on another is not just relying on or not on other causes and conditions. It means relying or not on a subject [lit. object possessor], a conception, which is other than the object, and being posited by it or not, so there is no fault that if the sign is established, then the object to be proved is established. Likewise in the *Yogic Four Hundred*² it says [XIV 23]:

What is dependently arisen
Is not own-powered. They all rely
And have no power of their own,
So then a self does not exist.

Tsongkhapa indicates that own-powered in this context should not be taken simply as the opposite of other-powered but should be understood as having a mode of being that is not posited by conception. This should be taken as a pith instruction.

The veena sound of relativity,
One treasury of all the Conquerors’ speech,
Can’t captivate myself, or one like me,
A would-be human, gormless beast in fact!

¹ Section of the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*. Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee English translation, vol. 3, p. 212.

² Āryadeva’s *Four Hundred* is sometimes known as the *Yogic Four Hundred*, in view of the name Candrakīrti gives for the text in his commentary on it, the *Commentary on the ‘Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas’*.

4. Nirvana is Peace

With regard to the explanation of the meaning of nirvana being peace and virtue, there are five

- A. Identifying the nature of nirvana
- B. The way to actualize it
- C. The cause of attaining it and the cause which establishes it [p. 63]
- D. The reason why it is irreversible [p. 66]
- E. Analysis of whether it is conventional or ultimate [p. 66]

A. The nature of nirvana

The *Ocean of Reasoning* [commentary on XXV 9] says:

Taking nirvana as the reality¹ of a mind where the seeds of the afflictions have been abandoned and the appearance of the appropriated aggregates has subsided...

As it says, it is the reality of a mind that is devoid of the natural and adventitious defilements:²

Nirvana is the one sole truth.³

There are many such source quotations for knowing this.

B. The way to actualize it

With regard to the second, there are three

- [1] Refuting the system of others
- [2] Positing our own system [p. 61]
- [3] Dispelling objections to it [p. 62]

With regard to the first, from the two

- a. Setting out their assertion
- b. Refuting it [p. 61]

a. Setting out their assertion

In [Nāgārjuna's] *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*⁴ [v. 8 ab] it says:

¹ Reality, *chos nyid*: ultimate reality, i.e. emptiness.

² An object's lack of inherent existence is its natural or primordial purity. A mind that sees without any appearances to it of inherent existence is thus free of the natural defilements. A mind that is without the afflictions and their seeds is one that is free of the adventitious defilements.

³ In his *Commentary on the 'Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning'*, *yuktiṣaṣṭikāvr̥tti rigs pa drug cu pa'i 'grel pa*, discussing verse 5, Candrakīrti quotes an (unidentified) sūtra, 'Gelong, qualified by being non-deceptive, this nirvana is the one supreme truth.' Of the four noble truths, true sufferings, true origins and true paths are compounded things, deceptive in that they 'deceive the childish by appearing to exist inherently.' True cessations alone on the other hand are non-deceptive and beyond suffering. Nirvana is the supreme true cessation.

⁴ *yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā, rigs pa drug cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*.

Cessation through their being destroyed,
Not by well knowing compounded things:

According to the proponents of real existence of our own affiliation then, cessation has to be actualized by the destruction, i.e. severance, of the continuum of the aggregates through the power of the antidote and not by way of knowing their nature. This is under the influence of their holding to the true existence of the compounded things of cyclic existence.

b. Refuting it [fr. p. 60]

From the same [v. 8 cd]:

To whom will it be evident?
How is it known that they're destroyed?

If it is so, to whom will nirvana be evident? It follows that it is not tenable that it could actualize in anyone's continuum because, according to you [realists], at the time when there is the being who actualizes it, then the nirvana to be actualized is not established and when it is established, the aggregates have been cut off so there is no one who actualizes it. Likewise how could there be the saying:¹

I have done what was to be done. I shall not know another birth after this,
upon knowing that one has attained nirvana when the aggregates have been destroyed?
This is not tenable because, according to you, when the saying is uttered, the object expressed, nirvana, is not established and when it is established, the utterer of the saying has ceased and does not remain.²

[2] Our own system [fr. p. 60]

For example, the falling hairs that a person with an eye defect sees, a person whose eyes are free of defects does not see at all if he looks there. Just so, if the wisdom which has abandoned ignorance looks at the cyclic existence which the person with ignorance sees in terms of signs, it does not see anything at all. The actualization of just that non-seeing is called passing beyond the suffering of this world³ and saying, 'I have done what was to be done,' is by way of this. From the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* [v. 10, 11 ab]

When perfect wisdom comes at what

¹ This remark occurs several times in the sūtras signifying the attainment of enlightenment or nirvana. See for instance the *Foundations of Discipline*, vinayavastu, 'dul ba'i gzhi, kha f. 64a. Candrakīrti includes it at this point in his *Commentary on the 'Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning'*.

² With this absurd consequence, that there is no one to experience final nirvana as posited by them because there are no more aggregates at that time, Nāgārjuna refutes the view of the realist Buddhist schools of his day, such as the Great Expositionists and the Sūtrarians. Of schools coming to prominence later, the Mind-only Followers of Scripture hold a view similar to the above two on this topic. The Mind-only Followers of Reasoning and the Middle Wayers hold that aggregates do continue in final, i.e. remainderless, nirvana, though in a purified form. See Jeffrey Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, p. 942.

³ According to the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary*, bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo, passing beyond the suffering of this world, *mthong ba'i chos la mya ngan las 'das pa* simply means nirvana, *mya ngan las 'das pa*.

Occurs conditioned by ignorance,
It does not see slightest thing
That's been produced or else has ceased.

That's passing from the suffering of
This world and doing that to be done.

The *Ornament for Clear Realizations* [V 21 cd] says:

Observe the perfect perfectly.
On seeing the perfect, there's release.

In short, actualizing the absence of inherent nature of cyclic existence through having fully known it is the meaning of actualizing nirvana because, in the same [*Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, v. 6 cd], it says:

Full knowing of existence just
Is what we say nirvana is.¹

[3] Dispelling objections to it (430) [fr. p. 60]

Qualm: Even a stream enterer has directly realized cyclic existence's absence of inherent nature so it follows he has actualized nirvana.²

Response: There is no fault, for if one realizes reality directly one does not necessarily actualize that. The reason for this I have set forth elsewhere.³

Further qualm: 'To whom will it be evident?' It is not correct to advance this consequence. In case of the one with remainder, it is sufficient answer to say that that foe destroyer actualizes it. In the case of the one without remainder, when he actualizes it there are two systems, that either the continuum of awareness is severed, or it is not. If it is a case of your advancing the consequence against someone who takes the former position, then it is the

¹ In his *Medicinal Ear of Corn* vol. 2, p. 102, Gen Lamrimpa says, 'The absence of inherent existence of cyclic existence is the final nature of cyclic existence, so, having directly realized it, one extinguishes the appearance of cyclic existence, the possessor of that nature, to one's mind, and that very extinction actualized...is nirvana.' The ultimate nature of cyclic existence is emptiness. Only a vision of that emptiness vanquishes cyclic existence. Emptiness is all that remains before the mind upon having extinguished cyclic existence. Thinking in this way the Consequentialists see that nirvana is in the nature of emptiness and not simply a cessation within the mental continuum which is the abandonment of the afflictive obstructions.

² A stream enterer is, in the terminology of Hearer Vehicle practice, a person whose direct realization of selflessness has not gone beyond the initial stage. This qualm is from someone who accepts the Consequentialists' uncommon assertion that, in order to experience the peace of nirvana, practitioners of the Hearer Vehicle must realize the emptiness of inherent existence, the subtlest level of selflessness, which applies to people and all other phenomena alike. Hence he is not one of the proponents of real existence criticized above.

³ In his *Medicinal Ear of Corn*, vol. 2, p. 107, Gen Lamrimpa says, 'Since he is not a foe destroyer he has not actualized nirvana... actualizing reality upon becoming free from either of the two obstructions is the measure of actualizing nirvana.' A hearer foe destroyer is free of the afflictive obstructions. A buddha is free of the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience.

same for you too. If it is the case of the latter, then that foe destroyer actualizes it, so how does the consequence hold? It does not.

Response: If our system of positing with and without remainder were in accord with that of the proponents of real existence, the consequence would indeed not hold. However, this [Consequentialist] way of positing them and that of the Autonomists and below are altogether different. How so? The system of the lower tenet holders is that, on the basis of the nirvana which is having abandoned the afflictions, nirvana with or without remainder is determined merely by whether the continuum of the contaminated aggregates has, respectively, been brought to an end or not. This system says that, on the basis of having abandoned the afflictions, nirvana with or without remainder is whether there is, respectively, a remainder of true appearance or not.

Going by this system, the timing of their attainment is that the one without remainder is attained first and, to attain it, it is *not* necessary that the contaminated aggregates be cut off. There are these and such like unique features, so it can be understood from these reasons that the above consequence holds for the proponent of real existence but not for us.

Therefore, once one has abandoned just the afflictions, whenever one enters into meditative equipoise on reality, that is called a temporary actualization of nirvana and then, after one has abandoned the obstructions to knowledge, when one enters into meditative equipoise on reality, that is called complete nirvana because one has entered into meditative absorption on reality never to arise again.¹

There is the question of whether, in the Consequentialist system here, nirvana with remainder is a fully qualified nirvana or not. If it is not, that would be contradictory with the basis of division, nirvana, having two divisions, nirvana with and without remainder. If it is, that would be contradictory with what it says in the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* [v. 9]:

Unless the aggregates have ceased,
Although the afflictions are no more,
There's no nirvana. When they've ceased
At that time there'll be liberty.

This is a matter for investigation but one point is that the ceasing or not ceasing of those has to be taken to be ceasing or not ceasing in the perspective of uncontaminated reasoning consciousness. It is not suitable to take it as their continuum ceasing or not ceasing.

C. The cause of attaining it and the cause which establishes it [fr. p. 60]

With regard to the third, there are two

- (1) The cause of attaining it [p. 64]
- (2) The cause which establishes it [p. 64]

¹ Qualm: Does not the hearer foe destroyer who has destroyed the foe of the afflictions also finally actualize complete nirvana when he passes away out of his last life? He does so because at that time he enters into meditative absorption on reality never to arise again.

Response: Eventually a buddha arouses such beings from their accomplishment of withdrawal into solitary peace and enjoins them to proceed onto the bodhisattva path for the world's welfare.

(1) The cause of attaining it [fr. p. 63]

The root cause of our being bound to cyclic existence is self-grasping ignorance, that alone. So the main cause of attaining the liberation of nirvana is the wisdom realizing selflessness, that alone. The *King of Concentrations Sūtra*¹ says:

If you realize the selflessness of things
And meditate on that analysis,
That is the cause to win nirvana's fruit.
There is no peace by any other cause.

There are innumerable such.

Moreover, self-grasping is cut off by the realization of selflessness and then, through the cutting off of that, when there has been a successive cutting off, from the cutting off of compositional action up to that of the suffering aggregates themselves, nirvana is actualized. This is the common explanation. The uncommon explanation is to say that, without following those stages, just as, when we awake from sleep, dream suffering vanishes, just so, when we realize the nature of suffering, nirvana manifests itself. This is the thought of the *Introduction to the 'Treatise on the Middle'* [VI 106] when it says:

When there is ignorance dependent on it acts are done,
And not without it, even the unlearned know, no doubt. (435)
With sun-like gentle minds that clear away the densest dark
The learned ones know emptiness in full and are released.

We can illustrate this with another example, that of removing the fright of seeing a rope as a snake. One way to remove it would be through other methods such as meditating on love and compassion for the snake. The alternative way to remove it would be by holding up a light and bringing about the understanding that the snake was not real. Of the two, the latter would be the best. Just so, through knowing the lack of inherent nature of cyclic existence, its suffering terminates in peace. Just this explanation of the way to actualize nirvana should be held as the ultimate one, of definitive meaning. Understand this through:

Observe the perfect perfectly.
On seeing the perfect, there's release.

In a similar vein, it is quite suitable to give freeing oneself from the fear of dream fire by putting it out with dream water as a comparable example.

(2) The cause which establishes it [fr. p. 63]

With regard to the second there are two

- (a) The reasoning which establishes liberation
- (b) The reasoning which establishes omniscience [p. 65]

With regard to the first

- (a) The reasoning which establishes liberation

¹ samādhirājasūtra, ting nge 'dzin gyi rgyal po'i mdo, contains a verse that is similar, though not identical, to Gen Lamrimpa's citation at f. 27a7-27b1.

If there exists a powerful antidote that harms its causal type, there necessarily exists an occasion for its extinguishment. For example, a powerful harmer of the cause, the tangible object cold, is observed, so there is an occasion for the thorough extinguishment of the effect of cold, goose pimples. Just like that a powerful antidote to the cause of these suffering aggregates is observed.

As the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* [II 190 cd] puts it:

It's not forever more because
There's stoppage of the cause and such.

Through what [reasoning] and how the property of the subject and the pervasion of the above are ascertained may be known from elsewhere.

The second

(b) The reasoning which establishes omniscience [fr. p. 64]

Thus it says [*Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'*, II 32]:

The one who knows what's to be done
Or cast aside, plus method too,
Such we would call a valid being
And not one knowing everything.

It is saying that an omniscient one in terms of seeking liberation should be taken as one who knows as it is what out of the four truths is to be done and what cast aside, together with the method, and not as someone who sees far away forms and so forth, so at this point it is the existence of that sort of wisdom that will be established. There are two different ways of establishing it, one as is explained in the forward mode, which relies on a nature sign, and one which is as explained in the reverse mode, which relies on an effect sign.

The first: if it is an awareness that has a stable basis and does not rely on further effort, having completely familiarized, then it is necessarily able to give rise to a fully developed clear appearance of its object of familiarization, for example just like desirous attachment. The first moment of a direct perceiver which realizes the mode of being of the four truths is also such.

The second: if it is someone who, by his own power, unerringly sets forth the mode of abiding of the four truths, then there necessarily exists in his continuum a knower which directly comprehends that, for example, just like one who by his own power explains the mode of abiding of a pot. Our teacher also sets forth the mode of abiding of the four truths in such a way.

In short, first of all ascertain with the force of realization the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths. Then, coupling that ascertaining awareness with special method, if one familiarizes without being separate from the branches of familiarization, an awareness that has a stable basis and, having completely familiarized, does not rely on further effort, will, for the crucial reason of it being factually concordant, intensify limitlessly. So then seek thorough certitude with regard to the way in which it gives rise to an altogether conclusive clear appearance of the object it meditates upon. If one achieves that, it will easily bring certainty as to how both liberation and omniscience exist.

D. The reason why it is irreversible [fr. p. 60]

Qualm: Having attained the liberation of nirvana is it possible to revert to cyclic existence? If it is, it is just on a par with the meditative absorption of the peak of existence and utterly undependable. If it is not, you must give the reason why it is not. (440)

Response: The reason is indeed set forth in such as the *Commentary on 'Valid Cognition'* with [II 210 c]:

Since harms are non-existent...¹

The main, conclusive reason is because the movement of karmic winds is cut off in the expanse of reality. Since it is cut off, the primordial mind enters into the expanse of peace and the causes of it reversing from there are stopped. We may take it that this is the thought behind remarks to the effect that, to understand properly the way nirvana or the reality limit is actualized on the sūtra side, it is necessary to rely on a profound input from tantra. However, since this is not the occasion I will not elaborate beyond this. To put it in a simple way, light can clear away darkness but darkness cannot clear away light. Just so, the realization of selflessness can overcome self-grasping but not the other way round. For this reason, as long as the light of wisdom does not degenerate, the darkness of unknowing has no chance to enter in. Without that how could one revert to cyclic existence? There is no cause of such a reversal, and the reason why there is no chance that wisdom will degenerate is as I have already explained.

Thus the sūtras, tantras and commentaries with one voice proclaim that the best and most excellent of all happiness is the happiness of liberation alone, and this is established by reasoning also: once attained it is impossible for it to degenerate. Therefore, at this time, on this one, single occasion of obtaining the pleasures and enrichments we must arouse ourselves from the depth of our hearts and the marrow of our bones, and self and others all make effort to the very top of our bent at the method of obtaining it.

E. Analysis of whether it is conventional or ultimate [fr. p. 60]

Of the two, the Consequentialists and the Autonomists, the Autonomists assert Great Vehicle nirvana to be ultimate and Lesser Vehicle nirvana to be conventional. [Ārya Vimuktisena's] *Illuminating the Twenty Thousand*² says that this is determined by whether the great or small vehicle has a path of realizing the selflessness of phenomena or not. The Consequentialists assert that one must certainly realize the selflessness of phenomena in order to attain the liberation of nirvana. This is determined by their assertion that grasping at a self of phenomena is an afflictive obstruction. For that crucial reason they assert that nirvana is pervaded by being ultimate. Being ultimate it must therefore be established in the perspective of uncontaminated meditative equipoise and if it is so established, it cannot

¹ Gyaltsab-je, in his *Clarifying the Path to Liberation* commentary concludes his explanation of Dharmakīrti's verse as follows: '...since the contrary conditions [to the foe destroyer abiding stably in nirvana], the harms of cyclic existence, are all non-existent, and since the awareness in his continuum which directly realizes the perfect meaning, the meaning of selflessness, is fixed in that direction on all occasions.'

² pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstrābhisamayālaṅkāravṛtti, nyi khri snang ba.

escape being thusness, in which case the master-scholar's¹ pronouncement that true cessations are ultimate but not thusness is hard to make sense of, it would seem.

In brief, the beginningless non-inherent existence of cyclic existence is ultimate, so nirvana is ultimate it is said, the point being that cyclic existence's emptiness of truth is alone the basis of nirvana. I have written about this in detail in my *Medicinal Ear of Corn*² so I do not wish to elaborate beyond this here.

If we sum up and put into practice the crucial points we have explained above, it should be done like this: firstly contemplate in detail how all of existence is impermanent and inconstant. Then view compositional suffering with whatever revulsion you can develop. Having developed that, as the means to release you from that suffering, keep continually to the view of selflessness in accordance with the pith instructions. If you do that, it will not be long before nirvana, which is peaceful, virtuous and by nature great joy, is easily attained.

We say:

A whirling firebrand whirling on and on
Forever until now through all three realms,
Subject to all the suffering there is,
What whirled me on till now not recognized,

Through Lama's kindness this time they're revealed,
The foes that harm, the four false graspings at
The pure, the pleasant, permanence and self.
Who will not take the steps that vanquish them?

A person who's possessed of sense will not
Do down this short life's enemies but still
Ignore the ones that last from life to life.
Is it not right to stop them by all means? (445)

The four correct views here were stamped with seals
And far and wide proclaimed, so anyone
Who goes beyond them, where will he be but
Far from the Lord of Dharma's way of seeing?

All four and eighty thousand Dharma points
Condense into the four seals' Dharma way.
Seeing this did not our Teacher say in praise
They are the fourfold Dharma summary?

¹ Panchen Sonam Dragpa, textbook author of Drepung Loseling College.

² See *Collected Works*, vol. 2, p. 97.

Don't judge then if your Dharma way is pure
Swayed by the three, desire, hate, ignorance,
But by the four seals' path, says one who wears,
In these end times, a doer of virtue's guise.

Keys of the path the Conquerors praise so oft,
Best of the sea of Dharma so profound,
They come to mind so partially, but won't
A stock of merit so profuse solve that?

If when the Conquerors bless, the Dharma sounds
From even trees, when Lama blesses then
I'm powerless not to speak fine speech, so please,
Don't fault it based on how the speaker is.

The way of Dharma though is vast as space,
My mind more tiny than a needle's eye,
So then what chance for even just a drop
Of that great ocean to infuse my mind?

Whatever pack of faults here, speech that's wrong,
Or contradictory, off the point, I then,
Plus all my sins beginningless, confess
To Lama, Conquerors and their Children too.

If apt remarks, before unknown, there be
Upon the view, pursuing depths of sense,
Not swayed by ripples of the literal word,
I offer to the wise with open minds.

By virtue of my efforts here, not straying from
The path of switching self and others, may I on
The ship of powerful Conqueror Children's deeds sail for
The land where all beings too have joy for evermore.

Colophon

*A Glowing Light of Scripture and Reasoning, Lamp Illuminating the Essentials of the Four Seals that Proclaim the View,*¹ is a brief compilation as a personal memory aid of the essential meanings, avoiding the elaboration of many textual citations, by one in the form of a monk and named for the path called Ngawang Phuntsok. May it too retrieve the Sage's precious teachings

¹ On the title page as part of the title it says *lta ba bka' rtags kyi phyag rgya bzhi'i gnad don* ...Essentials of the Four Seals that Authenticate the View. Here in the colophon on the other hand it says *lta ba bkar btags kyi phyag rgya bzhi'i gnad don* ... Essentials of the Four Seals that Proclaim the View.

from degeneration and thereby also may all delight in the splendour of the fullness of happiness, however they please. It was printed for Dawa, Jampa, and Nyima and the late Yangchen Drolkar of Nyemo Shagramkyid Khangbu. Through the virtue of that may the Subduer's teachings spread and all migrators come to contentment.

May virtue flourish.

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Array of Qualities of Mañjuśrī's Buddha Land Noble Māhayāna Sūtra

āryamañjuśrībuddhakṣetraguṇavyūhanāmamahāyānasūtra

'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi yon tan bkod pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

(D 59) dkon brtsegs, ga 248b1-297a3

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āryasaddharmasmṛtyupasthāna

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