

**TWO COMMENTARIES ON THE
SAMDHINIRMOCANA-SUTRA
BY ASANGA AND JNANAGARBHA**

John Powers

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Dedication

To my mother,
for her encouragement and support.

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Abbreviations

BCLS: Bulletin de la Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques, Académie Royale de Belgique.

BEFEO: Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient.

Bhāṣya: Asaṅga's Āryasaṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya ('phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i rnam par bshad pa), Sde dge version (Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Choedhey, vol. mdo sde ngi, pp. 2-22).

BSOAS: Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.

D: Sde dge version of the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra.

EB: The Eastern Buddhist.

IA: Indian Antiquary.

IBK: Indogaku Bukkyō-gaku Kenkyū.

JA: Journal Asiatique.

JIABS: Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies.

JRAS: Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

KDBK: Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyō-gakubu Kenkyūkiyō.

KDBR: *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyō-gaku Ronshū*.

Lamotte: Étienne Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra: L'explication des Mystères* (Louvain and Paris, 1935).

MCB: *Mélanges Chinoises et Bouddhiques*.

Peking A: Peking Tripiṭaka version of Asaṅga's *Āryasamdhinirmocana-bhāṣya*, vol. 104.1.1.1-7.5.1.

PEW: *Philosophy East and West*.

Stog: Stog Palace version of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*.

TBS: *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Körös*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

Tohoku: Tohoku Catalog number (UI Hakuju et al. *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon*. Sendai: Tohoku Imperial University, 1935).

Wonch'uk: *Ārya-gambhīra-samdhinirmocana-sūtra-ṭīkā* ('phags pa dgongs pa zab mo nges par 'grel pa'i mdo'i rgya cher 'grel pa). Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Choedhey, Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang, 1985, *mdo 'grel*, vol. *ti* (118), by Wonch'uk.

WZKSOA: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*.

Preface

This book began as a part of a project to translate the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, one of the most influential texts of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism and the primary scriptural source of the Yogācāra school. The initial work was done in India under the auspices of a grant from the American Institute of Indian Studies at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath. While in residence there, I had the good fortune to come in contact with Professor Yeshe Thabkhe, who agreed to work with me on the translation of the commentary attributed to Jñānagarbha, which discusses the eighth chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana*. In addition, he was kind enough to help with difficult passages in an already-completed draft translation of the commentary attributed to Asaṅga, which provides selective discussions on some important topics in the sūtra. As an expert on Indian Buddhist commentarial literature, his help was invaluable.

Although this work was initially intended as an ancillary part of the translation project, it soon became apparent that these two commentaries had merits of their own and were helpful in drawing out the thought of difficult passages in the sūtra and in making decisions concerning the translation of technical terms. Thus, after completing the translation of the sūtra, I decided that a separate book containing translations of these important commentaries and discussions of their doctrines and purported authors would be valuable for people interested in Buddhist philosophy in general, and Yogācāra in particular. My hope in publishing this volume is that it will prove useful for people interested in the sūtra and how it has been interpreted by those who inherited it and were faced with the often difficult task of making sense of its often enigmatic teachings.

I would like to particularly thank Professor Thabkhe for his help and for the enormous amount of time he spent going over difficult passages, commenting on the philosophical ramifications of the text, and discussing the ranges of meanings of

technical terms. Thanks are also due to Ven. Samdhong Rinpoche, principal of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, for making available the resources of his school. One of the greatest resources was Ven. Ngawang Sherap, Librarian of the Institute, who was very helpful in finding rare reference materials, dictionaries, and manuscripts of the texts.

Another scholar who was of great help in this project was Geshe Palden Dragpa, Librarian of Tibet House in Delhi, who donated his time and vast knowledge of Indian commentarial literature. I would also like to offer my special thanks to Professor Jeffrey Hopkins, my graduate advisor, who read every line of the *Saṃdhinirmocana* with me, checked every part of the translation with great thoroughness and wonderful patience, and who read and emended many parts of the commentaries in this volume. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the help of Professor William Magee of the University of Virginia, whose advice on computer problems, terminology, and philosophical issues has been invaluable.

Introduction

1. The *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and Its Commentaries

The *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, one of the seminal works of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism, has influenced Buddhist thought in every country to which Mahāyāna travelled. Its influence is evidenced by the number of texts which quote it and by the number of commentaries on it. In the Tibetan canon alone, there are four commentaries on the sūtra: (1) Wonch'uk's *Extensive Commentary on the Profound Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought* ('phags pa dgongs pa zab mo nges par 'grel pa'i mdo'i rgya cher 'grel pa, ārya-gambhīra-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra-ṭīkā);¹ (2)

¹Peking #5517. vol. 106, pp. 1-345; Tohoku #4016. Wonch'uk (Tibetan: Wen tshegs; Chinese: Yüan-ts'e, 圓測) was a Korean student of Hsüan-tsang (玄奘) who lived in Ch'ang-an during the T'ang dyanasty and wrote in Chinese. This author and his commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana* have been the subject of several articles by IIDA Shotaro: (1) "The Three Stūpas of Ch'ang-an", in *Papers of the First International Conference on Korean Studies* (Seoul: The Academy of Korean Studies, 1980), pp. 486-7; (2) "A Mukung-hwa in Ch'ang-an - A Study of the Life and Works of Wonch'uk (613-696)", in *Proceedings, International Symposium Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of Korean Liberation* (Seoul, 1975), pp. 225-51; and (3) "Who Can Best Re-turn the Dharma-cakra?", in *IBK* #27.1, 1986, pp. 948-51. The history of the transmission of this text from China to Central Asia and Tibet is discussed in John Powers, "Accidental Immortality: How Wonch'uk Became the Author of the *Great Chinese Commentary*" (forthcoming in *JIAS* #15.1, 1992). My translation of the sūtra contains numerous translated excerpts from this commentary (forthcoming from Dharma Publishing, Berkeley, CA). Regarding Wonch'uk's dates, see NAKAMURA Hajime, *Shin Bukkyō Jiten* (Tokyo: Seishin Shobo, 1961), p. 60. See also the "Enjiki" entry in the *Hobogirin* catalogue, ed. Paul Demiéville et al. (Paris and Tokyo, 1978).

Byang chub rdzu 'phrul's *Explanation of the Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought* ('phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo'i rnam par bshad pa, ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtrasya-vyākhyāna);¹ (3) Jñānagarbha's *Commentary on Just the Maitreya Chapter from the Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought* ('phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo las 'phags pa byams pa'i le'u nyi tshe'i bshad pa, ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtre-ārya-maitreya-kevala-parivarta-bhāṣya);² and (4) Asaṅga's *Commentary on the Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought* ('phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i rnam par bshad pa, ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya).³ The Tibetan canon also contains a text that discusses the sets of reasonings presented in the tenth chapter of the sūtra, entitled *Summary of the Sūtra [Explaining the Thought] by Way of Valid Cognition of Correct Words* (bka' yang

The original Chinese text was in ten *chūan*, but the only extant version, in the *Dai-nihon Zokuzōkyō* (大日本續藏經, *hsü tsang ching*; Hong Kong Reprint, 1922, pp. 134.d - 535.a), is missing the first portion of the eighth *chūan* and all of the tenth *chūan* of the original text. These have been reconstructed from the Tibetan translation of Fa-ch'eng (法成; Tibetan: Chos grub) by INABA Shōju: *Enjiki Gejinmikyōsho Sanitsububan no kanbunyaku* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1949. See also Inaba's *Restoration of Yūan-tse's Chieh-shên-mi-ching-shu Through Its Tibetan Counterpart* (Kyoto: Heirakuji, 1972); reviewed by NAGAO Gadjin, in *Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan Kenkyū Nempō* #9, 1972, p. 95. Inaba discusses his methodology in his article "On Chos-grub's Translation of the *Chieh-shên-mi-ching-shu*" (*Buddhist Thought and Asian Civilization*, ed. Leslie Kawamura and Keith Scott; Emeryville, CA: Dharma Press, 1977, pp. 105-113).

¹Peking #5845, vol. 144, p. 191 - vol. 145, p. 89; Tohoku #4538. No author is mentioned in Peking, but Sde dge states that it was written by Byang chub rdzu 'phrul, an epithet of King Khri srong lde brtsan. This text is discussed by Ernst Steinkellner, "Who is Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul", *Berliner Indologische Studien*, 1989, pp. 229-251. Numerous passages of this text have been translated or paraphrased in the notes to my translation of the sūtra (mentioned in the previous note).

²Peking #5535, vol. 109, pp. 196-211; Tohoku #4033. This has been studied and translated into Japanese by NOZAWA Jōshō in his *Daijō-Bukkyō Yuga-gyō no kenkyū* (*Studies in the Yogācāra School of Mahāyāna Buddhism*; Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1957. This work contains the text of the "Maitreya" chapter of the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra* and the Tibetan and Chinese texts of Jñānagarbha's commentary and the commentary on the eighth chapter of the sūtra from the commentary attributed to Byang chub rdzu 'phrul.

³Peking #5481, vol. 104, pp. 1-7; Tohoku #3981. Excerpts have been edited and translated by Étienne Lamotte, *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra: L'explication des Mystères* (Louvain and Paris: Université de Louvain & Adrien Maisonneuve, 1935).

dag pa'i tshad ma las mdo btus pa), attributed to Khri strong lde brtsan.¹ In addition, the *Compendium of Ascertainments* (*vinīścaya-saṃgrahaṇī*, *rnam par gyan la dbab pa'i bsdu ba*),² attributed to Asaṅga, quotes most of the sūtra and prefaces each chapter with short summaries of its main points.³

In addition to these texts, Bu ston mentions five other commentaries (now apparently lost) in his *Catalogue of Translations of Doctrine* (*chos bsgyur dkar chag*), which are listed by Ernst Steinkellner in his article, "Who is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul?"⁴ After Bu ston's time, Tibetan scholars of the Dge lugs pa school created an extensive tradition of oral and written commentary on the sūtra that begins with Tsong kha pa's *Essence of the Good Explanations* (*legs bshad snying po*). The first section of this work, entitled "Mind Only" (*sems tsam*), discusses the *Samdhinirmocana* at length and focuses on its presentations of Buddhist hermeneutics. Tsong kha pa's work, in turn, has inspired at least twenty other Dge lugs pa sub-commentaries, and the philosophical and doctrinal ramifications of the *Samdhinirmocana* (as presented by Tsong kha pa) are still actively debated today in Dge lugs pa monastic colleges.⁵ There is also a commentary on the sūtra dubiously attributed to Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi, 774-835, the founder of the Shingon school of Japanese Buddhism), entitled *Explanation of the Sūtra Elucidating the Profound Secret* (*chieh*

¹Peking #5839; Tohoku #4352. This has been briefly discussed by: (1) Ernst Steinkellner ("Who is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul", pp. 241-3); (2) Giuseppe Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, part I, (Rome, 1958, pp. 122-5); (3) R.A. Stein, "Une mention du Manichéisme dans le choix du Bouddhisme comme religion d'état par le roi Tibétain Khri-sroṅ-lde-bcan", in *Indianisme et Bouddhisme: Mélanges offerts à Mgr. Étienne Lamotte* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1980, p. 333); and (4) Ariane MacDonald, "Une Lecture des Pelliot Tibétain 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047, et 1290. Essai sur la formation et l'emploi des mythes politiques dans la religion royale de Sroṅ-bcan-sgam-po", in *Études Tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris, 1971), pp. 367ff.

²Peking #5539, vol. 110, p. 233 - vol. 111, p. 121; Tohoku # 4038.

³These comments are all translated in the section below which discusses Asaṅga's commentary on the sūtra. For studies of this text and questions about its formation, see Lambert Schmithausen, *Der Nirvāṇa-Abschnitt in der Vinīścaya-saṃgrahaṇī der Yogācārabhūmiḥ* (Wien: Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Süd- und Ostasiens, Heft 8, 1969), and *Ālayavijñāna* (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1987).

⁴Steinkellner, "Who is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul", pp. 245-6.

⁵Tsong kha pa's text, along with the oral and written traditions that derive from it, are the subjects of a forthcoming study by Jeffrey Hopkins, entitled *Reflections on Reality*.

shen mi ching chu (解深密經註),¹ which contains the Chinese text of the sūtra with interlineal comments.

The past and present interest in the sūtra bears witness both to the profundity of its thought and the difficulties involved in trying to understand it. The *Samdhinirmocana* is a multi-faceted and penetrating analysis of some of the most important topics of Buddhist philosophy, e.g., the nature of consciousness, the path to enlightenment, the differences between the perceptions of ordinary beings and those who are enlightened, and rules for interpretation of scriptures. It has inspired and perplexed Buddhist thinkers, both because of its rich insights and thought-provoking analogies and the portions of the text that are abstruse or that lend themselves to multiple interpretations. For these reasons, Buddhist scholars in India, China, Korea, and Central Asia have commented on its thought, and Tibetan and Mongolian scholars continue to debate doctrinal issues raised by the sūtra.

Despite the wide-ranging influence of this text and its philosophy, the *Samdhinirmocana* has received surprisingly little attention from Western scholars. Étienne Lamotte's 1935 French translation has been the only extensive study of the sūtra in any Western language, and my forthcoming translation will be the first in English.

The commentaries on the sūtra have received even less attention. The only work by a Western scholar that discusses them at length of which I am aware is Steinkellner's "Who is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul". None of the commentaries have previously been translated into any Western language, with the exception of the excerpts of Asaṅga's commentary translated into French by Lamotte in his *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra: L'explication des Mystères*. The only other translation of one of the commentaries on the sūtra of which I am aware is the Japanese translation of Jñānagarbha's treatise by NOZAWA Joshu, which is accompanied by a critical edition of the Tibetan text.²

The present study is an attempt to partially rectify this oversight. The commentaries translated and discussed below, attributed to Asaṅga and Jñānagarbha, contain useful discussions of difficult points and technical terms in the *Samdhinirmocana* and are invaluable aids for anyone wishing to understand the thought of the

¹*Chieh shen mi ching chu* (Taiwan, 1975).

²For further information regarding scholarly studies of the *Samdhinirmocana* and its commentaries, see John Powers, *The Yogācāra School of Buddhism: A Bibliography* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991).

sūtra and how it has influenced, and been interpreted by, Buddhist authors. They are quite different in style and presentation: Asaṅga's text is the shortest extant commentary on the sūtra and mainly summarizes some of its important ideas and passages. Jñānagarbha's commentary is a detailed discussion of the eighth chapter of the *Samādhinirmocana* that comments on most of the important passages and technical terms of that section of the sūtra.

If they were indeed authored by Asaṅga and Jñānagarbha (which will be discussed below in greater detail), they also represent two very different periods of Indian Buddhist literature. Asaṅga, who lived in India around the third or fourth centuries A.D., was one of the most influential figures in the early formative period of Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy and is credited in Tibet with being the main founder of the Yogācāra school. Yogācāra was one of the two main philosophical schools of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism (the other being Madhyamaka), and Asaṅga's treatises, along with those of his brother Vasubandhu, defined the outlines of the thought of Yogācāra. Since the *Samādhinirmocana* is the main scriptural source for that school, if the commentary that bears his name was actually authored by Asaṅga, this is an important resource for determining the philosophical and doctrinal connections between the sūtra and the founder of the school that was inspired by it.

The other Indian commentary, attributed to Jñānagarbha,¹ comes from a period just after the apogee of development of Mahāyāna thought, around the eighth cen-

¹Whether or not this text was authored by Jñānagarbha, I think that the style and syntax clearly mark it as an Indian text. Indigenous Tibetan texts generally read differently than Tibetan translations of Sanskrit works, and the text attributed to Jñānagarbha has the ambiance of an Indian work. The commentary attributed to Byang chub rdzu 'phrul, on the other hand, reads like the work of a Tibetan author, and I agree with Steinkellner's assessment that this is probably an indigenous Tibetan work. In his "Who is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul" (pp. 240-1), he points out that in the Sde dge edition of the Tibetan canon it occurs in the "Miscellaneous" (*sna tshogs*, vols. *cho* and *jo*) section, which contains a number of works by Tibetan authors. Steinkellner, following Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*, thinks that the probable author was the Tibetan translator Cog ro Klu'i rgyal mtshan. Bu ston's contention that the author is actually Klu'i rgyal mtshan is also cited by Ser shul Dge bshes Blo bzang phun tshogs in his commentary on Tsong kha pa's *Legs bshad snying po* (entitled *Drang nges rnam 'byed kyi zin bris zab don gsal ba'i sgron me*; Mysore: Sere Byes Monastery, n.d., p. 29b.4), and he concurs with Bu ston's thought that the author is the translator (*lo tsa ba*) Cog ro Klu'i rgyal mtshan (although Ser shul Dge bshes incorrectly cites the work in which Bu ston makes this assertion as the *Chos 'byung* rather than

tury A.D., and is concerned only with the eighth chapter, which is a dialogue between the Bodhisattva Maitreya and the Buddha. The main focus of the chapter is meditation, with a particular emphasis on the topics of calming (*zhi gnas*, *śamatha*) and insight (*lhag mthong*, *vipaśyanā*). This is one of the more difficult chapters in the *sūtra*, both in terms of thought and style, and Jñānagarbha's commentary is a valuable resource for anyone wishing to grapple with the *sūtra*'s presentation of meditation theory and the nature of consciousness. It is a meticulous and exacting commentary which moves through the chapter line by line, often paraphrasing questions or answers and providing explanations of key terms and concepts. Whether or not it was authored by Jñānagarbha, it is clearly the work of a scholar who was well-versed in Buddhist philosophy and psychology, and the number of objections to the *sūtra*'s ideas and the doctrinal debates that it addresses indicate that this is a commentary of a relatively late date in the development of Indian Buddhism.

Both of these commentaries has proven to be useful in studying the thought of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*. Their approaches and styles are very different, but taken together they complement each other, and each offers insights into the philosophy of this difficult text. The primary value of Asaṅga's commentary is that it provides a map through the thought of the *Samdhinirmocana*, which serves as a guide to the relations between sections of the *sūtra* and which gives a good overview of the text. Jñānagarbha's commentary provides insightful commentary on one of the more difficult sections of the *sūtra*, indicates some of the possible and actual objections that could be raised with respect to some of its doctrines, and presents fine distinctions of technical terms. It is a masterpiece of traditional scholarship and provides incisive and cogent explanations for almost every passage of the chapter. Unlike Wonch'uk's work, which quotes extensively from a wide range of Buddhist literature, quotations from other sources are rare in Jñānagarbha's text, and most of the opinions appear to reflect the author's own ideas. Both of these commentaries provide insights into the meaning of difficult and obscure passages, and they are invaluable resources for those who wish to explore the thought of the *sūtra*.

the *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*). If Bu ston's speculation is correct, this would mean that the probable time of composition of this text was during the reign of King Ral pa can (who ruled from 815-838), since according to Tsepon Shakabpa (*Tibet: A Political History*; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, p. 49) this was the time of Klu'i rgyal mtshan's greatest productivity.

Part One:

A Study and Translation of Asaṅga's *Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya*

1. Introduction

According to Tibetan traditions, Asaṅga is one of the two great “openers of the chariot ways” (*shing rta srol 'byed*) who clarified Mahāyāna doctrines in accordance with earlier prophecies that foretold their coming.¹ The other “opener of the chariot ways” was Nāgārjuna, who developed and spread the Madhyamaka school on the basis of the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras, while Asaṅga developed and spread the Yogācāra school, relying mainly on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*.²

Given the importance of this author, the Yogācāra school, and the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, it is surprising how little attention has been paid to the commentary on the sūtra attributed to Asaṅga, entitled *Commentary on the Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought* (*ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya*; Tibetan: *'phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i rnam par bshad pa*).³ Since Étienne Lamotte's partial French translation in 1935,⁴ I am aware of no contemporary scholar who has studied this text, and there is no complete translation in any Western language. This neglect is probably due to a number of factors, including the brevity of the commentary and the difficulty of its style. It is a generally very terse work that summarizes large

¹This idea is found in Tsong kha pa's *Legs bshad snying po* (Sarnath: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Printing Press, 1973), pp. 3-4.

²See Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness* (London: Wisdom, 1983), pp. 358-9.

³Sde dge #3891, pp. 1-22; Peking #5481, vol. 104, pp. 1-7.

⁴Étienne Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocanasūtra: Explication des Mystères* (Paris and Louvain, 1935). This text will be referred to in this study as Lamotte.

sections of the sūtra with short comments, and parts make little sense on their own apart from the sūtra. It is clearly written for scholarly monks who were deeply immersed in the complexities of Buddhist philosophy, and this makes the commentary difficult to understand and to translate in places. Judging from the style and content, along with the fact that the author only discusses certain (generally difficult or obscure) passages, it may well be that this is a text composed or dictated by a senior teacher for students to provide them with guidelines and insights into a difficult text. The brevity of the commentary indicates that it was never intended to be a comprehensive discussion of the whole sūtra, and was instead a selective commentary on particular points.

Despite its brevity and terseness, however, it is an invaluable aid to understanding some difficult parts of the *Saṃdhinirmocana*, and my decision to publish a translation of it is based on the help that it provided in translating the sūtra. The primary value of the commentary for anyone reading the sūtra is that it provides a map through this difficult text. It mainly focuses on the more difficult passages of the sūtra, but hardly mentions those which are easily understandable. For instance, the first chapter of the commentary is mainly concerned with the introduction to the sūtra (in my opinion one of the most difficult parts of the text), and only a few lines are given over to comments on the main topic of the chapter, the designations of the “compounded” (*'dus byas*, *saṃskṛta*) and the “uncompounded” (*'dus ma byas*, *asaṃskṛta*). Because of this focus, it is invaluable as a guide through some of the murkier parts of the sūtra.

2. Overview of the Commentary

Chapter one is the longest section of the *Bhāṣya*, but, as mentioned above, it mostly discusses the introduction to the sūtra, which describes the place in which the teaching of the *Saṃdhinirmocana* takes place. This is said to be a vast celestial palace that extends throughout innumerable world systems and that reflects the good qualities of the Buddha who created it. The palace is the residence of many advanced Buddhist practitioners, both Hīnayānists and Mahāyānists. The *Bhāṣya* lists eighteen perfections that characterize the palace, then lists several divisions of the good qualities of the Buddha. It then discusses the various attainments of the Hīnayānists and Bodhisattvas who reside in the palace. These lists and divisions take up most of the chapter, and then a short discussion is devoted to Buddha's use of the terms

“compounded” and “uncompounded”. The *Bhāṣya* mainly echoes the contention of the *Saṃdhinirmocana* that these are terms designated by Buddha for particular didactic purposes. The use of these terms is purely pragmatic, and Buddha realizes that the terms do not express the reality of things, but they are useful for those of his followers who have not intuitively realized the ultimate (*don dam pa*, *paramārtha*).

Chapter two follows the second chapter of the *Saṃdhinirmocana*, which begins with a statement that the ultimate is “a character that completely transcends argumentation”. This point is illustrated in the sūtra by a story told by the Bodhisattva Dharmodgata (the main interlocuter of the chapter) of some non-Buddhists whom he observed debating about the ultimate. The sūtra indicates that their understandings of the ultimate were flawed by their adherence to wrong views and that they were prone to quarrels and acrimony. The *Bhāṣya* indicates that their faulty understanding of the ultimate is due to the fact that they rely on teachings by others (rather than on their own meditative experience), their limited achievements in meditation (which cause them to imagine that they have progressed farther than they actually have), their exaggerated adherence to their own views and philosophical systems, and their propensity toward becoming angry with others who do not share their views. Most of the second chapter of the *Bhāṣya* deals with this opening story and its ramifications for the thought of the sūtra, but the rest of the chapter is not discussed in detail.

Asaṅga indicates that the sūtra's third chapter is concerned with Bodhisattvas on the level of engagement through belief (*mos pas spyod pa'i sa*, *adhimukticaryā-bhūmi*) who, like the non-Buddhists discussed in the second chapter, are unable to understand the ultimate due to mental obscurations. They do not properly understand imputations or reasonings and “are estranged from sūtras of definitive meaning”. This appears to mean that they cling to sūtras of interpretable meaning while distancing themselves from sūtras that contain Buddha's definitive teachings. As a result, they understand what is unimportant but fail to grasp what is important, and this leads them to create confused and mistaken doctrinal formulations regarding the ultimate. They fail to understand the *Saṃdhinirmocana*'s teaching that the ultimate is “a character that transcends sameness and difference”, and as a result they propound doctrines that are at variance with Buddha's definitive instructions concerning the ultimate (which are presumably those contained in the *Saṃdhinirmocana*).

The discussion of chapter four of the sūtra is extremely brief. Asaṅga characterizes the teachings of the chapter in terms of three kinds of “boastful pride” (*mngon pa'i nga rgyal, abhimāna*) and then divides the chapter into three parts, each of which refers to a particular aspect. The topic of boastful pride is an important one in the sūtra, since it is said to be one of the primary obstacles to direct, intuitive understanding of the ultimate.

Chapter five of the sūtra focuses on the question of why Buddha describes certain Bodhisattvas as “wise with respect to the secrets of mind, sentience, and consciousness”. The *Bhāṣya* divides the fifth chapter into discussions of five types of obscuration with respect to the secrets of mind. It then briefly discusses the concept of “basis-consciousness” (*kun gzhi rnam par shes pa, ālaya-vijñāna*), one of the most important doctrinal innovations of the Yogācāra school. The *Bhāṣya*'s discussion mainly focuses on an objection that is often made to this doctrine, that the basis-consciousness is equivalent to the Hindu *ātman*, which is said to be eternal, unchanging, and pure consciousness. Asaṅga replies that the basis-consciousness cannot be equated with the *ātman* because it is changing from moment to moment and has no essence apart from the seeds that comprise it. Every mental event deposits a concordant seed in the basis-consciousness (for example, if one is angry, this creates a concordant seed which is deposited in the continuum of the basis-consciousness and which will predispose one toward anger in the future). Since, the *Bhāṣya* argues, there is no basis-consciousness apart from these seeds, and since its constitution is continually changing in accordance with the production of new seeds, it is completely different from the *ātman*.

The sixth chapter of the sūtra begins with a question by the Bodhisattva Guṇākara, who asks Buddha why he designates some Bodhisattvas as being “wise with respect to the character of phenomena”. Buddha answers by indicating that there are three characters of phenomena and that Bodhisattvas who fully apprehend this teaching merit that designation. Each of these characters is a particular quality in terms of which phenomena may be viewed, a property that defines phenomena in a particular way. These are: (1) the imputational character (*kun brtags pa'i mtshan nyid, parikalpita-lakṣaṇa*), which includes ideas falsely attributed to phenomena; (2) the other-dependent character (*gzhan gyi dbang gi mtshan nyid, paratantra-lakṣaṇa*), the quality that phenomena have of being produced through the power of causes and conditions external to themselves (rather than by their own nature or necessarily); and (3) the thoroughly established character (*yongs su grub pa'i*

mtshan nyid, pariniṣpanna-lakṣaṇa), which the sūtra equates with the ultimate. This character is said to be the absence of the imputations that are mistakenly superimposed onto the other-dependent character, and it is also said to be the final nature of phenomena. Asaṅga states that the discussion of these characters in the sūtra can be characterized according to six instructional purposes. As he develops this idea, Buddha is said to have taught these three characters in order to benefit Bodhisattvas in six ways, and each successive part of the chapter is said to lead them to a higher level of understanding, culminating in a description of how to attain the state of an "exalted knower of all aspects" (*rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa, sarvākāra-jñāna*).

Surprisingly, although the seventh chapter of the sūtra is one of the most important texts for Buddhist hermeneutics, the *Bhāṣya* barely mentions any of the statements of the sūtra that are relevant to this topic. In the sūtra, the Bodhisattva Paramārthasamudgata begins by questioning Buddha about some types of statements that he had made previously which conflict with certain statements made on other occasions. Much of the discussion of the seventh chapter of the sūtra is devoted to indicating how the doctrinal conflicts can be overcome and to providing rules in terms of which Buddhist exegetes may resolve similar problems. Chapter seven of the *Bhāṣya* indicates that the teachings of the seventh chapter of the sūtra serve as counteragents to four kinds of mistaken conceptions, and it divides Buddha's intended audience into five categories, each of which is characterized by the level of belief of its members.

Chapter eight of the sūtra contains a seminal discussion of the doctrine of "cognition-only" (*rnam par rig pa tsam, vijñapti-mātra*), in which Buddha tells the Bodhisattva Maitreya that the things perceived in ordinary perception are images of mind and are "cognition-only". This discussion is one of the seminal statements of Buddhist idealism, and its ramifications are still being debated today in Tibetan monastic colleges, but the *Bhāṣya* does not even mention it, perhaps because the author thought that the sūtra's statements are unequivocal and do not require further commentary. The *Bhāṣya* states that in the eighth chapter Buddha teaches his audience about yoga in six ways, and Asaṅga divides the chapter into six parts in accordance with this division. His comments indicate that he thinks that Buddha's purpose in this chapter is primarily therapeutic. He states that particular statements in the chapter are directed toward certain mental obscurations and that Buddha teaches as he does in order to lead his followers toward deeper understanding

through yogic practice. Buddha then tells them how they can preserve the insight they gain and maintain a high level of enthusiasm for meditative practice.

The ninth chapter of the *sūtra* focuses on the perfections (*pha rol tu phyin pa, pāramitā*) and the Bodhisattva levels (*sa, bhūmi*). The *Bhāṣya* states that the emphasis of the chapter is on the training by means of which the perfections are developed and how this relates to the levels. Asaṅga states that the *sūtra* presents an analysis of things that are inimical to cultivation of the perfections, along with discussions of meditative practices that counteract them. The purpose of this meditative training is twofold: (1) by developing the perfections, one progresses in merit and wisdom, overcomes mental obstructions and faults, and thus accomplishes one's own welfare, and (2) this development in turn enables one to work for the benefit of others and help them to reach their own spiritual goals.

Although the tenth chapter is one of the longer parts of the *sūtra* and contains a discussion of the nature and characteristics of Buddhahood (which is the final goal of Mahāyāna practice), the *Bhāṣya* has only a brief summary. Asaṅga states that in this chapter Buddha's teachings serve as antidotes to misconceptions concerning the nature of the bodies of a Buddha. He adds that all the teachings of the Tripiṭaka serve this function. This is followed by a question and answer concerning "imputation of what is not real" (*yang dag pa ma yin pa kun tu rtogs pa, abhūta-parikalpa*), which seems out of place in this text, since the term does not occur either in the tenth chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana* or anywhere else in the *sūtra*. The *Bhāṣya* divides this into eight categories and then provides short explanations of these and further divisions. The text ends with a quotation from an unnamed source (which is not the *Samdhinirmocana*) which does not seem to have any connection with any part of the *Samdhinirmocana*.

This section seems rather out of place in the commentary, and I have not been able to identify any part of the *sūtra* to which it could intelligibly be connected. It is also odd that this follows a very abbreviated discussion of an important and lengthy chapter and that this discussion fails to mention many of the important issues raised in that chapter.

The section appears to have been tacked on to the *Bhāṣya*, perhaps by a later redactor. It could also be the case that the whole text is a series of notes on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and that the discussion moved on to issues not directly addressed in the *sūtra*. In any case, it is difficult to see how this section could be a commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana*.

The final colophon states that the *Bhāṣya* was composed by Asaṅga and that it was translated by the Indian masters Jinamitra and Śilendrabodhi, along with the Tibetan translator Ye shes sde in response to a request. It does not indicate who made the request or the nature of the request, nor does it give any indication of the place and date of the translation.

3. The Authorship of the Text

Anyone who studies a text attributed to a major Indian author like Asaṅga is immediately confronted by the problem of authorship. Indian literature is replete with texts attributed to important thinkers, many of doubtful authenticity, and this is particularly true with respect to Asaṅga. Unfortunately, the *Bhāṣya* itself provides few clues that can be used in determining whether or not Asaṅga was its author. It mainly summarizes portions of the sūtra and divides it into topical sections, and the commentary contains few statements on distinctively Yogācāra doctrines. The concept of "basis-consciousness" (*kun gzhi rnam par shes pa, ālaya-vijñāna*), for example, is only discussed briefly, and the sūtra's statements concerning the doctrine of "cognition-only" (*rnam par rig pa tsam, vijñapti-mātra*) are not even mentioned.

On the other hand, my study of this text has uncovered no statements that are fundamentally at variance with other texts generally accepted as being authentically Asaṅgan, such as the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*, or *Abhidharma-samuccaya*, and this in itself provides at least some basis for provisionally accepting the traditional attribution of authorship to Asaṅga. In addition, the syntax and style of the Tibetan translation mark the text as being clearly Indian, and the author's understanding and insights into the *Samdhinirmocana* mark him as being profoundly familiar with its doctrines. For the purposes of the present study, it is probably not of great importance whether or not Asaṅga was the author, since the commentary can stand on its own as an important discussion of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, and the author was clearly a competent scholar well-versed in the philosophy of the sūtra who provided a valuable guide to some of its important topics. These factors alone provide ample reason to study and translate this text, and in the absence of better textual or doctrinal evidence for determining authorship, there is no compelling reason to reject the traditional attribution of authorship to Asaṅga.

Another discussion of the question of the text's authorship that should be mentioned in this context is found in Tsong kha pa's *Essence of the Good Explanations*

(*Legs bshad snying po*). Because of the fact that the *Compendium of Ascertainments* (*vinīścaya-saṃgrahaṇī*, *rnam par gtan la dbab pa'i bsdu ba*, which is accepted in Tibetan traditions as being authentically Asaṅga) quotes most of the *Samdhinirmocana* and comments on it, Tsong kha pa contends that the composition of a separate commentary on the sūtra would have been redundant, since Asaṅga had already "extensively commented" on it. He adds that taking this to be a work by Asaṅga indicates "a great absence of analysis."¹ He states:

In his *Compendium [of Ascertainments]*, Asaṅga quotes, except for the introductory chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana*, most of the remaining chapters and settles well the difficult points; hence, there also does not appear to be any need for this master's composing a separate commentary.²

In his commentary on the difficult points of Tsong kha pa's text, Dpal 'byor lhun grub echoes the same thought and adds that another reason to discount this commentary as being a work of Asaṅga's is that it conflicts with his other works, but he does not elaborate on his reason(s) for thinking this.³

Alex Wayman thinks that the commentary to which Tsong kha pa is referring is the *Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya*,⁴ but if we look closely at Tsong kha pa's arguments it is clear that the commentary he is discussing and the *Bhāṣya* are different works. There are several reasons that lead to this conclusion: firstly, Tsong kha pa quotes a passage from the commentary he is discussing that is concerned with the two truths (*bden pa*, *satya*) and the three natures (*ngo bo nyid*, *svabhāva*), but this passage does not appear in any of the three versions of the *Bhāṣya* that I have con-

¹*Legs bshad snying po*, Sarnath edition, p. 43.

²*Legs bshad snying po*, Sarnath edition, p. 87. See also A khu blo gros rgya mtsho's *Drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i dka' 'grel rin chen sgron me* (Delhi: Kesang Thabkhes, 1982), p. 195.4, which mentions a short ten-page commentary attributed to Asaṅga (which may be the *Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya*, which comprises eleven folios in the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan 'gyur*). A khu blo gros rgya mtsho contends that the attribution of this commentary to Asaṅga is incorrect.

³Dpal 'byor lhun grub, *Legs bshad snying po'i dka' 'grel bstan pa'i sgron me* (Buxaduar: Sera Monastery, 1968), pp. 44.7-46.7.

⁴Alex Wayman, *Analysis of the Śrāvakaśālistra Manuscript* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), p. 34: "It is plain that Tsoñ-kha-pa refers to the *bhāṣya* on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* attributed to Asaṅga."

sulted,¹ nor is there any passage that remotely resembles it. Secondly, Tsong kha pa states that the commentary he is discussing quotes Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇa-viniścaya* (which would refute the contention that Asaṅga could have written the commentary, since he lived before Dharmakīrti), but this citation is also not found in the *Bhāṣya*. Thirdly, Tsong kha pa refers to the commentary he is discussing as a "great commentary" ('*grel chen*'),² but the *Bhāṣya* comprises only eleven folios in the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan 'gyur*, and so it is highly unlikely that it would be referred to as a "great commentary" since Tsong kha pa reserves this term for extensive commentaries.

The key to discovering the identity of the commentary to which Tsong kha pa is referring lies in Bu ston's *Catalogue of Dharma Translations* (*Chos bsgyur dkar chag*),³ which indicates that the *Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtrasya-vyākhyāna* ('*phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo'i rnam par bshad pa*; attributed to Byang chub rdzu 'phrul in the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan 'gyur*) is thought by one (unnamed) scholar to have been composed by Asaṅga, but Bu ston thinks that this attribution is incorrect. One of the reasons that Bu ston gives for this assertion is that the commentary cites Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*tshad ma rnam nges*), and this is also one of Tsong kha pa's reasons for denying the attribution of authorship to Asaṅga. Also, Bu ston refers to this text as a "great commentary" ('*grel pa chen po*'), which is a further indication that the text to which both he and Tsong kha pa are referring is the commentary attributed to Byang chub rdzu 'phrul in the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*, rather than the one attributed to Asaṅga.⁴ The *Bhāṣya* is too short

¹These are the Peking edition, the Sde dge edition, and the excerpts included in Lamotte's version of the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*.

²*Legs bshad snying po*, p. 43.4.

³*Putun bukkijōshi*, ed. NISHIOKA Soshu, *Tōkyō Daigaku Bungakubu Bunka Koryū Kenkyū shisetsu Kenkyū Kiyō* 4 (1980), pp. 61-92; 5 (1981), pp. 43-94; 6 (1983), pp. 47-201; see especially p. 55.7-15. See also: Ernst Steinkellner, "Who Is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul?" *Berliner Indologische Studien*, 1989, pp. 229-51.

⁴In his commentary on the *Legs bshad snying po* (entitled *Drang nges rnam 'byed kyi zin bris zab don gsal ba'i sgron me*; Mysore: Sera Byes Monastery, n.d., p. 29b.4), Ser shul dge bshes Blo bzang phun tshogs refers to Bu ston's discussion of the commentary attributed to Asaṅga (although he incorrectly identifies the text in which the discussion is found as the *Chos 'byung* instead of the *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*; there is no mention of this problem in the *Chos 'byung*'s discussion of Asaṅga's works in Obermiller's translation: *History of Buddhism by Bu-ston*; Heidelberg, 1931, p. 140), and indicates that the text to which Tsong kha pa is referring is the one

to be considered a “great commentary”, and its discussion of the *sūtra* is rather sketchy in comparison to the commentaries of Wonch’uk and Byang chub rdzu ’phrul in that it skips over many important points in the *sūtra*. The only texts in the *Bstan ’gyur* that would qualify as “great commentaries” on the *Samdhinirmocana* are the works of Wonch’uk (almost three volumes in the Sde dge edition) and Byang chub rdzu ’phrul (most of two volumes in Sde dge), which are by far the largest and most comprehensive extant commentaries on the *sūtra*. Since Wonch’uk cites many post-Asaṅga Indian authors (such as Asvabhāva and Sthiramati), as well as Chinese authors such as Hsüan-tsang, no Tibetan scholar would have attributed his commentary to Asaṅga, which leads to the conclusion that the “great commentary” attributed to Byang chub rdzu ’phrul in the Sde dge edition (no author is mentioned in the Peking edition) must be the one to which Tsong kha pa is referring.

Although it seems clear that Tsong kha pa’s arguments specifically refer to the commentary attributed to Byang chub rdzu ’phrul in the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan ’gyur* rather than to the *Bhāṣya*, two of Tsong kha pa’s points still need to be considered in relation to the latter text: (1) that Asaṅga had already “extensively commented” on the *Samdhinirmocana* in the *Viniścaya-saṃgrahaṇī* and that (2) composing a second commentary would have been redundant. With regard to the first point, although the *Viniścaya* quotes most of the *sūtra* and comments on each chapter, these comments are very terse (generally one to three lines), and the total commentary on the text would only fill about three pages, thus making it the shortest extant commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana*. The fact that the *Viniścaya* quotes the *Samdhinirmocana* extensively does not entail that it has *commented* on it extensively, and so this by itself is not sufficient reason to reject the attribution of this work to Asaṅga. Also, the comments found in the *Viniścaya* are only short summaries of the main ideas of each chapter and, because of their brevity, necessarily ignore many important points in each chapter, and so it can hardly be argued that

that Bu ston thinks was actually composed by Cog ru Klu’i rgyal mtshan, i.e., the *Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtrasya-vyākhyāna* (*’phags pa dgongs pa nges par ’grel pa’i mdo’i rnam par bshad pa*). This also seems to be the text to which A khu blo gros rgya mtsho (*Drang ba dang nges pa’i don rnam par ’byed pa’i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po’i dka’ ’grel rin chen sgron me*; Delhi: Kesang Thabkhes, 1982, p. 195.4) refers to when he identifies the commentary under discussion as a commentary in two volumes. This could not be the *Bhāṣya*, which is only eleven folios in the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan ’gyur*; the *Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtrasya-vyākhyāna* is the only two-volume commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana* in the *Bstan ’gyur*.

this section of the *Viniścaya* extensively comments on the sūtra and “settles well the difficult points”.

It should be noted, however, that Tsong kha pa's assertion most likely is not that the comparatively short section of the *Viniścaya* in which the sūtra is extensively quoted settles well the difficult points of the sūtra, but rather that the author does this throughout the whole text of the *Viniścaya*. If we examine this text, however, there is a good deal of evidence against this contention. In the Peking edition, the *Viniścaya* comprises a total of 576 pages, and aside from the section in which the *Saṃdhinirmocana* is quoted (vol. 111, pp. 83b.5-107d.7) there are a total of 111 quotes of Buddha's statements or of sūtras. Of these, I could only identify two as corresponding to lines in the *Saṃdhinirmocana*. These two occur on p. 71b.8 and p. 71c.7 of the *Viniścaya*, in a section that quotes a number of questions directed at Buddha (apparently from various sūtras) asking of what he was thinking when he made certain statements. The two quotes from the *Saṃdhinirmocana* are: (1) “of what was the Bhagavan thinking when he said, ‘All phenomena are without entityness’”,¹ and (2) “of what was the Bhagavan thinking when he said, ‘All phenomena are unproduced, unceasing, quiescent from the start, and naturally in a state of nirvāṇa’”.²

These two questions are part of one extended question asked by the Bodhisattva Paramārthasamudgata near the beginning of chapter seven of the *Saṃdhinirmocana*.³ The *Viniścaya* does not discuss these in detail, but only gives short explanations of the import of the questions. Regarding the first, the text states: “[Buddha] said this with respect to this and that [phenomenon] for the benefit of trainees, thinking of the three types of non-entitynesses: non-entitynesses in terms of character, non-entitynesses in terms of production, and ultimate non-entitynesses”.⁴ After quoting the second part of the question, the *Viniścaya* comments: “[Buddha]

¹The Tibetan text reads: *bcom ldan 'das kyis ji las dgongs nas chos thams cad ngo bo nyid med pa zhes gsungs*.

²The Tibetan text reads: *bcom ldan 'das kyis ji las dgongs nas chos thams cad ma skyes pa dang ma 'gags pa dang gzod ma nas zhi ba dang rang bzhin gyis yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa zhes gsungs*.

³This passage is found in the Sde dge edition (D) p. 32.3; and Stog Palace edition (Stog) p. 46.5.

⁴The text reads: *'dul ba'i dbang gis de dang der ngo bo nyid med pa nyid rnam pa gsum las dgongs nas gsungs te / mtshan nyid ngo bo nyid med pa nyid dang skye ba ngo bo nyid med pa nyid dang / don dam pa ngo bo nyid med pa nyid do*.

said this thinking just of non-entitynesses in terms of character".¹ The *Viniścaya* then goes on to cite a number of similar questions, apparently from other sūtras, but does not again discuss the *Samdhinirmocana* until the beginning of the section in which it is quoted extensively (Peking p. 83b.5).

Aside from these two instances, I have found no other passages in the *Viniścaya* in which statements from Buddha or a sūtra are quoted that correspond to passages in the *Samdhinirmocana* (aside from the section in which most of the sūtra is quoted), nor have I seen any other places where the *Samdhinirmocana* is mentioned by name, although other works are mentioned by name.

Returning to our previous point, it would be strange that the *Viniścaya* does not even mention the *Samdhinirmocana* or any passage from it for the first 331 pages if it is extensively commenting on the *Samdhinirmocana* and settling well its difficult points (as Tsong kha pa contends). Moreover, there are over one hundred quotes from sūtras in this section of the *Viniścaya*, and if the *Samdhinirmocana* is an important topic of discussion there would seem to be no good reason to neglect to mention it or quote from it.

In fairness to Tsong kha pa, it should be mentioned that the arguments I have presented are mainly circumstantial and that his main contention is that the *Viniścaya* comments on the *Samdhinirmocana* and settles well its difficult points, not that it quotes the sūtra. To evaluate the merits of Tsong kha pa's contention fully, it would be necessary to study the *Viniścaya* comprehensively, comparing its thought with that of the *Samdhinirmocana* to determine whether or not his ideas can be supported by looking at the text as a whole. Given the size of the *Viniścaya*, this would be a massive undertaking, and such a task lies outside the scope of the present study, which is primarily concerned with the *Samdhinirmocana-bhāṣya*.

Since the *Viniścaya* only specifically refers to the *Samdhinirmocana* in the places cited above and mainly quotes other texts, it would be a monumental task to study the whole of the *Viniścaya* to determine whether or not it is implicitly referring to the sūtra in other places.² However, a comparison of the section of the

¹The text reads: *mtshan nyid ngo bo nyid med pa nyid kho na las dgongs te gsungs so*.

²These problems are compounded by the fact that both texts were originally written in Sanskrit but now only exist in Tibetan translations. Given this fact, any analysis of grammar, vocabulary, syntax, etc. is severely hampered, since differences might only reflect peculiarities of individual translation styles.

Viniścaya that quotes and explicitly discusses the sūtra with the *Bhāṣya* could provide a useful starting point for a discussion of the question of whether or not the two texts could have been written by the same author.

According to the position of Tsong kha pa cited above, there would be no need for Asaṅga to compose a commentary on the sūtra in addition to the *Viniścaya*, and so according to this principle the attribution of authorship of the *Bhāṣya* to Asaṅga should be rejected. As we have seen above, an examination of the sources cited by the *Viniścaya* provides little evidence to support Tsong kha pa's claim, and so a comparison of the section of the *Viniścaya* that explicitly discusses the sūtra with corresponding portions of the *Bhāṣya* could provide clues as to whether or not the texts are in conflict in terms of how they comment on the sūtra. If there were important doctrinal differences between the *Viniścaya* and the *Bhāṣya*, this would probably be sufficient reason to decide that they were not written by the same author, but when one compares the two texts one finds a number of similarities. For instance, in both works the author begins with a statement that the first chapters of the sūtra discuss five characteristics of the ultimate, that it is: (1) an inexpressible character; (2) a non-dual character; (3) a character that completely transcends the sphere of argumentation; (4) a character that completely transcends difference or non-difference; and (5) a character that is everywhere of one taste.¹ At the beginning of their discussions of the second chapter of the sūtra, both also indicate that it discusses the ultimate in terms of its relation to argumentation (*rtog ge, tarka*), and their discussions begin with the statement that the sūtra indicates that the ultimate is everywhere of one taste.²

¹The Tibetan of the texts reads as follows: *Viniścaya* (Peking vol. 110, p. 83b): *don dam pa ni mtshan nyid lnga dang ldan pa yin te / brjod du med pa'i mtshan nyid dang / gnyis su med pa'i mtshan nyid dang / rtog ge'i spyod yul las yang dag par 'das pa'i mtshan nyid dang / tha dad pa dang / tha dad pa ma yin pa nyid las yang dag par 'das pa'i mtshan nyid dang / thams cad du ro gcig pa'i mtshan nyid do.*

Bhāṣya (Sde dge #3981, p. 5.2) reads: *de la bcom ldan 'das kyis don dam pa'i mtshan nyid lnga bstan ste / don dam pa'i mtshan nyid lnga ni / brjod du med pa'i mtshan nyid dang / gnyis su med pa'i mtshan nyid dang / rtog ge'i spyod yul las yang dag par 'das pa'i mtshan nyid dang / gzhan dang gzhan ma yin pa las yang dag par 'das pa'i mtshan nyid dang / thams cad du ro gcig pa'i mtshan nyid do.* Except for the use of *gzhan dang gzhan ma yin pa* in the *Bhāṣya* and *tha dad pa dang tha dad pa ma yin pa* in the *Viniścaya*, the wording is nearly identical.

²Compare *Viniścaya* p. 84b.2: *de la rtog ge'i spyod yul las yang dag par 'das pa'i mtshan nyid ni;* and *Bhāṣya* p. 9.6: *gnyis pa ni rtog ge la brten nas don dam par spyod pa.*

The *Viniścaya* prefaces its citation of the fifth chapter with the statement that it is concerned with “the character of mind” (*sems kyi mtshan nyid*, *citta-lakṣaṇa*), and the *Bhāṣya* begins its discussion by stating that the chapter is concerned with “the secrets of mind” (*sems kyi gsang ba*, *citta-guhyā*).¹

At the beginning of chapter six, both texts indicate that this chapter focuses on “the character of phenomena” (*chos kyi mtshan nyid*, *dharma-lakṣaṇa*).² The *Viniścaya* begins chapter seven by stating that this chapter is concerned with “the characters of non-entitynesses of phenomena” (*chos rnams kyi ngo bo nyid med pa'i mtshan nyid*, *dharmānām niḥsvabhāva-lakṣaṇa*), and the the *Bhāṣya* states that the main topic is “the teaching of the three non-entitynesses that are antidotes to four kinds of mistaken conceptions with respect to objects.”³

The *Viniścaya* begins chapter eight with the statement that it is concerned with “the path of calming (*zhi gnas*, *śamatha*) and insight (*lhag mthong*, *vipaśyanā*) that are subsumed by yoga,” and the the *Bhāṣya* begins its discussion of the chapter by stating that it is concerned with “the path of yoga in terms of six aspects.”⁴

Chapter nine of the *Viniścaya* begins with the statement that the chapter “teaches in accordance with the divisions of the vehicle, beginning with the presentation of the vehicle,” and the the *Bhāṣya* states that in this chapter “questions and answers — beginning with what should be known with respect to completing the perfections — are expressed, because the perfections are included within the Great Vehicle.”⁵ Finally, the citation of the tenth chapter of the *Viniścaya* begins with the statement that this chapter is “a delineation that establishes the activities of Tathā-

¹*Viniścaya* p. 87b.4 reads: *de la sems kyi mtshan nyid ni*; *Bhāṣya* p. 12.4 reads: *lga pa la ni sems kyi gsang ba la shin tu rmongs pa rnam pa gsum ste*.

²*Viniścaya* p. 88b.2 reads: *de la chos rnams kyi mtshan nyid ni*. *Bhāṣya* p. 13.3 reads: *drug pa la ni dgos pa drug dang ldan pa'i chos kyi mtshan nyid bstan te*.

³*Viniścaya* p. 89b.2: *de la chos rnams kyi ngo bo nyid med pa'i mtshan nyid ni*; *Bhāṣya* p. 14.2: *bdun pa la ni don la log par rtog pa rnam pa bzhi'i ngyen po ngo bo nyid med pa nyid gsum bstan pa 'di ma brjod na*.

⁴*Viniścaya* p. 93d.2: *chos gdags rnam par dgod pa las brtsams nas / rnal 'byor gyis yongs su bsdus pa'i zhi gnas dang lhag mthong gi lam gyi rab tu dbye ba ni*; *Bhāṣya* p. 15.4: *brgyad pa la ni rnam pa drug gis rnal 'byor gyi lam bstan te*.

⁵*Viniścaya* p. 99d.2: *theg pa rnam par bzhaq pa las brtsams nas theg pa'i rnam par dbye ba ji lta ba bzhin bstan pa ni*; *Bhāṣya* p. 18.3: *dgu pa la ni pha rol tu phyin pa yongs su rdzogs pa la mkhas par bya la brtsams nas 'dri ba dang lan brjod de / pha rol tu phyin pa rnams theg pa chen pos bsdus pa'i phyir ro*.

gatas, beginning with just the presentation of the vehicles," and the *Bhāṣya* states that the chapter indicates the "antidotes to obscurations with respect to the bodies of Tathāgatas."¹

With the exception of the last chapter, the statements of both texts are remarkably similar, and they often use the same words to indicate the focus of the chapters. While this may not prove that the same person wrote both works, it does indicate that there are no important differences in the views presented in the two texts. To take this a step farther, the fact that both texts preface their discussions of the chapters with similar statements fits with the idea that both were written by the same author, since Asaṅga could have expanded on his brief comments from the *Viniścaya* when he wrote the *Bhāṣya*, or perhaps he condensed his ideas from the *Bhāṣya* when he wrote the *Viniścaya*.² In any case, Tsong kha pa's contention that Asaṅga would not have written a separate commentary in addition to the *Viniścaya* does not seem to be supported by a comparison of the portion of the text that quotes the sūtra and the *Bhāṣya*.

Similarities between these texts are also found in their formats. They are similar to each other (and different from the other commentaries on the sūtra found in the Tibetan canon) in that they are mainly "meaning commentaries." This means that they summarize the meaning of passages and sections, while the other commentaries on the *Samdhinirmocana* are mainly "word commentaries" which quote terms, phrases, and passages and then comment on them. The comments of the *Viniścaya* are limited to short prefatory statements before the citation of each chapter that indicate the central meaning of the chapter, and the *Bhāṣya* begins its discussion of each chapter with a similar statement concerning the focus of the chapter and then generally provides overviews of smaller sections. Many of these overviews take the

¹*Viniścaya* p. 104c.5: *theg pa rnam par gzhas pa kho na las brtsams nas de bzhin gshegs pa'i bya ba bsgrub pa'i rab tu dbye ba ni*; *Bhāṣya* p. 21.1: *bcu pa la ni de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku la shin tu rmongs pa rnams kyi gnyen por ni*.

²It should be noted that these considerations would be rendered moot if one accepts Lambert Schmithausen's contentions that the *Viniścaya* is a composite work containing various strata of authorship. See, for instance, his *Ālayavijñāna* (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1987) and *Der Nirvāṇa-Abschnitt in der Viniścayasamgrahaṇī der Yogācārabhūmiḥ* (Wien: Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Süd- und Ostasiens, Heft 8), 1969.

form of divisions of the thought of the section, and these divisions are then sometimes explained individually, but more often are simply stated and left unexplained.

4. *Asaṅga: His Life and Times*

As is true of any important Buddhist figure, the events of Asaṅga's life are shrouded in myth and legend. There is no reliable historical account of his life, since all such reports are hagiographical and contain numerous stories of wondrous events and miraculous occurrences. Contemporary scholarly opinion generally places him in the third or fourth centuries A.D., but beyond that there is little about his life that can be determined with any confidence.¹

¹For discussions of his dates, see: A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), pp. 435-7; NAKAMURA Hajime, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey With Bibliographical Notes* (Hirakata: Kufs Publications, 1980), p. 264, where he places Asaṅga at 310-390 A.D.; Alex Wayman, *Analysis of the Śrāvakabhūmi Manuscript* (Berkeley, 1961), pp. 19-46; and Sylvain Lévi, *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra* (Paris, 1911), pp. 1-7, where he provides a biography of Asaṅga that is drawn from the biographies of Paramārtha, Hsüan-tsang, and Tāranātha.

The dates of his brother Vasubandhu have been the subject of much scholarly speculation. A few of the works that deal with the question of his dates are: Stefan Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984) and *Vasubandhu: Three Aspects* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin), 1969; D.R. Bhandarkar, "Who Was the Patron of Vasubandhu?", *JA*, 1912, pp. 1-3; Erich Frauwallner, *On the Date of the Buddhist Master of the Law Vasubandhu*, (Rome: Serie Orientale Roma, 1951); FUNAHASHI Naoya, "The *Lankāvatāra-sūtra* and the Time of Vasubandhu", *IBK* #20.1, 1971, pp. 321-326; Padmanabh Jaini, "On the theory of the two Vasubandhus", *BSOAS* #21, 1958, pp. 48-53; summarized in *Proceedings of the International Conference of Orientalists*, #24, Munich, 1957, vol. 1, pp. 552-554; T. Kimura, "The Date of Vasubandhu Seen from the *Abhidharmakośa*", *Buddhist Studies in Honor of Charles Lanman* (Cambridge, MA, 1929), pp. 89-92; Marek Mejer, "A Contribution to the Biography of Vasubandhu from Tibetan Sources", *TBS* vol. 2, 1984, pp. 159-174; G. Ono, "The Date of Vasubandhu seen from the History of Buddhist Philosophy", in *Buddhist Studies in Honor of Charles Lanman* (Cambridge, MA, 1929), pp. 93-94; Noël Péri, "À Propos de la date de Vasubandhu", *BEFEO*, XI, 1911, pp. 339-390; SAKURABE Hajime, "On Frauwallner's Dating of Vasubandhu", *IBK* #1.1, 1952, pp. 202-208; Lambert Schmithausen, "Sautrāntika-Voraussetzungen in *Viṃśatikā* und *Triṃśikā*", *WZKSOA* #11, 1967, pp. 109-136; and J. Takakusu, "The Date of Vasubandhu", in *Indian Studies in Honor of Charles Lanman* (Cambridge, MA, 1929), pp. 78-83; "The Date of Vasubandhu 'in the Nine Hundred'", *JRAS*, 1914, pp. 1013-1016; "The Life of Vasubandhu by Paramārtha", *T'oung Pao*, ser. II, #5, pp. 269-296; reprint, E.J. Brill, Leyden, 1904; and "A Study of Paramārtha's Life of Vasubandhu and

This does not mean that the traditional accounts of his life should be simply dismissed. Despite their obvious flaws in terms of historical accuracy, the traditional biographies may contain some kernels of historical facts, and whether or not this is so they make interesting reading and tell an intriguing story about the life of a major Buddhist thinker. They provide information about how Buddhists perceive Asaṅga, how his life exemplifies Buddhist paradigms and values, and how Buddhists have viewed the connections between his biography and his thought. The rest of this section will be devoted to a brief encapsulation of the traditional biographies of Asaṅga.

According to Tibetan tradition, Asaṅga's birth had been predicted in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* (Peking 775) and the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-tantra* (Peking 162),¹ and during his lifetime he clearly defined the Yogācāra tenet system. In the Dge lugs pa school, it is held that Śākyamuni Buddha taught four schools of tenets: the two Hīnayāna systems of Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika and the two Mahāyāna systems of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, but the two Mahāyāna systems did not flourish during his lifetime. Thus it was necessary for Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga to open broad paths for the chariots of these systems originally set forth by Buddha so that others could follow them.² For this reason, they are referred to as "openers of the chariot ways" (*shing rta srol 'byed*) in Tibetan traditions.

the Date of Vasubandhu", *JRAS*, 1905, pp. 33-53. Other references on this and related subjects may be found in John Powers, *The Yogācāra School of Buddhism: A Bibliography* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991).

¹The importance of their being prophesied is often mentioned in Dge lugs pa treatises: see, for example, *Legs bshad snying po*, Sarnath edition, pp. 3-4. As Joe B. Wilson notes (in *The Meaning of Mind in the Mahāyāna Buddhist Philosophy of Mind-Only*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1984, pp. 208-9), this idea is discussed by Gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me in his *Yid dang kun gzhi'i gnas rnam bshad pa mkhas pa'i 'jug mgog*, in *Guñ thañ gsun 'bum* (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek, 1972), vol. 2, p. 2a.2.

The passage from the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* in which Dge lugs pa exegetes think that Asaṅga's birth was predicted can be found in P.L. Vaidya's edition (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1967), p. 6.5; this is cited and discussed by Joe B. Wilson, *The Meaning of Mind in the Mahāyāna Buddhist Philosophy of Mind-Only*, pp. 208-9. See also Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 358-60 and Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 1976, p. 51).

²See *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 357-60.

In traditional biographies, Asaṅga is said to have been a third level Bodhisattva,¹ and Tāranātha reports that in a previous life his mother had been a Buddhist monk who was a devotee of Avalokiteśvara who had hurt the feelings of another monk while debating with him, and Avalokiteśvara predicted that this would result in repeated births as a woman.² During one of these births, as a Buddhist laywoman named Prasannaśīla, she gave birth to Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, and a third son named Viriñcinivatsa, all of whom entered the Buddhist order. Tāranātha reports that she gave birth to two great Buddhist scholars (Asaṅga and Vasubandhu) as a result of her prayer to Avalokiteśvara that she give birth to boys who would help to restore Buddhism in India.³

The traditional accounts agree that Asaṅga was the eldest of the three brothers, Vasubandhu was the second, and that Viriñcinivatsa was the third. Tāranātha reports that Prasannaśīla was a Brahman woman of the Kauśika clan, but that the birth of Asaṅga was the result of a union with a Kṣatriya man, while the births of her other two sons were the results of later unions with a Brahman.⁴ The family lived in the region of present-day Peshawar, in a village called Puruṣapura in Gāndhāra.

Asaṅga showed an early predilection toward religious practice, and even as a child went to the forest to meditate on teachings he received from a tantric teacher named Jetāri. He received monastic ordination at an early age and soon demonstrated an unusual memory and great intelligence. He first studied under Sarvāstivāda teachers, and Paramārtha reports that he studied the Hīnayāna scriptures under an arhat named Piṇḍola and that he also read many Mahāyāna texts, including the Per-

¹This idea is mentioned in *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 359, Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism in India* (tr. Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya; Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 1970), p. 166, and Bu ston's *History of Buddhism* (tr. Eugene Obermiller), part I, p. 140. Wonch'uk, however, refers to Asaṅga as a first level Bodhisattva who directly realized the meditative stabilization (*ting nge 'dzin, samādhi*) of "light of doctrine" (*chos kyi snang ba*) and who directly perceived the face (or presence) of Maitreya and asked him to explain the Bodhisattva levels (*Ārya-gambhīra-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra-ṭīkā*; 'phags pa dgongs pa zab mo nges par 'grel pa'i mdo'i rgya cher 'grel pa; Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Choedhey, Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang, 1985, mdo 'grel, vol. ti [118], p. 52.6).

²Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism*, pp. 154-5.

³Ibid., pp. 155-6. The three-fold destruction of the Dharma in India at that time is described by Bu ston, *History of Buddhism*, pp. 36-7.

⁴Ibid., pp. 155-6.

fection of Wisdom Sūtras.¹ Unable to fathom their profound meaning, he sought and received an initiation that began a search to find and receive teaching from the coming Buddha, Maitreya.²

He left his teacher and went alone to a cave on a mountain named Kukkuṭa-pāda, where he remained in meditative seclusion for twelve years. According to Bu ston and Tāranātha, he first prayed to Maitreya and meditated for three years, but without success.³ As he was about to leave his cave and give up his spiritual quest to find Maitreya, he noticed that some of the rocks outside his cave had been worn smooth by the wings of birds who made their nests on the mountain. He decided that if birds could gradually wear down rocks in this way, this was a sign that through diligent religious practice he could attain the difficult goal of gaining a vision of Maitreya.

Thus, he re-entered his cave and renewed his meditation, but after three more years had still not attained his goal. He again decided to give up his quest, but as he left the cave he saw some stones that had been eroded by water and, taking this as a sign that he should not despair, he returned to his cave and his meditation.

After three more years, however, he still felt that he had not made significant progress, and again decided to renounce his quest. As he left his cave he saw a man who claimed to be making needles by rubbing iron with cotton and who showed

¹This is reported in Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu*, translated by J. Takakusu ("The Life of Vasubandhu by Paramārtha". *T'oung Pao*, ser. II, #5, 1904, pp. 269-296; reprint Leyden: EJ. Brill, 1904). See also Alex Wayman, *Analysis of the Śrāvakabhūmi Manuscript* (Berkeley, 1961), p. 31.

²Maitreya (*byams pa*), in Buddhist mythology, is the future Buddha, who presently resides in Tuṣita in preparation for his last rebirth, in which he will be a fully actualized Buddha. At present he is a tenth level Bodhisattva, and according to Wonch'uk (vol. *thi* [119], p. 174.2) he is called "Love" (*maitreya*) "because his nature is endowed with love and compassion". Regarding this Bodhisattva, see: Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre, eds., *Maitreya*; Princeton, 1986; Lewis Lancaster, "Maitreya", in *Encyclopedia of Religions*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 136-141; SUGURO Shinjou, "On Maitreya", in *Bukkyō Gaku*, vol. 21, 1987, pp. 1-28; and INAGAKI Hisao, "Haribhadra's Quotations from Jñānagarbha's *Anantamukhanirhāradhāraṇīkā*", in Leslie Kawamura and Keith Scott, eds., *Buddhist Thought and Asian Civilization* (Emeryville, CA: Dharma Press, 1977), pp. 139-40, which discusses Haribhadra's etymology of Maitreya's name in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*.

³See Tāranātha pp. 156-9 and Bu ston p. 138.

Asaṅga some needles that he had made in this way. Asaṅga took this as another indication that he should not give up his quest, and so he returned to his meditation.

He persevered for another three years, but after a total of twelve years of meditation still had not attained his goal, and so he left his cave and went far away. As he was coming to a town, he saw a dog whose body was being eaten by worms and which was suffering horribly. He felt overwhelming compassion for the dog, but realized that if he removed the worms from the dog's flesh then they would die, but that if he did not then the dog would die. As a solution, he decided to cut off part of his own flesh so that the worms would be attracted to it and would leave the dog, and then he went into the town to buy a knife. He returned, knife in hand, but as he was about to cut off his flesh, the dog transformed into the luminous form of Maitreya. Asaṅga somewhat testily asked Maitreya why he had taken so long to show himself, to which Maitreya replied that up to this point Asaṅga's mental obstructions had been too powerful for him to be able to perceive Maitreya's exalted form. The combination of his twelve years of dilligent practice and his intense compassion for the dog had finally brought him to a point where Maitreya was visible to him.¹

Maitreya went on to explain that he had been present in the cave with Asaṅga during his twelve-year meditative retreat and showed him the stains on his robe where Asaṅga had unknowingly thrown his garbage on him. He then informed Asaṅga that he needed someone to expound Mahāyāna doctrine in the world, and he brought Asaṅga to Tuṣita heaven, where according to some accounts he spent six months, and according to others fifty-three years. During this time, Maitreya extensively taught him the Mahāyāna doctrine, including the "Five Books of Maitreya,"² and Asaṅga quickly intuitively grasped the meaning of Maitreya's teachings.

After his sojourn in Tuṣita he returned to India, where he began composing commentaries on Maitreya's works as well as many independent treatises. Among these were the *Compendium of Ascertainments* (*vinīścaya-saṃgrahaṇī*, *gtan la dbab pa'i bsdud ba*, a section of the voluminous *Levels of Yogic Practice*; *yogācāra-*

¹See Tāranātha pp. 156-9.

²These are: (1) *Dharma-dharmatā-vibhāga*; (2) *Madhyānta-vibhāga*; (3) *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkāra*; (4) *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*; and (5) *Mahāyānottara-tantra*. See Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 780-1.

bhūmi, rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa), the *Compendium of the Great Vehicle* (*mahāyāna-saṃgraha*, *theg pa chen po'i bsdu ba*), and the subject of the present study, a commentary on the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*.¹ His writings and oral teachings, along with those of his brother Vasubandhu, became the main sources of a new philosophical school, which later came to be known as Yogācāra. His philosophical insights and doctrinal innovations have had a profound impact on Mahāyāna thought and practice for centuries, and the ramifications of his work are still debated today in Tibetan Buddhist monastic colleges.

5. The Translation

The main text used in the following translation is the Sde dge text published by the Karmapa Center in Delhi.² This has been compared to the Peking version of the commentary (P #5481, vol. 104, pp. 1-7), and every quotation from the sūtra has been identified in notes. The pages in both the Sde dge and Stog Palace versions³ have been given in order that anyone wishing to find the sūtra passage in my forthcoming critical edition of the Tibetan texts of the sūtra may easily do so.⁴ The page numbers in brackets refer to the Karmapa Sde dge edition. I have mainly endeavored to translate the text as literally as possible, but in a number of places the terseness of the text required adding explanatory material in brackets or in notes. In all

¹This commentary (Peking 5481, Sde dge 3981) was translated into Tibetan around A.D. 800 by Jinamitra, Śilendrabodhi, and Ye shes sde, and is said to consist of 220 verses in the *Lhan dkar* catalogue (number 534 according to the numbering of Marcelle Lalou — see “Les Textes Bouddhiques au temps du Roi Khri-sroṅ-lde-bcan”, in *JA* #241, 1953, pp. 313-353) and *Bu ston's Chos bsgyur dkar chag* (number 653 according to Nishioka's numbering). It is also partially edited and translated by Lamotte (*Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*, op. cit.). Portions of the commentary are found in appendices at the end of some chapters in Lamotte's text.

²*Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-bhāṣya* ('phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i rnam par bshad pa; Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Choedhey, Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang, 1985, Sde dge vol. *ti* (118), pp. 1-22; Tohoku #3981.

³The Sde dge edition referred to is: Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Choedhey, vol. *mdo sde ca*; Tohoku #106; the Stog Palace edition referred to is in *The Tog Palace Edition of the Tibetan Kanjur*; Leh: Smanrtsis Shesrig Dpemzod, 1975-1978, vol. 63, pp. 1-160.

⁴The references to the Sde dge text are abbreviated as D, and the references to the Stog Palace text are abbreviated as Stog. In my forthcoming critical edition, the two translations of which these are representatives are arranged in parallel columns, with Stog on the left and Sde dge on the right.

cases these are clearly indicated, and hopefully they will be helpful in filling in some of the gaps in the text.

Translation of Asaṅga's
Explanation of the Superior Sūtra
Explaining the Thought
(Ārya-saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra-bhāṣya)

Honage to the Prince Mañjuśrī.

Introduction to the *Mahāyāna Sūtra Explaining the Thought*

With respect to [the passage,] “Thus have I heard...all sentient beings”:¹ The Bhagavan indicates that the ultimate character has five [aspects]. The five [aspects] of the ultimate character are: (1) it is an inexpressible character; (2) it is a non-dual character; (3) it is a character that completely transcends the sphere of argumentation; (4) it is a character that completely transcends difference and non-difference; and (5) it is a character that is everywhere of one taste. With respect to those [five aspects]: viewing it as an inexpressible character and as a non-dual character is [described in the passage] in the *Sūtra Explaining the Thought*, “Bodhisattva Vidhivat-paripṛcchaka asked....” To expand on this: you should know that the question is [discussed] elsewhere.²

¹This passage has been abridged. Most of the first three pages contain a lengthy quote from the introduction to the sūtra, which is unusual in that it is the only lengthy quotation in the text. Other quotations only contain short phrases or single words. Since the following discussion does not discuss specifics of the passage, it seemed appropriate to omit it.

²It is unclear what the author's meaning is in this sentence, since the text does not specifically discuss the question. He may be referring to another text, since it is unlikely that he could mean that this text discusses the question.

The placement of this passage is odd: he quotes the introduction at length and for the next several pages will discuss it at some length, but the question he mentions comes after the

You should know that the praise of the inestimable palace in the *Sūtra Explaining the Thought* is in eighteen parts: the two sentences [indicate] that it is (1) perfect in terms of color; (2) perfect in terms of shape; (3) perfect in terms of measurement; (4) perfect in terms of area; (5) perfect in terms of causes; (6) perfect in terms of nature; (7) perfect in terms of its master; (8) perfect in terms of servants; (9) perfect in terms of direction; (10) perfect in terms of resources; (11) perfect in terms of accomplishing activities; (12) perfect in terms of non-harmfulness; (13) perfect in terms of being free of opponents; (14) a perfect abode; (15) perfect in terms of the particulars of the master's abode; (16) perfect in terms of vehicle; (17) perfect in terms of entrance; and (18) perfect in terms of basis.

The praise of the Buddha [6] is indicated by way of four parts: the accomplishment of one's own welfare due to the unsurpassed abandonments and exalted wisdom of a Buddha; and the accomplishment of others' welfare due to the two, exertion for oneself and others.

With respect to [the phrase, "The Bhagavan] — endowed with a mind of good understanding...":¹ There is one part, because [Buddhas] understand with their minds all of the varieties of existent things.

Alternatively, there are four parts, because: (1) a mind of good understanding is not habituated to the signs of the internal and external sense spheres (*skye mched, āyātana*); (2) a mind of good understanding with respect to profound meanings is inclined toward the selflessness of phenomena; (3) a stainless mind of good understanding completely transcends the state of a Bodhisattva; and (4) an unsurpassed mind of good understanding is undifferentiated among all Buddhas.² This is the accomplishment of one's own welfare due to unsurpassed exalted wisdom.

With respect to "understanding that is unobstructed realization",³ there are two parts, because [Buddhas] know the varieties of existents that are objects of knowledge.

introduction and begins a new topic in the *sūtra*, and so it is unclear why the author mentions it now.

¹D p. 3.4; Stog p. 5.4.

²In other words, all Buddhas are equally enlightened, and there are no differences in terms of depth of understanding among them.

³D p. 3.5, A p. 6.4 read: *sgrib pa med pa'i rtogs pa thugs su chud pa*; Stog p. 5.6 reads: "having full realization due to not possessing obstructions" (*sgrib pa mi mnga' bas rtogs par thugs su chud pa*).

Alternatively, there are three kinds, because: (1) with respect to a realization that does not have afflictive obstructions, that abandonment is also not diminished in the future, and so afflictions do not arise; (2) a realization that does not have obstructions, which is matured with respect to those [i.e., afflictions] is posited as being inconceivable; and (3) a realization that does not have the obstructions to omniscience penetrates the sameness of exalted wisdom that is also unattached and unobstructed in the three times.¹ This is accomplishment of one's own welfare due to unsurpassed abandonment.

With respect to [the phrase,] "endowed with bodies that enter into all worldly realms",² there are three parts, because [Buddhas] work for the benefit of countless sentient beings. Those bodies that enter [into all worldly realms] are indicated by way of: (1) thought, (2) method, (3) non-affliction, and (4) entity.

With respect to that, thought is the eliminator of all doubts. Method [refers to] activities that are indicated [in scripture], such as rebirth in the realm of Tuṣita and so forth. [7] Non-affliction is just absence of affliction due to individually, unobstructedly knowing mundane phenomena. Entity is just what does not arise from all afflicted conceptions. This is accomplishment of others' welfare through applying oneself to [helping] them.

With respect to [the phrase,] "having given rise to the wisdom of all Bodhisattvas",³ there are four parts, because exalted wisdoms of Bodhisattvas give rise to their own exalted wisdoms. The arising of exalted wisdom is indicated by way of three aspects: (1) assertion; (2) establishment; and (3) realization.

What is [the first] like an assertion? Because it is asserted that Bodhisattvas are one with the truth body of Buddhification.

Why is [the second] like establishment? Because the non-difference between exalted wisdoms of Tathāgatas and abandonments is established.

Why is [the third] like realization? Because the state of those two is [characterized by] realization of suchness, the realm of truth (*chos kyi dbyings*, *dharma-dhātu*). That realization of the realm of truth is also superior to [realizations of] Hearers

¹These are: past, future, and present.

²D p. 3.6, A p. 6.6 read: 'jig rten gyi khams thams cad du zhugs pa'i sku dang ldan pa; Stog p. 6.1 reads: "endowed with bodies that pervade all worldly realms" ('jig rten gyi khams thams cad du khyab pa'i sku dang ldan pa).

³D p. 4.1; Stog p. 6.3.

(*nyan thos, śrāvaka*), because it surpasses [other realizations] due to [understanding] the realm of truth. Hearers attain nirvāṇa, but that surpassing due [understanding] the realm of truth is said to extend to the limit of the realm of space.

For instance, even at the time of disintegration or at the time of formation [of the universe,] space is not destroyed. Similarly, at the time of manifest, perfect enlightenment or at the time of completely attaining nirvāṇa, Buddha Bhagavans also do not abide in cyclic existence or nirvāṇa.

From the point of view of collections of phenomena, there are also other divisions. The perfections of Tathāgatas are said to be of twenty-one kinds: (1) perfection of mind; (2) perfection of speech; (3) perfection of body; (4) perfection of nirvāṇa without characteristics and of residence; (5) perfection with respect to acquiring [good] qualities; (6) perfection with respect to questions that are taught in scripture; (7) perfection in surpassing opponents; (8) perfection in purifying a [Buddha] land, (9) perfection [8] of abode; (10) perfection of activities; (11) perfection in terms of emanations; (12) perfection in terms of teaching; (13) perfection in terms of pursuing activities for [the sake of] sentient beings; (14) perfection in terms of advice concerning omnipresent paths; (15) perfection in terms of non-affliction with respect to helping and harming; (16) perfection in terms of basis; (17) perfection in terms of non-discordance; (18) perfection in terms of sport by way of miraculous displays; (19) perfection in terms of inexhaustible qualities; (20) perfection in terms of personal existence (*bdag gi dngos po, ātma-bhāva*); and (21) perfection in terms of nirvāṇa.

With respect to those, perfection of residence has two aspects. As it is said: "In this life, with respect to residing within emptiness, at that time [i.e., in the past] and also now Ānanda remains often in emptiness." This is because [such] residing in individual investigation [involves] observing the world six times, day and night.

The praise of Hearers is due to [their] wisdom. That wisdom is also indicated by way of thirteen kinds of perfections: (1) perfection in terms of non-duality; (2) perfection in terms of thorough disciplining; (3) perfection in terms of praiseworthiness; (4) perfection in terms of height; (5) perfection in terms of size; (6) perfection in terms of following suitable paths; (7) perfection in terms of quickness; (8) perfection in terms of going afar; (9) perfection in terms of going well; (10) perfection in terms of practice; (11) perfection in terms of pacification; (12) perfection in terms of happiness when meeting [people]; (13) perfection in terms of empowerment; and the praise of Bodhisattvas is due to their abiding in a great state.

That abiding in a great state is said to be complete abandonment of nine kinds of path-transgressions. The nine kinds of path-transgressions are: (1) paths that are discordant with perfect enlightenment; (2) becoming soiled; (3) becoming [9] impeded; (4) wasting; (5) unhappiness; (6) fearfulness; (7) sectarianism; (8) non-religiosity; (9) non-partisanship.

The teaching of the five signs of the ultimate is as follows: The *Perfection of Wisdom Chapter* says that [the ultimate] is a quality that is respectively: (1) inconceivable; (2) incomparable; (3) immeasurable; (4) incalculable; and (5) equal to the unequalled. Non-duality and inexpressibility are said to be the antidotes to obscuration with respect to scriptures and realizations that lack superimposition and deprecation.

Because prior to naming awareness [of that name] does not exist; [and] because [names] are manifold and are not definite,¹ non-duality is established. They are simply terms imputed by the Teacher [i.e., Buddha] and are conventions of various conceptual consciousnesses. Because [Buddha] designated the three natures by way of: (1) a conventional consciousness that is not thoroughly established and is present in the continuums of Superiors; (2) an ultimate consciousness; and (3) a perception, you should know that the inexpressible character is the main [character].

[The phrase,] "a term that is designated by the Teacher",² [refers to Buddha's] designating the imputational nature (*kun brtags pa'i ngo bo nyid, parikalpa-svabhāva*). [The phrase,] "an expression is also not something that is without thingness",³ designates the other-dependent [nature] (*gzhan gyi dbang [gi ngo bo nyid], paratantra[-svabhāva]*). [The phrase, "Superiors] perfectly realize the inexpressible",⁴ designates the thoroughly established [nature] (*yongs su grub [pa'i ngo bo nyid], pariniṣpanna[-svabhāva]*). [The phrase,] "emphatically apprehend",⁵ [indicates that] they become entrenched after having emphatically apprehended their

¹In other words, there are many different names for the same thing in different languages, and the designation of a particular thing by a certain sound is merely adventitious, since the name is just a conventional designation for the thing and is not necessitated by the nature of the thing designated.

²D p. 5.6; Stog p. 8.7.

³D p. 6.1; Stog p. 9.3.

⁴D p. 6.2; Stog p. 9.4.

⁵D p. 7.5; Stog p. 11.5.

own view. [The phrase,] “emphatically conceive”,¹ [refers to] people other than them who apprehend [illusions as real] and do not give up [such ideas. The phrase — “They subsequently impute conventional designations] due to understanding the ultimate...”² — [refers to] the names [affixed] to whatever is an object. The first [chapter] has been explained.

Chapter Two

In the second [chapter], in dependence upon [a discussion of] argumentation, the ultimate is analyzed.³ Also, there are five faults of those Forders (*mu stegs can*, *tīrthika*) who do not understand the ultimate: (1) the fault of searching; (2) the fault of exaggerated pride; (3) the fault of exaggerated adherence [to one’s own view]; (4) the fault of imputation; and (5) the fault of disputation.

(1) They hope to understand the ultimate through merely being taught by others. (2) When they attain mere calming (*zhi gnas*, *śamatha*), [10] they have exaggerated pride thinking, “[I] understand the ultimate” due to merely apprehending signs. (3) Under the power of designations, they exaggeratedly adhere [to their views] in accordance with how [the ultimate] is described. (4) In dependence upon conventionalities of perception and so forth, they posit the existence of a soul and so forth and subsequently become attached to the positions of themselves and others, which are mutually contradictory designations. (5) When they become angry, they dispute [with each other], and eventually they quarrel. These five aspects should be understood as being modes of progressively manifestly establishing the ultimate and as being successive [stages]. You should know that the five examples are respectively affixed to the five aspects of the ultimate.

It is like this: beginning with the five types of interest, there is: (1) interest in eliminating existence; (2) interest in [eliminating] desire; (3) interest in [eliminating]

¹D p. 7.5; Stog p. 11.5.

²D p. 8.3; Stog p. 12.5: “[They subsequently impute conventional designations] due to understanding in accordance with objects” (*‘di ltar don ji lta ba bzhin du / rnam par rig par bya ba’i phyr*).

³Text correction: the Sde dge edition of A reads: *don rnam par dpyod pa*; changed to: *don dam pa rnam par dpyod pa* in accordance with Lamotte’s citation of this passage (Lamotte p. 53) and Peking A (Peking edition of Asaṅga’s *Bhāṣya*), vol. 104, p. 4d.5.

conceptuality; (4) interest in [eliminating] conventionalities; and (5) interest in [eliminating] self-grasping.

"The early periods"¹ are those [periods] in which the Bhagavan became manifestly, perfectly enlightened. [The phrase,] "a [time] that was much earlier",² [refers to a time] in which Buddha manifestly, perfectly enlightened others. [The word] "were"³ [means that] those [Forders] previously gathered in order to ascertain exactly how phenomena exist. The word "assembled"⁴ [refers to] those who, having seen them, assembled [with them]. "Considering"⁵ [refers to] teaching.

Moreover, they thought that their own textual systems were free from superimposition and deprecation; therefore, they were "weighing"⁶ [the ultimate character of phenomena]. They were "closely thinking about"⁷ [the ultimate character of phenomena] in dependence upon reasoning. Due to these two, [i.e., weighing and closely thinking about the ultimate character of phenomena,] they taught in accordance with how they thought and whatever they thought.

[The phrase] — "they were seeking in that way, but not having realized it, those whose minds had become different"⁸ — [means that] their minds had become separated. [The phrase] — "had two-pointed minds"⁹ — [refers to] those with doubts. [The phrase] — "those with bad minds"¹⁰ [refers to] others who mistakenly ascertain [the character of the ultimate]. "Debating"¹¹ [means that] they [debated] with their minds. "Quarreling"¹² [means that] they were [quarreling] with words. "Harmed"¹³ [refers to] teaching. [11]

¹D p. 9.6: *sngon gyi dus rnams*; Stog p. 15.1: *sngon gyi gdugs rnams*.

²D p. 9.6; Stog p. 15.1.

³D p. 9.6; Stog p. 15.1.

⁴D p. 9.6; Stog p. 15.1.

⁵D p. 10.1; Stog p. 15.2.

⁶D p. 10.1; Stog p. 15.3.

⁷D p. 10.1; Stog p. 15.3.

⁸D p. 10.1; Stog p. 15.3.

⁹D p. 10.1; Stog p. 15.3.

¹⁰D p. 10.1: *blo gros ngan pa*; Stog p. 15.3: "who had minds that were not in accord" (*blo gros mi mthun pa*).

¹¹D p. 10.2; Stog p. 15.4.

¹²D p. 10.2; Stog p. 15.4.

¹³D p. 10.2; Stog p. 15.4.

Moreover, when they propound unreasonable [doctrines], because they spew forth harsh speech they strike [each other]. When they propound reasonable [doctrines], because they have to hide due to rejection and so forth, they are oppressed. They are “malevolent”¹ because of just those two things.

“Realization”² is due to the path of seeing (*mtshong ba’i lam*, *darśanā-mārga*). “Actualization”³ is due to the path of meditation (*bsgom pa’i lam*, *bhāvanā-mārga*). “Relate”⁴ [refers to] teaching. Moreover, [Buddha] clarifies and opens up [the meaning of the ultimate]. With respect to that, [Buddha] “clarifies”⁵ by way of clarifying well [the meaning of the ultimate] due to presenting designations of doctrines. He “opens up”⁶ [the meaning of the ultimate] by way of teaching the meaning. [Beings who are only acquainted with hot and bitter tastes] “are unable to investigate, infer, or imagine” [the taste of honey or the taste of sugar]⁷ due to the power of argumentation, the power of inference, and the power of belief.

Chapter Three

In the third [chapter], Bodhisattvas who abide in the level of engagement through belief (*mos pas spyod pa’i sa*, *adhimukticyā-bhūmi*) improperly mentally consider the ultimate after having become obscured by the two obscurations: (1) obscuration with respect to imputations; and (2) obscuration with respect to reasonings. Obscuration with respect to imputations is due to being estranged from sūtras of definitive meaning. Obscuration with respect to reasonings is due to not directly understanding the branches of reasons (*gtan tshigs*, *hetu*) and so forth.

With respect to understanding what is unimportant but not understanding what is important, they reason by way of faulty reasons that lack [correct] consequences. [Buddha] teaches and establishes the ultimate by way of the extensive passage

¹D p. 10.2; Stog p. 15.4.

²D p. 10.3; Stog p. 15.6.

³D p. 10.3; Stog p. 15.6.

⁴D p. 10.5; *bsnyad*; Stog p. 16.1: “explain” (*bshad*).

⁵D p. 10.5; Stog p. 16.1.

⁶D p. 10.5; Stog p. 16.1.

⁷D p. 11.4; Stog p. 17.4.

ranging from, "Why is this?..." to "...it is not suitable to say, 'The character of the compounded and the character of the ultimate are not different.'"¹

By way of distinguishing the subtle, [Buddha] says, "profound".² Similarly, you should know that the meanings of those former expressions [12] are concordant. Indicating the supremely subtle is done by way of differentiating between the vehicles of Hearers and so forth.

Chapter Four

The fourth [chapter] indicates that the character that is everywhere of one taste³ is an antidote to the three kinds of boastful pride. The three kinds of boastful pride are: (1) boastful pride of apprehended objects; (2) boastful pride of apprehending subjects; and (3) boastful pride of different characters.

With respect to those, the indication of the antidote to boastful pride of apprehended objects is treated in detail [in the passage,] "Why is this...purification of the aggregates."⁴ The indication of the antidote to boastful pride of apprehending subjects is treated in detail [in the passage,] "Moreover, Subhūti, monks who practice yoga...."⁵ The indication of the antidote to boastful pride of different characters is treated in detail [in the passage,] "Moreover, Subhūti, just as these aggregates and...."⁶

Chapter Five

In the fifth [chapter], there are three kinds of obscuration with respect to secrets of mind: (1) obscuration with respect to nature; (2) obscuration with respect to divisions; and (3) obscuration with respect to answering objections.

¹D pp. 13.6-14.5 Stog pp. 20.5-22.4.

²D p. 17.6; Stog p. 26.4.

³This refers to the statements in the sūtra that the ultimate is "a character that is everywhere of one taste", which means that it is a quality which characterizes all phenomena and that is undifferentiated. It is compared to space (*nam mkha'*, *ākāśa*), which is also omnipresent and undifferentiated.

⁴D p. 21.1; Stog p. 30.7.

⁵D p. 21.5; Stog p. 31.5.

⁶D p. 22.1; Stog p. 32.3.

With respect to those, the indication of the antidote to obscuration with respect to nature ranges from [the passage,] “Viśālamati...” to “...in the Formless Realm...”¹

With respect to divisions, there are five kinds: (1) the division of characteristics (*mtshan nyid, lakṣaṇa*) [is referred to in the expressions,] “appropriating consciousness” (*len pa’i rnam par shes pa, ādāna-vijñāna*), “basis-consciousness” (*kun gzhi rnam par shes pa, ālaya-vijñāna*), and “mind” (*sems, citta*);² (2) the division of activities (*las, karma*) [is indicated by the passage,] “Because that [consciousness] apprehends and appropriates that body...”;³ (3) the division of functions (*’jug pa, niśritya*) [refers to] eye consciousness, etc. and simultaneous and non-simultaneous functioning;⁴ (4) the division of conventionalities (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*) [refers to] secrets that are the sphere of activity of knowledge of the system of doctrine; and (5) the division of the ultimate [is indicated by the passage] ranging from, “...do not see...appropriating...” to “...do not see the mental consciousness.”⁵ [13] This is because they have the power of non-conceptual exalted wisdom. You should know that those mysteries that are the objects of activity of non-conceptual exalted wisdom are mysteries that are ultimate objects of activity.

With respect to the division of answering objections:⁶ Since seeds (*sa bon, bīja*) are included [within the continuum of mind] and are also included within two other [categories], you should know that because they are included among secret things, the other two — mentality (*vid, manas*) and consciousness (*rnam par shes pa, vijñāna*) — are also included among secret things.⁷ Because it is [comprised] of all seeds, [the basis-consciousness] is a mysterious basis.

¹D pp. 23.7-24.2; Stog pp. 34.7-35.4.

²D p. 24.3-4; Stog p. 35.5-7.

³D p. 24.3; Stog p. 35.5.

⁴This appears to refer to the passage ranging from D p. 24.4-6 (Stog p. 36.1-3). The sūtra lists five consciousnesses: eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, bodily consciousness, and mental consciousness. The last part of the passage in A differs from the passage in D and Stog: *lhan cig tu cig car dang cig car ma yin par ’jug pa*. D and Stog read: “functions simultaneously” (*lhan cig rjes su ’jug pa*).

⁵D p. 26.1-4; Stog p. 38.2-6.

⁶This is apparently another division in addition to the previously mentioned five divisions.

⁷The implication of this passage is that seeds, mentality, and consciousness are all secret or hidden things because they are not accessible to sense direct perception and are known instead through meditative perception.

From among these: Because it is not suitable to be taught [to fools]; because it is a basis in the sense of having the characteristics of the seeds of functioning consciousnesses; and because it does not a basis by way of its own character, it is difficult to know.¹

Chapter Six

The sixth [chapter] teaches the characteristics of phenomena having six purposes: (1) antidotal purpose; (2) instructional purpose; (3) purpose of actualization; (4) purpose of method; (5) realizational purpose; and (6) beneficial purpose.

With respect to [the first], the antidotal purpose is an antidote to the four kinds of obscuration: (a) obscuration with respect to objects that lack causes of superimposition; (b) obscuration with respect to objects that have causes of superimposition; (c) obscuration with respect to afflictions that cause disintegration of that; and (d) obscuration with respect to purification.

With respect to [the second], the instructional purpose is of four kinds: (a) teaching the meaning; (b) teaching the external; (c) teaching the internal; and (d) teaching the levels of meditative equipoise.

With respect to [the third], the purpose of actualization actualizes the three doors of liberation [i.e., emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness].

With respect to [the fourth], the purpose of method is knowing the three natures in dependence upon some [phenomenon].

¹It is not a basis by way of its own character because it is simply made up of its seeds, and there is no substance or permanent substratum of basis-consciousness apart from the seeds that compose it. This is an important point, because Yogācāra thinkers were often accused of positing a basis-consciousness that is the functional equivalent of the Hindu *ātman*, that is, a permanent, unchanging essence that is pure consciousness. The concluding verses of this chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana* indicate that Buddha did not teach the basis-consciousness to "fools" because they might consider it to be an *ātman*, and the commentary is indicating why it is different from the *ātman*. The argument holds that there is no essence or substance of basis-consciousness and that the seeds created by functioning consciousnesses constitute its character at any given moment. The statement that it is not a basis by way of its own character indicates that it is merely a continuum that changes in accordance with these seeds and has no existence as a separate entity or substance apart from them.

With respect to [the fifth], the realizational purpose is knowing objects that are phenomena which are objects of knowledge and positing their effects due to having [knowledge of] all aspects of objects of knowledge.

With respect to [the sixth], the beneficial purpose is attaining [the state of] an exalted knower of all aspects (*rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa, sarvākāra-jñāna*) [14] because that is said to be manifest, perfect [realization] with respect to everything. You should know that due to knowing that, things (*ngos po, bhava*) are said to be “phenomena” (*chos, dharma*). Since designations with respect to those [phenomena] are like that, [Buddha] thereby designates “Bodhisattvas who are wise with respect to the character of phenomena.”¹

Chapter Seven

In the seventh [chapter] — before stating the teaching of the three non-entitynesses (*ngo bo nyid med pa, niḥsvabhāva*) that are antidotes to four kinds of mistaken conceptions with respect to objects — in teaching his indirect thought concerning the non-entitynesses, [Buddha] indicates that this is an antidote to degeneration due to the four kinds of mistaken conceptions with respect to objects.

With respect to that, the four kinds of mistaken conceptions with respect to objects are: (1) [wrongly thinking that] a basis [in Buddha’s thought] does not exist due to not relying on the three non-entitynesses;² (2) [wrongly thinking that] there is no thought [behind Buddha’s teachings] due to abandoning [Buddha’s] thought with respect to the three types of non-entityness; (3) [wrongly thinking that] there is no meaning due to abandoning the meaning which does not have superimposition and does not have deprecation; and (4) [mistakenly] not relying [on Buddha’s

¹This refers to the main question of the chapter, in which the Bodhisattva Guṇākara asks Buddha why he designates some Bodhisattvas as being “wise with respect to the character of phenomena”. The commentary indicates that this refers to those Bodhisattvas whose understanding of phenomena approaches that of an exalted knower of all aspects, who understands both the appearances and conventional designations of phenomena, as well as their emptiness.

²This refers to the idea found in the seventh chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana* that Buddha taught conflicting doctrines but that there was a reason behind his teachings, and this serves as a basis for understanding why he appeared to contradict himself in his teachings. The key to understanding the basis in Buddha’s thought, according to the seventh chapter, lies in properly comprehending his teachings concerning the three non-entitynesses and the three characters (*mtshan nyid, lakṣaṇa*).

teachings] due to not relying on former and later [teachings,] such as [the statement], “Whatever does not exist by way of its own character does not arise” and so forth.

Before stating the antidotes to desiring teachings, you should know the differentiations of establishment and the differentiations of belief by way of the differentiations of persons. With respect to that, the differentiations of establishment are as follows: (1) That which, having the three types of basis, is based on [Buddha's] teaching [is expressed by the passage,] “regarding that...those beings who have not previously generated roots of virtue...”¹ (2) That which is based on lineage [is expressed by the passage,] “Paramārthasamudgata...a person who has the lineage of a Hearer who proceeds solely to peacefulness...”² (3) That which is based on conditions [is expressed by the passage,] “I describe those Hearers who change with respect to the enlightenment [that they are seeking] as being a type of Bodhisattva...”³

With respect to the differentiations of belief, there are five kinds: (1) those who come to perfect lineage, those who come to perfect belief, and those who come to perfect wisdom are the first [type: Buddha says,] “With respect to that, sentient beings who have generated great roots of virtue...”⁴ (2) with respect to coming to perfect lineage and belief, [15] those who are separated from wisdom are the second [type: Buddha says,] “With respect to that, sentient beings who have generated roots of virtue...”⁵ (3) those who come to lineage and belief and who come to a little wisdom are the third [type: Buddha says,] “The doctrine that is taught by the Tathāgata works on sentient beings by way of their various beliefs...”⁶ (4) those with faulty wisdom, who come to perfect lineage and perfect belief, are the fourth [type: Buddha says,] “Whatever sentient beings — other than these sentient beings — who have not achieved [the levels of the path]...up to the collections of merit and wisdom...”⁷ and (5) those who come to perfection in everything and who

¹D p. 36.3; Stog p. 51.7.

²D p. 38.4; Stog p. 54.7.

³D p. 38.7; Stog p. 55.5.

⁴D p. 39.4; Stog p. 56.4.

⁵D p. 40.3; Stog p. 57.2.

⁶D p. 40.4; Stog p. 57.6.

⁷D p. 40.7; Stog p. 58.3.

come to understand by way of instruction¹ are the fifth [type: for instance,] *Paramārthasamudgata*, who teaches the examples of “adding butter” [to cooked meat], “dried ginger”, “the basis for the drawing of a picture”, and “space”.² You should similarly associate [these examples] with: [Buddha’s] discourses on ethics and meditative stabilizations, on wisdom, on conventional [truths], and on ultimate [truths], respectively.

Chapter Eight

In the eighth [chapter, Buddha] teaches the path of yoga by way of six aspects. He indicates these by way of delineating designations due to [teaching]: (1) knowing; (2) not knowing; (3) nature; (4) causes of practice; (5) attainment and methods of attainment; and (6) not degenerating.

With respect to those, the grouping of calming and insight is nature. Causes of practice are: (1) perceiving presentations of designations of doctrines; (2) not giving up aspirations; and (3) the four phenomena that are objects of attainment. Attainment [is described in the passage,] “Maitreya, designations of doctrines that I have stated....”³ Methods of attainment [are described in the passage,] “Bhagavan, at what point do Bodhisattvas....”⁴

You should know that the rest are designations that are delineated by way of [the topic of] not degenerating. With respect to that, you should know that designations that are delineated by way of [the topic of] not degenerating are of many kinds. With respect to not degenerating in terms of meditative stabilizations (*ting nge ’dzin, samādhi*) that are based on non-conceptual exalted wisdom, [Maitreya says,] “Bhagavan, [16] are the path of calming and the path of insight different or the same....”⁵ With respect to not degenerating with respect to realizing non-conceptual exalted wisdom, [Maitreya says,] “Bhagavan, is that image that is the object

¹This passage has been translated in accordance with an oral explanation by Geshe Yeshe Thabkhe, who equates *mgo glengs* with *bsan pa*, “instruction”. This refers to advanced practitioners who have heard Buddha’s teachings and fully understood their meaning.

²D pp. 47.4-48.3; Stog pp. 67.6-68.7.

³D p. 51.6; Stog p. 73.6.

⁴D p. 54.2; Stog p. 77.1.

⁵D p. 53.1; Stog p. 75.5.

of activity of meditative stabilization which is a viewing consciousness...."¹ With respect to not degenerating due to not thinking about time in meditating on the three signs, [Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, at what point...solely cultivate insight...."²

With respect to eliminating satisfaction with mere inferior [attainments, Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, how many kinds of insight are there...."³ This is due to not being satisfied with [insight] arisen from signs and so forth. With respect to eliminating degenerated faculties, [Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, when you say, 'calming and insight that dwell on doctrines....'"⁴ With respect to not degenerating in terms of increasing virtue, [Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, through calming and insight observing doctrines that are unmixed...."⁵ This is because the extent to which mind subsumes objects of observation is the extent of increase of the root virtues.

With respect to not degenerating in the sense of having antidotes to conceptual-ity and mental fluctuation, [Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, at what point do calming and insight become meditative stabilizations that are conceptual and analytical...."⁶ With respect to not degenerating and knowing causes with regard to meditation, [Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, what is the cause of calming...."⁷

With respect to eliminating boastful pride, [Maitreya says,] "Bhagavan, [when] Bodhisattvas cultivating calming and insight know doctrine and...."⁸ This is by way of indicating the characteristics of thorough individual knowledge of doctrines and meanings [that arises] due to absence of boastful pride. This is due to [knowing]: (1) the set of all meanings; (2) the set of all meanings [known] by way of instructions; (3) the set of mental analyses; (4) extensive bases and supports; [17] and (5) all profound meanings.

The set of all phenomena that are objects of knowledge is said to [include] apprehended objects and apprehending subjects: the varieties of existents and the ways that they exist.⁹ Objects that are apprehended are divided into objects that are

¹D p. 54.7; Stog p. 75.7.

²D p. 54.2; Stog p. 77.1.

³D p. 54.6; Stog p. 77.7.

⁴D p. 55.4; Stog p. 78.7.

⁵D p. 56.1; Stog p. 79.6.

⁶D p. 57.6; Stog p. 82.5.

⁷D p. 58.5; Stog p. 83.4.

⁸D p. 59.1; Stog p. 84.2.

⁹This refers to a passage beginning on D p. 59.6 (Stog p. 85.2).

states and objects that are resources. Initial mistakenness with respect to these apprehending subjects and so forth is thorough affliction. Initial non-mistakenness is purification.

Indicating village boundaries — or one hundred of those, etc. — is the cause of expressly denoting innumerable worldly realms.¹ The set of all meanings [known] by way of instructions [refers to] doctrinal teachings of Buddhas that are based on the two truths [i.e., conventional truths and ultimate truths]. Afflictive faults are expressed in those. Qualities of purification are expressed. These qualities of affliction and purification are produced from conditions, but are not produced from God (*dbang phyug, īśvara*) and so forth. These are also included together; they are divided according to the characteristics of compounded phenomena.

Similarly, one knows suffering by way of impermanence, sickness and so forth. In the Hearer Vehicle, one knows suffering and so forth. In the Great Vehicle, one knows [reality] by way of suchness and so forth. These are indicated by way of the two, grouping and dividing. Also, when answering, [Buddha] answers by way of partial answers and so forth.

With respect to the fourth [part], the set of all meanings, the basis is letters. The support is meanings. You should know that these two are the profound teaching and profound meaning. [These] are extensive due to [the extensiveness of] objects that are realms, because these are incalculable [in number].

Not degenerating due to merely attaining calming is a result of diligently seeking knowledge and insight.² With respect to not degenerating in terms of through knowledge with respect to origination of the subtle, [Maitreya says,] “Bhagavan, how and through what mental contemplation cultivating calming and insight do Bodhisattvas remove what signs....”³

With respect to eliminating fear with respect to emptiness, [the sūtra says,] “Bhagavan, in the Great Vehicle...the full character of emptiness....”⁴ [18]

¹This refers to a passage beginning on D p. 61.2 (Stog p. 87.3).

²The implication of this is that some might be content with just attaining calming, and this contentment could keep them from seeking more advanced states of understanding. Calming and insight are merely preliminaries to attainment of knowledge and insight, and should not be thought of as ends in themselves.

³D p. 65.3; Stog p. 93.3.

⁴D p. 67.7; Stog p. 97.2.

With respect to cultivating calming and insight — beginning with nature, causes, effects, actions, application, objects of engagement — not wasting instructions given [by Buddha is described in the passage,] “Bhagavan, how many kinds of meditative stabilization of calming and insight are included....”¹

With respect to eliminating non-serious aspiration with respect to meditation: The meanings of the four sources of subtle signs are to be known through pursuing [cultivation of] the [four] mindful establishments. The remainder are to be known through pursuing [understanding of] the sixteen emptinesses.² You should connect the emptiness of the indestructible with collections of two terms.³ Emptiness of character [should be connected with] two signs.⁴ You should know that the remaining [emptinesses] are to be connected with each of these.

Chapter Nine

In the ninth [chapter], questions and answers — beginning with what should be known with respect to completing the [ten] perfections (*pha rol tu phyin pa, pāramitā*) — are expressed, because the perfections are included within the Great Vehicle. With respect to how they are completed: It is by way of the division of the [ten] levels (*sa, bhūmi*); [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, if the ten Bodhisattva levels are....”⁵

With respect to completing the perfection of giving and so forth, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, how many bases of training of Bodhisattvas are there....”⁶ With respect to that, beginning with wisdom regarding effects, wisdom regarding

¹D p. 68.4; Stog p. 98.1.

²These are listed on D pp. 66.4-67.4 (Stog pp. 94.7-96.5).

³The meaning of this is unclear, but appears to refer to the passage in the sūtra (D p. 67.3; Stog p. 96.3) in which Buddha says, “when one thoroughly knows the objects of pure suchness, then the signs of the uncompounded and the signs of the indestructible are eliminated by the emptiness of uncompounded phenomena and the emptiness of the indestructible”.

⁴This appears to refer to the passage in the sūtra (D p. 66.4; Stog p. 95.1) in which Buddha says, “when one thoroughly knows the meaning of the suchness of abiding, then the signs that are a continuation of production, cessation, abiding, and transformation are eliminated by the emptiness of character and the emptiness of what is beginningless and endless”.

⁵D p. 77.1; Stog p. 111.3.

⁶D p. 83.5; Stog p. 120.5.

discordant classes and antidotes, and wisdom regarding names, there are three questions.

With respect to wisdom regarding divisions of the classes that are discordant with the levels, there is: (1) the class that is discordant with liberative wisdoms and (2) the class that is discordant with liberative minds; [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, with respect to those, how many obscurations are there? How many discordances of assumptions of bad states are there....”¹

Wisdom regarding divisions of antidotes is due to accumulating the virtues [resulting from] entering into the levels. With respect to wisdom regarding the basis of ripening the continuums of oneself and others, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, why is it that, among all births in cyclic existence, a Bodhisattva’s birth is called ‘the most excellent’....”² [19]

With respect to wisdom regarding methods of perfecting thought, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, why is it that Bodhisattvas proceed by way of extensive aspirations....”³ Wisdom regarding methods of ripening oneself and [other] sentient beings [is explained] in terms of the six bases of training.⁴ Wisdom regarding bases and those who base [themselves on them] is due to [understanding] the bases [described] in the earlier and later parts of the three trainings. Wisdom regarding good methods of elevating and actualizing is the cause of the two, merit and exalted wisdom.

With respect to wisdom regarding training well, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, how do Bodhisattvas train in these six bases of training....”⁵

Good wisdom should be known [to arise] from: (1) developed constituents; (2) correctly actualized collections; (3) non-degeneration with respect to vehicle;⁶ (4) no uncertainty; and (5) situation. With respect to wisdom regarding perfected collections, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, why are these six bases of training known to be designated as being six-fold....”⁷

¹D p. 80.6; Stog p. 116.4.

²D p. 82.7; Stog p. 119.6.

³D p. 83.2; Stog p. 120.2.

⁴This begins on D p. 83.5 (Stog p. 120.5).

⁵D p. 84.2; Stog p. 121.5.

⁶This is probably an admonition against moving from the Mahāyāna path to a Hinayāna path.

⁷D p. 84.4; Stog p. 122.1.

With respect to wisdom regarding the additional [perfections, Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, why are the other perfections known to be designated as being four-fold...."¹ With respect to wisdom regarding arising, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, how should one understand this indication of the order of these six perfections...."² With respect to wisdom regarding divisions of differences, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, into how many aspects are these perfections divided...."³

With respect to wisdom regarding completion, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, why are these perfections [called] 'perfections'...."⁴

With respect to wisdom regarding groups of designations, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, what are the individual functions of those five aspects...."⁵

With respect to wisdom regarding distinctiveness of qualities, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, [20] what are the vastnesses of these perfections...."⁶

With respect to wisdom regarding continuity, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, in what way do Bodhisattvas search for the pleasing fruitional results of enduring perfections and...."⁷

With respect to wisdom regarding methods of abiding in the cause, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, why is it that, just as Bodhisattvas [engage in] the perfections, they do not abide in them due to faith in the pleasing fruitional results of the perfections...."⁸

With respect to wisdom regarding actualization of activities, [Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, what are the individual powers of these perfections...."⁹

With respect to wisdom regarding correctly actualized benefits that are grouped [together, Avalokiteśvara says,] "Bhagavan, from what cause do the perfections

¹D p. 85.1; Stog p. 122.7.

²D p. 86.2; Stog p. 124.4. This sentence in the commentary is omitted in the Peking edition, p. 7.1.

³D p. 86.4; Stog p. 124.7.

⁴D p. 87.1; Stog p. 125.7.

⁵D p. 91.3; Stog p. 131.6.

⁶D p. 91.6; Stog p. 132.3.

⁷D p. 92.1; Stog p. 132.6.

⁸D p. 92.2; Stog p. 133.1 reads: "Bhagavan, why is it that, just as Bodhisattvas engage in the perfections through faith, they are not similarly intent on the pleasing fruitional results of the perfections?"

⁹D p. 92.4; Stog p. 133.4.

arise; what are their results; and what are their functions....”¹ You should know that the results are the objectives of oneself and others.

With respect to wisdom regarding hindrances to benefitting sentient beings, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, if...why are there poor people in the world....”²

With respect to wisdom regarding not degenerating in terms of engaging in method, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, through which perfection do Bodhisattvas apprehend the non-entityness of phenomena....”³

With respect to wisdom regarding decrease and increase, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, [when you say,] ‘perfection’....”⁴

With respect to wisdom that eliminates grasping at the continuum of thorough affliction, [Avalokiteśvara says,] “Bhagavan, how many kinds of latencies of afflictions are there [on] these [levels]....”⁵

With respect to wisdom regarding divisions that are differentiations of deliverances (*nges par ’byin pa, nairyāṇika*), [Avalokiteśvara says,] “...the Bhagavan’s [statement], ‘Both the Hearer Vehicle and the Great Vehicle [are one vehicle]’....”⁶ With respect to that, for those who imagine the meaning to be only what is literally spoken, “superimposition” (*sgro ’dogs pa, samāropa*) is [imputing] form and so forth in terms of the imputational character. For others, “deprecation” (*skur pa ’debs pa, apavāda*) is depreciating the character of all phenomena due to [thinking], “The entities of all phenomena do not exist.”

Chapter Ten

In the tenth [chapter, Buddha] teaches (1) by indicating that the antidote to obstructions with respect to the bodies of a Tathāgata is the truth body, which is the antidote to [imagining] the impermanent to be permanent, and (2) by indicating that the arising of their births is the antidote to imagining them to be illusory. The [three] baskets of designations of doctrines are non-mistakenly taught to be the antidotes to obscurations.

¹D p. 92.6; Stog p. 134.1.

²D p. 93.1; Stog p. 134.3.

³D p. 93.4; Stog p. 134.7.

⁴D p. 93.6; Stog p. 135.4.

⁵D p. 94.4; Stog p. 136.3.

⁶D p. 95.7; Stog p. 138.3.

The eleven characteristics of schematic outlines (*ma mo, māṭṭkā*) can be [condensed into] five types of characteristics: (1) two are characteristics of teachings; (2) three are characteristics of thorough investigation; (3) two are characteristics of results; (4) two are characteristics of hindrances and aids to these; (5) two are characteristics of faults and [good] qualities of those. The remainder are antidotes to obscurations with respect to the objects of activity of Buddhas. You should know that all of these teachings are also of the mode of teaching of Tathāgatas' births.¹ This completes [the explanation of] the tenth [chapter].

QUESTION: How should one know imputation of what is not real (*yang dag pa ma yin pa kun tu rtogs pa, abhūta-parikalpa*)?

[RESPONSE]: It should be known by way of: (1) basis; (2) characteristic; (3) method; (4) result; (5) cause; (6) final transformation; (7) support; and (8) divisions.

With respect to that, basis [refers to] Bodhisattvas. Characteristic simply [refers to] causes of error. Method [refers to] wisdom arisen from hearing, thinking, and meditating. Result [refers to] attainment of unsurpassed, complete, perfect enlightenment which abandons that and to [fulfilment of] the welfare of sentient beings. Cause [refers to] reasoning, delighting in the arising of Buddhas, hearing excellent doctrines, taking to mind what is proper, and doctrinal commitments that are concordant with doctrine. Final transformation [refers to] realization of suchness. Whoever understands [this] knows the imputation of what is unreal. Support [refers to] the level of engagement through belief, the first [Bodhisattva] level, and the Buddha level.

Division [refers to] seventeen kinds: [22] (1) the division of arising; (2) the division of non-arising; (3) the division of apprehending subjects; (4) the division of apprehended objects; (5) the division of viewing [something] as external; (6) the division of viewing [something] as internal; (7) the division of having afflictions; (8) the division of not having afflictions; (9) the division of what is experienced after birth; (10) the division of what is experienced at other times;² (11) the division

¹In other words, these are the types of teachings that the emanations of Tathāgatas give to sentient beings.

²The term "other times" (*lan grangs gzhan*) is translated in accordance with an oral explanation by Geshe Yeshe Thabkhe, who equates *lan grangs* with *stengs* or *gnas skabs*.

of non-existence; (12) the division of existence and non-existence; (13) the division of what is real; (14) the division of what is real and what is unreal; (15) the division of the concordant causes of what is real; (16) the division of indicating what is here;¹ and (17) the division of what arises in the past and present and so forth.

These aspects should be understood in accordance with four [statements]: (1) “The unreal is unreal imputation; (2) the not unreal is simply non-imputation; (3) non-imputation is not non-imputation; (4) everything is said to be knowable”

This completes the *Explanation of the Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought* by the Master Asaṅga.

This is translated by the Indian masters Jinamitra and Śīlendrabodhi and the great revising translator (*zhu chen gyi lo tsa ba*) Bande Ye shes sde and prepared [in response to] a request.

¹According to Geshe Thabkhe, this can also mean “indicating what something is” or “indicating what something is called”.

Part Two: A Study and Translation of Jñānagarbha's *Ārya-maitreya-kevala-parivarta- bhāṣya*

1. Introduction

According to Tibetan historical literature, Jñānagarbha flourished in eastern India,¹ and he is associated with the philosophical lineage of Bhavya and Śāntarakṣita.² Tāranātha states that he was born in Oḍiviśa and became a student of Śrīgupta in Bhaṅgala (Bengal).³ He is also said to have been a Mādhyamika who followed the philosophical views of Bhavya and who had a vision of Avalokiteśvara. Tāranātha asserts that Jñānagarbha was a Svātantrika-Mādhyamika, along with Bhavya, Avalokitavrata, Buddhajñānapada, and Śāntarakṣita.⁴ Ruegg places him in the eighth century and cites the historian Sum pa mkhan po's assertion that he was a teacher of Śāntarakṣita.⁵

¹*Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, tr. Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1970), p. 260.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 252-3 and 260.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 252-3.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 260. The *Blue Annals* (tr. George Roerich; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1949, p. 34) only mention him as belonging to the ordination lineage of Nāgārjuna, Bhavya, Śrīgupta, and Śāntarakṣita that was transmitted to Tibet by Sba Ratna.

⁵See David Seyfort Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), p. 69 and n. 225. Malcolm Eckel (*Jñānagarbha's Commentary on the Distinction Between the Two Truths*; New York: State University of New York Press, 1987, pp. 5-34) also places him in the eighth century, and NAGASAWA Jitsudō thinks that he lived from 700-760 (*Daijōbukkō yuga-gyō shisō no Hattenkeitai*; Tokyo, 1969, pp. 4-16; reported in Leslie Kawamura and Keith Scott, eds., *Buddhist Thought and Asian Civilization*; Emeryville, CA: Dharma Press, 1977, p. 143 n. 16). Ruegg notes (p. 69) that there were at least

In the Dge lugs pa school, he is classed as a Sautrāntika-Svātantrika-Mādhyamika, primarily on the basis of his *Differentiation of the Two Truths* (*satyadvaya-vibhaṅga*, *bden pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa*), which is known in Tibet as one of the "three [texts] illuminating Svātantrika" (*rang rgyud shar gsum*).⁶

Jñānagarbha, along with Candrakīrti, is classed by Dbus pa blo gsal as a Svātantrika-Mādhyamika of a type called "Mādhyamikas who practice what is renowned in the world" (*'jig rten grags sde spyod pa'i dbu ma pa*).⁷ In a study of the *Blo gsal grub mtha'*,⁸ Mimaki provides a table for various identifications of Jñānagarbha's affiliation, according to which Rje btsun pa,⁹ 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa,¹⁰

two other authors named Jñānagarbha, one of whom was a teacher of Mar pa in the eleventh century, and the other a translator whose name appears in the colophons of several works translated into Tibetan. See also MATSUMOTO Shirō, "Jñānagarbha's Theory of Two Truths", in *Bukkyō Gaku* #5, 1978, pp. 109-137, where he discusses the three Jñānagarbhas. This is reported in the preface to Jñānagarbha's commentary on the *Samdhinirmocanā-sūtra* in the Ōtani University version of the *Bstan 'gyur* (*sems tsam* section, vol. 2 (*bi*), p. 8).

⁶See Donald Lopez, *A Study of Svātantrika* (New York: Snow Lion, 1987), pp. 21 and 446-7 n. 16 and Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School*, pp. 68-9, n. 223 (the other two works are Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṃkāra* and Kamalaśīla's *Madhyamakāloka*). It should be noted that this term could also mean "the three Eastern Svātantrikas", since *shar* can mean both "East" and "illuminate", "appear", "dawn". Jñānagarbha's treatise on the two truths is discussed by Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje (*Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa gsal bar bshad pa thub bstan lhun po'i mdzes rgyan*; Samarth: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Printing Press, 1970, p. 429.4), and he indicates that Jñānagarbha's Svātantrika reasonings are not accepted by Prāsaṅgikas, and so Lcang skya also does not use them in his chapter on Prāsaṅgika. The *Satyadvaya-vibhaṅga* and its auto-commentary (*vyṛtti*) are found in the Sde dge edition of the Tripiṭaka (Tohoku #3881 and #3882) but not in the Peking edition.

⁷*Blo gsal grub mtha'*, ed. and tr. MIMAKI Katsumi (Tokyo: Zinbun Kagaku Kenkyusyo, 1982), p. 27. He writes (p. 28):

Jñānagarbha est considéré comme appartenant à la fois à l'école des 'Jig rten grags sde spyod pa'i dbu ma pa et à l'école des Svātantrika. On peut le déduire de fait que sa *Satyadvaya-vibhaṅga-kārikā* est citée pour appuyer l'opinion des Svātantrika, bien que son nom ne soit pas cité expressément sous les Svātantrika.

⁸Ibid, pp. 27-8. As Tsong kha pa notes, these distinctions were not felt by Jñānagarbha, nor by Bhavya, Śāntarakṣita, etc., who saw no difference in the view of selflessness in their own school and that of Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti. See Lopez, *A Study of Svātantrika*, p. 446 n. 16.

⁹Rje btsun pa chos kyi rgyal mtshan of Se ra Byes Monastery (1469-1546), in his *Grub mtha'i rnam gzhag*. See also Ruegg, pp. 68-9, n. 223.

¹⁰'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje (1648-1722), in his *Grub mtha' chen mo*.

Dge 'dun rgya mtsho,¹¹ and Paṇ chen Śākya mchog ldan¹² classify him as a Sautrāntika-Mādhyamika,¹³ and Bu ston¹⁴ and Go rams pa¹⁵ classify him as a Yogācāra-Mādhyamika.¹⁶ Mimaki cites several different Presentations of Tenets (*grub mtha'*)

¹¹Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475-1542), the second Dalai Lama, in his *Grub mtha' rgya mtshor 'jug pa'i gru rdzings*.

¹²Paṇ chen Śākya mchog ldan, in his *Dbu ma rnam par nges pa'i chos kyi bang mdzod lung dang rigs pa'i rgya mtsho* (cited in Mimaki p. 36).

¹³*Blo gsal grub mtha'*, op. cit., p. 29. See also Lessing and Wayman's translation of Mkhas grub's *Rgyud sde spyi rnam*, p. 90, where he is also identified as a Sautrāntika-Svāntantrika, and Ruegg, op. cit., pp. 68-9, n. 224. On p. 39, Mimaki writes:

Jñānagarbha est considéré normalement comme auteur des Sautrāntika-mādhyamika par les auteurs dGe lugs pa, tels que Se ra rJe btsun pa. Chos kyi rgyal mtshan et 'Jam dbyangs bzad pa. Quelques maîtres antérieurs qui prennent la même position d'après Śākya mchog ldan pourraient sans doute être dGe lugs pa. Par contre, des auteurs tels que Bu ston Rin chen grub et Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge, qui sont dans la filiation des Sa skya pa, prennent Jñānagarbha pour un auteur des Yogācāra-mādhyamika. Par ailleurs dBus pa blo gsal, et probablement aussi 'Ba' ra ba rGyal mtshan dpal bzañ, considèrent Jñānagarbha comme un auteur des 'Jig rten grags sde spyod pa'i dbu ma pa.

¹⁴Bu ston rin chen grub (1290-1364), in his *Chos 'byung*. See Eugene Obermiller's translation, (Heidelberg, 1931) part II, p. 135.

¹⁵Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429-1489), in his *Rgyal ba thams cad kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa zab mo dbu ma'i de kho na nyid spyi'i ngag gyis ston pa nges don rag gsal* (cited in Mimaki p. 32).

¹⁶*Blo gsal grub mtha'*, pp. 29 and 34. For a discussion of the philosophical differences between Prāsāngika-Mādhyamikas and Svāntantrika-Mādhyamikas, see Lopez, op. cit., pp. 68-9 and 76 and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness* (London: Wisdom, 1983), pp. 399-439. See also the short discussion of Olle Qvarnstrom, *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective: The Vedāntavi-nīścaya Chapter of Bhavya's Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* (Lund: Plus Ultra, 1989), pp. 96-98. According to the Dge lugs pa system (as outlined by Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, 1728-1791) in his *Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa rin po che'i phreng ba* (Dharamsala: Shes rig par khang, 1969, p. 55), a Yogācāra-Svāntantrika-Mādhyamika is a Mādhyamika who does not assert the existence of external objects but does assert the existence of self-knowers (*rang rig, svasaṃvedanā*). A Sautrāntika-Svāntantrika is a Mādhyamika who does not assert the existence of self-knowers and who does assert that external objects exist by way of their own character (see Geshe Lhundrup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*; New York: Grove Press, 1976, pp. 122-132 and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 361-3). According to these two definitions, it is difficult to place Jñānagarbha in either classification, because in his *Satyadvaya-vibhaṅga* he refutes an opponent who asserts the existence of self-knowers (see Tohoku #3882.4b.2), which would mark him as a Sautrāntika-Svāntantrika, but in his commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana* he agrees with the statement of the sūtra that external objects do not exist. This indicates that if the same Jñānagarbha wrote both texts he did not identify exclusively with either

of Dge lugs pa and Sa skya authors which classify Jñānagarbha, and Mimaki concludes that Dge lugs pa authors generally classify him as a Sautrāntika-Mādhyamika,¹⁷ but several Sa skya authors (e.g., Bu ston and Go rams pa) classify him as a Yogācāra-Mādhyamika.¹⁸

According to the Tibetan doxographers, Jñānagarbha was a Mādhyamika who utilized both Madhyamaka and Yogācāra sources, and so for them there is no contradiction in his writing both a treatise presenting a Madhyamaka perspective on the two truths (*The Differentiation of the Two Truths*) and a commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* (which is the main scriptural source for the Yogācāra school).¹⁹ Several contemporary scholars, however, think that because there is a philosophical incompatibility between the two schools, accepting the Yogācāra position that all phenomena are mind-only (*sems tsam, citta-mātra*) or cognition-only (*rnam par rig pa tsam, vijñapti-mātra*) would preclude his accepting the Madhyamaka position that compounded phenomena (*'dus byas, saṃskṛta*) do exist conventionally. This discrepancy is mentioned by Ruegg in *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School in India* and by Eckel in *Jñānagarbha's Commentary on the Distinction Between the Two Truths*.²⁰ Both indicate that they see a conflict between the thought of the *Differentiation of the Two Truths* and that of the commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*. Ruegg, for example, points out that in the *Differentiation of the Two Truths* the author characterizes the doctrine of mind-only as a position that is inferior to the Madhyamaka understanding of selflessness²¹ (while the commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* defends the doctrine of mind-only

viewpoint. It is virtually certain that he did not identify himself as a Svātantrika, but simply as a Mādhyamika, and the lines of demarkation between schools was probably much more fluid at the time when he lived and wrote than the later Tibetan exegetes presented them.

¹⁷*Blo gsal grub mtha'*, p. 34.

¹⁸*Blo gsal grub mtha'*, pp. 32-3.

¹⁹The Tibetan text of this work has been edited and translated into Japanese by NOZAWA Jōshō (*Daijō Bukkyō yuga-gyō no Kenkyū*, Kyoto, Hōzōkan, 1957) on the basis of the Peking (number 5535) and Sde dge (number 4033) texts. It is also listed in the *Lhan dkar* catalogue (number 532 according to Lalou's numbering) and Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag* (number 2926 in Nishioka's edition of Bu ston's text: *Putun bukkyōshi*, in *Tōkyō Daigaku Bungakubu Bunka Koryū Kenkyū shisetsu Kenkyū Kiyō* 4 (1980), pp. 61-92; 5 (1981), pp. 43-94; 6 (1983), pp. 47-201).

²⁰See Ruegg, pp. 68-9 and Eckel, pp. 31-4.

²¹Ruegg, p. 69.

without indicating that it should be viewed as inferior to the Madhyamaka view). Eckel speculates that the differences in philosophical outlook between the two works could be evidence that they were written by different authors,²² but this alone is not, in my opinion, sufficient reason by itself to reject the notion that both texts are by the same author, since there are many cases of authors adopting different attitudes and perspectives in different works.²³ An equally plausible explanation is that Jñānagarbha accepted the Mahāyāna idea that Buddha taught different (and often conflicting) doctrines to different audiences according to his understanding of what would be most beneficial to each listener, and so Jñānagarbha would feel no philosophical conflict in commenting on and defending different doctrines attributed to Buddha without rigidly adhering to just one position. This does not entail that he was inconsistent, or even that he necessarily changed his mind; rather, as Ruegg indicates,²⁴ Jñānagarbha states in the *Differentiation of the Two Truths* that Buddha taught different doctrines to different audiences due to his compassion and that he taught some people about the aggregates (*phung po*, *skandha*), constituents (*kham*s, *dhāu*), and sense spheres (*skye mched*, *āyatana*), while he taught others that everything is mind-only, and to others he taught that all phenomena lack a self. Jñānagarbha indicates that he thinks that the doctrine of mind-only is inferior to the Madhyamaka understanding of selflessness, but he also thinks that it is a part of a progression of teachings given by Buddha leading up to the Madhyamaka view of selflessness:

In accordance with [their] thought — by way of progressively teaching (1) the aggregates, constituents, and sense spheres; (2) mind-only; (3) and the

²²Eckel, pp. 5-34.

²³Although this is not the occasion to develop this idea fully, there is a basic problem in studies by contemporary scholars who try to decide that different texts could not have been written by the same author on the basis of differences of thought or style. The problem with this approach is that it tacitly assumes that every author has a uniform philosophical view and writing style throughout his/her life, but this is patently false, as can be seen in any number of contemporary authors, who write from different perspectives and utilize different styles, adapting their writing to the needs of particular works. An example would be Jean-Paul Sartre, who wrote in a variety of styles and genres. Many of the works known to have been written by Sartre would have to be rejected according to the implicit rules of the methodology of contemporary scholarship which holds that differences in thought and style necessarily indicate differences in authorship.

²⁴Ruegg, p. 69.

selflessness of all phenomena — [Buddha] completely refuted the apprehension of [truly existent] things.²⁵

This statement appears to indicate that the author of the *Differentiation of the Two Truths* accepted the doctrine of mind-only as a part of a progression of teachings given by Buddha leading up to the teaching of the selflessness of all phenomena, and so it would not be inconsistent for the same author to write another text in which he commented on and defended statements attributed to Buddha expounding this position.

Both Eckel and Ruegg also point out that there were two other Jñānagarbhas mentioned in Tibetan literature, one of whom was a teacher of Mar pa the translator and another who translated the *Commentary on the Differentiation of the Two Truths* into Tibetan.²⁶ In addition, Steinkellner²⁷ states that Bu ston's mention of the commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*²⁸ occurs in the portion of his *Catalogue (dkar chag)* that mainly lists works by Tibetans. The author listed there is referred to as "Shes rab snying po", and Steinkellner points out that this is a possible alternative translation of Jñānagarbha (usually translated as Ye shes snying po).²⁹ He also mentions that none of the catalogues which mention this work list a translator, which is at least circumstantial evidence that the author might have been Tibetan.

In Tibetan Dge lugs pa traditions, however, it is accepted that the commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and the *Differentiation of the Two Truths* were written by the same person, the eighth century Indian master Jñānagarbha.³⁰ Steinkellner has provided some useful evidence which supports the thesis that the author of the commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* was a Tibetan rather than an Indian, but since this evidence is circumstantial, it is not sufficient, in my opin-

²⁵Satyadvayavibhaṅga-vṛtti (bden pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel pa), Ōtani University Press Sde dge, dbu ma vol. 12, p. 13a.3-4.

²⁶See Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, p. 69. Steinkellner ("Who Is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul" (*Berliner Indologische Studien*, 1989, pp. 231-3) speculates that there may have even been two translators, one an Indian named Jñānagarbha and the other a Tibetan named Ye shes snying po.

²⁷Steinkellner ("Who Is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul"), pp. 231-3.

²⁸In his *Chos bsgyur dkar chag* (number 2926 in Nishioka's numbering).

²⁹Steinkellner ("Who Is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul"), p. 233.

³⁰Bu ston's mention of this work in the section mainly devoted to indigenous Tibetan works may, however, indicate that he did not think that the Indian Jñānagarbha wrote this work.

ion, to reject conclusively the tradition's attribution of both works to the same person.

Furthermore, although scholars such as Eckel, Ruegg, and Mimaki have indicated that they find a discrepancy between Jñānagarbha's Madhyamaka affiliation and his composing a commentary on the *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra*, Tibetan doxographers of the Dge lugs pa school would argue that there is no contradiction. For instance, in his *Essence of the Good Explanations (legs bshad snying po)*, Tsong kha pa states that Svātantrikas (e.g., Bhavya, Śāntarakṣita, and Kamalaśīla) rely on the *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra* and, according to his analysis, as a Svātantrika Jñānagarbha would also treat it as an authoritative scripture. According to Tsong kha pa, the Svātantrikas, beginning with Bhavya, accept the *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra* as a definitive teaching, but their interpretations differ from those of the Yogācāras:

Kamalaśīla's *Illumination of the Middle Way (dbu ma snang ba, madhyamakāloka)* explains in detail that Bhavya opened this systems's path of commentary [in which it is held] that the meaning of the three natures described in the *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra* as interpreted by the Yogācāras is not the meaning of the sūtra but that it has the Madhyamaka meaning.³¹

According to Tsong kha pa's analysis of the Svātantrika system, Bhavya and his followers rely on the *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra*, but their readings differ from those of Yogācāra thinkers. Bhavya, for example, denies that Buddha teaches that external objects are mind-only, even though there are statements that seem to propound this in several sūtras, e.g., the *Sūtra on the Ten Levels (Daśabhūmika-sūtra)*, the *Descent Into Laṅkā Sūtra (Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra)*, and the *Samḍhinirmocana-sūtra*.³²

³¹*Legs bshad snying po* (Sarnath ed., p. 130.8).

³²According to Jeffrey Hopkins (*Meditation on Emptiness* p. 361), Bhavya refuted the Cittamātra position that there are no external objects. He contended that Buddha never taught this, despite the fact that Buddha did say the words, "Everything in the three realms is mind-only." According to Bhavya, the words do not mean what they appear to say, and he contends that if one looks at the context it is clear that even on the occasions where Buddha makes statements that all phenomena are mind-only this is not what he means. This idea is discussed by Blo bzang dkon mchog in his word-commentary on 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's *Grub mtha' chen mo*, p. 192.3 and by Tsong kha pa in his *Legs bshad snying po* (Sarnath edition, p. 115.1). *Meditation on Emptiness* also states that Bhavya holds that all phenomena do not exist ultimately, but conventionally they do exist inherently or naturally. He is a Sautrāntika-Svātantrika-Mādhyamika, because like a Sautrāntika he

Although Tsong kha pa contends that some sections of Bhavya's works "settle the meaning of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*", he does not cite any places where Bhavya actually mentions the sūtra by name.³³ He does indicate, however, that Bhavya refers to doctrines presented in the sūtra and refutes the interpretations of Yogācāra authors, and Tsong kha pa seems to think that the references are clear

asserts the existence of objects that are external to perceiving consciousness. According to Tibetan doxographers, the definition of a Sautrāntika-Svātrantika is: "a Mādhyamika who does not assert self-knowers and who asserts that external objects exist by way of their own nature" (from *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* by Sopa and Hopkins, p. 123).

³³See, for instance, *Legs bshad snying po* pp. 109.14 (where Tsong kha pa states that Bhavya, settling the thought of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, indicates that other-dependent phenomena (*gzhan dbang, paratantra*) have entityness in the sense of being established by way of their own character); p. 113.17 (where he states that Bhavya disagrees with the Yogācāras in that he thinks that "the meaning of the sūtra is that the emptiness of an ultimately [existent] entity of form and its production and so forth is the thoroughly established [nature]"); and p. 114.7 (where he indicates that Bhavya disagrees with the Yogācāras' interpretation of the sūtra's discussion of the idea that phenomena are not produced inherently). The latter passage illustrates how Tsong kha pa indicates that Bhavya relies on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* although he does not mention the name of the sūtra:

The Yogācāras also assert that the statements in the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* concerning production by way of [the object's] own nature and inherent production from other are of concordant meaning; and they assert that non-production of that [refers to] non-production under [the object's] own power. Therefore, they assert that due to its non-existence it is not necessary that ultimate production not exist. [Bhavya] asserts that if other-dependent phenomena were truly established, they would have to be established in accordance with how they appear, due to which the statement in the [*Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*] that [other-dependent phenomena are] like magical illusions would not be correct. Therefore, he explains that their emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*.

The passage in the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* to which this passage probably refers is on D p. 9.1, Lamotte p. 38, and Stog p. 13.5.

It is noteworthy, however, that if Bhavya actually relies on the sūtra he does not mention it by name. In the fifth chapter of his *Tarkajvālā*, for instance, he discusses Yogācāra (the chapter is entitled "entry into ascertainment of suchness according to the Yogācāras", *rnal 'byor spyod pa pa'i de kho na nyid gtan la dbab pa la 'jug pa*), but never mentions the name of the sūtra, although he does mention the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* and Dignāga's *Ālambana-parīkṣā* and quotes Vasubandhu's *Madhyānta-vibhāga-bhāṣya*. Tsong kha pa's thought that Bhavya is referring to the *Samdhinirmocana* seems to be based on the fact that Bhavya utilizes and discusses terminology that is found in the sūtra (although he does not mention this as a source), and so the implication from Tsong kha pa's viewpoint is that the textual referent of his terminology is clear enough that he did not need to mention the sūtra by name.

enough that there is no doubt that Bhavya is discussing the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*. He also points to several places where other Mādhyamikas, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, cite the sūtra to support their philosophical positions, which backs up his contention that the authors of the Svātantrika branch of Madhyamaka treated the sūtra as an authoritative scripture. If, as he contends, Bhavya relied on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla cited it as a scriptural source that supported their arguments, then this is good evidence for the Dge lugs pa position that the sūtra is authoritative for this branch of Madhyamaka. Unfortunately, it still does not settle the question of the doctrinal affiliation of Jñānagarbha, because, according to the Dge lugs pa doxographers, as a Sautrāntika-Svātantrika he would have to assert the existence of external objects as Bhavya does, but in his commentary on the sūtra he indicates that he accepts the sūtra's statement that all phenomena are cognition-only (*rnam par rig pa tsam, vijñapti-mātra*).

In one of the best-known passages of the sūtra, Maitreya asks, "Is that image that is the object of activity of meditative stabilization which is a viewing consciousness different from the mind or is it not different?", to which Buddha replies:

Maitreya, it is said to be not different. Why is it not different? Because that image is simply cognition-only. Maitreya, I explain that consciousness is distinguished by [the fact that its] object of observation is cognition-only.³⁴

According to Schmithausen, this may be "the oldest, or at least the oldest extant, Yogācāra text that clearly expresses universal idealism,"³⁵ and Jñānagarbha's commentary reflects this idealism:

If you ask, 'How can objects not exist,' [Buddha replies,] 'Because although objects do not exist, production of cognitions appears.' Although objects in the past, in the future, and in dreams and so forth do not exist, productions of cognitions of those appear as such [i.e., as existent].³⁶

³⁴D p. 53.3; Stog p. 75.7.

³⁵Lambert Schmithausen, "On the Problem of Spiritual Practice and Philosophical Theory in Buddhism", in *German Scholars on India* (Bombay, 1976), p. 240. See also Étienne Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, p. 211 n. 6 and Schmithausen, "On the Vijñaptimātra Passage in *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* VIII.7", in *Acta Indologica*, vol. VI, 1984, pp. 433ff.

³⁶Ārya-maitreya-kevala-parivarta-bhāṣya, p. 322a.6.

He then goes on to refute objections to the statement that objects of observation are cognition-only, and he states that in dreams one perceives images that one believes to be external objects, but these are simply mental creations. He also cites the analogy of different types of beings who perceive a body of water differently because of their respective predispositions. Animals such as fish perceive it as a habitat, human beings perceive it as a place for getting drinking water or for bathing, hungry ghosts (*yi dags*, *preta*) perceive it as being filled with disgusting substances such as pus and blood, and gods see it as being of the nature of precious jewels. The upshot of the analogy is that there is no static external object; rather, each individual being perceives objects as a result of predispositions that exist within the continuum of the mind.

Although the sūtra passage and Jñānagarbha's commentary clearly indicate that the mind and its objects are non-different, Alex Wayman thinks that the sūtra's statement only applies to the context of meditation and is not a general statement that applies to all objects.³⁷ He states that the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* is only describing how objects appear to meditators during some meditative states, but he thinks that the text does not extend this to include all phenomena. He categorizes the idea that this statement of the doctrine of cognition-only indicates a denial of external objects as "nonsense."³⁸ His contentions, however, are clearly disproven by the sūtra and by Jñānagarbha's commentary.

In the first place, his implicit assumption that the perceptions of meditative states are somehow less valid than ordinary experiences is odd considering the great value that Buddhist thinkers place on the insights gained through meditative experience. For Buddhist meditators, the experiences of meditative states are if anything more valid than ordinary experiences, and they commonly extend the insights of meditation to ordinary experience.³⁹ Indeed, if meditative experience were only valid

³⁷Alex Wayman, "Yogācāra and the Buddhist Logicians", *JIAS*, 2.1, 1979, p. 68. See also his review of *The Yogācāra Idealism* by A.K. Chatterjee (in *PEW*, 15, #1, 1965, pp. 65-73), in which he attacks Chatterjee's thesis that the Yogācāras hold a doctrine of idealism.

³⁸Wayman, "Yogācāra and the Buddhist Logicians", p. 70.

³⁹A good description of how this attitude is expressed in the *Vimśatikā* can be found in INAZU Kizow's article, "The Concept of Vijñapti and Vijñāna in the Text of Vasubandhu's *Vimśatikā-vijñaptimātratā-siddhi*", in *IBK* 15.1, pp. 474-468. See also Schmithausen, "Spiritual Practice and Philosophical Theory in Buddhism", pp. 239-249, where he argues that the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and other Yogācāra treatises do not justify doctrines such as cognition-only on the basis of

in the meditative situation, there would be little point in engaging in meditation in the first place, since one's experiences would only be meaningful in a limited situation that would be irrelevant to most of the experiences of oneself and others.

A more fundamental error in Wayman's position can be found by reading the section following the sūtra passage cited above, in which Buddha *explicitly* extends the doctrine of cognition-only to all phenomena. Maitreya asks, "Are the forms and so forth of sentient beings, which abide in the nature of images of the mind, not different from the mind", to which Buddha replies,

Maitreya, they are not different. With respect to those images, because childish beings with distorted awareness do not know cognition-only just as it is in reality, they consider them wrongly.⁴⁰

Jñānagarbha comments,

This indicates that mind appears as an object of observation which is like an image; [and so Buddha] teaches, 'It is not different from mind.' In order to indicate the reason, [Buddha] says, "I explain that consciousness is distinguished by [the fact that its] object of observation (*dmigs pa*, *ālambana*) is cognition-only." An object of observation is an appearance of mind in the aspect of an object and, moreover, it is not different from cognition because it is observed simultaneously.⁴¹

The idea that a mind appearing in the aspect of an object and perception of that object occur simultaneously is important to Jñānagarbha's argument. In order for there to be a difference between mind and its objects, there must be a temporal difference between the arising of an object and the mind's awareness of that object. Jñānagarbha argues that there is no such temporal difference and that mind produces

rational arguments; rather, these doctrines "resulted from a generalization of a fact observed in the case of meditation-objects, i.e., in the context of spiritual practice" (p. 241).

⁴⁰D p. 53.7; Stog p. 76.6. See also Schmithausen, "Spiritual Practice and Philosophical Theory in Buddhism", p. 241, where he states, "already in the *Samādhirnirmocanasūtra* the use of the term [*viññaptimātra*] is not limited to objects of meditation...the statement that mind (*viññāna*) is characterized by the fact that its object is nothing but cognition contains no restriction." See also HATTORI Maasaki, "Realism and the Philosophy of Consciousness-Only", in *EB*, vol. XXI #1, 1988, pp. 23-26.

⁴¹Otani University Press, *sems tsam* vol. 2, #4033 (*bi*), p. 321b.4.

cognitions of objects from predispositions in the mental continuum. Because of this, the appearance of an object and awareness of that object occur in the same moment.

Similar themes reoccur throughout the commentary. On several occasions, he clearly indicates that external objects do not exist and that our perceptions of them are merely the result of mental predispositions. Just as in dreams, hallucinations, etc. we perceive non-existent external objects that are purely mental creations, so also in waking reality we assent to the apparent reality of mental images that appear as external objects. Waking reality, of course, has a stronger hold on us than dream-realities, but both are unreal. At no point does Jñānagarbha attempt to argue that Buddha's intention is not really to propound the idea that external objects do not exist. Rather, he accepts the sūtra passages cited above as straightforward statements that all objects of observation are cognition-only, and he argues against opponents who disagree with this contention.

To return to our earlier discussion of what his commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana* reveals about his doctrinal stance: the numerous statements asserting universal idealism in the commentary reveal that in this work he understands the sūtra as containing an unambiguous denial of external objects. According to the doxographers of the Dge lugs pa school, this would be inconsistent if he were a Svātantrika-Mādhyamika, since according to the Dge lugs pa Svāntarikas assert that external objects exist. Moreover, if we look at the *Differentiation of the Two Truths*, it contains no clear statement as to whether he accepts or rejects the existence of external objects. This leaves open a number of possibilities, including: (1) the two works may have had different authors; (2) Jñānagarbha only discussed the doctrine of cognition-only in his commentary on the sūtra but did not mention it in his other work; (3) Jñānagarbha adopted different perspectives in each work; (4) the Dge lugs pa classification scheme is not pertinent to Jñānagarbha's thought.

If a major difference of opinion were found between these two works, this would be a good reason for rejecting the thesis that they were authored by the same person, but the texts do not seem to provide enough evidence to draw a conclusion. Moreover, Tsong kha pa's analysis indicates that Svātantrika-Mādhyamikas rely on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, and so Jñānagarbha's purported Madhyamaka affiliation would not interfere with his composing a commentary on the sūtra.

Thus, he could have written from a mainly Yogācāra point of view in his commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and from a mainly Mādhyamaka point of view in his *Differentiation of the Two Truths*. Whether or not he wrote both works,

it is certain that he was not concerned with presenting either the Svātantrika position or that of any subdivision within Svātantrika, since these classifications were invented in Tibet and were not recognized by Indian authors such as Jñānagarbha.⁴² He undoubtedly only saw himself as a Mādhyamika and was probably not as concerned with fine points of doctrinal affiliation as either the Tibetan doxographers or contemporary scholars. As Donald Lopez has noted, the philosophical situation of India during Jñānagarbha's time was fairly fluid,⁴³ with a great deal of interaction and debate between different philosophical schools, and most thinkers were probably concerned with presenting the most consistent and defensible position possible in a particular work, not with how later scholars would classify their doctrinal affiliation. In any case, the questions of the philosophical position of Jñānagarbha and of the authorship of the works attributed to him are too complex to settle here and require further study.

2. The Translation

As the title of his commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* indicates, Jñānagarbha only comments on the eighth chapter, "[The Questions of] Maitreya," which is primarily concerned with the topics of calming (*zhi gnas*, *śamatha*) and insight (*lhag mthong*, *vipaśyanā*). Jñānagarbha's methodology involves first citing a passage and then explaining what it means. These explanations are often prefaced with short phrases that indicate the context of the passage and provide a transition from the explanation of one passage to the next. He often identifies the purpose for Buddha's speaking a particular phrase, and he also often sums up the main point of a section with a concluding remark about the intent of the section.

Unlike Wonch'uk, he seldom mentions any other texts or authors (the only quotations are two passages from Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras),⁴⁴ and his explanations seem to be indications of his own opinions. He states many qualms that could arise from his explanations or from Buddha's words, and he answers them by

⁴²For a discussion of these doctrinal classifications, see Olle Qvarnstrom, *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective: The Vedāntaviniścaya Chapter of Bhavya's Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* (Lund: Plus Ultra, 1989), pp. 96-98.

⁴³See Lopez, *A Study of Svātantrika*, pp. 446-48 n. 16.

⁴⁴These are found on pp. 320b and 334b.

showing that the teachings of the chapter present a coherent system of meditative theory and epistemology, but he never attributes any of the questions and qualms to any particular person or persons.

The main text used in the following translation is that published by Ōtani University Press, *sams tsam* vol. 2, #4033 (*bi*), pp. 318b-345a, which comprises fifty-three pages and is divided into two sections. This has been compared to the Peking translation (Peking #5535, vol. 109, pp. 196.4.1-209.3.8), and every quotation from the sūtra has been identified in notes.

As with the translation of Asaṅga's commentary, for every quotation from the sūtra the page numbers in both the Sde dge and Stog Palace versions⁴⁵ have been given so that anyone wishing to find the sūtra passage in my forthcoming translation and critical edition of the Tibetan texts of the sūtra may do so.⁴⁶ There are many passages in the text that are followed by particles (such as *zhes*, *ces*, etc.) which in Tibetan are used to identify quotations but that do not refer to passages in the *Samdhinirmocana*. These appear to be paraphrases of the sūtra, and since they are not actual quotations, I have marked them with single quotations marks to distinguish them from citations of passages from the sūtra, which are indicated with double quotes. The page numbers in brackets refer to the page breaks in the Ōtani edition.

I have mainly tried to mirror the style and syntax of the text in the translation, but in many places have taken some liberties in order to make the text more readable in English. One of the great difficulties facing a translator of a text like this is the difference between classical Sanskrit style and the kinds of styles that are acceptable in contemporary English. Jñānagarbha, like many classical Sanskrit stylists, uses

⁴⁵The Sde dge edition referred to is: Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Choedhey, vol. *mdo sde ca*; Tohoku #106; the Stog Palace edition referred to is in *The Tog Palace Edition of the Tibetan Kanjur*; Leh: Smarntsis Shesrig Dpemzod, 1975-1978, vol. 63, pp. 1-160.

⁴⁶The references to the Sde dge text are abbreviated as D, and the references to the Stog Palace text are abbreviated as Stog. Anyone who compares the quotations of the sūtra in Jñānagarbha's commentary and my translation will find numerous differences. This is due to the fact that the Stog Palace edition is quite different from the translation found in the Sde dge, Peking, Snar thang, Lhasa, and Co ne editions of the sūtra. These are discussed at length in John Powers, "The Tibetan Translations of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and *Bka' 'gyur* Research", forthcoming in *Central Asiatic Journal*. I think that in most cases the meanings of the two translations are equivalent. Where this is not the case, I have indicated the differences between the Stog and Sde dge versions in notes.

long sentences containing a number of interconnected ideas and phrases. Many Indian writers considered this to be an elegant and polished style, but teachers of modern English would generally consider many of Jñānagarbha's passages to be run-on sentences and would never allow their students to write in this way. In addition, since there is no extant Sanskrit version of the text, a translator has to rely on Tibetan translations, which are generally very exacting but are also difficult to read for this very reason. The Tibetan translators generally attempted to render every particle, case indicator, etc., and the result is often turgid reading, even by the standards of philosophical Tibetan. Add to this the differences between Tibetan and Sanskrit grammar and style, and the problems multiply.

Even more problematic from the translator's point of view, contemporary English and classical Sanskrit are quite different in grammar and style. Since relations between parts of a sentence are indicated by case particles in Sanskrit, the position of words is fairly fluid in comparison to English. In addition, classical Sanskrit styles allowed and even encouraged writers like Jñānagarbha to write in ways that would be unacceptable in English, and even to formulate thoughts in ways that would not occur to English writers. In addition, many of the key terms Jñānagarbha uses and that informed his worldview and philosophy have no English equivalents. Thus, the translator faces a difficult choice: to translate the text as literally as possible or to essentially paraphrase the text in order to make it more palatable to contemporary readers. I have chosen the former course, which places a greater burden on the reader because of the difficulties in the style, but which preserves more of the distinctive techniques and insights of the author. A paraphrase is often helpful as an interpretation of a difficult text, but it is not a translation. My goal has been to prepare a translation, one that mirrors the original as closely as possible given the differences between the original text and the limitations that English grammar, vocabulary, and syntax place on the translator.

The style, vocabulary, and thought mark it as a text intended for scholar-monks who were thoroughly versed in Buddhist philosophy, particularly philosophy of mind and meditation theory. It also assumes a thorough knowledge of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and its doctrines, and so undoubtedly would have been difficult even for many of Jñānagarbha's Buddhist contemporaries. Given the distance between classical India and the contemporary English-speaking world, for many readers this commentary will no doubt prove to be difficult reading, but for anyone interested in the meditational and psychological thought of the *Samdhinirmocana*, this

is a commentary well worth close study and consideration. It discusses one of the most important sections of a seminal Buddhist work and provides helpful keys for interpreting many of its difficult points. It was an invaluable aid in translating the eighth chapter and helped to clear up some problematic passages and guided my translation of a number of technical terms. More importantly, it is a meticulous and thorough commentary that provides guidelines and insights that are useful for anyone seeking to understand the sūtra's presentation of meditation theory and its relation to the nature of mind.

**Translation of Jñānagarbha's
Commentary on Just the Chapter
of the Superior Maitreya
(Ārya-maitreya-kevala-parivarta-bhāṣya)**

With respect to explaining a little the “Maitreya chapter” from the *Superior Sūtra Explaining the Thought*, [this is] the first part. Homage to the Superior Maitreya.

Beginning with the presentation of designations of doctrines, [the passage —] “You should know the divisions of the path of calming (*zhi gnas*, *śamatha*) and insight (*lhag mthong*, *vipaśyanā*), which are included within yoga.”⁴⁷ — indicates the path of yoga through delineating the designations of: (1) nature; (2) cause of application; (3) development; (4) methods of attainment; and (5) non-degeneration. With respect to that, whatever is included within [the topic of] yoga is of the nature of the path of calming and insight.

[The phrase,] “This is yoga”⁴⁸ is [spoken] thinking of the category of ethics. You should know that the division of the path of calming and insight by way of the nature of the categories of meditative stabilization (*ting nge 'dzin*, *śamādhi*) and exalted wisdom (*ye shes*, *jñāna*) — which are included within the category of ethics — is [included within] nature and so forth.⁴⁹

⁴⁷This passage is not found in either D or Stog (or any other Tibetan text of the sūtra that I have consulted).

⁴⁸This phrase is also not found in any of the Tibetan versions of the sūtra.

⁴⁹In other words, these are included within the first division listed above. According to Geshe Yeshe Thabkhe, this means that ethics is the foundation (*sa gzhi*) of meditative stabilizations and exalted wisdom.

Moreover, yoga is reasonable; it is associated with the path of calming and insight, which is included within the four analyses.⁵⁰

"*Samdhinirmocana*" means 'cutting the knots of the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience' through definitely freeing (*nges par dkrol bas*) the profound thought [of Buddha]. It is a "sūtra" because it is simply a complete statement of what is definite..

With respect to the Bodhisattva Maitreya's posing questions to the Bhagavan [i.e., Buddha]: This path of calming and insight is the cause of approaching great enlightenment, and because the Superior Maitreya is also close to great enlightenment, he poses questions to the Bhagavan.⁵¹

After having settled the nature of the path of calming and insight in this way, [Maitreya's question —] "Bhagavan, abiding in what [and in dependence upon what] do Bodhisattvas..."⁵² — asks about the causes of practice. The causes of practice are indicated by the abode, the basis, and the object of observation (*dmigs pa, ālambana*). [319a] [Buddha's response —] "Maitreya, abiding in and depending upon an unwavering resolution to expound designations of doctrines and to become unsurpassably, perfectly enlightened"⁵³ — indicates the causes of practice by way of [the discussion of] calming and insight and indicates the conditions of practice by way of [the discussion of] conditions. Because the statement concerning designations of doctrines is [an exposition of] the collections of doctrines that are explained, it is the cause of abiding. Because unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment is

⁵⁰Yeshe Thabkhe says this means they are purified by the four analyses; (1) analysis of nature (*chos nyid kyi rigs pa*); (2) analysis of functions (*bya ba grub pa'i rigs pa*); (3) analysis of dependence (*ltos pa'i rigs pa*); and (4) analysis establishing logical proofs (*'thad pa sgrub pa'i rigs pa*).

⁵¹This seems to contradict the contention of Gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me (in his *Drang nges rnam 'byed kyi dka' 'grel rtsom 'phro legs bshad snying po'i yang snying*; Sarnath: Mongolian Lama Guru Deva, 1965, pp. 74.6-75.13) that the Bodhisattvas in this sūtra (who are all on the tenth Bodhisattva level) do not actually have these questions, but are questioning the Buddha for the benefit of other beings for whom the questions and answers are relevant. Since all these Bodhisattvas have attained the initiation of "great light rays", according to Gung thang, they have nothing to learn that they do not already know, and so they ask questions for the benefit of trainees less advanced on the path.

See also Rgyal ba dge 'dun gya mtsho's *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsung 'bum las drang nges rnam 'byed kyi dka' 'grel dgongs pa'i don rab tu gsal bar byed pa'i sgron me* (the copy I have consulted is a blockprint from the library of H.H. The Dalai Lama, n.d.), p. 6a.3.

⁵²D p. 51.1; Stog p. 72.6.

⁵³D p. 51.2; Stog p. 72.7.

the realized truth body (*chos kyi sku*, *dharma-kāya*), aspiration to that is the cause upon which one depends. This is because aspiration is the prerequisite for all of the qualities that lead to great enlightenment.

The statement — “The Bhagavan [said,] ‘The four things that are objects of observation of calming and insight are...’”⁵⁴ — indicates the cause of practice by way of the object of observation. With respect to [Buddha’s statement,] “analytical images (*rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa’i gzugs brnyan*, *savikalpa-pratibimba*); (2) non-analytical images (*rnam par mi rtog pa’i gzugs brnyan*, *nirvikalpa-pratibimba*); (3) the limits of phenomena (*dnegos po’i mtha’*, *vastvanta*); and (4) accomplishment of the purpose (*dgos pa yongs su grub pa*, *kṛtyānuṣṭhāna*)”:⁵⁵ “image” (*gzugs brnyan*, *pratibimba*) means⁵⁶ “similitude” (*’dra ba*, *sadṛśya*).⁵⁷ If you ask, “Of what is it an image,” [I reply,] “Of mind”: this is because all appearances are just that. With respect to the object of observation, what is present in front of [the observer] is the analytical image. What is included among internal [objects of observation] is the non-analytical image. “Thing” (*dnegos po*, *vastu*) [refers to] the basis-consciousness (*kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*, *ālaya-vijñāna*), because in that minds and mental factors that have bases and objects of observation abide due to things that are causes and effects.

Because of subsuming the limits of those, that [term] “limits of phenomena” means “transformational truth body”. Also, because “accomplishment of the purpose” accomplishes the aims of oneself and others, entry into [a path of]⁵⁸ seeing — that is not obstructed with respect to all objects of knowledge and is non-attached exalted wisdom — is said to be “accomplishment of the purpose”.

⁵⁴D p. 51.3; Stog p. 73.1.

⁵⁵D p. 51.3; Stog p. 73.1.

⁵⁶The Tibetan word is *tha tshig*. Yeshe Thabkhe equates it with meaning (*don*).

⁵⁷Yeshe Thabkhe says that this is because the image (e.g., a Buddha’s truth body) is just visualized internally, through the medium of a meaning-generalality (*don spyi*, *artha-sāmānya*), and one only observes it without analyzing it in terms of its final mode of subsistence (*gnas lugs*).

⁵⁸The words in brackets are added in accordance with an oral explanation by Yeshe Thabkhe, who connects this with the three things that are abandoned by a path of seeing (*mtshong lam spangs gsum*): (1) the imputation of true personhood (*’jig lta kun btags*); (2) adherence to ethical conduct (*tshul khrims brtul zhugs phyogs ’dzin*); and (3) having afflicted doubt (*the tshom nyon mongs can*).

[Maitreya's question,] "with respect to those..."⁵⁹ asks, "With respect to those four objects of observation, which paths [are connected] with which objects of observation?" [The passage — "the Bhavagan] said: 'One is [an object of observation of calming]: non-analytical images'"⁶⁰ — [indicates] that these are objects of observation of calming, since [319b] calming is internal viewing. They are included among internal [objects of observation] because of how [the mind] engages them.

The passage — "How many are [just] objects of observation of insight?...[The Bhagavan] said, 'Only one is: analytical images'"⁶¹ — [indicates that] they are [objects of observation] of insight because one apprehends signs due to scattering⁶² with respect to the object of observation.⁶³

The passage — "How many are [just] objects of observation of those two?; [The Bhagavan] said: Two are; what are the two? They are: the limits of phenomena and accomplishment of the purpose"⁶⁴ — [indicates that] because these two are of the nature of abandonment and exalted wisdom, they are said to be just objects of observation of a path that is a union of calming and insight. This is because they are final fruits.

After having settled the nature of the path of calming and insight and the causes of practice, in order to teach that a Bodhisattva should seek calming and how [that Bodhisattva] should become skilled in insight, the passage — "Bhagavan, how is it that Bodhisattvas abiding in and depending upon these four phenomena that are objects of observation of calming and insight seek calming and become skilled in insight?"⁶⁵ — asks about the attainment of these two. Because calming is of the nature of pacification of mental turmoil, Bodhisattvas should seek it. Because insight is of the nature of differentiation of phenomena, in order to indicate that they must be skilled in that, [Buddha] said, "Maitreya, [designations of doctrines that] I [have stated to Bodhisattvas are]...."⁶⁶ "Designations of doctrines [that I] have stated" is

⁵⁹D p. 51.3; Stog p. 73.2.

⁶⁰D p. 51.4; Stog p. 73.3.

⁶¹D p. 51.4; Stog p. 73.3.

⁶²This is translated in accordance with the Peking text (p. 197.1.6), which inserts the instrumental particle *kyis* here; this is omitted in the Sde dge text.

⁶³In other words, because one fails to focus on the object of observation and to perceive its final nature of emptiness, one instead becomes involved in perception of signs and characteristics.

⁶⁴D p. 51.5; Stog p. 73.4.

⁶⁵D p. 51.5; Stog p. 73.5.

⁶⁶D p. 51.6; Stog p. 73.6.

the general instruction. Through designations of collections of names, collections of words, and collections of letters, [Buddha provides] a general presentation of doctrines. [The phrase,] “sūtra collections...”⁶⁷ is the specific instruction.

Question: In what way does hearing well these general and specific teachings of sūtra collections and so forth, apprehending them well, repeating them, analyzing them well with the mind, and realizing them well with insight facilitate (*rgyur gyur*) the practice of calming? [320a]

[**Response:**] [Buddha] says, “Remaining alone in an isolated situation...”⁶⁸ [They are] “alone” due to physical isolation (*lus dben pa, kāya-viveka*); [they are] “isolated” due to mental isolation (*sems dben pa, citta-viveka*). In order to indicate both that the mind through which they mentally contemplate those doctrines is of the nature of [those] doctrines and that those doctrines are also of the nature of mind, [Buddha] says, “engaging [in this practice] in this way and abiding in that many times...”⁶⁹ Physical pliancy (*lus shin tu sbyangs pa, kāya-prasrabdhi*) arises from physical isolation. Mental pliancy (*sems shin tu sbyangs pa, citta-prasrabdhi*) arises from mental isolation.

Moreover, because of diminishing the afflictions that are objects of abandonment of meditation by way of obtaining mental contemplation of antidotal doctrines in accordance with how they are taught, [one attains] physical pliancy. Because of diminishing the afflictions that are objects of abandonment by [a path of]⁷⁰ seeing, [one attains] mental pliancy. Because [those afflictions] do not exist in that body and because mental turmoil does not exist [in the mind,] physical and mental pliancy are called “calming”. [The phrase,] “in this way...”⁷¹ makes it definite that “Bodhisattvas seek calming just through taking doctrines to mind, and not through other [practices]”.

Also, in order to indicate that Bodhisattvas are skilled in insight, [Buddha] says, “They [attain] physical pliancy and...”⁷² “They” refers to Bodhisattvas. Those

⁶⁷D p. 51.6; Stog p. 73.6.

⁶⁸D p. 52.1; Stog p. 74.2.

⁶⁹D p. 52.2; Stog p. 74.3.

⁷⁰The words in brackets are added on the basis of an oral explanation by Yeshe Thabkhe, who explains that this practice refers to the preliminary training for the path of seeing.

⁷¹D p. 52.2; Stog p. 74.4.

⁷²D p. 52.3; Stog p. 74.5.

Bodhisattvas abide in and depend upon the attainment of physical pliancy and mental pliancy. [The phrase,] “In accordance with how those doctrines have been considered”⁷³ [indicates] non-mistaken mental contemplations. “Just those”⁷⁴ [refers to the doctrines] indicated previously. “Internally”⁷⁵ [means] not externally.

Individual analysis — with respect to phenomena that are mental images which are meditated on as images that are objects of activity of meditative stabilizations — is differentiation. Belief is ascertainment (*nges par byed pa*).

Question: Since, at the level of realization, aspectless phenomena function unitarily with a mind that has aspects,⁷⁶ how are individual analysis [320b] and belief suitable?

[**Response:** Buddha] states, “Therefore, having abandoned the aspects of mind....”⁷⁷ This is because aspects of mind are mistaken appearances.

Objection: Because meditative stabilization and wisdom are⁷⁸ mental factors (*sa mang po ba*)⁷⁹ due to being always related with mind, if mental aspects do not exist, in what way do these two arise in relation? Such calming is meditative stabilization, and insight is wisdom; therefore, if those two do not exist, how are phenomena suitable to be individually analyzed as mental images?

[**Reply:**] Here, according to the Proponents of Yogic Practice (*rnal 'byor spyod pas smras pa, yogācāra-vāda*) — since at the level of understanding [one realizes that] all minds, meditative stabilizations, wisdoms, and phenomena are not external objects [and arise] from mind — mind similarly lacks inherent existence (*ngo bo nyid med pa, niḥsvabhāva*). The lack of inherent existence of mind is just mind’s absence of being mind [by way of its own character]. It is also said in the *Perfection*

⁷³D p. 52.3; Stog p. 74.5.

⁷⁴D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.5.

⁷⁵D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.5.

⁷⁶Yeshe Thabkhe explains that this means that the mind has no actual external objects (*phyi rol med*), but it appears to have them. Thus the mind takes on the appearances of aspects of external objects, but mind and its objects are of the same entity.

⁷⁷D p. 52.3; Stog p. 74.6.

⁷⁸The Sde dge text has a negative particle *ma* here, which the Peking text omits. Yeshe Thabkhe thinks that the Peking reading is the correct one.

⁷⁹Literally: “many-grounders”; Yeshe Thabkhe glosses this as referring to mental factors (*sems byung, caitta*).

of *Wisdom* [Sūtra,] “That mind is non-mind; the nature of the mind is clear light.”⁸⁰ Therefore, [Buddha] says, “Having abandoned the aspects of mind...”

“Images that are objects of activity of meditative stabilization”⁸¹ are [arisen] from mind and are not external objects. “In those”⁸² [means] just in those. “Objects that are known”⁸³ are non-dual objects. “Differentiation”⁸⁴ is understanding. “Thorough differentiation”⁸⁵ etc. [refer to] excellence in terminological enumeration.⁸⁶ “Forbearance” is just mental freedom with respect to ascertaining phenomena that are countless non-dual objects. In [the phrase,] “That is insight”,⁸⁷ “insight” [means] that because one eliminates the phenomena that are associated with specifically and generally characterized phenomena, this view is an “insight”. [The words,] “in that way...”⁸⁸ mean that when Bodhisattvas are just like this, it is definite that ‘they are skilled in insight, and otherwise they are not.’

After having settled the attainment of calming and insight, in order to about the method of attaining it, [Maitreya] asks, “Bhagavan, [321a] prior to...that Bodhisattva...”⁸⁹

[The passage,] “...that is observing the mind”⁹⁰ refers to “observing signs”. “Internal”⁹¹ [refers to] taking to mind what is not an external object. Prior to attaining physical and mental pliancy, one is at the level of practice.

[When Maitreya] asks, “What is that mental contemplation called”, [Buddha] answers, “It is not calming.”⁹² It is said to be belief that is concordant with calming and to be a similitude [of calming] because it is a means of attaining calming.

⁸⁰In other words, the term “mind” is merely a conventional designation, and there is no essence or entity of mind. The designation “mind” is given to a constantly changing series of mental events, but mind is actually empty of inherent existence, and so is said to be of the nature of clear light.

⁸¹D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.5.

⁸²D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.5.

⁸³D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.6.

⁸⁴D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.6.

⁸⁵D p. 52.4; Stog p. 74.7.

⁸⁶Yeshe Thabkhe says this means that the mind becomes more skilled in understanding differentiations of phenomena.

⁸⁷D p. 52.5; Stog p. 74.7.

⁸⁸D p. 52.5; Stog p. 75.1.

⁸⁹D p. 52.5; Stog p. 75.1.

⁹⁰D p. 52.6; Stog p. 75.1.

⁹¹D p. 52.6; Stog p. 75.1.

⁹²D p. 52.6; Stog p. 75.2.

In [the passage,] “Bhagavan, at what point do Bodhisattvas...”,⁹³ [Maitreya] says, “prior to attaining physical and mental pliancy,” because “body and mind have not become serviceable”.

[Maitreya] asks, “When [a Bodhisattva] is doing internal mental contemplation with respect to the images that are objects of activity of meditative stabilizations, in accordance with how those phenomena are contemplated...”,⁹⁴ because this is not the completion of preparation. When [Maitreya] asks, “What is that mental contemplation,” [Buddha] answers, “It is not insight,”⁹⁵ because it is a means of attaining insight. You should know that prior to this there are many ways in which one ascertains designations [of doctrines] by way of not forgetting [Buddha’s instructions].

Ascertainment of designations [of doctrines] due to not forgetting meditative stabilizations that are based on non-conceptual exalted wisdom [is the focus of Maitreya’s question,] “Bhagavan, are the path of calming and the path of insight different or not different?”⁹⁶ [Buddha] answers, “Why are these two not different? Because [insight] observes the mind that is the object of observation [of calming]....”⁹⁷ The path of calming is not different from the path of insight, because insight observes the mind that is the object of observation [of calming]. With respect to the path of calming: since insight observes just the mind that is its object of observation, both the object of observation and the observer are just not different, because they are of the nature of mind. [The rhetorical question and answer —] “Why are they not non-different...”⁹⁸ — indicates that they are simply not non-different. Therefore, [Buddha] says, “Because [insight] observes an analytical image.”⁹⁹ [321b]

The path of calming and the path of insight are different, because that [i.e., insight] observes analytical signs and analytical images in that way.¹⁰⁰ The statement

⁹³D p. 52.6; Stog p. 75.1.

⁹⁴D p. 52.7; Stog p. 75.3.

⁹⁵D p. 53.1; Stog p. 75.3.

⁹⁶D p. 53.1; Stog p. 75.5.

⁹⁷D p. 53.2; Stog p. 75.6.

⁹⁸D p. 53.2; Stog p. 75.6.

⁹⁹D p. 53.3; Stog p. 75.7.

¹⁰⁰This passage (*‘di ltar de ni rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa mtshan ma dang bcas pa’i gzugs brnyan la dmigs pa’i phyir ro*) is translated in accordance with Yeshe Thabkhe’s oral explanation, in which he glosses *dang bcas ba* as meaning *yod pa*, to have.

that those two are of the nature of mind indicates that they are just one; and because [one is] conceptual and [the other is] non-conceptual, [Buddha] states that “they are just different”.¹⁰¹ With respect to non-conceptual exalted wisdom’s not losing understanding, [Maitreya] says, “Bhagavan, is that image that is the object of activity of meditative stabilization which is a viewing consciousness different from the mind or not different?”¹⁰² This asks, ‘Are those two — the mind that is an observer and the observed object, the image that is the object of activity of meditative stabilizations — different or non-different,’ and [Buddha] answers, “they are not different”.¹⁰³

By way of indicating the reason [that answers] the question, “why”, [Buddha] says, “Because that image is simply cognition-only.”¹⁰⁴

This indicates that mind appears as an object of observation that is like an image; [and so Buddha] teaches, ‘It is not different from mind.’ In order to indicate the reason, [Buddha] says, “I explain that consciousness is distinguished by [the fact that its] object of observation is cognition-only (*rnam par rig pa tsam, vijñapti-mātra*).”¹⁰⁵ An object of observation is an appearance of mind in the aspect of an object and, moreover, it is not different from cognition because it is observed simultaneously.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹This appears to refer to D p. 53.2 and Stog p. 75.6.

¹⁰²D p. 53.3; Stog p. 75.7.

¹⁰³D p. 53.4; Stog p. 76.1.

¹⁰⁴D p. 53.4; Stog p. 76.1.

¹⁰⁵D p. 53.4; Stog p. 76.2.

¹⁰⁶This statement accords with the statement in chapter five of the sūtra that an eye consciousness arises “engaged with, in one instant with, and in the same range as” a mental impression of it. This is significant in that it indicates that there are at least two places in the text that can be read as propounding similar statements about the relation of the mind and its objects, statements that imply that mind and its objects are non-different. This is important because some Western scholars think that the section in the eighth chapter of the *Samdhinirmocana* that discusses the doctrine of cognition-only is a later interpolation, but the plausible link between this section and chapter five suggests that this doctrine is integral to the thought of at least two parts of the text, thus calling into question the idea that this is a later interpolation.

In an oral commentary on this passage, Yeshe Thabkhe expressed the same idea, saying that if the appearance of an object and its cognition by the mind are simultaneous, then mind and its objects must be of the same entity (*ngo bo gcig*), since if they were different substantial entities there would have to be a temporal succession.

[**Objection:** The passage —] “If that image which is the object of activity of meditative stabilization...”¹⁰⁷ — offers a basis of opportunity for dispute because, if the signs that are realized are agents and the images that are investigated are actions, then how could those two be suitable to be non-different, since in the world agents and actions appear differently?

[**Reply:**] Because they are established as being just non-different in reality, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, with respect to that...”¹⁰⁸ “No” indicates an agent, and “any” indicates an action.¹⁰⁹ Because just one phenomenon is not also several, [322a] if realizers, analyzers, and actions were real — since individual subtle particles do not appear among minds and mental factors — then conventionalities that are agents and actions would also not exist. This is so because of their being conventionalities [that appear] among compounded phenomena,¹¹⁰ their having relations, and their being powerless. Moreover, if some autonomous (*rang dbang can*) things were non-existent, then due to exaggerated adherence to an agent, deeds would just be doers, because an agent would not be suitable. Agents, actions, and deeds would also not be suitable.

Objection: How could the mind that cognizes the aspects of apprehending subject and apprehended object appear?

Reply: [Buddha] says, “The mind that is generated that way appears as such.”¹¹¹ This indicates that ‘such cognitions — which arise from seeds of cognition that from beginningless time are infused with the predispositions for designating apprehending subjects and apprehended objects — appear in the aspects of apprehending subjects and apprehended objects.’ In order to clarify the meaning, [Buddha] teaches the example [of a mirror,] “It is like this: for example....”¹¹² This indicates that ‘an image in a round mirror does not arise [as a real substantial entity]. But

¹⁰⁷D p. 53.4; Stog p. 76.2.

¹⁰⁸D p. 53.5; Stog p. 76.3.

¹⁰⁹D p. 53.5; Stog p. 76.3.

¹¹⁰I have translated this in accordance with the most probable meaning. The passage reads: ‘*dus pa dag la yang kun rdzob yin pa’i phyir*. I assume that ‘*dus pa* refers to ‘*dus byas*, compounded phenomena.

¹¹¹D p. 53.5; Stog p. 76.4.

¹¹²D p. 53.6; Stog p. 76.4.

form itself produces the mistaken image. Therefore, the mind thinks, "I see an image."

[**Qualm:**] With respect to that, there are also proponents [of truly existent external objects] who say, ['You assert that] in dependence upon a basis — a round mirror — and a sign — a form — an image that is just like a substantial entity arises. If all of those bases were non-existent, then how could this example be suitable?'

[**Response:**] In response to them, [Buddha] says, 'Because objects that are different from cognitions of aspects of forms and images do not exist.' If you ask, 'How can objects not exist,' [Buddha replies,] 'Because although objects do not exist, production of cognitions appears.' Although objects in the past, in the future, and in dreams and so forth do not exist, productions of cognitions of those appear as such [i.e., as existent].

Moreover, because one observes different cognitions through the power of believing in concordance of objects,¹¹³ [322b] just mind definitely appears as an image. As an example: with respect to one phenomenon — a river and so forth — animals perceive it in the form of an abode. Hungry ghosts (*yi dags, preta*) perceive it in the form of pus, etc. People similarly perceive it in the form of water; and gods similarly perceive it as a place having a nature of *vaiḍūrya*.¹¹⁴ [The phrase,] "Likewise..."¹¹⁵ [indicates] that, just as the two — form and an image — are not different but appear to be different, likewise — because they appear simultaneously with their ascertainment — one ascertains that 'the two, objects of observation and observers, are determined to be just non-different.'

In [the passage —] "Bhagavan, [are the forms and so forth] of sentient beings..."¹¹⁶ — [the phrase,] "forms and so forth" [refers to] substantial entities like

¹¹³In other words, the reason for the fact that we tend to perceive similar objects is that we expect to do so: our minds create realities that make sense and that accord with our expectations. Just as in dreams we create images and rules that accord with the logic of dreams, so in waking life we create images and events that accord with the logic of waking "reality".

¹¹⁴According to Chandra Das (*A Tibetan-English Dictionary*; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970, p. 877), *vaiḍūrya* can refer to three different types of lapis-lazuli: (1) a yellow lapis-lazuli called a *mañjuri*; (2) a green lapis-lazuli called a *sugata*; and (3) a white lapis-lazuli called a *sūnya*. Wonch'uk (vol. *ti* [118], p. 107.2), quoting Ācārya Paramārtha (Slob dpon Yang dag bden pa), states that "*vaiḍūrya*" is a precious substance of blue color that does not disintegrate when burned.

¹¹⁵D p. 53.7; Stog p. 76.5.

¹¹⁶D p. 53.7; Stog p. 76.6.

blue and so forth. “Images of the mind” are [images] appearing to the mind. “Abide in the nature” [means that they] abide in its entity. “Moreover” [refers to] things that are external objects. What is not different from mind [includes] ‘actions and afflictions’ and so forth, from which consciousness [gives rise to] actions, afflictions, and even Demons (*bdud, māra*).¹¹⁷

Because those actions¹¹⁸ do not operate differently, one also apprehends them as being threefold due to the differentiations of virtuous, non-virtuous, and neutral¹¹⁹ phenomena. With respect to that, [if one asks,] ‘Are virtuous actions and afflictions [different from mind] or [not,] Buddha’s response is, “Maitreya, they are not different.”’

Qualm: Why do they appear to be different?

[**Response:** Buddha] says, “With respect to those images, because childish beings with distorted awareness do not know cognition-only just as it is in reality, they consider [them] wrongly.”¹²⁰ This indicates that those childish beings — not perceiving reality just as it is, corrupted by faulty vision — ‘perceive non-existent external objects as existing in that way’.

In answer to [Maitreya’s] question — “At what point do Bodhisattvas solely cultivate insight?” — [Buddha] says, “At the time of continuous mental contemplation”.¹²¹ Regarding uninterrupted mind: ‘interrupted’ [means] obstructed, and ‘not obstructed’ [means] uninterrupted. [323a] This is the meaning of ‘focusing on the object of observation’.

With respect to [the question,] “At what point [do Bodhisattvas cultivate] the two, calming and insight?”¹²² Insight is simply mental one-pointedness with respect to the object of observation. Calming is simply internal mental one-pointedness.

By way of asking about the signs of mind, [Maitreya] says, “What are the signs of mind?”¹²³ [Buddha] answers with the statement, “Maitreya, objects of ob-

¹¹⁷This whole paragraph is omitted in the Peking text, p. 198.4.

¹¹⁸Text correction: Sde dge reads: *lam*; Peking p. 198.4 reads: *las*.

¹¹⁹Literally: non-fluctuating, *mi g.yo ba*.

¹²⁰D p. 54.1; Stog p. 76.7.

¹²¹D p. 54.2; Stog p. 77.1.

¹²²D p. 54.3; Stog p. 77.3.

¹²³D p. 54.4; Stog p. 77.4.

servation of insight...."¹²⁴ Whatever is an object of observation of insight — a mental image that is a conceptual object of activity of meditative stabilizations — is a sign of mind, because [mind] apprehends different types of signs.

In answer to the question, "What is an uninterrupted mind,"¹²⁵ [Buddha] says, "Maitreya, it is the object of observation of calming...." Whatever internally focuses on an object of observation of calming that observes an image is an "uninterrupted mind", because this includes all internal objects of observation.

In answer to the question, "What is mental one-pointedness," [Buddha] says, "that image which is the object of activity of meditative stabilizations...."¹²⁶ This indicates that whatever phenomena appear in the aspect of mental images to meditative stabilizations are not different from mind, because their inherent existence is not established. Therefore, in [the passage,] "this...is cognition-only",¹²⁷ [Buddha] indicates that this is 'realization of the reality-limit' (*yang dag pa'i mtha'*, *bhūta-koṭi*). "Realization" [refers to] individual knowledge.

In [the phrase,] "Having realized that, it is also mental contemplation in that way",¹²⁸ "realized that" [means] that one has realized that it is just cognition-only. After having realized that, realization of suchness is the establishment of mental one-pointedness, because cognition-only has eliminated [false adherence to] aspects. This is because the suchness of mind abides in just its own sphere.

The question concerning the divisions of insight asks, "Bhagavan, how many kinds of insight are there?"¹²⁹ In answer to the question, [Buddha] says, "There are three kinds." [323b] With respect to the [unspoken] thought, 'What are the three,' [Buddha] says, "(1) that arisen from signs (*mtshan ma las byung ba, nimitta-mayī*); (2) that arisen from searching (*yongs su tshol ba las byung ba, paryeṣaṇā-mayī*); and (3) that arisen from individual investigation (*so sor rtog pa las byung ba, pratyavekṣaṇā-mayī*)".¹³⁰ That arisen from signs is arisen from hearing. That arisen

¹²⁴D p. 54.4; Stog p. 77.4.

¹²⁵D p. 54.4: *bar chad ma mchis pa'i sems*; Stog p. 77.5: *de ma thag pa'i sems*.

¹²⁶D p. 54.5; Stog p. 77.6.

¹²⁷D p. 54.5; Stog p. 77.6.

¹²⁸D p. 54.5; Stog p. 77.7.

¹²⁹D p. 54.6; Stog p. 77.7.

¹³⁰D p. 54.6; Stog's translation (p. 78.1) of these terms is different, in that *las byung ba* is omitted: *mtshan ma can dang / kun tu tshol ba dang / so sor rtog pa'o*.

from searching is arisen from thinking. That arisen from individual analysis is arisen from meditation.¹³¹

Moreover, four purities are explained: (1) purity of object of observation; (2) purity of actions;¹³² (3) purity of non-defilement;¹³³ and (4) natural purity. From among those, differentiation in accordance with purity of object of observation is [insight] arisen from signs. Differentiation in accordance with purity of actions is [insight] arisen from searching. Differentiation in accordance with purity of non-defilement and differentiation in accordance with natural purity are [insight] arisen from individual analysis.

Moreover, whatever is engaged in the four analytical procedures — (1) analytical procedure [looking into] dependence, (2) analytical procedure [looking into] performance of functions, (3) analytical procedure [looking into] logical correctness, and (4) analytical procedure [looking into] the nature — in dependence upon what has the signs of the analytical procedure [looking into] dependence and the causes of the analytical procedure [looking into] performance of functions, is [insight] arisen from signs. Whatever is engaged in searching in accordance with the analytical procedure [looking into] logical correctness is [insight] arisen from searching. Whatever arises from individual investigation of nature (*chos nyid, dharmatā*) in accordance with the analytical procedure [looking into] the nature is [insight] arisen from individual analysis.

¹³¹This refers to an important idea in Buddhist meditation theory, that there are three stages involved in understanding doctrinal teachings. The first, wisdom arisen from hearing (*thos pa las byung ba'i shes rab, śrutamayī-prajñā*), occurs when someone hears and studies doctrines. The second, wisdom arisen from thinking (*bsams pa las byung ba'i shes rab, cintāmayī-prajñā*), occurs when one understands those doctrines through further contemplation. The third, wisdom arisen from meditation (*bsgoms pa las byung ba'i shes rab, bhāvanāmayī-prajñā*), occurs when analytical meditation and stabilizing meditation are in harmony, that is to say, when there is a union of calming and insight. These are discussed at length by Wonch'uk (vol. *thi* [119], pp. 339-347). See also: Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness* (London: Wisdom, 1983) pp. 92-94; Louis de la Vallée Poussin, tr., *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu* (Paris, 1924), ch. 6, pp. 143 and 159; and Walpola Rahula, tr., *La Compendium de la Super-Doctrine d'Asaṅga* by Walpola Rahula (Paris, 1971), p. 134. Étienne Lamotte provides a bibliography of these terms in *La Somme du Grand Véhicule d'Asaṅga* (Louvain, 1973) notes p. 7*.

¹³²Text correction: the Sde dge text (p. 323b.2) reads: *lam rnam par dag pa*; emended to *las rnam par dag pa* in accordance with the Peking text (p. 199.2.2).

¹³³Text correction: the Sde dge text reads: *dri rnam par dag pa*; emended to *dri ma med pa rnam par dag pa* on the basis of its occurrence in the next sentence as *dri ma med pa*.

In response to the question, "What is [insight] arisen from signs", [Buddha] says, "It is that insight which takes to mind just an analytical image that is the object of activity of a meditative stabilization."¹³⁴ This indicates that — with respect to phenomena such as heard objects of meditative stabilizations that are conceptual and analytical and so forth — any insight that takes to mind any image having the signs of a pure object of observation is "arisen from signs".

In response to the question, "What is [insight] arisen from searching," [Buddha] says, "With respect to this and that..."¹³⁵ [The phrase,] "with respect to this and that" [refers] to the entities of mental images.

In [the passage,] "...understood well through wisdom [just those phenomena that] were not well understood":¹³⁶ [324a] Wisdom [means] a pure path. It [operates] with respect to non-observational phenomena. "That" is said to [refer to] "phenomena". "Just those" [means] 'just mental images.' Any insight of Bodhisattvas which mentally contemplates [its object] through understanding it well is [insight] arisen from searching.

In answer to the question, "What is [insight] arisen from individual investigation," [Buddha] says, "With respect to this and that..."¹³⁷ "With respect to this and that" [means] 'with respect to differentiation by way of cognition-only.' "Through wisdom" [means] 'through supramundane wisdom.' Because — with respect to meditational phenomena that are realized well as they are ascertained — liberative objects of knowledge — purity of non-affliction and natural purity — abandon the afflictive obstructions, the mind is liberated. Thus, due to the purity of non-affliction and abandonment of the obstructions to omniscience, wisdom is liberated. Thus, that natural purity connects one with complete, perfect happiness. Thus, [Buddha] says, "That insight which takes to mind [its object] is [insight] arisen from individual investigation."

[in response] to the question, "With respect to calming, how many kinds are there," [Buddha] says, "through engagement with that uninterrupted mind..."¹³⁸

¹³⁴D p. 54.6; Stog p. 78.1.

¹³⁵D p. 54.7; Stog p. 78.2.

¹³⁶D p. 54.7; Stog p. 78.2.

¹³⁷D p. 54.7; Stog p. 78.2.

¹³⁸D p. 55.2; Stog p. 78.3.

The arising of uninterrupted insight from a mind of meditative equipoise is an “uninterrupted mind”.

[The statement —] “Moreover, it is said to be of three kinds”¹³⁹ — [refers to insight] arisen from signs, [insight] arisen from searching, and [insight] arisen from individual investigation, because these are the three kinds of insight. You should know that calming is also of three kinds. Because they are internal operations and because they are subtle factors, [Buddha] does not describe their characteristics.

[The passage,] “Alternatively, there are eight kinds of calming...”¹⁴⁰ indicates a division. Because there is an eightfold division that subsumes the divisions of the [four] concentrations and the [four] formless absorptions, calming is also explained as being of eight types. [Buddha says,] “Alternatively, there are four kinds [of calming]”¹⁴¹ because immeasurable love, [immeasurable] compassion, [immeasurable] joy, [324b] and immeasurable equanimity are internal mental operations. Because they are entities that pacify agitated minds — such as harmful intent and so forth — they are explained as being calming.

Also — by way of asking about the division of the two, calming and insight that dwell on doctrines and that do not dwell on doctrines — [Maitreya] says, “Bhagavan, when you say, ‘calming and insight that dwell on doctrines....’”¹⁴² In [Buddha’s answer —] “due to engagement with the signs of doctrines as sūtra collections etc.¹⁴³ are apprehended and contemplated” — “signs of doctrines” (*chos kyi mtshan ma*, *dharma-nimitta*) [refers to] words, letters, and so forth. “Meanings” are reasons (*rgyu mtshan*, *hetu*) that are meanings. This indicates that calming and insight — [focusing] on meanings after having focused on the signs of doctrines of sūtra collections etc. that are apprehended and contemplated — abide in doctrines. Thus, [Buddha] teaches that ‘they are interested in doctrines due to focusing on meanings’. “Without relying on doctrines that are apprehended and contemplated...”¹⁴⁴ [means] ‘not apprehending doctrines such as sūtra collections and so

¹³⁹D p. 55.2; Stog p. 78.3.

¹⁴⁰D p. 55.2; Stog p. 78.4.

¹⁴¹D p. 55.3; Stog p. 78.6.

¹⁴²D p. 55.4; Stog p. 78.7.

¹⁴³The Sde dge text reads: *mdo'i sde la sogs pa*. This is not found in D, Stog, or any other Tibetan text of the sūtra.

¹⁴⁴D p. 55.5; Stog p. 79.1.

forth.' "From others"¹⁴⁵ [means] from other causes, not by the power of one's own causes. In [the phrase,] "instructions and teachings": speech that is understood is instruction.

Objection: Hearing [doctrines] from others is also just [calming and insight] that abide in doctrines, because of being engagement with doctrines propounded by others.

[Response:] This is not engagement through the power of apprehending doctrines such as sūtra collections etc., but it is engagement due to the cause of faith in others, because doctrines are not ascertained. Therefore, it is not [calming and insight] that dwell on doctrines.

[The words —] "It is like this: [calming and insight focusing on] discolored corpses or..."¹⁴⁶ — [indicate that] they do not receive instructions from others due to faith, because calming and insight that meditate on ugliness and so forth focus on them through exertion. Therefore, this is not [calming and insight] that dwell on doctrines.

[The passage —] "Maitreya, with respect to that..."¹⁴⁷ — indicates that Bodhisattvas of sharp faculties, who relate to doctrines in accordance with how they have heard and apprehended them, [325a] cultivate the arising of calming and insight that dwell on doctrines through the power of their own minds. Therefore, [Buddha] teaches that they are 'non-reversible'.¹⁴⁸

[The phrase,] "In dependence upon [calming and insight] that do not dwell on doctrines..."¹⁴⁹ indicates that Bodhisattvas who initially are not able to hear and apprehend doctrines — such as sūtra collections etc. — and who relate to [doctrines] through faith because of others [teaching them] are of dull faculties. Therefore, because they are suitable to be motivated by others, [Buddha] teaches, 'I do not designate [these Bodhisattvas as being of sharp faculties]'.

By way of asking about the division of [calming and insight] which observe doctrines that are unmixed and which observe doctrines that are mixed, [Maitreya]

¹⁴⁵D p. 55.5; Stog p. 79.2.

¹⁴⁶D p. 55.5; Stog p. 79.2.

¹⁴⁷D p. 55.7; Stog p. 79.4.

¹⁴⁸This term (*phyir mi ldog pa, avaivartika*) may also mean that they are "not in conflict with" or "not turned away from" a correct understanding of doctrine.

¹⁴⁹D p. 55.7; Stog p. 79.5.

says, “Bhagavan, [what are] calming and insight that observe doctrines that are unmixed...”¹⁵⁰ [The phrase —] “doctrines in accordance with how they have apprehended and considered them”¹⁵¹ — indicates that cultivation — of calming and insight with respect to those doctrines of sūtra collections etc. that are apprehended and considered in terms of the aspects of emptiness and so forth — are “calming and insight which observe doctrines that are unmixed.”

[The phrase, “calming and insight] that observe each of the individual doctrines of sūtra collections etc.”¹⁵² refers to [calming and insight] that observe [their objects] within dwelling on different doctrines of sūtra collections etc. In [the phrase,] “If...doctrines of sūtra collections etc.”, “all of these doctrines” [refers to] those sūtra collections etc. that were indicated previously.

[The phrase,] “flow into suchness”¹⁵³ [means that] they are inclined toward suchness. [The phrase,] “descend into suchness”¹⁵⁴ [means that] they are mainly concerned with suchness. [The phrase,] “have descended into suchness”¹⁵⁵ means that they ‘have gone into suchness’. This indicates that all of those phenomena [i.e., enlightenment, nirvāṇa, and transformation of the basis] ‘are of one taste with suchness’. “Suchness” refers to the naturally pure realm of truth.

In [the passage,] “flow into enlightenment...”,¹⁵⁶ ‘enlightenment’ [refers to] supramundane conceptual exalted wisdom. In [the phrase,] “flow into transformation of the basis” (*gnas gyur, āśraya-parāvṛtti*),¹⁵⁷ basis [refers to] the qualities of a Buddha; [transformation occurs] through the power of the [ten] levels (*sa, bhūmi*) and the [ten] perfections (*pha rol tu phyin pa, pāramitā*). [325b] “Transformation of the basis” [refers to] the truth body.

In [the phrase] — “All these doctrines of sūtra collections etc...virtuous doctrines...”¹⁵⁸ — “virtuous doctrines” [means that] they are ultimately virtuous, because the point at which one understands that their nature is of the nature of nirvāṇa,

¹⁵⁰D p. 56.1; Stog p. 79.6.

¹⁵¹D p. 56.2; Stog p. 80.1.

¹⁵²D p. 56.2; Stog p. 80.1.

¹⁵³D p. 56.3; Stog p. 80.3.

¹⁵⁴D p. 56.3; Stog p. 80.3.

¹⁵⁵D p. 56.3; Stog p. 80.3.

¹⁵⁶D p. 56.4; Stog p. 80.3.

¹⁵⁷D p. 56.4; Stog p. 80.4.

¹⁵⁸D p. 56.5; Stog p. 80.5.

and that their nature is virtuous because they are of the nature of the path is the point at which one [understands] scripture. "Innumerable" [means] measureless.

The uncontaminated realm of truth [is such] because of being unrestricted. [The virtuous doctrines] are "measureless" because of their innumerability. This is because they completely transcend enumeration. "Expressed through the manifest expression" [means that] such uncontaminated doctrines are expressed through manifest expression.

[The phrase,] "that...is calming and insight which observe doctrines that are mixed"¹⁵⁹ [refers to] calming and insight that observe collected doctrines.

By way of asking about the divisions of [calming and insight] which observe doctrines that are a little mixed, very mixed, and immeasurably mixed, [Maitreya] says, "Bhagavan, [when you designate] calming and insight which observe doctrines that are a little mixed..."¹⁶⁰

[Buddha's response,] "Maitreya, beginning with sūtra collections..."¹⁶¹ answers this [question]. After one has lumped together into one the beginning, middle, and end of what one has apprehended of any doctrines of sūtra collections etc., calming and insight that mentally contemplate [those doctrines] are to be known as being "[calming and insight] which observe doctrines that are a little mixed". [Buddha] states this 'because they do not observe all doctrines'.

[The phrase —] "as many sūtra collections etc. as one has apprehended"¹⁶² — indicates that after one has lumped into one each and every [doctrine] of those sūtra collections etc., that mental contemplation is to be known as being calming and insight observing doctrines that are very mixed, 'because they observe all the doctrines of sūtra collections etc.'.

[Buddha's] teaching — "the teachings of doctrines of the Tathāgatas are numberless..."¹⁶³ — indicates that, because the teachings of the Tathāgatas refer to all objects of observation, [326a] they completely gladden the thoughts of all beings who are trainees everywhere and at all times; thus, they are "measureless in their in-

¹⁵⁹D p. 56.5; Stog p. 80.6.

¹⁶⁰D p. 56.5; Stog p. 80.6.

¹⁶¹D p. 56.7; Stog p. 81.1.

¹⁶²D p. 57.1; Stog p. 81.3.

¹⁶³D p. 57.2; Stog p. 81.4.

crease". The measureless words and letters of doctrines and the measureless progress of wisdom and inspiration are like this.

[The phrase,] "lumped into one"¹⁶⁴ means that — due to the non-observability of the reality of doctrines — calming and insight that treat them as being of one taste are known to be "[calming and insight] which observe doctrines that are immeasurably mixed."

[Maitreya's question] — "Bhagavan, at what point do Bodhisattvas [attain calming and insight which observe doctrines that are mixed]"¹⁶⁵ — is a question about the cause of attainment of that. [Buddha's answer —] "Maitreya, you should know that they attain them through five causes..." — indicates the cause of attainment.

In [the passage] — "When mentally contemplating, they destroy all of the bases of the assumptions of bad states (*gnas ngan len gyi 'ching ba, dauṣṭulya-bandhana*) in each moment" — assumptions of bad states are of two kinds: (1) assumptions of bad states that are afflictions such as desire and so forth; and (2) assumptions of bad states that are afflictions such as [wrong] views and so forth. The basis of those is the basis-consciousness. Because calming and insight which observe doctrines that are mixed are antidotes to these two assumptions of bad states, they serve to destroy the bases of these. They get rid of various conceptions.

With respect to [the phrase,] "attain joy in the joyousness of doctrine":¹⁶⁶ Because one is separated from the defilements of assumptions of bad states, due to physical and mental pliancy one attains joy in the joyousness of doctrines that are separated from various [wrong] discriminations. "They understand well that the appearances of doctrines are measureless in the ten directions and that their aspects are not limited..." because they ascertain measureless doctrines well.

With respect to [the passage,] "The non-imaginary signs that are partially concordant with purification — these being endowed with accomplishment of the purpose — arise in them":¹⁶⁷ this is because they purify the view [that mistakenly sees] the aspects of [a self of] persons and of phenomena. Because an exalted knowledge of all aspects is a cause of accomplishing the aims of oneself and others, it is an

¹⁶⁴D p. 57.2; Stog p. 81.3.

¹⁶⁵D p. 57.3; Stog p. 81.5.

¹⁶⁶D p. 57.4; Stog p. 81.7.

¹⁶⁷D p. 57.5; Stog p. 82.1.

'accomplishment of the purpose'. [326b] When one understands a portion of that, the non-imaginary aspects of signs that are concordant with that arise due to one's faith.

In [the passage,] "For the sake of attaining, perfecting, and completing the truth body, they grasp the causes of increasing goodness, the greatest auspiciousness":¹⁶⁸ on the first level, one realizes the truth body. On the third level one attains it. On the tenth level one completes it. On the Tathāgata level, one perfects it because one brings it to completion. With respect to [the term] "cause": Through cultivating the [ten] levels and the [ten] perfections one definitely emerges [from cyclic existence].

[The phrase,] "increasing goodness, the greatest auspiciousness"¹⁶⁹ [means that] through realizing [the truth body] one attains it; through attaining it one completes it; through completing it one increasingly perfects it; through greater auspiciousness one becomes very auspicious.

Also, by way of asking about the divisions of these two, [Maitreya] says, "Bhagavan, on what level..."¹⁷⁰ In [Maitreya's next question, the phrase,] "meditative stabilizations that are conceptual and [merely] analytical"¹⁷¹ [means] that just coarse mind is conceptual. Just the fourth is analytical.

In [the passage —] "In accordance with how they are apprehended and..."¹⁷² — [the phrase,] "the signs of those" indicates that 'calming and insight — which observe the signs of doctrines of sūtra collections etc. in accordance with how they are apprehended, investigated, and analyzed, which are analytical in the sense of experiencing clear and coarse [signs,] — are meditative stabilizations that are conceptual and analytical.'

In [the phrase,] "signs of those",¹⁷³ "those" [refers to] the signs of doctrines of sūtra collections etc. that are apprehended in accordance with how [Bodhisattvas] have apprehended, investigated, and analyzed them. With respect to that, because this [apprehension] is non-conceptual, it is a signless [apprehension] that is clear and

¹⁶⁸D p. 57.5; Stog p. 82.2 reads: "For the sake of completing and accomplishing the truth body, they grasp the causes of increasing goodness, the greatest auspiciousness."

¹⁶⁹D p. 57.5; Stog p. 82.2.

¹⁷⁰D p. 57.7; Stog p. 82.5.

¹⁷¹D p. 58.1; Stog p. 82.5.

¹⁷²D p. 58.1; Stog p. 82.6.

¹⁷³D p. 58.2; Stog p. 83.1.

coarse. This indicates that ‘analytical calming and insight — which experience the subtle in the sense of merely following that which appears — are non-conceptual and merely analytical meditative stabilizations.’¹⁷⁴

In [the passage,] “...in all respects with regard to the signs of those...”,¹⁷⁵ “they experience doctrines spontaneously in all respects with regard to the signs of those” [327a] because they unify the continuum of the mind, because conceptuality and analysis are pacified, and because they have mental engagement that experiences doctrines spontaneously without apprehending the signs of doctrines of sūtra collections etc. Thus, [Buddha] teaches that ‘such calming and insight are non-conceptual and non-analytical meditative stabilizations.’

[The phrase,] “Moreover, [calming and insight] arisen from searching...”¹⁷⁶ indicates that ‘on the level of conceptuality and analysis, calming and insight — arisen from searching with respect to doctrines that are conventional and ultimate truths — are conceptual and analytical meditative stabilizations.’ “[Calming and insight] arisen from individual analysis are non-conceptual and merely analytical meditative stabilizations”¹⁷⁷ because of analyzing individually and in detail the doctrines of sūtra collections etc. “Calming and insight which observe doctrines that are mixed are non-conceptual, non-analytical meditative stabilizations”¹⁷⁸ because all doctrines are of one taste in terms of their suchness. Thus [calming and insight] engage them spontaneously.

[Maitreya’s question —] “Bhagavan, what is the cause of calming?”¹⁷⁹ — asks about the cause of apprehending calming and insight and about the cause of equanimity. In [Buddha’s answer —] “Maitreya, when the mind is excited or...”¹⁸⁰ — “excited” [means] not pacified. [The phrase,] “qualms that it will be excited” [refers to] scattered thoughts. [The phrase,] “phenomena that are concordant with

¹⁷⁴The translation of this phrase follows the Peking text, p. 201.1.1: *de snang ba’ o la spyir dren pa tsam phra mo myong ba’ i rjes su dpyod pa’ i zhi gnas dang lhag mthong gang yin pa de ni rtog pa med cing dpyod pa tsam gyi ting nge ’dzin yin no zhes ston to*; Sde dge reads: *de snang ba’ o la phyir dran pa tsam phra mo myong ba’ i rjes su dpyod pa’ i zhi gnas dang lhag mthong gang yin pa de ni rtogs pa med cing dpyod pa tsam gyi ting nge ’dzin yin no zhes ston to*.

¹⁷⁵D p. 58.3; Stog p. 83.2.

¹⁷⁶D p. 58.4; Stog p. 83.3.

¹⁷⁷D p. 58.4; Stog p. 83.4.

¹⁷⁸D p. 58.5; Stog p. 83.4.

¹⁷⁹D p. 58.5; Stog p. 83.5.

¹⁸⁰D p. 58.6; Stog p. 83.5.

sobering phenomena" [refers to] the aspects of [true] sufferings and [true] sources. [The term] "uninterrupted mind"¹⁸¹ [means] that the mind does not observe mental objects.

In [the passage] — "Maitreya, [when] the mind becomes lax or..."¹⁸² — "mental laxity" [means that the mind] degenerates due to lethargy and sleep. [The phrase,] "suspects that it will become lax" indicates what is concordant with laxity. "Pleasing phenomena" are the aspects of [true] cessations and [true] paths. [The phrase,] "signs of the mind" refers to 'the signs of a mind that observes pleasing phenomena'. [327b]

After having explained the causes of calming and the causes of apprehending [it,] by way of [the passage —] "Maitreya, when a path that is singly dedicated to insight, or is singly dedicated to insight, or even one that is a union of those two..."¹⁸³ — [Buddha] indicates the cause of equanimity. [The phrase,] "not afflicted by the secondary afflictions that are those two" indicates the differences between those three kinds of paths. When the mind spontaneously engages in a path that is not defiled by excitement, contrition, lethargy, or sleep, that spontaneous mental contemplation is said to be "the cause of equanimity".

[Maitreya's] question — "Bhagavan, when Bodhisattvas cultivating calming and insight know doctrine and know the meaning, in what way do they know doctrine? In what way do they know the meaning?"¹⁸⁴ — asks about the division of the natures of doctrines and meanings. Doctrine is the basis, and meaning is [not]¹⁸⁵ the basis. Therefore, [Buddha's answer] — "Maitreya, they know doctrine by way of five aspects..."¹⁸⁶ — initially indicates the division of transformational doctrines.

¹⁸¹Sde dge and Lamotte's citation of this passage read: *bar chad med pa'i sems*. Stog, however, reads: "immediately preceding mind" *sems kyi de ma thag pa*. The explanation in the commentary indicates that Jñānagarbha would favor Sde dge and Lamotte's reading of "uninterrupted mind". The probable Sanskrit equivalents of *bar chad med pa* and *de ma thag pa* are close (*anantara* and *anantarya*), and so Stog's reading may have been a mistake on the part of its translators, or perhaps they saw the two terms as being equivalent.

¹⁸²D p. 58.7; Stog p. 83.6.

¹⁸³D p. 58.7; Stog p. 84.1.

¹⁸⁴D p. 59.1; Stog p. 84.2.

¹⁸⁵The negative particle *ma* is not found in the Sde dge text, p. 327b.4, but is found in the Peking text, p. 201.3..3. Yeshe Thabkhe indicates that the Peking reading is the more probable one.

¹⁸⁶D p. 59.2; Stog p. 84.3.

Alternatively, with respect to the nature of doctrine, there are two kinds: (1) doctrines that are explained and (2) doctrines that are realized. Because doctrines that are explained are the foundation of doctrines that are realized, and because doctrines that are explained also are of the nature of names, words, specifics, and collections, [Buddha] teaches, “words and...”¹⁸⁷

In [the passage —] “What are names? They are what are designated to afflicted and purified phenomena as actual and specific names”¹⁸⁸ — ‘afflicted phenomena’ are desire and so forth. Purified phenomena are faith and so forth. With respect to those, ‘desire’ and ‘faith’ are actual nominal designations. [The expressions —] ‘Desire also should be known’, or ‘[Desire] should be abandoned’ — are specific nominal designations. [328a] Similarly, [the expressions —] ‘Faith should be cultivated’, or ‘[Faith should be cultivated] many times’ — are specific nominal designations. That is [the aspect of] names.

With respect to [the passage,] “What are words? They are bases and supports that reside in and depend upon collections of just these names for the sake of imputing conventions with regard to objects that are afflicted and purified”:¹⁸⁹ [the statement —] ‘Attachment to the Desire [Realm,] the Form [Realm,] and the Formless [Realm] are to be abandoned’ — is a collection of names. Collections of names of purified phenomena are similarly indicated. [The statement,] ‘Faith in the connection between the actions and results of non-sentient beings is virtuous’ is like this.

[The passage] — “What are letters? They are the letters that are the bases of these two”¹⁹⁰ — means that particles that are letters are the bases of names and words.

[The passage —] “What is individual knowledge? It is individual knowledge due to mental contemplation that observes unmixed [doctrines]”¹⁹¹ — indicates that

¹⁸⁷D p. 59.3; Stog p. 84.4.

¹⁸⁸D p. 59.3; Stog p. 84.4 reads: “What are names? They are what are designated as actual names to afflicted and purified phenomena.”

¹⁸⁹D p. 59.3; Stog p. 84.5 reads: “What are words? They are what reside in and depend upon collections of just these names for the sake of imputing conventions with regard to affliction and purification.”

¹⁹⁰D p. 59.4; Stog p. 84.6.

¹⁹¹D p. 59.4; Stog p. 84.6 reads: “What is knowledge in the aspect of individuality? It is knowledge due to mental contemplation that observes unmixed [doctrines].”

words of doctrines of excellent sūtra collections etc., which are arrangements of names, words, and letters, are apprehended individually.

[The passage —] “What is individual knowledge by way of collections? It is individual knowledge due to mental contemplation that observes mixed [doctrines]”¹⁹² — indicates that after one has unified those collections of doctrines of sūtra collections etc., they are apprehended.

After having explained how Bodhisattvas who cultivate calming and insight individually know doctrines, in order to indicate the aspects through which they individually know meanings, [Buddha] states in detail, “Bodhisattvas individually know objects by way of ten aspects, by: (1) their varieties...”¹⁹³

With respect to [the passage,] “Maitreya, with respect to that, these which are the final divisions, in all respects, of afflicted and purified phenomena, are the varieties”:¹⁹⁴ Among the afflicted are desire and so forth. [328b] Among the purified are faith and so forth. The enumerated aspects of those afflicted and purified phenomena are their varieties; the final divisions of their aspects are their modes.

In [the passage,] “...these are...”¹⁹⁵ [the varieties of] the aggregates include all the aggregates of afflicted and purified phenomena, which [are included] within the five aggregates.

With respect to [the passage,] “The six internal sense spheres indicate the profound; the six external sense spheres indicate enjoyments...”:¹⁹⁶ You should understand that the sense faculties (*dbang po*, *indriya*) and so forth are subsumed by the five-fold enumeration.

With respect to “the varieties”: The existence of afflicted and purified phenomena — [differentiated] in accordance with the varieties of phenomena — is [the category of] “the varieties”.

¹⁹²D p. 59.5; Stog p. 84.7 reads: “What is knowledge in the aspect of collection? It is knowledge due to mental contemplation that observes mixed [doctrines].”

¹⁹³D p. 59.6; Stog p. 85.2.

¹⁹⁴D p. 59.7; Stog p. 85.3.

¹⁹⁵D p. 60.1; Stog p. 85.4.

¹⁹⁶This passage is not found in D, Stog, or Lamotte. The passage to which this probably refers is found in D p. 60.1, Stog p. 85.5: “Moreover, these are: ‘the fivefold enumeration of the aggregates, the sixfold enumeration of the internal sense spheres, and also the sixfold enumeration of the external sense spheres’, and so forth.”

[The passage —] “Maitreya, with respect to that, the suchness of just those afflicted and purified phenomena is the way that they really exist”¹⁹⁷ — indicates that at the point where one analyzes afflicted and purified phenomena, their unmistakable [mode of] existence, just as it is, is “the way they really exist”.

[The phrase,] “Moreover, it has seven aspects”¹⁹⁸ indicates another division. In [the phrase,] “the suchness of arising”, continuous engagement in afflictions, actions, and births is ‘arising’. “Suchness” is not different from that aspect. This indicates non-mistaken nature.

[The phrase,] “the beginninglessness and endlessness of compounded phenomena”¹⁹⁹ indicates the absence of a former and later limit. With respect to [the passage —] “The suchness of character is the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena in all phenomena”:²⁰⁰ “all phenomena” are the compounded and the un-compounded. With respect to that, among individual compounded phenomena, a person does not exist within each subtle atom or among all minds and mental factors. [329a] Also, among whatever is un-compounded — space, analytical cessations, and non-analytical cessations — a person does not exist. Therefore, the character of phenomena is the non-existence of a self of persons.

“The suchness of cognition is [the fact that] compounded phenomena are cognition-only”²⁰¹ because internal and external things are distinguished by being cognition-only.

In [the passage] — “The suchness of abiding is explained by me as true sufferings”²⁰² — “abiding” [means that] selfless phenomena²⁰³ abide in time and so forth. This is because all of those are not concordant with true sufferings with respect to Superiors.

¹⁹⁷D p. 60.2; Stog p. 85.5.

¹⁹⁸D p. 60.2; Stog p. 85.6.

¹⁹⁹D p. 60.2; Stog p. 85.7.

²⁰⁰D p. 60.3; Stog p. 85.7.

²⁰¹D p. 60.3; Stog p. 85.7.

²⁰²D p. 60.3; Stog p. 86.1.

²⁰³The Tibetan reads: *bdag po med pa'i chos*; Yeshe Thabkhe equates this with *bdag med pa'i chos*.

In [the passage —] “The suchness of distorted establishment is explained by me as true sources”²⁰⁴ — distorted establishment is of the nature of delusion and so forth [which misconceive] the selfless as [having] a self; therefore, it is the cause of the sufferings of manifestation and birth.

With respect to [the passage,] “The suchness of purification is explained by me as true cessations”:²⁰⁵ Because it eliminates adventitious imputations that are impure phenomena, it is [called] purification.

With respect to [the passage,] “The suchness of correct establishment is explained by me²⁰⁶ as true paths”:²⁰⁷ Because correct establishment is the antidote to distorted establishment, it is a pure path that pacifies the delusion of a self and so forth.

[The passage,] “Maitreya, with respect to that...”²⁰⁸ indicates how these suchnesses are differentiated. [The passage,] “... the suchness of arising...” explains this in detail. Because all sentient beings increase²⁰⁹ the predispositions for the view of personal existence, [Buddha] teaches, ‘Due to the suchness of arising and so forth, [all sentient beings] are similar and equal.’

With respect to [the passage,] “Due to the suchness of character and the suchness of cognition, all phenomena are similar and equal”: This is because all phenomena have a character that is an absence of a self of persons [329b] and because they are distinguished as being cognition-only.

[The passage,] “Maitreya, with respect to that...”²¹⁰ [refers to] the three enlightenments [of Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Mahāyānists]. The suchness of purification indicates that they are similar and equal, because they are similar in terms of the natures of their cessations.

Objection: Why should they be similar, since — although a liberated Buddha works for the benefit of sentient beings by way of the characteristics of the truth body — liberated Hearers and Solitary Realizers do not.

²⁰⁴D p. 60.4; Stog p. 86.1.

²⁰⁵D p. 60.4; Stog p. 86.2.

²⁰⁶Text correction: the Sde dge text reads *las*; emended to *ngas*.

²⁰⁷D p. 60.4; Stog p. 86.2.

²⁰⁸D p. 60.5; Stog p. 86.3.

²⁰⁹The Tibetan term is *brtas pa*. According to Yeshe Thabkhe, this equals *rgyas pa* in this passage.

²¹⁰D p. 60.5; Stog p. 86.5.

[Response:] Liberated Buddhas are differentiated by the force of former vows, but liberated Hearers and so forth are not. For example: although knotted cloth and unknotted cloth are similarly placed together in a dyeing vessel, by the power of this, bright color appears in the knotted [cloth,] but not in the unknotted [cloth].

Similarly, even though they are similarly placed in the dyeing vessel of nirvāṇa, due to the power of this, the nirvāṇas of Buddhas are differentiated, but the nirvāṇas of Hearers and so forth are not. Therefore, in the similarity of their purifications they are liberated, but in terms of the truth body — which is just an uncommon sovereignty — they are not.

[The phrase] — “Maitreya, with respect to that, due to the suchness of correct establishment...”²¹¹ — indicates that wisdoms that are included within²¹² calming and insight which observe doctrines that are mixed are similar and equal, because wisdom is the antidote to all obscurations. This indicates that, due to the suchness of correct establishment, the way that things really exist is “similar and equal” [in all things].

In the context of [discussing] objects that are apprehenders, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, with respect to that, objects that are apprehenders are the following phenomena: (1) the five physical sense spheres....”²¹³ [Buddha says that] because the five physical [sense spheres] are the five: eyes and so forth. These are included within the aggregate of form.

Phenomena that are: mind, sentience, consciousness, and mental factors [330a] are also just [discussed] in the context of objects that are apprehenders. This is because mind [refers to] the basis-consciousness. Sentience (*yid*, *manas*) [refers to] afflicted [sentience] (*nyon mongs pa can* [*gyi yid*], *kliṣṭa*[-*manas*]). Consciousness [refers to] the six operating consciousnesses. Mental factors are feeling and so forth [i.e., the fifty-one mental factors].²¹⁴ These are apprehenders because they are of a type that has objects of observation.

After having explained objects that are apprehenders, in the context of [discussing] objects that are apprehended, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, with respect

²¹¹D p. 60.7; Stog p. 86.6.

²¹²See p. 329a.3.

²¹³D p. 61.1; Stog p. 86.7.

²¹⁴For a list of the fifty-one mental factors, see: Elizabeth Napper and Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (Valois, New York: Snow Lion, 1980), pp. 35-39.

to that, objects that are apprehended are...."²¹⁵ The 'six external sense spheres' — forms, sounds, scents, tastes, tangible objects, and phenomena — are apprehended.

In order to indicate that all phenomena are apprehended objects of mental consciousnesses, [Buddha] says, "Moreover, Maitreya, objects that are apprehenders are also objects that are apprehended."²¹⁶

After having discussed objects that are apprehended, in order to explain objects that are abodes, [Buddha] extensively teaches, "Maitreya, with respect to that, objects that are abodes are...."²¹⁷ [The passage,] "one village, or 100 villages..." refers to immeasurable worldly realms.

After having discussed objects that are abodes, in order to explain objects that are resources, [Buddha] says, "Maitreya, with respect to that, objects that are resources...."²¹⁸ [The phrase,] "...due to being an object of enjoyment..." [means] due to being an [object of] enjoyment — such as an object of veneration etc. — of men and women. "Property" [refers to] clothing etc., because Bodhisattvas must differentiate everything through correct reasonings.

After the explanation of objects that are enjoyments, in order to explain mistaken objects, [Buddha] says, "Maitreya, with respect to that, mistaken objects are...."²¹⁹ [The phrase,] "with respect to just these objects that are apprehending subjects and so forth" [refers to] those indicated previously. "Mistaken" [refers to] incorrectly viewing the [four] truths. [330b] Superimposing permanence etc. on the entities of impermanent phenomena — dependent-arising that are apprehended objects, apprehending subjects, and so forth — is a mistaken discrimination. Because the two, mistaken discrimination and mistaken mind, awaken mistaken views, they are abandoned by correct views.

After having explained the meaning of "mistaken objects", in order to explain non-mistaken objects, [Buddha] says, "Maitreya, with respect to that, non-mistaken objects are...."²²⁰ [The passage —] "You should know that [non-mistaken objects] are the opposite of those [i.e., mistaken objects] and they are antidotes [to them] — refers to:] (1) viewing impermanent objects — such as apprehending subjects and

²¹⁵D p. 61.1; Stog p. 87.1.

²¹⁶D p. 61.1; Stog p. 87.2.

²¹⁷D p. 61.2; Stog p. 87.2.

²¹⁸D p. 61.6; Stog p. 88.1.

²¹⁹D p. 61.6; Stog p. 88.2.

²²⁰D p. 62.1; Stog p. 88.4.

so forth — as impermanent; (2) viewing the nature of suffering — which is discordant with [the state of] a Superior — as suffering; (3) viewing the nature of unclean things as unclean; and (4) viewing selfless things that depend upon conditions as selfless. When one is separated from mistaken views through obtaining [their] antidotes, one also becomes free from mistaken discriminations and mistaken minds.

After [discussing] non-mistaken objects, in order to indicate afflicted objects, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, with respect to that, afflicted objects are of three kinds...”²²¹ If you ask, ‘What are they’, [Buddha] says: “...of the three realms...” If you ask, ‘What are the three’, [Buddha] says, “(1) afflictive afflictions [of the three realms]; (2) afflictions that are actions; and (3) afflictions that are lifetimes”.

From among the limbs of cyclic existence: ignorance, craving, and appropriation are the afflictive afflictions. Activities and existence are the afflictions that are actions. Consciousness, name, form, the six sense spheres, contact, feeling, birth, aging and death are the afflictions of lifetimes.

After having explained afflicted objects in that way, in order to explain pure objects, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, with respect to that, pure objects are the phenomena that are harmonies with enlightenment through serving to separate one from those three types of afflictions.”²²² [331a] You should know that these are the mindful establishments (*dran pa nye bar gzhag pa, smṛtyupasthāna*) etc.

[The passage —] “Maitreya, you should know that these ten aspects include all objects”²²³ — indicates that Bodhisattvas correctly understand objects through these ten [categories:] their varieties and so forth. Therefore, [Buddha] teaches that ‘they correctly understand objects’.

Second and Final Part

Also, by way of indicating a five-fold division, [Buddha] says, “Alternatively, Maitreya, Bodhisattvas know objects by way of five aspects...”²²⁴ In answer to the question, “What are the five,” [Buddha] says, “things that are objects of knowledge; objects that are objects of knowledge; knowledges; obtaining the fruits of knowl-

²²¹D p. 62.1; Stog p. 88.5.

²²²D p. 62.2; Stog p. 88.6.

²²³D p. 62.2; Stog p. 88.7.

²²⁴D p. 62.3; Stog p. 89.1.

edge; knowing those". [He says this] because everything is included within these five aspects. In [the passage —] "Maitreya, with respect to that...things that are objects of knowledge...are to be viewed as being all objects of knowledge; they are as follows: the aggregates..." — the [five] aggregates and so forth include all things that are objects of knowledge.

With respect to [the passage,] "Maitreya, with respect to that, objects that are objects of knowledge should be known as the actual mode of those objects of knowledge that are [known through] various aspects...":²²⁵ These are objects that are objects of knowledge that 'should be known in accordance with what is known by one aspect, the varieties, and should be known in accordance with how [they are known]'. In the extensive statement — "these are such things as conventionalities and..." — "conventionalities and ultimate truths" are what Buddhas teach in dependence upon the two truths.

"Faults" are so called because they function as afflictive faults. "Qualities" are so called because they function as purifying qualities. With respect to "conditions": Those afflictions and purifications only arise from their own causes, and not from God (*dbang phyug, isvara*) etc. With respect to "time": This [331b] [refers to] the times of arising in the past, future, and present.

With respect to "the characteristics of production, abiding, and disintegration": Objects that are objects of knowledge and so forth are differentiated in terms of conditions that are characteristics of compounded phenomena. "Sickness and so forth" [refers] to suffering. "[True] sufferings and [true] sources and so forth" [refers] to the Hearer Vehicle. "Suchness and so forth" [refers] to the Great Vehicle. With respect to "condensed [discourses] and differentiations":²²⁶ these instruct by way of the two, summarizing and elaborating.

Also, when there are answers in [Buddha's teachings,] certain prophecies are [for example,] when someone asks, 'Will all sentient beings die,' and [Buddha] definitely responds, 'They will die.'

Differentiation and scriptural questions are [for example,] when someone asks, 'Will all dead [beings] be reborn,' and [Buddha] differentiatingly answers,

²²⁵D p. 62.4; Stog p. 89.2.

²²⁶D p. 62.6 reads: *bsdu ba dang / dbye ba*; Stog p. 89.6 reads: "condensed [discourses] and extensive [discourses]" (*bsdus pa dang / rgyas pa*).

'Those sentient beings who have afflictions will be reborn, but those without afflictions will not be reborn.'

Answering after having asked a question is [for example,] when someone asks, 'Are humans superior, or are they inferior,' and [Buddha] answers after having asked a question: 'The answer depends upon who they are.' If the question refers to those in the bad migrations [i.e., hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals,] then the answer must be, '[Humans] are superior [to them]'. But conversely ('on the other hand'), if the question refers to gods, then the answer must be, 'They are inferior'. Thus, [Buddha] answers after having asked a question.

"Discarding"²²⁷ is [for example,] when someone asks, 'Are the aggregates and the self one or different,' and [Buddha] discards that [question,] because the self does not exist substantially.

"Secrets" [are so named] because for sentient beings who have not ripened [their wisdom] doctrines are hidden secrets. "Proclamations"²²⁸ [are so named] because they are the opposite of those. With respect to [the phrase,] "partially concordant with such": You should know that other things, such as imputed persons and so forth, are objects that are objects of knowledge.

"By way of the varieties"²²⁹ [means] by way of the aspects of conventionalities [332a] and so forth. You should know that "the way that they really exist"²³⁰ [refers] to the [four] truths — suffering and so forth — for those of the Hearer Vehicle, and to suchness and so forth for Mahāyānists.

With respect to [the passage,] "Maitreya, with respect to that, knowledges are [the harmonies with enlightenment] that apprehend both of those":²³¹ Qualities — such as the [four] mindful establishments etc., that are concordant with the limbs of enlightenment, which are apprehended through just observing [the following]: (1) things, the aggregates etc., that are objects of knowledge; (2) how the varieties of objects that are objects of knowledge exist; and (3) their mode of existence — are knowledges, because they are of the nature of knowledge.

²²⁷The Sde dge text (p. 331b.6), D p. 62.7, and Stog p. 89.7 all read: *gzbag*, which normally means "to establish" or "to posit", but Yeshe Thabkhe says that in this passage it means "to discard", not "to establish", which makes more sense given Jñānagarbha's explanation.

²²⁸D p. 62.7: *bsgrags pa*; Stog p. 89.7: "teachings" (*rab tu bstan pa*).

²²⁹This is not found in either D or Stog.

²³⁰This is also not found in either D or Stog.

²³¹D p. 62.7; Stog p. 90.1.

After having explained knowledges, in order to teach about attainment of the fruit of knowledge, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, with respect to that, obtaining the fruit of knowledge is...”²³² [The passage — “disciplining desire, anger, and bewilderment...” — [refers to] disciplining desire through mindful establishments etc. with respect to the self, twofold body, feelings, mind, and phenomena.

[The words,] “completely abandoning”²³³ [indicate that] after one has thoroughly subdued them, they are abandoned. [The words,] “the fruits of asceticism” [refer to] the four, Stream Enterers and so forth [i.e., Once Returners, Non-Returners, and Arhats]. [The phrase,] “...mundane qualities of Hearers and Tathāgatas...” [refers to] the [four] concentrations, the [four] immeasurables and so forth. “Supramundane” [refers to] knowing that [the afflictions] are exhausted and will not arise [again] and so forth. “Common” [refers to] non-afflicted consciousness, aspirational consciousness, and so forth. Any actualizations of those are attainments of fruits of knowledge.

After having taught about attaining the fruits of knowledge, in order to indicate how that obtainment of the fruits of knowledge is to be known, [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, knowledge of that...”²³⁴ [The phrase,] “...just those phenomena that are actualized...” [refers] to those things that were just taught. “Liberating knowledge” [332b] is self-knowledge.

[The phrase,] “extensively explaining and teaching these to others”²³⁵ means that one causes realization — in others’ continuums — of the qualities of Tathāgatas and Hearers that one has actualized oneself.

After having taught, “Maitreya, you should know that all objects are also included by way of these five aspects of objects”,²³⁶ [the passage] — “Moreover, Maitreya, Bodhisattvas...” — indicates that ‘just as [Bodhisattvas] know all objects by way of five aspects, so they also know objects by way of four aspects.’

In answer to [the question,] “What are the four aspects of objects,”²³⁷ [Buddha] says, “(1) appropriated objects of mind; (2) objects of experience; (3) objects of cognition; and (4) objects of affliction and objects of purification....”

²³²D p. 63.1; Stog p. 90.2.

²³³D p. 63.2; Stog p. 90.3.

²³⁴D p. 63.3; Stog p. 90.4.

²³⁵D p. 63.3; Stog p. 90.5.

²³⁶D p. 63.4; Stog p. 90.5.

²³⁷D p. 63.4; Stog p. 90.5.

This indicates that just as [Bodhisattvas] know all objects by way of five aspects, so they also know objects by way of four aspects.

In answer to [the question,] “What are the four,” [Buddha] says, “by way of: (1) appropriated objects of mind; (2) objects of experience; (3) objects of cognition; and (4) objects of affliction and purification”.²³⁸ Appropriated objects of mind are predispositions of the basis-consciousness, because they are causal. Objects of experience are: (1) a mind’s bewilderment concerning a self; (2) viewing a self; (3) pride in the self; (4) desire for the self; and so they are experienced objects. Objects of cognition are said to be different things that are aspects of abodes, abiders, and objects of observation that are simply cognition-only in the sense that operating consciousnesses view them as external. Objects of affliction and objects of purification are the aspects of abodes, abiders, and objects of observation of those minds and mental factors that are either not realized or realized by just those minds.

After [Buddha] has indicated that all objects are also included by way of these four aspects of objects by stating, “Maitreya, you should know that all objects are included [by these four aspects]”, [333a] [the statement,] “Moreover, Maitreya...”²³⁹ indicates that ‘Bodhisattvas know objects by way of three aspects’.

In [the passage,] “objects that are letters, objects that are meanings, and objects that are realms”,²⁴⁰ objects that are letters are supports. Objects that are meanings are what is supported. Objects that are realms are objects that are both.

Regarding [the passage,] “Maitreya, with respect to that, objects that are meanings should be known in terms of ten aspects”:²⁴¹ “The character of suchness” [refers to] just apprehended objects. “The signs of knowledge” [refers to] just apprehending subjects. “The character of abandonment” [refers to] just separation. “The character of actualization” [refers to] just attainment. “The character of meditation” [refers to] how these are not wasted. “the character of differentiation of those characters of suchness and so forth” [refers to] the differentiation of ‘the suchness of mirrors and the suchness of appearances and so forth’.

²³⁸There appears to be no reason for the repetition of this quotation. The wording is slightly different from the previous citation, but nothing new is added.

²³⁹D p. 63.5; Stog p. 90.7.

²⁴⁰D p. 63.6; Stog p. 91.1.

²⁴¹D p. 63.6; Stog p. 91.2.

In [the phrase,] “the character of basis and what depends upon a basis”,²⁴² “Basis” [refers to] phenomena such as suchness and so forth. [Things that depend upon] a basis are objects. “The character that interrupts knowledge and so forth” [refers to] obstructions and so forth.²⁴³

“The character of concordant phenomena” [refers to] good attainment and so forth. “Faults of non-knowledge and so forth” [refers to] corrupting the aims of oneself and others. “Benefits of knowledge and so forth” [refers to] fulfilling the aims of oneself and others.

In [the passage —] “Maitreya, with respect to that, objects that are realms are the five realms...”²⁴⁴ — worldly realms include worlds that are environments: these are objects to be purified by Bodhisattvas. Realms of sentient beings are objects of maturation. The realm of truth is an object to be realized. The realms of discipline²⁴⁵ are suitable to be objects of maturation. The realm of methods of discipline [333b] [includes] things that are well-taught.

With respect to [the passage,] “Maitreya, you should know that all objects are also included by way of these three aspects of objects”:²⁴⁶ You should perceive that all interpretable meanings and definitive meanings are included. [The passage —] “Bhagavan, [what are the differences between] knowledge of objects by wisdom arisen from hearing...”²⁴⁷ — is a question [that asks,] ‘What are the differences between [knowledge of objects by wisdoms] arisen from hearing, thinking, and meditating?’

In [the passage —] “Maitreya, through wisdom arisen from hearing Bodhisattvas...”²⁴⁸ — wisdom arisen from hearing is based on words; the meanings which arise [from that] are not. This is because apprehenders of only what is literal and what lacks [Buddha’s] thought are thoughts that do not ascertain profound doctrines. This is because what is not direct perception does not perceive directly.

²⁴²D p. 63.7; Stog p. 91.4: “the character of basis and dependent arising” (*gnas dang rten cing ’brel ba’i mushan nyid*).

²⁴³According to Yeshe Thabkhe, this includes the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience.

²⁴⁴D p. 64.1; Stog p. 91.5.

²⁴⁵The sūtra indicates that “realms of discipline” are sentient beings, because each sentient being is a potential trainee, i.e., someone who can be disciplined by Buddhist doctrine and practice.

²⁴⁶D p. 64.2; Stog p. 91.6.

²⁴⁷D p. 64.2; Stog p. 91.7.

²⁴⁸D p. 64.4; Stog p. 92.2.

“Concordant with liberation” [refers to] what serves as a cause of liberation, because one indirectly correctly realizes individual meanings. These are not liberators.

In [the passage,] “Maitreya, through knowledge arisen from thinking...”²⁴⁹ “arisen from thinking” [means that] it arises from thinking by means of reasoning. This is because those who only abide in the letters, who are not literal, and who apprehend the thought [behind the teachings] are acquainted with what they hear. This is because they do not [understand] through direct perception, are very concordant with liberation, and have the conditions for liberation. This is because those who have not correctly understood non-liberative meanings have not directly perceived liberative [meanings].

In [the passage,] “Maitreya, through knowledge arisen from meditation Bodhisattvas...”²⁵⁰ knowledge arisen from meditation arises from ascertaining doctrine. This is because those who apprehend [doctrine while] abiding in the words and those not abiding in the words are well acquainted [with doctrine]. This is because those who are literal and apprehend [Buddha’s] thought ripen the predispositions of what they have heard. [334a]

[The phrase,] “partially concordant with these things to be known”²⁵¹ [means that they are] partially concordant with those things that are things to be known as they are by way of various aspects. If you ask, ‘What sorts of things [are indicated,]’ [Buddha] says, “images that are objects of activity of meditative stabilizations”. [Bodhisattvas] do not understand by way of objects of activity that are expressions of what they have heard and considered. This is because [only] direct perception is individual knowledge.

[These Bodhisattvas are] “very concordant with liberation”²⁵² because they are very close to it. This is because those who also know liberative meanings realize them directly. [The phrase,] “These are the differentiations of those” [refers to the differentiations] of wisdoms arisen from hearing, thinking, and meditating.

In the extensive passage, “Bhagavan...Bodhisattvas who cultivate calming and insight...”²⁵³ [Buddha] says, ‘Whatever is a wisdom regarding calming and in-

²⁴⁹D p. 64.5; Stog p. 92.3.

²⁵⁰D p. 64.6; Stog p. 92.5.

²⁵¹D p. 64.7; Stog p. 92.6.

²⁵²D p. 64.7; Stog p. 92.6.

²⁵³D p. 65.1; Stog p. 92.7.

sight observing doctrines that are mixed is knowledge', because their aspects are not various. 'Whatever is a wisdom regarding calming and insight which observe doctrines that are unmixed is discernment', because their aspects are various.

With respect to [the passage,] "Bhagavan...Bodhisattvas cultivating calming and insight...":²⁵⁴ Due to [being asked] — "...how and through what mental contemplation do [Bodhisattvas] remove what signs?" — [Buddha] teaches three things with respect to the question [in paraphrase,] 'Due to knowing doctrines and meanings, through what mental contemplations do Bodhisattvas remove what signs?' "Through mental contemplation of suchness" refers to 'mental contemplation of non-duality'. [The phrase,] "...remove the signs of doctrines and the signs of meanings" [refers to] two types of signs. They remove signs of doctrines and signs of meanings. "Signs" means 'objects of observation'.

With respect to [the question,] "how do...[Bodhisattvas] remove...":²⁵⁵ [Buddha] says, [334b] "not observing the nature of names with respect to names...." This is because signs of doctrines are of the nature of names, words, and letters. One also does not observe doctrines in terms of their bases.²⁵⁶ Just as it is with respect to the names that are bases of doctrines, so when words and letters that are the signs of doctrines are removed, they are not observed.

[The passage —] "Just as it is...so all...meanings should be known"²⁵⁷ — [means that] the ten kinds, five kinds, four kinds, and three kinds taught [earlier] are not observed.

With respect to [the passage,] "up through realms, not observing an inherent nature of realms...":²⁵⁸ When the inherent natures of those five realms indicated [previously] are eliminated, they are not observed. "Signs abiding in them" are signs that are the bases of meanings. Since bases of meanings are doctrines, when those signs are also eliminated, they are eliminated by way of non-observation. Because mental contemplation of suchness is just non-dual — since in meditation on the suchness of those objects: signs of doctrines that are names, words, letters, ap-

²⁵⁴D p. 65.3; Stog p. 93.3.

²⁵⁵D p. 65.3; Stog p. 93.3.

²⁵⁶This refers to words and letters, which are the bases of meanings.

²⁵⁷D p. 65.4; Stog p. 93.5.

²⁵⁸D p. 65.5; Stog p. 93.5.

prehenders, and so forth, their aspects are [perceived as] non-dual — this is the meaning of “non-observation of those signs”.

In [the question —] “Bhagavan, are...”²⁵⁹ — [the phrase,] “the signs of cognition of the meaning of suchness” [indicates that] cognition of suchness is simply an exalted knower of all aspects. Its objects of observation are non-things. Also, the *Perfection of Wisdom* says, “Subhūti, the objects of observation of an exalted knower of all aspects are non-things. Aspects are pacified. The controller is mindfulness. Characteristics do not exist.”

[The passage —] “Maitreya, cognition of the meaning of suchness overcomes all phenomena and signs of phenomena”²⁶⁰ — [indicates that] all the signs of doctrines and meanings are not completely realized, [335a] but their antidote is knowledge of the meaning of suchness. Therefore, they are exceeded by them.

With respect to [the passage,] “[I] do not explain that in that anything is exceeded by anything”:²⁶¹ Because [cognition of suchness] is an antidote to all signs that are viewed with respect to that and because objects of observation and aspects are not eliminated, [that] is not exceeded by anything.

With respect to the extensive statement, “Bhagavan...a dirty pot, for example...”:²⁶² [Maitreya’s question —] “Thinking of what mental analysis and what suchness did you say that...” — is asked because there are three kinds of mental analysis²⁶³ and seven kinds of suchness.

[Buddha’s answer —] “Maitreya, it was due to three kinds of mental analysis...”²⁶⁴ — indicates that mental analysis arisen from hearing, from thinking, and from meditating and the suchness of cognition are non-dual. Thus, this means that ‘thinking of them, I [Buddha] taught those.’ [This explains] the verses of the Maitreya Chapter.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁹D p. 65.5; Stog p. 93.6.

²⁶⁰D p. 65.6; Stog p. 93.7 reads: “Maitreya, when one does not observe as signless the cognition of the meaning of suchness, with respect to that, what could be eliminated?”

²⁶¹D p. 65.7; Stog p. 94.1.

²⁶²D p. 65.7; Stog p. 94.1.

²⁶³Text correction: the Sde dge text (p. 335a.3) only mentions analysis (*so sor brtags pa*). This is emended on the basis of the Peking text (p. 204.5.1), which reads: *sems la so sor brtag pa*.

²⁶⁴D p. 66.2; Stog p. 94.4.

²⁶⁵The translation of this passage is speculative. The Tibetan reads: *byams pa'i le'u'i k'a ri ka //*, which makes no sense in this part of the text, since the *kārikās* of chapter eight occur several pages later than the section presently under discussion. It may indicate that the present section is rele-

[Maitreya] asks, “Bhagavan, how many signs — which Bodhisattvas who cognize doctrines and meanings in that way are engaged in removing — do you describe; by what are they eliminated?”²⁶⁶ and [Buddha] answers, “There are ten....”

With respect to [the passage,] “The various signs of words and letters — according to which one knows doctrines and meanings — are eliminated by the emptiness of all phenomena”:²⁶⁷ This is because the phenomena which are the ‘various signs of words and letters that are not included within the emptiness of all phenomena’ are not different.

In [the passage —] “The signs of continual operation of production, cessation, abiding, and transformation, which are known in terms of the meaning of the suchness of abiding, [335b] are eliminated by the emptiness of character and the emptiness of what is beginningless and endless”²⁶⁸ — “abiding” [refers to] the characteristics of production, abiding, aging, and impermanence that are included among compounded phenomena of the three times.

Moreover, because illustrations (*mtshan gzhi*, *dr̥ṣṭānta*) do not exist, they are empty of characteristics; and because illustrations do not exist, they are also empty of the characteristics of illustrations, since illustrations and characteristics are free from being one or different. As it is said, “You have correctly said, ‘If characteristics were other than illustrations, then illustrations would be signless. If they were one, then there would be nothing that is both.’” “Beginningless and endless” [means that] there is no former or later limit. This is because there is no former and later limit and a real basis does not exist.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of the view of true personhood and the signs of thinking ‘I’ — which one knows with respect to objects that are appre-

vant to the thought of the verses, which are primarily instructions concerning how the teachings on yoga of this chapter should be put into practice. Since this is the most probable explanation of the cryptic statement in Jñānagarbha’s text, I have translated it in accordance with this hypothesis.

²⁶⁶D p. 66.3; Stog p. 94.6.

²⁶⁷D p. 66.4; Stog p. 94.7 reads: “when one thoroughly knows the meanings of doctrines, then the various signs of verbal expressions are eliminated by the emptiness of all phenomena.” Note that Stog treats the compound translated as “verbal expressions” (“words and letters” in D) as a *karmadhāraya*, whereas D treats it as a *dvandva*.

²⁶⁸D p. 66.4; Stog p. 95.2 reads: “when one knows the meaning of the suchness of abiding, then the signs that are a continuation of production, cessation, abiding, and transformation are eliminated by the emptiness of character and the emptiness of what is beginningless and endless.”

henders — are eliminated by the emptiness of the internal and the emptiness of the unapprehendable”:²⁶⁹ Apprehenders are the eye and so forth and minds and mental factors. With respect to those, whatever signs are apprehended as I and mine, which appear to be a person, are empty by way of the emptiness of the internal and are empty by way of the emptiness of the unapprehendable, because their nature is not observed.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of viewing enjoyments — which one knows with respect to objects that are apprehended — are eliminated by the emptiness of the external”:²⁷⁰ Apprehended objects are external appearances such as form and so forth. They are empty in terms of each subtle particle and in terms of collections [of these]. This is because a functioning self-entity which is of the nature of the objective appearances of shapes and colors is not suitable.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of internal happiness and the signs of external sufferings which one knows — that are objects of enjoyment possessing the services of men and women — are eliminated by the emptiness of the external and internal and [336a] by the emptiness of nature”:²⁷¹ “The signs of internal enjoyments” [refers to] interest in²⁷² mistaken feelings. “Signs of external sufferings” [refers to] mistaken interest in the bodies of men and women. They are empty, just like mistaken [feelings] in dreams and so forth. The nature of that interest in internal and external [enjoyments] is [also] empty, as it did not arise previously [and so it does not naturally produce desire, but only does so due to our afflictions].²⁷³

²⁶⁹D p. 66.5; Stog p. 95.2 reads: “when one knows objects that are apprehenders, then the signs of the view of true personhood and the signs of the ‘I’ are eliminated by the emptiness of the internal and the emptiness of the unapprehendable.”

²⁷⁰D p. 66.6; Stog p. 95.4 reads: “when one knows objects that are apprehended, then the signs of viewing enjoyment are eliminated by the emptiness of the external.”

²⁷¹D p. 66.7; Stog p. 95.4 reads: “when one knows objects that are resources — possessing the services of women and men and of possessions as objects of enjoyment — then the signs of internal happiness and the signs of external apprehended objects are eliminated by the emptiness of the external and internal and by the emptiness of nature.”

²⁷²The Tibetan term is *mos pa*, which Yeshe Thabkhe equates with “delight” or “happiness” (*dga’ ba*).

²⁷³The words in brackets summarize an oral explanation by Yeshe Thabkhe, who indicates that the upshot of this passage is that the things in which we find pleasure are not naturally enjoyable. If they were, they would naturally produce pleasure, but in fact they tend to lead to suffering and unhappiness because of the negative thoughts we produce with regard to them. Also, they only seem pleasurable due to conditioning and previously generated predispositions.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of the immeasurable — which one knows with respect to objects that are abodes — are eliminated by the emptiness of the great”:²⁷⁴ Manifest establishments of immeasurable worldly realms are empty by way of the emptiness of the great, which is like space [in that it pervades everywhere].

With respect to [the passage,] “In dependence upon [knowing] formlessness in that way, the internal signs of blissful liberation are eliminated by the emptiness of compounded phenomena”:²⁷⁵ All compounded phenomena without exception are just empty, because they [are produced] from coarse causes and conditions.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of the selflessness of persons, the signs of the selflessness of phenomena, the signs of cognition-only,²⁷⁶ and the signs of the ultimate — through which one knows objects in terms of the suchness of character — are eliminated by the emptiness of what has passed beyond the extremes, by the emptiness of non-things, by the emptiness of inherent existence of non-things, and by the emptiness of the ultimate”: The signs of the selflessness of persons are empty by way of the emptiness of what has passed beyond the extremes. If a person did exist, then negation of the person would also be suitable.

The signs of the selflessness of phenomena are empty by way of the emptiness of non-things. If phenomena did exist, then negation of phenomena would also exist.

The signs of cognition-only are empty by way of the emptiness of the inherent existence of non-things. Mistaken cognition of inherent nature is only of the nature of non-things, because duality is not established.

The signs of the ultimate are empty by way of the emptiness of the ultimate. [336b] Because the two, objects of negation and negators, are not ultimate, because objects of negation do not exist, and because neither negators nor eliminators exist, thus, apart from realization of emptiness, an ultimate does not exist.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of the uncompounded and the signs of the indestructible — which one knows with respect to objects of pure suchness

²⁷⁴D p. 67.1; Stog p. 95.6 reads: “when one knows the objects that are abodes, then the signs of the immeasurable are eliminated by the emptiness of the great.”

²⁷⁵D p. 67.1; Stog p. 95.6.

²⁷⁶Text correction: the Sde dge text (p. 336a.5) reads: *rnam par rig pa*. The Peking text (p. 205.2.4), D p. 67 p. 2, and Stog p. 96.1 all read: *rnam par rig pa tsam*. Also, when Jñānagarbha uses this term later on in this section (p. 336a.7), it reads *rnam par rig pa tsam*.

— are eliminated by the emptiness of uncompounded phenomena and the emptiness of the indestructible”:²⁷⁷ “Pure suchness” [refers to] true cessations. They are un-compounded and immutable, but apprehended objects that are the signs of those two — uncompounded phenomena and the immutable — are eliminated by the emptiness of uncompounded phenomena and the emptiness of the indestructible.

With respect to [the passage,] “The signs of emptiness that one takes to mind in terms of the emptiness that is an antidote to those signs are eliminated by the emptiness of emptiness”:²⁷⁸ Any cognition of emptiness that eliminates all these signs is also empty.

In the extensive statement — “Bhagavan, when one eliminates ten types of signs...”²⁷⁹ — the elimination of signs of the image, the object of activity of meditative stabilizations, is an antidote, and the signs of afflicted phenomena are its discordant class.

In [the passage —] “Maitreya...these emptinesses...”²⁸⁰ — [the phrase,] “each of these objects is not a non-antidote to all these signs” means that ‘all of those are also objects of observation for purification.’

[The passage —] “Bhagavan...in the Great Vehicle...”²⁸¹ [discusses] non-degeneration. Thus, [Buddha] offers the following designation: Because emptiness is the antidote to the boastful pride that is the cause of degeneration of Bodhisattvas, when Bodhisattvas know the character of that they become non-degenerated with respect to the Great Vehicle. [337a]

In [the passage,] “...good, good”,²⁸² “degenerated from emptiness”²⁸³ refers to ‘not understanding the character of emptiness’. One “becomes degenerated from all of the Great Vehicle” due to fear of emptiness.

²⁷⁷D p. 67.3; Stog p. 96.3.

²⁷⁸D p. 67.4; Stog p. 96.4 reads: “when one takes to mind the suchness that is an antidote to these signs, then the signs of emptiness are eliminated by the emptiness of emptiness.”

²⁷⁹D p. 67.5; Stog p. 96.5.

²⁸⁰D p. 67.6; Stog p. 96.7.

²⁸¹D p. 67.7; Stog p. 97.2 does not mention the Great Vehicle, but the rest of the quote is the same.

²⁸²D p. 68.2; Stog p. 97.4.

²⁸³The Sde dge text and D read: *stong pa nyid las rab tu nyams pa*; Stog reads: “corrupted with respect to emptiness” *stong pa nyid la rab tu rung ba*.

In [the passage,] “Maitreya, because of this...listen”,²⁸⁴ “other-dependent characters” are [produced] from coarse causes and conditions. “The thoroughly established character” is a non-dual character.

In [the passage,] “Separated from imputational characters, such as afflicted and purified phenomena in all aspects and...”,²⁸⁵ phenomena that are [produced] from coarse causes and conditions are other-dependent characters. They have a nature of emptiness because of being non-entitinesses in terms of production (*skye ba ngo bo nyid med pa nyid, utpāda-niḥsvabhāva*). Purification of those is the thoroughly established nature. This is empty in the sense of being an ultimate emptiness.

Conceptions thinking, ‘In other-dependent characters there is affliction,’ and ‘In the thoroughly established nature there is purification’ are imputational characters that are empty due to being emptinesses in terms of character.

[The phrase,] “non-observation with respect to that”²⁸⁶ [indicates that] the entityness of imputations is not observed in the entityness of other-dependent characters. This is because they are not established as being of the entityness of affliction and purification. Because it is established as being emptiness, [the thoroughly established character] is a thoroughly established entity. Because they are neither one nor different by way of their own nature, illustrations and characteristics are similar.

[The passage,] “...that is ‘the full character of emptiness in the Great Vehicle’”²⁸⁷ [indicates that] because the three natures that are subsumed by the two truths — the conventional and the ultimate — are empty, this includes the character of emptiness.

[The passage,] “Bhagavan, how many kinds of meditative stabilization of [the two,] calming and insight, are included”²⁸⁸ asks, ‘Bhagavan, [337b] from what causes of calming and insight do they arise’. [Buddha’s] answer, “They arise from the cause of pure ethics.” [refers to] meditative equipoise when ethics is purified.

²⁸⁴D p. 68.3; Stog p. 97.5.

²⁸⁵D p. 68.3; Stog p. 97.6.

²⁸⁶D p. 68.4; Stog p. 97.7.

²⁸⁷D p. 68.4; Stog p. 97.7.

²⁸⁸D p. 68.4; Stog p. 98.1.

[The sentence,] “They arise from the cause that is a pure view arisen from hearing and thinking”²⁸⁹ [indicates that] the view arisen from meditative equipoise of hearing and thinking becomes purified.

In order to ask about the results of having realized the causes of calming and insight, [Maitreya] asks, “Bhagavan, what are the results of those?”²⁹⁰

[Buddha’s reply —] “Pure mind is the result; pure wisdom is the result”²⁹¹ — indicates that ‘the result is a liberated mind and liberated wisdom.’

After [Buddha] has settled the results of calming and insight by way of the extensive statement, “Moreover, Maitreya...”²⁹² [Maitreya] asks, “[Bhagavan,] what are the functions of [calming and insight]” in order to ask about their functions.

With respect to [Buddha’s] answer, “Maitreya, they are liberation from the two bonds...”²⁹³ The functions of these two types of bonds are similar, and [Buddha] says, “[They are liberation] from the [two bonds,] the bonds of signs and the bonds of assumptions of bad states.” The afflictions of desire and so forth — which [arise] from grasping signs of objects such as desirable things and so forth — are bonds of arising signs. Manifest conceptions of things that are ‘I’ and ‘mine’ with respect to the aggregates are bonds of assumptions of bad states. Liberation from these two kinds of bonds is the function of calming and insight.

In [the passage,] “Bhagavan, from among those five kinds of obstacles spoken of by the Bhagavan...”²⁹⁴ — “the views [that overvalue] bodies and resources” are desire for the [six] internal sense spheres and the [six] external object spheres. “The discourse of Superiors” [refers to] discourses on the harmony of the supreme doctrine. “Abiding in commotion” [338a] [refers to a condition that] is not physical isolation. “Being satisfied with inferior [attainments]” refers to] mere mundane concentrations.

[The phrase —] “because of the first one does not exert oneself”²⁹⁵ — [means that] due to not having physical isolation, one does not exert oneself with respect to calming and insight. [The phrase] — “because of the second one does not bring the

²⁸⁹D p. 68.6; Stog p. 98.4.

²⁹⁰D p. 68.6; Stog p. 98.4.

²⁹¹D p. 68.7; Stog p. 98.4.

²⁹²D p. 68.7; Stog p. 98.5.

²⁹³D p. 69.2; Stog p. 98.7.

²⁹⁴D p. 69.2; Stog p. 98.7.

²⁹⁵D p. 69.3; Stog p. 99.4.

training to completion” — [means that] because of being satisfied by mere inferior [attainments] one does not bring one's training to completion.

With respect to [the passage] — “Bhagavan, from among the five obstructions, which...”:²⁹⁶ regarding “excitement and contrition”, excitement is non-pacification of the sense-faculties. Contrition [refers to] things that are done wrongly. When one does not perform virtuous actions and performs actions that are non-virtuous, one becomes mentally attached [to these actions].

“Lethargy” [refers to] an unsuitability in terms of actions of body and mind. “Sleep” [refers to] going to sleep. “Doubt” [refers to] error concerning the [three] jewels, the [four] truths, and [teachings concerning] actions and results [of actions].

“Aspiration to the attributes of the Desire Realm” [refers to] desire for the five qualities of the Desire Realm.²⁹⁷ “Harmful intent” [refers to] hatred toward sentient beings.

With respect to [the passage,] “Bhagavan, at what point is a path of calming purified...”:²⁹⁸ lethargy and sleep are internal discouragements. Excitement and contrition are distractions to external objects.

Calming and insight include all meditative stabilizations, and you should know that phenomena which serve to interrupt those meditative stabilizations [do so] because they are mental scatterings. Because they must be abandoned, [Maitreya] asks, “Bhagavan, how many types of mental distractions do [Bodhisattvas] abiding in calming and insight find?”²⁹⁹

[The phrase —] “distraction of taking something to mind and mental distraction externally” — indicates that the distractions and so forth of Hīnayāna mental contemplations for Bodhisattvas who abide in the Great Vehicle [338b] serve as interruptors of the meditative stabilizations that are the bases of supramundane, non-conceptual exalted wisdoms, and so they should be abandoned.

[The phrase —] “experiencing the taste of meditative absorptions”³⁰⁰ — [means that] experiencing the taste of the [four] concentrations, the [four] formless

²⁹⁶D p. 69.4; Stog p. 99.4.

²⁹⁷For a discussion of these, see Leah Zahler, *Meditative States in Tibetan Buddhism* (London: Wisdom, 1983), pp. 93-96

²⁹⁸D p. 69.5; Stog p. 99.6.

²⁹⁹D p. 69.6; Stog p. 100.1.

³⁰⁰D p. 70.3; Stog p. 100.6.

[absorptions,] and meditative absorptions produces the lifetimes of long-lived gods. Due to this, one forsakes working for the welfare of sentient beings.

[The passage —] “If [Bodhisattvas,] abiding in external signs...”³⁰¹ — indicates that at the causal level, one abides in dwellings in dependence upon apprehension of pleasant and unpleasant signs. Mental contemplation of signs internally belongs to the class that is discordant with signless meditative stabilizations. Therefore, it should be known; it should be abandoned.

[The passage —] “If [Bodhisattvas]...in dependence upon internal mental contemplation...”³⁰² — indicates that, because bodies that have assumptions of bad states are abodes of all afflictions, one is distracted.

With respect to [the passage,] “...feelings that arise in dependence upon internal mental contemplation...”³⁰³ In dependence upon mental contemplation that is based on the view of true personhood, one has contaminated feelings with respect to birth. Because this is concordant with cyclic existence and because it is discordant with all the paths of Superiors, this is “distraction of assumptions of bad states”.

Because calming and insight are of the nature of meditative stabilizations and wisdom, they are said to be present on all the [Bodhisattva] levels. Therefore, [Maitreya] asks, “Bhagavan, having apprehended calming and insight from the first Bodhisattva level up to the Tathāgata level, of what are [calming and insight] antidotes?”³⁰⁴

With respect to [the passage,] “Maitreya, on the first level calming and insight are antidotes to the afflictions of bad migrations, to the afflictions that are actions, and to the afflictions that are births”;³⁰⁵ This is because one attains the exalted wisdom which is an antidote to the view of [a self of] persons and of phenomena.

On the second [level] they are antidotes to the arising of subtle errors that are infractions. [339a] This is because ethics is purified.

On the third [level] they are antidotes to desires of the Desire Realm, because one attains uncorrupted concentrations and meditative absorptions.

³⁰¹D p. 70.3; Stog p. 100.7.

³⁰²D p. 70.4; Stog p. 101.1.

³⁰³D p. 70.4; Stog p. 101.1.

³⁰⁴D p. 70.4; Stog p. 101.2.

³⁰⁵D p. 70.5; Stog p. 101.3 reads: “afflictions that are lifetimes” (*tshe'i kun nas nyon mongs pa*).

On the fourth [level] they are antidotes to attachment to meditative absorption and attachment to doctrines, because one abides many times in things that are concordant with enlightenment and because they destroy the pride of [knowing] various doctrines of sūtra collections and so forth.

On the fifth [level] they are antidotes to completely turning away from cyclic existence or directing oneself toward nirvāṇa, because when one meditates on the four truths of Superiors a basis of affliction and purification is not observed.

On the sixth [level] they are antidotes to the arising of many signs because — through just abiding many times in the suchness of dependent arising by way of the yoga of calming and insight — the suchness that is differentiated according to signs of affliction and purification, the impure and the pure, is not observed.

On the seventh [level] they are antidotes to the arising of subtle signs, because they [i.e. Bodhisattvas] attain a signless state due to connection with the one vehicle.

On the eighth [level] they are antidotes to not having dominion with respect to signlessness etc. or signs, because one abides in non-activity and signlessness and because of cultivating a Buddha land.

On the ninth [level] they are antidotes to not having dominion with respect to teaching doctrine in all aspects, because one establishes individual knowledge and the maturation of sentient beings; thus one has power over all aspects of maturation.

On the tenth [level] they are antidotes to not attaining complete individual knowledge of the truth body, because one purifies the doors of meditative stabilizations and the doors of apprehension.

On the Tathāgata level they are “antidotes to afflictive obstructions and obstructions to omniscience that are more subtle than the very subtle”;³⁰⁶ [339b] this is because the doors of meditative stabilizations and of apprehension are immeasurably pervasive, and so on the Buddha level all Buddhas abandon all predispositions for the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience, which are more subtle than the supremely subtle; this is a Bodhisattva’s initiation into Buddhahood.

With respect to [the passage,] “Because they are conquered well, one obtains unattached and unobstructed knowledge and vision with respect to everything...”³⁰⁷ Because one does not turn away from all objects of knowledge, one is unattached, and because one is unobstructed in terms of knowledges with respect to which

³⁰⁶D p. 71.1; Stog p. 102.1.

³⁰⁷D p. 71.2; Stog p. 102.1.

Hearers and so forth are obstructed, one obtains unobstructed knowledge and vision.

"The object of observation that is an accomplishment of the purpose"³⁰⁸ [is so named] because [through this] one attains final fulfilment of one's own and others' purposes. "A very pure truth body" [is pure] because one completely abandons the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience. One "abides in the pure truth body" due to transforming all bases.

In order to ask about the methods of attainment [of this, Maitreya] says, "Bhagavan, how does a Bodhisattva who establishes calming and insight..."³⁰⁹ Because calming and insight are concordant operative causes of the enlightenments of Hearers and so forth, [Maitreya] asks, 'How does one become completely buddhified with respect to unsurpassed, complete, perfect enlightenment?'

In [the passage —] "The Bhagavan said..."³¹⁰ — [the phrase,] "beginning with the seven types of suchness" [refers to] the seven types of suchness, respectively: (1) the suchness of arising; (2) the suchness of character; (3) the suchness of cognition; (4) the suchness of abodes; (5) the suchness of mistaken establishment; (6) the suchness of purification; and (7) the suchness of correct establishment.

[The phrase —] "How...on doctrines in accordance with how they have been heard and considered..."³¹¹ — [means] 'in accordance with doctrines that are objects of observation such as calming and insight and the seven kinds of suchness. [340a]

If you ask, 'From among those doctrines, how does the mind consider them,' [Buddha] says, "With a mind that is set in meditative equipoise."³¹² This is because when one engages in observation — with a mind that is set in meditative equipoise on those doctrines — one is dealing with mental images. Therefore, they are contrary to the suchness of mind.

³⁰⁸D p. 71.2; Stog p. 102.2.

³⁰⁹D p. 71.2; Stog p. 102.2 reads: "Bhagavan, how does a Bodhisattva who is earnestly making effort at calming and insight..."

³¹⁰D p. 71.3; Stog p. 102.3.

³¹¹D p. 71.4; Stog p. 102.4.

³¹²D p. 71.4; Stog p. 102.4.

That they “apprehend them well, consider them well, and establish them well”³¹³ indicates a compatibility between that suchness and internal mental contemplation. “Just that” [refers to] suchness. In [the phrase —] “They take suchness to mind in that way” — “they” [refers to] Bodhisattvas.

With respect to [the passage,] “If the mind becomes very withdrawn from even all arisings of very subtle signs”:³¹⁴ This is because mental contemplation of suchness is the antidote to all signs. If for Bodhisattvas who take that [i.e., suchness] to mind there is no arising of even subtle signs, then, [Buddha] teaches, “What need is there to consider the arising of coarse signs?” Subtle signs are those ranging from “signs of mental appropriation” to “signs of the selflessness of phenomena”.³¹⁵

“Entering into such and...”³¹⁶ [means that] through examining all signs one enters into suchness. “Abiding in that often” [means] abiding many times in meditation that takes suchness to mind. “Occasional” [means that one thing] is an object of calming but not of insight. [One time] is a time of insight but is not a time of calming. [Another time] is ‘a time of a path that is a union [of those two]’.

If you ask, ‘At that time, with respect to that mental purification from obstacles, obscurations, and distractions — of Bodhisattvas who abide in just that way — what occurs,’ [Buddha] answers, “one realizes that the seven aspects of suchness are to be known by oneself individually and internally.”³¹⁷ This is because all phenomena are subsumed by the seven aspects of suchness. [340b] Because the seven aspects that are individually realized are [realized] by a Bodhisattva’s path of seeing, [Buddha] says, “That is the path of seeing of that [Bodhisattva].”³¹⁸

In [the passage —] “By attaining this...”³¹⁹ — [the term,] “faultless reality” [means that] they perceive the foremost suchness. [The phrase —] “They also experience the advantages of that level” — means that ‘on the first [level,] Bodhi-

³¹³D p. 71.4; Stog p. 102.5 reads: “they realize them well, think about them well, and arrange them well.”

³¹⁴D p. 71.4; Stog p. 102.5.

³¹⁵This refers to a list of twenty-one types of subtle signs that appears on D pp. 71.5-72.2 (Stog pp. 102.6-103.5).

³¹⁶D p. 72.2; Stog p. 103.5.

³¹⁷D p. 72.2; Stog p. 103.6.

³¹⁸D p. 72.3; Stog p. 103.7.

³¹⁹D p. 72.3; Stog p. 103.7.

sattvas experience those things that are taught as being advantageous'. "Previously" [refers to] Bodhisattvas who have previously attained the level of the path of seeing on the level of engagement through belief. Attaining the objects of observation that are analytical images and non-analytical images is "attaining the two aspects."

With respect to [the passage,] "In that case, by attaining the path of seeing they attain [the stage of] observing the limits of phenomena":³²⁰ Because one realizes the realm of truth by way of omnipresent objects; and because one does not observe phenomena that are bases of affliction and purification; and because this is a final object of realization, the limit of phenomena is the truth body that is realized. Bodhisattvas abiding in the path of seeing attain that object of observation that is a limit of phenomena, the nature of the truth body which is the object of observation of a path that is a union [of calming and insight].

[The phrase,] "through entering into the path of meditation, [proceeding] higher and higher..."³²¹ [refers to] the second level and so forth. [The passage —] "mentally contemplating just those three aspects of objects of observation" — [refers to] analytical images, non-analytical images, and the limits of phenomena. They internally mentally contemplate those three subtle signs, and [so Buddha says,] "It is like this: for example, just as a person can remove³²² a very large nail with a small nail, so also, in the same way that a [small] nail expels a [large] nail, eliminating the signs of the internal, one gradually eliminates all of the signs that are partially condordant with affliction. When one eliminates the signs, one also eliminates the assumptions of bad states."³²³ [341a] With respect to [that statement,] the faults of desire and so forth are the signs. The views are assumptions of bad states.

³²⁰D p. 72.4; Stog p. 104.2.

³²¹D p. 72.5; Stog p. 104.2.

³²²D p. 72.5 and the Sde dge text, p. 340b.6, read: *sbom po 'byin*; Stog p. 104.3 reads: *sbom po*.

³²³Lamotte's translation of the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (*La Somme du Grand Véhicule d'Asaṅga*; Louvain, 1973, pp. 219-220) contains the same analogy. Vasubandhu's commentary on this passage states:

The synthetic knowledge of an object (*saṃsrṣṭadharmāmbana jñāna*) serves as the antidote to all obstacles (*sarvāvaraṇa-pratipakṣa*). It is like a small nail (*sūkṣmāṇī*) expelling a large nail (*sthūlāṇī*). In effect, the infused seeds (*vāsanābīja*) of afflicted dharmas (*saṃkleśika-dharma*), which reside in the root consciousness (*mūla-vijñāna*), are coarse (*sthūla*), and the antidotal path (*pratipakṣa-mārga*) that can expel them is subtle (*sūkṣma*) [my translation].

With respect to [the passage,] “By overcoming well all signs and assumptions of bad states, gradually proceeding higher and higher [on the levels,] one purifies the mind like gold...”:³²⁴ For example, when gold is purified by the work of a goldsmith who purifies it more and more, just as it becomes very bright and one is not captivated by grains of gold that are different from those, in the same way, on a path that cultivates the levels higher and higher, because the mind becomes serviceable due to separation from all adventitious defilements, it becomes very clear.

In [the passage —] “In this way, until one becomes unsurpassably, completely enlightened, one becomes perfected and attains the object of observation that is an accomplishment of the purpose”³²⁵ — accomplishment of the purpose³²⁶ [refers to] attaining unattached and unobstructed knowledge and vision due to pursuing the aims of oneself and others.

In answer to [Maitreya's] question, “When Bodhisattvas practice...”,³²⁷ [Buddha] says, “Maitreya, Bodhisattvas who are skillful with respect to six topics manifestly establish the great powers of Bodhisattvas....” Bodhisattvas — who are skilled with respect to: (1) the arising of mind, (2) the abiding [of mind], (3) the emergence [of mind], (4) the increasing [of mind], (5) the diminishment [of mind], and (5) skill in method [with respect to mind] — manifestly establish the great powers of Bodhisattvas. [Buddha] indicates that ‘manifest establishment of the great powers of Bodhisattvas depends on [skill with respect to] the arising of mind and so forth.’

[Buddha] says, “At what point [do Bodhisattvas become] wise with respect to the arising of mind? When they know the arising of mind in terms of sixteen aspects, then they are wise with respect to the arising of mind as it really is.”³²⁸ With respect to “cognition that is stable and is a vessel”: “cognition that is stable” [refers

The same idea is found in *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (Chengdu, n.d., pp. 264 and 267) and *Dag yid thon mi'i dgongs rgyan* by Tshe brtan shabs drung (New Delhi: Gondals Press, 1969), p. 38. Both of these texts indicate that the analogy refers to the way that a small wooden peg can be used to expel a larger peg in a piece of furniture. Wonch'uk (vol. *thi* [119], pp. 452.3) also discusses various ways of applying this metaphor.

³²⁴D p. 72.6; Stog p. 104.5.

³²⁵D p. 72.7; Stog p. 104.6.

³²⁶Text correction: the Sde dge text (p. 341a.3) reads: *dgongs pa yongs su grub pa*; emended to *dgos pa yongs su grub pa*.

³²⁷D p. 73.1; Stog p. 104.7.

³²⁸D p. 73.3; Stog p. 105.3.

to] the basis-consciousness [that contains] all seeds. It is stable due to being infused by the predispositions of phenomena that are afflicted and purified. [341b]

Because engaging knowers fluctuate, they are not infused with predispositions, but the predispositions are just what operate as infusers, because they are of the nature of virtue and so forth. A cognition that is a vessel is a basis. The two, stable cognition and cognition that is a vessel, are ignorant, because in them aspects and objects of observation are not annihilated.

Whatever is an arising of that mind is an arising of an ignorant mind that is a cognition which is stable and a vessel. Because Bodhisattvas who are wise with respect to that eliminate all the obstructions and assumptions of bad states of the basis-consciousness — which observes all phenomena as mixed — they manifestly establish the great powers of Bodhisattvas. With respect to [the phrase,] “A cognition of various types of objects of observation...”:³²⁹ Because they simultaneously apprehend objects such as form and so forth, this is a cognition of various aspects of objects of observation. Because they are able to realize definitely and to remember subsequently, this is conceptual. Because engaging consciousnesses are of the nature of wisdoms, they are mental consciousnesses. [The phrase,] “Bodhisattvas are wise with respect to that” [means that] you should know that this also applies to everything.

In [the phrase,] “simultaneously apprehends external and internal objects”,³³⁰ “external objects” are form and so forth. “Internal objects” are objects of observation and so forth. Any of those which are apprehended at one time are conceptual consciousnesses. Skill with respect to their arising is also like the former [skill].

With respect to the extensive statement, “in a moment, in an instant, in a short time...”:³³¹ Bodhisattvas — who [cultivate] meditative absorptions with respect to many simultaneous meditative stabilizations in an instant by way of mental consciousnesses that cultivate calming and insight — are suitable immediately after this [to enter into meditative stabilizations,] because meditative stabilizations are internal engagements.

³²⁹D p. 73.4; Stog p. 105.4.

³³⁰D p. 73.4; Stog p. 105.5.

³³¹D p. 73.4; Stog p. 105.6.

Question: If they [engage in] different factors in one instant, [342a] how can this very mental consciousness justifiably [be said to] perceive many Buddha lands that are abodes, and how can it justifiably [be said to] perceive many Tathāgatas, since appearances of external forms are objects of eye consciousnesses?³³²

[Response:] This is justifiable, because all engaging consciousnesses are objects of mental consciousness; therefore, various aspects of mental consciousness are conceptual. When that [engaging consciousness] engages and focuses on that basis, one obtains the names of this and that.

For example, with respect to intention, actions of body and mind are similar. Also, with respect to intention, the characteristics of compounded phenomena that are meritorious, non-meritorious, and fluctuating should be known in terms of actions of body and mind. In the same way, you should know that — because of just that mental consciousness which purifies calming and insight — Bodhisattvas who perceive many Buddha lands and who perceive many Buddha Bhagavans with an apprehending eye consciousness in one moment are wise with respect to various aspects of the arising of mind.

[The arising] of cognition with respect to small signs that are objects of observation is also just treated in accordance with arising of mind. [The passage —] “It is like this...involved with the Desire Realm...”³³³ — [indicates that] the arising of a mind that is involved with the Desire Realm is a level of non-meditative equipoise. Therefore, it has small signs as its object of observation.

[The passage —] “cognitions having great signs as their objects of observation are involved with the Form Realm”³³⁴ — [indicates that] the arising of a mind that is involved with the Form Realm is a level of meditative equipoise. Therefore, it has great signs as objects of observation.

[The passage —] “cognitions having limitless signs as their objects of observation are involved with the sphere of limitless space or the sphere of limitless consciousness”³³⁵ — [indicates that] a mind which arises from absorptions and births and which thinks, ‘limitless space’, ‘limitless consciousness’ — is involved with

³³²In other words, if everything that one perceives is a creation of mental consciousness, on what basis can one assign a privileged truth status to perceptions of Buddha-lands and Tathāgatas? Why should these be any more real than any other perceptions?

³³³D p. 73.5; Stog p. 105.7.

³³⁴D p. 73.5; Stog p. 105.7.

³³⁵D p. 73.6; Stog p. 106.1.

limitless space and limitless consciousness. Therefore, it [342b] is a [cognition having] limitless signs as its objects of observation.

[The passage —] “cognitions having subtle signs as their objects of observation are involved with the sphere of nothingness”³³⁶ — [indicates that] a mind which arises from observing subtle signs and which thinks, ‘nothingness’ because it is a mind that is involved with the view of true personhood is a cognition having subtle signs as its objects of observation.

[The passage —] “cognitions having final signs as their objects of observation are involved with the sphere of neither discrimination nor non-discrimination”³³⁷ — [refers to] the arising of a mind which is a cognition of final signs that are objects of observation from final absorptions that are realms, abodes, and worlds.

[The passage —] “cognitions of signlessness that observe the supramundane and cessation”³³⁸ — [indicates that] the arising of a supramundane mind is an antidote to all signs. Therefore, it is a signless cognition. The arising of a mind observing cessations is like that.

[The passage —] “involved with suffering: it is [involved with]...sentient beings who are hell beings”³³⁹ — [indicates that] the arising of a mind which [observes] sentient beings who are hell beings is involved with suffering, because it is not mixed with happiness.

[The passage —] “involved with feelings that are mixed: It has involvement in the Desire [Realm as its object of observation]”³⁴⁰ — refers to ‘the arising of a mind that is intermingled with feelings of happiness, suffering, and equanimity. This is because the Desire Realm encompasses various fruitions of actions.

[The passage —] “involved with joy: the first concentration and the second concentration”³⁴¹ — [refers to] the arising of a mind that is involved with joy that arises from isolation in the two, the first and second concentrations.

[The passage —] “involved with bliss: the third concentration”³⁴² — [refers to] the arising of mental factors from internal purity in the third concentration.

³³⁶D p. 73.6; Stog p. 106.2.

³³⁷D p. 73.7; Stog p. 106.2.

³³⁸D p. 73.7; Stog p. 106.3.

³³⁹D p. 74.1; Stog p. 106.4.

³⁴⁰D p. 74.1; Stog p. 106.4.

³⁴¹D p. 74.1; Stog p. 106.4.

³⁴²D p. 74.1; Stog p. 106.4.

[The passage —] “involved with neither suffering, non-suffering, happiness, nor non-happiness: [it ranges from] the fourth concentration up to the sphere of neither discrimination nor non-discrimination”³⁴³ [343a] — [indicates that] beyond the fourth concentration one is separated from eight kinds of faults. Therefore, a mind that is involved with equanimity arises. The eight kinds of faults are: (1) conceptuality; (2) analysis; (3) inhalation; (4) exhalation; (5) happiness; (6) suffering; (7) mental happiness; and (8) mental unhappiness.

[The passage —] “involved with affliction: it is involved with the afflictions and the secondary afflictions”³⁴⁴ — [refers to] the afflictions of desire and so forth. The secondary afflictions are belligerence and so forth.

[The passage —] “involved with virtue: it is involved with faith and so forth”³⁴⁵ — refers to ‘the arising of a mind that is involved with the [three] jewels, the [four] truths, and conviction with respect to actions and their fruits and so forth’.

[The passage —] “involved with the neutral: it is not involved with either of these two”³⁴⁶ — refers to ‘the arising of a mind that is born from fruition [of actions,] is arisen from activity, is arisen from labor, and that makes emanations’.

After having explained in what way [Bodhisattvas] become skilled with respect to the arising of mind, because [Maitreya asks,] “At what point [do Bodhisattvas become skilled with respect to abiding [of mind,]³⁴⁷ Buddha] teaches that entrance into skill with respect to abiding of mind [occurs] “when they know the suchness of cognition just as it is”.

With respect to this [statement]: Bodhisattvas who know compounded phenomena as cognition-only are wise with respect to abiding of mind. [Buddha] indicates that when they are wise with respect to abiding of mind, ‘they manifestly establish the great powers of Bodhisattvas.’

Question: Why [are phenomena] like the suchness of cognition-only?

[Response:] Because each and every cognition is separated from objects.

³⁴³D p. 74.2; Stog p. 106.5.

³⁴⁴D p. 74.2; Stog p. 106.6.

³⁴⁵D p. 74.3; Stog p. 106.7.

³⁴⁶D p. 74.3; Stog p. 106.7.

³⁴⁷D p. 74.3; Stog p. 107.1.

Question: If mental states of dreams etc. are suitable to be just cognition-only, then how are cognitions that are eye consciousnesses etc. and eye cognitions etc. — which have forms [as their objects of observation] — suitable to be cognition-only? [343b]

[Response:] All viewing cognitions having signs appear dualistically even though there are no objects. This is because eye cognitions etc. [operate] by way of signs of forms etc., viewing consciousnesses that are conscious of those, and the viewing consciousnesses up to body consciousness. Mental cognitions are those [cognitions] that have signs of all cognitions of final phenomena — eye and so forth — and are those [cognitions] that have viewing consciousnesses due to being cognitions of mental consciousnesses. Signs and viewing consciousnesses are abodes that are bases of afflictions such as mistaken [view] and so forth. If those are not viewed, the mistaken [view] of non-objects as objects will not occur. If that does not exist, then the afflictions that are the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience also will not occur. If they do not exist, purification also will be the non-existence of faults. You should know the suchness of cognition by way of just these reasonings and by way of scripture.

After having explained abiding of mind, due to being asked, “at what point [do Bodhisattvas become] skilled with respect to emergence [of mind]”,³⁴⁸ Buddha] discusses the emergence of mind. Bodhisattvas who are skilled with respect to extrication of mind are those who understand, just as it is, that a mind — which [emerges] from the bonds of signs of afflictions such as desire etc. and the bonds of assumptions of bad states that are afflictions such as [the view of] true personhood etc. — ‘emerges from those’. Thus, they manifestly establish the great powers of Bodhisattvas.

After having explained emergence of mind, due to being asked, “at what point [do Bodhisattvas become] skilled with respect to increasing [of mind]”,³⁴⁹ Buddha] discusses the increasing of mind. [The passage —] “When a mind that is an antidote to signs and assumptions of bad states is produced and increases, they know, ‘It is produced; it increases’”³⁵⁰ — [indicates that] because they [have attained] a union of

³⁴⁸D p. 74.4; Stog p. 107.1.

³⁴⁹D p. 74.5; Stog p. 107.3.

³⁵⁰D p. 74.5; Stog p. 107.3.

calming and insight that is an antidote to assumptions of bad states, when the signs of engagement [in these assumptions of bad states] increase, [they know that,] 'they increase': they are wise with respect to increasing [of mind]. [344a]

After having explained increasing of mind, [Buddha] discusses diminishment of mind by way of [the passage,] "at what point [do Bodhisattvas become] wise with respect to diminishment [of mind]...."³⁵¹ In [the passage —] "When a mind which is afflicted by signs and assumptions of bad states that are discordant with those [i.e., calming and insight] diminishes and decreases, [they know that,] 'it diminishes; it decreases': they are wise with respect to diminishment [of mind]" — [the phrase,] "that are discordant" refers to 'minds that are involved with hindrances, obstructions, and distractions'.

After having explained diminishment of mind, [Buddha] discusses skill [in method with respect to mind]³⁵² by way of [the passage,] "at what point [do Bodhisattvas become] skilled with respect to method...."³⁵³ [The passage —] "When they meditate on the [eight] spheres of liberation, the [eight] spheres of surpassing, and the [six] spheres of totality..."³⁵⁴ — [indicates that] Bodhisattvas who meditate on the spheres of liberation, the spheres of surpassing, and the spheres of totality are [skilled] with respect to methods of purifying the mind.

[The passage —] "Maitreya, in that way..."³⁵⁵ — [indicates that] Bodhisattvas who are skilled with respect to these six topics³⁵⁶ in that way have manifestly established, will manifestly establish, and are manifestly establishing the great powers of Bodhisattvas; this includes what went before.

³⁵¹D p. 74.5; Stog p. 107.4.

³⁵²As Yeshe Thabkhe. indicates in an oral explanation of this passage, Jñānagarbha is not talking about the doctrine of "skill in means" (*thabs la mkhas pa, upāya-kauśalya*), but rather a specific type of knowledge, "skill in method with respect to mind". Skill in means refers to a Bodhisattva's ability to skillfully adapt approaches and doctrines to the specific capacities, interests, etc. of particular groups and individuals. Jñānagarbha indicates that the skill which is being discussed in the sūtra is developed as a result of purifying the mind through attaining advanced meditative states.

³⁵³D p. 74.6; Stog p. 107.5.

³⁵⁴D p. 74.6; Stog p. 107.6.

³⁵⁵D p. 74.7; Stog p. 107.6.

³⁵⁶These are the six topics under discussion: (1) skill with respect to the arising of mind; (2) skill with respect to abiding of mind; (3) skill with respect to emergence of mind; (4) skill with respect to increasing of mind; (5) skill with respect to diminishment of mind; and (6) skill in method with respect to mind.

In the extensive statement: "With respect to the statement by the Bhagavan, 'In the element of a nirvāṇa without a remainder of aggregates all feelings completely cease...' "³⁵⁷ [Buddha states,] "Maitreya, in brief there are two kinds of feelings: (1) cognitions of assumptions of bad states that are states; and (2) cognitions of objects that are the fruits of those. With respect to that, cognitions of assumptions of bad states that are states should be known as being of four kinds: (1) [assumptions of bad states] that are cognitions of form states...." [This passage indicates that] due to transforming the form aggregate, one cognizes [Buddha] lands, the bodies [of a Buddha,] the [major] marks [of a Buddha,] the minor marks [of a Buddha,] the limitless eloquence [of a Buddha,] and the unperceivable topknot [at the crown of a Buddha's head].³⁵⁸

[The passage, "assumptions of bad states] that are cognitions of formless states" [344b] [refers to] the characteristics of the four kinds of non-form aggregates when they have been transformed. With respect to those, due to transforming the aggregate of feeling [one attains] a cognition that is a basis of extensive, faultless happiness. When the aggregate of discrimination is transformed, [one attains] a cognition that has overlordship with respect to teaching by means of all collections of names, collections of words, and collections of letters. Due to transforming the

³⁵⁷D p. 74.7; Stog p. 107.7.

³⁵⁸A Buddha land is the world or world-system in which a particular Buddha works and lives. See: Teresina Powell, "The Background and Early Use of the Buddhakṣetra Concept", *The Eastern Buddhist* 6.199-430 and 7.131-176.

The major and minor marks of Buddhas are signs that distinguish them. See: *Mahāvīyutpatti* XVII; Wonch'uk (vol. *di* [120], p. 291.5); Byang chub rdzu 'phrul vol. *jo* (206), p. 315.7; and Lamotte, *La Somme du Grand Véhicule d'Asaṅga*, notes pp. 54*-5*. The eighty-two minor marks are also listed there. See also: *La Somme du Grand Véhicule d'Asaṅga*, pp. 286, 295, and 302; and *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra* XXI.57.

According to Yeshe Thabkhe, the limitless eloquence of the Buddha refers to the four ways by which Buddhas get sentient beings to listen to their teachings, called the "means of gathering" (*bsdu ba'i dngos po*, *saṃgraha-vastu*): (1) giving (*sbyin pa*, *dāna*), which involves giving away teachings of doctrine and material goods; (2) speaking pleasantly (*snyan par smra ba*, *priya-vādita*), which involves interesting them in one's teachings of doctrine through pleasant words; (3) beneficial activities (*don spyod pa*, *artha-caryā*), which are activities that accord with what trainees want; and (4) concordant actions (*don mthun pa*, *samanartha*), which involves making one's actions accord with one's words. These are described in *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 1487. See also *Pāli Text Society Dictionary* (London, 1972), p. 666 and *Mahāvīyutpatti* XXXV, 1-4.

The topknot on the crown of a Buddha's head (*spyi gtsug pa*, *uṣṇīṣa*), is a topknot of hair or a growth of the skull of indeterminate size that makes it appear that the head has a turban on it.

aggregate of compositional factors, [one attains] a cognition that brings forth emanations,³⁵⁹ transformations, gatherings of attendants, and pure qualities. Due to transforming the aggregate of consciousness, [one attains] cognitions that are: (1) the mirror-like exalted wisdom (*me long lta bu'i ye shes, ādarśa-jñāna*), (2) [the exalted wisdom of] equality (*mnyam pa nyid [kyi ye shes], samatā[-jñāna]*), (3) [the exalted wisdom of] individual investigation (*so sor rtoḡ pa[i ye shes], pratyavekṣaṇa[-jñāna]*), and (4) the exalted wisdom that accomplishes activities (*bya ba sgrub pa'i ye shes, kriyā-siddhi-jñāna*).

[The passage —] “With respect to that, established results are whatever [have their results] now...”³⁶⁰ — [means that] just those cognitions of form states and formless states arise in that moment. [The passage —] “non-established results are whatever serve as causes in the future” — [refers to] future results of just those.

Also, you should know that cognitions of objects are of four kinds.³⁶¹ What are the four? (1) Cognitions of bases are uncommon establishments of the colors, expanses, measurements, and so forth of inestimable mansions of Tathāgatas. (2) Cognition of property [refers to] appearances of various measureless kinds of property completely transcending those of gods and humans. (3) Cognition of resources [refers to] one's own and others' experiencing of the resources of Mahāyāna qualities by way of the two, enjoyment bodies and emanation bodies. (4) Cognition of reliances [refers to] mastery of those causes and conditions that are cognitions of objects.

In [the passage] — “Moreover, in the element of nirvāṇa that has a remainder of aggregates...”³⁶² — “moreover” [refers to] cognitions of bases and cognitions of objects that are their results. They exist in the element of a Tathāgata's nirvāṇa that has a remainder of aggregates. “Non-established results” are what serve as future causes.

With respect to [the passage,] “experience feelings which arise from contact that is included among cognitions”:³⁶³ [345a] This is because one has not abandoned

³⁵⁹Text correction: the Sde dge text (p. 344b.2) reads: *sgrul pa*; the Peking text (p. 209.2.2) reads: *sprul pa*, and Yeshe Thabkhe indicates that this is the correct reading.

³⁶⁰D p. 75.3; Stog p. 108.3.

³⁶¹This refers to D p. 75.3 and Stog p. 108.4.

³⁶²D p. 75.4; Stog p. 108.5.

³⁶³D p. 75.5; Stog p. 108.5 reads: “one experiences only a feeling that arises from cognitive contact”.

cognitions that are afflicted and that are unafflicted. “Its discordant class has not ceased in all ways” because one obtains cognitions of bases which arise from contact that is included among cognitions. Due to one’s own conceptuality regarding feelings which arise from contact that is subsumed by ignorance — afflicted [feelings] that are a class that is discordant with that [i.e., a nirvāṇa without a remainder of aggregates] and non-afflicted [feelings] — one eliminates the seeds of the arising of uncommon feelings that are apprehenders. Because one obtains cognition of objects which are pleasing results that arise from contact that is included among cognitions, due to the conceptuality of others one also eliminates obstructions with respect to all objects of observation that are seeds of the arising of uncommon feelings that are apprehenders.

With respect to [the passage,] “When one thoroughly passes beyond sorrow in the element of a nirvāṇa without a remainder of aggregates, even that ceases...”³⁶⁴ This is because when states arise from contact that is included within cognitions of Tathāgatas and when cognitions of objects arise in that way, one eliminates even those attainments. The seeds of the arising of feelings and non-feelings are simply the body of the basis-consciousness. [The discussion] is wrapped up³⁶⁵ by [the passage,] “Therefore....”³⁶⁶

Question: If Tathāgatas attain nirvāṇa in the element of a nirvāṇa without a remainder of aggregates, how do they accomplish the aims of others within cyclic existence?

[Response:] Due to the power of former aspirations, even though Tathāgatas attain nirvāṇa they still accomplish the aims of others, because the sport of Tathāgatas is manifold.

[This concludes] the explanation of “The Chapter of the Superior Maitreya” from the *Superior Sutra Explaining the Thought* composed by the master Jñānagarbha.

³⁶⁴D p. 75.5; Stog p. 108.7.

³⁶⁵The Tibetan word is *mjug sdud* (Skt. *nigamyati*). According to the *Bod skad tshig mdzod chen mo*, vol. I, p. 882, this term is used in two ways: (1) the method of wrapping up at the end of a work (*las mjug sgril thabs byed pa*); and (2) condensing the essence at the end of an extensive explanation (*rgyas bshad kyi mthar snying po bsdu ba*).

³⁶⁶D p. 75.6; Stog p. 109.1.

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