

# WHEN THE CLOUDS PART



THE *Uttaratantra* AND ITS MEDITATIVE  
TRADITION AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN  
SŪTRA AND TANTRA

KARL BRUNNHÖLZL





WHEN THE CLOUDS PART

## THE TSADRA FOUNDATION SERIES

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# WHEN THE CLOUDS PART

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The *Uttaratantra*  
and Its Meditative Tradition  
as a Bridge between Sūtra and Tantra

TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY  
Karl Brunnhölzl

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## Abbreviations

BA	Gö Lotsāwa's <i>The Blue Annals</i> ('Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 1996)
C	Chinese version of the <i>Uttaratantra</i> /RGVV
CMW	<i>A Commentary on the Meaning of the Words of the "Uttaratantra"</i> (anonymous)
D	Derge Tibetan Tripiṭaka
GC	Gö Lotsāwa's commentary on the <i>Uttaratantra</i> ('Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 2003b)
GISM	Jamgön Kongtrul's <i>Guiding Instructions on the View of Great Shentong Madhyamaka</i> (Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas 2008)
HLS	Dashi Öser's commentary on the <i>Uttaratantra</i> (Bkra shis 'od zer 2006)
HML	<i>The Heart of the Matter of Luminosity</i> (Skyo ston smon lam tshul khriṃs 2007f)
IM	<i>Instructions on the "Mahāyānottaratantra"</i> (Skyo ston smon lam tshul khriṃs 2007a)
J	Johnston's Sanskrit edition of <i>Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JIASB	<i>Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies</i>
JIBS	<i>Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies</i> (Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū)
JIP	<i>Journal of Indian Philosophy</i>
JKC	Jamgön Kongtrul's commentary on the <i>Uttaratantra</i> (Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas 2005b)

- Lamp* Karmapa Mikyö Dorje's *Lamp That Excellently Elucidates the System of the Proponents of Shentong Madhyamaka* (Mibskyod rdo rje 1990)
- LTWA Library of Tibetan Works and Archives
- MA Sanskrit manuscript A of *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā*
- MB Sanskrit manuscript B of *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā*
- P Peking Tibetan Tripiṭaka (Tokyo-Kyoto: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1956)
- PIW *Pith Instructions on the Wisdom at the Point of Passing when about to Die* (Skyo ston smon lam tshul khirms 2007b)
- RGVV *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā*
- RGVV (D) *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā* Derge Tengyur
- RGVV (P) *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā* Peking Tengyur
- RW *The Repository of Wisdom* (Skyo ston smon lam tshul khirms 2007c)
- RYC Rinchen Yeshé's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (Rin chen ye shes 2010)
- SM Sajjana's *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstropadeśa*
- Taishō Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (The Chinese Buddhist Canon), edited by J. Takakusu and K. Watanabe. Tokyo: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Kankō kai, 1970
- TBRC Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center ([www.tbrc.org](http://www.tbrc.org))
- TOK Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé's *Treasury of Knowledge* (Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas 1982)
- Ut (D) *Uttaratantra* Derge Tengyur
- Ut (P) *Uttaratantra* Peking Tengyur
- VT Vairocanarakṣita's *Mahāyānottaratantraṭippanī*
- WZKS *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*
- YDC Yeshé Dorje's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (Ye shes rdo rje 2010)

## Preface

One may well wonder why there needs to be another book about buddha nature and the *Uttaratantra*. The reasons for this volume are to present hitherto untranslated materials on this text (mainly its Indian commentaries and early Tibetan materials on it) and to shed new light on what is called “the meditative tradition of the Maitreya texts” as well as the *Uttaratantra*’s connections with Mahāmudrā and Shentong.<sup>1</sup>

Though there are a number of translations of the verses of the *Uttaratantra*, the only two pioneering English renderings of its commentary *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā* (RGVV), by Obermiller (from the Tibetan) and Takasaki (from the Sanskrit and Chinese), are quite outdated at this point. This volume contains a new translation of both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV from the Sanskrit and Tibetan, which is further informed by Vairocanaṛakṣita’s (eleventh/twelfth century) brief commentary (unavailable at the time of the earlier translations). The book also contains translations of Sajjana’s (eleventh century) *Mahāyānottaratantrapadeśa* (a versified synopsis of the *Uttaratantra*) and two never-translated Tibetan commentaries, one by a student of Marpa Dopa Chökyi Wangchug<sup>2</sup> (1042–1136) and the other by Dūmo Dashi Öser<sup>3</sup> (late fifteenth to sixteenth century; a student of the Seventh Karmapa and principal teacher of the Eighth). The former commentary (CMW) is one of the earliest Tibetan commentaries on both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV. The latter commentary incorporates the topical outline of the *Uttaratantra* by the Third Karmapa. In addition, this volume includes translations of several short texts that are based on the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, most of them of a contemplative nature—six works by the Kadampa master Kyotön Mönlam Tsültrim<sup>4</sup> (1219–1299), *The Lamp That Excellently Elucidates the System of the Proponents of Shentong Madhyamaka* by the Eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje<sup>5</sup> (1507–1554), and *Guiding Instructions on the View of Great Shentong Madhyamaka* by Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé<sup>6</sup> (1813–1899). These texts, as well as excerpts from others, provide ample scriptural support for the meditative approach to the *Uttaratantra* (versus the exegetical or study approach) and also establish the

ways in which the text is used in the context of Mahāmudrā instructions and the Shentong view.

The introduction provides a survey of the main sūtra sources of the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings and the great variety of explanations of the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* in India and Tibet. It also investigates the history and transmission of the five works of Maitreya from India to Tibet as well as the relationships between the *Uttaratantra* and Yogācāra, Shentong, and Mahāmudrā. Several appendices contain comments by different Indian and Tibetan authors on the crucial verses I.27–28 and I.154–55 of the *Uttaratantra* as well as *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.21 (which is virtually identical with *Uttaratantra* I.154), explanations of the key term “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects,” and some additional comments on the meaning and purpose of teaching *tathāgatagarbha*.

Given this wealth of materials, it is hard to believe that the original scope of this book was actually very modest—simply translating the *Uttaratantra*, RGVV, and Dashi Öser’s commentary, with only a very short introduction. However, in the course of this work, the discovery of CMW<sup>7</sup> and the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim (triggered by BA’s mentioning one of them),<sup>8</sup> as well as closer looks at the above-mentioned texts by Sajjana, the Eighth Karmapa, and Jamgön Kongtrul, led to a fascinating journey. This journey included looking at the different ways in which the Maitreya texts and the *Uttaratantra* in particular were transmitted and interpreted in India and Tibet, how the *Uttaratantra* came to be related with Mahāmudrā in both the Kagyü and Kadampa traditions, how the Shentong view in these traditions (versus the one of Dölpopa) is very compatible with Mahāmudrā, and how the *Uttaratantra* is used as the basis of contemplative Mahāmudrā-style manuals. In particular, for many years I was always intrigued when I heard or saw “the meditative tradition of the Maitreya texts” being mentioned, but it seemed that not much information about its contents, let alone possible scriptural sources, was available. Now, this situation has definitely changed through the study, research, and translation of the above works and other materials. The rich findings on my journey through the worlds of *tathāgatagarbha*, Yogācāra, Shentong, and Mahāmudrā are presented here, and it is my hope that the reader will enjoy the many scenic outlooks on the way (externally as well as internally) as much as I did.

An asterisk (\*) preceding a Sanskrit term or phrase indicates the most probable Sanskrit that corresponds to a Tibetan term or phrase when the original Sanskrit is unavailable or unattested. Superscripted circles (°) that precede, follow, or enclose a Sanskrit term or phrase indicate that this term or phrase is part of a longer compound.

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My deep gratitude and respect go to Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche for all his profound and detailed teachings on the *Uttaratantra* and several of its commentaries over three decades, as well as for being such a living example of buddha nature free from adventitious stains. I am also very thankful to all the Indian, Tibetan, Bhutanese, Chinese, Japanese, American, English, French, German, Danish, Dutch, Polish, and Russian scholars (too many to name here) who have worked on the *Uttaratantra* and related materials before me. Their efforts have supported me greatly in presenting several parts of this book. As always, I am particularly appreciative of, and thankful for, the generous support by the Tsadra Foundation, which has changed my life in a profound way and has made the translations and research in this and other volumes possible. Big thanks also go to Michael Wakoff for his skilled and meticulous editing. I am also grateful to Stephanie Johnston for preparing the layout, as well as kindly listening to the ramblings about my latest discoveries on the journey of putting together this book.

If there is anything in this volume that sounds good, makes sense, and serves as an antidote to ignorance, confusion, and suffering, may it be relished as originating from realized masters and scholars truly vast in learning. Everything else, including all mistakes, can safely be said to be mine.

It is my hope that this work may be a contributing cause for the buddha heart of His Holiness the seventeenth Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, swiftly embracing all sentient beings in whatever ways suitable. May it in particular be of assistance in transplanting and sustaining both the scholarly and meditative traditions of the Karma Kagyü lineage in the English-speaking world, as these were initiated and fostered by all the Karmapas and their followers as a means to enable suffering beings to penetrate the thick clouds of their adventitious obscurations and soar freely through the sky of mind's vast and luminous expanse.



## TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

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## *The Sūtra Sources of the Tathāgatagarbha Teachings*

Possibly the first appearance of the term *tathāgatagarbha* (though not in the sense in which it is used in the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras) has been traced to the Mahāsaṃghika *Ekottarikāgama* (the Chinese recension of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*):

If someone devotes himself to the *Ekottarikāgama*,  
Then he has the *tathāgatagarbha*.  
Even if his body cannot exhaust defilements in this life,  
In his next life he will attain supreme wisdom.<sup>9</sup>

The term is also used once in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* (which is dated prior to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*) as an epithet of Sudhana, without further explanation.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra in One Hundred Fifty Lines* (*Adhyardhaśatikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*) contains the sentence “all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart because their entire being is that of the great bodhisattva Samantabhadra.”<sup>11</sup>

The earliest mahāyāna sūtras that are based on and discuss the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* as the buddha potential that is innate in all sentient beings began to appear in written form in the late second and early third century.<sup>12</sup> To my knowledge, there is no Indian text that provides a list of “*tathāgatagarbha* sūtras,” but the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV spell out their sūtra sources as follows.

The *Uttaratantra* (I.2) declares that its primary source is the *Dhāraṇī-svararājasūtra*, which is said to contain all seven vajra points. RGVV adds the following sūtras as alternative individual scriptural sources for these vajra points—the *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra* (vajra points 1 to 3), the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* (vajra points 4 and 6), the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (vajra point 5), and the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayavatāranirdeśasūtra* (vajra point 7). In addition, *Uttaratantra* III.27 refers to the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* as the source of the sixty-four buddha qualities. RGVV also mentions the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* as the basis for teaching

the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition in detail (which refers to *Uttaratantra* I.143–52, matching the dharmakāya and so on with the nine examples in that sūtra). Though the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* is not explicitly mentioned in the *Uttaratantra*, it is clearly the source of the nine examples for enlightened activity used in the *Uttaratantra*. In addition, RGJV quotes this sūtra several times.

Further important quotes in RGJV related to the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* are from the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* (the example of the universe being painted on a huge canvas and then being inserted into a minute particle, which illustrates tathāgata wisdom pervading the mind streams of all sentient beings), as well as the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchāsūtra* and the *Sāgaramatiparipṛcchāsūtra* (both about luminous mind and its adventitious stains). A famous passage from the *Cūlasuññatasutta*<sup>13</sup> is silently incorporated in RGJV's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55. RGJV also refers to the passage “those with great desire have the nature of absolutely not [attaining] parinirvāṇa,” which is found in several sūtras, among them the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*.<sup>14</sup>

It is obvious that the *Uttaratantra*'s nine examples for the tathāgata heart being obscured by adventitious stains come from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, but neither the *Uttaratantra* nor RGJV explicitly acknowledge this. Likewise, the *Uttaratantra*'s example of the painters who draw a king's portrait (I.88–92), which illustrates the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, is unacknowledged as stemming from the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*.

Later, probably beginning with Dölpopa Sherab Gyaltzen<sup>15</sup> (1292–1361), Tibetan authors began to use the terms “*tathāgatagarbha* sūtras”<sup>16</sup> and “sūtras of definitive meaning” and compiled lists of those types of sūtras. Dölpopa's “ten *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” consist of the following:

1. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
2. *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*
3. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
4. *Mahābherīsūtra*
5. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*
6. *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*<sup>17</sup>
7. *Tathāgatamahākaraṇānirdeśasūtra* (aka *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*)
8. *Tathāgatagañjānācintyaviśayāvatāranirdeśasūtra*
9. *Mahāmeghasūtra*
10. *Parinirvāṇasūtra* and *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (these two are counted as one)<sup>18</sup>

Dölpopa also refers to the first five as “the five *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras.”<sup>19</sup> His “five sūtras of definitive meaning” are the following:

1. *Pañcaśatikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*
2. the “Maitreya Chapter”<sup>20</sup>
3. *Ghanavyūhasūtra*
4. *Praśāntaviniścayaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra*
5. *Ratnameghasūtra*

This list is expanded to “the ten sūtras of definitive meaning” by adding the following:

6. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*
7. *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*
8. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
9. *Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvataṛajñānālokālaṅkārasūtra*
10. *Buddhāvataṛsakasūtra*

The same twenty sūtras in the same order and classification are also found as a contemporary anonymous collection of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras and sūtras of definitive meaning, obviously stemming from the Jonang tradition (the end of the brief introduction to this collection refers to Dölpopa’s self-chosen epithet “the one who possesses the four reliances”). The introduction says the following about what these twenty sūtras teach:

I pay homage to and take refuge in the pure ground that is empty and devoid of the bearers of the nature of phenomena, the nature of phenomena, suchness, the great bliss of self-arising wisdom—the final purity, self, bliss, and permanence—that is the partless omnipresent pervader, the single blend of expanse and wisdom without any flaws of contradiction and beyond mundane examples, dependent origination, dialectics, and consciousness, the sphere of personally experienced wisdom, the ultimate sugata heart resembling the eight mirror divinations, the inseparability of [saṃsāric] existence and peace in which the many are one taste and that incorporates all ultimate buddhas, dharmas, saṃghas, deities, mantras, tantras, maṅḍalas, and mudrās, the natural luminosity that is the inseparability of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, as well as the inseparability of the two realities, and in which there is nothing to be removed or to be added, natural connateness, natural changelessness, great nirvāṇa, great Madhyamaka, Mahāmudrā, profound prajñāpāramitā, and the other-empty dharmakāya that pervades

all of space. Among these profound words of the Buddha that clearly teach those [topics], here the five *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras are . . .

Thus, the five and ten *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras and the five and ten sūtras of definitive meaning need to be read undoubtedly by those who aspire for [only] a few [texts to be read]. In detail, one needs to read the entire *Kangyur* and *Tengyur*, and one definitely needs to cultivate the profound yogas.<sup>21</sup>

The Gelugpa scholars Kedrub Jé Geleg Balsang<sup>22</sup> (1385–1438) and Kungtang Göncho Denpé Drönmé<sup>23</sup> (1762–1823) present the Jonangpa list of ten *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras by replacing the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaśāyāvātāranirdeśasūtra*, *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*, and *Mahāmeghasūtra* in Dölpopa's above list with the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, and *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*.<sup>24</sup> Tuktan Lobsang Chökyi Nyima<sup>25</sup> (1737–1802) has yet another list based on Dölpopa's *Ocean of Definitive Meaning*,<sup>26</sup> which consists of the following:

1. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
2. *Mahābherīsūtra*
3. *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*
4. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
5. *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*
6. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*
7. *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*
8. *Ratnakūṭa*
9. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*

The Nyingma master Gaḥto Rigdzin Tsewang Norbu<sup>27</sup> (1698–1755), an important teacher of the Jonang Shentong and Kālacakratantra traditions for the Eighth Situpa, Chökyi Jungné (1699/1700–1774), wrote a brief versified text,<sup>28</sup> whose title says that it lists “the sūtras of the heart of the definitive meaning of the final teaching cycle that ascertain the ultimate.” This list consists of “the twenty-two sūtras of definitive meaning.” Among these, the “five *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” are the following:

1. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
2. *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*
3. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
4. *Mahābherīsūtra*
5. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*

“The ten *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” are the above five plus the following:

6. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
7. *Ghanavyūhasūtra*
8. *Prasāntavinīśayaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra*
9. *Ratnameghasūtra*
10. *Mahāmeghasūtra*

“The twenty sūtras of definitive meaning” consist of the above ten plus the following:

11. *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*
12. *Mahāśūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*<sup>29</sup>
13. *Pañcaśatikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*
14. “Maitreya Chapter”
15. *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*
16. *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśasūtra* (aka *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*)
17. *Dharmasaṃgītisūtra*
18. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*
19. *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśasūtra*
20. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*

Finally, “the twenty-two sūtras of definitive meaning” consist of the above twenty plus (21) the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra* and (22) the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* (from the *Avataṃsakasūtra*), for these latter two are said to represent “the amazing general meaning of the mahāyāna.”

When compared to Dölpopa’s above lists of “*tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” and “sūtras of definitive meaning,” almost all sūtras in these lists also appear in Tsewang Norbu’s list (the one that appears in the former but not in the latter is the *Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*; those that appear in the latter but not in the former are the *Mahāśūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*, *Dharmasaṃgītisūtra*, and *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra*). However, only the first five *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras are identical in name and classification in both lists, while the classifications of the remaining sūtras as “*tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” or “sūtras of definitive meaning” differ greatly between Dölpopa and Tsewang Norbu.<sup>30</sup>

Almost exactly the same twenty-two sūtras with the same classifications are found in a collection of twenty-two sūtras of definitive meaning by the Gelugpa scholar Tubten Legshé Sangpo<sup>31</sup> (born 1835) from Drepung, who was also active at the Derge printing house. The colophon of this collection says that these twenty-two sūtras represent the texts that are

held to be the final essence of the definitive meaning by the followers of Aśaṅga—the lineage of vast conduct among the two well-known traditions of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra. The only two differences between Tsewang Norbu's and Tubten Legshé Sangpo's lists are that the latter speaks of the first five sūtras as “the five selected *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” and that it replaces the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra* with “the complete elaborations on the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*.”<sup>32</sup> Since some of the quite specific wordings in Tsewang Norbu's text and Tubten Legshé Sangpo's colophon are identical, either the latter relied on the former or both drew from another common (but unknown) source.

*The Essence of Shentong*<sup>33</sup> by Tāranātha (1575–1634) says that Great Madhyamaka (that is, Shentong) relies on sūtras from all three dharma wheels. The sūtras from the first wheel are such as the *Kaccāyanagottasutta* and the *Mahāsuññātasutta*. Those from the second wheel are such as the “Maitreya Chapter” and the *Pañcaśatikāprajñāpāramitā*. Those from the third wheel include the four sūtras of definitive meaning of Mere Mentalism:

1. *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*
2. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
3. *Ghanavyūhasūtra*
4. *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*

The sūtras that teach the final definitive meaning are the following:

1. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
2. *Mahābherīsūtra*
3. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*
4. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
5. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*
6. *Ratnameghasūtra*
7. *Praśantaviniścayasamādhisūtra* and so on.<sup>34</sup>

Based on these sūtras, Tāranātha says, the extraordinary and subtle philosophical system of the perfect dharmadhātu, the tathāgata heart, and the dharmakāya's being permanent, eternal, everlasting, and endowed with all ultimate buddha qualities that are primordially intrinsic was formulated as secret discourses.

Largely following Tāranātha, Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé's JKC also lists the same four sūtras of definitive meaning of Mere Mentalism, which are said to teach the nature of phenomena as being really established ultimately.<sup>35</sup> The sūtras that teach the final definitive meaning are the same

as in Tāranātha's list plus the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*, *Mahāmeghasūtra*, and so on.

Jamgön Kongtrul's GISM speaks of twenty "sūtras of the heart of the definitive meaning in the last [turning of the] wheel" but does not name them.<sup>36</sup> Given Kongtrul's great reliance on Dölpopa and Tāranātha, those twenty sūtras are probably Dölpopa's above "ten sūtras of definitive meaning" and "ten sūtras on the tathāgata heart."

Dzamtang Khenpo Ngawang Lodrö Trappa,<sup>37</sup> (1920–1975) in the preface to his *Great Shentong*,<sup>38</sup> states that the primary scriptural sources of "the causal yāna of definitive meaning" (or sūtra Shentong)<sup>39</sup> are the following eighteen sūtras:

1. the "Maitreya Chapter"
2. *Pañcaśatikāprajñāpāramitā*
3. *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*
4. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
5. *Ghanavyūhasūtra*
6. *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*
7. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
8. sections in the *Ratnakūṭa* collection (such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*)
9. *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*
10. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*
11. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*
12. *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviśayāvatāranirdeśasūtra*
13. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*
14. *Mahāmeghasūtra*
15. *Ratnameghasūtra*
16. *Mahābherīsūtra*
17. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*
18. *Praśāntaviniścayaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra*

Rinchen Yeshé's (thirteenth/fourteenth century) RYC lists more than sixteen "sūtras that ascertain the ultimate and teach the definitive meaning":<sup>40</sup>

1. *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśasūtra* (aka *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*)
2. *Sthirādhyāsayaparivartasūtra*
3. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
4. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
5. *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*
6. *Mahāyānopadeśasūtra*
7. *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*

8. *Tathāgatagaṇajñānācintyaviśayāvatāranirdeśasūtra*
9. *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*
10. *Gaganagaṇjaparipṛcchāsūtra*
11. *Sāgaramatiparipṛcchāsūtra*
12. *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*
13. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*
14. *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*
15. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*
16. *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*<sup>41</sup> and so on

Gorampa Sönam Sengé (1429–1489) explains that the sūtras to be explained by the five Maitreya works are those that are specific to the mahāyāna.<sup>42</sup> Among them, those that are of expedient meaning are sūtras like the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*. Those that are of definitive meaning are the following:

- the prajñāpāramitā sūtras
- Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra*
- Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
- Ratnadārikāparipṛcchāsūtra*
- Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*
- Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra*
- Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
- Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* and so on.

Among these sūtras of definitive meaning, Gorampa says, the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* ascertains the meaning of those that determine a single disposition because it explains solely the prajñāpāramitā sūtras. The *Uttaratantra* comments on the meaning of those sūtras that determine several dispositions because it explains the sūtras of definitive meaning other than the prajñāpāramitā sūtras.

Mipham Rinpoche's main text on buddha nature, *A Synopsis of the Sugata Heart*,<sup>43</sup> cites mainly the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (ten times) in support of *tathāgatagarbha*, while it quotes the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (six times) only in support of *tathāgatagarbha*'s being just a synonym for emptiness, which is an expedient means to help naive beings overcome their fear of emptiness (see below). The text also quotes the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*, *Gaganagaṇjaparipṛcchāsūtra*, *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśasūtra*, *Prasāntaviniścayaaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra*, *Jñānamudrāsamādhisūtra*, and others, but all of



these quotes except the one from the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* do not specifically discuss *tathāgatagarbha*.

In his commentary on the Third Karmapa's *Aspiration Prayer of Mahāmudrā*,<sup>44</sup> the contemporary Kagyü master Sangyé Nyenpa<sup>45</sup> Rinpoche (born 1968) speaks of "the twenty-one sūtras of the definitive meaning, such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (greater and lesser), *Candrapradīpasūtra*,<sup>46</sup> *Mahābherīsūtra*, and *Mahāmeghasūtra*." He adds that those who accept these sūtras as the final definitive meaning hold that the Shentong view represents the meaning of the intention of the sūtras of the final turning and that this view is the very ultimate definitive meaning.<sup>47</sup>

In sum, as per the *Uttaratantra*, RGVV, and the above Tibetan authors, the sūtras explicitly or implicitly associated with *tathāgatagarbha* can be listed as the following twenty-four:

1. *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*
2. *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*
3. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
4. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*
5. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*
6. *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra*
7. *Mahābherīsūtra*
8. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
9. *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintya viśayāvatāranirdeśasūtra*
10. *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokaḷaṃkārasūtra*
11. *Ratnadārikāsūtra*
12. *Mahāmeghasūtra*
13. *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*
14. *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*
15. *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*
16. *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*
17. *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*
18. *Ratnakūṭa*
19. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*
20. *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*
21. *Gaganagaṇjaparipṛcchāsūtra*
22. *Sāgaramatiparipṛcchāsūtra*
23. *Praśāntavinīścayaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra*
24. *Candrapradīpasūtra*

Though several modern scholars have studied the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* and related terms in a number of these sūtras (for details, see below), to my knowledge, there is no comprehensive overview of all the sūtra sources related to the notion of buddha nature and the different ways in which it is treated in these sources. An exhaustive study of all the details of whether, how, and to what extent the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* are represented in the above sūtras is obviously beyond the scope of this book, so the following is just a brief survey of the major points of how buddha nature is discussed in these sūtras.<sup>48</sup>

### *The Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*

The earliest one among these sūtras is the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*,<sup>49</sup> which primarily consists of detailed descriptions of the nine examples for all sentient beings possessing the tathāgata heart that are also found in the *Uttaratantra*. The central and repeated message of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is that all beings bear a fully perfect buddha within themselves. However, these beings are not buddhas yet because they are not aware of the buddhahood that lies within them, which is obscured by the cocoons of afflictions and needs to be pointed out. Still, the true nature of all beings is not different from that of a buddha, and beings will manifest as buddhas once the obscuring afflictions have been removed. As Takasaki (1974) and Zimmermann (1998) point out, this topic is closely related to, and based on, the passage in the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* about buddha wisdom being present in all beings<sup>50</sup> (which precedes the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and is also quoted in RGVV).<sup>51</sup> Zimmermann (1998 and 2002) also points out some relationships and similarities between the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Mahābherīsūtra*, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (see below).

### *The Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*

Another early *tathāgatagarbha* sūtra (and the shortest) is the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*. It is available only in a Chinese translation,<sup>52</sup> and almost one-third is quoted in RGVV, which clearly shows the Indian origin of this sūtra. As its title suggests (*parivarta* means “chapter”), this sūtra may originally have been part of a larger sūtra or a sūtra collection. It has a close thematic relationship with the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and likewise emphasizes the importance of faith as a skillful means for the realization of the tathāgata heart (though not as its actual cause). As in many other

early mahāyāna sūtras, the main interlocutor in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśaparivarta* is Śāriputra.

As its name says, the main theme of the sūtra is the discussion of the lack of increase and decrease. The text says that it is due to the misconception of there being any increase or decrease of the dhātu of sentient beings that beings roam in saṃsāra and wrongly think of nirvāṇa as annihilation or permanence. The root of such misconceptions is their lack of understanding the oneness of the nondual dharmadhātu. This dharmadhātu is the sphere and the great nirvāṇa of buddhas, which cannot be perceived even by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, let alone ordinary beings. Still, buddhas, bodhisattvas, and sentient beings are not different in essence since they are nothing but three different states of the dharmakāya in terms of its being more or less unobscured by adventitious stains. The dhātu of sentient beings is ultimate reality and the tathāgata heart, which is also identified as the dharmakāya, fully endowed with the inseparable, innumerable, and inconceivable qualities of a buddha, just as the radiance, color, and shape of a jewel are inseparable. The three states of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and sentient beings are nondual, being neither the same nor different.

*Tathāgatagarbha* is primordially connected by nature with the inconceivable qualities and wisdoms of a buddha. For the sake of sentient beings, this is described as the naturally pure mind. Also, the tathāgata heart is by nature not connected with the cocoons of the afflictions, which are eliminated only through the awakened wisdom of a tathāgata. For the sake of sentient beings, it is described as the naturally pure mind being tainted by adventitious stains. The *tathāgatagarbha* as the nature of phenomena remains the same and is permanent until the end of time. It is the ground of all phenomena but is itself without arising and ceasing, and represents the permanent, eternal, everlasting, and peaceful refuge that is the inconceivable and pure dharmadhātu (that is, the dharmakāya). Thus, ultimately, sentient beings are without arising and ceasing, as well as endowed with all the qualities of the dharmadhātu. The realization that buddhas, bodhisattvas, and sentient beings are not different in their essence is thus free from the two wrong views of increase and decrease. Thus, when the dharmakāya is obscured by adventitious stains, it is called “sentient being.” When this very same dharmakāya becomes weary of saṃsāra and practices the ten pāramitās and bodhisattva conduct, it is called “bodhisattva.” When it is free from all stains, it is called “buddha.”

As Jikido Takasaki, Diana M. Paul, and Henry Shiu point out, there are a number of common features between the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the

*Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, such as *tathāgatagarbha*'s being associated with sentient beings, its embodying the nature and wisdom of a buddha, its being obscured by adventitious stains, and sentient beings' not being aware of its presence within them. Of course, all these features are also shared with other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras. Shiu adds that the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra* are also closely related to the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* in their presentations of *tathāgatagarbha*.

### *The Śrīmālādevīsūtra*

The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*<sup>53</sup> shares even more ideas with the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* and explains them in greater detail (it even contains some almost identical passages). Just as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* and other sūtras, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* speaks of the single yāna (the budhayaṇa) and links this notion to *tathāgatagarbha*. Like the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, it speaks of the dharmakāya as “the permanent and everlasting refuge” and also takes the *tathāgatagarbha* to be the basis of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Both sūtras use the same terms to describe the dharmakāya—“permanent,” “eternal,” “everlasting,” and “peaceful,” which also appear repeatedly as typical terms in the *Uttaratantra* and *RGVV*. Furthermore, both sūtras speak of the inseparable and inconceivable buddha qualities of the *tathāgata* heart that cannot be realized as being divisible from it and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā in number. They also equate *tathāgatagarbha* with the dharmakāya obscured by stains and say that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas cannot realize *tathāgatagarbha*. However, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*'s discussion of “those with great desire” (*icchāntika*),<sup>54</sup> who cling to the dharmakāya and the dhātu of sentient beings as being different, is not mentioned in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*.

Further crucial notions in the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* include linking *tathāgatagarbha* with emptiness in a particular twofold way—the *tathāgata* heart (or naturally luminous mind) is empty of adventitious stains but not empty of its limitless inseparable qualities. This is said to be the correct understanding of emptiness, and to understand *tathāgatagarbha* means to understand emptiness. Those who cling to everything's being purely empty are those whose minds are distracted from emptiness's being understood in a proper manner (*śūnyatāvīkṣiptacitta*).<sup>55</sup> Also, the sūtra speaks of the fruition of *tathāgatagarbha* being the dharmakāya that consists of the four pāramitās of purity, self, bliss, and permanence.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, the crucial notion of “the ground of the latent

tendencies of ignorance” as the basis and sum of all obscurations of the tathāgata heart is used several times in the sūtra. Besides all these elements also being found in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, the general outstanding significance of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* for the teachings on buddha nature is highlighted by the fact that it is the sūtra with by far the greatest number of quotes and references in RGVV (cited twenty-eight times).

### The Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra

Given that the *Uttaratantra* identifies the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*<sup>57</sup> as its main source, it is quite surprising that this sūtra never even mentions terms such as *tathāgatagarbha* or *buddhadhātu*. It contains, however, the term “disposition/lineage of the three jewels” (Tib. *dkon mchog gsum gyi rigs*) six times.<sup>58</sup> Of course, the Tibetan would fit very well with the term *ratnago-tra* in *Ratnago-travibhāga*. However, *dkon mchog gsum gyi rigs* renders both *triratnavaṃśa* and *ratnatrayago-tra* (or *triratnago-tra*), and a quote from the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* in RGVV has *triratnavaṃśa*<sup>59</sup> The term is used in a uniform manner in the sūtra (“not interrupting the lineage of the three jewels”), paralleling the notion of bodhisattvas’ “not interrupting the buddha lineage (*buddhavaṃśa*)” in texts such as the *Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra* and the *Kāśyapaparivarta* (see below), which does not suggest the typical notion of buddha nature. Given this uniform use in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, it is to be assumed that the remaining occurrences of *dkon mchog gsum gyi rigs* in this sūtra also render *triratnavaṃśa* and not *ratnatrayago-tra* (which is found in the text of RGVV proper). Thus, tempting as it may be, the assumption that the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* gave the *Ratnago-travibhāga* its name is very unlikely.<sup>60</sup>

The sūtra also speaks several times of “the dhātu (or basic element) of sentient beings,” adding sometimes that it is impure, not stainless, and associated with afflictions or flaws. It also classifies this dhātu of sentient beings as threefold—“being certain in terms of what is correct,” “being uncertain,” and “being certain in terms of what is mistaken” (all of this is also found in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV). In particular, the sūtra states several times that the Buddha looks at the impure dhātus of sentient beings and then guides those who are suitable through his enlightened activity.

However, when investigating the extensive passages from the introduction and the beginning of the main part of this sūtra that RGVV and Tibetan commentaries (such as CMW) identify as the sources of the *Uttaratantra*’s seven vajra points, one does not find much that corresponds

to the distinct terminologies and concepts through which the *Uttaratantra* explains these vajra points.

In terms of the first three vajra points, the sūtra speaks about the consummate causes of the three jewels and their infinite and unsurpassable qualities in great detail but not in the way the *Uttaratantra* describes the ultimate qualities of the three jewels.

The fourth vajra point—the tathāgata heart—is said by RGVV to be explained by the sixty factors of purification in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. However, even according to RGVV itself, those factors teach the tathāgata heart only by implication:

The buddha element is explained through a description of the sixty kinds of factors that purify its [natural] purity because it is [only] if the object to be purified is endowed with qualities that purifications of its purity are justified.

Indeed, the passages in the sūtra about these factors of purification contain nothing about the tathāgata heart but only describe the four ornaments, eight illuminations, sixteen kinds of compassion, and thirty-two kinds of activities of bodhisattvas.

The fifth through seventh vajra points—awakening, its qualities, and its enlightened activity—are said by RGVV to be taught by the sūtra's passages on the eighty divisions of the attributes of the victors. Among these, awakening is explained through the sixteen great aspects of awakening, due to which sixteen corresponding forms of great compassion engage those who have not attained awakening. The qualities of awakening are taught as consisting of the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the eighteen unique buddha qualities (this seems to be the only part of the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* that actually matches one part in the *Uttaratantra*'s explanation of its vajra points).<sup>61</sup> The sūtra contains no separate discussion of the thirty-two kinds of enlightened activities other than explaining that each of the above thirty-two qualities performs a certain activity that accords with this quality (thus, these thirty-two qualities include the thirty-two kinds of enlightened activities). In addition, this section in the sūtra is followed by a further general discussion of buddha activity.

It is this last section that contains the famous example of purifying an encrusted beryl in three stages, which is also quoted in RGVV. It is only here that we find a discussion of the impure dhātu (or basic element) in all sentient beings' being likewise purified in three steps through the Buddha's

first teaching on impermanence, suffering, identitylessness, and impurity, secondly teaching on emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness, and finally teaching on the complete purity of the three spheres,<sup>62</sup> which eventually makes sentient beings enter the domain of the tathāgatas.<sup>63</sup>

### The Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra

First of all, there are two types of sūtras with the name *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, whose main topic consists of the events surrounding the last days of the Buddha. The earlier version of this sūtra, which is contained in the Pāli canon (there are also Sanskrit and Chinese versions),<sup>64</sup> is a comprehensive compendium of hīnayāna ideas. The later version,<sup>65</sup> which is discussed here, also contains some of the well-known episodes toward the end of the Buddha's life but treats them mainly as convenient starting points for the discussion of mahāyāna ideas, such as *mahāparinirvāṇa*'s actually referring to the permanent and blissful nature of the dharmakāya and buddha nature's being universally present in all sentient beings. This sūtra's presentation of buddha nature became the main scriptural basis for the discussion of *tathāgatagarbha* in China.

The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* equates the term *tathāgatagarbha* with "buddha element" (*buddhadhātu*; the same is done in the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*, *Mahābherīsūtra*, *Uttaratantra*, and RGVV) as well as with the single yāna, and says that buddha nature is an equivalent of buddhahood or perfect awakening. Buddha nature is eternal, pure, real, virtuous, and will be realized by everyone in the future. Similar to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, this resultant buddha nature—the dharmakāya—is said to consist of the four pāramitās of permanence, bliss, purity, and a self. Buddha nature itself is also equated with the notion of a self, but there is a clear warning of confusing this "correct" self with the notion of *ātman* in its ordinary sense. Furthermore, buddha nature as a result (buddhahood) is endowed with a perfect buddha's ten powers, four fearlessnesses, eighteen unique qualities, major and minor marks, and so on. What it lacks or is free from are all kinds of karmas and their results, afflictions, the skandhas, and the twelve links of dependent origination.<sup>66</sup>

In this sūtra, the statement "all sentient beings possess buddha nature" is repeatedly explained to mean that they will possess perfect awakening in the future but do not possess the major and minor marks of a buddha right now. In order for this awakening to happen, sentient beings (the direct or primary cause) must practice the six pāramitās (the auxiliary causes), just as milk is made into cream or butter through additional other conditions.

Consequently, the sūtra vehemently criticizes people who misinterpret the teachings on buddha nature to mean that all beings have already attained buddhahood and that there is thus no need for the practices of a bodhisattva. Rather, beings can perceive their buddha nature only if they make efforts in the Buddhist path. The sūtra even says that if one regards the expression “possessing buddha nature” to mean “possessing it at present,” it must then be said that sentient beings do *not* possess buddha nature. That buddha nature is both nonexistent at present and existent in the future is presented as an expression of the Buddhist middle path. Similarly, the sūtra says that if one sees everything to be empty but fails to see what is not empty, this is not called “the middle path.” Likewise, if one sees everything as the lack of a self but fails to see what is the self, this is not called “the middle path.” What is called “the middle path” is the buddha element (that is, *tathāgatagarbha*).

In the same vein, the sūtra also frequently refers to the *tathāgata* heart as being a seed and illustrates it through the examples of flowers’ growing out of elephant tusks when it rains and butter’s being made from milk. In those cases, buddha nature is obviously regarded as a potential that becomes fully developed only later.

On the other hand, the sūtra’s examples of a pearl embedded in the forehead of a strong man, a treasure beneath the earth, and a gold mine suggest that buddha nature is immanent in sentient beings and only needs to be revealed. The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* explicitly refers to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and attributes the statement that the *buddhadhātu* is present in all sentient beings to this sūtra (this could also mean that the examples of a hidden treasure and a gold mine, though different in details, may have been inspired by the similar examples in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*). In that vein, the sūtra also states that buddha nature is not newly created but only prevented from being seen by adventitious stains. Furthermore, the text says, just as an empty bottle is empty only of liquid but not of its own color and shape, liberation is empty only of afflictions and suffering but is not empty in the sense of being nonexistent. By contrast, the sūtra declares elsewhere that buddha nature abides nowhere and thus is also not in sentient beings, just as sound does not abide in any part of a lute.

In sum, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* discusses three very different meanings of all sentient beings’ possessing buddha nature—(1) all are endowed with an intrinsic pure nature of which they will become fully aware once what obscures it has been removed, (2) all possess a seed or potential for buddhahood, which will grow into its full fruition in the future once all



necessary conditions are present, and (3) the mahāyāna path to buddhahood is open for all, and its result is definite if one follows this path.

Among these three positions, the third is probably the one that has the most support in this sūtra for several reasons. The sūtra repeatedly encourages its audience to avoid metaphysical speculations as in (1) and (2) and to focus on the practices that actually lead to buddhahood. Also, it contains several passages that strongly deny buddha nature to be an entity that is inherent in sentient beings, such as, “If some hold that all sentient beings definitely possess the tathāgata heart, which is permanent, blissful, a self, and pure, and that it is neither produced nor born but is not perceived by sentient beings due to the existence of stains, it should be understood that they slander the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha.” Besides the above example of the lute, the sūtra contains further passages that greatly oppose the notion of future buddhahood’s being based on some dormant potential that exists at present, such as saying that if milk already had the nature of butter, it would not need any other conditions to become butter. Likewise, sentient beings are said not to have the nature of buddhas intrinsically but need to rely on the conditions of practicing the pāramitās and so on. In addition, ultimately, no phenomenon has any definite nature whatsoever. Furthermore, the sūtra explains that sentient beings are said to possess buddha nature in contrast to inanimate things because they, unlike stones and so on, are able to attain buddhahood. In general, the sūtra often emphasizes the practical implications of the teachings on buddha nature, such as its being praised by bodhisattvas in order to encourage sentient beings to give rise to bodhicitta. The Buddha also says that buddha nature is in fact not a self but is only described as a self for the sake of guiding certain beings.

The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*’s position on the notion of “those with great desire” (*icchāntika*) is as ambiguous as its position on buddha nature. “Those with great desire” are consistently portrayed in this sūtra as possessing all the major flaws described in Buddhism (such as enjoying evil deeds, putting down the mahāyāna dharma, and committing the five actions of immediate consequence),<sup>67</sup> and they are said to be incurable. Consequently, the first part of the sūtra denies that those with great desire, who are like a scorched seed, possess buddha nature and that they ever attain buddhahood (which of course stands in direct opposition to the sūtra’s passages that state that all sentient beings possess buddha nature). By contrast, later passages affirm that those with great desire possess buddha nature, can definitely attain buddhahood, and only temporarily lack roots of virtue.<sup>68</sup> Despite these extensive discussions of the notion of *icchāntika*, the sūtra

never uses the terms “disposition” (*gotra*) or “those who lack the disposition” (*agoṭraka*).

In sum, these very different and even contradictory positions on buddha nature and the notion of *icchantika* in the same sūtra suggest that the versions of this sūtra that we have now were compiled from different sources (as is the case with other mahāyāna sūtras, such as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*).

### *The Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*

Like the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*<sup>69</sup> is a mahāyāna version of an earlier *Nikāya* sūtra with the same name,<sup>70</sup> and it also stresses the ethical and practical aspects of the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings. For example, the sūtra says that practitioners keep proper Buddhist discipline and so on because they possess buddha nature.

The sūtra centers around the ex-serial killer Aṅgulimāla, whose guru had told him to kill one thousand people and collect a finger from each one, which he wore as a necklace (thus his name “Finger-Necklace”). After having murdered 999 persons, he met the Buddha and intended to make him his last victim. However, despite his running as fast as he could, he could not reach the Buddha, who kept walking at normal speed. After a brief conversation, he became the Buddha’s student and quickly attained arhathood. As one of its highlights, the sūtra contains a debate between the arhat Aṅgulimāla and Mañjuśrī (who defends the emptiness of the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras) on the correct understanding of emptiness, *nirvāṇa*, *tathāgatagarbha*, and the *dharmakāya*, which clearly favors the superiority of emptiness as having the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* and buddhahood’s being empty only of stains but not in every respect (of course, this is reminiscent of Tibetan debates about Rangtong and Shentong). The debate culminates in Mañjuśrī’s encouraging Aṅgulimāla to meditate on the great emptiness of all phenomena that is nothing whatsoever.<sup>71</sup> Aṅgulimāla asks Mañjuśrī what the meaning of always saying “empty, empty” is, which Mañjuśrī answers with a verse about all phenomena’s, including the *kāyas* and wisdoms of the Buddha, being like space, without characteristics, ungraspable, and formless. Aṅgulimāla replies as follows:

Childish beings may think of hailstones as being gems and take them home, but then they see them melt and think, “Oh, they are empty.” Likewise, through reflecting and meditating on utter emptiness, you, Mañjuśrī, see all phenomena dissolve. You even think that liberation, which is not empty, is empty. Just as some people may meditate on gems

as being empty due to their mistaking hailstones for gems and seeing those hailstones melt away, you even think of nonempty phenomena as being empty. Seeing phenomena as empty, you also destroy nonempty phenomena as being empty. However, empty phenomena are different from nonempty phenomena. Just like hailstones, the billions of afflictions are empty. Just like hailstones, nonvirtuous phenomena swiftly perish. But the Buddha and liberation are permanent, like a beryl. As for space, buddhas have form, while all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack form. The liberation of a buddha is also form, while the liberations of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack form, so how can you say that the characteristic of liberation is to be empty? Do not entertain this notion of there being no [such] divisions.

If there are no people in a house, it is empty. If there is no water in a vase, it is empty. If no water flows in a river, it is empty. The house is not empty in all respects—it is called “empty” because there are no people in it. The vase is not empty in all respects—it is called “empty” because there is no water in it. The river is not empty in all respects—it is called “empty” because no water flows in it. Likewise, liberation is not empty in all respects—it is called “empty” because it is free from all flaws. The Buddha is not empty either—he is called empty because he is free from all flaws and lacks any human or divine existence entailing billions of afflictions. Alas, Mañjuśrī, you behave like a mosquito, not understanding the precise meaning of empty and nonempty. The Nirgranthas<sup>72</sup> also meditate on everything’s being empty, so you Nirgrantha mosquito, say no more!<sup>73</sup>

Prior to this debate, the Buddha answers the classical question why all sentient beings are not enlightened, if they all possess the tathāgata heart. He says that even if all buddhas searched with great effort, they would never find any stains in the tathāgata heart, and this stainless tathāgata heart adorned with infinite major and minor marks exists in all sentient beings.<sup>74</sup> The tathāgata heart is covered by billions of afflictions and thus is invisible, like oil in a thorough mix of oil and lots of water. However, just like oil and water, there is no chance for the buddha element and these afflictions ever becoming blended into one. Though the former abides within the latter, it is like a lamp in a vase—once the vase is broken, the lamp shines brightly and beautifully. Or, the śrāvakas of the buddha are like the vase and their lack of afflictions is like the lamp. Once the billions of afflictions break like the vase through engaging in the path to liberation, the entire dharmadhātu

is eventually seen like a myrobalan fruit in the palm of one's hand.<sup>75</sup> Also, when the sun and moon are covered by clouds, they do not shine on the earth, but they do shine once they are freed from clouds. Likewise, if the tathāgata heart is covered by the billions of afflictions, it does not shine, but the sun or moon of the buddha element shines once it is liberated from these afflictions. Anybody who teaches the tathāgata heart is called "a perfect buddha," no matter whether they possess afflictions or are free from them.

Similar to the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* and also echoing the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* says that the inconceivable pure dharmadhātu is the ultimate single refuge that is unborn, unceasing, permanent, eternal, everlasting, and peaceful, that there is only a single yāna (the one that leads to the realization of the tathāgata heart), and that the tathāgata heart is nothing but the natural purity of the mind. The afflictions are said to arise from not knowing this natural purity of the mind (just as the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* says that all wrong views, afflictions, and so on, arise from not knowing the single dhātu). The *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* likewise identifies the dhātu (or basic element) of sentient beings with this single dhātu and, similar to the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, moreover equates both with the "dhātu that is the self" (*ātmadhātu*), which is in turn closely related to the pāramitā of self as found in both the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*. Also, the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* explicitly draws attention to the significance of the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras and the need to appreciate them properly.

The *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* even quotes the famous second verse of the *Dhammapada* and says that this verse intends the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* to be nothing but the natural purity of the mind:

Mind precedes phenomena,  
 Mind is their chief, from mind they spring.  
 Those who speak or act with a pure mind  
 Happiness will follow like their shadow.

What distinguishes the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* from other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras are its detailed discussions (usually in the form of dialogues) of the correct and incorrect views on *tathāgatagarbha*, emptiness, nirvāṇa, and the dharmakāya, which progressively guide the reader up to the ultimate view through gradually clarifying different levels of misunderstanding.

Given the obvious importance of the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* for the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings and its (in all probability) availability prior to the

*Uttaratantra* and RGVV, it is very surprising that it is not mentioned in either the *Uttaratantra* or RGVV (or in any of the other commentaries in this volume except for a few references in GC and its merely being listed as a *tathāgatagarbha* sūtra in JKC).

### The Mahābherīsūtra

Similar to some of the above sūtras, this text also states that the Buddha as well as the tathāgata heart are permanent, eternal, everlasting, peaceful, and a self.<sup>76</sup> Śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have newly entered the mahāyāna are incapable of realizing the parinirvāṇa of the buddhas as permanent, eternal, everlasting, and peaceful. It is only bodhisattva mahāsattvas who understand the eternal character of the Tathāgata as well as the existence of the tathāgata heart, without abandoning the two-fold identitylessness of persons and phenomena. Those bodhisattvas are able to distinguish teachings of expedient meaning and definitive meaning. Among other positive activities, they will preserve the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras and teach their benefit.

Similar to the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Mahābherīsūtra* uses the example of the progressive refinement of milk into butter and ghee (clarified butter) for the progressive manifestation of the pure essence of buddha nature. Ordinary beings with wrong views are said to be like an impure mixture of milk and blood, while those who have taken refuge in the three jewels resemble pure milk. Those who pursue the dharma out of faith and new bodhisattvas are similar to cream. Śrāvakas and bodhisattvas on the first seven bhūmis are like fresh butter. Śrāvaka and pratyekabuddhas arhats as well as bodhisattvas on the ninth and tenth bhūmis resemble melted butter, while tathāgatas are similar to ghee.

In this sūtra, the Buddha uses the terms *tathāgatagarbha*, *tathāgatadhātu*, and *buddhadhātu* interchangeably. He also links *tathāgatagarbha*, which is said to be infinitely luminous and pure, with the notions of the single dhātu and the single yāna. The wisdoms of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas as well as the sūtras on emptiness are like a city conjured up by the leader of a travel party for the weary travelers to rest for a while, whereas buddhahood resembles the actual final destination of this party, a marvelous and real huge city with a great abundance of everything. Thus, the teachings on the three yānas and the three nirvāṇas are of expedient meaning and have only a temporary purpose. The Buddha even proclaims that those who say that sūtras such as the *Mahābherīsūtra* do not exist are not his students and he is not their teacher.

Any sūtras that teach on emptiness should be understood to entail a certain intention behind them, whereas unsurpassable sūtras like the *Mahābherīsūtra* do not bear any intention behind them. Those who are lazy, have corrupt discipline, and whose body, speech, and mind are not under control will cast away the sūtras that teach on the permanence of the Buddha and the tathāgata heart and will instead train in the sūtras on emptiness. Similar to Aṅgulimāla above, the Buddha also says that the sūtras on emptiness are only of expedient meaning and that those who do not understand the meaning of emptiness and identitylessness properly are ruined. For emptiness and identitylessness apply only to the obscuring afflictions, while their basis—great nirvāṇa—is eternal and peaceful.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, according to the Buddha, he teaches the notion of no-self only in order to overcome the worldly notion of a self. The notion of no-self amazes people and so they become curious to hear the dharma. Once they have entered the teachings and their faith has grown, they diligently train in the dharma of emptiness. Thereafter, the Buddha says, I teach them that liberation is existent, eternal, peaceful, and has form. The existence of such liberation shows that there exists the true self—the tathāgata heart—in sentient beings, just as smoke shows the existence of fire. However, this true self, which is like gold covered by ore,<sup>78</sup> or a precious jewel inside a mountain, is not like the worldly views about a self, or like any views about permanence and extinction.

In answer to Kāśyapa's question, "If there is such a true self, why is it not seen?" the Buddha teaches four examples as reasons for the existence of the tathāgata heart in all sentient beings and its being obscured only by adventitious stains.<sup>79</sup> This tathāgata heart, he says, is adorned with infinite major and minor marks, and through it, sentient beings will attain nirvāṇa. For example, a film over our eyes makes us blind for as long as we do not obtain some medicine, but we will regain our eyesight once we have taken that medicine. Likewise, the cocoon of billions of afflictions covers the basic element of beings, which is like an eye. It is not seen by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas but only by those who delight in the Buddha. The remaining three examples are the moon covered by clouds, someone's digging a well and eventually finding water under many layers of earth, and a lamp within a vase. Just as this lamp, the tathāgata heart within the vase of saṃsāric afflictions does not shine upon and promote the welfare of beings until this vase of saṃsāra is broken.

### The Laṅkāvatārasūtra

It seems that most modern scholars agree that this sūtra originated later than the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, which would explain why it is not quoted or referred to in these texts.<sup>80</sup> This may be supported by the date 420 CE of the earliest Chinese translation of the sūtra (which is now lost) as well as its not being explicitly quoted by name in Indian texts before the time of Sthiramati and Dharmapāla (if one disregards the attribution of the *Sūtrasamuccaya* to Nāgārjuna, which contains four quotes from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, mentioning it by name). On the other hand, Lindtner (1992) pointed out a number of close textual relationships between this sūtra and early Madhyamaka texts by Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva. In any case, that this sūtra is not mentioned in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV<sup>81</sup> is not necessarily due to its possible later origin. Its equation of *tathāgatagarbha* with emptiness and the ālaya-consciousness, as well as its statement that *tathāgatagarbha* is taught only for the sake of removing fear of emptiness and attracting non-Buddhists, clearly do not accord with the position of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV and are reason enough for these texts not to refer to it. This very issue also seems to be responsible for the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*'s not being included in any of the above lists of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras despite its detailed discussions of the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*.

The entire *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* consists of a dialogue between the Buddha and the bodhisattva Mahāmāti. Though this sūtra is not mentioned in the *Uttaratantra*, RGVV, or the above lists of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras (except for Mipham's *Synopsis*, but only in a very limited sense), it discusses the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* in great detail. However, in accordance with its generally heterogeneous nature of saying different things in different places, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* uses the term *tathāgatagarbha* in a number of very different ways. For example, the text speaks several times of *tathāgatagarbha* as being the sphere of the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones. *Tathāgatagarbha* is also equated with suchness and the perfect nature (*pariniṣpanna*):

Mahāmāti, what is the perfect nature here? It is as follows. It is the sphere of the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones, the attainment of the realization of suchness by the wisdom of the noble ones, which is free from conceptions about the characteristics of causal features, names, and entities. Mahāmāti, the perfect nature is the very heart of the tathāgata heart.<sup>82</sup>

The tenth chapter equates *tathāgatagarbha* with naturally luminous mind and, similar to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, uses the examples of gold ore and a stained cloth for the *tathāgata* heart's being obscured by adventitious stains. Like most of the above *sūtras*, it even equates *tathāgatagarbha* with the true self, which is clearly distinguished from the self of the *tīrthikas* and even outshines the lack of self:

The dialecticians who are confused in the thicket  
Of consciousness, lack the proper doctrine,  
And wish to propound a self  
Just keep running here and there.

The self to be realized in one's personal experience  
Has the characteristic of purity.  
This *tathāgata* heart  
Is not the sphere of dialecticians.

...

The *ālaya* that is held to be like this heart  
Is described by the *tīrthikas*  
As being associated with a self,  
But that is not what the *dharma*s [of the *buddha*s] proclaim.

Through distinguishing these [two selves],  
Liberation and reality are seen  
And the afflictions to be relinquished  
Through seeing and familiarization are purified.

Naturally luminous mind  
Is the pure *tathāgata* heart,  
But this appropriation of sentient beings  
Is free from limit and nonlimit.

The color of gold and the pure gold  
In gravel become visible  
Through cleansing it—so it is with the *ālaya*  
Of the *skandhas* in a sentient being.<sup>83</sup>

*Buddha* is neither a person  
Nor the *skandhas* but uncontaminated wisdom.



Having familiarized with it, it is always peacefulness—  
In it, I take my refuge.

That mind's natural luminosity  
Is associated with mentation and so on,  
Afflictions, and a self  
Is what the supreme speaker has taught.

...

The naturally luminous self  
Is afflicted by beginningless  
Adventitious afflictions and is purified  
Like a garment [from the dirt it] possesses.

Just as a garment becoming stainless  
And gold becoming free from flaws  
Remain and are not destroyed,  
So this self is without any flaws.<sup>84</sup>

The verses that follow these provide a number of examples for this tathāgata heart—the true self as opposed to the mistaken notion of a personal self—not being seen in the skandhas by the ignorant (similar to a woman's not seeing her own womb, jewels in the earth, or the healing essence of a medicinal plant). This passage of the sūtra concludes with praising the true self and strongly criticizing the view that there is no such self:

If the self does not exist, there are no  
Bhūmis, masteries, supernatural knowledges,  
No unsurpassable empowerments,  
And no special samādhis.

Unspeakable are those who speak of the lack of the self—  
They separate themselves from the activities of bhikṣus,  
Harm the dharmas of the Buddha,  
And entertain views about existence and nonexistence.

This pronouncement of the self blazes  
Like the fire at the end of time,  
Consumes the jungle of the lack of the self,  
And is liberated from the flaws of the tīrthikas.<sup>85</sup>

In that vein and similar to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* also uses the distinct term “a mind distracted from/by emptiness” (*śūnyatāvīkṣiptamati*):

Mahāmati, it is the tathāgata heart, which is the cause of nirvāṇa, happiness, and suffering, that circles in saṃsāra. Naive ordinary beings whose minds are distracted by emptiness do not understand this.<sup>86</sup>

The sūtra also says that *tathāgatagarbha* is the primordially pure luminosity that possesses all the major marks of a buddha and always dwells immutably within all sentient beings, similar to a gem wrapped in a dirty cloth:

Then, the bodhisattva mahāsattva Mahāmati said the following to the Bhagavān: “The Bhagavān taught the tathāgata heart in the discourses of the sūtra collection. You stated that, by virtue of the purity of natural luminosity, it is primordially pure, endowed with the thirty-two major marks, and hidden within the bodies of all sentient beings. The Bhagavān declared that, just like a gem of great value wrapped in a stained cloth, it is wrapped up in the cloth of the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas, is tainted by the stains of desire, hatred, ignorance, and false imagination<sup>87</sup> [but] is permanent, eternal, peaceful, and everlasting.”<sup>88</sup>

The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* uses several synonyms for *tathāgatagarbha*, such as “buddha disposition” and “tathāgata disposition.” This disposition is described as not only being free from all eight consciousnesses but also free from the essential teachings to be cultivated on the path, such as the three natures and twofold identitylessness. At the same time, it is adorned with all kinds of qualities, such as supernatural knowledges, samādhis, and powers:

Mind, twofold identitylessness,  
Mentation, consciousness,  
The [three] natures, and the five dharmas<sup>89</sup>  
Do not exist in my disposition.

What is free from the characteristics of mind,  
Without consciousness and mentation,  
And lacks the dharmas and natures  
Is the tathāgata disposition.

...

What is adorned by supernatural knowledges,  
Faculties, samādhis, and powers  
And endowed with all kinds of mental bodies  
Is the pure tathāgata disposition.

Stainless personal experience  
And free from causal features—  
The eighth bhūmi and the buddhabhūmi  
Are the tathāgata disposition.<sup>90</sup>

Likewise, the ninth and tenth bhūmis are also said to represent the tathāgata disposition.<sup>91</sup> In addition, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* clearly and repeatedly affirms that there is only a single yāna—the one to buddhahood. Obviously, all of this is very much in line with what other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras teach and also resembles the examples used in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*.

On the other hand, the Buddha explicitly states in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that what all sūtras of all buddhas teach is nothing but emptiness, nonarising, nonduality, and the lack of nature.<sup>92</sup> In addition, the sūtra often discusses these topics as well as the notion of identitylessness in detail. Clearly, this does not accord with the above passages in the same sūtra, or with statements in other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras. It corresponds rather to the well-known passages in the *Samādhirājasūtra* and the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra* about which sūtras are of definitive meaning, namely, those that teach emptiness and its equivalents,<sup>93</sup> which were followed by all Mādhyamikas. Given this discrepancy, Mahāmāti of course asks how the Buddha's above teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* (which is even explicitly called “the self”) are different from the *ātman* of the Hindus:

In that case, Bhagavan, isn't the doctrine of the tathāgata heart similar to the doctrine of the self of the tīrthikas? Bhagavan, the tīrthikas too teach the doctrine of the self, which is a permanent creator, without qualities, all-pervasive, and imperishable.<sup>94</sup>

In his answer, the Buddha declares that *tathāgatagarbha* is not like the *ātman* and that it actually is another word for emptiness. It was taught for the sake of preventing fear of emptiness in certain people and as a means to expediently guide non-Buddhists into the Buddhist teachings:

The Bhagavān said, “Mahāmati, my instruction on the tathāgata heart is not similar to the doctrine of the self of the tīrthikas. Rather, Mahāmati, the tathāgatas give the instruction on the tathāgata heart as bearing the meaning of words such as emptiness, true end, nirvāṇa, nonarising, signlessness, and wishlessness.<sup>95</sup> Thus, for the sake of relinquishing what makes naive beings afraid of the lack of a self, the tathāgata arhats, the completely perfect buddhas, teach the sphere of nonconceptuality and nonappearance through the introductory instruction on the tathāgata heart.

Now, Mahāmati, future and present bodhisattva mahāsattvas should not cling to the self. Mahāmati, a potter makes various containers from a single lump of clay of one sort with his hands, artistic skill, a stick, water, and a rope. Mahāmati, likewise, through all kinds of forms of prajñā and skill in means, the tathāgatas [teach] phenomenal identitylessness, in which all characteristics of conceptions have terminated, either through the instruction on the [tathāgata] heart or through the instruction on identitylessness. Just like a potter, they teach it through all kinds of words, expressions, and synonyms. For that reason, Mahāmati, the instruction on the tathāgata heart is not the same as the instruction on the doctrine of the self of the tīrthikas.

Thus, Mahāmati, the tathāgatas teach the instruction on the tathāgata heart through teaching the tathāgata heart in order to attract the tīrthikas, who cling to the doctrine of the self. So how may those whose thinking falls into the views of conceiving an incorrect self and those who succumb to falling into the sphere of three [kinds of] liberation<sup>96</sup> swiftly awaken to unsurpassable and completely perfect awakening? Mahāmati, it is for their sake that the tathāgata arhats, the completely perfect buddhas, give the instruction on the tathāgata heart. Therefore, this is not similar to the doctrine of a self of the tīrthikas. Consequently, in order to put an end to the views of the tīrthikas, they need to become followers of the heart of nonself of a tathāgata (*tathāgatanairātmyagarbha*).<sup>97</sup>

Thus, here the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* seems to present the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* as a provisional means, while in reality *tathāgatagarbha* means nothing other than emptiness and identitylessness. Though other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* also say that buddha nature should not be mistaken for the *ātman*, the thrust of their statements appears to be completely different

from what is said here. For both these sūtras teach that the characteristic or pāramitā of self is a true feature or equivalent of the tathāgata heart, and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* even says that the lack of a self or identitylessness is merely a means to refute the tīrthikas. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* here seems to proclaim the reverse—the teachings on buddha nature are a means to alleviate the fear of emptiness found in non-Buddhists and to indirectly introduce them to the definitive meaning that is emptiness and the lack of a self. Obviously, these statements played a significant role for the later reception of the buddha nature teaching in India, such as its integration as a provisional instruction into the Madhyamaka tradition. This provided a basis for Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka interpretations that the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings are of expedient meaning.

However, this section in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* must be read in conjunction with the sūtra's above strong statements about the tathāgata heart's being the true self (as opposed to the wrong notion of a self entertained by the tīrthikas), which can be realized only by "those whose minds are not distracted by emptiness" (that is, by a nihilistic misunderstanding of emptiness rather than understanding the true emptiness that is the tathāgata heart) and those who do not hold the view of the lack of such a self. It is also highly significant that the above section says that "all characteristics of conceptions have terminated, either through the instruction on the [tathāgata] heart or through the instruction on identitylessness," which clearly shows that the instruction on *tathāgatagarbha* is naturally understood as an approach that is as nonreifying as the instruction on identitylessness or emptiness. Equally significant in that regard is the use of the term "the heart of nonself of a tathāgata," which explicitly combines or unites both notions. In addition, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*'s passage below that summarizes its approach to *tathāgatagarbha* says that it is the object of the tathāgatas and was explained for Śrīmālādevī in order to teach phenomenal identitylessness to the śrāvakas. However, in itself, it is not the object of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and tīrthikas, who cling to the teachings in a literal manner, but the object only of great bodhisattvas with subtle and sharp intelligence, who rely on the meaning rather than the words. All of this suggests that the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* and the teachings on emptiness or identitylessness are understood in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as actually being fully equivalent rather than the former's being a provisional and preliminary introduction to the latter. Indeed, as other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras and RGVV also suggest, the notion of buddha nature is exactly that which represents the correct understanding of emptiness.

Now, an even more puzzling and ambiguous explanation of *tathāgatagarbha* in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is the one that equates it with the ālaya-consciousness. This ālaya-consciousness or *tathāgata* heart is said to contain both contaminated and uncontaminated latent tendencies, and thus to be both momentary and not momentary:

Mahāmāti, the ālaya-consciousness, which is known as “the *tathāgata* heart,” is momentary in its being associated with mentation as well as the latent tendencies of the active consciousnesses,<sup>98</sup> [but] it is non-momentary [in its being associated] with the uncontaminated latent tendencies. Naïve ordinary beings who are attached to the doctrine of momentariness do not realize [the difference between] the momentariness and the nonmomentariness of all phenomena. Since they do not realize it, they destroy even unconditioned phenomena through their view of extinction.<sup>99</sup>

Mahāmāti, the collections of the five [sense] consciousnesses are not subject to *saṃsāra*, nor do they experience suffering and happiness, nor are they the causes of *nirvāṇa*. Mahāmāti, what flourishes and terminates is the *tathāgata* heart, which is associated with the causes of the sufferings and happinesses that are experienced [as their results] and congeals through the four [kinds of] latent tendencies.<sup>100</sup> It is not realized by naive beings whose minds are infused with conceptions about the view of momentariness.<sup>101</sup>

Similarly, the *sūtra* says that the *tathāgata* heart represents the cause of both virtue and nonvirtue, effects all births and existences in *saṃsāra*, and yet is free from a self and what is mine, just like a dancer doing various performances.<sup>102</sup>

However, to leave no doubt about its ultimate stance and in line with its above statements about *tathāgatagarbha*, the *sūtra* declares that the ālaya-consciousness—the *tathāgata* heart—is indestructible, just like gold's or diamonds' remaining the same without ever increasing or decreasing. If the attainment of realization were momentary, it says, the noble ones would become nonnoble ones. So how could naive beings who are not skilled in explaining the intentions behind certain statements examine the meaning of momentariness correctly?<sup>103</sup>

The *sūtra* also says repeatedly that the ālaya-consciousness, which is tainted by the impregnations of negative tendencies since beginningless time,<sup>104</sup> is like the main body of a great ocean—uninterrupted, free from

the flaw of impermanence, without any idea of a self, and naturally pure. The other seven consciousnesses are like its moving waves—being momentary, arisen from the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, caused by false imagination, and clinging to names and characteristics. Thus, the tathāgata heart (the ālaya-consciousness) is said to be naturally pure but, due to adventitious stains, it appears as if it were impure to non-Buddhists, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas. This ālaya-consciousness still operates in non-Buddhists and even śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who realize personal identitylessness. It is only through the realization of bodhisattvas that it can undergo a change and be purified:

Mahāmati, the tathāgata heart contains the causes of virtue and non-virtue and is the creator of all births and forms of existence. Free from a self and what is mine, like a dancer, it enters [all kinds of] dangerous forms of existence. . . . The tirthikas, who cling to [different] causes, do not understand this. Being impregnated by all kinds of beginningless latent tendencies of the impregnations of negative tendencies of discursiveness, it is called “ālaya-consciousness.” Its body, together with the seven consciousnesses that arise from the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, always operates uninterruptedly, just like a great ocean and its waves, is free from the flaw of impermanence, is the cessation of the position of a self, and is utterly pure by nature. The seven consciousnesses such as mentation and the mental consciousness, which are other than this and arise and perish, are momentary, arise from the cause that is false imagination, focus on collections of shapes, activities, and distinct instances, cling to names and characteristics, do not understand that appearing forms and characteristics are one’s own mind, do not discriminate happiness and suffering, are not the cause for liberation, arise through and give rise to names, characteristics, and rising desire, and have the [ālaya-consciousness] as their cause and support. Immediately after the so-called sense faculties conjoined [with consciousness] have become exhausted and have ceased, the others [the consciousnesses] do not arise and operate [anymore] either. Those yogins who do not discriminate the thoughts of their own minds as happiness and suffering, who rest in the meditative absorption of the cessation of discriminations and feelings, and who are skilled in the four dhyānas, the [four] realities, and the [eight] liberations entertain the thought of [actually] having been liberated.

[However,] if the ālaya-consciousness, which is known as “the tathāgata heart,” does not undergo a change (*parāvṛtti*), there is no cessation of the seven active consciousnesses. For what reason? Because the consciousnesses flourish by virtue of [the ālaya-consciousness’s serving as] their cause and support, and [because the ālaya-consciousness] is not an object of any of the yogins [who are immersed] in the yogas of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and tīrthikas. Even when one realizes one’s own lack of a personal self and apprehends the specific and general characteristics of the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas, this tathāgata heart [still] flourishes. It terminates [only] through seeing the five dharmas, the [three] natures, and phenomenal identitylessness. Through its undergoing a change by progressing through the bhūmis, one cannot be distracted by the views about the path that others, that is, the tīrthikas, [hold]. . . . Therefore, Mahāmati, bodhisattva mahāsattvas who have this special goal should purify the tathāgata heart, which is known as “the ālaya-consciousness.”

Mahāmati, suppose there were no tathāgata heart, which is known as “the ālaya-consciousness.” Mahāmati, without this tathāgata heart, which is known as “the ālaya-consciousness,” there would be no [such] flourishing and terminating. But, Mahāmati, there is [such] flourishing and terminating in naive beings and noble ones, respectively. The yogins who do not cease their efforts and are persevering abide by [dwelling in] their own personal experience of the noble ones and abiding blissfully amid the visible phenomena [of this life]. Mahāmati, this sphere that is the tathāgata heart, the ālaya-consciousness, is beyond the dialectical views of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and tīrthikas. Though it is completely pure by nature, due to its being afflicted by adventitious afflictions, it appears to them as if it were impure, but it does not [appear so] to the tathāgatas. Mahāmati, for the tathāgatas, it serves as the sphere of their direct perception, just like a myrobalan fruit in the palm of one’s hand.<sup>105</sup>

Mind (*citta* as a synonym of the ālaya-consciousness or the tathāgata heart) is said to be neither separated from nor connected with the latent tendencies—it remains the same but is ensnared by latent tendencies. The dirt-like latent tendencies that arise from the mental consciousness sully the mind, which resembles a white garment. Just as space, the ālaya in the body is neither existent nor nonexistent. Once the mental consciousness



has come to an end, mind as such is free of all turbidity—since mind knows all phenomena, it is buddhahood.<sup>106</sup>

Thus, it is not surprising that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, similar to other *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras, Yogācāra texts, and the *Uttaratantra*, uses the three examples of gold, water, and space for the purity of the mind free from adventitious stains:

Just like pure gold,  
Water free from turbidity,  
And a cloudless sky,  
So is [the mind] pure of concepts.<sup>107</sup>

The sūtra explicitly distinguishes an ultimate ālaya from a relative one that consists of cognizance (*viññapti*). Ultimately, however, both are devoid of duality and thus are nothing but suchness:

Since the ultimate ālaya-consciousness  
And the ālaya of cognizance  
Are removed from apprehender and apprehended,  
I teach them to be suchness.<sup>108</sup>

A similar distinction is made with “mind” as an equivalent of the ālaya-consciousness:

The true nature of the mind is pure  
But not the mind that arises from mistakenness.  
Mistakenness comes from the impregnations of negative tendencies—  
Therefore, the mind is not seen.<sup>109</sup>

The text explicitly enumerates the eight consciousnesses as (1) the tathāgata heart, which is known as the ālaya-consciousness, (2) mentation, (3) the mental consciousness, and (4)–(8) the five sense consciousnesses.<sup>110</sup> Once; the text even speaks of nine forms of consciousnesses:

Through improper conception,  
Consciousness is operating  
In eight or nine different kinds,  
Just like waves on the ocean.<sup>111</sup>

The sūtra does not explain what the ninth consciousness is, but it probably refers to *tathāgatagarbha* as the pure essence of the ālaya-consciousness.<sup>112</sup>

Thus, the above distinction between an ultimate and a relative ālaya and at least some of the passages in which the tathāgata heart is linked to the ālaya-consciousness suggest that the tathāgata heart is not always understood as a complete equivalent of the ālaya-consciousness but rather as its intrinsically pure nature once it has been fully purified of all its latent tendencies. Thus, the true nature of the ālaya-consciousness in the sense of the tathāgata heart is not to be relinquished but only purified from its adventitious stains (this distinction is also made in a more explicit manner in the *Ghanavyūhasūtra*). This also implies that it is the tathāgata heart as the essence of the ālaya-consciousness that represents the universal foundation of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa (that the ālaya-consciousness/*tathāgatagarbha* is such a foundation is in fact stated in the sūtra).

On the other hand, as seen above, the text also states that the ālaya-consciousness is momentary, is associated with the other seven momentary consciousnesses, and is the root of afflictiveness. Immediately following the above passage that ends with the example of the myrobalan fruit, the sūtra addresses such an obvious discrepancy by declaring that this is the explanation for śrāvakas, while the equation of the ālaya-consciousness with permanent buddha nature is the explanation for the sake of great bodhisattvas with sharp faculties. Moreover, the Buddha explicitly links what he said about the tathāgata heart to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and summarizes the *Lankāvatārasūtra*'s approach to the ālaya-consciousness and *tathāgatagarbha* as follows:

“Mahāmati, this is what I [expressed] in the teachings for Śrīmālādevī and also for the sake of other bodhisattvas whose insight is subtle, sharp, and pure: I explained the tathāgata heart, which is known as ‘ālaya-consciousness’ and is associated with the seven [remaining] consciousnesses, as the object of the tathāgatas for the sake of Śrīmālādevī in order to teach phenomenal identitylessness to the śrāvakas, who are attached to the operating [of the ālaya-consciousness. But actually, in itself,] it is not the object of the dialectics of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and tīrthikas (who are other). Rather, Mahāmati, this very object of the tathāgatas—the object that is the tathāgata heart, the ālaya-consciousness—is [the object] of bodhisattva mahāsattvas like you, whose insight is subtle and sharp, whose intelligence is discriminating, and who rely on the meaning [rather than the words. However,] it is not

[the object] of any tīrthikas (who are other), śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas, who cling to the expression of the teachings in a literal manner.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, Mahāmati, you and other bodhisattva mahāsattvas should make efforts in fully realizing this object of all tathāgatas—the tathāgata heart, the ālaya-consciousness—and not be content with mere study.” Here, [the Buddha] spoke the following [verses]:

The heart of the tathāgatas  
Is associated with the seven consciousnesses.  
Duality flourishes due to grasping  
And terminates through full realization.

The mind appears like a reflection,  
Created by beginningless thought.  
When actual reality is seen as it is,  
Neither referents nor the referent-maker exist.

Just as naive beings grasp at a fingertip  
And do not look at the moon [it points to],  
So those who are stuck on letters  
Do not understand the true reality that is mine.

Mind dances like a dancer,  
Mentation resembles a buffoon,  
And consciousness with the five [senses]  
Imagines appearances like a stage.<sup>114</sup>

In sum, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* constantly appears to shift perspectives when presenting its crucial topics, such as endorsing versus more or less strongly criticizing or even denying the notions of a self, emptiness, identitylessness, the ālaya-consciousness, and *cittamātra*. However, rather than simply taking them to be contradictory, when read carefully in comparison, such shifts in perspective appear to be attempts (though not very systematic) to differentiate mistaken and correct ways of understanding those notions such as *tathāgatagarbha*, a self, and emptiness.

In particular, the sūtra seems to present the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* in four ways: (1) as a full equivalent of the ālaya-consciousness, which is the basis of, and operates together with, the other seven consciousnesses, (2) as the pure essence of the ālaya-consciousness that is not to be removed

but only purified, (3) as the unchanging true self that only needs to be freed from its adventitious stains, and (4) as an equivalent of the correct understanding of emptiness and identitylessness. Obviously (2) and (3) are closely related in meaning but described separately in different passages of the sūtra.

As for the notion of “disposition” (*gotra*), the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* presents five kinds of beings with five different dispositions—those who possess the dispositions for realizing the śrāvakayāna, the pratyekabuddhayāna, and the tathāgatayāna, respectively, those with an uncertain disposition, and those without disposition (*agotraka*). As for those without disposition, which are also called “those with great desire (*icchāntika*),” not attaining buddhahood, the text describes two very different types of such persons. The first are those who have no wish for liberation because they have abandoned all roots of virtue, which primarily means that they reject the mahāyāna teachings. However, at some point, they will reconnect with virtue through the blessings of the buddhas and thus also attain buddhahood eventually. For the buddhas never abandon any sentient being. The second type are those with great desire who are bodhisattvas, that is, those who have taken the vow not to enter parinirvāṇa until all sentient beings have attained parinirvāṇa. They are referred to as “those with great desire” because their great desire is to lead all beings to buddhahood. It is by virtue of this aspiration and their skill in means that they do not enter nirvāṇa. Another reason why they do not pass into nirvāṇa is their realization that all phenomena are already nirvāṇa primordially.

### *The Ghanavyūhasūtra*

Similar to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, this text mainly discusses Yogācāra themes (such as the three natures and the related threefold lack of nature).<sup>115</sup> Despite its not being mentioned in the *Uttaratantra*, RGVV, or the above lists of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras, it contains some brief references to *tathāgatagarbha*. Like several of the above sūtras, the sūtra says that the Tathāgata is permanent, eternal, everlasting, peaceful, blissful, unconditioned, and indestructible. What is called “tathāgata heart” is the dhātu of nirvāṇa or the dharmadhātu, which is indestructible like space. No matter whether buddhas appear or not, this is the abiding true nature.

Similar to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Ghanavyūhasūtra* relates *tathāgatagarbha* to the ālaya-consciousness. Though it does not always clearly distinguish between ālaya-consciousness, ālaya, and *tathāgatagarbha*, it sometimes differentiates the defiled ālaya-consciousness from the pure ālaya.

This pure ālaya is then described as being naturally luminous, the object of those skilled in yoga, and a synonym of *tathāgatagarbha*. Both the ālaya-consciousness and the pure ālaya/*tathāgatagarbha* abide together in sentient beings but are, respectively, like dirt and gold covered by dirt.

What is luminous and always pure  
Is the ālaya of all living beings.

...

Likewise, mentation, mind, and consciousness  
Cycle in the dhātus of sentient beings,  
But there is neither increase nor decrease—  
Natural luminosity always shines.<sup>116</sup>

No matter how ignorant beings think  
About the moon's arising and waning,  
The moon itself lacks any arising and waning.

...

Likewise, naive ignorant beings  
Always think about the arising and waning  
Of the ālaya-consciousness,  
But it is uncontaminated buddhahood.

No matter how it may arise, this ālaya  
Does not become different through that.  
Being the matrix from which the active consciousnesses come,  
It is like the moon due to the [waxing and waning of] latent tendencies.<sup>117</sup>

The sūtra continues that the ālaya is the cause of afflicted and purified phenomena alike—the cause of all saṃsāric forms of existence, of the meditative equipoise of the noble ones who see the dharma, and the beautiful realms of all buddhas. When it is realized, buddhahood, the disposition, and the yāna are not different. The pure natural state of the ālaya is seen and heard by bodhisattvas—the supreme purity of the ālaya is seen as adhering to the bodies of all beings, as being endowed with the thirty-two major marks, as buddhas in all kinds of forms, and as the turning of the wheel of dharma. Just as the moon abides in the sky together with the multitude of stars, the ālaya and the consciousnesses abide together in the body. All bodhisattvas who are and will be prophesied as buddhas will become tathāgatas by virtue of the merit of the stainless ālaya.<sup>118</sup>

Some further examples among the many that this sūtra presents of the purity of the ālaya-consciousness in the sense of *tathāgatagarbha's* being enclosed in its obscurations are as follows. Just as pure gold does not shine in its ore but shines when it is cleansed, the ālaya-consciousness within the seven consciousnesses is seen by yogins who purify it through samādhi. Since butter exists in milk but is not seen, those who know that churn the milk to obtain butter. Likewise, the ālaya-consciousness within the seven consciousnesses is seen by the sages who churn and process it. Just as pure sun and moon crystals reveal their qualities through being hit by sun and moon rays, the uncontaminated ālaya-consciousness—the pure tathāgata heart—reveals its qualities, when it has undergone the fundamental change.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, the sūtra says:

O king, the mind is inconceivable,  
Always being naturally luminous.  
It is the tathāgata heart,  
Which abides like gold in rocks.

...

Together with the mind of latent tendencies,  
The ālaya of all seeds  
Is always the luminous nature  
Of what is afflicted and what is pure.

Thus, the disposition of the tathāgatas

...

Just as the waves of the ocean,  
The ālaya likewise pervades  
What is inferior, medium, and supreme.<sup>120</sup>

And:

The ālaya with all kinds of seeds  
Is also the splendid<sup>121</sup> sugata heart.  
The Tathāgata has taught  
This heart through the term ālaya.

The heart that is also known as the ālaya  
Is not understood by those of weak insight

...

Likewise, the purity within the ālaya of consciousness  
Is the sphere of the noble ones—  
It always shines like gold.  
The ālaya that is known as the heart  
Is not an object of the conceptual mind.

The imaginary natures  
Cannot be conceived,  
While the perfect nature  
Is always seen by those capable of yoga.

The subject that is the mental consciousness  
Is the entity that fetters childish beings.  
What appears [for them like] mirages and clusters of hairs  
Is seen by the noble ones as what is stainless.<sup>122</sup>

Thus, similar to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, this sūtra implicitly equates the tathāgata heart even with the perfect nature. One even finds Mahāmudrā-like statements about this ālaya:

Through not knowing one's own thoughts,  
They arise similar to waves.  
Being liberated from thoughts and what is thought of  
Is the ālaya of all sages.<sup>123</sup>

Interestingly, the main interlocutor in this sūtra has the name Vajragarbha and the same term is also used in the text as a synonym for *tathāgatagarbha* and the pure ālaya. In the same vein, the sūtra also speaks of “the indestructible vajra mind.”

### *The Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*

Apart from the above-mentioned example of a canvas with the universe painted on it (quoted in RGVV), in the context of the gradual purification of the tathāgata heart, RGVV briefly refers to the example of gold's being progressively purified, which refers to the process of the ten bhūmis.<sup>124</sup> This example is found in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* within the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*,<sup>125</sup> though without being related in any way to buddha nature.

Once, the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*<sup>126</sup> uses the term *tathāgatagarbha* with its typical meaning of buddha nature, speaking of “possessing the tathāgata

heart, which will be freed from the cocoons of the five doors of ignorance of all sentient beings.<sup>127</sup> In addition, the text uses *tathāgatagarbha* several times as an epithet of buddhahood and also says once that certain bodhisattvas are one with the body of the tathāgata heart. Once, a bodhisattva with the name Tathāgatagarbha is mentioned.

### *The Ratnakūṭa*

It seems that this sūtra collection is mainly mentioned above in relation to *tathāgatagarbha* because the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* is a part of it.<sup>128</sup> The *Ratnakūṭa* also includes the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*,<sup>129</sup> in which we find the example of the painters illustrating the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, which is also used in the *Uttaratantra* (without mentioning this sūtra source). However, in themselves, both this example and this emptiness are not usually a part of the teachings on buddha nature. In addition, a passage from the *Kāśyapaparivarta* in the *Ratnakūṭa* is quoted in RGVV but without being related to *tathāgatagarbha*. Still, the *Kāśyapaparivarta* discusses the related notions of “the disposition of the noble ones” (*āryagotra*) and “buddha lineage or pedigree” (*buddhavaṃśa*). It says that the former is as equal and undifferentiated as space, devoid of both body and mind, in accordance with nirvāṇa, stainless, ultimately real, imperishable, permanent, without self, and nonreferential.<sup>130</sup> The continuity of “the buddha lineage” prevents bodhisattvas from entering the limited personal nirvāṇa of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.<sup>131</sup> Also, compared to arhats, the gods have more love even for beginner bodhisattvas who have just given rise to bodhicitta and whose faculties are not yet matured. For those bodhisattvas maintain “the buddha lineage” without interruption.<sup>132</sup>

### *The Ratnadārikāparipṛcchāsūtra*

Neither the Tibetan nor the Chinese canons contain a *Ratnadārikāparipṛcchāsūtra*. As it turns out, this is actually just another name of the *Mahāyānopadeśasūtra*.<sup>133</sup> At the end of the *Mahāyānopadeśasūtra*, the Buddha gives a list of synonyms for this sūtra, which include *Ratnadārikāparipṛcchā*. In the *Mahāyānopadeśasūtra*, the main interlocutor is indeed Ratnadārikā and the Buddha teaches her the sixty-four qualities of awakening (including their individual causes) in the exact order as they are presented in the third chapter of the *Uttaratantra* (which explicitly refers to the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* as the source of these qualities).<sup>134</sup> However, these qualities are not specific to the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings and, with slight variations, appear in many other sūtras too.



Like many other sūtras, this one also speaks of a single yāna. In general, it contains teachings on emptiness that are quite standard. Toward the end of the sūtra, Ratnadārikā explains “the mudrā of irreversibility of bodhi-sattvas” to Śāriputra in verses,<sup>135</sup> beginning with:

Here, the mudrā of irreversibility  
Is the realization of nonduality  
Through having realized the dharmadhātu  
And the dhātu of sentient beings to be equal as true reality.

This is followed by many verses that emphasize the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the equality of the skandhas and buddhahood, and so on, and identify irreversibility to be emptiness, such as:

Those are irreversible who realize  
The conditioned dhātus  
And the unconditioned dhātu  
To be empty of reality.

And:

The mudrā of phenomena is emptiness  
There is no maturation and no elimination.  
Those who are sealed by the mudrā of emptiness  
Are taught to be irreversible.

### *The Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra and Mahāśūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*

As mentioned before, these two sūtras correspond to the *Cūlasuññatasutta* and *Mahāsuññatasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 121 and 122), respectively, two of the few sūtras from the Pāli canon that were also included in the Tibetan *Kangyur*.<sup>136</sup>

The *Cūlasuññatasutta* begins by Ānanda asking the Buddha whether he had correctly understood the Buddha’s statement “Now, Ānanda, I often abide in emptiness” (the remainder of the text makes it clear that this emptiness refers to the fruitional attainment of arhathood that is achieved through focusing on the empty aspect of nirvāṇa). The Buddha then illustrates this sentence through a series of examples, beginning with saying that the palace where he and his saṃgha are residing at present is empty

of elephants, cattle, horses, and so on, but is not empty of the assembly of monks. Likewise, the minds of monks in solitude are empty of the distracting perceptions of villages and their people but are not empty of the perception of the forest they dwell in. The same is said for not perceiving the forest but only earth, not perceiving any of the above but progressively only perceiving one of the four formless absorptions (beginning with Infinite Space), and finally resting only in “the samādhi of the mind that is signless.” In that last stage, arhathood is attained, and the only remainder is the distractions of the six āyatanas based on the body. Each one of these examples and their meanings is followed by the famous passage:

Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent.

Obviously, in this sūtra, emptiness is not used as a philosophical or metaphysical concept but is applied to a progressive “emptying” of the mind of distracting perceptions and conceptions. This meditative process culminates in arhathood, with the body and its six āyatanas as the only thing this arhathood is not empty of. Naturally, this has nothing to do with the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*.

In later Yogācāra texts, the above passage was taken out of its original context and reinterpreted in different ways with regard to what is empty of what and what remains. Relevant in our context here is RGVV’s incorporating this passage in its comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55, immediately after the following quote from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*:

The tathāgata heart is empty of all cocoons of afflictions that are separable [from it] and [can] be realized as being divisible [from it]. It is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable [from it], [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it], and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>137</sup>

Thus, RGVV implies that “what does not exist somewhere” refers to the “cocoons of afflictions” and that “somewhere” is the tathāgata heart, which is empty of these afflictions and thus represents the really existent remainder. RGVV concludes then that this is “the unmistakable defining characteristic of emptiness [in the case of the tathāgata heart] since it [thus] is free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.”<sup>138</sup> It is obviously this

interpretation of that passage that caused Tibetan commentators such as Dölpopa to include the *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra* in the category of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras.

The contents of the *Mahāsūnyatānāmamahāsūtra* are distinct from the *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*, and it also explains the notion of emptiness in a different way. For, in the former sūtra, the Buddha teaches about mentally engaging in internal emptiness in the sense of relinquishing the clinging to a personal self through training in the dhyānas, mentally engaging in external emptiness in the sense of relinquishing the clinging to phenomena such as form that are considered as “what is mine,” and mentally engaging in both internal and external emptiness. Clearly, the sūtra contains nothing about *tathāgatagarbha*.<sup>139</sup>

### The Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra

This text is a lost Yogācāra sūtra, which is preserved only in a few quotes in other Yogācāra texts.<sup>140</sup> At least in those quotes, there is nothing specific about buddha nature. However, RGVV explicitly links the most famous verse from this sūtra to a quote from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*:<sup>141</sup>

The dhātu of beginningless time  
Is the foundation of all phenomena.  
Since it exists, all forms of existence<sup>142</sup>  
And also nirvāṇa are obtained.

RGVV also comments on the four lines of this verse through four quotes from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* that likewise expand on *tathāgatagarbha*. In the context of denying that there are any sentient beings who lack the buddha disposition, RGVV quotes another verse as support for all beings’ being suitable to eventually become buddhas:<sup>143</sup>

Though beginningless, [saṃsāra] entails an end.  
What is naturally pure and consists of permanent dharmas  
Is not seen since it is externally obscured by a beginningless cocoon,  
Just as a golden image that is concealed.

According to Jamgön Kongtrul, this verse is also from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*.<sup>144</sup> In any case, it greatly resembles the ninth example for

buddha nature's being obscured by adventitious stains in the *Tathāgata-garbhasūtra* and the *Uttaratantra*.

### *The Tathāgataguṇajñānācintya viśayāvatāranirdeśasūtra*

This work mentions once that all buddhas are permanent, eternal, and immutable but does not contain any teachings on buddha nature per se.<sup>145</sup> It is quoted once in RGVV as the alternative source (besides the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*) of the seventh vajra point (enlightened activity).

### *The Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokāṃkārasūtra*

This sūtra is quoted several times in RGVV.<sup>146</sup> In its comments on one of these quotes (the Tathāgata's seeing the dhātu of sentient beings, which is pure, stainless, and without afflictions), RGVV explicitly equates the tathāgata heart with the dhātu of sentient beings.<sup>147</sup> The sūtra also says that the Tathāgata's own purity and the purity of sentient beings are not two and cannot be made two (similar statements are frequently found in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras). In addition, the nine examples for enlightened activity in the *Uttaratantra* come from this sūtra (though unacknowledged). However, it does not contain any specific teachings on buddha nature.

### *The Mahāmeghasūtra*

Zimmermann (2002) says that two in a series of examples in the *Mahāmeghasūtra*<sup>148</sup> closely resemble those in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. The examples compare the state of not living according to the teachings and of not entering into a certain samādhi to (1) winter rice and so on, which have not yet fulfilled their nature of benefitting beings and (2) the fruits of a palmyra palm, a mango tree, and cane (the same enumeration as in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*), which have not yet become such trees. Though the thrust of the examples in the *Mahāmeghasūtra* differs from those in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the examples themselves clearly echo basic elements of the latter sūtra. Also, one of the bodhisattvas in the audience has the name Tathāgatagarbha. However, apart from these features, this sūtra shows no elements of *tathāgatagarbha* teachings.

### *The Gaganagañjaparipṛchāsūtra*

A passage from this sūtra<sup>149</sup> is quoted by RGVV<sup>150</sup> in the context of the tathāgata heart's being like space, while the skandhas and so on that arise in it resemble the elements. This passage says twice that the afflictions are adventitious and the nature of the mind is fundamentally pure (this is

repeated once elsewhere). However, this statement is found in many sūtras. Apart from that, this sūtra is not related to the notion of buddha nature.

### *The Sāgaramatipariṣchāsūtra*

This sūtra<sup>151</sup> is quoted twice in RGVV<sup>152</sup> in the context of the tathāgata heart's phase of being a bodhisattva. The first quote describes how bodhisattvas deliberately retain certain afflictions in order to be reborn in saṃsāra and yet are not harmed by these afflictions. The second quote uses the example of the purification of a precious beryl that had been lying in the mud for many years. This example, the sūtra says, illustrates that bodhisattvas see the natural luminosity of the mind of sentient beings, which is obscured by adventitious afflictions but never tainted in its essence (this is repeated once elsewhere). By virtue of that, they give rise to the mind-set for purifying the minds of sentient beings and liberating them. Elsewhere, the sūtra says that the dhātu of sentient beings is primordially pure and that what is called a "sentient being" refers simply to mistakenness, ignorance, saṃsāric existence, craving, being ensnared by views, and improper mental engagement. The text also states that bodhisattvas constantly give rise to compassion, make efforts, and dedicate their own virtues and those of others so that the lineage of the three jewels does not become interrupted. Otherwise, this sūtra does not contain elements of the teachings on buddha nature.

### *The Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*

RGVV relates a brief passage from this sūtra<sup>153</sup> to the first three vajra points (the three jewels) of the *Uttaratantra*, which seems to be the reason why it became included in the category of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras. However, there is nothing in this sūtra that is related to the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha*—it mainly teaches that all phenomena are empty, without arising, and ceasing, which means that attachment and so on with regard to them are pointless.

### *The Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*

This sūtra mentions the term *tathāgatagarbha* once in passing, equating it with the mahāyāna.<sup>154</sup> Otherwise, it contains nothing about buddha nature. The sūtra's main topic is the importance of leaders' being good examples for the kingdom.

### **The Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī**

There is nothing in this text that is related to the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings,<sup>155</sup> unless one wants to understand the example of digging up a treasure beneath different layers of earth and rock, which has some resemblance to the examples in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, in that way. Here, the treasure stands for the text's central theme of "the dhātu of nonconceptuality," which is obscured by different types of conceptions. The text otherwise shows distinct Yogācāra elements and also resembles the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras in style.

### **The Saṃdhnirmocanasūtra**

This famous Yogācāra sūtra contains nothing about *tathāgatagarbha*.<sup>156</sup>

### **The Praśāntaviniścayaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra**

The *Praśāntaviniścayaprātihāryanāmasamādhisūtra*<sup>157</sup> declares that saying "The Tathāgata is permanent and the Tathāgata is eternal" is of far greater merit than someone else's giving all kinds of gifts to the retinues of the buddhas in all worlds in the ten directions. The sūtra also speaks once of "seizing the disposition of the three jewels." However, since it also refers several times to "the Buddha disposition," "the dharma disposition," and "the saṃgha disposition" (which do not refer to *tathāgatagarbha*), this expression is most probably only a general term for those three. The sūtra shows no discussion of buddha nature.

### **The Candrapradīpasūtra**

The contents of the *Samādhirājasūtra*,<sup>158</sup> of which the *Candrapradīpasūtra* is a shorter and earlier version, are described by Gomez and Silk (1989, 15–16) as follows:

The sūtra declares its main theme to be a particular samādhi that is supposed to be the key to all elements in the path and to all the virtues and merits of buddhas and bodhisattvas. This state of mind, or spiritual practice, is called "the samādhi that is manifested as the sameness of the essential nature of all dharmas" (*sarva-dharma-svabhāvā-samatā-vipañcita-samādhi*) . . . here the term "samādhi" is understood in its broadest signification. This samādhi is at the same time the cognitive experience of emptiness, the attainment of the attributes of buddhahood, and the performance of a variety of practices or daily

activities of a bodhisattva—including service and adoration at the feet of all buddhas. The word *samādhi* is also used to mean the sūtra itself. Consequently, we can speak of an equation, *sūtra* = *samādhi* = *śūnyatā*, underlying the text. In this sense the title *Samādhirāja* expresses accurately the content of the sūtra.

And:

The *Samādhirāja* . . . has been identified consistently with the Madhyamaka tradition. Regamey has shown, however, that the *Samādhirāja* cannot be considered a clear representative of a single philosophical tradition. The sūtra's doctrinal position cannot be described accurately as unambiguously Mādhyamika, or even as pure *śūnyavāda*. That is to say, one would find it difficult to show that the sūtra is the product of, or a legitimate representative of, Mādhyamika circles. Still, it is obvious that the sūtra was considered highly authoritative by Mādhyamika scholastics and ignored by Yogācāra authors. In spite of its clearly defined philosophical position, the *Samādhirāja* does not fit our stereotype of a sectarian document. . . . Furthermore, in terms of religious types it is eclectic and universalistic, so that it would be pointless to attempt to box it in some general category. It makes room for more than one dimension of Buddhist religion: meditation, worship of the Buddhas, the cult of the Book, philosophical speculation, rehearsal of myth (in *avadanā* style) and so on. At the present stage of our knowledge of the history of Mahāyāna sūtra literature, we can only say that the *Samādhirāja* played an important role as a "proof text" for the Madhyamaka. But it seems unlikely that the text was composed with such a role in mind. It would be more accurate to say that it was conceived as a representative text of general doctrine, with a strong leaning towards a philosophic position that can be described as akin to that of the Madhyamaka. Because of its comprehensive, almost encyclopedic, character, it offered a wider range of ideas from which to quote than did other texts. (*ibid.*, 31)

In any case, it is clear that this sūtra does not include any discussion of buddha nature or related topics.

### *The Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*

This sūtra<sup>159</sup> does not teach on *tathāgatagarbha* but Zimmermann (1998) shows several structural, formal, and doctrinal parallels between the earlier *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* and the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, which seem to have influenced the composition of the latter. Also, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*'s example of a man's carrying a jewel in the hem of his garment without knowing it and later needing to be told about it by a friend in order to retrieve it and use it to overcome some difficulties is very similar to the examples in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. In the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, the example illustrates arhats' not being aware of their wish for omniscient buddha wisdom that they made a long time ago and thus remaining with only limited wisdom. The example serves to support the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*'s central theme of the single yāna that even arhats enter eventually to achieve the only soteriological goal of buddhahood. This theme is, of course, also a crucial element in the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha*, and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*'s example may be seen as echoing *Uttaratantra* I.35ab and I.40, which say that weariness of saṃsāra and wishing for nirvāṇa are triggered by the existence of the tathāgata heart in beings. While the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* keeps saying that all beings should become buddhas, the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* explains the reason why all beings are able to become buddhas—they already possess the heart of a tathāgata. Thus, against this background, it is only natural that *Uttaratantra* II.58–59 mentions the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* as an example of teaching the true reality of phenomena to arhats, thereby turning them away from their clinging to having attained true nirvāṇa. After that, they are finally matured in the supreme yāna through prañā and means and their buddhahood is prophesied. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* also emphasizes the permanence of the Buddha and says that buddha wisdom and not emptiness is the supreme achievement.

### *The Ratnameghasūtra*

This sūtra<sup>160</sup> says that suchness is beyond the sphere of all afflictions, the sphere of the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones, stainless, permanent, everlasting, immutable, and indestructible—no matter whether tathāgatas arise or not, this dharmadhātu definitely remains. However, such statements are found in other sūtras too and are not necessarily elements of the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings. Beyond that, this sūtra contains no specific elements of those teachings.



### The Dharmasaṃgītisūtra

This text<sup>161</sup> discusses many general mahāyāna themes (such as the ten pāramitās, emptiness, and compassion). The text speaks repeatedly about the three doors to liberation (emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness) but also uses terms such as “false imagination” and “fundamental change.” The great compassion of bodhisattvas is said to include all the teachings of the Buddha. Thus, to be endowed with such great compassion is like having all his instructions lying on the palm of one’s hand. There are also discussions between two bodhisattvas about the nature, the birth, the abiding, and the death of the Buddha and in what sense these are to be understood. The sūtra contains a few passages that could be taken as being related to *tathāgatarbha*, though they are not very specific. Once the text speaks of “the heart of sentient beings” and equates it with omniscience and completely perfect buddhahood. Elsewhere, the primary and secondary afflictions are said to be adventitious, while the dharmadhātu is without coming and going and therefore is neither adventitious nor abiding. Since the dharmadhātu is equality, it is the nirvāṇa of tathāgatas. Finally, the sūtra says that fire is present in all wood but without the proper conditions and some effort coming together, a fire will not burn from wood. Likewise, tathāgatahood abides in all knowable objects (!), but without the proper conditions such as faith and some effort, it does not manifest and does not perform the activity of a buddha.

### The Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras

These sūtras (with the one minor exception in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra in One Hundred Fifty Lines* mentioned above) obviously contain nothing about buddha nature.

In sum, among all the above sūtras, the only ones that clearly contain teachings on *tathāgatarbha* are the following eight:

1. *Tathāgatarbhasūtra*
2. *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*
3. *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*
4. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*
5. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*
6. *Mahābherīsūtra*
7. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
8. *Ghanavyūhasūtra*

It is unfortunate that none of the Tibetan authors mentioned provides any criteria for including or excluding certain sūtras in their above lists of “*tathāgatagarbha* sūtras,” “sūtras of definitive meaning,” and so on, and that they do not explain what the differences between these categories are. For example, it is not clear why Dölpopa, Tāranātha, and others do not include the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the *Ghanavyūhasūtra* in their lists of “*tathāgata* sūtras” since especially the former sūtra discusses *tathāgatagarbha* in detail (one can only speculate that this exclusion may be due to the equation of *tathāgatagarbha* with the ālaya-consciousness and emptiness). Also, it is striking that the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* as an important source of the *Uttaratantra* is absent from all the lists of “*tathāgatagarbha* sūtras” and “sūtras of definitive meaning” except for those by the Gelugpa scholars Kedrub Jé, Kungtang Göncho Denpé Drönmé, and Tukwan Lobsang Chökyi Nyima. On the other hand, varying numbers of sūtras that do not discuss buddha nature at all have found their way into all of the above lists.

Now, the reasons why sūtras other than the eight listed above were included in the various lists of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras seem to be due to one or more of the following criteria—being linked to the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* in the *Uttaratantra* or RGVV, containing certain key phrases that can be related to these teachings, and including certain examples that can be interpreted in accordance with the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*. In addition, certain sūtras appear to have been included by some Tibetan scholars under those sūtras that are said to teach the ultimate definitive meaning because some of their contents are in general accordance with the Shentong view (such as the “Maitreya Chapter,” the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*). For some sūtras, the reasons why they were included are not clear (such as the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra* and the *Pañcaśatikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*).<sup>162</sup>

Finally, it is remarkable that, in contrast to many other major mahāyāna sūtras, there are no known Indian commentaries on any of the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras (except for the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*). However, given that the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV use and elaborate on the typical terminologies and templates of virtually all *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras listed above, it seems appropriate to regard the *Uttaratantra* as a synopsis or digest of all these sūtras and RGVV as a general commentary on them.

## *Different Ways of Explaining the Meaning of Tathāgatagarbha*

As for the meaning of the Sanskrit compound *tathāgatagarbha*, its first part (*tathā*) can be taken as either the adverb “thus” or the noun “thusness/suchness” (as a term for ultimate reality; many texts, among them the *Uttaratantra*, gloss *tathāgatagarbha* as “suchness”). The second part can be read either as *gata* (“gone”), or *āgata* (“come, arrived”; the Tibetan *gshegs pa* can mean both). However, in the term *tathāgata*, both meanings more or less come down to the same. Thus, the main difference lies in whether one understands a *tathāgata* as (a) a “thus-gone/thus-come one” or (b) “one gone/come to thusness,” with the former emphasizing the aspect of the path and the latter the result. The final part of the compound—*garbha*—literally and originally means “embryo,” “germ,” “womb,” “the interior or middle of anything,” “any interior chamber or sanctuary of a temple,” “calyx” (as of a lotus), “having in the interior,” “containing,” or “being filled with.” At some point, the term also assumed the meanings of “core,” “heart,” “pith,” and “essence” (which is also the meaning of its usual Tibetan translation *snying po*).<sup>163</sup> As Zimmermann points out, Sanskrit or Pāli dictionaries do not explain *garbha* in those ways, but the corresponding forms of the term in several modern Indian languages can have all of those meanings. In addition, late Indian Buddhist texts also refer to such meanings. For instance, Kṛṣṇa’s *Yogaratnamālā* and Ratnākaraśānti’s *Muktāvalī* (both commentaries on the *Hevajratantra*) equate *garbha* in *vajragarbha* with *hṛdaya*. Jayaratha’s *Tantrālokaviveka*, a commentary on the *Tantrāloka*, interprets *garbha* as *sāra*.<sup>164</sup> Wayman and Wayman (1974, viii–ix) mention that, in commentaries on the *Guhyagarbhatantra*, *garbha* is not only explained as womb (*kukṣi*) and embryo (*bhrūṇa*) but also as middle or center (*madhyama*).

In that vein, as a proficient Sanskrit translator, Gö Lotsāwa Shönnu Bal<sup>165</sup> (1392–1481) explains a number of Sanskrit synonyms of *garbha* and correlates some of them with the three aspects of *garbha* in the *Uttaratantra*—the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition.<sup>166</sup> He says that *sāra*

represents a basis from which many dharmas radiate or emanate, thus referring to the dharmakāya. *Hṛdaya* has the sense of being crucial or very precious, like a human heart. Thus, it refers to suchness because those who wish for liberation need to regard it as crucial or precious. *Garbha* itself means “seed” or “womb.” Since it stands for something that is present in an enclosing sheath, it refers to the disposition. Furthermore, *maṇḍa* means “something very firm” or “quintessence,” as in calling the vajra seat in Bodhgāya *bodhimaṇḍa* or speaking of “the essence of butter.” Also, according to Vasubandhu’s commentary on the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, *garbha* means something solid, like the core of a tree. However, in general, Gö Lotsāwa says, all four terms can apply to all these meanings.

JKC explains *garbha* similarly but differs in its glosses of *sāra* and *hṛdaya* and relates all three terms to suchness.<sup>167</sup> *Garbha* refers to something that exists in the middle of an enclosure or a sheath that covers it. Therefore, at the time of the ground, suchness appears to be obscured by adventitious stains and to exist in their middle. The term *hṛdaya* means “essence” or “supreme,” so this suchness is the essence or what is supreme. *Sāra* refers to being firm and stable, thus indicating that suchness never changes.<sup>168</sup>

Technically speaking, the term *tathāgatagarbha* can be understood as either a *bahuvrīhi* or a *tatpuruṣa* compound, meaning “containing a tathāgata (as one’s core or heart)” or “the core or heart of a tathāgata,” respectively. The first one is the most natural reading and is also supported by numerous passages in the scriptures, but the *tatpuruṣa* version is also found in RGVV and elsewhere.<sup>169</sup>

### *Explanations of Tathāgatagarbha in Indian Texts*

As for the different ways in which the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* is explained in Indian Buddhist scriptures, Gö Lotsāwa’s introduction to his GC presents four meanings in general and four meanings in the *Uttaratantra* in particular.<sup>170</sup> The first four are: (1) the emptiness that has the characteristic of being a nonimplicative negation, (2) the luminous nature of the mind (the basic element of awareness), (3) the ālaya-consciousness, and (4) all bodhisattvas and sentient beings. In the *Uttaratantra*, the tathāgata heart is taught as having the three specific characteristics: (1) dharmakāya, (2) suchness, and (3) disposition, as well as the general characteristic (4) nonconceptuality.<sup>171</sup>

### *Tathāgatarbha* as the Emptiness That Is a Nonimplicative Negation

As for buddha nature's being explained as the emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation, based on quotations from Bhāviveka's (c. 500–570) *Madhyamakahr̥daya*, its commentary *Tarkajvālā*, and Candrakīrti's (c. 600–650) *Catuhśatakaṭīkā*, GC says that emptiness is asserted by these masters as a nonimplicative negation. In particular, it is this kind of emptiness that Bhāviveka's *Tarkajvālā* refers to as "tathāgata heart" in response to the critique of some śrāvakas that, in the mahāyāna, the tathāgata heart is said to have the characteristic of being all-pervasive, which contradicts the third seal of the Buddha's teachings—that all phenomena are empty and without self:

[The expression] "possessing the tathāgata heart" is [used] because emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and so on, exist in the mind streams of all sentient beings. However, it is not something like a permanent and all-pervasive person that is the inner agent.<sup>172</sup> For we find [passages] such as "All phenomena have the nature of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. What is emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness is the Tathāgata."<sup>173</sup>

Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* on VI.42 says:

One should know that since [the ālaya-consciousness] follows the nature of all entities, it is nothing but emptiness that is taught through the term "ālaya-consciousness."<sup>174</sup>

GC comments that it is not possible for Candrakīrti not to have seen that the tathāgata heart is well known as the ālaya-consciousness, which is stated many times in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, and thus he asserts this emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation as the tathāgata heart.<sup>175</sup> Candrakīrti, GC says, saw the explanation that, based on quoting the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the statement of the emptiness of sentient beings' being a buddha adorned with all major and minor marks is of expedient meaning. Thus, his *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* states that the tathāgata heart is of expedient meaning.<sup>176</sup>

According to GC, Āryavimuktisena (sixth century) and Haribhadra (mid-eighth–early ninth century) explain the emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation as the disposition and the svābhāvikakāya.<sup>177</sup> Jñānagarbha (early eighth century) even explains it as the dharmakāya, thus implicitly asserting it as the tathāgata heart.<sup>178</sup> GC also adds the position of Ngog

Lotsāwa and his followers that the tathāgata heart is the emptiness in the sense of a nonimplicative negation that is taught in Nāgārjuna's "collection of reasoning."<sup>179</sup> They explain the statement that all sentient beings are pervaded by the dharmakāya as sentient beings' being suitable to attain the dharmakāya.

One should add here Kamalaśīla's (c. 740–795) *Madhyamakāloka*, which takes the tathāgata heart to be natural luminosity but defines the latter as the dharmadhātu characterized by twofold identitylessness:

This statement "All sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart" teaches that all are suitable to attain the state of unsurpassable completely perfect awakening since it is held that the term tathāgata expresses that the dharmadhātu, which is characterized by personal and phenomenal identitylessness, is natural luminosity.<sup>180</sup>

Kamalaśīla's interpretation seems to be based on the term *tathāgatānairātmyagarbha* ("the heart of nonself of a tathāgata") mentioned above in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*,<sup>181</sup> which indicates that buddha nature does not refer to an *ātman* but to the lack of a self. This approach of Kamalaśīla influenced later Mādhyamikas in their take on the tathāgata heart, as seen in Jayānanda's (eleventh century) *Madhyamakāvataṛaṭīkā*<sup>182</sup> and Abhayākara's (died 1125) *Munimatālaṅkāra*.<sup>183</sup> Kamalaśīla also quotes the passage from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that Candrakīrti used to establish the teaching on buddha nature as being of expedient meaning.<sup>184</sup> However, Kamalaśīla does not follow Candrakīrti in that regard but only states that, depending on the different ways of thinking of those to be guided, the Buddha taught nothing but the dharmadhātu through a variety of conventional means (including the expression "tathāgata heart").

It should also be noted in this context that virtually all early Indian Yogācāra masters (such as Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Sthiramati, and Asvabhāva), if they refer to the term *tathāgatagarbha* at all, always explain it as nothing but suchness in the sense of twofold identitylessness.<sup>185</sup> Thus, all Indian Mādhyamikas (except for Nāgārjuna in his *Dharmadhātustava*) and virtually all classical Yogācāra masters up to the tenth century were not willing to openly embrace the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings as anything other than emptiness, obviously being very concerned about not getting anywhere near the non-Buddhist notion of an *ātman*. Interestingly, the exceptions in this regard among early Indian Yogācāras all "went into exile," teaching and translating in China, with their works being preserved only in Chinese.

The most prominent among them are Guṇabhadra (394–468), Ratnamati, Bodhiruci (both fifth–sixth century), and especially Paramārtha (499–569), all of whom extensively translated and taught Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha* materials. In India, it was only later Yogācāras, such as Jñānaśrīmitra and Ratnākaraśānti, who interpreted the tathāgata heart along the lines of mind’s luminous nature (see right below).<sup>186</sup>

### *Tathāgatagarbha* as Mind’s Luminous Nature

Gö Lotsāwa’s GC continues that, in terms of the tathāgata heart’s being explained as the luminous nature of the mind (the basic element of awareness), *Uttaratantra* I.63ab says:

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is unchanging, just like space.

Therefore, it explains the tathāgata heart as suchness. *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* XIII.19 states:

It is asserted that mind is always natural luminosity  
And that it is tainted by adventitious stains.  
Apart from the mind that is the nature of phenomena,  
No other mind is proclaimed to be luminous in nature.<sup>187</sup>

Thus, these and other passages explain the true nature of the mind—the basic element of awareness—as the tathāgata heart. GC continues that the same is also stated in many texts by Nāgārjuna (such as his *Dharmadhātustava*, *Cittavajrastava*, and *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*)<sup>188</sup> and a great number of sūtras of the final dharma wheel.<sup>189</sup>

As indicated above, a few later Indian Yogācāras need to be added here. For example, the beginning of the sixth chapter of Jñānaśrīmitra’s *Sākārasiddhi* says that one can neither superimpose the tiniest thing that does not manifest lucidly (*aprakāśa*) nor deny even the slightest trace of what manifests lucidly (*prakāśa*).<sup>190</sup> In order to support this statement, he quotes the *Madhyāntavibhāga*, *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, *Abhisamayālamkāra*, and *Uttaratantra*. After identifying the wrong positions of superimposition and denial, Jñānaśrīmitra cites *Uttaratantra* I.154 and RGVV and explains that real aspects are mental forms that have the nature of being appearances of lucidity (*prakāśarūpa*), which he equates with buddha nature—the

tathāgata element (*tathāgata dhātu*). Just as this tathāgata element, those lucid forms are free from all superimposition and denial.<sup>191</sup>

Ratnākaraśānti generally describes the tathāgata heart as being equivalent to naturally luminous mind, nondual self-awareness, and the perfect nature (which he considers to be an implicative negation and not a nonimplicative negation).<sup>192</sup> As for the ontological status of mind, his *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa* says that it does not exist as apprehender and apprehended, but the existence of the sheer lucidity of experience cannot be denied.<sup>193</sup> The text also brings up the well-known objection against the existence of self-awareness, known from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, that mind is unable to act upon itself, just as a sword cannot cut itself and a finger cannot touch itself.<sup>194</sup> In his answer, Ratnākaraśānti emphasizes the soteriologically crucial role of mind's fundamental nature's being nondual self-awareness. If mind just experiences its own delusional superimpositions onto this nature, it appears as mistakenness (called "ālaya-consciousness"), but when it realizes its own true nature directly, it is unmistakable nondual wisdom or the dharmakāya. The transition from the former to the latter state is accomplished through progressively stripping away all characteristics of mistakenness, thus experiencing the lucidity of all phenomena empty of duality. Ratnākaraśānti also highlights the fact that realization and buddhahood cannot be reasonably defined as the cessation of the entirety of mind and mental factors (as Candrakīrti does),<sup>195</sup> but that the uncontaminated characteristics of their continuum remain and continue to operate forever. He also says that the liberated minds of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats and buddhas are taught to be equally pure, but the qualities of the fundamental change of buddhahood as the full expression of mind's natural luminosity are far greater since the dharmakāya functions as the support of the buddha qualities.<sup>196</sup> Thus, Ratnākaraśānti clearly argues against all Mādhyamikas who deny self-awareness, while emphasizing that it is precisely this self-awareness that is the nature of the experiential quality of realizing the ultimate, adding that this nondual wisdom is empty because it is devoid of adventitious mistakenness.<sup>197</sup>

As for the tathāgata heart's being temporarily obscured by adventitious stains, Ratnākaraśānti's *Sūtrasamuccayabhāṣya* quotes the Buddha, Nāgārjuna, and Maitreya and concludes that buddha nature is the single disposition that serves as the basis for there being only a single yāna ultimately:

Since the dharmadhātu has the meaning of disposition they are inseparable. Therefore, since all [beings] possess the tathāgata heart, its



fruition is just a single yāna. However, since it was taught as various yānas in the form of progressive means of realization and [since] this disposition does not appear due to [being obscured by] afflictions and so on, temporarily, [the Buddha] spoke of five dispositions. For, he said:

Just as within stony debris  
Pure gold is not seen,  
And then is seen through being purified,  
Tathāgatas [become visible] in the world.<sup>198</sup>

Also noble Nāgārjuna says [in his *Dharmadhātustava*]:

In a pregnant woman's womb,  
A child exists but is not seen.  
Just so, dharmadhātu is not seen,  
When it's covered by afflictions.<sup>199</sup>

Likewise, noble Maitreya states [in his *Uttaratantra*]:

Because the illuminating dharmadhātu radiates light,  
There is no difference in suchness,  
And the actuality of the disposition appears,  
All [sentient beings] possess the sugata heart.<sup>200</sup>

Therefore, just as [described in] the *Tathāgatarbhasūtra*, though [the tathāgata heart] is ensnared by afflictions, when the conditions for [its] awakening have formed, all [yānas] are simply a single yāna.<sup>201</sup>

This tathāgata heart is naturally pure suchness, merely obscured by adventitious stains, and the natural luminosity that is free from apprehender and apprehended:

The essence of the nature of phenomena is called “tathāgata heart.” The dhātu is the suchness that is naturally pure and associated with stains. Other sūtras [call it] tathāgata heart and so on. It is described [in the *Uttaratantra* through] stating nine examples:

A buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amid bees,  
Grains in their husks, gold in filth,

A treasure in the earth, a sprout and so on from a small fruit,  
An image of the Victor in tattered rags,

Royalty in the womb of a destitute woman,  
And a precious statue in clay—just as these exist,  
This dhātu dwells in sentient beings  
Obscured by the adventitious stains of the afflictions.<sup>202</sup>

Its characteristics are stated as “natural luminosity” and so on. The characteristic of its being devoid of stains from the very beginning is called “purity,” which refers to being devoid of apprehender and apprehended.<sup>203</sup>

Naturally luminous mind is the self-awareness that remains after all afflictive and cognitive obscurations (apprehender and apprehended) have been relinquished. When this self-aware luminous mind is realized, it is called “nirvāṇa”:

As for “mind’s true nature lacking any difference by way of a distinct division in terms of mistakenness and unmistakenness,” it is said, “Mind does not exist by any nature of its own.” Since afflictedness is mistakenness, it is not established through a nature of its own, that is, through reasoning. “But how is what is purified established?” It is said, “through mind just as it is.” This is self-aware luminous mind, just as it is, which is free from [all] afflictive and cognitive obscurations in the form of the characteristics of apprehender and apprehended. As for “mind not existing,” it refers to [mind’s appearing as] apprehender and apprehended. “What is mind” is the self-awareness that is free from those [two]. Since this [latter mind] is not understood by those who just see this life, it is the inconceivable dhātu. In brief, what is called “nirvāṇa” is analyzed by prajñā as being the realization of self-aware luminosity.<sup>204</sup>

Compare also Ratnākaraśānti’s *Śuddhamatī* commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, which describes mind’s luminosity as being obscured by adventitious stains by saying “the [nature of phenomena] is natural luminosity, while the activity of the path is to terminate the adventitious obscurations”<sup>205</sup> and “ultimately, signlessness is sheer lucidity.”<sup>206</sup> Thus, ultimate reality is not the utter lack of any entity, but mind’s ultimate luminosity:

Just as suchness, the defining characteristic of mind is not the lack of any entity because it has the defining characteristic of utter lucidity. Mind is not other than suchness because it is not different from lucidity.<sup>207</sup>

Consequently, the fruition of buddhahood is nothing but this luminosity with all its innate qualities having become free from adventitious stains:

The uncontaminated dharmas, which are the nature of dharmatā completely pure in all aspects, make up the svābhāvikakāya of the buddha bhagavāns. For, through being free from all adventitious mistakenness, they abide as that nature. As [*Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.2] says:

The knowledge of all aspects is attained—  
Immaculateness in terms of all obscurations.  
Buddhahood is illustrated  
By a jewel casket thrown open.<sup>208</sup>

Likewise, the text says that the uncontaminated dharmas make up the svābhāvikakāya because, through being free from all mistakenness, they are the sheer dharmatā that has the character of lucidity.<sup>209</sup>

In sum, in his works Ratnākaraśānti generally sees himself as a Mādhyamika, but one who integrates many essential elements of Yogācāra and the teachings on buddha nature, such as emphasizing the soteriologically crucial role of mind's nature being nondual lucid self-awareness—the tathāgata heart—which is only obscured by adventitious stains and needs to be experienced in an unmediated manner as what it truly is. This self-aware natural luminosity is what remains after all obscurations have been eliminated. In other words, the realization of the ultimate or buddhahood is not the mere cessation of the entirety of mind and mental factors, but the pure elements of their continuum remain as the wisdom minds of bodhisattvas and buddhas.<sup>210</sup>

A commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* by Mahājāna<sup>211</sup> speaks of emptiness as an implicative negation and says that all phenomena have the character of mind's luminous nature.<sup>212</sup> Interestingly, Mahājāna explains the word *kula* in *kula*putra (“son of good family”) and *kula*duhitā (“daughter of good family”) as having the disposition (*kula* or *gotra*) of bodhisattvas, which he glosses as the tathāgata heart. The weariness about suffering and the wish to be protected from it and attain nirvāṇa are caused by or indicate

the power of the tathāgata heart in beings, which parallels the explanation of this in *Uttaratantra* I.40–41. Thus, based on the tathāgata heart, bodhisattvas develop bodhicitta, practice the six pāramitās, and so the entire path unfolds.<sup>213</sup> In the context of explaining the mantra of prajñāpāramitā, Mahājāna says that the phrase “the mantra that calms all suffering” refers to this mantra’s being the cause for realizing the four pāramitās of purity, self, permanence, and bliss on the final path of nonlearning.<sup>214</sup> As described in several *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras and the *Uttaratantra*, these four pāramitās are the ultimate defining characteristics of the tathāgata heart.<sup>215</sup>

Prāśāstrasena’s *Āryaprajñāpāramitāhṛdayaṭīkā* comments on the *Heart Sūtra*’s phrase “all phenomena are without arising, ceasing, purity, impurity, increase, and decrease” by using the notion of buddha nature (*sangs rgyas kyi ngo bo*), which exists without any change in all beings, is naturally pure, and is only obscured by adventitious stains:

As for [the sūtra’s] saying “without arising, without ceasing,” the subsequent existence of what did not exist before is called “arising.” The subsequent nonexistence of what existed before is called “cessation.” Since this buddha nature—the dharmadhātu, ultimate emptiness—has no beginning point, an endpoint is not to be found. Therefore, [the sūtra] says, “without arising, without ceasing.”

Even when sentient beings cycle on the five paths [of rebirth in saṃsāra], buddha nature does not become stained. Therefore, [the sūtra] speaks of “purity.” Even when awakening to unsurpassable completely perfect awakening, there is no superior purity than buddha nature. Therefore, [the sūtra] says, “without purity.”

Despite manifesting in the bodies of ants and beetles, buddha nature does not become smaller. Therefore, [the sūtra] says, “without decrease.” Despite manifesting as the dharmakāya, buddha nature does not increase. Therefore, it is without becoming full. Why? Because it is beyond thought and expression and thus not within the confines of measurement.

Since the dharmadhātu does not arise in two ways (through karma and afflictions), it is unarisen. Being unarisen, it is without perishing and therefore is unceasing. Since the dharmadhātu is naturally pure, it is not pure and thus is without purity. Though it is naturally pure, it is not that it becomes impure [through] adventitious afflictions. Therefore, it is pure. Since there is no decrease in the dharmadhātu through the relinquishment of the factors of afflictiveness, it is without decrease.

At the time of the increase of purified phenomena, the dharmadhātu does not increase. Therefore, it is without increase.<sup>216</sup>

The sūtra's phrase "no attainment and no nonattainment" is also explained in terms of buddha nature. The entire path is merely the dissolution of the latent tendencies of ignorance in the ālaya-consciousness, which simply reveals the already existing qualities of buddha nature—buddha wisdom or the mirrorlike dharmadhātu—which are also the qualities of prajñāpāramitā. Though buddhahood has the nature of emptiness, it is not that prajñāpāramitā is without result. Moreover, without any result, any actions on the path to attain a result would be pointless.<sup>217</sup>

### *Tathāgatagarbha* as the Ālaya-Consciousness

Gö Lotsāwa's GC continues that the explanation of the tathāgata heart as the ālaya-consciousness is found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Ghanavyūhasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*,<sup>218</sup> the vajra songs (dohās), and others.<sup>219</sup>

It should be added here that Paramārtha in his rather free translations of the *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya*<sup>220</sup> and *The Awakening of the Mahāyāna Faith*,<sup>221</sup> which contain passages from the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, also relates the ālaya-consciousness to the tathāgata heart. Ratnamati said that, just as with the tathāgata heart, awakening consists of purifying the ālaya-consciousness from its defilements in order to uncover its pure and original nature (like removing dust from a mirror), rather than eliminating it. *The Distinction of the Views* by the early Tibetan translator Yeshé Dé<sup>222</sup> (eighth century) speaks of buddha nature as "the ālaya:"

It is taught that, at the time of the tathāgata heart's not having become clearly manifest, it is called "ālaya." When it has become clearly manifest, it is called "dharmakāya."<sup>223</sup>

### *Tathāgatagarbha* as a Sentient Being

According to GC, the explanation of the tathāgata heart as a sentient being is found in texts such as the *Pradīpodyotana*:

All sentient beings are the tathāgata heart.<sup>224</sup>

Also, the *Uttaratantra* contains passages such as:

The basic element . . .  
 Is taught through three names  
 In its three phases.<sup>225</sup>

In addition to these two sources, one may as well add the *Hevajratantra's* famous verse:

Sentient beings are buddhas indeed.  
 However, they are obscured by adventitious stains.  
 Due to the removal of these, no doubt,  
 Beings are definitely buddhas.<sup>226</sup>

### *Tathāgatagarbha* as the Dharmakāya, Suchness, the Disposition, and Nonconceptuality

GC does not discuss the *Uttaratantra's* above-mentioned four explanations of the tathāgata heart as dharmakāya, suchness, disposition, and nonconceptuality further since it says that they are explained in detail throughout the text. However, JKC's introduction (13–14) elaborates on these four explanations based on GC's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.27 (compare appendix 1):

Since buddha wisdom enters into the multitudes of beings,  
 Since its stainlessness is nondual by nature,  
 And since the buddha disposition is metaphorically referred to by [the  
 name of] its fruition,  
 All beings are said to possess the buddha [heart].

According to Gö Lotsāwa, JKC says, (1) the buddha wisdom that is present in sentient beings is called “tathāgata heart” because buddha wisdom enters into all these beings. (2) Since the nature of the mind—suchness without adventitious stains—exists in all buddhas and sentient beings without difference, it is also called “tathāgata heart.” (3) The factors similar to a buddha (the skandhas and so on) that exist in sentient beings represent the buddha disposition. Since “disposition” has the meaning of being very similar, this disposition is labeled with the name “tathāgata” and thus explained as the heart of a tathāgata.<sup>227</sup> Thus, in brief, the tathāgata heart is taught to be the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition, respectively. The first one is the actual tathāgata and the nominal heart of sentient beings. The second one is both the actual tathāgata and the actual heart because it

covers both buddhas and sentient beings. The third one is the actual heart and the nominal tathāgata. (4) Nonconceptuality should be understood as applying to all the preceding points (1)–(3) in general.

JKC continues that “disposition,” “basic element,” “seed,” and so on, are used as the synonyms of the tathāgata heart. However, “basic element” (*dhātu*) does not have the meaning of “cause” here—it is called “basic element” because, in terms of not being clearly manifest, it also has the meaning of the word *garbha* (“heart”). This is why a buddha in a decaying lotus and so on are given as the nine examples of this basic element because it is present as the actually existent true nature that is obscured from the outside by obscurations that are something else. The dharmadhātu too is taught to be the disposition and the basic element.

In addition to the above eight different ways of explaining the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha*, note that *Uttaratantra* I.23–24 identifies the tathāgata heart as being fourfold: (1) stained suchness, (2) stainless suchness (awakening), (3) the qualities of this awakening, and (4) its enlightened activity. Thus, besides being the intrinsic disposition for (or cause of) awakening as well as the result that is awakening, the tathāgata heart is here additionally explained as the buddha qualities and nonconceptual enlightened activity for all beings. Still, these four can be subsumed easily under the above four points of GC—the dharmakāya, suchness, the disposition, and nonconceptuality. For suchness is twofold—stained (1) and unstained (2), the disposition is the same as stained suchness (1), the dharmakāya consists of (2)–(4), and nonconceptuality applies to all, but in particular to (4).

### *Tibetan Assertions on Tathāgatagarbha*

As for the many different ways in which Tibetan scholars explain the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha*, only a brief sketch of the main positions in the major Tibetan schools is possible here.

According to BA,<sup>228</sup> those who follow the tradition of Dsen Kawoché (Tib. Btsan Kha bo che) hold that since the tathāgata heart is the naturally luminous nature of the mind, it is the powerful vital cause of buddhahood. TOK agrees, saying that, according to the Eighth Situpa, the texts in Dsen Kawoché’s lineage accepted a really established, self-aware, self-luminous cognition empty of the duality of apprehender and apprehended to be the powerful vital cause of buddhahood.<sup>229</sup>

Ngog Lotsāwa (1050–1109) says in his commentary on the *Uttaratantra* that the basic element or dhātu is the conventional object that is a nonimplicative negation.<sup>230</sup> He defines this dhātu as the mind stream that has the

nature of emptiness and is accomplished through the accumulation of the virtue that is attained from the path of accumulation up through the seventh bhūmi. Moreover, Ngog equates “dhātu” not only with the tathāgata heart (as in RGVV) but also with the ālaya-consciousness (maybe influenced by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*).<sup>231</sup> Obviously, this creates a considerable tension with his definition of the tathāgata heart as emptiness, but he does not resolve it (some of his followers, such as Chaba Chökyi Sengé, thus explicitly reject the identification of the tathāgata heart as the ālaya-consciousness). BA adds that both Ngog Lotsāwa and his student Dsangnagpa hold the tathāgata heart to be ultimate reality, but for them ultimate reality is not even a mere referent object (*zhen yul*), let alone being an object of terms and conceptions.<sup>232</sup> On the other hand, Chaba Chökyi Sengé is said to assert that ultimate reality consists of the nonimplicative negation of all entities’ being empty of real existence and that this negation does serve as a referent object of terms and conceptions. Chaba also states that the teaching on the tathāgata heart in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* bears an intention and is not to be taken literally.<sup>233</sup>

The Kadampa tradition, and later the Gelugpa School, generally follow Ngog Lotsāwa in asserting the tathāgata heart as mind’s emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation. However, like Chaba Chökyi Sengé, Gelugpas usually assert that the teachings on tathāgata heart are of expedient meaning. Kedrub Jé Geleg Balsang (1385–1438) says that the tathāgata heart refers to the emptiness of mind’s being empty of being really established in its phase of not being free from adventitious stains:

In the *Mahāyānottaratantra*, it is said that the sugata heart and the sugata element are equivalent. In its commentary, it is stated:

Here, the meaning of “dhātu” is the meaning of “cause.”<sup>234</sup>

Therefore, the sugata heart is called “the sugata cause.” [However,] the mere cause of a buddha is not called “sugata heart.” “How is it then?” It is the emptiness of mind’s being empty of being really established that is called “the naturally pure true nature of the mind.” The naturally pure true nature of the mind in its phase of not being free from adventitious stains is called “sugata heart” or “naturally abiding disposition.” The naturally pure true nature of the mind in its phase of being free from all adventitious stains without exception is called “svābhāvikakāya,” “the ultimate reality of cessation,” “the ultimate result of



freedom,” “the true nature endowed with twofold purity,” or “the dharmakāya endowed with twofold purity.” The adventitious stains are the afflictive and cognitive obscurations. Therefore, the svābhāvikakāya is necessarily not the sugata heart because what is free from adventitious stains is necessarily not what is not free from stains. In our own system, though the synonyms “sugata heart” and “svābhāvikakāya” are unconditioned, nonentities, permanent, eternal, and everlasting, they are not really established.<sup>235</sup>

The similar view of Gyalsab Darma Rinchen<sup>236</sup> (1364–1432) says that the tathāgata heart is the state of a being in whom mind’s emptiness is obscured, while buddhas by definition do not possess this tathāgata heart. Thus, the tathāgata heart as mind’s emptiness is the cause of buddhahood only in the sense that this emptiness is the focal object of the wisdom of bodhisattvas in meditative equipoise, which is the primary cause of buddha wisdom (however, both the wisdoms of bodhisattvas and buddhas are momentary and belong to seeming reality). Thus, the tathāgata heart is only a cause in the sense that the mind stream is purified through focusing on it. Tsongkhapa (1357–1419) himself is quite silent about buddha nature (probably because his champion Candrakīrti declared it to be of expedient meaning). In his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, Tsongkhapa says about the Madhyamaka position on the buddha disposition that both the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and the *Uttaratantra* teach it to be the dharmadhātu or the nature of phenomena free from anything to be removed or added.<sup>237</sup>

Just as the Gelugpas, *The Ornament That Illuminates and Beautifies the Tathāgata Heart*,<sup>238</sup> by Butön Rinchen Drub (1290–1364), holds the teachings on buddha nature to be of expedient meaning. To that end, he says that the general basis of intention of these teachings is the ālaya-consciousness, while Maitreya’s *Uttaratantra* entails the threefold basis of intention that consists of the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition. The purpose of teaching the tathāgata heart is to relinquish the five flaws in *Uttaratantra* I.160–67, and the invalidation of the explicit statement is that the tathāgata heart lacks wisdom and all the qualities that are contained in this wisdom because these two (wisdom and qualities) must be produced by the two accumulations of wisdom and merit, respectively, on the path.<sup>239</sup> Taking the reverse position of the Gelugpas on this, both Butön and his student and commentator Dratsépa Rinchen Namgyal (1318–1388) identify the actual tathāgata heart as being solely the final fruition of buddhahood. As the latter says:

The fully qualified sugata heart is the dharmakāya of a perfect buddha but never exists in the great mass of sentient beings.<sup>240</sup>

In his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, Butön says that the naturally abiding disposition is nothing but emptiness.<sup>241</sup>

The position of Dölpopa, Tāranātha, and their followers on the tathāgata heart differs in almost all regards from everybody else's (in particular, the Gelugpas, the Sakyapas, and Butön reject Dölpopa's interpretation vehemently). For Dölpopa, the teaching on buddha nature is of definitive meaning and serves as one of the cornerstones of his Shentong view. He typically describes both buddha nature and the dharmakāya as being ultimately really established, everlasting, eternal, permanent, immutable (*ther zug*), and being beyond dependent origination. He also equates the tathāgata heart with "ālaya-wisdom" as opposed to the ālaya-consciousness. In that vein, Dölpopa makes a sharp distinction between the spheres of ordinary consciousness and nondual wisdom as being two separate kingdoms because consciousness is merely seeming and empty of itself, while nondual wisdom is really established and only empty of other seeming phenomena but not empty of its own nature. The object of consciousness is exclusively saṃsāra and the object of wisdom is exclusively nirvāṇa. Dölpopa explicitly declares that the tathāgata heart, nondual wisdom, and ultimate reality withstand analysis. In other words, self-emptiness—phenomena's being empty of a nature of their own—pertains only to conventional reality but not to ultimate reality (the tathāgata heart), which is not empty of itself. He also holds that the sixty-four qualities of a perfect buddha exist in a complete and unobscured manner at the time of the ground, that is, in ordinary sentient beings. However, as mentioned above, Dölpopa's typical Shentong presentation of the tathāgata heart, as found in his main work *Mountain Dharma*, is absent in his commentary on the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>242</sup>

Virtually all Kagyü masters hold the teaching on buddha nature to be of definitive meaning and deny that the tathāgata heart is just sheer emptiness or a nonimplicative negation. Though the Kagyü approach has certain similarities with Dölpopa's view, it is generally less absolute than the latter's and shows several significant differences, such as not claiming that the buddha qualities exist in their full-blown form even in confused sentient beings and not making such an absolute distinction between the two realities as Dölpopa does (the exception is Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé, who largely follows Tāranātha and Dölpopa but at times blends their positions with the Third Karmapa's view).<sup>243</sup>

Gö Lotsāwa's GC summarizes his own position on the tathāgata heart in the *Uttaratantra* and its relation to the adventitious stains as follows.<sup>244</sup> Among the seven vajra points, he says, the basic element is to be explained first for the following reason. The basic element is described as emptiness or suchness and therefore all explanations of the seven vajra points in their ultimate aspects refer to nothing but suchness, merely differing in whether this suchness is pure or not pure of stains. The emptiness explained in the second dharma wheel is the nonimplicative negation of being empty of a nature that is not mixed with any other nature, which is to be realized through inferential valid cognition as its cognitive subject. This emptiness is also described as not having arisen from any causes or conditions at all. In the last dharma wheel, that kind of emptiness applies only to the outer cocoon of adventitious stains, while thereafter the emptiness that represents the tathāgata heart is determined. The tathāgata heart's own essence is not a nonimplicative negation but is the element of basic awareness.<sup>245</sup> It is not a direct object of inferential valid cognition but is the object of direct perception. As for its not originating due to causes and conditions, this does not mean that it is absolutely unoriginated. Just as the element of space occurs naturally within its own state, in its own continuum, the basic element does not depend on any changes through having contact with other phenomena.

GC continues by saying that also the great Madhyamaka masters assert the sūtras of the last dharma wheel as authoritative (*tshad ma*) and it is not the case that they do not accept the emptiness that represents the tathāgata heart. For Bhāviveka's *Prajñāpradīpa* says:

What was taught [by the Buddha] is mainly dependent origination with the distinctive features of nonarising and so on. Therefore, it is established that the meaning of this treatise [the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*] is to teach nonconceptual wisdom, whose object is nectar[like] true reality (the nonconceptual ultimate, which is like the stainless autumn sky), in which all reference points without exception are at utter peace, and which is free from being a unity or a multiplicity, peaceful, and to be experienced personally. Though the way of being of the Bhagavān is true reality, those with bad thoughts do not have confidence in it. Therefore, it is apprehended through the predominance of inference.<sup>246</sup>

In the context of the last dharma wheel, the hotness of fire and so on are used as examples because Nāgārjuna's *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* states:

Just as sweetness is the nature  
 Of sugar, and hotness that of fire,  
 So the nature of all phenomena  
 Is asserted to be emptiness.<sup>247</sup>

Also, the object of negation of which something is empty is a bit different here from that of the second dharma wheel. The tathāgata heart exists from sentient beings up through buddhas as the nature of the mind by way of not being impaired or fabricated by any other conditions, while it is said to be empty of all fabricated adventitious phenomena.

Next, GC provides a list of such adventitious phenomena, which includes not only the conventionally unmistaken and mistaken subjects and objects of ordinary beings but also the subjects and objects in the mind streams that represent the spiritual paths of ordinary beings, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas. Thus, what is adventitious consists of: (1) the direct appearances that are apprehended as blue, yellow, and so on, and consist of the mind's being colored in the form of distinct aspects of objects, (2) the aspects that are the apprehenders of these appearances, (3) the aspects that are the objects that appear for conceptions and are produced by the power of the latent tendencies planted by direct appearances, (4) the aspects that are the apprehenders of those objects, (5) the appearances of inference explained in *Madhyamaka*, (6) the aspects that are the apprehenders of those appearances, (7) the aspects of strands of hair, yellow conch shells, and so on, that are caused by impaired sense faculties, (8) the aspects that are the apprehenders of those, (9) the clear appearances of dreams, (10) the appearances that arise from meditation, such as skeletons and the totalities,<sup>248</sup> (11) the appearances of contaminated supernatural knowledges, (12) the appearances of the dhyānas and formless absorptions, (13) the appearances of the objects of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas realizing personal identitylessness, and (14) the aspects that are the apprehenders of those. Since all of these are fabricated by either objects, latent tendencies, or impaired sense faculties, they are not the mode of being of mind's natural state. Therefore, it is said that mind's nature is empty of all of them.

Still, it is not that these adventitious phenomena arise as something that is apart from the nature of the mind. This is similar to the example of space's being described as empty because it does not turn into clouds, mountains, and so on, while it is at the same time not tenable for clouds and so on to abide anywhere else than in space. Moreover, since the outer world and the bodies of sentient beings are brought about by ignorance,

they are fabricated too and thus also represent objects of negation of which the tathāgata heart is empty.

The buddhas do not see this element of basic awareness as having any kinds of characteristics whatsoever because the *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* says:

In brief, the buddhas  
Did not see [mind] nor will they see it.  
How could they see  
What has the nature of lacking a nature?

What is called “entity” is a conception,  
The lack of conceptions is emptiness.  
Wherever conceptions appear,  
How could there be emptiness?

The tathāgatas do not see a mind  
With the aspects of something to be cognized and what cognizes it.  
Wherever there is something to be cognized and what cognizes it,  
There is no awakening.

Being without characteristics, without arising,  
Without abiding, and without words,  
Space, bodhicitta, and awakening  
Have the characteristic of being nondual.<sup>249</sup>

The *Madhyāntavibhāga* states:

In brief, suchness, the true end,  
Signlessness, the ultimate,  
And the dharmadhātu  
Are the synonyms of emptiness.

Since they refer to being changeless, being unmistakable,  
Being the cessation of [signs], being the sphere of the noble ones,  
And being the cause of the qualities of the noble ones,  
These are the respective meanings of those synonyms.<sup>250</sup>

According to Gö Lotsāwa, these synonyms are suitable to be applied to both kinds of emptiness—the one that is a nonimplicative negation and the one

that is basic awareness. He concludes that Maitrīpa, the lord of this dharma (the *Uttaratantra*), and his successors assert that the emptiness taught in the *Madhyamakāvātāra* represents middling Madhyamaka, while the emptiness that is basic awareness is the system of supreme Madhyamaka.<sup>251</sup>

The Drugpa Kagyü master Padma Karpo<sup>252</sup> (1527–1592) says that the nature of the tathāgata heart is threefold—the dharmakāya is the power to accomplish what one wishes for, suchness never changes into anything else, and the disposition means to be moistened through compassion. Since the tathāgata heart is lasting, it is the basis for everything unconditioned that is connected to it and cannot be separated from it as well as everything conditioned that is not connected to it and can be separated from it. When this tathāgata heart is not realized, it is suitable to be called “saṃsāra,” and when it is realized as it is, it is suitable to be called “nirvāṇa.” This is comparable to the existence of space, which can appear as having clouds for some and as being without clouds for others. The adventitious stains, which do not withstand analysis on the level of the correct seeming, are like clouds, while the dharmadhātu, which withstands being analyzed, is like space. However, to say that the tathāgata heart actually exists in all sentient beings is of expedient meaning. Therefore, it is called “buddha heart” but not “śrāvaka heart” and so on. The object that is to be realized is this tathāgata heart alone, but the cognizing subject that realizes it just as it is is solely the vision of buddhas.<sup>253</sup>

In the Karma Kagyü School, it is the Third Karmapa's works that are considered to be the most authoritative on buddha nature. In particular, he discusses the tathāgata heart in the first and ninth chapters of his *Profound Reality* and its autocommentary, his commentary on the *Dharmadhātustava*, and his *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart*. The Karmapa's unique approach to presenting the tathāgata heart is to skillfully combine the teachings of Yogācāra, Madhyamaka, and the *Uttaratantra*. The tathāgata heart is mind's luminous ultimate nature or nondual wisdom, which is the basis of everything in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Its essence is empty, its nature is lucid, and its display is unimpeded (this is also how the nature of the mind is presented in the Mahāmudrā tradition, and the Karmapa's commentary on the *Dharmadhātustava* indeed equates the tathāgata heart with Mahāmudrā).<sup>254</sup> Like Padma Karpo, Rangjung Dorje says several times that not realizing this nature of the mind or buddha nature is saṃsāra, while realizing it is liberation (something that Dölpopa repeatedly rejects at length). The commentary on the *Profound Reality* by the first Karma Trinlépa, Choglé Namgyal (1456–1539),<sup>255</sup> elaborates that, according to

the Third Karmapa, the tathāgata heart is the essence of the inseparability of the naturally luminous dharmadhātu and personally experienced wisdom—nothing but ordinary mind, which is free from being real or delusive, like a reflection of the moon in water, and beyond identification and characteristics. This is understood as the personally experienced awareness of mind's being profound and lucid in a nondual way.

The Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* contains several uncommon discussions of the tathāgata heart, describing it as the ultimate reality of prajñāpāramitā, nondual wisdom, mind's luminosity, the perfect nature, "the profound other-empty" (*shentong*), and Mahāmudrā, which is empty of all imaginary and dependent phenomena of seeming reality. The Karmapa emphasizes that the tathāgata heart is the only ultimately real entity, which is permanent and able to perform functions (such as enlightened activity). He also repeatedly says that the tathāgata heart and sentient beings are mutually exclusive since sentient beings are nothing but the sum of adventitious stains. Thus, sentient beings neither possess nor are the tathāgata heart. This also means that it is not the case that buddha nature exists in sentient beings, but sentient beings (seem to) exist in buddha nature, just like clouds floating in the sky without affecting it.<sup>256</sup>

The Nyingma views on buddha nature are complex.<sup>257</sup> From early on, there is a tendency in this school to bring the explanations on the tathāgata heart in line with Dzogchen, starting with Rongsom Chökyi Sangpo<sup>258</sup> (1042–1136), Rog Sherab Ö<sup>259</sup> (1166–1244), and Longchen Rabjampa<sup>260</sup> (1308–1364). In that regard, Longchenpa, Mipham Rinpoche (1846–1912), and others state repeatedly that the Dzogchen view accords with \*Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka. Also, no Nyingma scholar ever considered only the last dharma wheel as being of purely definitive meaning while categorizing the second one as being of purely expedient meaning. Rather, there is generally a balanced approach to these two cycles of teachings. As Pötrül Dongag Denpé Nyima<sup>261</sup> (1898–1959) says:

Therefore, in the system of Great Madhyamaka, according to the intended meaning of sūtras such as the *Akṣayamati[nirdeśasūtra]* and great treatises such as the root text of the *[Madhyamak]āvatāra* and its commentary, the middle words of the Buddha are asserted as being of definitive meaning. According to the intended meaning of sūtras such as the *Dhāraṇīśvararāja[sūtra]* and great treatises such as the *Uttaratantra*, the sūtras of the last words of the Buddha that teach the

[tathāgata] heart are asserted as being of definitive meaning. The intended meanings of [these two combined] as a single essential point without contradiction represents the general [approach of] Nyingma texts.

Mipham Rinpoche wrote four texts that discuss the tathāgata heart—his commentary on the *Uttaratantra*,<sup>262</sup> *The Beacon of Certainty*,<sup>263</sup> *The Lion's Roar of Shentong*,<sup>264</sup> and *A Synopsis of the Sugata Heart*.<sup>265</sup> As Dorji Wangchuk says, the “official position” of the Nyingma School on buddha nature may be said to be spelled out in *A Synopsis of the Sugata Heart*. Briefly speaking, Mipham generally describes the tathāgata heart as the unity of appearance and emptiness, adopting a view of buddha nature that reflects Longchenpa's description of the ground of Dzogchen—the ground of the indivisible ultimate reality that is primordially pure (*ka dag*) and spontaneously present (*lhun grub*). Mipham also uses reasoning in the tradition of valid cognition to establish the existence of the tathāgata heart, similar to his use of reasoning to establish the purity and divine nature of appearances in the vajrayāna (the latter use of reasoning is a unique feature of the Nyingma tradition, which is said to go back to the works of Rongsom). To that end, Mipham juxtaposes the realm of conceptual mind and the sphere of nonconceptual wisdom, thus integrating an epistemological system of valid cognition with what is completely beyond any conceptions. However, ordinary reasoning is only an expedient means of knowledge, whereas nonconceptual wisdom is the ultimate mode of realization and is said to be present primordially.

Pötrül Dongag Denpé Nyima's view of the tathāgata heart, which is largely based on Mipham Rinpoche's, is briefly outlined as follows:

Thus, the manner of presenting the two realities by means of [the mode of] appearance and [the actual mode of] being's being in accordance is as follows. As for the distinctive feature of the sugata heart that is the definitive meaning in the sūtras of definitive meaning in the last wheel of the words of the Buddha (such as the ten sūtras on the [tathāgata] heart), in terms of the aspect of being empty, it has the character of being the object that is the dharmadhātu whose essence is empty and which is endowed with the three doors of liberation. In terms of the aspect of appearance, it is the subject that is the natural luminosity of wisdom, which is inseparable from the qualities of knowledge, loving-kindness, and power. This is [asserted as] the ultimate in



which [the mode of] appearance and [the actual mode of] being are in accordance. The appearances of mistakenness that have the nature of saṃsāra and constitute the aspect of adventitious stains—all subjects and objects that are separable from and do not enter the basic ground of the basic nature—are asserted as the seeming in which [the mode of] appearance and [the actual mode of] being are not in accordance.<sup>266</sup>

Thus, from the point of view of emptiness, buddha nature is the empty dharmadhātu (the object) and from the point of view of appearance, it is the wisdom (the subject) that is not empty of the inseparable qualities of a buddha. Both these aspects are inseparable and are empty of the adventitious stains that represent the delusive appearances of saṃsāra. Interestingly but definitely in line with this explanation, Pötrül says repeatedly that both the *Madhyamakāvatāra* and the *Uttaratantra* are scriptures of “the Great \*Prāsaṅgika Mahāyāna,” though he clearly rejects the Gelugpa understanding of this being the case because, he says, the Gelugpa position is solely based on a nonimplicative negation (the lack of real existence), while completely rejecting the notion of luminosity.<sup>267</sup>

In the early Sakya School, Sakya Paṇḍita<sup>268</sup> (1182–1251) identifies the tathāgata heart as being the dharmadhātu free from all reference points and rejects interpretations of buddha nature as being an entity (be it matter or mind) or a nonentity. Like the Gelugpas and Butön, he asserts the teaching in some sūtras and in the *Uttaratantra* that buddha nature exists in all sentient beings to be of expedient meaning, saying that the basis of intention of this statement is emptiness, the purpose is to relinquish the five flaws in *Uttaratantra* I.160–67, and the invalidation of the explicit statement is that if the tathāgata heart really existed, it would be a real entity, be like the self of the tīrthikas, and contradict the sūtras of definitive meaning in all respects. He also says that Candrakīrti taught it to be of expedient meaning in his *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*.

According to BA,<sup>269</sup> Rendawa Shönnu Lodrö<sup>270</sup> (1348–1412) first took the *Uttaratantra* to be a treatise of Mere Mentalism and composed a commentary in accordance with that system. However, when Rendawa stayed in solitary retreat later, BA reports that he sung a spontaneous dohā:

Therefore, seeing our own mind, this inseparability of being aware  
and empty,

To exist in all sentient beings in a pervasive manner,

Through examples such as a treasure below the earth and the womb  
of a pregnant woman,  
[Maitreya] declared that all beings are endowed with the tathāgata  
heart.<sup>271</sup>

Rongtön explains that what is called “the tathāgata heart” is suchness with stains (the basic element not liberated from the cocoon of the afflictions), which is the emptiness of mind with stains.<sup>272</sup> By contrast, the dharmakāya of a tathāgata is what is liberated from this cocoon. The term “tathāgata heart” is used in terms of what is primary because this heart (in the sense of emptiness) is explained to exist at the time of the fruition too. This also refutes the assertion that the fully qualified tathāgata heart is solely the buddhahood that is endowed with twofold purity (natural purity and purity of adventitious stains) because it is explained repeatedly that the primary tathāgata heart is suchness with stains. Rongtön’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* says that the Mādhyamikas identify the disposition as the dharmadhātu specified by the six inner āyatanas.<sup>273</sup>

In the later Sakya School, it is the works of Gorampa Sönam Sengé (1429–1489) that are usually taken to be authoritative.<sup>274</sup> According to him, the tathāgata heart refers to the nondual unity of mind’s lucidity and emptiness or awareness and emptiness free from all reference points. It is not mere emptiness because sheer emptiness cannot be the basis of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. However, it is not mere lucidity either because this lucidity is a conditioned entity and the tathāgata heart is unconditioned. When the unity of lucidity and emptiness is not associated with skillful means, it becomes the basis of saṃsāric phenomena. Then, out of this unity, improper mental engagement arises, which leads to afflictions, karma, and the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas, as described in *Uttaratantra* I.55–57. When the unity of lucidity and emptiness is associated with skillful means, it becomes the basis of all phenomena of the path through becoming weary of saṃsāra and striving for nirvāṇa, as explained in *Uttaratantra* I.41. Once the unity of lucidity and emptiness has become free from all adventitious stains through the power of having cultivated the path, it is endowed with twofold purity and serves as the basis of all buddha qualities.

In his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, the contemporary Sakya scholar Ngawang Kunga Wangchug (1921–2008) also emphasizes that the tathāgata heart is not just sheer emptiness but the union of lucidity and emptiness.<sup>275</sup> In the Mere Mentalist system, he says, the naturally abiding disposition, emptiness, suchness, the true end, signlessness, the ultimate,

and the dharmadhātu are asserted to be synonyms for the emptiness of the dependent nature's being empty of the imaginary nature, which is an emptiness that is established as withstanding analysis through reasoning, with all of the above being equivalents. However, in the Madhyamaka system, the sugata heart, the dharmadhātu, and the naturally abiding disposition are asserted as the unity of lucidity (the bearer of the nature of phenomena) and the cessation of all reference points of the four extremes within this very lucidity (the nature of phenomena) being inseparable. On the other hand, emptiness, suchness, and so on, are presented from the point of view of the basic nature that is the cessation of all reference points of real existence or of the four extremes. Therefore, the difference between the sugata heart and suchness or emptiness is very big because suchness is presented as only the empty part of said unity. In brief, in the Madhyamaka system, the naturally abiding disposition must be the dharmadhātu because it is the cause of the buddhadharmas (such as the ten powers) and because dharmadhātu, disposition, and cause are equivalents.<sup>276</sup>

As in a lot of other areas, the details of the position of Śākya Chogden<sup>277</sup> (1428–1507) on the tathāgata heart differ from Gorampa's view, as well as from virtually all other Tibetan presentations of buddha nature.<sup>278</sup> According to Śākya Chogden, the pāramitāyāna teaches two types of tathāgata heart, as described in the second and third dharma wheels, respectively. The first type is the nonimplicative negation of all extremes of reference points. This tathāgata heart pervades all beings up through buddhas. However, this type of tathāgata heart is not the actual one but only the nominal tathāgata heart. Śākya Chogden says that neither the temporary position on the tathāgata heart (its being a nonimplicative negation) nor the final position (its being inexpressible) of the Niḥsvabhāvavādins provide a correct identification of the tathāgata heart. The third dharma wheel teaches the actual tathāgata heart, which is said to be of two kinds. Some of its sūtras explain that the tathāgata heart endowed with all buddha qualities is present in all sentient beings. Other sūtras take this statement as bearing an intention. Following these latter sūtras, Śākya Chogden argues that the basis of the intention of the third dharma wheel's teachings on the tathāgata heart is mind's natural luminosity free from all extremes of reference points, which is the sphere of personally experienced wisdom and an implicative negation. According to him, this is also what the *Uttaratantra* says—that the statement of the tathāgata heart's pervading all sentient beings bears an intention and is to be interpreted correctly. He further argues that the *Uttaratantra*'s explanation of the basis of intention in teaching the

tathāgata heart was misunderstood by Tibetan thinkers as an explanation of the actual tathāgata heart.<sup>279</sup>

Furthermore, to possess wisdom is not equivalent to possessing the tathāgata heart. Though everyone including ordinary beings possesses wisdom in a nonmanifest manner, only bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi onward manifest this wisdom as the direct realization of ultimate reality. This means that only such bodhisattvas possess the actual tathāgata heart in that they see at least certain degrees of purification of the stains that cover the tathāgata heart as well as its inseparability from certain degrees of buddha qualities. Ordinary beings thus do not possess this actual tathāgata heart at all, while buddhas possess it in its completeness. In other words, the close connection between seeing the tathāgata heart free from adventitious stains and possessing it, as well as between becoming free from adventitious stains and “attaining” the qualities of a buddha, is a prominent feature of Śākya Chogden’s interpretation of *tathāgatagarbha*.

In general, he argues against identifying the tathāgata heart as a mere natural purity—the state of the natural freedom from obscurations as it is taught in the explicit teachings of the second dharma wheel and their commentaries. In his opinion, the actual tathāgata heart has to be asserted not only as natural purity and purity from adventitious stains, but also—and most importantly—as what is inseparable from the buddha qualities. In sum, Śākya Chogden distinguishes three kinds of tathāgata hearts: (1) the nominal tathāgata heart that is the mere natural purity (as taught in the second dharma wheel and its Madhyamaka commentaries), (2) the actual tathāgata heart that is the purity of adventitious stains and represents the relative tathāgata heart (as taught in the third dharma wheel and the Non-aspectarian system of Maitreya and Asaṅga, as well as in the teachings of expedient meaning in the second dharma wheel as these are interpreted by the third dharma wheel), and (3) the actual tathāgata heart that is the natural purity that is inseparable from all buddha qualities and represents the ultimate tathāgata heart (as taught in the system of Maitreya and Asaṅga and in the third dharma wheel).

Consequently, Śākya Chogden criticizes Ngog Lotsāwa and those who follow him for taking the emptiness of mind with stains as the meaning of the tathāgata heart because, he says, the tathāgata heart has to be identified in terms of the buddha qualities, which however is not suitable for a sheer emptiness. He is thus closer to those who explain the tathāgata heart as natural luminosity and nondual wisdom. However, he does not agree with all aspects of that view either because (as explained above) he does not

accept that the actual tathāgata heart pervades all beings; it exists only in noble bodhisattvas and buddhas. Also, Śākya Chogden speaks of a conditioned and an unconditioned as well as a seeming and an ultimate *tathāgatagarbha*. He holds that even the ultimate tathāgata heart is impermanent because it is a functional entity, which is ceasing moment by moment. On the other hand, he says, this does not contradict its being explained as permanent in other contexts, when having in mind the permanence in terms of continuity.<sup>280</sup>

Elsewhere,<sup>281</sup> Śākya Chogden summarizes the main positions on buddha nature in the Tibetan schools as follows:

1. Asserting that all sentient beings possess buddha nature
  - a) Asserting buddha nature from the point of view of a nonimplicative negation, which means that it thus is not specified by buddha qualities such as the powers (Ngog and his followers)
  - b) Asserting buddha nature from the point of view of an implicative negation, which means that it thus is specified by the buddha qualities (Dölpopa and his followers)
  - c) Asserting buddha nature as being sheer natural purity (Gelugpas)
  - d) Asserting buddha nature as the compound of natural purity and buddha qualities' being inseparable
    - (1) Asserting those qualities to be the qualities of the fruitional dharmakāya of realization (many Kagyüpas such as Pamo Trupa)
    - (2) Asserting those qualities to be the qualities of the natural dharmakāya (Bodong Choglé Namgyal,<sup>282</sup> 1376–1451)
2. Asserting that sentient beings do not possess buddha nature (Sakya Paṇḍita, Butön, and others)<sup>283</sup>

In sum, though there are numerous specific differences between the views of all these Tibetan masters, they can be said to fall into two camps—those who assert the tathāgata heart as sheer emptiness (be it as the dharmadhātu, the nature of phenomena, or a nonimplicative negation) and those who regard it as the union of mind's emptiness and luminosity (which includes the buddha qualities). The former typically consider the teaching on buddha nature as being of expedient meaning, while the latter usually regard it as being of definitive meaning.



## *The History and Transmission of “The Five Dharmas of Maitreya” from India to Tibet*

Among modern scholars, the authorship of the five texts that the Tibetan tradition considers as being composed by the great bodhisattva Maitreya—the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, *Madhyāntavibhāga*, *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, and *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* (*Uttaratantra*)—continues to be disputed. The main positions include a total denial of a historic person named Maitreya, the author of these texts’ being someone called Maitreya but not the great bodhisattva Maitreya, and these works’ being composed by Asaṅga or other persons. All five texts have been compared in terms of form, terminology, and contents, with some of them (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, *Madhyāntavibhāga*, and *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*) showing greater similarities than others (*Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and *Uttaratantra*), but it is naturally problematic to decide questions of authorship solely on the grounds of such criteria.

The Chinese Buddhist tradition also speaks of “the five works of Maitreya,” but considers them as consisting of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, a \**Yogavibhāga*,<sup>284</sup> the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, the *Madhyāntavibhāga*, and the *Vajracchedikāvyaḅhyā*.<sup>285</sup> The *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* was never translated into Chinese and seems to be completely unknown in the Chinese Buddhist tradition. The *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* was translated only once in 1936 by Fa-tsun (1902–1980) and plays no significant role in Chinese Buddhism, while the *Uttaratantra* is ascribed to a certain \**Sāramati*.<sup>286</sup>

The designation “the five dharmas of Maitreya”<sup>287</sup> in the Tibetan tradition for the above five texts is not of Indian origin and is also unknown in the two earliest catalogues of Tibetan translations from Sanskrit<sup>288</sup> (both compiled in the ninth century). Thus, it is hard to say when this expression was used first. However, by the eleventh century, at least some Indian texts considered all the above five texts to be authored by Maitreya.<sup>289</sup> Only two among these five were translated during the early translation period in Tibet—the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* by Gawa Baldse<sup>290</sup> and the *Madhyāntavibhāga* by

Yeshé Dé<sup>291</sup> (both eighth century). The remaining three were translated during the eleventh century—the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, by Ngog Lotsāwa; the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, by Sengé Gyaltzen<sup>292</sup> and Nagtso Lotsāwa, with the latter's being revised by Su Gawé Dorje<sup>293</sup> (eleventh century); and the *Uttaratantra*, by Ngog Lotsāwa and others.<sup>294</sup>

In the different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, there is just about every possible interpretation as to what each one of these five texts by Maitreya teach, what their intentions are, and which of them belong to Yogācāra or what Tibetans call “Mere Mentalism” (*sems tsam*), Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, \*Svātantrika-Madhyamaka, \*Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, Shentong Madhyamaka, or “Great Madhyamaka.” However, despite these differences, what is clear for most commentators is that, in terms of their contents, these five texts cover the entire range of the mahāyāna teachings.<sup>295</sup>

There are a number of Kagyü, Jonang, Kadam, Sakya, and Nyingma sources that speak about the transmission of the Maitreya texts.<sup>296</sup> According to TOK and JKC by Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé, who is known to rely greatly on Tāranātha, the intention of the sūtras of the third dharmacakra was elucidated by the four works of Maitreya except the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and by Nāgārjuna's collection of praises. In India, the meaning of these texts was explained and spread widely by Asaṅga, Vasubandhu (both fourth century), Candragomī (sixth/seventh century), their followers, Ratnākaraśānti, and others. It is also well known, Kongtrul says, that Dharmapāla (530–561) composed a treatise called *Dawn of Brightness*<sup>297</sup> that commented on Nāgārjuna's sixfold collection of reasoning and the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* in particular as bearing the intention of the third wheel of dharma.<sup>298</sup> However, while the general philosophical system of Maitreya's texts—the contents of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, and *Madhyāntavibhāga*—was explained in detail through many excellent teaching traditions (such as those of Dignāga and Sthiramati), the uncommon philosophical system of these texts was sustained in such a way that only the supreme disciples transmitted it orally, with the texts of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra* being hidden away as treasure texts.

According to the historical records of the tradition of Dsen Kawoché (aka Trimé Sherab; born 1021), Kongtrul says, the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and the *Uttaratantra* were not known to other paṇḍitas in India until the eleventh century,<sup>299</sup> when Maitrīpa rediscovered these texts inside an old stūpa and then received direct instructions on them from Maitreya.<sup>300</sup> BA and GC agree with this and add that it seems to be true because the great Indian treatises (such as Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṃkāralokā*) quote the



*Madhyāntavibhāga* and the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* but never mention the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra*. HLS says that Aśaṅga hid his RGVV in a stūpa, thinking that this commentary did not fit into the narrow minds of most proponents of Buddhist philosophical systems at the time. Later, Maitrīpa recovered both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV from that stūpa and felt great faith in it because he saw that the intention of this treatise was in conformity with the teachings on the heart of the matter by his guru, Śavarīpa.

As for the question whether Maitrīpa indeed rediscovered the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and the *Uttaratantra*, it is a fact that both texts were already quoted in three works by two teachers of Maitrīpa. Jñānaśrīmitra’s (c. 980–1040) *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* mentions the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* by name and quotes what corresponds to lines 24 and 27 in the Tibetan versified version.<sup>301</sup> The *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* also cites a number of verses from the *Uttaratantra* as well as passages from RGVV, and several verses of the same author’s *Sākarasaṃgrahasūtra* correspond to verses of the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>302</sup> Likewise, Ratnākaraśānti’s (eleventh century) *Sūtrasamuccayabhāṣya* quotes *Uttaratantra* I.28 and I.96–97 and two passages from RGVV.<sup>303</sup> Though it seems somewhat unlikely that Maitrīpa’s teachers quoted the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra* in their texts only after their student had rediscovered them, this is what the above sources suggest.<sup>304</sup> The earliest available Tibetan commentaries on the *Uttaratantra* by Ngog Lotsāwa and a student of Marpa Chökyi Wangchug (CMW) do not mention Maitrīpa at all. IM as the earliest known record of the rediscovery of the *Uttaratantra* says that a paṇḍita called Maitreyaṅātha retrieved instructions on the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* from a stūpa after he had dreamt about placing instructions on these texts inside a stūpa and then receiving teachings on them by Maitreya.<sup>305</sup> It is not clear in IM whether “instructions” refers to the actual manuscripts of these two texts or to instructions about them. However, IM seems to suggest that Maitreyaṅātha only retrieved the instructions in his dream that are contained in IM itself, which are Maitreya’s teachings based on the *Uttaratantra* that he gave in Maitreyaṅātha’s dream. Śākya Chogden reports that, according to some, a paṇḍita by the name Maitreyaṅātha retrieved the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* from a brick stupa just prior to the time of Ngog Lotsāwa. According to others, he says, this bearer of Maitreya’s name was in fact Maitrīpa, and the two texts represent treatises on Mahāmudrā. Rongtön says that it was a disciple of Maitrīpa named \*Aṅarākṣita who

retrieved the two texts from a four-storied sandalwood stūpa and then passed them on to Sajjana and his son Mahājana.

In any case, it is clear from the majority of the Tibetan accounts of the transmission lineage (*gsan yig*) of the *Uttaratantra* that Maitrīpa is regarded as a part of this lineage and was taught the text directly by Maitreya.<sup>306</sup> These Tibetan records also agree that Maitrīpa then taught the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra* to paṇḍita \*Ānandakīrti who, disguised as a beggar, traveled to Kashmir. There he transmitted these texts to the Kashmiri paṇḍita Sajjana (eleventh century), who gave copies to paṇḍita Jñānaśrī and others.<sup>307</sup> Some sources explicitly emphasize how extremely rare the manuscripts of these two texts were at the time of Sajjana.<sup>308</sup>

Sajjana was the elder son of paṇḍita Mahājana and the grandson of the siddha and paṇḍita Ratnavajra, who was an *upasaka* (holding the vows of a lay practitioner).<sup>309</sup> Ratnavajra was the central one among the six gatekeeper paṇḍitas of Vikramaśīla and there mainly taught the five texts of Maitreya, Dignāga's and Dharmakīrti's works on *pramāṇa*, and the Buddhist tantras for many years.<sup>310</sup> He is also said to have taught Madhyamaka to Parahitabhadrā<sup>311</sup> and Mahāmudrā to Padampa Sangyé<sup>312</sup> (died 1117), the founder of the tradition of *The Pacification of Suffering*. Upon his return to Kashmir, Ratnavajra established several centers for the study of the sūtra and tantra traditions.<sup>313</sup> He also went to Western Tibet, teaching and collaborating with the translator Rinchen Sangpo<sup>314</sup> (958–1055). At Samyé Ling, he supervised the rebuilding of the central terrace, which was burned in 986. Finally, he went to Uḍḍiyāṇa and attained the rainbow body there. Ratnavajra composed a number of tantric sādhanas, ritual texts, and praises, as well as the *Yuktiprayoga* (a short text on valid cognition), and translated the *Guhyavajratantra*, its *Vṛtti*, and the *Gītitattva* by the siddha Saroruha (all preserved in the *Tengyur*). In addition, he wrote a still extant, but unfortunately unavailable, commentary on the *Uttaratantra*,<sup>315</sup> which should shed considerable light on the interpretation of this text in the particular lineage that was subsequently transmitted into Tibet by Dsen Kawoché.

As a possible glimpse into this commentary by Ratnavajra, the Eighth Karmapa<sup>316</sup> says that there are three ways of distinguishing what is of expedient and what is of definitive meaning in the three wheels of dharma as presented by the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*, the *Uttaratantra*, and Nāgārjuna and his followers. According to the Karmapa, Ratnavajra explains the distinction in the *Uttaratantra* as follows:

The wheel that introduces [beings] to the path of peace is of expedient meaning. The wheel of maturation is the wheel that is predominantly of definitive meaning, but also contains some parts of expedient meaning. The wheel of prophecy is the wheel of nothing but the definitive meaning.<sup>317</sup>

As for the works of Sajjana, only three are preserved—a *Putralekha* (to his son Mahājana),<sup>318</sup> a *Sūtrālamkāraṇḍārtha*,<sup>319</sup> and the *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstropadeśa* (SM). The latter is the main source for Sajjana’s view on the *Uttaratantra* (for details, see the description and translation of SM below). The esteem in which he held the *Uttaratantra* is illustrated by his handing Ngog Lotsāwa the folios of the text one by one and saying that if even a single page of this manuscript were lost, it would be equal to the passing away of Maitreya.<sup>320</sup> Sajjana obviously stated the same to Dsen Kawoché<sup>321</sup> and also to the translator Shama Sengé Gyaltzen,<sup>322</sup> when Sajjana taught him the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*.<sup>323</sup> Sajjana’s son Mahājana received the transmission of the Maitreya texts from both his father and grandfather. Like Su Gawé Dorje, he was also active in western Tibet, translated Vasubandhu’s *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*, and helped in compiling the versified version of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*.

As for the transmission of the five Maitreya works and the *Uttaratantra* in particular from India to Tibet, there are four known lineages—one through Ngog Lotsāwa, two through Dsen Kawoché, and one through Marpa Dopa Chökyi Wangchug. Both Ngog and Dsen traveled to Kashmir and studied the Maitreya works with Sajjana at the same time. Ngog stayed in Kashmir for seventeen years and studied there with six different masters, among them also Parahitabhadrā. Ngog composed two commentaries on the *Uttaratantra*, with the shorter one’s being still available. Due to its purely scholarly approach, Ngog’s lineage is often called “the explanatory tradition of the dharma works of Maitreya” (*byams chos bshad lugs*), while Dsen’s more experiential approach represents “the meditative tradition of the dharma works of Maitreya” (*byams chos sgom lugs*). CMW in the tradition of Marpa Dopa and Parahitabhadrā shows both these approaches.

Dsen Kawoché was a student of Trapa Ngönshé<sup>324</sup> (1012–1090) and traveled to Kashmir at age fifty-five (1076). When he met Sajjana, he said, “Since I am old now, I won’t study many teachings. However, I wish to make the dharmas of the Bhagavān Maitreya my ‘death dharma.’<sup>325</sup> Therefore, please instruct me properly in them.” Upon this request, Sajjana taught him the Maitreya works by relying on the translator Su Gawé Dorje.<sup>326</sup> The latter

is also said to have written a (now lost) commentary on the *Uttaratantra* that contained his notes of Sajjana's teachings.<sup>327</sup> In Toling in western Tibet, Su Gawé Dorje also revised an earlier translation of the prose version of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (by Śāntibhadra and Tsültrim Gyalwa).<sup>328</sup> Another translator present at the time in Kashmir, called Padma Sengé,<sup>329</sup> also received explanations from Sajjana similar to those given to Dsen, and it appears that this Padma Sengé composed an (equally lost) extensive commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* that contained his notes of Sajjana's explanations.

Dsen Kawoché and Su Gawé Dorje returned to Tibet before Ngog Lotsāwa. They taught the Maitreya works (in particular, the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra*) to many masters in central Tibet. In particular, Dsen transmitted them to a certain Jangrawa.<sup>330</sup> The latter taught them to Tarma Dsöndrū (1117–1192) of Chö Dodé Boog,<sup>331</sup> who was a lineage holder of *The Pacification of Suffering* and composed an extensive commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* in several volumes (now lost). Tāranātha's *Supplication to the Profound Shentong Madhyamaka*<sup>332</sup> continues this lineage after Tarma Dsöndrū up to himself with Yeshé Jungné<sup>333</sup> (twelfth century), Jangchub Kyab<sup>334</sup> and Jangchub Shönnu<sup>335</sup> (twelfth/thirteenth century), Kyotön Mönlam Tsültrim (1219–1299), Jomden Rigpé Raltri<sup>336</sup> (1227–1305), Kytön Jampéyang Tragpa Gyaltsen<sup>337</sup> (thirteenth century), Dölpopa, Nyaön Kunga Bal<sup>338</sup> (1285–1379), Chöbal Gönpo,<sup>339</sup> Lodrö Sangpo Gyatso,<sup>340</sup> Tönyö Bal<sup>341</sup> (all fourteenth/fifteenth century), Śākya Chogden (1428–1507), Tönyö Trubpa<sup>342</sup> (fifteenth/sixteenth century), Kunga Drölcho<sup>343</sup> (1507–1565/66), Kunga Gyaltsen<sup>344</sup> (sixteenth century), and Tragden Trubpa<sup>345</sup> (sixteenth/seventeenth century). An alternative *gzhan stong* lineage from the Buddha is said to run through Vajrapāṇi, Rāhulabhadra, Nāgārjuna, Śavaripa, and Maitrīpa. After the latter, it continues as above.

A supplement to Tāranātha's lineage supplication by the contemporary Jonang master Ngawang Lodrö Tragpa (1920–1975) lists the following names after Tāranātha:<sup>346</sup> Jetsünma Trinlé Wangmo<sup>347</sup> (1585?–1668?), Kunga Balsang<sup>348</sup> (1629–1686), several unnamed masters in between, Kunga Yönten Gyatso<sup>349</sup> (1818–1890), Palden Namnang Dorje,<sup>350</sup> Kunga Öser,<sup>351</sup> Ngawang Lodrö's own principal guru, Tsognyi Gyatso<sup>352</sup> (1880–1940), and Kunga Tugjé Palsang<sup>353</sup> (1925–2000). Tāranātha states at the end of his supplication that this represents the lineage of the instructions that combine the intention of all sūtras of the final wheel of dharma and the commentaries on their intention, while there are distinct lineages for the

guiding instructions of each one of the five Maitreya texts. Nevertheless, from the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim (who is notably included in the above lineage), it is clear that the tradition of Su Gawé Dorje and Dsen Kawoché, at least with regard to the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, was continued through the Kadampa School and then the Jonang School. Also, the fact that the works by Mönlam Tsültrim were written down by his students, such as Séu Chökyi Gyaltzen,<sup>354</sup> and still exist today shows that a textual tradition based on Dsen’s instructions survived.

As for how this particular lineage came to Jamgön Kongtrul through the Jonang, Nyingma, and Kagyü schools (previous possible connections between Kadampa and Jonang on the one hand and Nyingma and Kagyü on the other notwithstanding), Kongtrul’s GISM says that, after Tāranātha, this lineage went through Gyaltzab Nartangpa Lodrö Namgyal<sup>355</sup> (1618–1683), Ngawang Trinlé<sup>356</sup> (1657–1723), Künsang Wangpo<sup>357</sup> (born late sixteenth/early seventeenth century), Gaḥto Tsewang Norbu (1698–1755), the Eighth Situpa, Chökyi Jungné (1699/1700–1774), the Thirteenth Karmapa, Dūdül Dorje<sup>358</sup> (1733/1734–1797/1798), and the Ninth Situpa, Pema Nyinjé Wangpo<sup>359</sup> (1774–1853), who was Jamgön Kongtrul’s main guru. The colophon of GISM says that Kongtrul also received Jonang instructions directly from Ngawang Chöpel Gyatso<sup>360</sup> (c. 1788–1865) in Dzamtang.<sup>361</sup> From Jamgön Kongtrul, all these teachings obviously went to his many students in the Nyingma, Kagyü, and Sakya schools. Among these three schools, the Shentong instructions in this particular lineage are primarily upheld in the Karma Kagyü tradition.

Gö Lotsāwa’s BA also mentions an—at least up through his time still existent—anonymous Tibetan commentary on the *Uttaratantra* that was referred to as “a ṭikā on the *Uttaratantra* in the tradition of Dsen” and supplemented its explanations of the *Uttaratantra* with pith instructions on meditation practice. According to BA, there were also several short texts, such as the *Repository of Wisdom* (*Ye shes kyi bzhag sa*; this is RW), that contained pith instructions of the Dsen tradition. In addition, BA says that the great Kashmiri paṇḍita Śākyaśribhadra (1140s–1225) is reported to have given pith instructions on the five works of Maitreya on Mount Sinpōri<sup>362</sup> near Gyantsé,<sup>363</sup> but that they do not exist at present (that is, at the end of the fifteenth century).<sup>364</sup>

The third transmission lineage of the *Uttaratantra* (and probably the other Maitreya texts) is found in Mönlam Tsültrim’s IM,<sup>365</sup> which says that Dsen Kawoché (referred to by his alias Trimé Sherab) first gave the instructions on this text to someone from southern Ladö,<sup>366</sup> who taught them to

Dopa Nyen.<sup>367</sup> Dopa passed them on to Mönlam Tsültrim, who in turn transmitted them to Séu Chökyi Gyaltsen<sup>368</sup> in the form of IM. Then, this transmission continued further in the Kadampa lineage.

The fourth transmission line of the *Uttaratantra* and all the other Maitreya texts reached Tibet via Parahitabhadrā and Marpa Dopa Chökyi Wangchug. Parahitabhadrā was a student of the Kashmirian Mahāpaṇḍita Somaśrī and also studied Madhyamaka with Ratnavajra. Parahitabhadrā's main Indian student was Mahāsumati, and he also taught Ngog Lotsāwa, Patsab Lotsāwa, Sangkar Lotsāwa Pagpa Sherab<sup>369</sup> (a student of Jñānaśrībhadra), Sherab Gyaltsen<sup>370</sup> (a student of Atiśa), Shönnu Cho,<sup>371</sup> Su Gawé Dorje, and Marpa Dopa. Together with these translators, Parahita translated or revised many sūtras, tantras, and treatises (more than twenty works in the *Tengyur*, among them the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*). There is also evidence that he collaborated with Sajjana, as their common revision of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* shows. In addition, the *Tengyur* contains three works authored by Parahitabhadrā (a *Śūnyatāsaptatvṛtti*, a *Maṅḍalābhīṣekavidhi*, and a rather extensive commentary on the first two verses of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*). Besides Kashmir, he was active in Toling in western Tibet. It seems that he was more of a Madhyamaka and Pramāṇa specialist, but there is no doubt that he was a part of the eleventh-century Kashmirian paṇḍita scene that was involved with the Maitreya texts and transmitted them to Tibet (he is also mentioned in one of the Tibetan transmission lineages of the *Uttaratantra*).<sup>372</sup> In that tradition, CMW, which is based on Parahitabhadrā's instructions, shows a strong and exclusive Yogācāra underpinning.

According to BA,<sup>373</sup> Marpa Dopa Chökyi Wangchug began his studies under the great Nyingma master Rongsom Chökyi Sangpo and Korub Lotsāwa Tsültrim Gyalwa.<sup>374</sup> Later he proceeded to Nepal and there met Marpa Chökyi Lodrö, who had just returned from his last journey to India. Upon requesting teachings from Marpa Chökyi Lodrö, Marpa Dopa was advised by him to receive instructions from the other main disciples of Nāropa since Nāropa himself had entered secret conduct and thus was no longer available. When Marpa Dopa came across a large crowd at Tirhut, he asked what was going on and heard that Nāropa had arrived. He offered gold to Nāropa, but Nāropa threw it onto the ground, silently gazed at him with wide-open eyes, and thus blessed him. After arriving in Magadha, Marpa Dopa received the empowerment and instructions of the Cakrasaṃvaratantra from Nāropa's students Manakaśrī, Prajñārakṣita, Bodhibhadra, and Pramudavajra. Having also heard numerous teachings from other

paṇḍitas, he returned to Nepal and there received further instructions on Nāropa’s system from Pamtingpa \*Abhayakīrti,<sup>375</sup> his younger brother Vāgīśvara, and Kanakaśrī, as well as many teachings from Vajrapāṇi (born 1017), one of Maitrīpa’s four main disciples. Primarily with the help of paṇḍita Sumatikīrti, Marpa mainly translated numerous texts related to the Cakrasaṃvara and Vajrayoginī tantras and spread them in Tibet to many students. He also composed detailed commentaries and summaries of both the basic *Cakrasaṃvāratāntra* and the *Yoginīsañcārya*, thus becoming famous for his contributions to transmitting the teachings on Cakrasaṃvara. This lineage was continued by Dsangmi Kupa Gyanam,<sup>376</sup> Dösewa Loden,<sup>377</sup> Jogro Chökyi Gyaltsen<sup>378</sup> (who also studied together with Gampopa’s student Pamo Trupa<sup>379</sup> [1110–1170] at Gyamar in Dölung),<sup>380</sup> and others, eventually reaching Butön. Later, one of Gampopa’s main disciples, Layagpa Jangchub Ngödrub, obtained Marpa Dopa’s system of Cakrasaṃvara from Dösewa and composed an extensive commentary based on Gampopa’s instructions, the basic tantra, and the *Yoginīsañcārya*.

Marpa Dopa also collaborated with Sajjana’s son Mahājana in translating Ratnavajra’s *Śrīcakrasaṃvarastotra* and *Śrīcakrasaṃvaramaṇḍaladevagaṇastotra* and Sajjana’s *Putralekha*, as well as with Ngog Lotsāwa in translating the *Bhagavadāryamañjuśrīsādhiṣṭhānastutī*. Also, CMW refers to both Sajjana and Ngog. Thus, Marpa Dopa was definitely familiar with Sajjana’s and Ngog’s tradition. In addition to having been taught the *Uttaratantra* by Parahitabhadra, he may even have received teachings on this text and other Maitreya works from one or both of those two and possibly from others among his above teachers. Marpa Dopa’s contact with Vajrapāṇi represents a clear connection between the Mahāmudrā lineage and the lineage of the Maitreya texts. Also, Marpa Dopa’s closeness to other students of the teachers of the more well-known Marpa, the forefather of the Kagyü School, is significant in this regard. It is of course tempting to credit the Mahāmudrā-style teachings on the seven vajra points in CMW’s introduction to Marpa Dopa’s contact with Vajrapāṇi (or Nāropa’s students), but there is no evidence for that. As for the continuation of Marpa Dopa’s lineage of the Maitreya texts, BA says that he translated all five of them and later transmitted them to the siddha Nyingpugpa Chökyi Tragpa<sup>381</sup> (1094–1186), who also received the Maitreya texts in the tradition of Dsen Kawoché from a certain Jangrawa.<sup>382</sup>

All of this, as well as the existence and the contents of CMW as a commentary on the *Uttaratantra*’s being transmitted from Parahitabhadra to Marpa Dopa and the latter’s students, shows that there was a different

lineage of the transmission of all five Maitreya works than those through Sajjana, Ngog Lotsāwa, Su Gawé Dorje, and Dsen Kawoché.<sup>383</sup>

In brief, it is clear that Marpa Dopa, having studied with Naropa's and Maitrīpa's disciples and thus sharing crucial sources with Marpa Chökyi Lodrö, played a significant role in the translation and transmission of tantric texts important in the Kagyü tradition.<sup>384</sup> He also belonged to the circle of Tibetans around the Kashmiri paṇḍitas Sajjana and Parahitabhadra who were the primary Indians instrumental in the transmission of the Maitreya works. Though there is no evidence for Marpa Dopa's having taught early Kagyü masters directly, some of his students had contact with some of Gampopa's main students. Thus, one may assume that Marpa's teachings were at least one important source for the meditative tradition of the Maitreya texts in the Kagyü School. Another connection of Gampopa's primary students with this meditative tradition in the line of Dsen Kawoché is probably found in BA's report of Layagpa Jangchub Ngödrub's having received the Maitreya texts from Jangrawa Dumtön.

Thus, CMW, as a record of Marpa Dopa's comments on the *Uttaratantra* based on Parahita's teachings, is of great importance for the early transmission of this text from India to Tibet in general and its meditative tradition in particular. Especially, the introduction of CMW is the earliest available document that clearly represents the meditative approach to the *Uttaratantra* in the style of Mahāmudrā instructions, which is often mentioned and favored in the Kagyü tradition to this day but that—with the exception of GC—finds no clear or detailed expression in the Kagyü commentaries on the *Uttaratantra* that have been accessible so far.

According to BA, GC, and JKC, there were many who wrote commentaries on the *Uttaratantra* in the tradition of Ngog Lotsāwa, such as Shang Tsépong Chökyi Lama,<sup>385</sup> Trolungpa Lodrö Jungné,<sup>386</sup> Nyangtrenpa Chökyi Yeshé<sup>387</sup> (all eleventh century), Chaba Chökyi Sengé<sup>388</sup> (1109–1169), his two students Tenpagpa Mawé Sengé<sup>389</sup> and Dsangnagpa Dsöndrö Sengé<sup>390</sup> (both born twelfth century), Pagtru Gyaltsen Sangpo<sup>391</sup> (1350–1425), and Rongtön Shéja Günsi (one may well add here later Gelugpa commentaries by Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen and others). Despite some of them using slightly different terminologies, all are said to agree with Ngog in explaining the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* according to the explanatory tradition of the works of Maitreya.<sup>392</sup> Another stream of commentaries (most of them more in line with the meditative tradition of the *Uttaratantra*) includes those by Dölpopa, his student Sabsang Mati Paṅchen<sup>393</sup> (1294–1376), and Sangpupa Lodrö Tsungmé<sup>394</sup> (mid-thirteenth to mid-fourteenth century).



In the Kagyü School, the Third Karmapa (who studied the *Uttaratantra* with Jamyang Śākya Shönnu)<sup>395</sup> composed a topical outline of the text (which is embedded in Dashi Öser’s HLS). A student of the Fourth Karmapa, Karma Göncho Shönnu<sup>396</sup> (born 1333), Gö Lotsāwa, the first Karma Trinlépa, Dümo Dashi Öser (late fifteenth to sixteenth century), and others wrote more detailed commentaries.<sup>397</sup> There also existed a short inter-linear commentary by Surmang Lhalungpa Karma Denpel,<sup>398</sup> which was based on the teachings that the Eighth Situpa had received from the Eighth Shamarpa, Chökyi Töndrub<sup>399</sup> (1695–1732). Jamgön Kongtrul’s JKC’s introduction says that it primarily follows the Third Karmapa but, except for that introduction, the text is essentially a copy of Dölpopa’s commentary.<sup>400</sup>



# *The Mahāyānottaratantra (Ratnagoṭravibhāga) and the Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā*

## *Texts and Authorships*

The Tibetan and Chinese traditions treat the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV as two distinct texts. Both canons contain separate translations of the “root verses” and the prose commentary together with these verses.<sup>401</sup> However, the two available Sanskrit manuscripts of RGVV (which include both the verses of the *Uttaratantra* and the prose commentary) as well as other Indian sources suggest that the two are simply two elements of the same text. The Sanskrit does not speak of RGVV as a commentary on the *Uttaratantra*, and its title is *Ratnagoṭravibhāgo mahāyānottaratantraśāstram*, thus containing both names. Also, though the title *Ratnagoṭravibhāgavyākhyā* for RGVV is used by modern scholars, it is not attested in any Indian text<sup>402</sup> (the Tibetan translation in the *Tengyur* has the title *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstravyākhyā*).<sup>403</sup> The Chinese tradition calls RGVV *Ratnagoṭraśāstra*, while it is almost always referred to as *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* or simply *Uttaratantra* in the Indian and Tibetan traditions, as attested by titles such as Sajjana’s *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstropadeśa* and Vairocanarakṣita’s *Mahāyānottaratantraṭippanī*, as well as quotes from the text in other Indian sources. For example, the *Sūtrasamuccayabhāṣya*<sup>404</sup> by Ratnākaraśānti (early eleventh century) explains a part of the prose of RGVV<sup>405</sup> and explicitly says that it comes from the *Uttaratantra* by Maitreya. Likewise, Abhayākara Gupta’s *Munimatālaṃkāra* quotes a prose passage from RGVV<sup>406</sup> by saying that it stems from the *Uttaratantra* authored by Maitreya.

The text known as RGVV consists of three parts: (1) basic verses, (2) commentarial verses,<sup>407</sup> and (3) prose commentary. The commentarial verses explain the basic verses, and the prose commentary glosses all verses (at least in the first chapter). Such a structure is quite rare among Indian works in general. Though Takasaki and other modern scholars agree that RGVV is a compilation of different elements and have made attempts to

identify the “original” core verses of the text, there is no clear solution to isolating such verses.<sup>408</sup>

As for the authorship of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, the Sanskrit manuscripts contain no name of the composer. Beginning with Ngog Lotsāwa's translations of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV in the *Tengyur*, the Tibetan tradition holds that the former was composed by Maitreya, while the latter was written by Asaṅga. The Chinese tradition asserts that both were authored by the elusive figure \*Sāramati (though no author is given in the translations or any of the old catalogues).<sup>409</sup> In many modern publications, the authorship of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV continues to be disputed with no definitive outcome, some favoring the Tibetan account and some the Chinese tradition.<sup>410</sup> It is noteworthy though that a Khotan-Saka hybrid Sanskrit fragment of the *Uttaratantra*<sup>411</sup> from the end of the eighth century, which quotes *Uttaratantra* I.1, III.1–8, III.10, and V3d, refers to the text as the *Ratnagoṭravibhāgaśāstra* by the bodhisattva Maitreya. Also, as the above references in texts by Ratnākaraśānti and Abhayākara Gupta show, from the eleventh century onward in India, it seems that not only the verses but also the prose parts of RGVV were ascribed to Maitreya. So far, no attribution of the authorship of RGVV to Asaṅga has been found in Indian works.<sup>412</sup>

As Kano (2006, 23 and 28–29) points out, from the seventh to tenth centuries, there seem to be no Indian texts that quote the *Uttaratantra* (though some texts discuss the topic of *tathāgatagarbha*), whereas the work is cited in a significant number of Indian Buddhist texts from the eleventh to thirteenth century. However, as Kano says, there are two texts that indicate the possibility of the transmission of the *Uttaratantra* still continuing at least throughout the eighth century—besides the above-mentioned Khotan-Saka fragment, the *Sarvatathāgatātattvasaṃgraha* (late seventh to eighth century) uses terms such as *garbha*, *dhātu*, and *ratnagoṭra* in accordance with the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>413</sup> In any case, a Sanskrit manuscript of the *Uttaratantra* was brought to China by Ratnamati in 508 CE and was translated by him in ca. 511 CE, so the text must have still been available in India in the early sixth century. Takasaki (1966a, 45–54; 1989, 412–15; and 1999) discusses a number of texts from the sixth and seventh centuries that appear to have been influenced by the *Uttaratantra*. These are the \**Buddhagoṭraśāstra* (Taishō 1610), the \**Anuttarāśrayasūtra* (Taishō 669; both translated by Paramārtha),<sup>414</sup> the \**Dharmadhātvaśāstara* (Taishō 1627), and two Chinese translations of a *trikāya* chapter in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra* (Taishō 664 and 665), which is absent in the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of this sūtra. However, since these texts are available only in the Chinese

canon and since the \**Buddhagotraśāstra* and the \**Anuttarāśrayasūtra* are not unlikely to have been authored by Paramārtha (499–569), it is uncertain whether they are indeed translations of actual Indian texts.

According to BA,<sup>415</sup> there were six translations of the *Uttaratantra* or RGVV into Tibetan. Both texts were translated by: (1) Atiśa and Nagtso Lotsāwa Tsültrim Gyalwa<sup>416</sup> (1011–1064), (2) Sajjana and Ngog Lotsāwa, (3) Patsab Lotsāwa Nyima Tra<sup>417</sup> (born 1055), (4) Marpa Dopa Chökyi Wangchug, and (5) Yarlung Lotsāwa Tragba Gyaltzen<sup>418</sup> (1242–1346). (6) Jonang Lotsāwa Lodrö Bal<sup>419</sup> (1299/1300–1353/1355) translated only the *Uttaratantra*. YDC<sup>420</sup> additionally refers to a translation by Lhotragpa Dharma Sengé.<sup>421</sup> At present, only the translation by Ngog Lotsāwa survives in its entirety, while several citations from translations (1), (3), and (6) are found in some Tibetan commentaries at least up through the fifteenth century.<sup>422</sup>

### *The Meanings of the Titles Ratnagotravibhāga and Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*

There is no room here to address the complex treatment of the term *gotra* in different texts, but its meaning in Yogācāra texts usually differs from the *Uttaratantra*'s primary use of the term as a synonym of buddha nature. Like the *Lañkāvatārasūtra*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* generally refers to *gotra* as “roots of virtue”<sup>423</sup> and speaks of five types of *gotra* (those of bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas, śrāvakas, those with uncertain *gotra*, and those without *gotra*).<sup>424</sup> Following *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* III.4cd and its *Bhāṣya*, the hermeneutical etymology of *gotra* is often explained as meaning *guṇottāraṇa*, with the syllable *go* in *gotra* standing for *guṇa* (“qualities”) and the syllable *tra* representing *uttāraṇa* (“delivering,” “setting free”). Thus, the *gotra* is the disposition from which qualities arise and increase or which sets them free. On *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* III.9 and III.11, its *Bhāṣya* comments that accumulating roots of virtue is indispensable for acquiring a disposition, but once the bodhisattva disposition is acquired, it serves as the source of an infinite number of further roots of virtue. Thus, *gotra* in this sense refers to conditioned and multiple phenomena, whereas *gotra* in the sense of buddha nature is clearly unconditioned and single. In addition, the distinction between the naturally abiding (*prakṛtistha*) and the accomplished (*samudānīta*) or unfolding dispositions in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* III.4 differs from how these terms are understood in the *Uttaratantra*. For the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* defines the former as what has the nature of being a cause or support for further virtue and the latter, as what is thus supported. The former sense is also evident from Sthiramati's (c. 510–570)

commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*,<sup>425</sup> which says that beings have infinite *gotras*, all of which refer to some (conventional) nature of theirs, such as being an angry or passionate person, or liking sweet versus other tastes. Just as the possession of the *gotra* of desire functions as the cause for giving rise to desire but not for hatred, the three different *gotras* of the three *yānas* are indispensable for there being three *yānas*. Further descriptions of the disposition in Yogācāra texts include “the latent tendencies of listening”<sup>426</sup> and “the seeds of the supramundane mind” in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* as well as “the distinctive feature of the six āyatanas” in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.

The commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, such as those by Āryavimuktisena and Haribhadra, generally follow the hermeneutical etymology in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* but identify *gotra* as the unconditioned dharmadhātu or suchness. Based on Indian hermeneutical etymologies, the Tibetan commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*<sup>427</sup> by Butön furthermore explains that, among the nine meanings of *go*, the ones relevant here are “direction” and “ground” or “earth” (*bhūmi*), while *tra*(*yaṇa*) means “protecting.” Thus, the *gotra* is the disposition because it protects the sentient beings that are contained in the dharmas or *bhūmis* directed toward awakening. Or, it refers to *kula* (“family,” “clan,” or “collection”) in the sense of being the disposition because it merges with the lower realms out of compassion or because it is the foundation of the collection of qualities. As for its synonyms, Abhayākara Gupta says in his *Munimatālaṃkāra*:

The dharmadhātu, which solely has the defining characteristic of all phenomena’s being without nature, is the cause for the dharmas of the noble ones. Therefore, it is expressed through the synonyms “naturally abiding disposition,” “basis,” “reliance,” “cause,” “foundation,” “abode,” “precursor,” “matrix,” “seed,” “dhātu,” and “nature.”<sup>428</sup>

Gö Lotsāwa’s commentary on the *Uttaratantra*<sup>429</sup> first comments on the general meanings of *gotra* and its synonyms *kula* and *vaṃśa*.<sup>430</sup> As for *gotra*, its above-mentioned explanation “setting free qualities” (*guṇottāraṇa*) is said to mean that, through something’s itself being stable and firm, the qualities that are supported by it increase and therefore become transcendent. This is like saying that the bodhicitta of those who are endowed with the disposition is stable and firm, while it will deteriorate if the disposition is lacking. *Gotra* can also mean “what protects qualities” (*guṇatraya*). Or, when *go* is taken to mean “ground,” it means “what sustains its own

ground.” That is, it “sustains” because it distinguishes those with the disposition from others. It is also called *gotra* because it divides into categories, like calling the generality of cattle “the *gotra* of cattle.” *Kula* can also refer to “ground” or “earth,” thus having the meaning of the source from which something arises.<sup>431</sup> *Vamśa* has the meaning of a succession from one to another, thus referring to a continuum.<sup>432</sup> In this text here, Gö Lotsāwa says, *gotra* has the meaning of being the source for the arising of the three jewels in the mind stream of a sentient being, thus being their substantial cause. This is also the meaning of *tantra* because a buddha arises by virtue of the functioning of the basic element of sentient beings as the substantial cause. The three vajra points of awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity are described as the *gotra* that makes someone attain awakening—they are of similar type, like paternal relatives.

In sum, a poetic but still quite literal rendering of the name *Ratnagotravibhāga* would be “Opening the Jewel Mine.” The title thus contains the analogy of buddha nature as the precious disposition in the minds of all sentient beings that, when “unearthed,” gives rise to, or manifests as, the three jewels of Buddha, dharma, and saṃgha. However, to use a less materialistic term for this intrinsic mental potential to become a buddha, I chose the translation “jewel disposition.” Unlike in texts such as the *Madhyāntavibhāga* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, *vibhāga* in *Ratnagotravibhāga* does not mean “distinction” (since there are no two things to be distinguished) but “analysis” or “critical study.” Thus, more formally, I render *Ratnagotravibhāga* as “An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition.”

As for the meaning of *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*, *tantra* can mean “continuum,” “doctrine,” “propagation,” “theory,” “model,” “system,” “framework,” “principal part,” “main point,” and “section.” Relevant meanings of *uttara* here include “ultimate,” “higher,” “more excellent,” “predominant,” “later,” “subsequent,” and “concluding.” As *Uttaratantra* I.160 explains, the word *uttaratantra* refers to the teachings on buddha nature as being the latest and also highest teachings of the Buddha, with VT’s<sup>433</sup> glossing this as *uttaragrantha* (“latest text” or “latest section”).

Similarly, Butön’s *History of Buddhism* says that the *Uttaratantra* bears its name because it is the supreme one (*uttara*) within the system or continuum (*tantra*) of the mahāyāna teachings.<sup>434</sup> The word *uttara* also means “later,” so the *Uttaratantra* is an exegesis of the latest teachings of the mahāyāna. The same author’s *Ornament That Illuminates and Beautifies the Tathāgata Heart* explains that a skilled physician first teaches to all his students, including the ordinary ones, the first parts of the medical system

(*tantra*).<sup>435</sup> Once they have well trained in that, he teaches his own children the profound medical methods that are not to be taken literally, such as mantras and how to turn poison into nectar. Likewise, the Buddha first teaches on impermanence and so on, thus producing weariness in his students and introducing them to the vinaya. Then, he teaches on the three doors to liberation, thus teaching the guiding principle of the tathāgatas. Finally, he teaches the tathāgata heart, which resembles the last parts of the medical system and represents the dharma wheel of irreversibility, the discourse on the purity of the three spheres, the single road to travel, the single yāna, the single refuge, and the profound dharma not sought from anywhere but the Buddha (compare this with the example of the stages of cleansing a beryl in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* quoted in RGVV).<sup>436</sup> As for the word *uttaratantra*, Butön says, *uttara* means “supreme” and “later,” with the latter meaning applying here. Or, it means “highest” because it is the highest continuum or section (*rgyud gong ma*) within the mahāyāna. This is followed by a quote from the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* with the same purport, which concludes by saying that the Buddha finally teaches in the last continuum or section (*rgyud phyi ma*) of his teachings, the one on the tathāgata heart, that the tathāgata heart is permanent.

Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen's commentary says that since *tantra* means “continuous flow” it refers to the scriptures that teach the means to purify the stained mind, while *uttara* means “later” or “latest,” thus referring to the latest mahāyāna scriptures.<sup>437</sup>

The commentary by Rongtön Shéja Günsi (1367–1449) also explains that *tantra* means “continuous flow,” but that this refers to the primary subject matter of this treatise—the tathāgata heart—being a continuous flow throughout all phases of the ground, the path, and the fruition.<sup>438</sup> Or, the term is similar to *tantra* in the vajrayāna sense: the basic element is similar to the causal tantra; the three conditions that purify the stains of this basic element (the vajra points of awakening, its qualities, and activity), to the method tantra; and the result that consists of the three jewels, to the fruition tantra (note that this explanation of the term *uttaratantra* accords more with the nowadays more common understanding of *uttaratantra* as “supreme continuum” in the sense of the changeless continuity of buddha nature itself). “Unsurpassable” (*bla ma*) means that there is no text higher than it and that it is particularly eminent because it teaches the seven vajra points—the meaning of the sūtras of definitive meaning that is difficult to realize.<sup>439</sup> Obviously referring to Butön and others, Rongtön says that some take *uttaratantra* to mean “the last section” (*rgyud phyi ma*) and



thus explain this treatise to be a commentary on the intention of the last dharma wheel, but that this is not the case because this treatise is also linked to the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* (referred to in *Uttaratantra* II.58), with the latter sūtra declaring itself to belong to the second dharma wheel. In sum, *Uttaratantra* as the title of this treatise signifies both its subject matter and its function.

Gö Lotsāwa's commentary explains that all teachings of the Buddha can be summarized into the three dharma wheels according to the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*.<sup>440</sup> The *Uttaratantra* bears its name because it belongs to the last one among these three. In general, *uttara* means "north" (in terms of direction), "supreme" (in terms of qualities), "other" (in terms of substance), and "later" or "subsequent" (in terms of time). Here, it means "later" (with the Tibetan *bla ma* also being a synonym of "later"). Like Rongtön, GC also says that *tantra* means "continuous flow," but that it must be understood according to the context. Thus, the term here refers to the continuous process of progressively guiding a person through the three dharma wheels, with the *Uttaratantra*'s being referred to as the last, supreme, or highest stage in that process. This point is also explained in *Uttaratantra* II.73cd:

Therefore, this final stage of the self-arisen ones is not even known  
By the great sages who have obtained the empowerment.

Later, GC also explains "continuous flow" as the meaning of *tantra* as follows.<sup>441</sup> Until one attains the first bhūmi, *saṃsāra* is a continuous flow and is thus described as a continuum (*tantra*). Likewise, the enlightened activity that is performed from the first bhūmi onward for as long as space exists is such a continuous flow, but it is "later" (*phyi ma*) because it has gone beyond *saṃsāra*. Even through combining *saṃsāra* and what is pure, this is still a single continuum because there is a continuous connection in terms of the one's having arisen from the other in that the later one (what is pure) arose from the earlier one (*saṃsāra*). Thus, what is condensed into one in this way is true reality—the luminous nature of the mind. Since it is obscured by ignorance earlier during the phase of *saṃsāra*, it is like a secret treasure. Through realizing it, it becomes the continuum of what is pure. How is it a "continuum," how does it go beyond *saṃsāra*, and how is it "later"? As for *uttara*, the Sanskrit *tara* means "crossing over" and "setting free." The prefix *ud* has meanings such as "very" (*lhag par*), "on" (*steng*), "later" (*phyi ma*), and "superior" (*rab*). Thus, great bodhisattvas first progress to the first bhūmi beyond *saṃsāra*, but even on all ten bhūmis, they

do not cross over the ocean that is the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. When they reach the final bhūmi of a buddha, they have even crossed that ocean. If the meaning of this explanation is summarized, it consists of verse 2 of the *Dharmadhātustava*:

Due to just that being purified  
 What is such circling's cause,  
 This very purity is then nirvāṇa.  
 Also the dharmakāya is just this.

GC says that this principle is truly amazing. For, even through having experienced limitless sufferings in the six realms of saṃsāra since beginningless time for such a long period, the tathāgata heart did not become rotten. Through its power, the disposition is awakened, great weariness of saṃsāra arises, and awakening is attained through effort. At that time, it will abide until the end of space as nothing but this basic element of sentient beings, who are just a continuous flow of afflictions and suffering. Furthermore, in terms of the continuum (*tantra*) that represents the means of expressing all this, the *Uttaratantra* teaches the meaning of all yānas, but its primary meaning consists of the later or ultimate (*bla ma*) dharma wheel.

Jamgön Kongtrul's JKC says that the *Uttaratantra* is the highest of all dharmas taught by the Buddha, being the unsurpassable one or the peak of the mahāyāna scriptures.<sup>442</sup> It is the commentary on the intention of teaching the heart of the matter, the lion's roar of irreversibility, thus being the king of all treatises. In general, the all-pervading dharmadhātu—nondual wisdom—is the nature of the disposition. This dharmadhātu's being endowed with the twofold purity of having relinquished the two obscurations is the nature of the dharmakāya. The means to attain this dharmakāya—the view of being free from all reference points and nonconceptual meditation—is the nature of the path. The well-spoken words of the perfect Buddha that teach these three (the disposition, the dharmakāya, and the path) represent the ultimate or supreme scriptures (*gzhung bla ma'am dam pa*). When these scriptures are analyzed finely, they are threefold. The first one, the actual ultimate scriptures, consists of the aspects of speech that are the mahāyāna scriptures, which are simply a subdivision of the melodious speech that appears for the buddhas themselves—their nondual wisdom that can arise as all kinds of aspects. This is of the same nature as natural purity or the result of freedom that is the dharmakāya. The second kind of

scripture consists of the mahāyāna scriptures in the form of the collections of names, words, and letters that appear as the aspects of term generalities in the minds of noble ones and ordinary beings. The third kind of scripture consists of the words and terms that are expressed as actual speech in accordance with the former two kinds and are called “the scriptures that represent the continuum or section (*rgyud*) of the mahāyāna sūtras of definitive meaning.” The latter two kinds of ultimate scriptures are very different in nature from the triad of nature, fruition, and path. However, since they arose from the aspiration prayers of a buddha, represent the natural outflow of the dharmakāya, and have the power to relinquish the two obscurations, one should understand that they are included in the uncontaminated dharmas of a buddha, the focal object for purification, and the perfect nature. Elsewhere,<sup>443</sup> JKC says that, similar to the tantras (*rgyud*), the final dharma wheel explains the ultimate actuality because it teaches the continuous (*rgyun mi chad pa*) dharmadhātu.

Unlike most other commentaries, CMW explains that *tantra* here is to be understood in its vajrayāna sense since the *Uttaratantra* resembles a tantra in two ways. Thus, the text is clearly regarded as a bridge between the sūtrayāna and the vajrayāna:

A tantra is a tantra in the sense of being concealed, hidden, or secret, that is, it is presented [as “tantra”] by keeping it secret from those who are not [proper] vessels. Likewise, if this treatise is taught to those who are not [proper] vessels (those who have the dispositions of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas and those with the cut-off disposition), fear will arise [in them]. Therefore, it is presented by keeping it hidden or secret from them. Or, in tantra there is the triad of causal tantra, fruitional tantra, and method tantra. Likewise, in this treatise, what resembles the causal tantra is the basic element. What resembles the method tantra are the means to purify this [basic element]—awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity. What resembles the fruitional tantra are the three jewels.<sup>444</sup>

Yeshé Dorje’s commentary YDC combines the above explanations with what CMW says, beginning by saying that *tantra* means “something that is continuous” (*rgyun chags pa*), which is twofold—the continuum of saṃsāra and the continuum of nirvāṇa.<sup>445</sup> Since the tantra in question here is the supreme or later continuum, it is called “the ultimate continuum” or “the later continuum.” As the *Vajraśikharatantra* says:

Tantra is called “something that is continuous”—  
 Saṃsāra is to be expressed as a continuum.  
 What is called “the later” is the yonder side—  
 The later continuum is nirvāṇa.

“Tantra” in the sense of the meaning that is to be expressed is threefold—causal tantra, fruitional tantra, and method tantra. (1) The causal tantra is what is continuous as the naturally luminous basic nature of phenomena since beginningless time, which is the meaning of “sugata heart” or “primordial buddha.” It is also called “nature” or “aspect.” YDC quotes a text called *Man ngag snye ma* as saying that the essence of the emptiness of entities means nothing other than this “nature” or “aspect.” It is a cause—the substantial agent that is the causal Vajradhara. Through it, there is the buddhahood that is established by nature and is not tainted by the stains of beginningless latent tendencies. This is the meaning of “the cause of the buddhahood that is characterized by nothing but this causal tantra’s having attained stainlessness.” Therefore, all omniscient mighty scholars say that it is not the intention of the tantra collection to explain the meaning of the causal tantra as being the ālaya-consciousness. (2) The fruitional tantra is what is continuous as the buddhakāya and its enlightened activity, which is nothing but the causal tantra free from adventitious stains. (3) The method tantra represents the methods to manifest the causal and fruitional tantras, which is the continuous path. One may think that since this is the vajrayāna’s manner of explaining *tantra*, it is unrelated to this context here. This is not the case for the following reasons. The three tantras represent ground, path, and fruition, with the causal and fruitional tantras respectively representing the dhātu in its phase of being impure and the awakening that is the phase of this very dhātu’s having become free from stains. Therefore, there is no difference in meaning.<sup>446</sup> Also, one must explain the meaning of the explicitly appearing term “tantra” in the name *Uttaratantra*. “Tantra” in the sense of the words that are the means to express this meaning consists of the texts that teach the three tantras just described. Therefore, the last turning of the wheel of dharma and the commentaries on its intention are also called “the ultimate continuum,” which is evident from *Uttaratantra* I.160b.

Mipham Rinpoche’s commentary says that “tantra” here refers to the continuity of the tathāgata heart (the main topic of the *Uttaratantra*) throughout ground, path, and fruition.<sup>447</sup> Or, this text is similar to a tantra because the basic element resembles the causal tantra; the three conditions

that purify it from stains (such as awakening), the method tantra; and the three jewels, the fruitional tantra. “Ultimate” means unsurpassable and most eminent because the text teaches the seven vajra points—the meaning of the sūtras of definitive meaning that is difficult to realize.

In an attempt to accommodate all these explanations of *uttaratantra*, I chose the rendering “ultimate continuum,” with the English word “ultimate”—like *uttara*—being understandable as both “latest” and “supreme.”<sup>448</sup> Thus, the *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* is “A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna.”<sup>449</sup>



## The Uttarantra and Its Relationship with Yogācāra

Both the *Uttarantra* and RGVV exhibit a significant number of typical Yogācāra terms and templates. Such terms include “false imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpa*),<sup>450</sup> “fundamental change” (*āśrayaparivṛtti*),<sup>451</sup> “naturally abiding disposition” (*prakṛtisthagoṭra*) and “accomplished disposition” (*samudānītagoṭra*),<sup>452</sup> “suchness with stains,” “stainless suchness,”<sup>453</sup> “being suchness” (*yathāvadbhāvikatā*) and “being variety” (*yāvadbhāvikatā*),<sup>454</sup> “supramundane (nonconceptual) wisdom,” (*lokottara[nirvikalpa] jñāna*),<sup>455</sup> “the wisdom of subsequent attainment” (*tatprṣṭhalabdham jñānam*),<sup>456</sup> the terminology of the triad of svābhāvikakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmāṇakāya,<sup>457</sup> and the term vimuktikāya.<sup>458</sup> Also, the technical term “omnipresence” (*sarvatraga*) for the first bodhisattvabhūmi is used by both RGVV and *Madhyāntavibhāga* II.16a. Furthermore, RGVV quotes two verses from the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* (among them the only one in the latter text that contains the term *tathāgatagarbha*), a passage from the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* on the disposition,<sup>459</sup> two verses from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, and the above-mentioned passage from the *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra* (or *Cūlasuññatasutta*) that is also found in several Yogācāra texts:

Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent.<sup>460</sup>

As for Yogācāra templates in terms of contents, the six topics of nature, cause, fruition, function (or activity), endowment, and manifestation through which the *Uttarantra* and RGVV describe both the tathāgata heart and awakening (vajra points four and five),<sup>461</sup> appear to be a rather common format in Yogācāra texts, in particular in their descriptions of ultimate reality.

*Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.56–59 (identical to four verses at the end of the *Buddhabhūmisūtra*) discusses the purity of the dharmadhātu as

buddhahood through these six topics. This presentation greatly resembles the explanation of the same six topics in the context of the fifth vajra point in the *Uttaratantra*, though some of the same contents are presented under different topics. First, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.56 defines (1) the nature of this uncontaminated dharmadhātu:

It has the characteristic of the suchness of all phenomena's  
Being pure of the two obscurations.  
It [also] has the characteristic of the inexhaustible mastery  
Over the wisdom of the real and [the wisdom] whose object that is.

According to Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*,<sup>462</sup> the nature of the dharmadhātu is thus twofold—suchness free from afflictive and cognitive obscurations as well as inexhaustible mastery over twofold wisdom. Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* explains that the suchness of all conditioned, unconditioned, contaminated, and uncontaminated phenomena refers to emptiness.<sup>463</sup> The suchness that is the emptiness of the buddhabhūmi has the characteristic and nature of being free from both the afflictive and cognitive obstructions. This is the fundamental change of suchness. “The wisdom of the real” (*vastujñāna*) refers to the pure mundane wisdom that is attained subsequently to this fundamental change, while “the real” (*vastu*) refers to the nonconceptual wisdom that is the characteristic of the fundamental change of the ālaya-consciousness (the dependent nature). This describes the fundamental change of the ālaya-consciousness, which is the support for the impregnations of negative tendencies. The word “that” in the last line refers to the dharmadhātu, which means that nonconceptual wisdom focuses on the dharmadhātu. This describes the fundamental change of the path. Through the pure mundane wisdom of subsequent attainment focusing on nonconceptual wisdom, inexhaustible mastery is attained, because this pure mundane wisdom realizes the nature of nonconceptual wisdom in an unmistakable manner. Also, nonconceptual wisdom attains inexhaustible mastery over suchness—the dharmadhātu—because nonconceptual wisdom settles one-pointedly on or in the dharmadhātu.<sup>464</sup>

Next, verse IX.57 explains (2) the cause and (3) the fruition of realizing this pure dharmadhātu:

The cultivation of the knowledge of suchness  
In all respects [leads to] full realization,



Whose fruition is the inexhaustibility of the two  
Provisions for all sentient beings in all aspects.

According to Sthiramati,<sup>465</sup> the first two lines explain the cause. “In all respects” means that, through cultivating the progression of listening to, reflecting on, and meditating on the synonyms of the dharmadhātu (such as “nonarising”) in the mahāyāna sūtras on the level of preparation, the wisdom of knowing suchness arises on the path of seeing. This means that the nonconceptual wisdom of realizing the omnipresence of the dharmadhātu arises. Then, through cultivating that very wisdom from the second through the tenth bhūmis, the full realization of the pure dharmadhātu will arise on the buddhabhūmi. As for the fruition, “in all aspects” means either “at all times” or “through all aspects of benefit and happiness.” “The two provisions” are the provisions of benefit (establishing beings in the higher realms and nirvāṇa in later lives) and happiness (causing them to engage in virtue through benefiting them through material goods in this life). “Inexhaustibility” refers to the uninterruptedness of such benefit and happiness until the end of saṃsāra.

Verse IX.58 describes (4) the function (or activity) and (5) the endowment of the pure dharmadhātu:

It entails the activity of the means for employing  
Emanations of body, speech, and mind.  
It is endowed with the doors of samādhi and dhāraṇī,  
As well as the two that are immeasurable.

Sthiramati says that each one of the activities of the means for employing emanations of body, speech, and mind is twofold (associated with buddhas themselves and others).<sup>466</sup> In terms of the body, this activity consists of buddhas’ themselves displaying as the physical forms of gods, nāgas, and so on, as well as blessing others to appear as buddhas and bodhisattvas. In terms of speech, such activity refers to buddhas’ teaching the dharma through the sixty aspects of their melodious speech and, through their blessing, causing sounds that explain the dharma to come forth from space, walls, trees, and so on. In terms of mind, this activity consists of buddhas’ realizing the profound actuality of the dharma through the blessing of wisdom and, through their blessing others, making even the minds of fools realize the profound dharma, causing noble śrāvakas like Śāriputra and Subhūti to explain prajñāpāramitā, and so on. “Emanations” refers to

maturing sentient beings through these three kinds of activities, which are “means” because activity refers to understanding how to use such means. The last two lines teach that the dharmadhātu is endowed with mahāyāna samādhis such as the Sky Treasure and the Heroic Stride,<sup>467</sup> dhāraṇīs such as the Dhāraṇī of the Inexhaustible Casket and the Dhāraṇī of Infinite Gates, and the two immeasurable accumulations of merit and wisdom.<sup>468</sup>

Finally, verse IX.59 explains (6) the manifestation of the pure dharmadhātu:

The purity of the dharmadhātu  
Of the buddhas is explained  
As the different manifestations as  
Its nature, dharma enjoyment, and emanation.

Sthiramati comments that buddhas engage in the welfare of sentient beings through three kāyas.<sup>469</sup> “The natural kāya (svābhāvīkākāya)” refers to the dharmakāya, meaning that the nature of buddhahood is the pure dharmadhātu. When the stains of apprehender and apprehended that exist in the ālaya-consciousness have been relinquished, this is the fundamental change of the dharmadhātu into mirrorlike wisdom, which is called “dharmakāya.” The sambhogakāya refers to the fundamental change of the afflicted mind into the wisdom of equality and the fundamental change of the mental consciousness into discriminating wisdom. This is called “sambhogakāya” because it provides the great enjoyment of the dharma for bodhisattvas on the bhūmis. The nirmāṇakāya represents the fundamental change of the five sense consciousnesses into all-accomplishing wisdom. It demonstrates the twelve deeds of a buddha and brings sentient beings to maturity. Among these three kāyas, the dharmakāya is the foundation or support of the other two.<sup>470</sup>

In sum, Sthiramati says, the completion of having cultivated all kinds of dharmas through the full maturation of the latent tendencies of listening by virtue of the samādhi of the buddhabhūmi serves as the cause of the completely pure dharmadhātu, which is devoid of all afflictive and cognitive obscurations (its nature). This pure dharmadhātu is endowed with infinite samādhis, dhāraṇīs, and the accumulations of merit and wisdom in order to always provide benefit and happiness for all sentient beings (the fruition). In general terms, this dharmadhātu is the suchness of all phenomena, the nature of unmistakeness, the cause for the arising of all qualities of the noble ones, and the very character of all tathāgatas.

*Mahāyānasamgraha* X.27 says that the dharmakāya is endowed with the six qualities of nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, and manifestation.<sup>471</sup> In due order, these qualities consist of (1) having accomplished ultimate reality, (2) having gone through all the bhūmis, (3) having found preeminence among all sentient beings (that is, omniscience), (4) being the liberator of all sentient beings, (5) being endowed with inexhaustible and unequaled qualities, and (6) being visible in the worlds and amid the retinues by way of the nirmāṇakāya and sambhogakāya but being completely invisible as the dharmakāya, even by gods and humans.<sup>472</sup>

In addition, these six topics with several instances each are listed in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* as constituting “the ascertainment of meaning,” one of the seven methods for ascertaining a topic of discussion.<sup>473</sup> Likewise, the *Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* says that its own first two opening verses teach the six topics of nature and so on as pertaining to the perfect Buddha.<sup>474</sup> The six are also listed in the *Yogācārabhūmi*,<sup>475</sup> though only in a brief discussion of grammar without further explanation.<sup>476</sup>

Thus, given the chronology and contents of these Yogācāra texts and the *Uttaratantra*, as well as the fact that RGVV quotes the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, it is most likely that the explanation of the first six topics of the fifth vajra point (and, to some extent, of the fourth vajra point) in both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV relies on the presentation of these six topics in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*.

Furthermore, the teachings on the tathāgata heart in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV are clearly based on and use the notion of “mind’s natural luminosity,” which is only superficially obscured by adventitious stains but never in its essence.<sup>477</sup> This notion is found in many Buddhist scriptures, beginning with the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* and *Samyutta Nikāya*, but particularly in Yogācāra texts.<sup>478</sup> For example, *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1 and I.13 explain emptiness in a positive manner as being an existent remainder after the imaginary duality of apprehender and apprehended has been cleared away. Furthermore, the *Madhyāntavibhāga* describes emptiness as mind’s natural luminosity that in its essence is never obscured by adventitious stains but remains untainted throughout. *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.16 says:

Afflicted and purified phenomena  
 Represent its being with stains and without stains.  
 Purity is asserted to be like the purity  
 Of the element of water, gold, and space.

Sthiramati's commentary on this verse explains that it is in dependence on emptiness's not having or having undergone the fundamental change that one speaks of being associated with stains or having relinquished these stains.<sup>479</sup> Through the flaws of noncognition and wrong cognition, ordinary beings cling to apprehender and apprehended, and their mind streams thus become stained through the afflictions, while emptiness does not appear in them. In the noble ones who lack mistaken states of mind due to realizing true reality, emptiness appears in an uninterrupted manner like a spotless clear sky. Thus, emptiness is to be regarded as being (temporarily) dependent on being afflicted and being pure, but its essence is not stained because it is natural luminosity. Sthiramati brings up the same objection as does Vasubandhu (see below) in his *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*—that emptiness first being afflicted and then becoming pure must entail a change in it, which would make it impermanent. Sthiramati answers that there is a change only insofar as the phase of emptiness being afflicted changes into the phase of its being without afflictions, but the nature of emptiness itself does not change since it always remains as the ultimate true reality and only becomes free from adventitious stains. In that, emptiness resembles water, gold, and space, which do not have the nature of what stains them and never change, no matter whether they are associated with such adventitious stains or become free from them. In fact, both emptiness's being associated with stains and its becoming free from them are nothing but adventitious events since emptiness's own nature is completely unaffected by either one.

*Madhyāntavibhāga* I.21–22 reaffirms the seeming states of bondage in *saṃsāra* due to emptiness's appearing to be afflicted and liberation from *saṃsāra* due to emptiness's appearing to be pure. However, in its essence, emptiness is never afflicted or pure but is mind's natural luminosity:

If it were not afflicted,  
 All beings would be liberated.  
 If it did not become pure,  
 Efforts would be fruitless.

It is neither afflicted nor nonafflicted  
 And neither pure nor impure  
 Because of mind's luminosity  
 And the adventitiousness of the afflictions.

As for emptiness's being afflicted and impure in ordinary beings and nonafflicted and pure in the noble ones, Sthiramati comments that emptiness is actually neither afflicted nor impure, which refers to its natural purity, and that the two words "afflicted" and "impure" just serve to emphasize that this natural purity is only associated with adventitious afflictions.<sup>480</sup> He refers to Vasubandhu's quote from the scriptures, which says that emptiness is pure "because of mind's natural luminosity," and continues that "mind" here refers to the true nature of the mind (*cittadharmatā*). That it is neither nonafflicted nor pure again highlights that it is only afflicted by virtue of adventitious stains but not afflicted in its nature. The scriptural support is the phrase "because of being afflicted by adventitious afflictions." In sum, emptiness is described here as being far beyond just the mere absence of duality in false imagination—it is the ultimate, luminous, and pure nature of the mind.

Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* on *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.22 also explains that emptiness has the nature of both emptiness and natural luminosity at the time of being a sentient being and has that very same nature of both emptiness and natural luminosity at the time of having become a perfect buddha.<sup>481</sup> Therefore, there is no difference in its nature of purity. Since there is nothing to purify in it, it is actually without purity. Still, at the time of having become a buddha later, it has become pure of the adventitious stains of the afflictive and cognitive obscurations through the power of having cultivated the path. Therefore, it is said that it is not impure either.

In addition to the *Madhyāntavibhāga* and its commentaries, the examples of space, gold, and water appear in many other Yogācāra texts in order to illustrate the changelessness of mind's natural luminosity and its being unaffected by adventitious stains, such as in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (lines 299–300), *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XI.13 and XIII.18–19, Vasubandhu's *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*<sup>482</sup> and *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*,<sup>483</sup> Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*,<sup>484</sup> the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī*,<sup>485</sup> the *Śatasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāṣṭādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābṛhaṭṭikā*,<sup>486</sup> and the *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusāriṇī*.<sup>487</sup> Similarly, *Uttarantra* I.30–31 uses the examples of space, a wish-fulfilling jewel, and water to illustrate the tathāgata heart's changelessness, its power, and the moisture of its compassion.

According to GC,<sup>488</sup> the section of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* on the nature of phenomena represents a commentary on awakening—the fifth vajra point of the *Uttarantra*.<sup>489</sup> The reasons for this are that "stainless

suchness” in the *Uttaratantra* corresponds to “the nature of phenomena” in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, with both texts explaining that stainless suchness consists of the fundamental change whose cause is nonconceptual wisdom. The conclusion of GC’s comments on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* states that the distinction between the existent nature of phenomena (suchness or mind’s luminosity) and nonexistent phenomena in this text matches the explanation in the *Uttaratantra* that the ultimately existent tathāgata heart is empty of adventitious stains but not empty of buddha qualities.<sup>490</sup> Note that this implies that the section on phenomena in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* represents a commentary on the adventitious stains in the *Uttaratantra*. Consequently, the contents of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and the *Uttaratantra* in their entirety are very closely related. In both texts, what is called “the fundamental change” indicates a primordial ultimate that is described in positive terms and is revealed by eliminating ultimately nonexistent adventitious stains. This is illustrated in both texts by the three examples of primordially pure space, gold (or a wish-fulfilling jewel), and water, all of which only need to be discovered by removing adventitious stains but do not need to be newly created or altered. Vasubandhu’s explanation of these three examples in his *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti* spells this out very clearly:

“When something has undergone this fundamental change, it has changed into something else. Consequently, how is what has undergone the fundamental change not something that is altered?” Therefore, [Maitreya] says that the manner in which there is a fundamental change without its referring to something that is altered is established through examples. Examples for the fundamental change are space, gold, water, and so on. For example, space is [always] nothing but pure by nature. It is only by virtue of its being associated with adventitious fog and so on that this [purity] is not realized, but it is [seen to be] pure by virtue of [eventually] becoming free from such [adventitious obscurations]. Since it is not the case that impure [space] becomes pure, it is not that its being pure arises [newly]. Rather, it is just that [its purity] is observed by virtue of its being free from causes for not observing it. It is also not that one should claim space to be something that is altered through its being observed as being utterly pure . . .

In the same way, in the fundamental change too, natural luminosity is not something that did not exist before, but it does just not appear by virtue of adventitious stains’ appearing. This is just as with [space, gold,

and water, respectively, appearing] to be impure, not immaculate, and turbid. By virtue of being free from these [adventitious stains], [natural luminosity] appears. However, it is not that it arises, in such a way that it has not been present [before], by virtue of the appearance of an alteration due to the nature of phenomena's entailing [such an] alteration. Since there is no such [alteration], the nature of phenomena and the fundamental change that is constituted by it are permanent.<sup>491</sup>

Similar to *Uttaratantra* I.37cd, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.23 designates buddhahood as “the supreme self that is the lack of self”:

In pure emptiness, buddhas attain  
 The supreme self of no-self.  
 Through attaining the pure self,  
 They have gone to the great self of the self.

Sthiramati's commentary explains that to attain the supreme self means to attain the supreme lack of self.<sup>492</sup> The supreme lack of self consists of personal identitylessness and phenomenal identitylessness. Since the buddhas have this twofold lack of a self as their self and their nature within the uncontaminated dhātu, they are presented as being the supreme self. As for the word “self” (*ātman*), on the one hand, it means the imaginary self of the tīrthikas, being equivalent to “sentient being,” “life-force,” and so on. But on the other hand, it can also refer to the nature of a phenomenon, such as saying that the defining characteristic or nature of fire is to be hot. In these cases, the word “self” is used in the sense of “nature” (*svabhāva*). Thus, because the buddhas have the nature of the lack of self, it is said that they have attained the supreme self. So, what is the supreme lack of self? It means pure emptiness. Once the emptiness that is personal and phenomenal identitylessness has become pure of the stains of apprehender and apprehended, emptiness is pure. Having attained this purity is called “having attained the supreme lack of self.” “The great self of the self” (*ātmamahātmatā*) designates the incomparable nature of this supreme self that is the supreme lack of self, which consists of the twofold identitylessness of persons and phenomena. In terms of exactly this being the very nature of buddhas, it is called “the self of the buddhas.”<sup>493</sup>

As for templates in terms of style, the *Uttaratantra*'s peculiar and rare approach of expressing the same content twice, with the second time's

being in a more complex meter, is also found in the ninth chapter of the *Mahāyānasūtrāṃkāra*.

Finally, as Mathes (2008a, 14–15) points out, the first three introductory verses of the *Uttaratantra* suggest that its author was familiar with and used the five principles of Yogācāra hermeneutics (as opposed to Madhyamaka hermeneutics) as laid out in a famous stanza in Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti*:

Those who relate the meaning of the sūtras  
Should state (1) their purpose, (2) their topical summary,  
(3) The meaning of the words, (4) their coherence,  
And (5) the rebuttal of objections.<sup>494</sup>

Among these five principles, (2) the topical summary of the *Uttaratantra* obviously consists of listing the seven vajra points in I.1, while (4) the coherence or connection between them is clearly identified in I.3 (and also, in a different way, in I.23 and I.26).<sup>495</sup> *Uttaratantra* I.156 presents an objection to the teachings on the tathāgata heart, and both (5) the rebuttal of this objection and (1) the purpose of these teachings are found in I.157–67.<sup>496</sup> (3) The meaning of the words is referred to in a brief form in *Uttaratantra* I.2 and in detail consists of the entire remaining text. If it is thus the hermeneutics of the Yogācāra School that is followed in the *Uttaratantra*, unlike in Madhyamaka hermeneutics, the mentioning of a purpose does not at all imply that this text is of expedient meaning.<sup>497</sup> Rather, as the rebuttal of the objection in I.158–60 shows, being empty of real existence is understood to apply only to what the *Uttaratantra* categorizes as adventitious stains, while the tathāgata heart does exist ultimately and is unaffected by these stains. Consequently, even though the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings are difficult to realize even for bodhisattvas on the bhūmis, the *Uttaratantra* deems it necessary to make it clear already to beginners that the prajñāpāramitā teachings on all phenomena's being emptiness are of expedient meaning and are superseded by the teachings on the tathāgata heart, which are of definitive meaning and are necessary to overcome the five flaws of faintheartedness, contempt for inferior beings, clinging to what is unreal, deprecating what is ultimately real, and excessive self-cherishing. At least some of these flaws cannot be redressed merely by understanding emptiness or may even be caused by misunderstanding it or clinging to it.<sup>498</sup> It is important to see that the *Uttaratantra's* purpose in relinquishing these five flaws does not constitute a total rejection of the teachings on emptiness or the Madhyamaka system but rather seems to be



aimed at how emptiness is to be properly understood and applied in terms of seeming and ultimate reality in the context of actually practicing this emptiness on the path to becoming a buddha.

Despite all these Yogācāra elements, the *Uttarantra* and RGVV obviously do not mention major Yogācāra hallmarks such as the imaginary, dependent, and perfect natures, the ālaya-consciousness, and *cittamātra*. Also, the sūtra sources presented in the *Uttarantra* and RGVV do not include any typical Yogācāra sūtras,<sup>499</sup> such as the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra* or the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

It should also be noted that the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* does not explicitly appear in any other Maitreya texts besides the *Uttarantra* and the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*,<sup>500</sup> nor is it found in any of Asaṅga's or Vasubandhu's own texts. It appears only a very few times in other classical Yogācāra texts, such as some commentaries by Vasubandhu, Sthiramati, and Asvabhāva (sixth century) on some of the texts by Maitreya and Asaṅga. In all these cases, however, *tathāgatagarbha* is treated only very briefly and is consistently explained as suchness in the sense of identitylessness.

For example, Vasubandhu's very brief comment in his *Bhāṣya* on *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.37 states that all beings are said to possess the tathāgata heart because suchness is the same in all beings and a tathāgata has the nature of pure suchness.<sup>501</sup> This conforms to the same author's *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* on "natural purity" in *Mahāyānasamgraha* II.26,<sup>502</sup> which says that, inasmuch as this natural purity exists as suchness, it exists in all sentient beings as their general characteristic. It is by virtue of this that it is taught that all phenomena (!) possess the tathāgata heart. Asvabhāva's *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāraṭīkā* is silent on IX.37, but his *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* on II.26 follows Vasubandhu, saying that natural purity is the actual true nature of ordinary beings, which means that suchness never changes into anything else, and therefore is the general characteristic of all phenomena.<sup>503</sup> Thus, it is said that all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart. Later in the same text,<sup>504</sup> Asvabhāva comments on bodhisattvas' attaining an equal mind with regard to all beings on the first bhūmi (*Mahāyānasamgraha* III.11) by saying that they see all beings as equality in the sense of their identitylessness, which is why the scriptures state that all beings have the tathāgata heart.

Sthiramati says on *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.37 that suchness refers to the nature of the two kinds of identitylessness in terms of persons and phenomena, which pervades all entities.<sup>505</sup> The personal and phenomenal identitylessness that exists in ordinary beings and the personal and phenomenal

identitylessness that exists in the noble ones are not different. It is only by virtue of this suchness's having become pure that it is called "tathāgata." Though suchness exists in everything, once the two kinds of identitylessness have become free from the adventitious afflictive and cognitive obstructions, they are pure, which is called "tathāgata." Thus, because suchness exists in sentient beings, they are all said to possess the tathāgata heart.<sup>506</sup>

Furthermore, Bandhuprabha's *Buddhabhūmyupadeśa* explains that the teachings on buddha nature refer to the pure dharmadhātu's being present in the mind streams of all sentient beings.<sup>507</sup> However, these teachings refer only to those beings who (among the five kinds of dispositions) possess the buddha disposition. They were given only as skillful means, referring only to a small number of sentient beings, and in order to guide those of indeterminate disposition to swiftly enter the mahāyāna. Also, the phrase "the Tathāgata's pure dharmadhātu pervades the minds of all sentient beings" means that, just as the Buddha's mind is ultimately pure because its original nature is luminous and pure, so are the minds of all sentient beings. However, the nature of the mind is suchness, and that the minds of sentient beings are equal to those of buddhas is stated by virtue of the nature of emptiness.

Obviously these comments on *tathāgatagarbha* are remarkably identical with the above-mentioned typical Madhyamaka explanation of this term as meaning nothing but emptiness or identitylessness. With the same comments coming from all these Yogācāra masters, this is clear evidence that at least the early major followers of this tradition did not explain *tathāgatagarbha* as the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV do (their taking *tathāgatagarbha* merely as suchness and not as the dharmakāya, the disposition, and naturally luminous mind would correspond only to *Uttaratantra* 1.28b). As stated before, the main reason for this appears to be that Yogācāra masters (like any other Buddhists) did not want to go at all near anything that sounds like an *ātman*, a true self, or an eternal soul. Also, being aware of the Madhyamaka critique of any form of intrinsic existence and being in line with the passages appearing in many Yogācāra texts that state that ultimate reality, buddhahood, dharmadhātu, and suchness are free from reference points, Yogācāra authors were clearly striving to avoid any basis for reification on the level of ultimate reality. Another reason may lie in certain Yogācāras explaining that "lacking the disposition" (*agoṭra*) means to absolutely never attain nirvāṇa.<sup>508</sup>

However, as shown by passages such as the above from the *Madhyāntavibhāga* and its commentaries as well as the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgaṅgī*,

the same Yogācāra masters do refer to the closely related themes of mind's luminous nature's being obscured only by adventitious stains and emptiness's being both empty and naturally luminous at the time of being a sentient being as well as at the time of being a buddha. Also, Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* states that it is untenable to say that only one among all the innumerable sentient beings who are endowed with the disposition to become a buddha will become a buddha, while the others will not.<sup>509</sup> In fact, everybody who has gathered the two accumulations of merit and wisdom will become a buddha.

As mentioned above, there were a number of early Indian Yogācāra masters whose understanding of *tathāgatagarbha* was more in accordance with the *Uttaratantra*, but all of them were mainly active in China and their works are available only in Chinese. Guṇabhadra (394–468) was active in translating and teaching both Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras in China (foremost among them the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, and the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*). Ratnamati (late fifth–sixth century), the translator of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV into Chinese, greatly emphasized the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings, saying that, just as with the tathāgata heart, awakening consists of purifying the ālaya-consciousness from its defilements in order to uncover its pure and original nature (like removing dust from a mirror), rather than eliminating it. Bodhiruci's translations include the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, and the *Mahāyānasamgraha*. However, it is said that his collaboration with Ratnamati (and Buddhasānta) in translating Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* came to an end over their disagreement as to whether *tathāgatagarbha* represents classical Yogācāra thought or not. As Shiu (2006, 187) mentions, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* reports that the same conflict led to Ratnamati's and Bodhiruci's ending their collaboration on a single translation of the *Uttaratantra* and each working on a translation of their own (Bodhiruci's is not preserved).

Paramārtha (499–569) was the foremost and most strong-voiced Indian master to teach and translate Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha* materials in early Buddhist China. He embedded discussions of *tathāgatagarbha* in several of his translations of Indian Yogācāra works. For example, in his rather free translations of the *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya*<sup>510</sup> and *The Awakening of the Mahāyāna Faith*,<sup>511</sup> he interpolates passages from the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV into Yogācāra treatises and also relates the ālaya-consciousness to the tathāgata heart. In addition, he is considered by modern scholars as the author (or at least the commentator and redactor) of the

*Buddhagotraśāstra* (*Fo Xing Lun*),<sup>512</sup> which is largely a rewriting of the *Uttaratantra* and one of the rare texts that synthesizes explicitly and in detail many classical Yogācāra topics, such as the three natures, with the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*.<sup>513</sup>

In addition, in several of his own texts, Paramārtha frequently uses the term *\*amalavijñāna* for a ninth consciousness beyond the eight that are common in Yogācāra.<sup>514</sup> This *\*amalavijñāna* is essentially the purified skandha of consciousness and is realized as the fundamental change that is the outcome of the relinquishment of the ālaya-consciousness through the remedies for that consciousness. This resultant state is diametrically opposed to the state of ordinary beings—it is permanent, uncontaminated, and free from karmic formations, afflictions, skandhas, the impregnations of negative tendencies, and all causes of future suffering. It functions as the basis of the path of the noble ones and is what has gained mastery over all virtuous phenomena. Parallel to the ālaya-consciousness's functioning as the basis of mundane phenomena, the *\*amalavijñāna* serves as the basis of supramundane phenomena, and the continuum of these phenomena represents the remedy for the ālaya-consciousness. The *\*amalavijñāna* is the naturally luminous mind that is tainted by adventitious stains. It is moreover equated with the perfect nature and said to be the nonexistence of both the imaginary nature and the dependent nature.<sup>515</sup> Furthermore, it is said to be not only free from any subject-object duality of deluded consciousness but also to be devoid of any distinction between nonconceptual wisdom and its object. By virtue of all these features, the *\*amalavijñāna* may reasonably be seen as a bridge to, or even as an equivalent of, the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*.<sup>516</sup>

In India, however, it seems that Yogācāra masters generally adopted the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* in accordance with the *Uttaratantra* only later, when Buddhist tantra with its very similar notions of ground tantra and all beings' primordially being buddhas was flourishing. Examples of such Yogācāras include Jñānaśrīmitra, Ratnākaraśānti,<sup>517</sup> and the authors of several commentaries on the prajñāpāramitā sūtras from a Yogācāra perspective.

Among these commentaries, both the *Śatasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāṣṭādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābrhatṭikā* (abbr. *Brhatṭikā*) and the *Bhagavatyaṃnāyānusārīṇī* (a subcommentary on the *Brhatṭikā*) say that what seems to obscure mind's true reality (also referred to as suchness, the perfect nature, or buddha nature) consists of nothing but fictitious adventitious stains (the imaginary and dependent natures) that can never be a part of or taint mind's ultimate natural luminosity.<sup>518</sup> In this vein, the *Brhatṭikā*

uses and connects the terms *tathāgatagarbha* and “fundamental change” several times and equates both terms with the perfect nature (suchness). For example:

As for “because the realms of sentient beings are completely pure,” the realms of sentient beings are completely pure because all sentient beings possess the *tathāgata* heart.<sup>519</sup>

And:

The perfect nature of inner and outer phenomena is called “the suchness of all phenomena,” that is, it is exemplified by “the suchness of form,” “the suchness of sound,” “the suchness of smell,” and so on. The fundamental change of the *tathāgata* heart of all buddhas—the *dharmakāya*—is the second one, called “the suchness of the *dharmadhātu*” because it is the foundation of all *buddhadharmas*.<sup>520</sup>

And:

During the state of ordinary beings, since the *tathāgata* heart is naturally completely pure, it lacks being afflicted. When it has undergone the fundamental change, just as space, it also lacks any being purified that has not occurred before. Therefore, [the sūtras] say that it is “neither afflicted nor purified.”<sup>521</sup>

Combining early Yogācāra explanations about the *tathāgata* heart as suchness with the *Uttarantra*’s three phases of the *tathāgata* heart, the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* says that “all sentient beings’ possessing the *tathāgata* heart” means that “all sentient beings are characterized by suchness,” which is divided into the three stages of being impure (sentient beings), both pure and impure (*bodhisattvas*), and utterly pure (*buddhas*).<sup>522</sup> The *Bhagavatyaṃnāyānusāriṇī* also relates suchness to these three stages.<sup>523</sup> The text takes suchness, *prajñāpāramitā*, and the *dharmakāya* to be equivalent and says that they represent ground, path, and fruition, respectively, in terms of the one and the same ultimately existent *dharmadhātu*’s (the perfect nature’s) being more or less obscured by adventitious stains, which is to be realized by personally experienced wisdom. All this is supported by quoting *Uttarantra* I.153,<sup>524</sup> the verse from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* that is also quoted in RGVV;<sup>525</sup> *Dharmadhātustava* 8–11; *Madhyāntavibhāga*

I.14–15 and its *Bhāṣya*; *Trisvabhāvanirdeśa* 31, 33, 34, and 36–38; the *Vyākhyāyukti*;<sup>526</sup> *Samādhirājasūtra* IX.23; *Acintyastava* 38cd–39 and 41; Asaṅga's lost *Determination of Questions about Suchness*; and *Pramāṇavārttika* III.3. In addition, the *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusāriṇī* contains a second quote of *Uttaratantra* I.153 and also cites *Uttaratantra* IV.90–91 and V.1–2.<sup>527</sup>

The ways in which Praśāstrasena's and Mahājana's commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra* relate to the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* were already discussed above.

Moreover, in terms of their relating Yogācāra to the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings, all these authors such as Jñānaśrīmitra can be regarded as forerunners of the later Tibetan approach of Shentong, which explicitly combines mainstream Yogācāra (such as the three natures, the eight consciousnesses, and the four or five buddha wisdoms) with the teachings on buddha nature.<sup>528</sup>

In sum, despite certain overlaps with Yogācāra, the instructions on buddha nature in texts such as the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV appear to have remained a separate strand of mahāyāna teachings in India for a long time, though they never formed an independent school besides Yogācāra and Mādhyamaka. Although both Mādhyamikas and at least early Yogācāras were not very enthusiastic about the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings, there is no critique of the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* in any Yogācāra text and even those Mādhyamikas (such as Candrakīrti and Jayānada) who categorized the teaching on *tathāgatagarbha* as being of expedient meaning did not level any polemics against it. In any case, it is clear that no one in India ever considered the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings as “un-Buddhist.”<sup>529</sup> Eventually, there was a tendency in certain later Yogācāra works to incorporate the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* into mainstream Yogācāra. In China, this approach had already manifested much earlier (though it was superseded later by the development of two distinct schools of Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha*). It was also adopted by certain masters in Tibet from the thirteenth century onward, beginning with the Third Karmapa and Dölpopa (see “The Meditative Tradition of the *Uttaratantra* and Shentong” below). Still, as illustrated above, the notion of mind's natural luminosity's being obscured only by adventitious stains, which is so closely related to the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha*, has always been a quite common theme in Yogācāra texts. As Keenan (1982, 14–15) remarks:

The overarching hypothesis that the preceding passages<sup>530</sup> seem to support is that early Yogācāra thinkers are indeed concerned with the question of the purity or impurity of consciousness, and this in turn would imply that they developed their thinking in the same doctrinal circles that gave rise to the *tathāgatagarbha* tradition. . . .

The earliest *tathāgatagarbha sūtras* began to appear shortly after the time of Nāgārjuna (ca. 150–ca. 250), and thus were contemporaneous with or shortly before the above Yogācāra texts. The *tathāgatagarbha* tradition offered an alternative to what was perceived as the overly negative tone of the Mādhyamika and *prajñāpāramitā* literature. It would thus be natural to assume some kind of connection between *tathāgatagarbha* and Yogācāra.

. . . [T]he presence in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* of the famous quotation from the *Mahāyānābhidharmasūtra* suggests that the author of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* regarded the *Mahāyānābhidharmasūtra* as being at least consistent with *tathāgatagarbha* themes. It does seem clear that in some instances the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* is dependent on the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* . . . [which] also suggests that this Yogācāra work was well received within *tathāgatagarbha* circles and was perceived as being consistent with *tathāgatagarbha* themes.

This does not mean that *tathāgatagarbha* is to be reckoned as a defined academic school in contrast to Mādhyamika and Yogācāra. As Takasaki has pointed out, such an evaluation was a peculiarity of Chinese Buddhism and is not found in either India or Tibet. This is further borne out by the complete lack of polemic against *tathāgatagarbha* teachings in Yogācāra works. . . .

The foregoing textual data seem to suggest that the initial pre-Asaṅga Yogācāra thinkers<sup>531</sup> represent a theoretical development from within the same circles that produced the *tathāgatagarbha* teachings. They appear to have taken their initial insights from the notion of the pure mind, as in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*.





## *The Meditative Tradition of the Uttaratantra and Shentong*

### *The Two Approaches of Explaining the Uttaratantra*

As mentioned above, for the transmission of the five works of Maitreya from India to Tibet, there are the four principal lineages through Ngog Lotsāwa, Dsen Kawoché (two), and Marpa Dopa, all of whom traveled to Kashmir and studied the Maitreya works with the great paṇḍitas there (primarily Sajjana and Parahita). The lineage through Ngog Lotsāwa is often called “the exegetical tradition of the dharma works of Maitreya” (*byams chos bshad lugs*), while Dsen Kawoché’s transmissions represent “the meditative tradition of the dharma works of Maitreya” (*byams chos sgom lugs*). Judging from CMW, Marpa Dopa’s lineage contains elements of both approaches since CMW’s introduction consists of Mahāmudrā-style meditation instructions based on the *Uttaratantra*, while its actual commentary on the words of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV consists almost exclusively of scriptural exegesis of a scholarly nature.

Ngog’s approach is also referred to as “the tradition of studying and reflecting on the dharma works of Maitreya” (*byams chos thos bsam gyi lugs*) and, as shown above and in appendices 1 and 2, it was later adopted in most points by the Sakya and Gelug schools. The meditative tradition came to be associated with what is known as the Shentong approach.<sup>532</sup>

GC<sup>533</sup> speaks of the two ways of explaining the *Uttaratantra* through the path of inference based on the Madhyamaka texts and explaining the heart of the matter (*snying po’i don*)<sup>534</sup> through the path of direct perception (by which GC essentially means Mahāmudrā).

Śākya Chogden compares the two positions of Ngog and Dsen by saying that Ngog identifies the tathāgata heart as the factor of the natural purity of all phenomena, which pervades all knowable objects and is a space-like nonimplicative negation. Then he describes Dsen’s meditative view and explains the complementary relationship between these two traditions:

The definitive meaning that he found from having studied the dharmas of Maitreya is explained by those in his lineage as follows. The sugata heart is the naturally pure wisdom, luminous by nature, that pervades [everyone] from buddhas to sentient beings. In earlier times these [two approaches] were known as “the difference between explaining the dharmas of Maitreya as the tradition of characteristics (*mtshan nyid kyī lugs*) and explaining them as the meditative tradition (*sgom lugs*).” However, in both cases there is no contradiction because the [explanation] according to the first [approach] is more profound at the time of eliminating the clinging to characteristics, while the [explanation] according to the latter [approach] is needed so that [the sugata heart] can function as the support of qualities.<sup>535</sup>

In its chapter on how the Shentong tradition spread in India and Tibet, as mentioned above, TOK states that the intention of the sūtras of the third wheel of dharma was elucidated by the works of Maitreya except the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and by Nāgārjuna’s collection of praises.<sup>536</sup> In India, the meaning of these texts was explained and spread widely by Aśaṅga, Vasubandhu, Candragomī, their followers, Ratnākaraśānti, and others. Dharmapāla (530–561) composed a treatise called *Dawn of Brightness* commenting on Nāgārjuna’s collection of reasoning as bearing the intention of the third wheel of dharma. However, while the general philosophical system of Maitreya as expressed in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, and *Madhyāntavibhāga* was explained through many traditions (such as those of Dignāga and Sthiramati), the uncommon view of these texts was sustained in such a way that only the supreme disciples transmitted it orally, with the texts of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra* being hidden away as treasure texts until Maitrīpa rediscovered them. Via \*Ānandakīrti and Sajjana, these texts were transmitted to Ngog Lotsāwa as well as Su Gawé Dorje and Dsen Kawoché.

TOK calls Ngog’s tradition of the Maitreya texts “the oral transmission of explanation” (*bshad pa’i bka’ babs*) and Dsen’s lineage, “the oral transmission of practice” (*sgrub pa’i bka’ babs*), saying that they are asserted to hold the views of Madhyamaka and Mere Mentalism, respectively. Based on the latter tradition, masters such as Dsangnagpa Dsöndrū Sengé, the Third Karmapa, Dölpopa, Longchen Rabjampa, Minling Terchen Gyurmé Dorje<sup>537</sup> (1646–1714) and his brother Lochen Dharmasrī (1654–1717/18),<sup>538</sup> the Eighth Situpa, and their followers<sup>539</sup> uttered the lion’s roar of the

irreversible actuality and illuminated the system of Great Madhyamaka, which is the definitive meaning beyond Mere Mentalism.

The source of this Shentong system that was widely renowned in both India and Tibet, TOK says, is the *Uttarantra*. According to its verse I.1, its subject matter consists of the seven bodies of the ultimate vajra, which are taught through the seven vajra points in four chapters. Their connection in due order is taught in *Uttarantra* I.3. These seven teach the complete body of the ground, path, and fruition of liberation—the Buddha as the teacher of the path, the dharma as his teachings, the saṃgha as those who train in it, those who have the disposition to be guided by these three, the awakening that is their liberation, the qualities of that awakening, and its enlightened activity. If these are summarized as the progression of making the path a living experience, since the generation of bodhicitta on the supreme path of the mahāyāna resembles a leader, it is discussed in order to teach the stages of correctly adopting this motivation of bodhicitta. What the *Uttarantra* teaches explicitly is to take refuge in the three jewels (vajra points 1–3). The focal objects of bodhicitta consist of the welfare of others and awakening. Since “others” refers to sentient beings as the objects for whose sake bodhicitta is generated, this teaches suchness with stains (vajra point 4). The welfare of these others is taught by enlightened activity (vajra point 7), and its cause is awakening (vajra point 5). The qualities (vajra point 6) represent the aids for promoting the welfare of others through awakening. Furthermore, all seven vajra points are determined through the principle of the two realities.

JKC’s introduction explains the following on the two traditions of explaining the *Uttarantra* and the text’s relationship with Shentong.<sup>540</sup> In general, it is the abiding principle of all texts of Maitreya that what is to be known at the time of the ground, the object of the view at the time of the path, and the svābhāvīkākāya at the time of the fruition are all presented on the basis of dharmadhātu wisdom. For example, in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, the dharmadhātu is explained as the basis of purification, the means of purification consist of the four trainings,<sup>541</sup> what is to be purified are all factors to be relinquished through seeing and familiarization, and the result of purification is the attainment of the dharmakāya.

Here in the *Uttarantra*, the basis of purification is the sugata heart. The means of purification consist of the four factors of faith in the dharma, prajñā, samādhi, and compassion,<sup>542</sup> as well as the sixty factors of purification in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. What is to be purified are the nine stains illustrated by the nine examples, the three obscurations (afflictive,

cognitive, and those of meditative absorption),<sup>543</sup> and the four factors of hostility toward the dharma, views about a self, fear of saṃsāra's suffering, and indifference about the welfare of sentient beings.<sup>544</sup> The result of purification consists of the result of freedom from all those factors to be purified, which is the manifestation of the dharmakāya with its qualities and enlightened activity. Thus, apart from mere differences in terminology, the presentations in all Maitreya texts come down to the same meaning.

Therefore, these texts do not differ with regard to the following. At the time of the ground, the ālaya is presented as the foundation into which the individual latent tendencies of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are input. At the time of the path, the adventitious stains are explained as the factors to be relinquished, and the factor of natural purity—self-aware wisdom—is accepted as what is to be experienced. At the time of the fruition, the wisdom of the final fundamental change is established to be existent.

With regard to this basis of the *Uttaratantra's* exposition, JKC follows GC in saying that there are the two systems of explaining it (1) through the path of inference that relies on the Madhyamaka texts and (2) through the path of the direct perception of the heart of the matter.

(1) The first one is the approach of Ngog Lotsāwa and his followers, who hold the tathāgata heart to be ultimate reality, which is the emptiness that is the nonimplicative negation explained in the Madhyamaka collection of reasoning. However, this ultimate reality is not even a mere referent object, let alone being an object of terms and conceptions. According to Ngog and his followers, being naturally endowed with qualities is only a label for all qualities naturally gathering, if one focuses on that emptiness. The cause of purified phenomena is taken to be twofold identitylessness—the focal object of the wisdom of purification. This identitylessness is not to be newly added. The cause of afflicted phenomena consists of the personal and phenomenal identities that are superimposed by afflictiveness. Since these focal objects of the afflictions are not established at all, there is nothing previously existent to be removed. The meaning of the dharmakāya's being pervasive is explained as the dharmakāya of sentient beings' being suitable to be attained.

(2) The explanation of the *Uttaratantra* through the path of the direct perception of the heart of the matter consists of the teachings of the followers of the meditative tradition of the Maitreya texts (as transmitted by Su Gawé Dorje and Dsen Kawoché) and Maitrīpa's pith instructions on prajñāpāramitā that accord with mantra (such as the *Tattvadaśaka*), which

he composed after having received the instructions of Saraha and Śavaripa. Having heard them from Maitrīpa, Marpa said:

The heart of the matter of the ultimate yāna,  
Mental nonengagement free from extremes,  
Shall be pointed out as the dharma that is Mahāmudrā.

Gampopa's statement, "The text for this Mahāmudrā of ours is the *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* composed by the Bhagavān Maitreya" was elucidated in his writings<sup>545</sup> and followed by Pamo Trupa, Jigden Sumgön<sup>546</sup> (1143–1217), and the Third Karmapa, who all saw the heart of the matter directly. A later rebirth of Jigden Sumgön, Dölpopa, composed *The Fourth Council*, which is the heart of the definitive meaning. Likewise, Śākya Chogden, Tāranātha, the Eighth Situpa, and so on, apart from some minor differences in their positions, all arrive at the same essential point about the view. Furthermore the extensive instructions by Maitrīpa's student Vajrapāṇi on the *Tattvadaśaka*, its commentary, and so on, in Tibet represent the tradition of Mahāmudrā that teaches exactly the meaning of this system. Also, Padampa Sangyé (another student of Maitrīpa) gave the name *The Pacification of Suffering* to this dharma of Mahāmudrā whose essence is prajñāpāramitā and that accords with secret mantra. In brief, JKC says, all the transmissions coming from Maitrīpa, notwithstanding some different phrasings, likewise come down to the same point.

The essence of all these explanations is the sugata heart, which is the luminous nature of the mind. At the time when it exists in the mind streams of sentient beings, it is called "disposition," and they are said to possess the buddha heart. Just as the king of the nāgas ascends from the depths of the ocean to the higher realms, this tathāgata heart rises toward the dharmas of the path and the fruition. At the time of having become a buddha, it is called "dharmakāya" and has become fully manifest. Just as Brahmā's emanations descend to earth, it then also covers all saṃsāric phenomena. The only difference at these two times is whether the tathāgata heart is or is not free from stains, but there is no better or worse or any change in the essence of the basic element of sentient beings and the dharmakāya. From that perspective, they are the same in that both are suchness. This is taught through the example of the Buddha's dwelling on earth and pervading the three realms with his physical appearances.

To divide these three (the disposition, the dharmakāya, and suchness) further, there are the naturally abiding disposition and the unfolding

disposition. The former abides in the mind streams of sentient beings in the manner of their heart since time without beginning, like a treasure under the house of a pauper. Within the power of the disposition abiding as the ground, the unfolding disposition consists of the increase of qualities through perfectly accomplishing the virtues of studying and so forth on the paths of learning, just as a fruit-bearing tree grows after it has been newly planted. The naturally abiding disposition functions as the cause of attaining the svābhāvīkākāya and the unfolding disposition, as the cause of the two rūpakāyas. That the unfolding disposition abides as the ground or the cause is asserted by Rangjung Dorje. The dharmakāya is also twofold—the actual fully qualified dharmakāya endowed with twofold purity and the natural outflow of realizing it (the words of a buddha that teach the principles of the profound ultimate reality and the diversity of seeming reality). Suchness is divided into two in the general words of the Buddha—the true reality of the ultimate and the true reality of the seeming. Gö Lotsāwa holds that all three (the disposition, the dharmakāya, and suchness) are divided into ultimate and seeming.

The intention of the *Uttaratantra* is that suchness is undifferentiable, which refers to the true nature of the mind abiding without change and interruption as being similar in type from sentient beings up through buddhas. This nature of the mind is taught through many names and examples. In the sūtras, it is referred to as prajñāpāramitā, ultimate reality, the true end, the basic nature, the unchanging perfect nature, the nature of phenomena, mind as such, emptiness, and so on. In the mantrayāna, it has many synonyms such as primordial protector, connate wisdom, great bindu, natural luminosity, and Mahāmudrā. This pure luminous nature is obscured by cloud-like adventitious stains, which arise simultaneously with it, like a film on gold, and consist of the consciousnesses that manifest as the dualistic appearances of apprehender and apprehended. They are given many names, such as ālaya-consciousness, dependent nature, the mistakenness of the seeming, and the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. From this, the four obscurations such as hostility toward the dharma arise, and thereby one does not realize the basic nature and is fettered in saṃsāra. Through the four causes such as faith in the supreme yāna, the basic nature is realized perfectly and the adventitious stains are eradicated, which leads to the manifestation of the buddha heart. This is called “dharmakāya.” Since this natural luminosity was primordially never tainted by stains, there is nothing to be removed in it—the stains are fabricated and adventitious, and therefore the basic element is empty of them. Since its qualities are

its intrinsic nature, there is nothing to be newly added that did not exist before—the qualities are characterized by being inseparable from the basic element, and therefore it is not empty of them. This is like someone with jaundice seeing a yellow conch shell—the actual conch is empty of being yellow but is not empty of being white.

When this actuality is determined through study and reflection, JKC says, according to the *Uttarantra*'s statement that “the true end is void of conditioned phenomena in all aspects,”<sup>547</sup> it is first analyzed through Shentong reasoning. Then, one familiarizes with it in accordance with verses such as the following:

Without beginning, middle, and end, undifferentiable,  
Nondual, freed [in] three [ways], stainless, and nonconceptual—  
This is the nature of the dharmadhātu, which is seen  
By yogins in the meditative equipoise of realizing it.<sup>548</sup>

What is to be experienced through such familiarization is held to be the wisdom that is empty of duality.<sup>549</sup> This refers to the same essential point as the venerable Sakyapa saying:

Having determined it as the freedom from extremes, make it a living  
experience as union (*zung 'jug*).<sup>550</sup>

The great beings who hold this explanatory system are known as “Shentong Mādhyamikas.” The mere term “empty of other” is also explicitly used in the sūtras, and in Tibet this system arose through the great siddha Yumowa Mikyö Dorje's<sup>551</sup> (born 1027) having composed his “fourfold cycle of *Lucid Lamps*.”<sup>552</sup> Those who widely spread this term *Shentong* and its meaning were Dölpopa and his followers. Though there is nothing discordant in the essential points of their view and meditation, there are some special features of their philosophical position in the context of determining the view. In particular, Dölpopa explains the tathāgata heart in a literal way as the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, self, and bliss. All Tibetans understood this as something really established set up by the mind and then refuted it. However, what Dölpopa had in mind as the meaning of permanence and so on is the changeless expanse.<sup>553</sup> He asserted that this expanse is liberated from all characteristics of reference points, is beyond terms and thoughts, and is the object of unmistakable nonconceptual wisdom. Since it withstands analysis through reasoning, one can only mistake it

for something that it is not when one subjects it to such analysis. He says that it is the same as the reflections of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects taught in the *Kālacakratāntra* being expressed as “Mahāmudrā.”

In brief, JKC says, the root of these two ways of explaining the *Uttaratantra* through the paths of inference and direct perception is whether the tathāgata heart is taken to be actually existent or nonexistent. Also, the tathāgata heart's serving as the two referents of analysis and meditation derives from understanding the following crucial verses of the *Uttaratantra* through looking toward the outside and the inside, respectively:

There is nothing to be removed in this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
 Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
 It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
 Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

A contemporary work on Kagyü Shentong Madhyamaka by Sherab Püntso,<sup>554</sup> which draws extensively on texts by the Third, Seventh, and Eighth Karmapas, the Fifth Shamarpa, the Eighth Situpa, and Jamgön Kongtrul, reports what Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche (born 1933), the present tutor to the seventeenth Karmapa, states about the main difference between the exegetical and the meditative traditions of the works of Maitreya. The former is said to explain the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* mainly as the element that is the basic nature of phenomena in the sense of the empty dharmadhātu free from all reference points, which is the emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation and is explained in Nāgārjuna's collection of reasoning. The latter explains the meaning of *tathāgatagarbha* mainly as the element of luminosity that is wisdom and is characterized by being the emptiness that is an implicative negation.<sup>555</sup>

Among the texts translated or summarized in this volume, CMW's introduction, IM, RW, HML, GISM, and the fragments from Dsen Kawoché's work (as well as, in part, Sajjana's SM, the Eighth Karmapa's *Lamp*, and Mönlam Tsültrim's *The Essential Pith Instructions That Summarize the Quintessence of the Piṭakas*) are clear examples of the meditative tradition of the works of Maitreya. Not only that but the first five and the last one



combine *Uttaratantra*-based Shentong and Mahāmudrā in a very obvious manner.

Thus, contrary to the claims of some modern scholars, it is clear that it was not only from the time of the Eighth Situpa onward that the “incompatible” views of Shentong and Mahāmudrā were joined, but they were obviously regarded as perfectly compatible by a number of masters much earlier. In fact, an incompatibility between Shentong and Mahāmudrā was voiced by Dölpopa only in his rejection of the position found in many Kagyü Mahāmudrā texts that the difference between ultimate reality and seeming reality or between buddhahood and mistakenness is merely realizing or not realizing the nature of the mind, as epitomized by the famous statement “The essence of thoughts is the dharmakāya.” Dölpopa’s critique was based on his above-mentioned sharp distinction between the spheres of ordinary consciousness and nondual wisdom (or seeming and ultimate reality) as being like two separate kingdoms. However, the way in which the Shentong view is usually formulated in the Kagyü School (primarily based on the writings of the Third Karmapa),<sup>556</sup> as well as in CMW and Mönlam Tsültrim’s texts, does not entail this strict separation but speaks of the confused mind and the awakened mind in terms of the latter’s being the true nature of the former (similar to ice and water).

In that vein, Mathes (2008a, 375) reports Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche’s oral explanation of the difference between Shentong and Mahāmudrā as follows. During analysis, the adventitious stains and buddha nature are necessarily differentiated since buddha nature is empty of what does not belong to it (that is, it is *shentong*—“empty of other”). But when buddha nature is directly realized in Mahāmudrā, there is no longer any difference between it and the adventitious stains or seeming reality.

Thus, in this context, one needs to keep in mind that since all phenomena of seeming reality are not really existent in the first place (and Dölpopa and Mahāmudrā agree on this), there is always only one ultimately real phenomenon to begin with, which is buddha nature or mind’s natural luminosity. Consequently, in fact, there is only a single actual reality, and therefore any presentation or separation of two realities is necessarily of expedient meaning.

### *The Shentong Lineages and the Meditative Tradition of the Uttaratantra in the Jonang, Kagyü, and Nyingma Schools*

In terms of the diversity of the Shentong tradition, as demonstrated elsewhere,<sup>557</sup> the view of the Third Karmapa, who is traditionally considered

the foremost authority on the view of buddha nature in the Karma Kagyü School, neither matches Shentong as understood by Dölpopa, Tāranātha, and other Jonangpas, nor Śākya Chogden's or Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé's presentations of it. Of course, one can find certain similarities, but there are significant differences between the Third Karmapa's view and various brands of Shentong. This is clearly acknowledged by several Kagyü masters, such as the First Karma Trinlépa, a close student of the Seventh Karmapa and an important teacher of the Eighth, who comments on lines 4–5 in the ninth chapter of the Third Karmapa's *The Profound Inner Reality* as follows:

The basic element of sentient beings is the stainless  
buddha heart endowed with the two realities.

The meaning of this is that unconditioned and spontaneously present mind as such, the dharmakāya beyond the entire web of reference points, which has the nature of being all-pervading like space, exists as ultimate reality. However, this does not teach that the sugata heart is really established, permanent, enduring, and totally unchanging. Also the [Seventh Karmapa's] statement in his *Ocean of Texts on Reasoning* that nondual wisdom is established as ultimate reality means that it is “established as *being* ultimate reality,” but he does not assert that it is really established, permanent, enduring, and totally unchanging. Some think, “If something is established as ultimate reality, it must be really established,” but they have not examined [this issue properly], since [their objection] comes down to nothing but being mistaken about the mere name “reality.” For example, though something may be established as seeming reality, [that does not mean that] it needs to be really established. Therefore, most present-day proponents of Shentong and the position of glorious Rangjung [Dorje] differ.

Also the statement by my omniscient guru [the Seventh Karmapa] that “*rangtong* and *shentong* are not contradictory” is an excellent explanation, [which shows] that he has realized this meaning. Thus, [the autocommentary] says that what is to be expressed is the mode of being of the buddha heart that exists as the great freedom from extremes, the inseparability of appearance and emptiness, and the union of the two realities. The sugata heart is nothing but the unmistakable own essence of the eight collections [of consciousness] explained in chapter 1. Here, the distinct and unmixed eight collections are the seeming,

and their unmistakable own essence is the ultimate, the two realities thus being a union. However, those who do not realize the meaning of the two realities are ignorant about the dependent origination that is only satisfying when not examined, thus circling in saṃsāra through their views of clinging to extremes, such as permanence and extinction. By stating the shortcomings of not realizing the two realities, [Rangjung Dorje] teaches that one needs to train in the mode of being of the two realities in union.<sup>558</sup>

A poem by Karma Trinlépa, in which he answers questions by one of his students about *rangtong* and *shentong*,<sup>559</sup> starts by pointing out that this discussion involves a lot of rigid fixation on both sides. He continues by summarizing what the Seventh Karmapa says about how *rangtong* and *shentong* are understood wrongly and correctly. Out of attachment to a nihilistic view, he says, certain present-day conceited Rangtongpas assert that emptiness in the sense of a nonimplicative negation is ultimate reality. But this is not the genuine *rangtong* asserted by the learned Rangtong Mādhyamikas. Said people may well meditate by being attached to such a rabbit horn-like nonexistence, but they will not experience the basic nature through this. Since nonexistence is not the sphere of valid cognition, how could it possibly be something that is realized by personally experienced wisdom? If one focuses on *rangtong* as a nihilistic view, forget about seeing true emptiness. The genuine *rangtong* explained by the previous learned ones is that all phenomena are empty of a nature of their own, but this is not a nonimplicative negation. Though it is empty of the appearances of apprehender and apprehended, the wisdom without the duality of apprehender and apprehended exists. “Empty” in the word “emptiness” does not mean “nothing whatsoever”—this is not the correct understanding of being empty, but just the extreme of being empty. Rather, one should consider that “-ness” is a suffix that indicates affirmation.

According to the Seventh Karmapa, Karma Trinlépa says, there are also some contemporary conceited Shentongpas, who claim that an ultimate that is permanent, enduring, eternal, immutable, and really established is the profound *shentong*, since it is empty of the adventitious stains of apprehender and apprehended. Such a claim amounts to nothing but faking one’s clinging to such an eternalistic view as being profound emptiness, but is not the pure *shentong* taught in the sūtras. Through being mistaken about Maitreya’s statement that “mind as such is not empty of unsurpassable qualities” (*Uttaratantra* I.155), they say that *shentong* refers to the sixty-four

qualities that exist at the time of the ground in a manner of being empty of adventitious stains. However, this means nothing but deprecating the buddhas by implying that sentient beings are completely perfect buddhas in whom all obscurations are terminated and wisdom has unfolded but who nevertheless circle in saṃsāra because they experience the sufferings of the six types of beings in the hells and so forth.<sup>560</sup>

Finally, Karma Trinlépa reports what the Seventh Karmapa taught him about the correct view of Shentong as explained by the Third Karmapa:

The meaning that is taught in the tantras, the bodhisattva commentaries,<sup>561</sup>

Many sūtras, and by those who follow the [five] dharmas of Maitreya  
Represents the Shentong held by Rangjung Dorje,  
About which I heard the following from the mighty victor.

He said that mind as such, unconfined, unbiased,  
Naturally luminous, expanse and awareness inseparable,  
The great sphere, ordinary mind,  
Whose essence does not change into anything,  
Is known as “other-empty” from the point of view of  
Having become buddhahood, once it is pure of adventitious stains.

That this primordial ground is not tainted by any obscurations  
Is the purport of “being empty of other.”  
This very mind as such being ignorant about itself  
Is called “adventitious obscuration.”  
Since this is something suitable to be separated from mind,  
The nature of phenomena is empty of it and thus “other-empty.”

The sixty-four qualities that reside within the basic nature  
Are indeed never separable from mind,  
So speak about “obscured buddhahood” at the time of the ground  
And “stainless buddhahood” at the time of the fruition!

The thirty-two qualities of freedom from all obscurations  
And the thirty-two maturational [qualities] of enlightened activity  
unfolding  
Are the distinctive features of a perfect buddha alone—  
We do not assert that these exist at [the time of] the ground.

The sixty-four qualities that exist at [the time] of the ground  
Are obscured by obscurations—through eliminating these stains,  
One becomes a stainless victor. Therefore, the basis of being empty  
In terms of other-emptiness is the sugata heart—  
The nature of the mind is primordially just this.  
What it is to be emptied of are the adventitious stains to be  
relinquished,  
Which are referred to as the imaginations of apprehender and  
apprehended.

Therefore, ultimate reality is nothing but mind as such  
Free from the imaginations of apprehender and apprehended,  
Natural luminosity, the connate union,  
The inseparability of expanse and awareness, ordinary mind—  
This is the view of profound other-emptiness.  
Therefore, “rangtong” and “shentong”  
Are not held to be contradictory by my guru.

In brief, if phrased by way of a correct understanding of the categories *rangtong* and *shentong*, Rangjung Dorje’s view can be said to regard these two as not being mutually exclusive and to combine them in a creative synthesis. Moreover, by using terms such as “connate union” and “ordinary mind,” Karma Trinlépa explicitly equates the Karmapa’s Shentong view with Mahāmudrā. As mentioned above, the Third Karmapa himself equates buddha nature with Mahāmudrā in his commentary on the *Dharmadhātustava*.<sup>562</sup>

This portrait of the Third Karmapa’s Shentong is confirmed by *A Pronouncement of Realization* by the Sixth Shamarpa, Chökyi Wangchug (1584–1630), which says:

Indeed, the learned set up mere presentations  
Of “self-empty” and “other-empty,”  
But the great victor, glorious Rangjung [Dorje],  
Holds these two to be noncontradictory.<sup>563</sup>

This is followed by establishing the Shentong view of the Kagyü lineage as the correct view by explicitly distinguishing it from the one of Dölpopa.<sup>564</sup> Based on this Shentong view, the Shamarpa then presents the meditation as Mahāmudrā and also connects it with the *Uttarantra*.<sup>565</sup>

Similarly, a song about the view by the Thirteenth Karmapa, Dūdül Dorje (1733–1797), declares the following on what is called “Shentong Madhyamaka”:

When commenting on its meaning, venerable Rangjung [Dorje] says  
That it is one with the system of Candrakīrti.  
Others assert that the ultimate is existent and really established  
And that emptiness is really established.

As for the mahāyāna’s sūtra portion, both the middle and the final  
wheel [of dharma]

Have the purport of the sugata heart, the unity of emptiness and  
luminosity.

The middle [wheel] explains this mainly by teaching emptiness,  
While the final [wheel] elucidates it mainly by teaching luminosity.

I understand that, in actuality, these are not contradictory.<sup>566</sup>

Though there are many more details, these passages show clearly that what is sometimes called “Kagyü Shentong” is not at all the same as the Shentong view proclaimed by Dölpopa, Tāranātha, and their followers.<sup>567</sup> Still, as the works by those latter masters and the above passages from Kagyü texts show, in both cases the *Uttaratantra* and the presentation of buddha nature represent major cornerstones of their views.<sup>568</sup>

As mentioned above, Tāranātha’s *Supplication to the Profound Shentong Madhyamaka*<sup>569</sup> and its supplement by Ngawang Lodrö Tragpa present the lineage of the sūtra-based Shentong tradition of the Jonang School as coming from Buddha Śākyamuni to Maitreya, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Maitrīpa, \*Ānandakīrti, Ratnākaraśānti, Sajjana, Su Gawé Dorje, Dsen Kawoché, Tarma Dsöndrū, Yeshé Jungné (twelfth century), Jangchub Kyab and Jangchub Shönnu (twelfth/thirteenth century), Kyotön Mönlam Tsültrim (1219–1299), Jomden Rigpé Raltri (1227–1305), Kytön Jampéyang Tragpa Gyaltsen (thirteenth century), Dölpopa (1292–1361), Nyaön Kunga Bal (1285–1379), Chöbal Gönpo, Lodrö Sangpo Gyatso, Tönyö Bal (all fourteenth/fifteenth century), Śākya Chogden (1428–1507), Tönyo Trubpa (fifteenth/sixteenth century), Kunga Drölcho (1507–1565/66), Kunga Gyaltsen (sixteenth century), Tragden Trubpa (sixteenth/seventeenth century), Tāranātha (1575–1634), Jetsünma Trinlé Wangmo (1585?–1668?), Kunga Balsang (1629–1686), several unnamed masters in between, Kunga Yönten Gyatso (1818–1890), Palden Namrang Dorje, Kunga Öser, Tsognyi

Gyatso (1880–1940), Kunga Tugjé Palsang (1925–2000), and Ngawang Lodrö Tragpa (1920–1975).<sup>570</sup> An alternative Shentong lineage from the Buddha is said to run through Vajrapāṇi, Rāhulabhadra, Nāgārjuna, Śavaripa, and Maitrīpa. After the latter, it continues as above.

Tāranātha's text states that this represents the lineage of the instructions that combine the intention of all sūtras of the final wheel of dharma and their commentaries, while there are distinct lineages for the guiding instructions of each one of the five Maitreya texts. Nevertheless, from the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim (who is included in the above lineage), it is clear that the tradition of Su Gawé Dorje and Dsen Kawoché at least with regard to the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* was continued through the Kadampa School and then the Jonang School. Also, the fact that the works by Mönlam Tsültrim were written down by his students, such as Séu Chökyi Gyaltzen, and still exist today shows that a textual tradition based on Dsen's instructions survived.

In addition to this sūtra-based lineage, Tāranātha's *Necessary Sources of the Dharma Cycle of the Kālacakratāntra*<sup>571</sup> presents a tantric Shentong lineage as running from Kālacakrapāda the Elder, Śrībhadrā (Kālacakrapāda the Younger; both eleventh century), Bodhibhadra, Paṇḍita Somanātha, Dro Lotsāwa Sherab Tra<sup>572</sup> (both twelfth century), Lhajé Gompa,<sup>573</sup> Drotön Namdse,<sup>574</sup> Yumowa Mikyö Dorje, Dharmeśvara,<sup>575</sup> Namka Öser,<sup>576</sup> Machig Tulku Jobum,<sup>577</sup> Semochewa Namka Gyaltzen,<sup>578</sup> Jamyang Sarma Sherab Öser,<sup>579</sup> Künkyen Chöku Öser<sup>580</sup> (1214–1292), Künpangpa Tugjé Dsöndrū<sup>581</sup> (1243–1313), up through<sup>582</sup> Dölpopa. From there, this lineage continues as in the above sūtra Shentong lineage.

As mentioned above, one way in which these particular lineages came to the Kagyü and Nyingma schools is outlined in Jamgön Kongtrul's GISM. Previous connections between Kadampa and Jonang on the one hand and Nyingma and Kagyü on the other notwithstanding,<sup>583</sup> GISM says that, after Tāranātha, the Shentong lineage that reached Jamgön Kongtrul went through Gyaltsab Nartangpa Lodrö Namgyal (1618–1683), Ngawang Trinlé (1657–1723), Künsang Wangpo (born late sixteenth/early seventeenth century), Gahto Tsewang Norbu (1698–1755),<sup>584</sup> the Eighth Situpa (1699/1700–1774), the Thirteenth Karmapa (1733/1734–1797/1798), and the Ninth Situpa (1774–1853), who was Jamgön Kongtrul's main teacher. According to the colophon of GISM, Kongtrul also received Jonang instructions directly from Ngawang Chöpel Gyatso<sup>585</sup> (c. 1788–1865) in Dzamtang.<sup>586</sup> From Jamgön Kongtrul, all these teachings went to his many students in the

Nyingma, Kagyü, and Sakya schools. Today, the Shentong instructions of this lineage are primarily upheld in the Karma Kagyü tradition.

Of particular relevance for the Kagyü and Nyingma lineages is that vidyādhara Tsewang Norbu, from the Nyingma monastery of Gaḥto in east Tibet, was a teacher of the Thirteenth Karmapa, the Tenth Shamarpa, Chödrub Gyatso (1742–1792), and, most importantly, the Eighth Situpa.<sup>587</sup> He introduced the teachings on Shentong and the Kālacakratāntra that he had received from the Jonang yogin Künsang Wangpo to these leading Karma Kagyü masters. The Eighth Situpa's autobiography says that he had been interested in the Shentong teachings for many years but only obtained them from Tsewang Norbu, who taught them to him in great detail at the stūpa of Bauddhanāth in Kathmandu. Thereafter, Situpa says, Tsewang Norbu ordered him to uphold the profound view of Shentong, which would result in Situpa's longevity and the vast spread of his teachings. The Eighth Situpa also mentions several forms of Shentong and states that he follows the one by the Seventh Karmapa and Śākya Chogden, which differs from Dölpopa's. Thus, Tsewang Norbu and the Eighth Situpa were crucial in preparing the ground for the revival of the Shentong view outside of the Jonang tradition proper, which culminated in the widespread acceptance of this view within the *Rimé* movement in the next century. This movement was spearheaded by Nyingma, Kagyü, and Sakya masters such as Dza Patrul Rinpoche, Jamgön Kongtrul, Jamyang Kyentsé Wangpo<sup>588</sup> (1820–1892), and later Mipham Rinpoche.<sup>589</sup> Kyentsé Wangpo's rebirth, Jamyang Chökyi Lodrö<sup>590</sup> (1896–1958), is also said to have had great appreciation for the Shentong view.

On the situation of Shentong in the present-day Kagyü and Nyingma schools, Stearns (2010, 82–83) says correctly:

All the special teachings of the Jonang lineage and the vital transmission of the collected writings of Dölpopa and Tāranātha have been maintained by the Jonang tradition in Amdo. But even the reading transmission of any of Dölpopa's writings seems scarce among leading *shentong* adherents of the Kagyü and Nyingma traditions. When the *shentong* is taught by these teachers, the different works of Kongtrul and Mipam, which vary a great deal from the original teachings of Dölpopa, are usually the treatises of choice. What is now taught as the *shentong* view in the Kagyü and Nyingma traditions represents a synthesis that has developed over time, primarily in order to enable Dölpopa's most profound insights to be incorporated into the established



doctrines of the Great Seal and the Great Perfection. Thus the *shentong* view and Six-branch Yoga taught by the living masters of the Jonang tradition in Amdo, based on the oral transmission and literary legacy of the ancient masters of Jonang, is certainly closer to what was transmitted centuries ago by Dölpopa and Tāranātha.

Note, however, that Mipham Rinpoche wrote only two texts on Shentong,<sup>591</sup> and he also said that he himself does not follow the Shentong view.<sup>592</sup> Nevertheless, some in the Nyingma tradition, mainly following the position of Mipham's close student Shechen Gyaltsab Padma Namgyal<sup>593</sup> (1871–1926), claim that Mipham was a Shentongpa, and his two texts on Shentong are still widely used in both the Nyingma and Kagyü schools. Stearns (2010, 81–82) says furthermore that Dilgo Khyentsé Rinpoche<sup>594</sup> (1910–1991), Kalu Rinpoche<sup>595</sup> (1905–1989), and Dūjom Rinpoche<sup>596</sup> (1904–1987) all accepted the Shentong view and that most present-day Kagyü and Nyingma teachers follow the lineages of explanations and practices passed down by these three masters. However, with regard to the Nyingma masters Dilgo Khyentsé Rinpoche and Dūjom Rinpoche, the Nyingma scholar Dorji Wangchuk (2005, 176–77) states:

I am not aware of any textual evidence that would suggest that these teachers were proponents of the *g'zan stong* doctrine, at least not in Dol-po-pa's sense. Both . . . speak about the oneness of appearance and emptiness or the compatibility of the Middle and Last Cycles of the Buddha's teachings.<sup>597</sup>

Generally, despite some claims to the contrary, it seems safe to say that the Shentong view is not a widely held position in the Nyingma School and is not usually considered such a big issue there. The exceptions seem to be Lochen Dharmaśrī<sup>598</sup> (1654–1717), Tsewang Norbu, Gedsé Paṇḍita Gyurmé Tsewang Chogdrub<sup>599</sup> (1761–1829), and of course Jamgön Kongtrul. However, as mentioned above, the Nyingma view always seeks primarily to be in line with Dzogchen as this tradition's hallmark. In that regard, Mipham Rinpoche and others stated repeatedly that the Dzogchen view accords with \*Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka.

The Shentong view was and continues to be more important in the Kagyü schools, but this seems to be primarily the case since Jamgön Kongtrul appeared to be such a strong advocate of this view. Though it is true that many contemporary Kagyü masters follow a kind of Shentong, as

mentioned above, this “Kagyü Shentong” differs in several ways from the Jonang Shentong. Despite Jamgön Kongtrul’s presentation’s being followed widely at present, when it comes to an indigenous Kagyü Shentong that is not mixed with Dölpopa’s and Tāranātha’s view, the works by the Third, Seventh, and Eighth Karmapas, the Eighth Situpa, and the first and second Karma Trinlépas are more authoritative.<sup>600</sup> As for the above statement by Cyrus Stearns about the late Kalu Rinpoche (the then head of the Shangpa Kagyü lineage,<sup>601</sup> who was considered as the activity emanation of Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé), it is true that he embraced the Shentong view and also had a certain influence on Karma Kagyü masters in that regard. However, the most influential contemporary Shentong proponents in the Karma Kagyü School are no doubt its two senior-most masters, Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche and Khenchen Tsültrim Gyatso Rinpoche (born 1934).

### *Indian Forerunners of Shentong, Early Tibetan Shentongpas, and Their Connection to the Uttaratantra*

As mentioned above, there are two models of the relationship between the three natures—(1) the classical Yogācāra model of the perfect nature’s being the dependent nature empty of the imaginary nature and (2) the Shentong model of the perfect nature’s being empty of both the imaginary and the dependent natures. The latter model is found in the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*, the *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusārīṇī*, and some texts by Ratnākaraśānti, which in addition all equate the perfect nature with the tathāgata heart (thus in effect saying that the tathāgata heart is empty of what is other—the adventitious stains of both the imaginary and dependent natures). Some of these texts add that it is precisely the manner of the perfect nature’s being empty of the other two natures that is the reason for the perfect nature’s being referred to as being the true emptiness (in the sense of a truly existent remainder that is empty of something else), which corresponds well to RGVV’s explanation of what true emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart. Both RGVV and these texts say that this true emptiness avoids the extremes of superimposition and denial. Naturally, RGVV and some of these texts share the above-mentioned quote from the *Cūlasuññatasutta*.<sup>602</sup> The Shentong model (2) is also implied in Sajjana’s SM and explicitly stated in a synopsis of Dsen Kawoché’s view based on his own writings by the Jonang master Kunga Drölcho (1507–1565/66). Thus, all these works can be said to be Indian and early Tibetan forerunners of crucial elements of what later became known as the Shentong view. Furthermore, without presenting model (2), Jñānaśrīmitra’s *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* and several of the texts by Mönlam

Tsültrim (especially IM, RW, and HML) exhibit clear connections between the *Uttarantra* and Shentong.<sup>603</sup>

To begin with Sajjana's SM, two of its verses and their glosses contain interesting passages in terms of a Shentong stance with regard to the tathāgata heart. Verse 9, which comments on *Uttarantra* I.27–28, says:

[Beings are endowed with] the heart of a tathāgata,  
 Because the disposition for the [tathāgata] exists [in them].  
 The suchness of the dhātu is devoid  
 Of what is afflicted—the dependent (*paratantra*).<sup>604</sup>

Thus, the tathāgata heart (suchness, the dharmadhātu) is explicitly said to be empty of the dependent nature (that is, mere conditioned appearances). Since it is empty even of the dependent nature, there is no question of its also being empty of the imaginary nature (the seeming duality of apprehender and apprehended within mere conditioned appearances). This is very close to the above-mentioned position of the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*, the *Āmnāyānusāriṇī*, the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābṛhaṭṭikā*, and Dsen Kawoché (see below) that the perfect nature is empty of both the imaginary and dependent natures. In addition, an interlinear gloss (in the same hand) between lines b and c of this verse in SM refers to the tathāgata heart as “the seed that represents the disposition of the victors [being covered by] the two kinds of obscurations” (afflictive and cognitive obscurations). Thus, both these obscurations are included in the dependent nature.

Verse 28 of SM comments on *Uttarantra* I.156–67 as being the justification for dispelling, through reasoning (*yukti*), refutation (*uddhāra*), and accomplishment (*prasādhana*)<sup>605</sup> the wrong view that the teachings on the tathāgata heart are not authoritative. In terms of reasoning and refutation, an interlinear gloss on this verse 28 refers to the objection in *Uttarantra* I.156 that everything without exception is to be understood as being empty because of being conditioned. In response, the tathāgata heart—luminous mind—is said to be unconditioned. Unlike ordinary minds and mental factors, which are usually described as being contingent on four conditions (object condition, dominant condition, immediate condition, and causal condition), the sole factor for the arising of luminous mind is a previous instance of that very luminous mind. Accordingly, by virtue of its being unconditioned, luminous mind is not empty, at least not in the same way as conditioned phenomena, which do not exist on their own, but are only adventitious stains that are just as unreal as clouds, dreams, and illusions.

Thus, the tathāgata heart does not arise from anything nor is it produced by anything. Rather, it is merely revealed by realizing that the stains are illusory and never really existed in the first place:

“Since it is known that [the statement] ‘Everything is empty, because it is conditioned, just as clouds and so on’ is taught everywhere without difference [such as in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras*], the teaching of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* that the nature of the mind is the ultimate is contradictory.” This is the meaning of the objection to [this teaching’s] being authoritative.

In this regard, what is conditioned is [indeed] necessarily empty, but luminous mind is not conditioned. For, by virtue of the close connection of the arising of a following [moment of this basic] awareness’s being contingent on nothing but the occurring of a preceding [moment of this awareness] that is of the same kind, there is no activity through conditions in that [luminous mind].

The examples of clouds, dreams, and illusions are for the sake of pointing out [the nature of] the subject of the probandum—the afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth—because emptiness is the probandum with regard to the afflictiveness of afflictions and so on.<sup>606</sup> For, if [the examples] were just examples [and did not exactly match the nature of this threefold afflictedness], it would follow that the [syllogism] is meaningless, because [afflictiveness] would not happen in an erroneous manner. [Thus,] the examples [refer to] the afflictions’ not being established independently. [Consequently,] it is not [really] the case that “the tathāgata heart is the nonarising of the afflictions.”<sup>607</sup> [This was only taught] to avoid contradictions between the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and other *sūtras* [such as the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras*].

It is also noteworthy that the interlinear notes on verses 19 and 28 of SM say twice that the dharmadhātu—luminous mind—is not empty, and not just in the sense of not being empty of its inseparable qualities but obviously not being empty of its own nature. For, unlike all other phenomena, it is not conditioned but is inexhaustible, unbound, and unceasing because it has the intrinsic nature of nonconceptuality.

The Jonang master Kunga Drölcho’s collection of 108 essential teachings from different lineages appears in volume 18 of the *Treasury of Instructions* (*gdams ngag mdzod*) by Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé. In the history section of his collection, Kunga Drölcho provides some context for Dsen Kawoché’s view

and for the following excerpts from the latter's teachings, which Kunga Drölcho compiled as *Guiding Instructions on the View of Other-Emptiness*:

As for the *Guiding Instructions on the View of Other-Emptiness*, Dsen Kawoché said, "The Kashmiri paṇḍita Sajjana made the following very essential statement: 'The victor turned the wheel of dharma three times—the first wheel [teaches] the four realities [of the noble ones], the second one [teaches] the lack of characteristics, and the final one makes excellent distinctions. Among these, the first two do not distinguish between what is actual and what is nominal. The last one was spoken at the point of certainty about the ultimate by distinguishing between the middle and extremes and by distinguishing between phenomena and the nature of phenomena. As for retaining the mere original texts of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and the *Uttarantra*, if these two texts disappeared, it would simply indicate that Maitreya has passed away into bliss.'"

That this appears [in] an old notebook of Dsen Kawoché himself, which bears the name *Lotus Hook*, shows that one should reject the later claim that the conventional term *shentong* was completely unknown in India and [only] appeared later in Tibet with the Omniscient Dölpu[pa]. Also, please examine closely the statement in one of the Omniscient Butön's replies to questions that it seems that a previously existent philosophical system of Danagpa Rinchen Yeshé<sup>608</sup> was later maintained by Dölpu[pa] by enhancing it greatly.<sup>609</sup>

Obviously, with regard to the three dharmacakras, Sajjana is said here to follow the hermeneutical principle of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, with the first two cycles of the Buddha's teachings' being of expedient meaning, while the last one is of definitive meaning. Interestingly, Kunga Drölcho goes so far as to take this as an indication that not only the teachings that were eventually referred to as Shentong, but even the term itself, were known in India.

It is noteworthy in this context that the record of received teachings of the Sakya master Shuchen Tsültrim Rinchen (1697–1774), who was one of the editors of the Derge *Tengyur* and was definitely not a proponent of Shentong, also reports that according to Dsen Kawoché's notebook, the transmission of Shentong already existed in India:

According to the clear [statement] in the notebook of Dsen Kawoché, [which speaks about] the manner of even the mere texts of the two *Vibhāgas* and the *Uttaratantra* (which follow the intended meaning of the last [dharma]cakra, distinguish [the middle from] extremes, and distinguish phenomena and the nature of phenomena) being difficult to obtain, the Shentong lineage that is known to have existed in India too . . .<sup>610</sup>

As for Kunga Drölcho's saying above that Butön referred to Dölpopa, Butön's preserved communications with other scholars do contain a letter to someone whom he addresses as "Lama Rinchen Yeshé." As the letter shows, Butön obviously had great respect for Rinchen Yeshé as a nonsectarian and accomplished scholar. Though what Kunga Drölcho reports Butön to have said about the connection between Rinchen Yeshé and Dölpopa is not found in this letter, what Butön says in it about Rinchen Yeshé's view is very much in line with Dölpopa's view:

In a separate letter [from Rinchen Yeshé], he declares the following . . . it is explained in the final [cycle of] the words of the Buddha that it is superior to the middle [cycle]. Therefore, what is stated in the final [cycle] is better. . . . Since the [*Mahāyāna*]sūtrālamkāra, the *Uttaratantra*, and so on, are commentaries on the intention of the final [cycle of] the words of the Buddha, what is stated in them is better. Though there are certainly many who assert these [texts] to be Mere Mentalism, their meaning transcends all four philosophical systems.<sup>611</sup>

In addition, Tāranātha's *History of the Kālacakratāntra* reports that Dölpopa indeed received teachings (including the five works of Maitreya) from Danagpa Rinchen Yeshé (thirteenth/fourteenth century) in 1313 while staying at Danag Monastery for about three months.<sup>612</sup> There is no doubt that this Rinchen Yeshé is the author of RYC. In its comments on *Uttaratantra* I.156–67, RYC indeed says that the tathāgata heart is void of delusive, deceiving, and conditioned phenomena in all aspects.<sup>613</sup> It also states that what the teachings in the middle wheel of dharma about all phenomena's lacking real existence have in mind are seeming conditioned phenomena, whereas the statements in the final wheel about the sugata heart's being real and changeless have the ultimate unconditioned dharmadhātu in mind. Ultimately, since the stains do not exist as the nature of the mind and are adventitious, the qualities of the tathāgata heart exist by nature.

Through hearing about it, one develops the *prajñā* of realizing the stains to be adventitious and the wisdom of realizing the naturally existent qualities.<sup>614</sup> Also, RYC defines “adventitious” as what is primordially nonexistent or what does not taint the nature of the mind.<sup>615</sup> Obviously, passages like these can be taken as being in accord with Dölpopa’s later strong-voiced version of Shentong (though RYC does not use the term *shentong* or Dölpopa’s specific terminologies). Still, as SM, CMW, and the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim clearly show, Rinchen Yeshé was definitely not the first one to make such statements. In addition, there are also a number of differences between Rinchen Yeshé and Dölpopa, such as the former’s asserting (like Ngog Lotsāwa and others) that all sentient beings are pervaded by the *dharma-kāya* (or the three *kāyas*) as being suitable to be attained as the manifest *kāyas* and have the disposition of the manifest three *kāyas*’ being suitable to be attained.

The *Guiding Instructions on the View of Other-Emptiness* that Kunga Drölcho (in his own words) “compiled from the instruction manual of Dsen Kawoché” (apparently the above-mentioned and now lost *Lotus Hook*) is a brief text that offers a glimpse into the earliest available Tibetan source for the Shentong view. Though the characteristic term *shentong* is not used, the text’s subject matter can be easily identified in later Shentong works, such as those by Dölpopa:

As for the guiding instructions on the view of other-emptiness, after [having taken] refuge [and generated bodhi]citta as the preliminaries, [understand that] the clinging to what is mistaken as being real is the imaginary. The clinging to false imagination itself as being the entities of apprehender and apprehended is like [mistaking] a mottled rope for a snake. As many [phenomena] as there are from form up through omniscience, there are also that many [corresponding] imaginary [natures that consist] of [said phenomena’s] being apprehended as such and such [phenomena].

What appear as various dependent [phenomena] in dependence on causes and conditions are nothing but false imagination, [just as] a mottled rope is the basis that is mistaken for a snake. [Likewise, all phenomena] from form up through omniscience, which represent conceptions, [arise in dependence on] karma and afflictions.

The self-arisen nature of phenomena that pervades the dependent from the very beginning, just as space exists in a mottled rope in an all-pervasive manner, is the unmistaken perfect [nature], the

unchanging perfect [nature], the two rūpakāyas, the [dharma] concordant with awakening, the reality of the path, and [everything] from dharmatā-form up through [dharmatā-]omniscience. On the conventional level, these are empty of the imaginary characteristic.

Though [the three natures] are presented as the threefold lack of nature, if analyzed, the bearer of the nature of phenomena is the dependent [nature], because, apart from the mind, apprehender and apprehended do not exist. The nature of phenomena is the perfect [nature] alone—the sole, stainless, and spontaneously present nature of phenomena.

Therefore, the imaginary is the emptiness of a nature of its own, just as the horns of a rabbit. The dependent is like an illusion, because it is empty of the imaginary. The perfect [nature] is like space, because it is empty of both the imaginary and the dependent. Though the conventions of the imaginary and the dependent exist seemingly, they do not exist ultimately. The perfect [nature]—the nature of phenomena—exists ultimately, but it is neither one in nature with nor different from the seeming bearers of the nature of phenomena. This is the Great Madhyamaka free from all extremes.<sup>616</sup>

Among the two models of the relationship between the three natures, Dsen Kawoché initially seems to describe model (1), but then he clearly spells out the Shentong model (2). The latter accords with the above explanations in the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*, the *Āmnāyānusāriṇī*, the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābṛhaṭṭikā*, and SM, as well as with the descriptions of the relationship between the three natures by Dölpopa and other Shentongpas. Also, in relating the three natures to the example of mistaking a rope for a snake, in line with many Shentong texts, Dsen Kawoché goes a step further than what the classical Yogācāra texts say in terms of the perfect nature. Though he agrees in comparing the imaginary nature to the snake and the dependent nature, to the rope, he describes the perfect nature as being like the space that exists in the rope in an all-pervasive manner.<sup>617</sup>

Furthermore, Dsen Kawoché describes the perfect nature not only as consisting of the classical twofold Yogācāra division into the unchanging and the unmistaken perfect natures, but also including the realizations on the path and the fruition of omniscient buddhahood (thus echoing, for example, *Mahāyānaśāstra* II.26, which describes the perfect nature as the four pure dharmas).<sup>618</sup> He also includes the fruitions of the sambhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya as well as “dharmatā-phenomena” (as



described in detail in the “Maitreya Chapter,”<sup>619</sup> the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābṛhaṭṭikā*, the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*, and the *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusāriṇī*). Likewise in agreement with these texts, Dsen Kawoché states that both the imaginary and the dependent natures exist only seemingly, while the perfect nature exists ultimately. Still, the perfect nature as the nature of phenomena is neither the same as nor different from the dependent nature as the bearer of this nature. In conclusion, just as Dölpopa and others later, Dsen Kawoché refers to all of this as “the Great Madhyamaka free from all extremes” and not as Yogācāra, Vijñāptivāda, or Mere Mentalism.

In fact, many Shentongpas present the difference between the two models of the relationship between the three natures as one of the key distinctions between Shentong and what Tibetans call Mere Mentalism, which follows model (1). Besides Dsen Kawoché’s above explanation, among the texts on the *Uttaratantra* in this volume, the Eighth Karmapa’s *Lamp*<sup>620</sup> and CMW<sup>621</sup> explicitly contain model (2) and Sajjana’s SM (verse 9) does so implicitly. In addition, it is a typical Shentong explanation to equate the adventitious stains of the tathāgata heart with both the imaginary and the dependent natures, which is found explicitly in the *Lamp*<sup>622</sup> and implicitly in Dsen’s explanation, IM,<sup>623</sup> and GISM.<sup>624</sup>

In this vein, BA mentions the existence of an anonymous Tibetan commentary on the *Uttaratantra* that was referred to as “a ṭīkā on the *Uttaratantra* in the tradition of Dsen” and supplemented its explanations on the text with pith instructions on meditation practice, as well as several short texts, such as RW, that contained pith instructions of the Dsen tradition.<sup>625</sup> As the above fragments of Dsen’s approach presented by Kunga Drölcho show, Dsen not only used model (2) of the relationship between the three natures but also obviously connected this model of the three natures to the contents of the *Uttaratantra*. All of this represents further close connections between the teachings of the *Uttaratantra* and Shentong.

As for Dsen Kawoché’s position on the tathāgata heart itself, we have only a few reports by later scholars. Śākya Chogden says:

The one who is known as Dsen Kawoché from Yarlung says that the definitive meaning obtained from having studied the Maitreya dharmas when he was sixty years old is that the tathāgata heart is the naturally pure wisdom—natural luminosity—that pervades [everyone] from buddhas to sentient beings.<sup>626</sup>

Obviously, this is close to what the above-mentioned interlinear note on verse 28 of SM says about the tathāgata heart and also accords with the Shentong view. As mentioned before, according to BA,<sup>627</sup> those who follow Dsen Kawoché's tradition hold that the tathāgata heart is the powerful vital cause of buddhahood since it is the naturally luminous nature of the mind. TOK agrees, saying that, according to the Eighth Situpa, the texts in Dsen Kawoché's lineage accepted a really established self-aware self-luminous cognition empty of the duality of apprehender and apprehended to be the powerful vital cause of buddhahood.<sup>628</sup>

In addition, Gö Lotsāwa's GC states that, according to the followers of Dsen, the difficult situations of sickness and so on can be made into the path through pith instructions (as stated above, Dsen originally requested teachings on the *Uttaratantra* from Sajjana as his instructions to be practiced at the time of death).<sup>629</sup>

It seems clear from GC and elsewhere<sup>630</sup> that Gö Lotsāwa did not agree with Dölpopa's particular kind of Shentong. However, Gö Lotsāwa's BA still remarks positively that there are people who claim that Dölpopa is wrong in asserting the tathāgata heart to be really existent and permanent, but it appears that it is due to his kindness that there are many in Tibet who take the *Uttaratantra* as their *yidam* (that is, they take this text as the most important basis for their practice).<sup>631</sup>

Although none of Gö Lotsāwa's preserved texts use the term *shentong*, some of GC's explanations can definitely be read as being in accordance with a Shentong approach. The clearest example is GC's introductory explanation of the fourth vajra point,<sup>632</sup> which distinguishes two kinds of emptiness—the one that is a nonimplicative negation and the one that is basic awareness, with the latter one's representing the supreme Madhyamaka. The emptiness explained in the second dharma wheel is the nonimplicative negation of being empty of any nature, which is to be realized through inferential valid cognition. It is also described as not having arisen from any causes or conditions. In the last dharma wheel, this kind of emptiness refers only to the outer cocoon of adventitious stains, while the emptiness that represents the tathāgata heart is as follows. The tathāgata heart's own essence is not a nonimplicative negation but the element of basic awareness. It is not a direct object of inferential valid cognition but is the object of direct perception. Just like space, the basic element does not depend on any changes through contact with other phenomena. Also, the object of negation of which something is empty is a bit different here than in the second dharma wheel. The tathāgata heart exists from sentient beings up through

buddhas as the nature of the mind by way of not being impaired or being fabricated by any other conditions, while it is said to be empty of all fabricated adventitious phenomena (this is the closest GC comes to saying that the tathāgata heart is “empty of something other”). Still, these adventitious phenomena are not something that is apart from the nature of the mind. This is similar to space’s being described as empty because it does not turn into clouds, mountains, and so on, while at the same time, it is not tenable for clouds and so on to abide anywhere else than in space. Moreover, since the outer world and the bodies of sentient beings are brought about by ignorance, they too are fabricated and thus also represent objects of negation of which the tathāgata heart is empty. Still, buddhas do not see this element of basic awareness as having any characteristic whatsoever. Maitrīpa, the lord of the *Uttaratantra*, and his successors assert that the emptiness taught in the *Madhyamakāvātāra* represents middling Madhyamaka, while the emptiness that is basic awareness is the system of supreme Madhyamaka.

In conclusion, it is obvious from a straightforward reading of the general contents of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV that these texts lend themselves greatly and easily to a Shentong interpretation—the main theme’s being that the tathāgata heart is empty of what is other than it but is not empty of its own nature. This is particularly clear in the contents of *Uttaratantra* I.155, RGVV’s corresponding quotes from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, and RGVV’s passage “Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent.”

Nevertheless, it seems important to point out that (in line with *Uttaratantra* I.156–60 and JKC’s introduction above) the teachings on the tathāgata heart in the *Uttaratantra* and related texts (as in the Shentong tradition) are not a total rejection of the teachings on emptiness or Madhyamaka (in the sense of Rangtong), but they have a different thrust—how to approach the direct experience of mind’s empty yet luminous nature in practice. Thus, one could say that the teachings on buddha nature speak about what happens *after* having used Madhyamaka reasoning and *not instead* of using such reasoning. Though both Dölpopa and many later Shentongpas actually said that Shentong includes, and is based on, Rangtong as a form of analytical rigor but supersedes this level of discourse, a significant number of later Shentongpas argued for the supremacy of Shentong even on the level of philosophical analysis (which is vehemently denied by their opponents). However, all disputes about Rangtong and Shentong are rather pointless as long as these notions are regarded as belonging to the same

level of discourse, experience, and realization, and to be mutually exclusive on that same level. Instead, any fruitful conversation about Rangtong and Shentong can start only from acknowledging that they pertain to different levels. As Ruegg (2000, 80–81) says:

One could assume an incompatibility, at one and the same level of reference, between two philosophical propositions, both of which cannot be true in accordance with the principle of contradiction. Alternatively, one might perhaps suppose a complementarity—perhaps even an incommensurability—between two doctrines that relate to different levels of reference or discourse, and which are accordingly not mutually exclusive or contradictory.

That is why, following Śākya Chogden, many (also contemporary) so-called “nonexclusive” Shentongpas say that Rangtong is supreme for cutting through all wrong views, reifications, and reference points, while Shentong is more amenable to, and beneficial for, describing and enhancing meditative experience and realization. They teach that the views of Rangtong and Shentong are not only not contradictory but—when understood properly—supplement each other and are one in terms of the definitive meaning.

## *The Uttaratantra and Mahāmudrā*

As stated before, texts such as CMW, those by Mönlam Tsültrim, GC, the Eighth Karmapa's *Lamp*, and GISM all establish connections between the *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā. Such connections are also found in a number of Indian and Tibetan Mahāmudrā works. Usually, these connections are made in the wider context of the Mahāmudrā approaches that came to be called "sūtra Mahāmudrā" or "essence Mahāmudrā" (the Mahāmudrā approach that is beyond "sūtra Mahāmudrā" and "tantra Mahāmudrā"). In order to provide some background against which the *Uttaratantra*-based Mahāmudrā instructions in the above texts can be appreciated more fully, I will next present an overview of the key elements of the different approaches to Mahāmudrā, their origins, their scriptural sources, and the different ways in which they are taught.

### *Sūtra Mahāmudrā, Tantra Mahāmudrā, and Essence Mahāmudrā*

TOK's explanation of the stages of the path of Mahāmudrā, which relies in significant parts on Gö Lotsāwa's BA and GC, is the most systematic presentation of the three approaches to Mahāmudrā that are traceable since the time of Maitrīpa and came to be called "sūtra Mahāmudrā," "tantra Mahāmudrā," and "essence Mahāmudrā" from the time of Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé (1813–1899) onward.<sup>633</sup> Therefore, TOK's discussion is presented here first as an overview of these three approaches. TOK begins by dividing Mahāmudrā into its two main approaches of sūtra and tantra:

Since this widely renowned "Incomparable Tagpo Kagyü" is not merely a lineage of words, it is called "the ultimate lineage of true reality."<sup>634</sup> The meaning of this is that it is an unbroken lineage of the realization of stainless Mahāmudrā. Therefore, this practice lineage has not deteriorated right up to the present [in that it is alive] in the root guru from whom one obtains the realization of Mahāmudrā. Thus, Mahāmudrā—the instruction that is greatly renowned in this precious lineage—is known as two [systems]. In the one that accords with the sūtra system,

one rests in meditative equipoise through being instructed that the subject does not mentally engage in the object—luminosity free from reference points. The mantra system is the Connate Union<sup>635</sup> Mahāmudrā of bliss and emptiness in unison, which is made special through the wisdom that arises from empowerment<sup>636</sup> and through striking the vital points in the vajra body.<sup>637</sup>

Then TOK explains the origins of sūtra Mahāmudrā, the crucial roles of Maitrīpa and Gampopa in its development, and its being squarely based on the *Uttaratantra*:

In the teachings of Tagpo Rinpoche,<sup>638</sup> it is said:

The text for this Mahāmudrā of ours is the *Mahāyānottaratantra-sāstra* composed by the Bhagavān Maitreya.

After the mighty lord Maitrīpa had obtained the instructions of the great Brahman [Saraha] and his successors, he composed pith instructions on prajñāpāramitā that accord with mantra, such as the *Tattva-daśaka*. Having heard them, lord Marpa said:

The heart of the matter of the ultimate yāna,  
Mental nonengagement free from extremes,  
Shall be pointed out as the dharma that is Mahāmudrā.

...

This is the scriptural system asserted by lord Maitrīpa.

Also Milarepa said:

Right now in the gap between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa,  
The basic nature being pointed out is Mahāmudrā.  
Please determine the view that is the ground.

The meaning of [all] these [statements] is as follows. The manner of the view and meditation of this [sūtra Mahāmudrā is stated in the *Uttaratantra*]:

There is nothing to be removed in this  
And not the slightest to be added.

Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.<sup>639</sup>

The *Uttarantra* continues:

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.<sup>640</sup>

Therefore, in this luminous nature of the mind, there are no stains to be removed because its nature is primordially without stains. Nor are there the slightest previously nonexistent qualities to be produced and added because its essence consists of intrinsic qualities since the beginning. As for the reasons for this, the basic element is empty of the fabricated and adventitious stains that have the characteristic of being suitable to be separated from the [tathāgata] heart. The basic element is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes—the buddha qualities (such as the ten powers)—whose nature is unfabricated and that have the characteristic of being inseparable [from it].

For example, this is as in the case when a [white] conch appears to be yellow due to a bile disease; the conch is empty of being yellow but is not empty of being white. Therefore, both the wish to remove stains and the wish to add qualities are obscurations due to thoughts of hope and fear. Hence, having relinquished these [wishes], through personally experienced *prajñā*, one should view and familiarize with just this actual true reality—the present ordinary mind (appearance and emptiness inseparable, free from being real or delusive)—as being precisely that, without contriving it or tampering with it through adopting and rejecting. “Viewing” refers to knowing and viewing through *prajñā*. “Familiarizing” refers to resting right within that [true reality] in a one-pointed manner without being distracted. This way of being is [also] stated and clarified by venerable Rangjung [Dorje]:

All is neither real nor delusive—  
Held to be like [a reflection of] the moon in water by the  
learned.  
Just this ordinary mind  
Is called “dharmadhātu” and “heart of the victors.”<sup>641</sup>

Therefore, glorious Kachö [Wangpo]<sup>642</sup> says:

This sheer lucid awareness that appears at the present time  
 Is the own essence of phenomena—seeming reality.  
 If you understand it as the uncontrived essential point just as  
     it is,  
 Ultimate reality is also nothing but this.

The two realities of those dealing with the conventions of texts  
 Abound with scriptures and reasonings, but they do not  
     understand the essential point.  
 Through taking the two to be different, they deviate from  
     nonduality.

Thus, seeming reality consists of the adventitious stains, which resemble [the appearance of] yellow based on a [white] conch. Ultimate reality is the tathāgata heart, which resembles the white of that conch. [However,] these are only mere appearances from the perspective of mistakenness (the subject), whereas there is no yellow or white to be removed or added in terms of the conch [itself] (the object). Therefore, the pith instruction [here] is to rest naturally settled in an uncontrived manner.

In brief, what are called “saṃsāra” and “nirvāṇa” are [only] presented from the perspective of mere seeming appearances, while the nature of both of them, which is free from reference points and is luminous, is called “sugata heart.” Hence, in terms of the definitive meaning, mere appearances and their nature cannot be distinguished individually, just like a fire and its heat. For this reason, also the Mother says:

Form is empty. Emptiness is form. . . .

Venerable Rangjung [Dorje] states:

The basic nature free from reference points, Mahāmudrā,  
 Is empty of all characteristics of the reference points of  
     thoughts.  
 This pure nature, lucid and yet without grasping,  
 Is also called “the tathāgata heart.”<sup>643</sup>



Next, TOK defends the approach of sūtra Mahāmudrā against the common claim of Mahāmudrā's not being found in the sūtras, while any genuine form of Mahāmudrā must be based on tantric empowerments. TOK rejects this critique, which was first leveled by Sakya Paṇḍita, through referring to two Indian sources that speak about Mahāmudrā in relation to the approach of the sūtras. In addition, the text refers to two of Atiśa's works and other Kadampa teachings as being major sources of sūtra Mahāmudrā besides the tradition of Maitrīpa and the *Uttaratantra* mentioned above.

About this, the dharma lord Sakya Paṇḍita asserted that the conventional term "Mahāmudrā" is absent in the prajñāpāramitā system and that the wisdom of Mahāmudrā arises solely from empowerments.<sup>644</sup> Following that, [some] great ones uttered a lot of meaningless chatter, but in the *Tattvāvatāra* composed by master Jñānakīrti, it says:

Another name of Mother Prajñāpāramitā is Mahāmudrā because it is the very nature of nondual wisdom.<sup>645</sup>

Thus, he not only explains that the prajñāpāramitā taught in the sūtras and the Mahāmudrā of mantra are synonyms, but he also explains these conventional terms:

As for those of highest capacities among the persons who exert themselves in the pāramitās, when they perform the meditations of calm abiding and superior insight, even at the stage of ordinary beings, this grants them the true realization characterized by having its origin in Mahāmudrā. Thus, this is the sign of irreversible [realization] . . .<sup>646</sup>

Sahajavajra also explains this in a similar way, which will be found below. That Tagpo Rinpoche gave rise to the realization of Mahāmudrā even in beginners who had not obtained empowerment is [precisely] this system of pāramitā [Mahāmudrā]. It consists primarily of instructions that come from the Kadampas. The *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors of Connate Union Mahāmudrā*, composed by lord [Atiśa] and this present tradition accord in all respects, and even the progression of the four yogas [of Mahāmudrā] is clearly taught in that [text].<sup>647</sup> Thus, it is said that [Gampopa] guided the majority in his assembly [of students] through the stages of the path that come from the Kadam

[tradition], while he guided the extraordinary [students] through the path of means that comes from guru Milarepa. Among these [two approaches, sūtra Mahāmudrā] represents the meaning of the former [approach]. With this in mind, lord Mikyö Dorje says:

Those in whom the fully qualified exemplifying and actual wisdoms have not been revealed through the three higher empowerments do not possess the fully qualified siddhi of Mahāmudrā of the teaching lineage of great Nāropa as transmitted from great Vajradhara. Nowadays, from the perspective of those who are to be guided in this degenerate age and are fond of very high yānas, venerable Gampopa and the protector Pamo Trupa applied the name “Connate Union Mahāmudrā” to the system of guidance through calm abiding and superior insight that is in common with the causal yāna of the pāramitās—the pith instructions of the *Bodhipathapradīpa* transmitted by the protector Atiśa.<sup>648</sup>

Nevertheless, in the approach to practice of most heart sons of Tagpo [Rinpoche], the instructions on Mahāmudrā are taught in such a way that they are preceded by conferring an empowerment. Thus, they hold [Mahāmudrā] to be the approach that is common to sūtra and mantra.<sup>649</sup>

TOK also divides Mahāmudrā into the three approaches of sūtra Mahāmudrā, tantra Mahāmudrā, and essence Mahāmudrā. Here, sūtra Mahāmudrā is explained in terms of ground, path, and fruition, which entail its view, meditation, and conduct.

The essence of the first is prajñāpāramitā, its name is  
Mahāmudrā,  
And its aspects are in accord with mantra.

The first of these three traditions is the sūtra tradition or this [tradition] that later came to be held as the Mahāmudrā of blending the realizations of sūtra and mantra. It corresponds to what the *Tattva-daśakaṭikā* composed by master Sahajavajra clearly explains as the wisdom that realizes suchness and has the three features of its essence’s being pāramitā, being in accordance with mantra, and its name being “Mahāmudrā.”<sup>650</sup>

1. Teaching ground Mahāmudrā, the basic nature that is the fundamental ground of [all] entities

This has three parts:

1. The actual way of being
2. The way of being mistaken
3. Pointing out the own essence of the way it is

1.1. The actual way of being

The ground is the basic nature without bias, free from extremes of reference points,

Never mistaken or liberated, and all-pervasive like space.

The ground, the basic nature that is the fundamental ground of [all] entities, is not established as the essence of either saṃsāra or nirvāṇa, does not exhibit any bias in any direction whatsoever, and is free from all extremes of reference points (such as existence, nonexistence, permanence, and extinction). Therefore, it is beyond being an object of speech, thought, and expression and is primordially never bound through mistakenness or liberated through being realized. Due to the essential point of its not being established as any specifically characterized phenomenon whatsoever, it pervades all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa like space. This basic nature is taught in the sūtras and tantras through many synonyms, such as Mahāmudrā, prajñāpāramitā, sugata heart, primordial buddha, and causal tantra. This nonduality of profundity and lucidity<sup>651</sup>—ultimate reality, the pure basis of purification, and the very essence of the mind—that has been explained already and will be explained [further] represents the basic nature of [all] that is to be known.

1.2. The way of being mistaken

The way of being mistaken is to appear but be without reality—

Through the creative display of this naturally pure luminosity, the vajra of mind, not being aware of its own essence, the [afflicted] mind stirs from the ālaya. Through the power of that, basic awareness is taken as a self and its own appearances as objects, that is, as subject and object's being different. Under the sway of these dualistic appearances, all kinds of karmas and latent tendencies are accumulated and

thus [beings] wander in saṃsāra without end in the form of an endless loop of mistakenness. As for the way of being mistaken, since seeming reality—the adventitious stains that are to be purified—is not present within the fundamental ground, it appears but is not established as being real. Therefore, one is able to become liberated through the remedy of [basic awareness] recognizing its own face.

### 1.3. Pointing out the own essence of the way it is

This mere appearance itself,  
In its triad of arising, abiding, and ceasing, is the great play of  
the three kāyas.

All of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa arises from the play of the mind. Through the power of this very [play] naturally abiding as the union of lucidity and emptiness, this mere appearance itself is the great play of the three kāyas free from the triad of arising, abiding, and ceasing. Its unborn fundamental ground is the dharmakāya, its unceasing radiance is the sambhogakāya, and its creative display arising as anything whatsoever is the nirmāṇakāya. Through recognizing the own essence of the way it is—that these three are all spontaneously present primordially as being inseparable in essence—all phenomena are free from affirming, negating, adopting, and rejecting in that they [simply] are the wheel of the natural state, suchness, the infinite expanse. This is the recognition of the own essence of the view of Mahāmudrā—the basic nature that is the ground.

## 2. *Teaching path Mahāmudrā, the manner of progressing through the paths and bhūmis through self-arisen calm abiding and superior insight*

This has three parts:

1. Teaching the samādhi of making this a living experience
2. Cutting off the treacherous paths of straying<sup>652</sup> and deviations
3. Describing the manner in which the stages of the four yogas arise

### 2.1. Teaching the samādhi of making this a living experience

At the time of the path, connate mind as such is the  
dharmakāya

And connate appearances are the light of the dharmakāya.<sup>653</sup>

This is the natural state without being distracted, without  
meditating, and without fabrication.

To engage in the actuality that was determined through the view in yoga at the time of the path is called “meditation Mahāmudrā.” This is presented by the great system founders of this tradition as follows. (1) What makes the meditation that has not arisen arise is the training in the four<sup>654</sup> preliminaries. (2) What makes [the meditation] that has arisen into the path is the threefold pointing-out instruction. (3) [Finally, there is] the manner of enhancing this and giving rise to qualities.

(1) One trains in the stages of the path common to Kadampa and Mahāmudrā—the four [reflections] that turn the mind away [from saṃsāra]—as well as [taking] refuge, [giving rise to] bodhicitta, accumulation [of merit], purification [of obscurations], and guru yoga until the signs [of accomplishment] come forth.<sup>655</sup> In that way, one should make the mind turn into the dharma and the dharma into the path.<sup>656</sup>

(2) *The Tantra of Inconceivable Connateness*<sup>657</sup> [says]:

Connate mind as such is the dharmakāya.

[Connate thoughts are the display of the dharmakāya.]<sup>658</sup>

Connate appearances are the light of the dharmakāya.

The inseparability of appearances and mind is the connate.

There arose limitless vajra discourses of the mighty lords of accomplishment commenting on the meaning of this [quote]. Accordingly, it is held that [all Mahāmudrā pointing-out instructions] are subsumed under pointing-out the threefold connate. Among these, (a) natural connate mind as such is the dharmakāya. The pointing-out of this has two parts—*calm abiding and superior insight*. *Calm abiding has two parts: with support and without support*. *Superior insight has three parts: revealing the essence, identifying it, and pointing it out*. Through this, the path dispels delusion. (b) As for connate thoughts, mind’s very own display, through the triad of [working with] stillness and movement, back-to-back thoughts, and cutting through self-clinging at its root, the hosts of thoughts blend into the dharmakāya. (c) As for pointing out that mind’s own radiance—connate appearances—is the dharmakāya’s own light, one thoroughly examines the self-appearances of the uncontrived mind and the mistaken appearances of the clinging mind and realizes them to be the play of the native state that is the nature of phenomena. Through that, one makes delusion dawn as wisdom.<sup>659</sup>

(3) Revulsion is the foot of meditation. Devotion is the head of meditation. Mindfulness is the actual meditation. Without being separated

from these three, the stages that arise from [skill in] means give rise to qualities during the enhancement [of one's practice].

If the samādhi that is the meditative equipoise of this approach is summarized briefly, it is embodied by the following three: resting freshly without being distracted, resting loosely without meditating, and resting in the self-lucid natural state without fabrication. Through these ways of resting, all the discursiveness of thoughts of the three times is self-liberated and is at peace in the nature of phenomena. This is the meaning of the three doors to liberation.

## 2.2. Cutting off the treacherous paths of strayings and deviations

One is liberated from the four cases of deviation and the three cases of straying.

When one meditates in this way, one is liberated from [the following]. To cling to all phenomena as being empty is to deviate [from emptiness as] the fundamental ground. When one has gained a little bit of understanding and experience of emptiness, to be satisfied with just that much and thus discontinue accumulation and purification is to deviate from emptiness [by mistaking it] as the path. To take emptiness as the path and then hope for a result at a later time is to deviate [from emptiness by mistaking it as] a remedy, without understanding that [all] factors to be relinquished and their remedies are inseparable. [One can also] deviate [from emptiness] in the form of sealing appearances with emptiness in a mentally fabricated manner.<sup>660</sup> These are the four cases of deviation in relation to superior insight.

If one clings to the three [experiences] of bliss, clarity, and nonthought, they become cases of straying [from the path] and circling in the corresponding ones among the three realms of saṃsāra.<sup>661</sup> These are the three cases of straying in relation to calm abiding.

## 2.3. Describing the manner in which the stages of the four yogas arise

Beyond the four joys and the three conditions, one makes the connection

Through three ways of arising and traverses the stages of the four yogas.

Since the four joys represent [only] the example wisdoms,<sup>662</sup> what lies beyond them is the actual wisdom.<sup>663</sup> Since the three conditions of bliss, clarity, and nonthought are [merely] experiences, what lies beyond them is realization's own true face. Furthermore, [Mahāmudrā meditation] is beyond being the objects of the three [kinds of] prajñā—the objects understood through study, the experiences through reflection, and the experiential appearances through meditation. Through arriving at the essential point of meditation's being untouched by any mental states of the three great ones,<sup>664</sup> one makes the connection through three ways of arising (gradual arising, in leaps, and all at once) and thus will effortlessly traverse the inner paths and bhūmis through the four stages of yoga (one-pointedness, freedom from reference points, one taste, and nonmeditation), each of which is divided into lesser, medium, and great, thus making twelve.

As for these four stages of yoga, in *The Tantra of [the Great River of] the Inconceivable Secret of Āli Kāli*,<sup>665</sup> we find:

Through the samādhi of the lion's sport,<sup>666</sup>  
 Unmoving, one-pointed, and clear cognition becomes lucid,  
 And self-aware wisdom is awakened from within.  
 Stable, poised readiness relinquishes the suffering of the lower  
 realms.

Second, through the illusion-like samādhi,<sup>667</sup>  
 In the great meditative equipoise free from reference points,  
 The inconceivable dawns as the display of samādhi.  
 Having attained heat represents power over birth.

Third, through the samādhi of heroic stride,<sup>668</sup>  
 The realization of the one taste of the many on the ten bhūmis  
 arises,  
 And the children of the buddhas of the three times promote the  
 welfare of others.  
 Having attained the peak, increase is uninterrupted.

Fourth, through the vajra-like samādhi,<sup>669</sup>  
 Due to effort in the practice of nonmeditation,  
 [All-]knowing wisdom sees the buddha realms.

This is the state of the spontaneously present great supreme dharma without seeking.<sup>670</sup>

With the same intention, [the four yogas] are also taught in detail in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*,<sup>671</sup> and their meaning, which was clearly explained by the great masters Padmasambhava, [Ratnākara]śānti, Nāropa, and others, was elaborated greatly by the protector Daō Shōnnu. . . . If the meaning of the various ways of explaining [the four yogas through] these and other presentations is summarized, it corresponds to what the Omniscient Chennga Chökyi Trappa<sup>672</sup> says:

As for the four yogas in this context, according to the tradition of guidance in the Mahāmudrā of the mantra system, they are explained as the very wisdom of Mahāmudrā that represents the essence of the four joys of descending from above and stabilizing from below. In terms of the tradition of guidance that is common to sūtra and mantra, they represent the ways in which the experiences of Mahāmudrā that are in accordance with these four joys arise.

...

### 3. Fruition Mahāmudrā, the manner of stainless ultimate buddhahood's becoming manifest

Understanding the view and making it a living experience through meditation,

Realization reaches its culmination and the fruition is attained now.

The view of the basic nature that is the ground is that both appearances and mind abide intrinsically as the three kāyas. Through cutting through doubts about the actuality of this [view] and pointing it out, one understands this actuality without error. Through the meditation of naturally settling the mind without contrivance right within this basic nature, one makes this actuality a living experience. This is enhanced through the conduct of the automatic and unceasing arising of the union of emptiness and compassion, through which the realization of the very nature of the basic nature's manifesting reaches



its culmination. This is the fruition—buddha is found within the mind. Through meeting the own face of the three kāyas, dharmakāya Mahāmudrā is no [longer] an aspiration for a later time but is attained right now.

As for these stages of the path [of Mahāmudrā], in accordance with Tagpo Rinpoche's dream visions and Milarepa's prophecies, [Tagpo Rinpoche] said, "I can benefit many beings through this Kadampa dharma too" and "Even the slightest benefit I have accomplished for sentient beings now represents [nothing but] the kindness of the Kadampa gurus." Also, he [once] dreamt that, through him beating a drum, many deer [came to] listen and he distributed milk to them.<sup>673</sup> All this and more represents the meaning of this approach of guidance. For the meaning of these [statements and dreams] is that, due to having reached the time when the degenerations are rampant,<sup>674</sup> those who have the extraordinary good fortune [of being suitable for] the vajrayāna have become very few. However, by virtue of [initially] guiding those to be guided who have duller faculties and are of lesser fortune through the stages of the path of the three [types of] individuals,<sup>675</sup> they finally evolve into [disciples] of supreme fortune and thus become extraordinary vessels for the mantra [approach]. That is, they attain liberation in a single lifetime or, even if not, many of them will see the actuality of Mahāmudrā through this method and thus will be established on the irreversible path. This is the intention behind [all] of this.<sup>676</sup>

Therefore, beginning with venerable [Gampopa] himself up through the present, there has been the practice system of guiding everyone to be guided, be they of greater or lesser fortune, without discrimination through this approach of guidance. In addition to this, the fortunate are taught the profound path of means of the mantra [system], and at that time these [instructions here] are given the names "instructions at the time of the cause" or "basic guidance." On this point, the great venerable one from Jonang<sup>677</sup> says:

Nowadays what is known as the Mahāmudrā that is the basic nature

Is a progression of meditation in the sūtra system of the final wheel.

By virtue of the progression of faculties, it [also] conforms with mantra

And therefore becomes like a lamp for beings.

It corresponds to the three appearances of the followers of the Path with the Result and so on.<sup>678</sup>

As for tantra Mahāmudrā (“the Mahāmudrā of great bliss”), TOK says that it comes from the Yogāntara<sup>679</sup> class of tantra, being based on the path of means, such as the highest empowerment, self-blessing, and the stages of mudrā.<sup>680</sup> Thus, tantra Mahāmudrā is realized through practicing methods such as the Six Dharmas of Nāropa. In particular, the ultimate view and realization in the *Uttaratantra*, the vajrayāna, and Madhyamaka are said to be necessarily the same:

The meaning [of these instruction] is summarized in [the phrase] “Seize luminosity within appearances.” When the thoughts of clinging to appearances as being [real] entities have become pure through one’s being skilled in this method, all appearances become empty forms. However, the empty forms such as smoke<sup>681</sup> . . . are merely signs and indications on the path of means that makes one realize this very basic nature that was not realized [before]. The actual ultimate object to be realized is definitely that just these ordinary present appearances are empty forms in every respect. Therefore, both [the teaching] in the *Uttaratantra* that there is nothing to be removed from, and nothing to be added to, the tathāgata heart and the teaching on the manner of familiarizing with the Mahāmudrā of the inseparability of appearance and emptiness in the mantra [system] must be the same as the basic nature of the view that is Madhyamaka. The eighth lord [Mikyö Dorje] and his successors hold that the Madhyamaka view is nothing but this:

To say “existence” is the clinging to<sup>682</sup> permanence.  
 To say “nonexistence” is the view of extinction.  
 Therefore, the learned should not dwell  
 In either existence or nonexistence.<sup>683</sup>

And

Neither existent, nor nonexistent, [nor] neither existent nor  
 nonexistent,  
 Nor having the character of both—  
 Being liberated from the four extremes  
 Is what is realized by Mādhyamikas.<sup>684</sup>

As for essence Mahāmudrā, TOK explains that the path of realizing the profound essence with sudden force is more profound than both sūtra and tantra Mahāmudrā.<sup>685</sup> Merely through the descending of the blessings of the vajra wisdom empowerment conferred by gurus with realization upon fortunate students of the very sharpest faculties, ordinary mind is awakened in the middle of their hearts and thus realization and liberation become simultaneous. Therefore, since this path does not depend on elaborate means and efforts in training, it is nothing but the direct appearance of the liberating life examples of the siddhas of the Kagyü lineage's reaching infinitely great levels of realization in an immediate manner.<sup>686</sup>

As already mentioned, at the time of Tagpo Dashi Namgyal<sup>687</sup> (1512–1587), in practice, Mahāmudrā in the Kagyü tradition is often explained and practiced as a blend of sūtra, tantra, and essence Mahāmudrā. Among the major Karma Kagyü Mahāmudrā works, Tagpo Dashi Namgyal's *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā* is considered to be a sūtra Mahāmudrā text; the works on the Six Dharmas of Nāropa and the *Hevajratantra*, tantra Mahāmudrā texts; and the Ninth Karmapa's *Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, an essence Mahāmudrā text.

### *The Sūtra Sources of Mahāmudrā*

To provide scriptural support for the approach of sūtra Mahāmudrā, the Kagyü tradition lists a number of sūtras and nontantric Indian treatises (for the latter, see below). Within the Tibetan tradition, Gampopa is unanimously considered to be a reincarnation of Candraprabhakumāra,<sup>688</sup> the bodhisattva who was the main interlocutor of the Buddha in the *Samādhirājasūtra* and who stepped forward as the only volunteer to preserve and propagate its teachings in the age of degeneration (that is, our present times). The Buddha promised to help him do that and is said to have been reborn eventually as Gampopa's student Pamo Trupa.<sup>689</sup> Thus, the Kagyü School regards the *Samādhirājasūtra* as one of the main foundations of Gampopa's Mahāmudrā approach (this approach is sometimes also referred to as the hidden or secret path of the sūtras since the actual method of Mahāmudrā meditation is hidden in the sūtra teachings). In addition, the *Samādhirājasūtra* is the main sūtra source quoted and referred to in one of the key Indian texts of Kagyü Mahāmudrā, the *Tattvadaśakaṭīkā* by Sahajavajra, one of the four main students of Maitrīpa.

According to BA, the famous Kadampa master Potowa Rinchen Sal<sup>690</sup> (1027–1105), one of the main students of Dromtönpa Gyalwé Jungné<sup>691</sup>

(1005–1064), agreed on the connection between the *Samādhirājasūtra* and Mahāmudrā, saying:

There is something that is called Mahāmudrā at present, which is the meaning of the *Samādhirājasūtra*. We should neither put it down nor engage in it."<sup>692</sup>

However, this statement in all likelihood did not refer to Gampopa because the latter only began teaching at Gampo in 1121, having stayed in meditation retreat before then. It may have referred to Maitrīpa's Mahāmudrā and the dohā tradition spread by his student Vajrapāṇi during the 1070s in Tibet.

Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, the present tutor of the seventeenth Karmapa, says that the *Samādhirājasūtra* is related to Mahāmudrā through its actual intent rather than through its literal meaning,<sup>693</sup> and that

when the great master Gampopa . . . expounded the Mahamudra system he only used this sūtra. We can find clear statements to this effect in his life story, as well as in many of his songs and teachings. . . . Accordingly, from the time of Gampopa . . . until today, there has been an unbroken lineage of advice on the method of teaching Mahamudra based on this sūtra. . . . When the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, established the Nalanda Institute at Rumtek Monastery, he personally selected the treatises to be included in the standard curriculum. . . . His Holiness included the *King of Samadhi Sūtra* in this curriculum as the supportive scripture for Mahamudra.<sup>694</sup>

In his *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā*,<sup>695</sup> Tagpo Dashi Namgyal additionally provides certain passages in the following sūtras as sources of Mahāmudrā—the *Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*, *Maitreyaprasthānasūtra*, *Gaganagañjapariṣcchāsūtra*, *Ratnadārikāpariṣcchāsūtra*, *Bhadrakalpikasūtra*, and *Varmavyūhanirdeśāsūtra*. *An Exposition of Mahāmudrā: The Treasure Vault of the Victors*,<sup>696</sup> by Padma Karpo, also quotes the *Ratnadārikāpariṣcchāsūtra*, *Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*, *Samādhirājasūtra*, and *Maitreyaprasthānasūtra*. In addition, the *Atyantajñānasūtra*<sup>697</sup> and the *Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* are also sometimes mentioned as sūtra sources of Mahāmudrā.

### *Maitrīpa's Mahāmudrā of "Mental Nonengagement"*

It is well known that Maitrīpa was a highly accomplished scholar in both the sūtra and the tantra traditions, as well as a tantric practitioner, before he left the monastic and academic environment and met his primary guru Śavaripa at the age of fifty-three. From him, he received what TOK calls "essence Mahāmudrā,"<sup>698</sup> and later Śavaripa told him to go back to academia and "teach the ācāryas how things really are." Due to his vast training in the sūtrayāna, the vajrayāna, and essence Mahāmudrā, Maitrīpa was able to develop his unique approach of blending the sūtra teachings of the mahāyāna with tantric elements and the pith instructions of the mahāsiddhas. In this way, the teachings of essence Mahāmudrā, which had hitherto been passed on within the wandering community of lay siddhas outside of monastic and academic institutions, found entrance into mainstream Indian Buddhism and thus became accessible to many more people. Naturally, this did not happen without some controversies. However, by combining his advanced spiritual realization of Mahāmudrā with his prior scholarly training in sophisticated terminology and instructions, Maitrīpa was able to spread Mahāmudrā in his former world of the Buddhist monastic and scholarly establishment. It happened there that Maitrīpa was victorious over the tīrthika Natikara in debate, who thus became one of his four main disciples, henceforth known as Sahajavajra. Later, Maitrīpa stayed in solitary retreat in the charnel ground Mount Blazing like Fire, where he, according to Pawo Tsugla Trengwa, composed his "cycle of twenty-five works on mental nonengagement (*amanasikāra*)."<sup>699</sup>

Maitrīpa's pāramitā-based teachings on Mahāmudrā are designed to enable even beginners to practice with direct insights into the luminous nature of the mind, that is, outside the requirements of the classic tantric path, such as having to receive empowerments and practicing the various levels of the generation and completion stages.<sup>700</sup> Maitrīpa's system teaches a swift path to awakening with the help of pith instructions and blessings of the guru, which is accessible even for ordinary people. Although Maitrīpa's own texts in his "cycle on mental nonengagement" freely employ several tantric terms and notions in not specifically tantric contexts, the term "Mahāmudrā" itself is only rarely found. Far more frequent are expressions familiar from the dohā tradition, such as "true reality" (*tattva*), "union" (*yuganaddha*), "connateness" (*sahaja*), "nondual" (*advaya*), "great bliss" (*mahāsukha*), "natural luminosity" (*prabhāsvara/prakāśa*), and, of course, Maitrīpa's key term "mental nonengagement." Among the five

works<sup>701</sup> in his cycle of works on mental nonengagement in which the word “Mahāmudrā” appears, the *Caturmudrānīścaya* provides the most detailed explanation of the term and the clearest link to both the sūtras and the notion of “mental nonengagement.” The text glosses Mahāmudrā as follows:

ĀḤ “Mahāmudrā”—Mahāmudrā is what is both great and mudrā. Mahāmudrā is the lack of nature and freedom from obscurations, such as cognitive [obscurations]. (In its stainlessness,) it resembles the sunlit autumn sky at noon. It serves as the basis for all perfect excellence, is the single nature (beyond the extremes) of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the embodiment of nonreferential compassion, and the single nature of great bliss. Accordingly, [the sūtras] say:

The dharmas of mental nonengagement are virtuous. The dharmas of mental engagement are nonvirtuous.<sup>702</sup>

[The *Sarvabuddhaviśayavatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* states]:

I pay homage to you who are without imaginary thoughts,  
whose mind does not abide [on anything],  
Who are without mindfulness, mentally nonengaged, and without focal object.<sup>703</sup>

This is understood as “Mahāmudrā.” Through that Mahāmudrā, whose nature is inconceivable, the fruition called “samayamudrā” is born.<sup>704</sup>

The commentary by Bhitakarma, one of Maitrīpa’s students, explains that Mahāmudrā is the fruition of the other three mudrās.<sup>705</sup> “ĀḤ” refers to being without arising throughout the triad of cause, path, and fruition. Arising due to dependent origination and being without arising are not different. “Mudrā” has the meaning of not going beyond—one cannot go beyond it by way of example, existence, or being something. It is like space. “Great” means that it is superior to the three other mudrās—karmamudrā, jñānamudrā, and समयamudrā.<sup>706</sup> The reasons to present Mahāmudrā as the fruition are as follows. What is called “the very essence of the lack of nature, devoid of superimposition and denial” should be known as Mahāmudrā. The lack of nature means being free from stains—all kinds of momentary aspects including the clinging to them, karmic maturations including examination and analysis, and apprehender and apprehended.

For example, from all kinds of different firewood, a single flame arises and does not remain once the wood is consumed. Likewise, Mahāmudrā is the single flame that arises from the variety of phenomena—they are realized to be without arising—but thereafter they are not even apprehended as the mere lack of arising. In fact, they are not apprehended as anything whatsoever. Realizing that is buddhahood, which depends on just that realization. Since one speaks of “perfect buddhahood in a single instant,” it is reasonable to be free from any engagement in negating and affirming. How is this Mahāmudrā? It is the lack of hope since it is the very “freedom from obscurations”—both cognitive and afflictive. There is no hope for a remedy—wishing that the six pāramitās (such as generosity) relinquish their respective opposites (such as avarice). There is also no hope for true reality—thinking that some fruition is attained through training well in the generation and completion stages. Nor is there any hope for a fruition—thinking that the fruition of buddhahood is attained from somewhere outside. This is because all afflictions are mastered by it, the suchness of all phenomena cannot be cultivated, and great bliss exists intrinsically. “The sunlit autumn sky at noon” that is not disturbed by clouds, rainbows, mist, fog, or storms is without arising, lacks a nature of its own, includes past, present, and future times, is primordially unchanging, and pervades all of saṃsāra. Likewise, Mahāmudrā lacks any arising by its nature and lacks any nature of existence, nonexistence, both, or neither. All times—being in saṃsāra, training on the path, and having revealed Mahāmudrā—are nothing but Mahāmudrā. Everything possible appears from it, but it never changes in the slightest, just as space remains unaltered by clouds and so on that appear in it or water remains unaffected by waves and silt.

Just as sesame oil pervades its seeds, Mahāmudrā pervades saṃsāra. However, saṃsāra is nothing but the appearance of Mahāmudrā; it is not such that there is a pervader and something pervaded. Mahāmudrā’s “serving as the basis for all perfect excellence” refers to the qualities of the dharmakāya (being free from superimposition and denial), sambhogakāya (experience), nirmāṇakāya (appearing in all kinds of ways), and svābhāvikakāya (the single nature of the natural state), all of which abide within one’s own experience.<sup>707</sup> This is fresh, natural, and relaxed. In other words, it is the source of all happiness in saṃsāra and the great bliss of nirvāṇa.<sup>708</sup> Mahāmudrā is pure, supreme, and inconceivable. Purity means that it “is the single nature of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa,” which is effortless, that is, primordial buddhahood. Supreme refers to the union of bliss and emptiness, free from the extremes of permanence and extinction. It is inconceivable

in that it lacks any kind of distraction. This experience of nonreferentiality is an unceasing flow like a river and thus cannot be divided into a duality of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. Mahāmudrā's being "the embodiment of nonreferential compassion" means that, through the power of such compassion and extraordinary aspiration prayers, true reality itself manifests as the two rūpakāyas. Still, true reality and those two kāyas are not different but have "the single nature of great bliss," which is free from superimposition and denial and is the kāya of mental nonengagement.

Bhitakarma also says that the great bliss of Mahāmudrā exists intrinsically in all sentient beings and that its realization means to see one's own nature by oneself, whereas those who delight in contaminated bliss due to being mistaken about this basic nature are fools.<sup>709</sup>

As for Maitrīpa's hallmark term "mental nonengagement," it is also discussed by Kamalaśīla in his *Bhāvanākramas* and his *Avikalpapraveśatikā* as being the final fruition of the practice of superior insight based on Madhyamaka reasoning. However, its Mahāmudrā meaning of not only being the process of letting go of dualistic conceptualization but also being a direct nonanalytical approach to realizing mind's natural luminosity is primarily known from the dohās of Saraha and also appears in some dohās by Tilopā and others.<sup>710</sup> Still, Maitrīpa is certainly the one who discusses this term in the greatest detail, due to which his entire approach later came to be identified with this term. Maitrīpa's *Amanasikārādhāra* justifies its use in the Buddhist teachings and clearly explains its meaning, combining a broad range of Indian scholarly approaches with the vajrayāna language of meditative experience, which is so typical of many of Maitrīpa's works.<sup>711</sup> First, he presents some grammatical considerations and then traces the term back to both the sūtras and tantras, providing the above quotes from the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* and the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, as well as a phrase from the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*:

Once bodhisattva mahāsattvas have relinquished all aspects of characteristics of conceptions through not mentally engaging [in them] . . .<sup>712</sup>

Though the term "mental nonengagement" is not found in the tantras, Maitrīpa quotes two verses from the *Hevajratantra*:

Neither . . . mind nor mental factors exist by virtue of a nature of their own.<sup>713</sup>



And:

Therefore, one meditates on the whole world [in this way],  
Wherefore one does not meditate with the mind (*manasā*).<sup>714</sup>

Maitrīpa concludes that this means that one meditates by way of mental nonengagement.

He also says that mental nonengagement is not a nonimplicative negation since it refers to negating all mental engagement that exists in terms of apprehender and apprehended and so on but does not negate mind as such. What that term teaches is the complete transcending of all conceptions. Nevertheless, to regard it as an implicative negation is without flaw—referring to an awareness that lacks any nature is the understanding of those Mādhyamikas who speak of illusion-like nonduality. When one calls that awareness illusion-like or not truly established, this is not a negation of existence altogether—it is not that it does not exist at all. Obviously, this presentation of a lucid yet nonreified awareness remaining after all dualistic mental activity has ceased corresponds well to the *Uttarantra*'s formula of the tathāgata heart's being empty of adventitious stains but not being empty of its intrinsic qualities, as well as to later formulations of *shentong* in the sense of an implicative negation.

Then, Maitrīpa gives two very special etymologies of *amanasikāra*. (1) He says that the (correct) mental engagement (*manasikāra*) in primarily the letter "A" is mental nonengagement (*a-manasikāra*). That kind of mental engagement means that everything is "A"—primordially unborn, since "A" is the seed syllable of identitylessness (this is supported by quotes from the tantras to that effect—*Hevajratantra* I.2.1. and II.4.22a, as well as *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* V.1c–2b). Hence, all such mental engagement refers to the lack of nature. (2) Alternatively, the meaning of *amanasikāra* is as follows. "A" stands for luminosity, and mental engagement (*manasikāra*) is a word for self-blessing. In this way, the state of *amanasikāra* means to bring forth the pure awareness that is the continuous flow of the nondual inseparable union of prajñā and compassion, which has the character of self-blessing with or within inconceivable luminosity.<sup>715</sup>

In other words, Maitrīpa's key notion of "mental nonengagement"—or "mental disengagement"—is just the subjective side of emptiness or what is called "freedom from reference points." The only way in which the mind can engage in the "object" that is the absence of discursiveness is precisely by not engaging in or fueling any reference points, but rather letting it

naturally settle of its own accord. In other words, it is only by a nonreferential mind that the absence of reference points can be realized, since that is the only cognitive mode that exactly corresponds to it. At the same time, when the mind rests in its own natural state, free from all discursiveness and reference points, this is not like a coma or being spaced out, but it is vivid and luminous intrinsic awareness.<sup>716</sup>

Note that Maitrīpa's two etymologies of "mental nonengagement" highlight the two crucial features of his Mahāmudrā approach that were explicitly spelled out by his student Sahajavajra and others later (see below). Maitrīpa's linking mental nonengagement with the syllable "A" is an indication that his Mahāmudrā corresponds to prajñāpāramitā. For in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras, the letter "A" stands for emptiness, or that "everything is primordially unborn."<sup>717</sup> To connect mental nonengagement with the three highest levels of the completion stage of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* ("self-blessing," "luminosity," and "union") is a clear sign that this Mahāmudrā also entails vajrayāna elements—not in terms of tantric rituals or techniques but in terms of inner experiences that represent the essence of the former and can be cultivated in Maitrīpa's sūtra-based approach with the help of the pith instructions of a guru.<sup>718</sup>

As Mathes (2008b, 20–21) points out, the translation of the *Amanasikārādhāra* in a collection of Drikung Kagyü works<sup>719</sup> is followed by an anonymous supplementary explanation of the meaning of "mental nonengagement." *Manasikāra* means mind as such appearing as all kinds of phenomena, while *a* refers to nonarising. Thus, *amanasikāra* refers to these two being of the same nature. Its synonyms are utter nonabiding, nonconceptuality, and inconceivability. Mental nonengagement does not refer to the lack of any object, the lack of any cognition, the stopping of discrimination, a weak experience, or analysis through discriminating prajñā. Therefore, it means realization through experiencing the heart of the matter.

Furthermore Maitrīpa's *Sekanirdeśa* 29 says that Mahāmudrā is complete nonabiding in anything and is also self-awareness:

Not to abide in anything  
Is known as "Mahāmudrā."  
Since it is stainless and since it is self-awareness,  
Manifold [appearances] and so on do not arise.

The *Sekanirdeśapañjikā* by Rāmapāla, one of the four principal students of Maitrīpa, comments that this verse teaches Mahāmudrā, which has

the nature of the mind that is single as the essence of connateness.<sup>720</sup> “In anything” refers to the dependently originating skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, and so on. “Not to abide” means mental nonengagement and lack of superimpositions. This is followed by the same two sūtra quotes on mental nonengagement as in Maitrīpa’s *Caturmudrāniścaya* above. One should not think that one is not able to make this a living experience because, due to the kindness of one’s guru, Mahāmudrā, which has the characteristic of being endowed with all supreme aspects, can definitely be perceived directly. Mahāmudrā does not have the nature of the four moments (of the four joys) “since it is stainless and since it is self-awareness.” Being stainless, the three stained moments of the manifold and so on do not occur in it. Therefore the three (impure) joys do not arise in it either.<sup>721</sup> Rāmapāla also says that nonabiding refers to the inconceivable wisdom that does not arise from analysis but is effortless, occurring of its own accord. Thus, it is clear for Rāmapāla here that the Mahāmudrā practice of complete nonabiding and mental nonengagement is not only mentioned in the sūtras but can be undertaken through the kindness of able gurus (that is, their pith instructions) without having to rely on the practice of the other three mudrās in a vajrayāna context of the path of means.

Another Mahāmudrā key term—“ordinary mind” (which is one of its synonyms and is found in a few dohās by Saraha and some others)<sup>722</sup>—appears very frequently in the *Dohanidhikoṣaparipūrṇagītināmanijattva-prakāśaṭīkā* attributed to Maitrīpa as well as once in Bhitakarma’s *Mudrā-caturaṭīkā*.<sup>723</sup> Thus, the term, which later became such a hallmark of Tibetan Kagyū Mahāmudrā, appears to have been used by some in India much earlier.<sup>724</sup>

As indicated in TOK above as well as in BA, GC, and other Tibetan sources discussed below, Sahajavajra’s *Tattvadaśakaṭīkā* is a very important source text for what came to be called “sūtra Mahāmudrā.” It is one of the few Indian treatises that explicitly and systematically links prajñāpāramitā with Mahāmudrā and certain vajrayāna approaches. The following are some of the text’s crucial passages in that regard (a number of which are also quoted or referred to in BA<sup>725</sup> and GC<sup>726</sup>). Sahajavajra begins by saying that the pith instructions of prajñāpāramitā as presented by Maitrīpa accord with the vajrayāna:

Since this master [Maitrīpa] gives a summarized explanation of the pith instructions of prajñāpāramitā that accord with the mantra system, through the very being of the nature of phenomena that bears the

name “*prajñāpāramitā*” . . . , he first pays his respect to the very nature of the three *kāyas*.<sup>727</sup>

In addition, these pith instructions, which represent the supreme form of *Madhyamaka*, are further adorned with the pith instructions of the guru:

The pith instructions of *prajñāpāramitā* are the definite realization of *Madhyamaka* that is adorned with the pith instructions of the guru. This is the ultimate emptiness, the spontaneously present *prajñā* endowed with all supreme aspects.<sup>728</sup>

As will be seen below, for *Sahajavajra*, this approach is thus a *sūtra*-based form of *Mahāmudrā* that includes some tantric elements, for example, the crucial role of the guru in giving direct pointing-out instructions of the nature of the mind as lucid yet empty self-awareness and the ensuing meditative approach of cultivating the direct perception of this awareness as it was pointed out, rather than following the analytical route of classical *Madhyamaka* that is based on inferential cognitions through reasoning.

*Sahajavajra* comments on *Tattvadaśaka* 5 as representing this supreme *Madhyamaka* approach of *Maitrīpa* in the sense of *sūtra Mahāmudrā*, which is not only based on emptiness in accordance with *Nāgārjuna* but entails the direct realization of this emptiness as naturally luminous self-awareness:

Thus, phenomena are of one taste,  
 Unhindered, and nonabiding.  
 Through the meditative concentration of reality as it is,  
 They are all luminosity.

In due order, “of one taste” means to be single-flavored as suchness. . . . “Unhindered” refers to the nature [of phenomena’s] being without superimpositions. “Nonabiding” means being unborn, since [phenomena] do not at all abide in the nature of [either] existence or nonexistence. “Luminosity,” due to being naturally free from stains, refers to self-awareness, since [that self-awareness] is very luminous. You may wonder, “How do you see phenomena as true reality, which has the essential character of suchness?” Therefore, [*Maitrīpa*] says, “through the meditative concentration of reality as it is.” The path that

is endowed with the union of calm abiding and superior insight is the meditative concentration of reality as it is.<sup>729</sup>

When connected with this explanation, *Tattvadaśaka* 2 (which says that, without the words of the guru, even Madhyamaka is only middling) implies that supreme Madhyamaka in the sense of sūtra-based Mahāmudrā must include the pointing-out instructions that enable one to have direct experiences of emptiness as luminous self-awareness through the path of uniting calm abiding and superior insight in a nontantric context, that is, without having to rely on empowerments or the techniques of the vajrayāna. Such pith instructions are explicitly referred to as “(skillful) means” (*upāya*) by Sahajavajra, while the regular Madhyamaka approach through reasoning alone is middling since it entails only *prajñā* but not skillful means.<sup>730</sup>

As *Tattvadaśaka* 7cd makes clear, this principle of experiencing everything as luminous-empty awareness also applies to all levels of insight or attainment on the path, be they actual or imaginary. Here, Sahajavajra explicitly refers to both this approach and the true reality it reveals as Mahāmudrā:

Even the vain presumptuousness about being free from duality,  
In like manner, is luminosity.

. . . [This is elucidated] through the following words [in Maitrīpa’s *Sekanirdeśa*]:

By not abiding on the side of the remedy  
And not being attached to true reality either,  
There is no wish for a result of anything whatsoever.  
Therefore, it is known as Mahāmudrā.<sup>731</sup>

Here, “Mahāmudrā” refers to the pith instructions on the true reality of Mahāmudrā, that is, thoroughly knowing the true reality of entities. . . . “Being free from duality” means being without duality. “Vain presumptuousness about” [being free from duality] refers to the conceptions that analyze true reality. Even that is [nothing but] “luminosity,” since it lacks a nature and is naturally pure. Likewise, also the presumptuousness in terms of something to be accomplished and the means of accomplishment is to be realized as the nature of luminosity.<sup>732</sup>

Sahajavajra also clearly distinguishes this sūtra-based approach adorned with pith instructions from the vajrayāna and the regular pāramitāyāna. He declares that this approach is inferior to the former but superior to the latter:

You may wonder, “But then, what difference is there compared to yogins holding the approach of secret mantra?” There are great differences in terms of the aspects of what is accomplished and the means of accomplishment since the [yogins who use this approach here] have no connection with the four mudrās and since, due to lacking the taste of the great bliss of the pride of [being] the deity, it takes them a long time to complete perfect awakening through [just] the [mental] aspect of equanimity [described]. On the other hand, they differ from yogins holding the approach of the pāramitās because they are very much superior by virtue of realizing the suchness of union—emptiness as investigated through the pith instructions of a genuine guru. Therefore, those who do not engage in austerities with regard to this very [suchness but] thoroughly understand the true reality of [everything’s] being of a single taste as emptiness are like [skillful] village people catching a snake. Though they play with that snake, they are not bitten by it. Some express this as “the wisdom of true reality, Mahāmudrā.” As it is said:

To unite means and prajñā—  
 This meditation is the supreme yoga.  
 To unify with Mahāmudrā  
 Is meditation, the victor explained.<sup>733</sup>

In addition to quoting numerous authoritative Indian mahāyāna masters (mainly Nāgārjuna; though not only his classic Madhyamaka works but also his praises),<sup>734</sup> Sahajavajra also cites several sūtras, particularly essential passages from the *Samādhirājasūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, in an effort to link Maitrīpa’s Mahāmudrā teachings with the sūtras as the words of the Buddha himself. In brief, through all of the features described here, Sahajavajra’s commentary provides clear evidence against the claim held by some that the sūtra-based approach of Mahāmudrā is just an invention of the Kagyüpas in Tibet.<sup>735</sup>

### Connections between Maitrīpa's Mahāmudrā and the Uttarantra

As mentioned before, Maitrīpa is credited with rediscovering the then-lost *Uttarantra* and *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*. However, apart from that, it is not clear how important his role in the transmission of the *Uttarantra* and the other texts of Maitreya was. It is remarkable that Maitrīpa, as the reported retriever of the *Uttarantra*, hardly ever quotes it in his own works, and there seems to be no significant discussion of the text either by him or in the available works of his students (except for Vajrapāṇi's comments on what corresponds to *Uttarantra* I.154 in his *Guruparamparakramopadeśa* right below). Also, what corresponds to *Uttarantra* I.154 in Maitrīpa's texts and those of his major students, discussed below, is never explicitly identified in these texts as coming from the *Uttarantra*, and the available Sanskrit editions of Maitrīpa's works as well as the Tibetan renderings of this verse in all of these texts suggest rather that it is *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.21 that is quoted.<sup>736</sup> Still, at least Maitrīpa and Vajrapāṇi appear to explain this quote more in line with the context of *Uttarantra* I.154.

As the contents of IM may indicate, Maitrīpa's teachings on the *Uttarantra* might have been transmitted only orally at first, but it is clear that there exist no known works on the *Uttarantra* by Maitrīpa, and the text is quoted only twice in the works in his "cycle of mental nonengagement"—in the *Pañcatathāgatamudrāvivarāṇa* (II.61b) and in the *Caturmudrānīścaya* (I.154). Unfortunately, neither of these texts explains those quotes in any detail.<sup>737</sup>

What corresponds to *Uttarantra* I.154 also appears in the *Dohakoṣapañjikā*, ascribed to Maitrīpa, in the context of explaining *Dohakośa* 20d "The nature of connateness is neither existent nor nonexistent." The *Dohakoṣapañjikā* says that "existent" here refers to any entities that are perceived by the sense consciousnesses or imagined by the mental consciousness.<sup>738</sup> Connateness is not existent in that way because it is the true nature of this multitude of appearing entities, and one is not liberated through just conceiving this multitude as it appears. Since connateness thus is something to be personally experienced, it is not nonexistent either. This is as taught in what corresponds to *Uttarantra* I.154. Following this quote, the *Dohakoṣapañjikā* continues that it is due to seeking bliss that humans are born from the union of their parents. However, they do not realize what this bliss is because it is to be personally experienced, which is again the reason why this bliss is not nonexistent. For it is inexpressible by virtue of one's being fully absorbed in it. This is the entity called "the bliss in the presence

of death.” Thus, in effect, the *Dohakoṣapañjikā* declares that one will be liberated only if one directly realizes the nature of connateness, which is equated with connate ultimate bliss, to be neither existent nor nonexistent. By implication, it is thus this connate bliss from which nothing is to be removed and to which nothing is to be added—it simply needs to be personally experienced in a nonconceptual and nondual manner as it really is.

The noteworthy exception to the *Uttaratantra*'s not being discussed in a significant manner in the texts of Maitrīpa's students appears to be Vajrapāṇi's *Guruparamparakramopadeśa*. This text introduces its comments on verses 1–3 of Maitrīpa's *Tattvaratnāvalī*, which discuss the notion of “complete nonabiding,” by quoting what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154. Vajrapāṇi's comments in a classical prajñāpāramitā or Madhyamaka fashion in the context of his explanation of the philosophical systems of the pāramitāyāna here suggest either that what he had in mind may rather have been the almost identical *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 or that he simply interprets *Uttaratantra* I.154 in two different ways in the two contexts of ordinary Madhyamaka and Mahāmudrā.<sup>739</sup> As will be clear from Vajrapāṇi's two explanations below, in effect, he relates Mahāmudrā to both prajñāpāramitā (since we saw above that “nonabiding” is understood as Mahāmudrā by Maitrīpa and Rāmapāla) and the *Uttaratantra*.

Based on this quote, Vajrapāṇi's Madhyamaka section in his *Guruparamparakramopadeśa*<sup>740</sup> states that one should not abide in any superimpositions of existence or any denials by claiming nonexistence and then continues to comment on this as follows:

Since the experience of mind as such as all kinds [of appearance] originates in dependence, it is unarisen. It is the lack of arising that appears as if arising—arising and the lack of arising are not different. Likewise, if appearances are examined through reasoning, they are empty. Empty refers to not being established, and appearances are what cannot withstand examination through reasoning. . . . For example, a mirage's appearing as water is empty of water—it is the very nonexistence of water that appears as water. The appearance as water and the nonexistence of water are not different. Likewise, appearance lacks a nature of its own, and the lack of nature is appearance. An appearance and its emptiness in terms of lacking a nature of its own are not different.

For example, if many [logs of] firewood are burned by a fire, they [all] are the same in having the nature of fire. Eventually, the firewood will be exhausted, and the fire itself will not remain [either]. Likewise,



after what appears as manifold [appearances] has been referred to as emptiness through reasoning, [appearances] are neither established as having the nature of entities, nor does emptiness itself remain either. Likewise, when what does not abide as duality is not established as duality, the lack of duality is not established either. Therefore, it is in order to put an end to the clinging of others, to cut through superimposition and denial, or as an expedient meaning that [appearances] are called “empty,” “lacking arising,” and “nondual.” But these [attributions] do not abide as the definitive meaning or as what is assessed by the learned.

. . . Being without clinging, without anything to be negated, and without anything to be affirmed, meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment are nondual and nonabiding. . . . Mental nonengagement without superimposition and denial and without clinging is meditation. Through the prajñāpāramitā that is without superimposition and denial and without clinging, the [other] five pāramitās . . . are pure of the three spheres. By virtue of that, the welfare of sentient beings is promoted—this is the view. . . . By virtue of all phenomena’s having the nature of not arising as any nature of their own, they do not abide as either existent or nonexistent. Therefore, not to abide in any superimpositions and denials in terms of existence and nonexistence is the knowledge of true reality. Illusion-like and completely nonabiding compassion is nonreferential compassion . . . because it mentally engages in all phenomena as not being observable as anything whatsoever.

Thus, according to Vajrapāṇi, all appearances are not only nothing other than emptiness, but emptiness is not something that can be reified or that remains after everything has been seen to be empty either. Therefore, ultimately, appearances as well as emptiness do not even abide as emptiness. Consequently, the knowledge of true reality must be the one that is free from superimposing and denying anything in terms of existence and nonexistence. This indeed corresponds to RGVV’s comments on *Uttarantra* I.154–55 saying that “these two verses elucidate the unmistakable defining characteristic of emptiness [in the case of the tathāgata heart] since it [thus] is free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.”

When Vajrapāṇi later explains Mahāmudrā,<sup>71</sup> he again uses the terms found in what corresponds to *Uttarantra* I.154 and also repeats some similar ways of explanation. However, in this context of Mahāmudrā, he relates all this much more to the subject side of true reality—the nonconceptual and nondual wisdom of Mahāmudrā as the experience of the union

of mind's luminosity and emptiness—as opposed to the object side that is mere emptiness. Thus, the presentation becomes more experiential and also more in tune with the meaning of *Uttaratantra* I.154 in its own context. Speaking of instantaneous perfect awakening, Vajrapāṇi says that, when not realized, it is saṃsāra and when it is realized, the same is Mahāmudrā, in which there is nothing to be negated or affirmed. Due to realizing it or not realizing it, it is expressed as nirvāṇa and saṃsāra, respectively, but ultimately there is no difference. For example, for as long as one does not realize that something is a rope, it may appear as a snake, but once one realizes it for what it is, it is clear that the nature of its appearing as a snake is nothing but the rope. There is no snake to be removed, nor is there any rope to be added. Likewise, if one does not realize Mahāmudrā, it appears as all kinds of thoughts. When it is correctly realized, the very nature of all kinds of thoughts is a union with the nature of nonthought. It is nothing but nonthought (Mahāmudrā) that appears as all kinds of thoughts. There is no thought to be removed here, nor is there any nonthought to be added.<sup>742</sup>

Furthermore, Vajrapāṇi says that Mahāmudrā's being presented as the three kāyas refers to the experiencing mind (which is something that later Kagyü masters very often say too). Mahāmudrā mind's being unconditioned is the dharmakāya. That is, the dharmakāya is the mind that is not impaired by any thoughts and thus lacks any superimpositions and denials such as “existence,” “nonexistence,” “duality,” and “nonduality.” The realization of this Mahāmudrā mind is the sambhogakāya. That is, the sambhogakāya is the experience of great bliss through realizing the nature of nonduality. The nirmāṇakāya means that this very Mahāmudrā mind appears as all kinds of appearances while not moving away from its own nature. The natural undifferentiated state of Mahāmudrā mind is the svābhāvikakāya—though it may be divided into the above three as a mere convention, the knowledge of true reality has no divisions but is of a single nature.

The term “union” refers to the nonduality of luminosity and emptiness. Though the true nature is undifferentiable, it is designated as these two through dharma terminology. Its lack of entity when examined through reasoning refers to its being empty, while its being experienced as equality refers to its being luminous. Its being luminous is nothing other than its being empty, and its being empty is nothing other than its being luminous. For example, though a mirage may appear as water, there is actually no entity of water. Likewise, if luminosity is analyzed, it is empty in that it is without nature, but it is not empty in the sense of being absolutely nonexistent like the horns of a rabbit. The emptiness of being without nature is

the experience of luminosity, whereas the appearance of being established through reasoning as an existing entity is not. Therefore, since being luminous and being empty are not different, they are a nondual union. However, just as before, it is for the sake of putting an end to other's clinging to dualistic appearance that this is expressed as "union" and nonduality." Actually, union and nonduality are not established in terms of their own specific characteristics and thus do not abide either.

As for this being effortless, a cairn may appear as a person when not realized for what it is but clearly is a cairn when it is realized as such. However, there is no person to be removed nor is there a cairn to be established. Likewise, when the ultimate essence—the nature of nonduality—is not realized, it appears as duality, but as soon as it is realized, it is nondual wisdom. Such realization is the view, while meditation means to settle the mind without distraction in all situations from the time of that realization onward. Here, Vajrapāṇi also mentions the typical Mahāmudrā instruction that in Mahāmudrā meditation there is no need for blocking one's senses from their objects. Rather, whatever may appear is to be realized as the nature of Mahāmudrā. It is an inferior approach to examine whatever thoughts may arise with reasoning and "make" them lack a nature. Everything that appears as all kinds of things is mind as such, and once that mind is realized without any clinging, one meditates by realizing whatever arises as Mahāmudrā. Just like letting water settle on its own without muddying it, through which it becomes clear, Mahāmudrā meditation is to settle in an uncontrived manner through knowing the nature of all phenomena. This Mahāmudrā is the fruition of being free from stains (thoughts of negating, affirming, and so on), which is the connate joy free from any characteristics.

In brief, Mahāmudrā is here described by Vajrapāṇi as the nonconceptual nondual wisdom nature of the mind, which seems to appear as all sorts of unreal thoughts (like a rope's being mistaken for a snake) until it is realized for what it is. This wisdom mind is the union of emptiness and luminosity, which is not an utter nonexistence after its illusory stains have disappeared but is the incontrovertible experience of its own natural state of lucid yet completely nonreferential awareness, just as the rope does not disappear into nothing when one sees that it is not a snake.

Now we can return to the verse cited at the beginning of Vajrapāṇi's Madhyamaka presentation above:

There is nothing to be removed from this  
And not the slightest to be added.

Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

With the two elements of nonconceptual wisdom and thoughts here in the context of Mahāmudrā in mind, the quotation of this verse appears to be in line with the meaning it has in the *Uttaratantra* in conjunction with I.155—just as a rope is empty of an imaginary snake, the tathāgata heart is empty of adventitious stains, or in other words, the Mahāmudrā mind of nonthought is empty of fictitious thoughts. Thus, adventitious thoughts are not to be removed and luminous-empty awareness is not to be added, but liberation simply means to see this true reality of Mahāmudrā as it is.

What corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 is also quoted in three other texts by Maitrīpa's main students. Rāmapāla's *Sekanirdeśapañjikā* cites the verse in a similar context as does Vajrapāṇi, saying that cognition and what is cognized are superimpositions and thus empty.<sup>743</sup> So even within thoughts, in essence, thoughts are nothing other than nonthought. This applies to not knowing all appearances as true reality as well as to knowing true reality. However, there is a difference in that the previous mind of clinging to the duality of apprehender and apprehended does not exist anymore later. Thus, ignorance consists of clinging to apprehender and apprehended. Rāmapāla's text also quotes *Uttaratantra* II.61b in the context of a very brief description of the four kāyas.<sup>744</sup>

Bhitakarma's *Mudrācaturaṭīkā* cites and explains what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 in order to ascertain that the undifferentiable connate nature is the ultimate dharmamudrā.<sup>745</sup> His explanation exhibits a pra-jñāpāramitā or Madhyamaka stance and thus is definitely more in line with the context of *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.21. In this verse, he says, "in this" refers to the dharmamudrā. As for "removing," appearances are the dharma-kāya, the guru, the instructions, and books. Something nonexistent does not need to be removed, and if something exists, even if one tries to remove it, it cannot be removed. Therefore, "there is nothing to be removed." Hence, the scriptures say:

Form lacks a nature of its own, and there is no seer either. There is no sound, nor is there a hearer. There is no smell, nor is there a smeller. There is no taste, nor is there a taster. There is nothing tangible, nor is there a toucher. There is no mind, nor is there anything to mind.

“To add” means “to meditate”—if there are two, it is reasonable for the one to meditate on the other, but since there are no two here, there is nothing to meditate. Therefore, the scriptures say:

There is nothing to meditate, nor a meditator.  
 There is no secret mantra, nor a deity.  
 Mantra and deity perfectly abide  
 As the freedom from reference points and the nature.

Hence, there is nothing to be observed or to be focused on. Thus, not to make arising appearances and unarisen mind into two is called “actual reality.” To see this in the manner of not seeing anything whatsoever is called “seeing as it really is.” To directly perceive it is “to see actual reality.” Immediately upon that, one is liberated in an instant. Therefore, the middle of rasanā and lalanā is the one that relinquishes wrongdoing, which is called “connate wisdom.”

Sahajavajra’s *Tattvadaśakaṭīkā* quotes what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 in the context of commenting on *Tattvadaśaka* 3cd, which speaks about mistakenness as the cause of attachment (these two together being understood as the equivalent for obscuration) and how to remove it:

Attachment is born from mistakenness.

Mistakenness refers to one’s own superimpositions. Attachment is fixation. Mistakenness means what is superimposed as the nature of entities, such as existence or nonexistence. Through such [superimpositions], one fixates again and again, which here means attachment, aversion, and ignorance. “Based on what should this mistakenness be relinquished?” In order to [answer that question, Maitrīpa] says:

And mistakenness is held to be without basis.

The meaning of this is that since here even the slightest arising has been negated, [removing mistakenness] is not just like extracting a thorn. Rather, it means to fully understand the nature [of mistakenness] and this nature is again nothing but its being unarisen. As it is [indicated] through the following words of the Bhagavān:

Mañjuśrī, ignorance has the meaning of nonexistence.

[And:]

There is nothing to be removed in this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Who sees actual reality is liberated.<sup>746</sup>

In sum, it appears that the explicit association of the *Uttaratantra* with Mahāmudrā was not initiated by Maitrīpa or his students except for Vajrapāṇi, who is the only one to establish a clear and detailed relationship between what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 (and in effect I.155) and the view and meditation of Mahāmudrā. Thus, at present, the above passage in his *Guruparamparakramopadeśa* seems to be the sole—and rather slim—Indian basis we know of that could have served as the explicit ground for Gampopa's famous statement that the scriptural source of Kagyü Mahāmudrā is the *Uttaratantra*. However, Gampopa's writings do not refer to the above passage by Vajrapāṇi and thus it is not very likely that he had it in mind when he made his statement. Rather it appears to have been his own general opinion on the relationship between the essence of the *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā, which was followed by many later Kagyü masters. Still, as CMW and some of the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim indicate, there seem to have been other earlier Indian and Tibetan Mahāmudrā instructions based on the *Uttaratantra*, but it is not clear whether Gampopa had access to them.

### *Other Indian Nontantric Treatises on Mahāmudrā*

There are at least two other Indian nontantric canonical Buddhist texts that also equate prajñāpāramitā with Mahāmudrā. In his *Tattvāvatāra*, Jñānakīrti (eighth/ninth century) says:

As for those of highest capacities among the persons who exert themselves in the pāramitās, when they perform the meditations of calm abiding and superior insight, even at the stage of ordinary beings, this grants them the true realization characterized by having its origin in Mahāmudrā. Thus, this is the sign of irreversible [realization].<sup>747</sup>

And:

All these results are accomplished through the meditation of the nondual training in Mahāmudrā. As the prajñāpāramitā sūtras extensively say:

Those who wish to train in the bhūmis of śrāvakas should listen to just this prajñāpāramitā . . . and should practice the yoga of just this prajñāpāramitā.

The same is said there for [those who wish to train] “in the bhūmis of pratyekabuddhas” and “in the bhūmis of buddhas.” Another name of Mother Prajñāpāramitā is Mahāmudrā because it is the very nature of nondual wisdom. This is also the Bhagavān, whose essential character is the dharmakāya. Exactly this is bodhicitta, the vajra of bodhicitta, the very nature of the Tathāgata. The wisdom of prajñāpāramitā is nondual, and this actuality is what is to be accomplished by the tathāgatas. It is also the nondual training in Mahāmudrā because it has the character of great compassion.<sup>748</sup>

In answer to the question what the nondual training in Mahāmudrā is, Jñānakīrti quotes the same verse as Sahajavajra does above when he explains Maitrīpa’s sūtra-based approach of Mahāmudrā to be superior to the regular pāramitāyāna:

To unite means and prajñā—  
 This meditation is the supreme yoga.  
 To unify with Mahāmudrā  
 Is meditation, the victor explained.

Thus, the cultivation of means and prajñā is the cultivation of the nondual training in Mahāmudrā.<sup>749</sup>

Jñānakīrti continues by explaining the meanings of means and prajñā, their union, and how the cultivation of this union represents Mahāmudrā meditation in great detail, which is a very interesting account of a sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach that directly employs compassion as one of its key elements and moreover involves some typically tantric techniques. The following is a summary:<sup>750</sup> He states that prajñā is the realization of all phenomena as being free from reference points. This freedom from reference points represents the emptiness that, in itself, is not just a term or yet

another reference point. The means in general consist of the three kinds of compassion of bodhisattvas—the compassion of focusing on suffering sentient beings, the compassion of focusing on them through understanding the dharma of impermanence, and nonreferential compassion. However, it is only the cultivation of the last type of compassion that represents the meditation that is the union of *prajñā* and means because the other two lack being free from reference points since they still focus on entities. The way in which one gradually cultivates *Mahāmudrā* through this union of *prajñā* and means entails three steps—one begins with becoming of the nature of all entities, then cultivates nonreferential compassion, and this then eventually turns into the meditation that has the character of *Mahāmudrā*.

The pith instructions on how to do so are as follows: One first visualizes oneself as one's personal *yidam* deity in an instantaneous manner. Then, one meditates on oneself being of the nature of all entities through thinking that one has the nature of *Vairocana*, who represents the essence of ignorance, and therefore one has the nature of the *skandha* of form that pervades all beings. Likewise, since one has the natures of *Ratnasambhava*, *Amitābha*, *Amoghasiddhi*, and *Akṣobhya*, who represent the essences of pride, desire, envy, and hatred, respectively, one has the natures of the *skandhas* of feelings, discriminations, formations, and consciousness that pervade all beings. Through having thus become of the nature of all entities, one manifests the great kinds of compassion of focusing on suffering sentient beings and focusing on them through the dharma. Then, through letting go of any kind of mental engagement in entities, nonentities, self-entity, other-entity,<sup>751</sup> and so on, one needs to withdraw the mind from everything and not think about anything. In that way, in yogins who do not think about anything whatsoever and have relied on a guru for a long time before, *prajñāpāramitā* will arise by virtue of the kindness of that guru. Due to having completely turned away from the distinction between assessing through valid cognition and the result to be assessed, this has the nature of self-appearance. By virtue of being free from all reference points, one is free from *samsāra*, which has the nature of suffering and reference points. Therefore, this is realized through the mirrorlike yoga that has the character of supreme joy. Once one, through the power of that, thinks "Alas, all these sentient beings have the nature of *nirvāṇa*, but through the power of ignorance, they do not recognize this—how can I make them realize it?" and thus thinks of all beings as having that nature, this will give rise to nonreferential compassion. Thus, one needs to think of their having this nature—the nature of all entities. Then, once this yoga that has the nature



of all entities and has the character of great compassion has become powerful, the very character of this great compassion that has the nature of all entities takes on a character that is not different from the nature of mother prajñāpāramitā, another name of which is Mahāmudrā, just as water and milk blend into one. This is then what one should look at. At that time, through familiarization, it becomes very clear. It also has the nature of all merit because it is the vajra nature of bodhicitta, which is the sovereign of the vajras of body, speech, and mind of all tathāgatas, because that vajra has the nature of prajñā and means' being nondual. One also realizes that externally oriented cognitions are merely superimpositions but not one's own true nature. Therefore, it is well known that this yoga of prajñā and means' being nondual is self-aware direct valid cognition and not just a superimposition. How could this yoga that is the fundamental change, has the nature of the nondual wisdom of Mahāmudrā free from reference points, and is well known as self-awareness have any kind of superimposition of reference points?

Though some technical details vary, this description of a Mahāmudrā approach that, through the kindness of the guru, strips away all obscuring mental activities and reveals the direct perception of mind's innate luminous self-awareness accords in its general features with Sahajavajra's above explanations.

Later,<sup>752</sup> in his section on the stages of the meditation of superior insight, Jñānakīrti quotes and comments on the famous two verses X.256–57 from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* on the “four yogic practices” (*prayoga*)<sup>753</sup> used in many mahāyāna texts:

By relying on mere mind,  
 One does not imagine outer objects.  
 By resting in the observed object of suchness,  
 One should go beyond mere mind too.

Going beyond mere mind,  
 One must even go beyond nonappearance.  
 The yogin who rests in nonappearance  
 Sees the mahāyāna.

Jñānakīrti explains the first verse in a rather standard way by matching it with the first three of the four yogic practices: (1) outer objects are observed to be nothing but mind, (2) thus, outer objects are not observed,

and (3) with outer objects' being unobservable, a mind cognizing them is not observed either. On X.257 (corresponding to (4) not observing both apprehender and apprehended, nonduality or suchness is observed), he comments that since suchness is unborn, it neither exists as an entity nor exists as the lack of entity. This means that suchness is the complete lack of reference points, since entities and the lack of entity include all possible reference points. Through realizing that, all beings are understood as having the nature of the dharmakāya, thus going beyond the understanding of mere mind. The yogin must even transcend the state of true reality's not appearing in the manner of being a unity or a multiplicity and the like. To fully rest in the nonappearance of any reference points whatsoever is to realize true reality, here called "the mahāyāna," and another form of that name is "Mahāmudrā." Thus, Jñānakīrti indicates that the final realization of the freedom from reference points even in the mahāyāna of the sūtras is nothing but Mahāmudrā, which he further equates with the famous "nonseeing is the supreme seeing" in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras:

What is the eye of wisdom of the Buddha, the Bhagavān? Not seeing anything through anything. . . . Likewise, what is seeing the ultimate? The nonseeing of all phenomena.

Jñānakīrti also clarifies here that such nonseeing is, of course, not just the same sheer absence of any mental engagement as when one is asleep or one's eyes are closed.

Implicitly, the *Prajñājñānaprakāśa* by Devacandra,<sup>754</sup> another one of the four main students of Maitrīpa, also equates Mahāmudrā with prajñāpāramitā since it says that Mahāmudrā has the characteristic of the realization of the lack of nature, which is uncontrived. Merely through contrived prajñā and wisdom, the omniscient wisdom of suchness, which has the nature of continuous great bliss, will never arise.

As for the equation of Mahāmudrā with prajñāpāramitā, it is quite common in tantric Buddhist texts. For example, Kālacakramahāpāda's *Padmanināmapañjikā*, a commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, presents the definition of Mahāmudrā as follows:

"Mahāmudrā [the Great Seal]" is the prajñāpāramitā that gives birth to all tathāgatas appearing in the past, future, and present. Since it seals the nonabiding nirvāṇa or changeless bliss, it is "the seal." Since it is

superior to karmamudrā and jñānamudrā and is free from the latent tendencies of saṃsāra, it is “great.”<sup>755</sup>

Furthermore, Vajrapāṇi’s *Laghutantraṭīkā* on the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra* equates Mahāmudrā with prajñāpāramitā and “being endowed with the supreme of all aspects.”<sup>756</sup>

As for the question of Atiśa’s connection with Mahāmudrā as mentioned above in TOK (and below by the Eighth Karmapa and Eighth Situpa), note that the introduction to Karma Trinlépa’s commentary on Saraha’s three cycles of dohā says that Atiśa was greatly involved in the dohā teachings and had received Saraha’s dohā lineage from Maitrīpa.<sup>757</sup> BA agrees and adds that Maitrīpa also taught Atiśa the root text and commentary of the *Uttaratantra*,<sup>758</sup> as well as other texts.<sup>759</sup> Both Karma Trinlépa and BA say that Atiśa had started to teach the dohās in Tibet but was discouraged by his students from continuing for fear of a deterioration of Tibetans’ engaging in conditioned virtues due to the style and contents of these dohās (which do not accord with the gradual path and the proper conduct that is emphasized in more conventional Buddhist teachings). BA says that Atiśa’s primary student, Dromtönpa Gyalwé Jungné, did receive teachings on the dohās and vajrayāna methods from him but pretended not to have received such for the same reason as above.<sup>760</sup> The same text also quotes Milarepa as saying that Atiśa was not allowed to teach vajrayāna, but, if he had, Tibet would be filled with accomplished siddhas.<sup>761</sup> In that context, it should also be noted that verses 64–66 of Atiśa’s *Bodhipathapradīpa* explicitly forbid monastics from receiving the second and third empowerments in the Yo-gānuttara class of tantra because that would break their monastic vows.

It is clear that since the dohās mainly teach Mahāmudrā, any other potential Mahāmudrā instructions by Atiśa to a wider audience would seem to have been prevented for the same reason. It would certainly be very interesting to compare Mahāmudrā teachings by Atiśa as the founder of the Kadampa School with other Mahāmudrā-like instructions in that tradition, such as the texts by Kyotön Mönlam Tsültrim presented in this book. As suggested by the Eighth Karmapa above in TOK and others, certain parts of Atiśa’s teachings in his *Bodhipathapradīpa* and its autocommentary for individuals of highest capacity among the three types of individuals in the *lamrim* teachings (in particular, verses 54–58), though rather clearly explained as referring to Madhyamaka, can also be read as being in agreement with Maitrīpa’s approach of mental nonengagement since thoughts are repeatedly identified as the root of saṃsāra and as something one needs

to let go of. Most striking in this regard is an unidentified quote, attributed to Nāgārjuna, in Atiśa's autocommentary, which (as mentioned above) is also used by Padma Karpo in his explanation of the meaning of "mental nonengagement":

To the one who does not think through imagination,  
Whose mind does not abide at all,  
Who is without mindfulness, is without mental engagement,  
And is without focus, I pay homage.<sup>762</sup>

Note also that Atiśa's *Madhyamakopadeśa* says that once all phenomena have been found to be nonexistent through analysis, one needs to rest in luminous nonconceptuality without mental engagement.<sup>763</sup> Interestingly, in terms of the teachings on buddha nature, his autocommentary on the *Bodhipathapradīpa* says that all sentient beings have a single disposition, which is the tathāgata heart,<sup>764</sup> and he includes the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra*, and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (which are certainly not typical Madhyamaka sources) in its list of sūtras that are a must-read.<sup>765</sup> Furthermore, the beginning of Atiśa's *Dharmadhātudarśanagīti* speaks about the dharmadhātu as buddha nature in a highly affirmative manner by including eighteen verses from the *Dharmadhātustava* and also using phrases found in the *Uttaratantra*, such as the dharmadhātu's being inseparable from the buddha qualities and its being enshrouded by afflictions corresponding to the example of a child in a pregnant woman's womb.<sup>766</sup>

In any case, that there actually were Mahāmudrā-style instructions in the Kadampa School within the context of the teachings for individuals of highest capacity in the *lamrim* approach is proven by such instructions' being found in that very context in Mönlam Tsültrim's *Essential Pith Instructions That Summarize the Quintessence of the Piṭakas*.<sup>767</sup>

### *Gampopa's Mahāmudrā and the Uttaratantra*

Before Gampopa (1079–1153) met Milarepa, he had already studied with a number of Kadampa teachers for several years, including Jayülwa Shönnu Ö<sup>768</sup> (1075–1138), Néusurpa Yeshé Bar<sup>769</sup> (1042–1118), Nyugrumpa Dsöndrö Gyaltzen,<sup>770</sup> Gya Jagriwa,<sup>771</sup> Gya Yönda,<sup>772</sup> Jangchub Sempa Kunga,<sup>773</sup> Shawa Lingpa,<sup>774</sup> and Geshé Drepa.<sup>775</sup> Pawo Rinpoche says that Gampopa received the following teachings from the following Kadampa teachers<sup>776</sup>—vinaya from Jayülwa, *lamrim* from Nyugrumpa, all of Atiśa's pith instructions from Jagriwa and Gya Yönda, and Milarepa's pith instructions from

Lama Jangchub Sempa.<sup>777</sup> He also received Cakrasaṃvara teachings from Maryül Loden<sup>778</sup> and Sangkar Lotsāwa Pagpa Sherab.

Thus, when Gampopa came to Milarepa, he was already an accomplished teacher in his own right, having excelled in both the study and practice of the Kadampa system, but it became obvious very quickly that he was in for a very different ride with Milarepa. According to BA,<sup>779</sup> in order to curb Gampopa's pride, Milarepa first had him wait for half a month before he granted him an audience. When he was finally admitted, Gampopa offered a piece of gold and a package of tea. Milarepa refused both and instead gave Gampopa a skull-cup with Tibetan beer, insisting that he drink it despite his obvious concerns about his monastic vows. When Gampopa requested Milarepa's profound instructions, Milarepa asked whether he had received empowerments. Gampopa answered, "I received many empowerments of Cakrasaṃvara and others, listened to numerous Kadampa instructions, and have experienced resting in samādhi for thirteen days." Milarepa laughed out loud and said, "The gods of the form and formless realms are more advanced than you then—they rest in samādhi for many eons. However, none of this is of any benefit for attaining buddhahood, just as pressing sand will not produce liquid butter. The Kadampas have instructions, but they lack pith instructions. Because a demon had entered the heart of Tibet, Atiśa was not allowed to teach the mantrayāna. If he had, Tibet would now be filled with siddhas. The Kadampa generation stage involves only single yidam deities,<sup>780</sup> and their completion stage consists only of dissolving the surrounding and its contents into luminosity. Now, you need to cultivate my caṅḍāli." Following that, he conferred the empowerment of Vajravārahī upon Gampopa, who then practiced accordingly.

Milarepa also said to Gampopa, "As for the aspect of calm abiding in your practice, however good all of this may be, it does not go beyond being a cause for rebirth in the higher realms of samādhi. As for the aspect of your practice of superior insight, all of it entails the danger of diverging into the four deviations from emptiness. It may well serve as a remedy for some portions of reification, such as clinging to real existence. However, since it is not able to cut through the entirety of clinging to extremes, there is the danger that the whole complex of this excellent view and meditation itself could turn into cognitive obscurations. Hence, if one is fettered, there is no difference between being fettered by an iron chain and being fettered by a golden chain." Later, Gampopa said about this, "If I had not met the great master Milarepa, I would have risked rebirth as a long-lived god." After having stayed in solitary meditation retreat for many years after he

had left Milarepa, Gampopa eventually combined the systematic and analytical approach of the Kadampa teachings with the Kagyü instructions on Mahāmudrā, which led to him being called “the one who united the two streams of Kadampa and Mahāmudrā.”

Among the thirty-eight preserved works of Gampopa, ten deal with Mahāmudrā as their exclusive subject. However, almost all of them are not his own writings but notes from his teachings taken by his students. This is obviously not the place to give an exhaustive survey of Gampopa's Mahāmudrā teachings,<sup>781</sup> so a few general main points shall suffice.

In his texts, Gampopa distinguishes three main paths. (1) The pāramitāyāna is called “the path of renunciation” and “the path of accumulation,” which relies on inferential analysis and is for those who have faith and are of dull faculties. (2) The path of mantra is labeled “the path of transformation” and “the path of means,” which relies on direct perception and is for those who are afflicted and of medium faculties. (3) The path of Mahāmudrā is “the path of prajñā” and “the path of suchness,” which relies on blessing and is for those who are intelligent and of sharp faculties. He also describes these three paths as follows:

(1) As for taking inference as the path, after having scrutinized all phenomena through arguments [such as] being beyond singularity and multiplicity, one says that there is no [other] possibility [for phenomena to be] than these [possibilities that one has examined] and then posits that everything is empty. [This is the path of] inference.

(2) [The practice of] nāḍīs, vāyus, and tilakas,<sup>782</sup> the repeated recitation of mantras, and so on, which are based on the generation stage of the deity's body, make up the path of blessing.

(3) As for taking direct perceptions as the path, a genuine guru says that connate mind as such is the luminous dharmakāya. Through having been taught an unmistakable instruction of definitive meaning like that, one then takes native mind as the path, without separating the triad of view, conduct, and meditation in terms of this connate mind about which one has gained certainty within oneself.<sup>783</sup>

Elsewhere, Gampopa explicitly states that Mahāmudrā is the highest path that actually transcends both sūtra and tantra. All of this clearly suggests that Gampopa considered Mahāmudrā per se as a path that does not belong to either sūtra or tantra but lies beyond both. In practice, most of Gampopa's preserved teachings consist primarily of sūtra-based instructions and

then conclude with Mahāmudrā, either not teaching the path of mantra at all or mentioning it only in passing.

Typical Mahāmudrā instructions by Indian siddhas are often simply expressions of the author's yogic realization or very short pith instructions to their most advanced disciples. Even when they mention some details on how to practice, these instructions are usually terse and unsystematic. By contrast, Gampopa's Mahāmudrā instructions are much longer and provide systematic progressive guidance. As exemplified by the fifth section of his *Pointing Out Thoughts as the Ultimate*,<sup>784</sup> such instructions often begin with preliminaries such as turning away from the mundane toward the spiritual path through the four reminders, giving rise to love, compassion, and bodhicitta, choosing a qualified guru, and cultivating calm abiding and superior insight. These preliminaries are followed by the actual instructions of pointing out the nature of the mind. Such pointing-out instructions are classified by Gampopa as being of five types—(1) pointing out appearances as mind through the analogy of sleep and dream, (2) pointing out the inseparability of appearance and emptiness through the analogy of water and ice, (3) pointing out mind as such as empty through the analogy of the empty sky, (4) pointing out multiplicity as being of one taste through the analogy of the taste of a piece of sugar, and (5) pointing out the continuity of the dharmakāya through the analogy of the continuity of a river.<sup>785</sup> Gampopa's works also explain the stages of experiences that are commonly known as the four yogas of Mahāmudrā (see below).

As with his Indian predecessors, the actual core Mahāmudrā instruction—the pointing-out instruction—in Gampopa's teachings is short, but it may appear lengthy due to being augmented by the discussions of the preliminaries and the four yogas. The Mahāmudrā instructions by Gampopa employ the same terms that are found in the Mahāmudrā teachings of Indian siddhas such as Saraha, Tilopa, and Maitrīpa, and it is clear that Gampopa used their texts as sources for his Mahāmudrā since he said to Pamo Trupa that the Indian Mahāmudrā texts include the dohās, “the seven works on accomplishment,” “the sixfold cycle of the essence,”<sup>786</sup> and “the cycle of works on mental nonengagement.”<sup>787</sup> However, in his particular Mahāmudrā approach, Gampopa almost always omits the tantric path of means that is an integral part in many of the instructions of his predecessors.<sup>788</sup> In that vein, though the word “bliss” occurs in his Mahāmudrā instructions, it does not have the significance of this term in the tantras (the wisdom of great bliss as pointed out during the third and fourth empowerments). Rather, Gampopa uses it to refer to the bliss of experiences

resulting from calm abiding. Thus, his approach to Mahāmudrā (which later was called “sūtra Mahāmudrā”) can be seen as a synthesis of mainstream mahāyāna teachings with what later was called “essence Mahāmudrā,” while skipping “tantra Mahāmudrā.”

Such an approach represents both a skillful means to make Mahāmudrā accessible to a wider audience and clear evidence for the Kadampa influences in Gampopa’s teachings. At the same time, Gampopa considered genuine Mahāmudrā as the highest path that transcends both sūtra and tantra. As pointed out by Sherpa (2004, 132–33), Gampopa’s approach of making Mahāmudrā accessible to students of all kinds of capacities without prerequisites such as empowerments seems to involve a contradiction between his statement that the realization of Mahāmudrā (the highest achievement in vajrayāna Buddhism) is an insight achieved by only a few and the claim that the Mahāmudrā teachings can be practiced by general audiences. Obviously, the term “Mahāmudrā” is used here in two distinct senses. The former refers to the original sense of this term as being the realization of mind’s true nature, which in its essence is superior to both the sūtric and tantric paths. In its second sense, the term refers to a progressive pedagogical system (largely based on Maitrīpa’s approach) that includes many conventional mahāyāna teachings and a few elements from the approach of the Indian siddhas and the vajrayāna (such as pointing-out instructions, guru devotion, and guru yoga), while only eventually culminating in the first kind of Mahāmudrā.

Despite hardly discussing the vajrayāna path of means in his texts, it is clear that Gampopa did teach the techniques of this path to those students who were able to understand and practice them. Thus, his instructions were completely geared to whichever audiences he encountered. Also, though he explicitly says that he favors the gradualist approach, he also accounts for and uses the possibility of instantaneous insights.

To provide a typical example of Gampopa’s writings, let’s look at some major points in his *Pointing Out Thoughts as the Ultimate*. The structure of this text is the clearest example of Gampopa’s union of Kadampa and Kagyü teachings because, in its first, second, and fifth sections, the presentations of the Kadampa positions on certain issues are regularly followed by explanations of Milarepa’s viewpoints. As for the contents, section 1, “Pointing Out Thoughts as the Ultimate,” says that the nature of the mind is sometimes called “ordinary mind” and sometimes “natural state” but these mean the same. Speaking of mind’s “nature” means that it is not a nonexistent (ibid., 202–3). According to Milarepa, thoughts are very kind.



The way in which they are kind is that they arise from the mind, and this mind is the dharmakāya. Thoughts represent the realization of mind's nature. Such realization is like a lamp in that it illuminates this nature and it resembles a weapon in that it cuts the root. Thus, through taking thoughts as the path, nonconceptual wisdom dawns (ibid., 212–13). Section 2, "Instructions on the Union of Generation and Completion," says that the statement "connate mind as such is the dharmakāya" means that awareness and emptiness are connate (ibid., 234–35).

Section 3, "A Summary of the Stages of the Path," contains a description of the four yogas of Mahāmudrā. (1) Gampopa says that you familiarize with the natural state of mind as such by settling the mind in an uncontrived manner, just as water settles in water. Through settling the mind in three ways—freshly, loosely, and naturally—you will be able to hold the mind a little bit and also catch a glimpse of its nature. Mind will be vibrant, crisp, and one-pointed. Even after your sessions, such states will occur in bits. Because you have recognized a part of your own basic awareness, you will be joyful and inspired. This is called "the yoga of one-pointedness."

(2) Just as a great river is uninterrupted in its flow or the tip of a candle flame has no interruption in its luminosity, you will experience such a continual stream of basic awareness through being mindful day and night and meditating again and again. Then, you will realize that both outer apprehended objects and the inner apprehending mind are free from the four extremes of reference points. You see your own basic awareness as clearly as if a fresh fruit were placed onto your palm. Sometimes good experiences and sometimes bad ones will arise. This is called "the yoga of the freedom from reference points."

(3) Then, when you have meditated in that way, as far as your meditative experience goes, the triad of outer appearances, your own body, and your mind will appear without any difference, just like water and milk's being mixed in an indistinguishable manner. Even in your realization (versus mere experience), these three kinds of phenomena will appear without any difference. At that time, you will even see whether other people possess or lack true meditation. This is called "the yoga of multiplicity's being of one taste."

(4) Next, due to having meditated in such a way, you resolve that all phenomena are equality. Through that, it will occur to you that there is nothing to be relinquished, no remedy to be relied upon, no awakening to be accomplished, no saṃsāra to be abandoned, nothing to meditate on nor a meditator. This is called "the yoga of nonmeditation." However, this is not yet fully qualified buddhahood. As long as this body that is a karmic maturation still

exists, there will be pleasant and painful feelings. For example, though a lion cub has completed its prowess in its mother's womb, it is not able to display this prowess until it has come out of the womb's enclosure. Likewise, though a garuḍa chick's wings are fully grown inside its egg, being constrained by this shell, it cannot fly until the eggshell is broken. Thus, buddhahood occurs in the intermediate state of dying (*ibid.*, 270–71).

Section 4, “The Concordances and Differences between the Philosophical Systems of Sūtra and Mantra,” says that the view of the vajrayāna is in accordance with Madhyamaka as far as the empty nature of phenomena is concerned, but it is more special by virtue of bliss—it appears as empty bliss. In terms of self-aware, self-lucidity, it accords with Yogācāra. However, it is not just mere lucidity but appears as blissful taste. Therefore, lucidity appears as emptiness and emptiness appears as lucidity—their union is the secret mantra. It is only in terms of each one of these elements that the view of the mantrayāna partially accords with Madhyamaka and Yogācāra (*ibid.*, 260–61). As for familiarizing with this, there is no one who meditates—since self-awareness is free from all identifications, no examples or words can illustrate it. From the perspective of characteristics, even the buddhas of the three times do not see it. Within its essence, there is no object on which to meditate either. In this way, since there is nothing to experience, there is not even the slightest something to meditate on. Thus, Gampopa says, “I do not assert lucidity. To assert lucidity means to identify it. Nor do I assert bliss or nonconceptuality. Bliss and nonconceptuality are also identifications. No example can illustrate me. No word can describe me. Do not fabricate me but simply let be!” (*ibid.*, 270–71).

Section 5, “The Heart of the Stages of the Path,” begins with the preliminaries such as the four reminders mentioned above and then comes to the actual Mahāmudrā instructions, saying that ultimate bodhicitta arises from the blessings of the guru and the experiences in one's own meditation. As Milarepa says:

Phenomenal existence is included in the mind.  
Mind dwells within the state of lucidity.  
In this, there is nothing to be identified.<sup>789</sup>

Gampopa also quotes the siddha Koṭāli:

Ordinary mind awakens in the middle of your heart  
Once the six collections are pure, bliss is a continual flow.

All actions are pointless, being the cause of suffering.

Rest in the natural state in which there is nothing to meditate.<sup>790</sup>

Gampopa continues that one needs to practice by means of the completion stage of elaborated and unelaborated Mahāmudrā and so on. In terms of elaborate Mahāmudrā, one practices by means of nāḍī and vāyu or special methods. The seeing of the ultimate essence of the mind arises initially for just an instant. Just as the waxing moon on its first day has the capacity of becoming the full moon, starting with a single moment, this ultimate essence will eventually pervade walking, standing, lying, and sitting at all times. Some geshés say, “Now in this lifetime is not the time for this essence to arise.” But Milarepa said, “If now is not the time for the essence to arise, when is that time? If it does not arise at this time when you have obtained the freedoms and riches of an excellent human body, when your five sense faculties are not defective, and when you have met a mahāyāna guru, do you think it arises when you have been born in the three lower realms? No way!” (Sherpa 2004, 286–93).

Gampopa’s *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors* (a collection of different short instructions) speaks about taking connate union as the path through the two armors of the view and prajñā, taking thoughts as the path, thoughts appearing as the four kāyas, and so on.<sup>791</sup> Interestingly, the text also contains pith instructions by Gampopa’s Kadampa teacher Jagriwa:

These are Lama Jagriwa’s pith instructions, called “trouncing upon encountering,” “pursuing subsequently,” and “proliferating out of nothing.” When great meditators meditate, they trounce occurring thoughts right upon encountering them—they cut through thoughts as being without arising immediately upon their occurring. As for “pursuing subsequently,” thoughts [arise] and then one looks from where they arose at first. Through that, one understands that they arose from the mind and also dissolve into the mind at the end. [Thoughts] are not dual with and not different from mind. He said that this is called “pursuing subsequently.” As for “proliferating out of nothing,” through thinking something heavy in one’s mind, something unpleasant will manifest. These are thoughts, while mind’s being without arising is the dharmakāya, he said. The three examples [for this] are that it is similar to a fire’s spreading in a forest [from a small spark to a wildfire]. [It is similar to] how wind and so on become its aids—likewise, whichever thoughts arise, they become the aids of prajñā, he said. It is similar to

snow's falling into water—all the snow that falls into water becomes of one taste with it. Likewise, immediately upon the arising of thoughts, they are of one taste with the connate. It is taught that this is Geshé Jagriwa's approach of taking [thoughts as the path].<sup>792</sup>

Obviously, these instructions on three ways to deal with thoughts according to one's capacity are very similar to Mahāmudrā teachings, and the examples are also used in the Mahāmudrā tradition. In line with the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim, these instructions are further evidence that Mahāmudrā-style teachings existed in the Kadampa School, that this was the case even before Gampopa, and that Gampopa received such instructions.

Gampopa's text also explains the four yogas of Mahāmudrā.<sup>793</sup> To rest in the essence of basic awareness without being distracted is the yoga of one-pointedness.<sup>794</sup> If thoughts arise in that one-pointedness, trounce them upon encountering them or pursue them subsequently. Through taking thoughts as the path in that way, they become indispensable and of great kindness. This is the yoga of the freedom from reference points. Remaining undistracted in that, when outer appearances become indistinct, this is the yoga of multiplicity's becoming of one taste. Through familiarizing with that, basic awareness becomes absolutely naked.<sup>795</sup> At that point, through the perfection of being familiar with it, the dharmakāya is attained. This is the yoga of nonmeditation. Through this, the armor of prajñā is taught by way of the armor of the view.

Furthermore, Gampopa says that the difference between the pāramitāyāna and the mantrayāna lies in their being long and short paths, respectively.<sup>796</sup> Also, in Nāropa's system, there is something to meditate, while in Maitrīpa's system there is nothing to meditate. At the time of the path, there is something to meditate, but at the time of the fruition, there is nothing to calculate in terms of meditating or not meditating. In the mantrayāna, there is no path to be calculated—all there is is realizing or not realizing true reality. However, those of the highest faculties rely on neither the pāramitāyāna nor the mantrayāna.

The text states that connate wisdom is this presently existing ordinary mind.<sup>797</sup> In order to recognize it, based on the words of the guru, let this ordinary mind be in an uncontrived manner. Let it be unaffected. Let it be in its own place. Let it be natural as it pleases. Through letting it be in this way, your own mind is realized as being without arising, abiding, and ceasing and as not being any entity.

Gampopa's preserved works do not feature any obvious references to the *Uttaratantra*, which is remarkable given the famous statement attributed to him that "the text for this Mahāmudrā of ours is this *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* composed by the Bhagavān Maitreya." However, this statement is not preserved in Gampopa's available texts. He must have studied the *Uttaratantra* with his Kadampa teachers, but there is no evidence that he had direct contact with Dsen Kawoché or one of his students. BA says that Gampopa produced an understanding of Mahāmudrā in beginners who had not obtained empowerment, which is the system of prajñāpāramitā.<sup>798</sup> Since Gampopa had said to Pamo Trupa that the *Uttaratantra* is the basis for his Mahāmudrā, Pamo Trupa transmitted this text to Jigden Sumgön. This is the reason why many explanations of the *Uttaratantra* are found in the writings of Jigden Sumgön and his students (see below).

In any case, the statement on the *Uttaratantra*'s being the basis of Mahāmudrā and the existence of early corresponding instructions in texts such as CMW and those by Kyotön Mönlam Tsültrim are evidence that such teachings must have existed earlier in India and Tibet (at least from the tenth century onward). It is also noteworthy that the transmission of the works of Mönlam Tsültrim (the eighth abbot of the great Kadampa seat Nartang) shows that these teachings were part of the Kadampa tradition, which at that time clearly represented mainstream Tibetan Buddhism. As mentioned above, many early Kagyü lineage holders, such as Gampopa and the First and Third Karmapas, studied extensively in the Kadampa tradition.<sup>799</sup> Whether they received teachings of the kind as contained in Mönlam Tsültrim's texts during their studies is not known, but it is very likely (which would also explain Gampopa's reported statement on the *Uttaratantra*). Of course, it is equally possible that those Kagyü masters obtained such teachings from other sources. Still, as many Kagyü works on Mahāmudrā say, sūtra Mahāmudrā comes from the *Uttaratantra*, Maitrīpa, or the Kadampas. All of this is clearly confirmed by the existence of texts such as those by Mönlam Tsültrim within the Kadampa tradition itself.

GC says that the Mahāmudrā approach of Gampopa based on the *Uttaratantra* is followed by those who correctly understand the pith instructions of the three masters from Kham<sup>800</sup> and others.<sup>801</sup> In that regard, GC quotes the early Drugpa Kagyü master Götsangpa Gönpö Dorje<sup>802</sup> (1189–1258) as having said that the one who excelled in Mahāmudrā among the teachings of the Buddha was Saraha, followed by Śavaripa and Maitrīpa (which, GC says, is very clear from Maitrīpa's *Tattvadaśaka* and its commentary by Sahajavajra), while in Tibet it was due to the kindness of

Gampopa that the Mahāmudrā tradition was transmitted even to cowherds. Both GC and BA<sup>803</sup> state that Mahāmudrā is explained in Sahajavajra's *Tat-tvadaśakaṭīkā* as the wisdom of suchness that has the three characteristics of its nature's being pāramitā, its being in accordance with the secret mantra, and its name's being "Mahāmudrā." Therefore, the Mahāmudrā of prajñāpāramitā of lord Gampopa was described by Götsangpa as being a teaching of Maitrīpa. At the same time, Gampopa also transmitted the Mahāmudrā that belongs to the path of tantra to his inner disciples.

GC continues that Vajrapāṇi, another main student of Maitrīpa, also explained this Mahāmudrā of prajñāpāramitā to many learned ones in Tibet. Padampa Sangyé, a direct disciple of Maitrīpa, gave the name *The Pacification of Suffering* to the Mahāmudrā whose essence is prajñāpāramitā and that accords with secret mantra, teaching it to countless students in Tibet. Likewise, the pith instructions and textual explanations coming down from Dsen Kawoché are definitely in accordance with Maitrīpa. Thus, in effect, GC says that the teachings that came to be known as Shentong accord with Mahāmudrā.

In that vein, GC's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.52–63 say that, throughout birth, sickness, aging, and death, the skandhas and so on arise, abide, and cease within the basic expanse of nonconceptuality, which is not affected by the fires of sickness, aging, and death.<sup>804</sup> When one dies, one simply dissolves back into the expanse of nonconceptuality. When one is sick and ages, it is that expanse itself that appears in the form of the pains of sickness and the process of aging. With this in mind, Padampa Sangyé asserted that everybody, be they male, female, old, young, or lepers, is able to see true reality if they possess the skillful means of a guru. Also the followers of the tradition of Dsen Kawoché hold that these situations of sickness and so on can be made into the path through pith instructions (as mentioned above, Dsen originally requested teachings on the *Uttaratantra* from Sajjana as his instructions to be practiced at the time of death).

Interestingly, BA<sup>805</sup> connects Gampopa's Mahāmudrā realization with a passage from the introduction of the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* that is also quoted in RGVV as the source of the first three vajra points.<sup>806</sup> BA says that, just as this introduction states that "the Bhagavān has completely and perfectly awakened to the equality of all phenomena," Gampopa's own realization of Mahāmudrā was supreme. Just as this sūtra says "has excellently turned the wheel of dharma," Gampopa uninterruptedly turned the wheel of vast instructions day and night. Just as this sūtra states "is endowed with the assemblies of limitless very disciplined disciples," Gampopa had

inconceivably many students who were endowed with the twelve qualities of abstinence,<sup>807</sup> had devotion for their guru, were not attached to this world, and made practicing meditation in solitary places the main thing in their lives.

BA continues that Milarepa had not taught the path of means and Mahāmudrā separately, but Gampopa taught the path of means only to suitable recipients for the vajrayāna, while he gave the instructions of Mahāmudrā even without empowerment to those who were suitable recipients of the pāramitāyāna. He composed a progressive guidance manual on that called *Connate Union*, which is also called “The dharma of the Realization of Tagpo.” Gampopa said that “it is taught in the scriptures that gurus and students must have many qualities, but for students it is sufficient to solely have devotion.” In this way, he gave rise to the realization of Mahāmudrā after a short time even in some foolish, destitute, and wicked persons. He also established many novices who had not done any study or reflection in such realization. Furthermore, he composed treatises on the progressive stages of the Kadampa teachings and taught many of their oral instructions. Thus, it is said that since that time, the two rivers of Kadampa and Mahāmudrā have been blended.

BA also states that though Gampopa was criticized by some great teachers of the scholarly oriented pāramitāyāna to have wasted many bright people through his way of teaching, he answered, “I may be blamed by those who follow the yāna of characteristics, but the welfare of beings will increase through these novices of mine.”

Elsewhere, BA reports some examples of Gampopa’s teaching approach.<sup>808</sup> When the First Karmapa met Gampopa after having already studied for many years with several Kadampa masters (he studied the Maitreya texts with Chaba Chökyi Sengé), Gampopa first taught the Kadampa stages of the path even to such an advanced student as the Karmapa and had him meditate on them. It was only thereafter that the Karmapa received empowerment and was taught the path of means. Also, as mentioned above, BA says that one of Gampopa’s four secondary lineage holders, Layagpa Jangchub Ngödrub, had earlier studied the Maitreya texts with his uncle and then also with Jangrawa Dumtön. Later, when he met Gampopa and received his blessings, the realization of Mahāmudrā dawned in him as if he had met an old acquaintance. Subsequently he also received instructions on caṇḍālī and Cakrasaṃvara from Gampopa. Later, when Gampopa was about to pass away, two monks requested instructions on the path of means from outside of his quarters but were not admitted by him. One of

his attendants advised them to ask for Mahāmudrā instead. After they had done so in a loud voice for a long time, Gampopa let them finally enter and gave them Mahāmudrā instructions.

### *The Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje*

Many texts by the Third Karmapa, though not explicitly linking the *Uttaratantra* to Mahāmudrā, combine the approaches and terminologies of Yogācāra, the *Uttaratantra*, and Mahāmudrā. The Karmapa's commentary on the *Dharmadhātustava* explicitly equates prajñāpāramitā with Mahāmudrā and says that both are the characteristics or equivalents of the dharmadhātu, which throughout is understood as being the tathāgata heart.<sup>809</sup> Given that the tathāgata heart is the topic of the *Dharmadhātustava*, it is not surprising that the Karmapa's commentary is greatly based on the *Uttaratantra* (quoting forty-two verses and referring to several others) and RGVV (four quotes, some lengthy). Thus, there is no doubt that the Third Karmapa also subscribed to a connection between the *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā.

The first, sixth, and ninth chapters of Rangjung Dorje's *Profound Inner Reality* and its autocommentary present the pure and the impure mind as the causes and conditions of nirvāṇa and saṃsāra, respectively, which is based on Yogācāra sources on the eight consciousnesses and the four wisdoms as well as on teachings on the tathāgata heart (such as from the *Uttaratantra*). His *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* is basically a synopsis of the *Uttaratantra*, while his *Distinction between Consciousness and Wisdom* represents a digest of the Yogācāra presentations on the eight consciousnesses and the four wisdoms. Traditionally, these four texts are considered as a unit, with the latter two being supplements of the first two. They are crucial in their elucidation of how the views and practices of vajrayāna and Mahāmudrā are based on the sūtrayāna teachings on buddha nature as the very ground, path, and fruition of these approaches and on mind's transition from being obscured in the form of dualistic consciousness to being free as nondual wisdom. Thus, these texts are not just mere philosophical or scholastic treatises, but inform and enhance meditation practice through their profound outlook and their sometimes distinctly experiential style, which is grounded in the Mahāmudrā approach and provides direct meditation or pointing-out instructions. The commentaries by Jamgön Kongtrul on the latter two texts at times also pick up this approach.

In this vein, the eminent contemporary Kagyü scholar and meditation master Thrangu Rinpoche says that *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* and



*The Distinction between Consciousness and Wisdom* combine scholasticism and reasoning according to the Shentong approach with the Mahāmudrā tradition of directly familiarizing with the nature of the mind. Thus, in terms of their more theoretical instructions, they present the definitive meaning, and in terms of practice, they correspond to the Mahāmudrā approach to meditation.<sup>810</sup>

Examples of this approach include the following passages from the autocommentary on *The Profound Inner Reality*:

[The meaning of] “beginningless” is as follows. Since a beginning and an end in time are conceptual superimpositions, here, [mind’s] own essence—be it with stains or stainless—is free from being the same as or other than dependent origination. Since there is no other beginning than that, this is called “beginningless time.” In the very instant of [mind] itself being aware (*rig pa*) of or realizing its own essence, it is liberated, whereas its not being aware (*ma rig pa*) of this [essence] is the beginning of mistaken mind, which is called “ignorance.”<sup>811</sup>

And:

Due to the unimpeded play of that very mind’s own essence through momentary consciousnesses, [while] its nature abides as emptiness and it is lucidity by nature (which represents the basis for everything), the individual manifestations of the collections of mental factors and the seven collections of consciousness appear in an unimpeded and momentary way from that [empty and lucid ground]. Therefore, during the phase of [mind] being impure, [these three aspects of mind’s empty essence, lucid nature, and unimpeded display] are called “mind,” “mentation,” and “consciousness” [respectively]. Once they have become pure, they are expressed through the names of the three kāyas and the wisdoms. . . .

As for that very mind being ignorant of itself, of what is it ignorant, through what is it ignorant, and in which way is it ignorant? Firstly, it is ignorant of its own naturally pure essence. Through what [is it ignorant]? It is ignorant of its own essence through [its own] unimpeded creative display appearing as if it were [distinct] subjects and objects. In which way is it ignorant? Due to being stirred by formational mentation, it appears as if it were causes and conditions, based on which it is rendered afflicted. Therefore, ignorance is produced and, through false

imagination, it serves as both the basis [—the ālaya-consciousness—] and the condition [—mentation—] of saṃsāra. Since this [mentation] and the ālaya[-consciousness] manifest in the form of mutual causes and conditions, just like water and waves, they are incessantly stirring and forming [each other]. Hence, this is ignorance.<sup>812</sup>

Jamgön Kongtrul's commentary on *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* says:

The meaning of “beginningless” is as follows. Before that essence (the pure nature [of the mind]), there is nothing that could be called “bud-dhahood,” and before the latent tendencies of ignorant mistakenness, there is absolutely nothing that could be called a “sentient being.” The time of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa appearing and being mistaken as two is this very moment,<sup>813</sup> it does not come via someplace else, because all phenomena are dependent origination.<sup>814</sup>

*Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* states:

The one who adopts and rejects these is mistakenness.  
 Through rejecting [mind's] own appearances, where should they  
 · cease?  
 Through adopting [mind's] own appearances, what should come  
 about?  
 Is clinging to duality not delusive?  
 Understanding this is indeed said to be the remedy,  
 But the thought of nonduality is not real [either],  
 For the lack of thought [just] turns into a thought.  
 You thought about emptiness, dissecting form and so on into parts,  
 Are you not mistaken yourself?<sup>815</sup>

The same text also equates the classical Mahāmudrā term “ordinary mind” with the key theme of the *Uttaratantra*—the dharmadhātu's being understood as the tathāgata heart—and relates this to the first two lines of *Uttaratantra* I.154:

Just this ordinary mind  
 Is called “dharmadhātu” and “heart of the victors.”  
 Neither is it to be improved by the noble ones  
 Nor made worse by sentient beings.<sup>816</sup>

Furthermore, the text relates the ignorance about one's true nature and its realization to the three natures of Yogācāra:

Since we lack certainty about what is, just as it is,  
 We produce the imaginary, construing what is nonexistent as existent.  
 The conceptuality produced by this is the dependent [nature].  
 Through not knowing the perfect,  
 We are agitated by our own doing.  
 Alas, in those who realize these qualities of the dharmakāya  
 To be what is real, this is the knowledge of reality.  
 [Even] their present little power is reality—  
 Casting away this knowledge, we fabricate what is unreal  
 And are carried away by the agitation of pursuing it.  
 Understand now what is, just as it is,  
 And you attain power in it.<sup>817</sup>

On the last two lines, Jamgön Kongtrul's commentary takes the Mahāmudrā stance of buddhahood's being nothing but realizing the nature of the mind for what it is:

Since the presence of the dharmakāya in ourselves is realized through study and reflection, understand what is, just as it is—that all qualities [of awakening] exist right now in a complete way in this mind as such, the buddha heart. Through becoming familiar with this understanding, refreshing it again and again, you will realize this, just as it is, which is sufficient—you will directly attain the power of these qualities.<sup>818</sup>

The beginning of *The Distinction between Consciousness and Wisdom* makes it clear that the entire text is written from the perspective, and for the purpose, of meditation as the process of becoming liberated from mistakenness and seeing mind's nature as it is:

Having relied on study and reflection,  
 In order to immerse myself in the ways of meditation,  
 While dwelling in seclusion,  
 I will express how this principle [of mistakenness and liberation]  
 appears.<sup>819</sup>

*The Eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje*

The Eighth Karmapa's introduction to his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra* presents two distinct Kagyü transmissions of Madhyamaka<sup>820</sup>—the well-known Kagyü lineage through Tilopa, Nāropa, Marpa, and so on, and the lineage of Maitrīpa's "Madhyamaka of mental nonengagement," which is a special lineage of Mahāmudrā.<sup>821</sup> He says that Maitrīpa realized that the Madhyamaka taught by Saraha, Śavaripa, Nāgārjuna, and Candrakīrti has the same meaning and taught it in this way to others. The Karmapa quotes Maitrīpa's *Tattvadaśaka* 2, which says that without the words of the guru, even Madhyamaka is only middling (this basically indicates that sūtra-based Mahāmudrā must include pointing-out instructions). From Maitrīpa, this lineage was passed on to Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, the First Karmapa, and so on. Maitrīpa's cycle of Madhyamaka teachings is known as "the twenty-five dharma works of mental nonengagement." In Tibet, three distinct lineages of the intended meaning of this "Madhyamaka of mental nonengagement" developed:

1. The practice that focuses on the profound and luminous Madhyamaka of the mantrayāna
2. The practice that focuses on the profound Madhyamaka of the sūtras
3. The practice that focuses on "the Madhyamaka of False Aspectarian Mere Mentalism"<sup>822</sup>

The latter system explains that the actual meaning of the dohās of the siddhas lies in the ultimately established, self-aware, and self-luminous cognition empty of apprehender and apprehended. This view has been widely taught in India and Tibet by master Vajrapāṇi (one of Maitrīpa's main students), Asu from Nepal, Kor Nirupa (1062–1162), and others.<sup>823</sup>

The Karmapa says that Marpa and Milarepa transmitted and accomplished the entirety of the first two practices, while Gampopa specifically focused on the second practice and widely propagated it. In the *Samādhirājasūtra*, he was the bodhisattva Candraprabhākumāra and was praised by the Buddha as the one who would later spread the teachings of this sūtra. It was Gampopa who gave this system (2) the name "Mahāmudrā," which comes from the Yogāntara class of tantra, in which Mahāmudrā is well known as the name for the wisdom of bliss-emptiness. When the Madhyamaka view of this system dawns in one's mind stream, this is called "the perception of ordinary mind" or "the perception of the dharmakāya." When one realizes that the bearers of the nature of phenomena, such as sprouts and

thoughts, are not established as anything other than their true nature, one refers to this realization with the conventional expression “thoughts appearing as the dharmakāya.”

The view and meditation of this Mahāmudrā system as inseparable from Madhyamaka are said to be very necessary in order to eliminate remaining latencies of discursiveness and the impregnations of negative tendencies at the time when extremely pleasant experiences of the vajrayāna’s wisdom of the union of bliss and emptiness arise in one’s mind. This is called “the single white panacea,”<sup>824</sup> because it eliminates all obscurations without exception. Even a partial dawning of the view and meditation of this Mahāmudrā in the mind serves as the supreme panacea for the referential grasping at what is held to be inferior (such as seeming reality and adventitious stains) or superior (such as ultimate reality or the nature of phenomena). Without such a remedy, just like medicine’s turning into poison, the view and meditation of the freedom from reference points would turn into a view and meditation that are themselves nothing but reference points.

At this point, the Karmapa refers to some of the main passages from Jñānakirti’s *Tattvāvātāra* and Sahajavajra’s *Tattvadaśakaṭikā* quoted above, which link Mahāmudrā with prajñāpāramitā. He says that the experiential guiding instructions of this Mahāmudrā system do not involve vajrayāna empowerments. This system’s explicit teaching is the Madhyamaka of emptiness free from reference points in the sūtra tradition, but implicitly it also teaches the ultimate profound actuality of both sūtras and tantras—the ordinary and extraordinary sugata heart. With this in mind, Gampopa, Pamo Trupa, Jigden Sumgön, and many others have said that “the treatise of our Mahāmudrā is this *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* composed by the Bhagavān Maitreya.” Götsangpa Gönpo Dorje declared that the initiators of this Mahāmudrā are both Saraha and Nāgārjuna, with Saraha teaching Mahāmudrā from the side of affirmation and Nāgārjuna teaching it from the side of negation. Therefore, the Karmapa says, I rejoice in the following straightforward words of Gö Lotsāwa:

This renowned “Glorious Tagpo Kagyü” is not a lineage of words, but it is the lineage of true reality. This true reality refers to the unbroken lineage of the realization of stainless Mahāmudrā. The guru from whom one obtains the realization of Mahāmudrā is presented as one’s root guru.<sup>825</sup>

Consequently, Mikyö Dorje states, though according to the secret mantra approach in the Kagyü lineage there are no separate guiding instructions on Mahāmudrā other than those in the Six Dharmas of Nāropa, by virtue of seeing the purport of this true actuality, the followers of this lineage distinguish instructions called “The Six Dharmas” and “Mahāmudrā.”

The Karmapa continues that, in addition to the Kagyü lineage, many others in Tibet taught this dharma system of Mahāmudrā. For example, it is contained in the teachings called *The Pacification of Suffering* that the Indian master Padampa Sangye brought to Tibet. In particular, there is the Mahāmudrā transmissions to Tropu Lotsāwa Jampa Bal<sup>826</sup> (1173–1225) by many Indian scholars and siddhas, such as Mitrayogin and the great Kashmiri Paṇḍita Śākyaśribhadra who visited Tibet from 1204–1213.<sup>827</sup> The portion of the Mahāmudrā teachings that was later transmitted to the great translators Jamba Lingba,<sup>828</sup> Gö Lotsāwa, Trimkang Lotsāwa Sönam Gyaltzen<sup>829</sup> (1424–1482), and others, when the great Bengali Paṇḍita Vānaratna (1384–1468) visited Tibet three times<sup>830</sup> also belongs to this type of Mahāmudrā system.<sup>831</sup>

The Eighth Karmapa then presents two other Madhyamaka lineages coming to Tibet from Nāgārjuna to Atiśa (982–1054) and Patsab Lotsāwa, respectively. As for the former lineage, Gampopa received it from Jayülwa and many other Kadampa masters. An alternative lineage went from Atiśa via the Kadampa masters Potowa and Sharawa Yönten Tra<sup>832</sup> (1070–1141) directly to the First Karmapa.

Here, Mikyö Dorje addresses the issue of whether the Madhyamaka teachings called “Mahāmudrā” that were transmitted by Maitrīpa and the Madhyamaka teachings transmitted from Atiśa are the same. In terms of the true reality that they teach, he says, there is no difference, but they differ in their approach to realizing this actuality. In Atiśa’s lineage, one determines true reality through conceptual examination and analysis. Then, one rests in meditative equipoise through the knowledge that entails a small degree of clear appearance with regard to the aspect of a nonimplicative negation. In Maitrīpa’s system, just as a fire dies once its wood has been consumed, one determines the nature of this examining and analyzing knowledge itself through seeing that it is baseless and without root. Then one rests in meditative equipoise in that which does not involve any sense of negation or affirmation whatsoever.

In several of his works, the Eighth Karmapa warns against a simplistic understanding of Mahāmudrā in general and Gampopa’s approach to it in particular. Besides the above quote in TOK about “Connate Union

Mahāmudrā” only being a name that Gampopa and Pamo Trupa gave to the pith instructions in Atiśa’s *Bodhipathapradīpa* in order to please those who are fond of very high yānas,<sup>833</sup> Mikyö Dorje’s commentary on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* makes it clear that even Gampopa’s sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach entails some elements of vajrayāna (as also stated by Sahajavajra and others):

Some confused . . . later followers of the Tagpo Kagyü say, “Lord Gampopa, even without relying on the mantra [approach], has nakedly pointed out the wisdom of Mahāmudrā to beginners in the nondual wisdom that is solely directed inward, thus manifesting ordinary or primordial mind.” There is no way that Lord Gampopa held such an approach even in his dreams.<sup>834</sup>

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* says:

Those present-day followers of [Mahā]mudrā whose confusion is even a hundred thousand times bigger than this exclaim, “Through refining the ālaya-consciousness into something pure, it turns into the result of mirrorlike wisdom.” This is not justified for the following reasons. Something like this does not appear in any of the traditions of the mahāyāna . . . A presentation of the ālaya-consciousness as the cause and mirrorlike wisdom as its result is not something that is obtained through reasoning. Rather, with respect to the mode of being of causes and results, in terms of [such] causes and results in the abhidharma that actually fulfill these functions (that is, being what produces and what is produced), the ālaya-consciousness and mirrorlike wisdom are not adequate as a cause and a result that fully qualify as such. Also, since the very nature of the ālaya-consciousness is [nothing but] the adventitious stains, it is presented as impure. No matter how it may be refined by something else, it will not turn into something pure. It is not possible within the sphere of knowable objects that something impure turns into something pure, or that something pure turns into something impure. Some assert that there is the mere factor of lucid and aware mind, and that this is what comprises all the seeds of saṃsāra as well as the seeds of nirvāṇa. This is . . . not something that appears in the Buddhist tradition . . . [which is shown by the fact that] this is put forward as the assertion of non-Buddhists . . . by the great guardians

of the Buddha's teaching, glorious Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, and then refuted.<sup>835</sup>

And:

This kind of mental nonengagement . . . is not something like the stopping of any thoughts in terms of experience and recollection (as a subcategory of mental factors) in the system of the Chinese master [Hvashang] who boasted himself about the Madhyamaka view. In brief, it is from the perspective of the sixth consciousness itself becoming without any characteristics that it is clearly manifest as the actuality of mental nonengagement. However, the explanation nowadays that being free from apprehending generalities—as the kind of cognition that impairs the sixth consciousness—is the view of Mahāmudrā free from mental engagement is nothing but the occurrence of a dharma famine. The manner in which the position of said Chinese master and the Mahāmudrā free from mental engagement do not accord should be understood from my other works.<sup>836</sup>

Mikyö Dorje generally holds that the Mahāmudrā instructions—in the sense of essence Mahāmudrā—originated with Saraha. In his *Answers to Lingdrungpa's Questions*,<sup>837</sup> he points to the superiority of this Kagyü Mahāmudrā compared even to the fourth empowerment in the Yogāntara class of tantra. In answer to the question of whether there is a difference between Gampopa's Mahāmudrā and the Mahāmudrā of the fourth empowerment, he says that Gampopa's Mahāmudrā falls outside the scope of the question of whether it is the same or different from this empowerment. For Jigden Sumgön says that this Mahāmudrā is "beyond the four joys, more eminent than luminosity, and untouched by the three great ones."<sup>838</sup> Saraha's *Dohakoṣa* too declares that the connate natural state, Mahāmudrā, the purport of the dohās, cannot be realized through the fourth empowerment:

Some engage in the explanation of the purport of the fourth  
 [empowerment],  
 Some understand it as the element of space,  
 And others view it as emptiness,  
 But mostly they have entered what is incompatible [with it].<sup>839</sup>



Instead, just like Saraha and other siddhas, the Karmapa here champions the most immediate approach to mind's nature, which entails discarding any conventional kind of Buddhist practice, including the vajrayāna. He says that within the great primordial freedom from the impurities of the experiences, realizations, and philosophical systems of the four mundane and supramundane empowerments and so forth, one simply settles in an unfabricated natural manner in what appears spontaneously as the primordial buddha, the primordially pristine presence itself. Apart from that, the siddhi of Mahāmudrā is not accomplished through tiresome activities such as requesting empowerments, ringing a bell, repeating mantras while meditating on a deity, collecting wood to make fire offerings, or carrying out extensive meditation rituals after having collected offering substances. The Karmapa concludes by saying that when Pamo Trupa met Gampopa after already having received the fourth empowerment in the Sakya tradition, he left the experience of Mahāmudrā in that fourth empowerment behind and realized the Mahāmudrā of Gampopa's Kagyü—ordinary mind.<sup>840</sup> All of this corresponds to Mikyö Dorje's remark in his spiritual memoirs that when teaching Mahāmudrā, he emphasizes the tradition of the dohās as transmitted via Maitrīpa's student Vajrapāṇi.<sup>841</sup>

As for the relationship between Mahāmudrā and the tathāgata heart, the Eighth Karmapa's *Answers to the Questions of Lama Kampa* refers to the Third Karmapa's *Profound Inner Reality's* speaking of mind in its two aspects—pure and impure.<sup>842</sup> As for how the impure aspect of mind comes about, mind's essence is empty, its nature is lucid, and its expression is unimpeded, but it is ignorant about itself. Therefore, the pristine mind is primordial wisdom (*ye shes*) but at the same time obscured by ignorance, which is called “consciousness” (*rnam shes*). Conventionally, this wisdom is an existing phenomenon, the natural, self-arisen, inherent, and undeluded tathāgata heart. Now, if there are these two kinds of minds, how can it be held that the essence of thoughts is dharmakāya? It is not incompatible for a single mind stream to entail both the natural state and adventitious stains because these stains are not other in substance than native mind (*gnyug ma'i sems*), which is equivalent to the dharmakāya and ordinary mind.

As mentioned above, the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* often equates the tathāgata heart with Mahāmudrā, even speaking of the “permanent moment of Mahāmudrā” and “the supreme awareness that is other” (that is, the direct experience of mind's nature that is beyond time and dualistic mind).<sup>843</sup>

*Tagpo Dashi Namgyal*

Tagpo Dashi Namgyal's (1512/1513–1587) *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā* presents several different positions as to whether Mahāmudrā belongs to the sūtrayāna, the mantrayāna, or neither.<sup>844</sup> First, he says, some dohās and symbolic transmissions of Mahāmudrā explain that among sūtra and tantra, Mahāmudrā belongs to the latter. Within tantra, among the path of blessing, the path of solace, and the path of direct perception, it represents the third one. They say that one needs either an elaborate or a short maturing empowerment and that the yānas preceding this highest one should be cultivated as appropriate since they are like stepping stones. According to the sources of secret conduct, among the three yānas in terms of students with inferior, medium, and highest intelligence—the pāramitāyāna, the mantrayāna, and the yāna of the unsurpassable essence—Mahāmudrā represents the latter. It has the four features of not directly being in accord with the two former yānas, not being in contradiction with them, being in partial accordance with them, and being more eminent than them. Nevertheless, these Mahāmudrā transmissions say that one needs some elaborate or short form of empowerment and blessing and one should also meditate on a deity as appropriate. Thus, Mahāmudrā must be considered as a subdivision of the mantrayāna.

However, if one analyzes what Saraha says, he asserts Mahāmudrā to be a shortcut path called “the path of the essence.” He holds that this path's own nature does not depend on the mantrayāna. It is free from the three conditions,<sup>845</sup> beyond the four joys, and even more special than luminosity. Still, he speaks in his *Queen Dohā* of how to rely on a karmamudrā, how to mature her through empowerment, and how to engage in yogic conduct, thus saying that if Mahāmudrā is connected with the mantrayāna, it is suitable for that. Saraha, Tilopa, and others also explain that in order to realize perfect wisdom, without the instructions of Mahāmudrā, it is difficult to realize the ultimate basic nature—luminous Mahāmudrā—through the paths of sūtra or tantra alone.

Then, Tagpo Dashi Namgyal refers to Gampopa's above-mentioned division of three paths—taking inference as the path, taking blessing as the path, and taking direct perceptions as the path, which is Mahāmudrā. He also adduces two further ways of Gampopa's making a threefold division of paths. (1) The pāramitāyāna is the path of relinquishing the basis through taking the factors to be relinquished and their remedies to be different. The path of transforming the basis is the mantrayāna—the transformation

of one's body into a deity, the transformation of taking afflictions as the path, and the transformation of taking thoughts as wisdom, thus cleansing stains with stains and cutting through thoughts with thoughts. The path of knowing the basis is Mahāmudrā—there is nothing to be relinquished, no remedy, nothing to be transformed, and nothing that transforms it, but everything is mind's display. One becomes a buddha through familiarizing with the recognition that mind's being primordially unborn exists as the intrinsic dharmakāya. (2) The pāramitāyāna refers to those of dull faculties engaging in the path of accumulation. The mantrayāna refers to those of medium faculties who are full of thoughts and afflictions engaging in the path of means. Mahāmudrā refers to those of sharp faculties who possess prajñā engaging in true reality. Therefore, Dashi Namgyal says, Gampopa holds that Mahāmudrā is a shortcut path separate from both sūtra and tantra (Gampopa also sometimes uses the term "path of blessing" for it). Gampopa asserts that when a realized guru guides a qualified student who has left behind all activities of this life, that student will be liberated instantaneously through the path of Mahāmudrā without depending on the paths of sūtra or tantra.

There are two kinds of persons who practice profound true reality—for the fortunate ones with prior training, it is sufficient to teach them the profound path in an instantaneous manner, while beginners must be taught this path in a gradual manner. Gampopa holds that this profound path of Mahāmudrā is a shortcut path independent of tantra and did not say that one needs maturing empowerments as a preliminary for it. Rather, he guided students by relying only on taking refuge in the guru and the three jewels, cultivating love, compassion, and bodhicitta, confessing wrongdoing, offering maṇḍalas to the guru and the three jewels, and praying to them with fervent devotion. In this context, those of highest faculties with an instantaneous disposition should first seek for the view and then should be taught the pith instructions on the means to rest in meditative equipoise on the basis of that view. This corresponds to the contemporary way of guiding students through The Four Letters of Mahāmudrā.<sup>846</sup> Those of inferior faculties with a gradual disposition are progressively guided from calm abiding to superior insight, which corresponds to the contemporary manner of guiding through Connate Union. The reasons for this are understood from the guidance manuals, oral instructions, and questions and answers in Gampopa's collected works, as well as from the parts of the collected works of Pamo Trupa and the First Karmapa that record the oral teachings of Gampopa.

However, it appears that later followers of this practice lineage, in terms of adapting Mahāmudrā to the sūtrayāna and tantrayāna, have joined Mahāmudrā with many practices from these yānas, such as required empowerments, the four common and uncommon preliminaries, and appropriate stages of enhancement. Thus, to take Mahāmudrā as the profound path that is in common with sūtra and tantra is not contradictory, but to do so is due to the different needs of those with inferior and superior intelligence and is in order to enhance realization. Still, if one follows Gampopa's system of practicing Mahāmudrā alone, there is no need for empowerments, the meditation of Vajrasattva, visualizing oneself as a deity, and visualizing the guru as Vajradhara, but one just practices the above preliminaries taught by Gampopa himself.

Dashi Namgyal's text does not show any significant linking of Mahāmudrā and the *Uttaratantra*—its only quote is *Uttaratantra* I.63ab among many other quotations to support the description of the nature of the mind as space-like luminosity.

### *Padma Karpo*

Padma Karpo's *Treasure Vault of Mahāmudrā* quotes three lines from the above-mentioned famous verse about connate mind's being the dharmakāya and so on and then explains its meaning—particularly Gampopa's key term “Connate Union”—by greatly relying on the *Uttaratantra*:

Connate mind as such is the dharmakāya.

Connate appearances are the light of the dharmakāya.

Therefore, the inseparability of appearances and mind is  
connateness.<sup>847</sup>

What is connate here are connate mind as such and connate appearances. Since Mahāmudrā free from any sides is labeled as two by minds that fall into one side or the other, it appears as the basic ground and its radiance, just as a single person may be apprehended as a friend or an enemy. Therefore, in terms of the basic ground, Mahāmudrā is presented as changeless great bliss. In terms of its radiance, it is presented as the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects. The first is the ultimate and the second is the seeming. Hence, the seeming is the cause or the means, while the ultimate is the result or the outcome of the means. The meaning of “changeless” is explained by *Uttaratantra* I.51cd:

Its true nature of being changeless  
Is the same before as after.

As for “the true nature” here, *Uttarantra* I.155 says that the basic element is empty of what is adventitious but is not empty of the unsurpassable qualities. Thus, since appearances are adventitious, they are taught to be changing. Since the true nature is not like that, it is without anything to change. Hence, it is called “naturally pure.” Since saṃsāra comes about due to the ongoing continuation of what is adventitious, the cause of saṃsāra needs to be purified. This cause is not something far away but simply consists of being distracted from the basic nature. Therefore, it is just through not engaging in being distracted from this nature that saṃsāra ends, and the ending of saṃsāra is nirvāṇa (this is followed by quoting *Uttarantra* I.154). Being distracted arises due to the power of beginningless latent tendencies, and these latent tendencies are planted by improper mental engagement. Being distracted is nothing but being ignorant about such mental engagement because the mind turns to what is other than proper mental engagement. In other words, to move away from mindfulness is what is called “distraction.” Therefore, if improper mental engagement has become pure, there will be only proper mental engagement. Thus, the gurus say that the root of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is determined by being unaware and aware, respectively. Proper mental engagement is exactly what is explained as the third meaning of the term “mental nonengagement” (*amanasikāra*) above—mentally engaging in a proper manner in the meaning of the letter *a*, which is prajñāpāramitā, nonduality, nonarising, and nonceasing. In terms of the vajrayāna, nonduality refers to the union of prajñā and means, which has the nature of great bliss. In terms of the pāramitāyāna, duality refers to subject and object, which will always be dual for as long as there is mental flux. The identitylessness of all phenomena is free from all flux, without any reference points, and nondual. Therefore, the gurus say that meditation is mental nonengagement. At that time, one cannot assert anything about what is to be looked at, so the view is called “being without any assertions.” Since whatever appears at that time is without anything to be adopted or to be relinquished, conduct is called “being free from adopting and rejecting.” Since appearing and being liberated are simultaneous, the fruition is called “being free from hope and fear.”

As for the word “union” in “connate union,” it means to rest in ordinary mind—the unity of connate appearances and mind—without distraction.

*The Eighth Situpa, Chökyi Jungné*

The commentary by the Eighth Situ Rinpoche on the Third Karmapa's *Aspiration Prayer of Mahāmudrā* quotes ten verses from the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadhātustava* each, clearly relating the *Uttaratantra* and its main topic of buddha nature with Mahāmudrā in terms of ground, path and fruition, as well as view and meditation. In its defense of a sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach without empowerment, the commentary also refers to Maitrīpa, Sahajavajra, and Jñānakīrti as forerunners of that system.

Situ Rinpoche's text quotes *Uttaratantra* I.154 twice. First,<sup>848</sup> the verse is quoted as support for saying that the basic natures of body and mind are inseparable, just like ice and water. Therefore, they are called "the union of the two kāyas at the time of the ground." There are no other means to clearly manifest this basic nature than the self-aware direct perception that arises through the power of meditation:

There is nothing to be removed in this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.

Later,<sup>849</sup> the same verse is cited as support for saying that the main point with regard to the meditation flaws of dullness and agitation is to directly look at their very essence and rest right within that essence in an uncontrived manner. This is the most profound remedy and is also necessary as the basis for superior insight.

Verse 7 of the *Aspiration Prayer* speaks about the typical fourfold vajrayāna set of (1) the basis of purification, (2) the means of purification, (2) what is to be purified, and (4) the result of purification:

Within the basis of purification, mind as such, the union of being  
 lucid and empty,  
 Through the means of purification, the great vajra yoga of  
 Mahāmudrā,  
 May the stainless dharmakāya manifest as the result of the  
 purification  
 Of what is to be purified, the stains of adventitious mistakenness.

(1) In his comments on the basis of purification,<sup>850</sup> Situ Rinpoche quotes *Uttaratantra* I.55–57, which speaks about the purity of the mind's being the basis of all impure states of mind while not relying on any of them, as the reason for naturally pure mind's being the basis of purification. Thus, the ground for everything in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is the purity of the mind, that is, the basic element or tathāgata heart. This is the basis of purification but not what is to be purified since there is nothing whatsoever to be purified in its own essence. This is followed by quoting *Dharmadhātustava* verses 17 and 22:

This basic element, which is the seed,  
Is held to be the basis of all dharmas.  
Through its purification step by step,  
The state of buddhahood we will attain.

The sūtras that teach emptiness,  
However many spoken by the victors,  
They all remove afflictions,  
But never ruin this dhātu.

To wit, the former verse essentially represents a synopsis of the last four vajra points, while the latter one can be understood as an alternative answer (compared to *Uttaratantra* I.158–60) to the question in *Uttaratantra* I.156 why the buddhas teach the existence of the tathāgata heart in sentient beings despite having said before that all knowable objects are empty.

Situ Rinpoche continues that the pure mind is endowed with the sixty-four qualities of maturation and freedom in a nondual manner even at the time of the ground, being obscured only by adventitious stains. There are limitless scriptures that teach that mind is the union of being lucid and being empty, such as *Uttaratantra* I.63's saying that this mind cannot be tainted by adventitious stains because it is naturally luminous:

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is unchanging, just like space.  
It is not afflicted by adventitious stains,  
Such as desire, born from false imagination.

There is no being lucid apart from being empty and no being empty apart from being lucid. Thus, they are a union since *Uttaratantra* I.155cd says that the basic element

Is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

By contrast, those who explain lucidity and emptiness as two separate things and say that their union refers to these two things becoming coupled stand outside the teachings of the Tathāgata.<sup>851</sup>

Commenting on the second line of verse 7 of the *Aspiration Prayer* (the great vajra yoga of Mahāmudrā's being the means for purifying that basis to be purified), Situ Rinpoche declares that according to the stages of the guiding instructions of the Tagpo Kagyü, for students who rely on a qualified guru, it is fine either way if their practice of Mahāmudrā is preceded by elaborate empowerments or not. Those without empowerment, by virtue of practicing the common, uncommon, and special preliminaries of Mahāmudrā followed by the main practices of calm abiding and superior insight, gain exceptional realizations through seeing ordinary mind's own face, which they had determined before through the pointing-out instructions they received. Such realizations are identical in the ultimate essential point to the realization of Mahāmudrā that arises through relying on the two stages of generation and completion. Furthermore, due to the different levels of the karmic dispositions of the students and the abilities of the gurus, some gain realization solely through the blessing of the transference of wisdom, while others gradually receive the four empowerments and then familiarize with the continuity of the experience of the third empowerment that is pointed out by the fourth empowerment. Thus, the wisdom of Mahāmudrā can become manifest through all kinds of means such as these. Though it is beyond being an object of speech, thought, and expression, the above-mentioned basis of purification is clearly experienced in the manner of being a personal experience.

Situ Rinpoche declares that the approach of wisdom's being suitable to arise even without being preceded by elaborate empowerments does not fit into the minds of some famous scholars in Tibet who say (a) that Mahāmudrā is not possible without empowerment and the generation and completion stages and (b) that a good approach to meditation can be based only on the view that is taught in the Madhyamaka texts through extensive reasoning.



(a) Situ Rinpoche answers that the first flaw does not apply to this Mahāmudrā system here because, though it is not held that elaborate empowerments are indispensable for disciples of highest faculties, their Mahāmudrā practice must definitely be preceded by a vajra master's blessings through vajra wisdom. As a result of that, the two stages of generation and completion are de facto definitely present too.

Of course, he says, some object that the empowerment of the transference of blessings does not qualify as an actual empowerment and that the practice of guru yoga does not qualify as the two stages of generation and completion. However, in that case, it would follow that empowerments into a colored-sand maṇḍala and so on are even less qualified as empowerments because an empowerment must be something that is able to give rise to the realization of the actuality of this empowerment in one's mind stream and because the ability of elaborate empowerments to do so is inferior to the one of unelaborate empowerments. Also, it would follow that deity yoga too does not qualify as the stages of generation and completion. For, in the vajrayāna, one must regard the deity and the guru as being nondual, and the deity must be sealed with the guru. Thus, a deity as something sealed without a guru who seals it is just an imputed deity, which will never grant the supreme siddhi of Mahāmudrā. Consequently, since the samādhi empowerment or the empowerment of vajra wisdom in our tradition is the supreme among all empowerments, it goes without saying that it qualifies as empowerment. In fact, it is a flaw if a realized guru attempts to guide a student of supreme faculties who is suited for Mahāmudrā through any elaborate empowerments other than this supreme empowerment. This is explained in detail in King Indrabhūti's *Jñānasiddhi*, which says that all supreme siddhis are accomplished through this vajra wisdom empowerment and describes the disastrous results of empowering someone with a physical maṇḍala if one possesses the entirety of perfect wisdom. Since the dividing line between receiving and not receiving an empowerment is whether or not the actuality of the empowerment has dawned in one's mind stream, it must be understood that one has received the vase empowerment if the realization of the inseparability of appearance and emptiness has arisen in one's mind. The same goes for the other three empowerments.

Likewise, guru yoga alone is sufficient as the two stages of generation and completion because the appearance of the entirety of phenomenal existence as the display of the guru through the power of guru yoga is far more effective in stopping clinging to ordinary appearances than even deity yoga. Also, many tantras say that the guru embodies all the jewels and that

all siddhis will be attained through meditating on the guru. As for the completion stage, to sustain the experience of one's mind's having become without reference points through intense devotion is held to be the supreme path free from all obstacles and points to go astray.

(b) The second flaw does not apply here either. From the perspective of the freedom from reference points, the view of mantra Mahāmudrā is in accord with Madhyamaka. Therefore, not<sup>852</sup> realizing the view of Madhyamaka cannot be a flaw of the mantrayāna. Furthermore, since Madhyamaka dialectics are merely taught for the sake of rebutting the disputes of tīrthikas, Mādhyamikas do not even consider analytical meditation as their very own system because Maitrīpa says in *Tattvadaśaka* 2cd:

Not adorned with the guru's words,  
The middle is just middling.

Thus, just as the Eighth Karmapa above, Situ Rinpoche here advocates personal pointing-out instructions by a guru as being the essence of even the Madhyamaka path. He continues with a quote from Sakya Paṇḍita as the reason why Mahāmudrā accords with the Madhyamaka view in terms of all reference points' having subsided:

If there were a view higher than Madhyamaka,  
That view would entail reference points.<sup>853</sup>

Accordingly, a view that is superior to the Madhyamaka free from reference points is impossible in the teachings of the Buddha. With this in mind, Jñānakīrti's *Tattvāvatāra* explains that the prajñāpāramitā taught in the sūtras and mantra Mahāmudrā are synonyms:

Another name of Mother Prajñāpāramitā is Mahāmudrā because it is the very nature of nondual wisdom.<sup>854</sup>

As for the critique of Mahāmudrā's being the system of Hwashang,<sup>855</sup> Situ Rinpoche confirms that many instructions on Mahāmudrā emphasize that it is essential not to pursue thoughts about the past, the present, and the future. Some people say about this, "Since your Mahāmudrā is to stop all mental engagement in terms of the three times, it is the meditation of the Chinese Hwashang." However, Situ Rinpoche says, these people just talk without having properly examined the issue, since the Kagyü lineage

does not hold that one should rest within a state of thoughts having ceased through deliberately stopping all mental engagement. Rather, it is held that the present fresh mind is sustained in an uncontrived manner. Still, these people may think, “Even if that is the case, you are not beyond the flaw mentioned, since all thoughts in terms of the three times will cease on their own through sustaining the present mind in an uncontrived manner.” This just shows that such people are very attached to their thoughts and thus cannot let go of them. Since there seem to be very many people who have such a “pure” view, they are more than welcome to join in relishing their thoughts and have no need to analyze this here. As for us, Situ Rinpoche concludes, we never embarked on any path other than the one taught by the *sugatas* and traveled by the mighty *siddhas*.

(3) Now, what is to be purified by the means of purification within the basis of purification consists of the dualistic phenomena of apprehender and apprehended that do not exist in the basic ground but are produced by adventitious mistakenness.

(4) The result of the purification of these stains is the manifestation of the *dharmakāya*, that is, the fundamental nature of the ground, in which all such adventitious dualistic phenomena have been relinquished. As *Dharmadhātustava* 37 says:

Covered by the web of the afflictions,  
It is called a “sentient being.”  
Once it’s free of the afflictions,  
It should be expressed as “Buddha.”

As for the teaching that the Buddha sees the *dharmadhātu* just as it is and the teaching that mind is self-aware and self-lucid, Situ Rinpoche says,<sup>856</sup> the following must be understood. Not seeing even an atom of something that could serve as a characteristic within the *dharmadhātu* free from all reference points is expressed as “the great seeing of wisdom.” That this is free from something to be aware of and something that is aware, or something to be made lucid and something that makes it lucid, is called “awareness” and “lucidity.” One needs to understand this secret essential point and not take said teachings as being equivalent to the perceptions of worldly people. Otherwise, to speak of mind’s being aware of itself by itself is self-contradictory, accruing the flaws of being like a sword that cannot cut itself and so on that are exposed in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, and other texts.

However, the nature of the mind is not to be taken as utterly nonexistent or completely unobservable either. If the basic element of naturally pure mind were nonexistent, even on the level of what is merely seeming, it would not be tenable for the appearances of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa to occur since one only speaks of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa due to the distinction of whether this fundamental ground is not realized or realized, respectively. This is clearly expressed in verses 11, 16, and 17 of the *Dharmadhātustava*.

Here, the following essential point is to be understood. Though all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa that appear as characteristics never existed in the basic ground, this does not contradict the fact that this basic ground provides the space in which everything can appear. Though this is expressed as “the vajra of mind,” “the naturally pure basic element,” and so on, it is impossible for something that entails the extreme of being absolutely real and permanent to exist. “But how can this be reconciled with the sūtras of the final dharma wheel’s speaking of the pāramitās of purity, permanence, bliss, and self (see *Uttaratantra* I.35–58), as well as the vajrayāna’s speaking of ‘invincible and indestructible wisdom’ and so on?” This is answered in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.78:

It is precisely nonexistence  
That is the supreme existence.  
Nonobservability in all respects  
Is the supreme observation.<sup>857</sup>

Accordingly, this refers to the naturally pure true reality that cannot be split by any characteristics or reference points, is beyond being an object of mind, and never changes into any other state. The purpose of teaching it in positive terms is to dispel the clinging to emptiness because the sūtras and Nāgārjuna say that such clinging is even worse than views about permanence. The reason for this is that emptiness was taught in order to dismantle any reification, but if one reifies emptiness, it is an even graver reification than any mundane one. This is similar to taking an emetic in order to dispel a disease and the emetic itself then turning into poison.<sup>858</sup>

Situ Rinpoche also explains the meaning of the well-known Kagyü expression “thoughts are dharmakāya.”<sup>859</sup> He says that all these phenomena that appear as mere thoughts do not go beyond the dharmadhātu that is great bliss. Therefore, from the very moment of their appearance, they are established as the dharmakāya. This is similar to the reflection of the moon in water, which does not go beyond the substance of water, being

established as water from the very moment of its appearance. However, Situ Rinpoche clarifies, it should be understood that we Kagyüpas never say that by virtue of thoughts' being the dharmakāya, one will be liberated merely through continuing to conceptually examine them.

Later,<sup>860</sup> our text relates the *Uttaratantra* to the fact that the names and meanings of all profound and vast dharmas are included in Mahāmudrā, which is thus the single white panacea, and also defends “the Mahāmudrā of mental nonengagement.” The meaning of “profound” here refers to actually being of one taste as emptiness. The meaning of “vast” refers to the mere means that enable one to directly or indirectly engage in Mahāmudrā. As *Uttaratantra* I.147 says:

The teaching of the principle of subtle profundity  
 Is like the single taste of honey.  
 The teaching of the principle of diverse aspects  
 Should be understood to resemble a kernel in its various husks.

Therefore, this is the final meaning taught by all the various discourses of the Sugata. Through realizing just this, one will arrive at the ground of all dharmas, perfect all qualities, and relinquish all obscurations. Hence, it was also given the name “single white panacea.” It is not contradictory for this term to likewise refer to the meditation that makes one realize Mahāmudrā since the opening verse of Dignāga's *Prajñāpāramitāsamgraha* says:

Prajñāpāramitā is nondual wisdom,  
 Which is the Tathāgata.  
 By virtue of being connected to this actuality to be accomplished,  
 It is [also] the term for both the [related] scriptures and the path.

Thus, Situ Rinpoche again links Mahāmudrā not only with the *Uttaratantra* but also with *prajñāpāramitā*.

He continues that some highly esteemed analytical scholars are concerned about the explanation of Mahāmudrā as lacking mental engagement. However, there is no flaw because the first letter *a* in *amanasikāra* teaches identitylessness, nonarising, and so on, that is, the meaning of the emptiness that is beyond all reference points. The remaining letters teach the mental engagement that is free from mental engagement and lacks any clinging even to emptiness. Thus, the meaning of this term is established as the Mahāmudrā of union free from reference points. This is followed by

several supporting quotations from the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, the *Hevajra-tantra*, the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*, and the passage on the etymology of *amanasikāra* from Maitrīpa's *Amanasikārādhāra* that was already presented above.

Shortly thereafter,<sup>861</sup> Situ Rinpoche has someone object, "If your Mahāmudrā belongs to the four mudrās, shouldn't it be preceded by practicing the other three mudrās?" According to the tantras, those of highest faculties can enter Mahāmudrā right from the start. It is not even contradictory to say that some who lack the highest faculties can still engage in Mahāmudrā meditation at the beginning. To say that Mahāmudrā practice must necessarily be preceded by practicing the other three mudrās is very absurd for the following reasons. There are many well-known and authentic records in both India and Tibet of siddhas effortlessly eliciting wisdom in their most gifted disciples merely through blessings or symbols, without any need for bestowing empowerments, giving reading transmissions, and imparting instructions. Still, it is not that the wisdom of Mahāmudrā can only come about in the context of "the descent of wisdom," but there are many explanations on different ways of accomplishing Mahāmudrā through any one of the other three mudrās. Therefore, it is only our own system "Connate Union" established by Gampopa that possesses many different approaches due to the varying capacities of both masters and students.

This is followed by a passage that is another clear reference to what later became called "sūtra Mahāmudrā." It also indicates that students who start out with it can "upgrade" their capacities and thus eventually become suitable for tantra or essence Mahāmudrā. Situ Rinpoche says that among these many approaches to realize Mahāmudrā, there is the acclaimed manner of guiding those who are not suitable recipients for the extraordinary vajrayāna but who possess the general mahāyāna disposition in either a certain or an uncertain way. Though they do not receive instructions on the other three mudrās, when the wisdom of union of the pāramitāyāna finally arises in them through this path, their disposition shifts to being one of those with sharpest faculties in the mantrayāna. Therefore, through special blessings and pointing-out instructions, they can then accomplish the supreme siddhi of Mahāmudrā. There are different opinions as to whether the wisdom of union of the pāramitāyāna itself is Mahāmudrā. Our own system does not speak out clearly on this matter, but it is obvious that we hold that from the perspective of the view, the two systems of the

pāramitāyāna and Mahāmudrā are not different. This can be understood from carefully reading Sahajavajra's *Tattvadaśakaṭīkā*.

At the end of his commentary,<sup>862</sup> Situ Rinpoche elaborates further on the two approaches of Mahāmudrā that he briefly referred to above: (1) the uncommon tantra system and (2) the system that blends sūtra and tantra. (1) In the first system, there are two approaches: (a) The first one consists of a powerful guru's conferring only the vajra wisdom empowerment upon a student of supreme faculties, without the need for preceding elaborate empowerments. In this approach, for students of instantaneous disposition, they become liberated merely through the blessings of this empowerment, being shown a symbol, or just a very short instruction, as is evident from many examples in India and Tibet. From among the two approaches of the elaborate path of means and the unelaborate path of Connate Union, this is the latter. (b) Those of lesser faculties who have the disposition of progressing in a gradual fashion need to go through the preliminaries as outlined by the Third Karmapa's *Guiding Manual on Connate Union*—taking some type of prātimokṣa vows, taking the bodhisattva vows, and receiving the elaborate kinds of empowerments, in the Kagyü School usually in the maṇḍala of Cakrasaṃvara. Thereafter, there are two ways to practice. One is to engage in the generation stage and, once one has become familiar with that, to engage in the completion stage yogas without characteristics. The other one is to first become a little bit familiar with the yogas of calm abiding and superior insight without characteristics and then to engage in the generation stage. By virtue of that, lucid appearances in the latter will be attained easily, and siddhis will be found swiftly. In both cases, after the generation stage, completion stage practices with and without characteristics are practiced in a unified manner such that they enhance each other.

(2) The system that blends sūtra and tantra was developed by Maitrīpa through clearly bringing out what Saraha and his successors had asserted. Maitrīpa also wrote the *Tattvadaśaka*, which teaches this approach and thus represents the original approach of this system. Later, Gampopa adorned this approach with the instructions of Atiśa on the stages of the path of the three kinds of individuals that he had heard from his Kadampa teachers. Thus, he is well known as the one who united the two streams of Kadampa and Mahāmudrā. Since this system enables one to arrive at the siddhi of Mahāmudrā in a comparatively short time, it well deserves the name "The Guiding Instructions of Connate Union without Meditation." Gampopa said, "Just as I saw in my dreams and as predicted by Milarepa, I benefited many beings through the Kadampa teachings" and "The little bit of

benefit that I bring to sentient beings at present is due to the kindness of the Kadampa gurus." He also dreamt of many deer listening to him playing a drum and that he then distributed milk to them. All this shows that this system has a specific purpose. For the intention behind it is that at the time of the degenerations being rampant, there are only very few disciples suitable for the extraordinary vajrayāna. However, by way of guiding people of inferior faculties through the stages of the path of the three kinds of individuals, they eventually become students of highest faculties and suitable vessels for the vajrayāna. Thus, they can attain liberation in a single lifetime or will at least see the true reality of Mahāmudrā through these methods and be established on the path of irreversibility.

Therefore, Situ Rinpoche says, to the present day there is this approach of guiding all students of higher and lower faculties without needing to examine them. However, when the profound path of means of the vajrayāna is taught on top of this approach, the latter is called "the instructions of the causal period of this vajrayāna" or "the guiding instructions of the ground." The reason for its being unnecessary to examine the mind streams of those to be guided here is obvious in the case of those who engage in this system through having faith in the profound actuality of Mahāmudrā, but even those who entertain doubts will gain great benefit. As the *Ratnāvalī* says:

By virtue of a little merit, about this dharma  
 Not even the slightest doubt arises.  
 But even the arising of doubt about it  
 Will tear [saṃsāric] existence to shreds.<sup>863</sup>

In brief, let alone tantra Mahāmudrā, even the Mahāmudrā that blends sūtra and tantra is much swifter than the regular pāramitāyāna.

Situ Rinpoche's commentary concludes with the lineages of (1) tantra Mahāmudrā and (2) sūtra Mahāmudrā,<sup>864</sup> saying that (1) was transmitted from Vajradhara to Tilopa, Nāropa, and Marpa. Another lineage of this approach came to Marpa through Vajradhara, Ratnamati, Saraha, Śavaripa, and Maitrīpa. Thus, Marpa brought these two lineages together and then passed them on to Milarepa, Gampopa, and so on. (2) The Mahāmudrā approach of the union of sūtra and tantra was only transmitted in the lineage from Saraha. Since this latter approach was adorned by Gampopa with the stages of the path of the Kadampa School, it also contains this school's three lineages of vast conduct, profound view, and practice through blessings. The first one originated with the Buddha and was passed on to



Maitreya, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Āryavimuktisena, Bhadanta Vimuktisena, Paramasena, Vinītasena, Vairocanabhadrā, Hariḥbhadrā, the greater and lesser Kusulipa, Dharmakīrti from Serling (Indonesia),<sup>865</sup> and Atiśa. The second lineage went from the Buddha to Mañjuśrī, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Candrakīrti, the Elder and Younger \*Vidyākoka, and Atiśa. The third lineage was transmitted by Vajradhara through Tilopa, Nāropa, Ḍombīpa, and Atiśa. Thus, all three came together in Atiśa, from whom they continued in Tibet to Dromtönpa, Chenngawa Tsültrim Bar<sup>866</sup> (1038–1103), Jayülwa Shönnu Ö, and Gampopa. Another way that the Kadampa lineage reached Gampopa was through his studies with Néusurpa Yeshé Bar, Nyugrumpa Dsöndrū Gyaltzen, Gya Jagriwa, and Shawa Lingpa.<sup>867</sup>

### *Other Kagyü Masters on Mahāmudrā and the Uttaratantra*

*The Ultimate Profound Path of Mahāmudrā* by the controversial Lama Shang Yutragpa Dsöndrū Tragpa<sup>868</sup> (1123–1193; a student of Gampopa and his nephew) includes some passages that are identical or very similar to what the *Uttaratantra* says. For example:

As for the heart of the ultimate definitive meaning, the dharmakāya,  
 The naturally pure and luminous expanse,  
 No matter whether the victors of the three times appear or do not  
 appear,  
 Whether the assemblies of the noble ones realize it or do not realize it,  
 Whether the sages teach it or do not teach it,  
 Or whether the commentators on the intention comment on it or do  
 not comment on it,  
 This pure and luminous true nature free from reference points

Is primordially and spontaneously present without any increase or  
 decrease.

Within pure space, worlds are formed and perish,  
 Are burned through fire, scattered by wind, and so on.  
 Though such destructions occur for many immeasurable eons,  
 Space lacks being harmed, lacks change, lacks increase, and lacks  
 decrease.

Due to primordially luminous sunlight's being obscured by clouds,  
 Darkness reigns, but when the cloud banks clear, there is brightness.  
 Though it appears as if there were increase and decrease,

It is impossible for the heart of the sun to increase or decrease.  
 This unchanging dharmakāya that abides like that  
 Is nothing but your own mind—it does not exist anywhere else.

...

It is not established as a self—when examined, it has no essence.  
 It is not without a self—it is the great self free from reference points.<sup>869</sup>

Per K. Sørensen reports that there are several texts by an early representative of the Tropu Kagyü<sup>870</sup> subschool, Jegom Sherab Dorje<sup>871</sup> (1140/50–1220), that follow Gampopa's blend of sūtra-based and *lamrim*-tiered Kadampa teachings with the *Uttaratantra*-based Mahāmudrā instructions of the Kagyü School.<sup>872</sup>

As Mathes (2008a, 41) points out, Jigden Sumgön subscribed to Gampopa's reported position that the *Uttaratantra* is the basis of Kagyü Mahāmudrā. A text on the three dharma wheels by one of Jigden Sumgön's students states:

Mahāmudrā is seriously engaged through making efforts  
 In the guiding instructions on this *Uttaratantra*,  
 Which is what I heard from Jigden [Sum]gön again and again.<sup>873</sup>

The commentary on this text says that the Mahāmudrā that Jigden Sumgön himself practiced was in accordance with the *Uttaratantra* and that the qualities of Mahāmudrā are taught in the *Uttaratantra* with the exact same purport.<sup>874</sup>

Mathes (2008a, 113–25) also discusses some aspects of the position of the Drugpa Kagyü master Barawa Gyaltzen Balsang (1310–1391) on buddha nature, which combines more scholarly explanations based on the *Uttaratantra* with a more experiential approach concordant with Mahāmudrā (though Barawa never uses that term). For example, Barawa defines the tathāgata heart obscured by adventitious stains as being characterized by the inseparability of its being lucid, aware, and empty, which is a frequent description of mind's nature in Mahāmudrā. He also explains that these stains simply refer to mind's nature temporarily not recognizing itself:

Being lucid refers to this ālaya's—bodhicitta—being clear, without being tainted by any obscuring stains that are established as entities. It is aware because it is not matter and thus knows happiness and suffering as [mentioned] above. It is empty because it lacks any color and shape.

These three are inseparable. When divided [into its phases], [its phase of] having adventitious stains is the sugata heart of sentient beings. The sugata heart that exists in sentient beings possesses adventitious stains. The mistakenness of this very [sugata heart] itself not realizing its own basic nature is mistakenness, which is ignorance. Ignorance is taught to be the afflictions and adventitious stains. The true luminous nature abiding within the cocoon of the afflictions is called “the sugata heart obscured by adventitious stains.” Its being lucid and clear, without being obscured by any impurities other than that ([such as] being established as entities of color and shape), is called “luminosity” and “the pure nature.” Ignorance is that this very [luminosity] does not recognize its own face. It is under the influence of that condition [of ignorance] that it appears as all kinds of apprehenders and apprehended [objects], which means to roam in saṃsāra. Therefore, this is the seed of saṃsāric phenomena or the sugata heart of sentient beings. . . . Through making this true nature a living experience, the karmic and afflictive [obscurations] including their latent tendencies of this [luminosity] that abides within the cocoon of karma and afflictions will become pure. Through that, the luminous true nature becomes manifest, which is the dharmakāya or sugata heart of the buddhabhūmi.<sup>875</sup>

Mind’s failure to recognize its own essence leads to the plethora of thoughts that are oriented toward what seems to be on the outside instead of mind’s looking inwardly at itself. This is what is called “ālaya-consciousness” and “sentient being”:

[The ālaya-consciousness] is the basic awareness that is the sugata heart [in its form] of the impure ālaya. Mistakenness [occurs] through its not recognizing its own face. Through that, all kinds of externally oriented thoughts arise. . . . Since it functions as the basis of saṃsāric phenomena, it is the impure ālaya-consciousness. Since it lacks the qualities such as the powers, it is referred to as a sentient being.<sup>876</sup>

Naturally, as the reverse side of nonrecognition, liberation, buddhahood, or the dharmakāya are nothing other than the tathāgata heart recognizing its own true nature. Thus, buddha nature’s not recognizing itself is called “ālaya-consciousness” and its recognition is “the ālaya of wisdom.” In this context, similar to Gö Lotsāwa, Barawa holds that the tathāgata heart is the single ground of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and at the same

time criticizes Dölpopa's well-known position that the ground of saṃsāra and the ground of buddhahood are disconnected like two distinct kingdoms by reinterpreting this position as being only a weak division in terms of isolates (which is obviously not what Dölpopa had in mind):

When this sugata heart recognizes its own face, thus becoming without mistakeness and holding its own ground, it is the dharmakāya of a buddha. Since it functions as the support of the kāyas, wisdoms, deeds, and enlightened activities of the buddhabhūmi, it is the pure ālaya of wisdom—buddhahood. The impure ālaya of consciousness does not function as the basis of the attributes of the buddhabhūmi because it lacks the qualities such as the powers. The pure ālaya of wisdom does not function as the basis of saṃsāra because it lacks the adventitious stains and therefore does not experience saṃsāric happiness, suffering, and so on. Therefore, if divided in terms of isolates, [Dölpopa] asserts that [these two] are two distinct kingdoms. However, since the nature of these two ālayas is the sugata heart, their essence is one.<sup>877</sup>

Later, Barawa comes back to the three features of mind's being lucid, aware, and empty and connects them with typical Mahāmudrā terms used for experiencing mind's nature in meditation. He says that such experiences represent ultimate reality even during the time of the path, which accords with the Mahāmudrā approach of working with direct perceptions of mind's ultimate nature from the very start:

This triad of being lucid, aware, and empty is inseparable, which is ultimate reality, unchanging throughout the entirety of ground, path, and fruition. Its way of appearing is unimpeded—in accordance with the influence of latent tendencies, it appears as all kinds of apprehenders and apprehended [objects], which is seeming reality. At the time of cultivating the path, mind's triad of being lucid, aware, and empty is experienced as being vivid [*sal le*], vibrant [*sing nge*], and crisp [*hrig ge*], just like the clear autumn sky. This is [also] ultimate reality.<sup>878</sup>

In another one of his works, Barawa again emphasizes that the difference between the factors to be relinquished and wisdom is nothing but mind's nature not recognizing or recognizing itself. Also, once it has been recognized, this recognition is irreversible and does not disappear again:

There is nothing to be relinquished that is different from [mind's] true nature not recognizing its own face. Therefore, once that true nature recognizes itself, wisdom—the remedy for what is to be relinquished—arises. That is, [what is to be relinquished] has become nonexistent because it is [nothing but] the true nature's not recognizing its own face. Therefore, though what is to be relinquished has become nonexistent, the recognition of [the true nature's] own face has not become nonexistent. Hence, the remedy will not become nonexistent.<sup>879</sup>

This is illustrated by the common Mahāmudrā example of water and ice:

Water freezes through conditions of coldness such as wind. Though it then has become like a stone, water and ice have a single nature, and the ice melts through conditions such as fire. Through that, the ice has become nonexistent but the water will not become nonexistent.<sup>880</sup>

In his *A Pronouncement of Realization*, the Sixth Shamarpa, Chökyi Wangchug, first establishes the correct Kagyü view of Shentong and then, based on this view, quotes *Uttarantra* I.154 as indicating how to correctly cultivate Mahāmudrā and avoid flaws:

The unmistakable way of meditation is as follows.  
 Since the meaning of the word “ordinary”  
 [In “ordinary mind”] refers to being uncontrived,  
 No matter whether you contrive it as existent or nonexistent,  
 Whether you contrive it by saying, “Just this is it,”  
 Or whether you contrive it by saying, “This is not it,”  
 It is simply contrived, but not ordinary.  
 With nothing to cultivate other than merely being undistracted,  
 Leaving this vivid presence  
 Free from a mind with something to meditate on  
 Is this tradition's way of meditating.  
 However, these days, when giving guidance,  
 [Some] may say, “Look right at whatever thought arises  
 And it will dissolve in its own place and vanish.  
 There is nothing more superior than that, my son!”  
 Through looking in this way,  
 Beginners may pride themselves  
 With the mere dissolution of that thought as being a great experience,

Like “freedom from reference points” or “nonmeditation,”  
 And thus are seized again by the demon of pride.  
 Some people may say,  
 “Look at just this thought!”  
 Then, by propping up that thought,  
 Pride arises, [thinking,] “I saw mind’s true face!”  
 Since there is this secret essential point,  
 You need neither empty it out deliberately to be empty  
 Nor purposely make up some transparent lucidity—  
 Just looking nakedly will suffice.  
 With that in mind, lord [Maitreya] said,  
 “There is nothing to be removed from it  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.”<sup>881</sup>

In the context of ground Mahāmudrā, *The Bright Torch* by Dselé Natso Rangdröl<sup>882</sup> (born 1608) relates both the *Uttaratantra* and typical Shentong explanations to Mahāmudrā, equating Mahāmudrā with the perfect nature and its obscurations with the dependent nature. The text also refers to these two as “the ālaya” and “the ālaya of various latent tendencies,” respectively.<sup>883</sup> The basic ālaya is said not to be a mere emptiness but the self-illuminating self-awareness that is the ever-unchanging tathāgata heart as the cause of all buddha qualities and is only covered by adventitious stains. Natso Rangdröl explains in detail that Mahāmudrā is the unconditioned dharmadhātu, which is the great emptiness free from arising, abiding, and ceasing as well as the naturally present three kāyas. Those who realize it are called “buddhas” and those who do not are called “sentient beings.” Saraha said in his *Dohakoṣa* that “the mind alone is the seed of all—saṃsāra and nirvāṇa emanate from it.” Thus, there is one essence with two aspects, and these aspects simply appear as the result of its being realized or not. However, in itself, the essence of these two aspects never changes, nor is it ever stained. In the general yāna, this is called “the unchanging perfect nature.” This undifferentiated neutral essence is also called “ālaya” because it is the basis for all of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. It is not a total emptiness in which there is nothing whatsoever; similar to a mirror and its clarity, there is an unimpeded self-illuminating awareness. The wisdom aspect of self-illuminating awareness is the essence of the awareness that is the inseparability of emptiness and lucidity. It is the seed or cause of all buddha

qualities and thus equivalent to all synonyms of nirvāṇa, such as the tathāgata heart, prajñāpāramitā, the dharmakāya, self-awareness, and the buddhahood of one's own mind. The dullness aspect of the essential ālaya is to obscure itself through not knowing its own true nature, which is called "innate ignorance" and "the ālaya of various latent tendencies." From it, all afflictions and deluded thoughts arise. Thus, the six consciousnesses and their objects represent the dependent nature. Hence, the terms "liberation" and "delusion" refer only to whether there is freedom from the stains of ignorance and illusory thought or not. According to *Uttaratantra* I.51cd, mind's primordially pure nature—self-arising wisdom free from all reference points—is changeless before and after. The adventitious stains or innate ignorance are like discolorations on gold, arising from itself and obscuring itself. As for how saṃsāra and nirvāṇa can be divisions of the single ālaya, camphor as a medicine can be either beneficial or harmful, depending on whether the illness is of a hot or cold type. Also, poison can be transformed into medicine by certain methods but is deadly without these methods. Likewise, one is liberated if one recognizes the essence of the ālaya but remains deluded if not. This difference is simply the result of having or not having realization.

In the present Sangyé Nyenpa Rinpoche's commentary on the Third Karmapa's *Aspiration Prayer of Mahāmudrā*,<sup>884</sup> which—according to its colophon—is greatly based on instructions by Khenpo Tsültrim Gyatso Rinpoche, verse 7 is explained by using the *Uttaratantra* and also linking Mahāmudrā with Shentong:

Within the basis of purification, mind as such, the union of being  
 lucid and empty,  
 Through the means of purification, the great vajra yoga of  
 Mahāmudrā,  
 May the stainless dharmakāya manifest as the result of the  
 purification  
 Of what is to be purified, the stains of adventitious mistakenness.

The commentary begins by quoting verse 11 of the *Dharmadhātustava*:

If this element exists, through our work,  
 We will see the purest of all gold.  
 Without this element, despite our toil,  
 Nothing but misery we will produce.

Based on this verse, Sangyé Nyenpa Rinpoche explains that the qualities of *tathāgatagarbha* (the disposition or the basic element) or mind as such (the nature of the mind that is the basis of purification) exist in the mind streams of all sentient beings, due to which it is feasible to make efforts on the path, relinquish what is to be relinquished, and attain the result. This resembles the example of melting, purifying, and refining gold nuggets and thus obtaining the result of purest gold due to all the qualities of gold's already existing in the nuggets. Without that *tathāgatagarbha*, all efforts on the path would be like trying to obtain purest gold through melting, purifying, and refining brass—other than tiring oneself out, no such result will be obtained. Therefore, during the phase of the ground, the qualities of the phase of the result abide as a potential that is suitable to be matured. At the time of the ground, this is called “mind as such.” The words “as such” in this expression refer to being uncontrived, the actual basic nature, or the natural state. This mind as such is not newly produced by causes and conditions but exists primordially in an intrinsic manner. This is the meaning of “the basis of purification.”

The qualities of this mind as such consist of the inseparable union of its being empty and luminous, which is the actual way of being of mind. This luminosity is not emphasized in the middle turning of the wheel of dharma since it mainly speaks of emptiness. However, in the pith instructions of Mahāmudrā, Dzogchen, and so on, mind is not mere emptiness but its luminous aspect is emphasized and thus discussed in detail. As *Uttaratantra* I.63 says:

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is completely unchanging, just like space.  
It is not afflicted by adventitious stains,  
Such as desire, born from false imagination.

Accordingly, though the adventitious stains exist based on the luminous nature of the mind as something that can be separated from it, they never taint this nature. *Uttaratantra* I.30ab states:

It is always unafflicted by nature,  
Just as a pure jewel, space, and water.

Thus, though mind as such and the stains coexist, the stains never obscure the nature of this mind as such. Through realizing mind's basic nature, it



will become naturally free from its stains since they are separable. However, though this luminous basic nature exists intrinsically in all sentient beings since the very beginning, due to not identifying it, they are bound by thoughts about a self and others.

This luminosity is expressed in a twofold manner as “ground luminosity” and “path luminosity.” Ground luminosity—the connately existing intrinsic qualities in the mind streams of all sentient beings, no matter whether they have or have not been recognized—constitutes the ground for the dawning of path luminosity. This luminous mind must be found through simply resting within nothing but the present moment of cognition—it is impossible to find through stubbornly clinging to what is outside. Luminosity is the true nature of the mind, from which it can never be separated, just like fire and its heat or the sun and its light. Though this ground luminosity exists primordially and intrinsically, it is difficult to recognize without the dominant condition of relying on a guru and his or her instructions. Therefore, to recognize it newly through familiarizing with it by connecting it with the guru’s pith instructions is called “path luminosity.” Ultimately, however, it is completely beyond all thought, speech, expression, and example and thus cannot be explained. As *Uttarantra* II.32–33 declares:

Since it is subtle, it is not an object of study.  
Since it is the ultimate, it is not [an object] of reflection.  
Since it is the depth of the nature of phenomena,  
It is not [an object] of worldly meditation and so forth.

For naive beings have never seen it before,  
Just as those born blind [have never seen] form.  
Even noble ones [see it only] as an infant [would glimpse]  
The orb of the sun while lying in the house of a new mother.

Thus, it is taught that even the noble ones cannot directly perceive it exactly as it is, just as a newborn baby only experiences some uncomfortable feeling when the radiance of the morning sun outside shines on its face.

This luminosity is permanent, really established, everlasting, established by its own nature, existing at all times, without arising and ceasing, unchanging, and solid. When this is related to Rangtong, there are many debates, while especially Yumowa Mikyö Dorje, Dölpopa, and Śākya Chogden have established it through many scriptures and reasonings. However, the luminosity that is endowed with all these qualities cannot be explained as

it is through connecting verbal objects of expression and means of expression—it is completely beyond them and thus inconceivable. As *Uttaratantra* II.69 states:

Because of being unutterable, because of consisting of the ultimate,  
 Because of not being examinable, because of being beyond example,  
 Because of being unsurpassable, and because of not being included in  
 [samsaric] existence or [nirvāṇic] peace,  
 The sphere of the Buddha is inconceivable even for the noble ones.

You may wonder, “Is the luminous nature of the mind empty?” It is empty but being empty is not necessarily being self-empty. The meaning of self-empty is that all phenomena that make up seeming reality are not really established in their own place, which means that they are empty of a nature of their own. But here it is not explained that luminosity is empty of a nature of its own. Rather, ground luminosity is primordially empty of what is other than it—the adventitious stains on it—or characteristics. This is what is called “empty” here, and it is in those terms that the union of being empty and luminous is established. On top of that union, the adventitious stains are present in the manner of being separable from it and therefore have never ever tainted the true nature.

As for the second line, “the means of purification, the great vajra yoga of Mahāmudrā,” those separable stains are purified by the means of purification that consist of the progressive yogas of Mahāmudrā that ultimately manifest ground luminosity just as it is. However, before one engages in these yogas, one first needs to recognize at least a coarse form of this luminosity through the pointing-out instructions.

Just as in TOK above, the progression of making what one has recognized a living experience consists of three stages: (1) first giving rise to the meditation that has not arisen (the four preliminaries), (2) the threefold pointing-out in order to stabilize this meditation once it has arisen, and (3) the enhancement. The common and uncommon preliminaries are likewise said to correspond to “the mind’s turning into the dharma” and “the dharma’s turning into the path,” respectively, from among the four dharmas of Gampopa. The next two dharmas of “the path’s dispelling delusion” and “delusion’s dawning as wisdom” are then discussed through explaining the verse from *The Tantra of Inconceivable Connateness* on connateness in a similar (but more detailed) manner as TOK does.<sup>885</sup>

As for the fourth line, “What is to be purified, the stains of adventitious mistakenness,” through relying on subtle and not just coarse scriptures and reasonings, one will first be able to identify the adventitious stains, rely on their powerful remedy in between, and finally destroy them at their root. For that, one needs to rely on intense efforts and prajñā. For all beings are very greatly habituated to the latent tendencies of the solid appearances of mistakenness, so that it is difficult to simply relinquish them. Therefore, if one makes correct efforts in the practice of Mahāmudrā, there is no need to purify the latent tendencies of mistakenness through deliberate effort, but the appearances of mistakenness as well as mistaken thoughts will self-arise and be self-liberated as the nature of phenomena. This is the distinctive key point. Similar to snow’s falling on a hot stone, since mistaken thoughts are the display and play of the nature of phenomena, through realizing their nature just as it is, they are liberated right within the basic nature, just as ice melts into water. Similar to there being no cold sensation in a place pervaded by a powerful fire, in yogins who have mastered the true basic nature, it is impossible for isolated appearances of mistakenness or mistaken thoughts to arise, just as a picture drawn on water. For they and the nature of phenomena can never exist separately. In brief, the adventitious stains to be relinquished need to be understood as the innate clinging to real existence.

As for the third line, “May the stainless dharmakāya manifest as the result of the purification,” the primordially present dharmakāya free from stains exists intrinsically in the mind streams of all sentient beings, but due to not recognizing their very own essence, they wander in delusion. In brief, if they recognize their very own wisdom that is present already at the time of the ground, just that is sufficient. In Dzogchen it is said that looking out over there is saṃsāra, while looking back in here is nirvāṇa. Therefore, the boundary line between mistakenness and liberation comes down to not seizing or seizing mind’s own ground: not seizing its ground means to be under the extrinsic influence of mistaken thoughts, while seizing its ground refers to withdrawing thoughts back in and then resting within the nature of self-awareness without contrivance and alteration. Hence, apart from the difference of these two states, the intrinsic qualities abide in both buddhas and sentient beings without any difference. No matter how much sentient beings are afflicted, the qualities that are their own essence do not become worse. No matter how much the noble ones relinquish the stains through the remedies of the path, the qualities that are their own essence cannot be made better. If one is able to fully manifest such qualities that are

free from being better, being worse, contrivance, alteration, increase, and decrease, that is pointed out to be “the attainment of the result.”

On verse 14, Sangyé Nyenpa Rinpoche comments as follows:

Appearance is mind and being empty is mind.

Realization is mind and mistakenness is your own mind.

Arising is mind and ceasing is mind.

Therefore, cut through all superimpositions in the mind.<sup>886</sup>

In the common Madhyamaka system, the word “appearance” eliminates the extreme of existence, while “being empty” eliminates the extreme of nonexistence. Through the word “appearance,” we can understand that what is not established ultimately and is like rainbows and mirages is mere lucidity and mere awareness but is not really established. Phenomena that are established ultimately cannot be properly indicated by what is understood by “appearance,” just as common expressions such as “it appears to exist” and “it appears to be understood” indicate a lack of definite certainty. Thus, ultimately established phenomena must be expressed by “being established” and not by “appearance.” “Appearance” means that, no matter which pure and impure phenomena of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* may appear, they are not established as anything that is ultimately different from what appears as the display of our present mind as such. The manner of “being empty” must be expressed by there being a basis of being empty, otherwise the meaning of being empty does not apply, as in the cases of the horns of a rabbit, a sky-flower, and so on. Therefore, “being empty” eliminates the extreme of nonexistence. As for the basis of emptiness, all seeming phenomena that consist of form up through omniscience are empty of a nature of their own. Apart from differences in terms of being pure and impure from the perspective of mind’s seeing, as far as those phenomena themselves go, the manner of being empty of a nature of their own is the same for all of them. Therefore, when speaking of “being empty,” superimpositions must be well cut through based on the basis of emptiness that is the mind, whereas it is difficult to cut through superimpositions based on merely the objects of the mind. Thus, it is based on the mind that one needs to be certain about the manner of being empty. The meaning of being empty here is that native connate wisdom is empty of the adventitious stains of latent tendencies, whereas just the explanation of the manner of being empty of a nature of its own as found in the Rangtong approach makes no sense here.<sup>887</sup> In brief, the manner of appearing (seeming phenomena) and the manner of being

empty (ultimate phenomena) are both not different from the mind. Here, “mind” should not be understood as our ordinary impure mind but as the pure mind as such that is the basic nature.

“Realization is mind” refers to realizing this basic nature. This is not to be understood as newly realizing something that did not exist before, but it means to recognize the basic nature that exists in us in an intrinsic manner.<sup>888</sup> When thinking about this in terms of the naturally abiding disposition, all sentient beings are buddhas—there is no sentient being that does not have the buddha disposition. As *Uttarantra* I.28 says:

Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates,  
 Since suchness is undifferentiable,  
 And because of the disposition,  
 All beings always possess the buddha heart.

Thus, it is established that the naturally abiding disposition exists in the mind streams of all beings. Even in the Rangtong system, the naturally abiding disposition—explained as the emptiness of being empty of real existence—is established as existent by pervading all sentient beings. In the systems of Shentong and the heart of Mahāmudrā, the naturally abiding disposition is explained as the nature of the mind—the basic nature whose essence is empty and whose nature is lucid—which exists within the cocoon of the adventitious stains. All buddha qualities of freedom and maturation exist in the mind streams of sentient beings, and when they become manifest through having practiced properly at the time of the path, that is called “realizing the basic nature.” This is not the same as the view of the Sāṃkhyas and so on because the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* clearly says so and adduces the reason that *tathāgatagarbha* is emptiness. Also the Rangtong masters, such as Candrakīrti, did not say that the tathāgata heart does not exist in the mind streams of sentient beings, but they said that it exists. Nevertheless, in the context of rebutting flaws such as the above, one needs to know this distinctive feature of *tathāgatagarbha*’s being emptiness. If this tathāgata heart—the pure mind—did not exist at all, the progression of mistakenness and realization would not exist either. Here, the commentary again quotes the above-mentioned verse 11 of the *Dharmadhātustava*, which is followed by *Uttarantra* I.40:

If the buddha element did not exist,  
 There would be no weariness of suffering,

Nor would there be the wish, striving,  
And aspiration for nirvāṇa.

On the correct understanding of superior insight in Mahāmudrā (verse 17), our text says that it means to clearly see, just as it is, the actual way of being of the luminous nature of the mind as explained in the context of Madhyamaka Shentong,<sup>889</sup> whose nature is permanent, everlasting, peaceful, and eternal.<sup>890</sup> In the common pāramitāyāna, superior insight refers to resting in meditative equipoise within the actual way of being of identitylessness empty of the two kinds of identities, which is also called “the view of the followers of Rangtong.” According to the system of Great Shentong, *Uttaratantra* I.63 and I.84 say:

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is completely unchanging, just like space.  
It is not afflicted by adventitious stains,  
Such as desire, born from false imagination.

Since it is the dharmakāya, the Tathāgata,  
The reality of the noble ones, and the ultimate nirvāṇa,  
There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood  
Due to its qualities being inseparable, just like the sun and its rays.

Since the very beginning, the mind streams of all sentient beings possess this actual way of being of the inseparability of being lucid and being empty in an intrinsic manner. No matter how it may be obscured by adventitious stains, in terms of its nature, it is never tainted by stains, while the stains exist in the manner of being separable from it. This mind that is the inseparability of being lucid and being empty has the nature of being permanent and being free from change, decrease, and increase. It is ever undeceiving, changeless, and genuinely stable. Throughout all three phases of ground, path, and fruition, it is this nature of the mind that is certain to be solely the object of the genuine meditative equipoise within the qualities that are the nature of phenomena. This is what needs to be manifested through the practice of superior insight. What is to be manifested in this way is not something newly arisen, but it is the connate qualities' primordially existing in the mind streams of beings in an intrinsic manner that is suitable to be manifested.

This is not to be understood as the mere emptiness that is taught in the context of Rangtong, which is known as “dead emptiness” (Tib. *ben stong*). In the middle turning of the wheel of dharma, it is taught that all phenomena from form up through omniscience are empty of a nature of their own in order to put an end to clinging to their real existence. However, as *Dharmadhātustava* 22 says:

The sūtras that teach emptiness,  
 However many spoken by the victors,  
 They all remove afflictions,  
 But never ruin this dhātu.

The realization of mind’s true nature needs to be preceded by understanding the Rangtong view not only for the sake of relinquishing the wrong idea of, or the clinging to, the real existence of what does not exist ultimately, but also in order that the correct view and meditation of Great Shentong can arise in one’s mind stream. It is definite that to the extent that certainty about the Rangtong view has arisen to that same extent the correct and profound view and meditation of Shentong will arise in one’s mind stream. This was earnestly established by the great Shentong masters, such as Yumowa Mikyö Dorje, Dölpopa, and Śākya Chogden. Therefore, though there is the ascertainment by applying the manner of negating what is to be negated to each and every instant of phenomena from form up through omniscience, the basic element as the remainder after such negations is not affected by them. That is, the basic nature of the inseparability of being lucid and being empty is taught to be established by its very nature. *Uttaratantra* I.63ab says that this basic nature—the final way of being—is really established:

The luminous nature of the mind  
 Is completely unchanging, just like space.

To dismantle the mind of dualistic clinging, it is taught not only that form and so on are empty of a nature of their own but that omniscience too is not established. The Buddha said that even if there were a phenomenon superior to the supreme phenomenon of nirvāṇa, it is also to be regarded as illusion-like and dreamlike. Accordingly, the basic nature is taught from the side of negation in Nāgārjuna’s collection of reasoning. The reason for this is that if one does not completely put an end to all forms of clinging to extremes, it is impossible for the realization of the basic nature to arise.

Thus, one needs to put an end to all mistaken cognitions with regard to the objects of clinging. If one were to prove that omniscience and luminosity are established by their very nature while still being in the context of putting an end to dualistic clinging, this would yet again represent the great demon of clinging to real existence. Therefore, in addition to not being able to overcome dualistic clinging, there would be the danger of not conquering the clinging to real existence. This is similar to someone's fear of there being a snake in the house, which can be dispelled through another person's assuring the first one that there is in fact no snake. However, such fear cannot be relinquished through saying, "It is not certain whether there is or is not a snake."

Thus, since it is necessary to put an end to all forms of clinging to extremes without exception in order to complete the analysis of the view, all phenomena from form up through omniscience must be established as lacking real existence. Once all such forms of mistaken clinging to the ultimate have been dismantled, within the perspective of the correct meditative state of ascertaining the ultimate just as it is, the special certainty about the basic nature of nondual lucidity and emptiness's being established by the very nature of being beyond all extremes will arise—this is the inconceivable power of the nature of phenomena. One will understand this when reading the *Mahābherisūtra*, *Mahāmeghasūtra*, greater and lesser *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, and others—one's fear of permanence, eternity, and changelessness will subside on its own. The Buddha said in these sūtras that the basic nature has the nature of being permanent, eternal, and changeless, while those who say that the basic nature is not permanent, not eternal, and not changeless do not see it. Since one needs to eliminate all wrong ideas of clinging to extremes in the context of cutting through superimpositions by way of the correct view, the views explained in the Rangtong approach are indispensable—they directly and indirectly open the door to the correct arising of certainty about the basic nature. The actual basic nature without mistakenness is very clearly taught in all sūtras and tantras and, in particular, in the wisdom chapter of the nondual *Kālacakratantra*. Hence, it is very inappropriate if that basic nature is presented as the mere emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation. On the other hand, having trained in detail in the distinction between the temporary and the ultimate definitive meanings as well as in their presentations, one's insight will be unflustered without falling into any bias.

On verse 21, the commentary says that ordinary mind—mind's basic nature of its lucidity and emptiness being inseparable—is what is left behind



as the remainder after experiences of clinging to both good as well as bad thoughts have become pure within the expanse.<sup>891</sup> As *Uttarantra* I.63ab, I.155cd, and I.30ab say:

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is completely unchanging, just like space.

It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

It is always unafflicted by nature,  
Just as a pure jewel, space, and water.

This ordinary mind is beyond relinquishing and adopting as well as beyond being separated and being attained. As *Uttarantra* I.154 and the *prajñāpāramitā* texts (*Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.21) say:

There is nothing to be removed in this  
And not the slightest to be added.  
Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.

Thus, no matter how much it may come under the sway of afflictions or how much the qualities may seem to improve, ordinary mind cannot become worse or better. It is this ordinary mind empty of all reference points (such as coming and going, good and bad, and relinquishment and attainment) that is called “freedom from reference points.”

### *Gö Lotsāwa's Unique Mahāmudrā Interpretation of the Uttarantra*

Gö Lotsāwa's commentary on the *Uttarantra* is unique among all commentaries on that text in that it relates the *Uttarantra* to Mahāmudrā in an explicit, repeated, and detailed manner. Examples of this commentary's linking the *Uttarantra* to Mahāmudrā in a general way include its opening homage's being addressed not only to Maitreya, but also to the prominent Mahāmudrā figures Maitrīpa (who is also the one who found the *Uttarantra*), Dampa Sangyé, and Gampopa. The colophon of Gö Lotsāwa's text makes it clear that it explains the *Uttarantra* based on (1) the exegetical tradition of Ngog Lotsāwa, (2) Gampopa's Mahāmudrā interpretation of the *Uttarantra*, which he received through Jigden Sumgön,

and (3) the explanations coming from Sajjana's direct student Dsen Kawoché, as well as the meaning of the three dharma wheels, both of which are in accordance with Mahāmudrā.<sup>892</sup> In addition, Gö Lotsāwa discusses the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as a general source of Mahāmudrā instructions, usually matching it with Mahāmudrā teachings from the dohā tradition or early Kagyü masters.<sup>893</sup>

Having thus clearly stated his general thrust of interpreting the *Uttaratantra* in the framework of Mahāmudrā, Gö Lotsāwa more specifically explains that the Mahāmudrā approach of meditation on the nature of the mind as presented in Maitrīpa's *Tattvadaśaka* and its commentary by Sahajavajra corresponds to both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV.<sup>894</sup> Later, he also describes several times in detail how Maitrīpa's approach is superior to Madhyamaka analytical meditation as, for example, taught by Kamalaśīla.<sup>895</sup>

Even more specifically, Gö Lotsāwa describes how the four yogas of Mahāmudrā are contained in a hidden form in both the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>896</sup> He states that the gurus who experience the pith instructions of the *Uttaratantra* explain the progressive stages of familiarizing with the tathāgata heart as these four yogas of Mahāmudrā. He admits that he cannot say for certain that the conventional names of these four yogas are not found anywhere in the scriptures, only that he himself has not seen them. However, he says, their meanings are explained in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. Though there are many presentations of the four yogas of Mahāmudrā composed by different gurus, here is what Lama Shang says in his *Ultimate Profound Path of Mahāmudrā*:

The meditative equipoise of realizing your own mind  
Is understood through the progression of the four yogas.

At the time when the yoga of one-pointedness arises,  
You realize the nature of your own mind.  
Like the center of pure space,  
It is unceasing clarity emptiness without middle or end.  
To remain in a vibrant and crisp state  
Is the meditative equipoise of the first yoga.  
Thoughts' proliferating out of this [state] represents  
Its subsequent attainment, even if you meditate on your cushion.  
If vibrant and crisp clarity emptiness remains,  
Even if you are chatting, walking, or sitting,  
You remain in the state of meditative equipoise.

At the time when the yoga of freedom from reference points arises,  
You realize the essence of your own mind.  
Uninterrupted awareness free from reference points,  
Without arising, ceasing, adopting, or rejecting—  
This mind of yours that abides as the dharmakāya  
Is the meditative equipoise of the second yoga.  
If you remain in this meditative equipoise,  
Even if you are walking, chatting, and speaking,  
You remain in the state of meditative equipoise.  
If you become distracted by characteristics of reference points,  
You are [in the phase] that is attained subsequent [to this equipoise],  
even if you meditate on your cushion.

At the time when the yoga of one taste arises,  
You realize the characteristic of your own mind.  
You realize that the many [appearances] of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa  
Arise from your own mind, the dharmakāya free from reference  
points.  
Thought and nonthought,  
Appearance and nonappearance, abiding  
And nonabiding, empty and nonempty,  
Clarity and unclarity—this entire variety  
Is of one taste as the luminous dharmakāya.  
Therefore, you see the great light of the dharmakāya  
But you see no thoughts that are not luminosity.  
The time of mind's taking hold  
Of such a realization of equal taste  
Is the meditative equipoise of the third yoga.  
If you are embraced by native mind,  
Even if you are jumping, running, chatting, and speaking,  
You remain in the state of meditative equipoise.  
If you are separated from native mind,  
You are [in the phase] that is attained subsequent [to this equipoise],  
even if you meditate on your cushion.

At the time when the yoga of nonmeditation arises,  
The essence of awareness is free from any support.  
There is nothing to meditate for a yogin,  
Nor is there any meditator, who simply disappeared.

This is called “buddhahood endowed with the three kāyas  
 And five wisdoms being complete in yourself” —  
 Now you know that it is exactly this.  
 You clearly resolved that precisely this  
 Is the siddhi of Mahāmudrā.  
 There is no conceited mind thinking that  
 This primordially abiding siddhi was attained.

There is no being embraced or not being embraced by mindfulness,  
 No mental engagement or nonengagement,  
 And no being or not being of one taste.  
 In nondual perception's very own state,  
 There are no stages of meditative equipoise and subsequent  
 attainment.

In uninterrupted awareness emptiness,  
 There is no death and no birth.  
 The power of a garuḍa is complete within its eggshell—  
 Once it is free from its eggshell, it soars through the sky.  
 The qualities of the three kāyas are complete in the mind—  
 Once the trap of the body has fallen apart,<sup>897</sup> the welfare of others  
 dawns.

In such an occurrence of nonmeditation,  
 There are no stages of meditative equipoise and subsequent  
 attainment.

No matter how high your realization may be,  
 As long as there is something to become familiar with,  
 There is the duality of meditative equipoise and subsequent  
 attainment,

There is being embraced and not being embraced by mindfulness,  
 And there is the duality of being distracted and not being distracted.  
 Once it dawns that there is nothing to become familiar with,  
 This is what is called “nonmeditation.”<sup>898</sup>

Then, GC links this description of the four yogas of Mahāmudrā to a passage from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in which the Buddha answers Mahāmati's question on “the great yoga.”<sup>899</sup> Here, the Buddha explains that bodhisattvas who possess the following four dharmas are yogins of the great yoga—ascertaining that appearances are one's own mind, relinquishing the views of arising, abiding, and ceasing, realizing that outer entities are nonentities,

and wishing to attain the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones. Gö Lotsāwa's comments on this passage from the *Lañkāvatārasūtra* match those four dharmas with the four yogas of Mahāmudrā in due order.

Thus, according to Gö Lotsāwa, the first Mahāmudrā yoga of one-pointedness has five distinctive features. (1) Meditating that everything is mere mind consists of the samādhi of realizing that clarity emptiness is like space. One realizes that everything that appears as the three realms of saṃsāra appears as the nature of this clarity emptiness. It is just that much that wanders in saṃsāra—other than this mind of clarity emptiness, there is no self or “mine” of someone who passes from this life to the next. (2) As for nothing to adopt or to reject, one thinks that the abiding in this clarity emptiness and the movement of thoughts are not different types of substance. Since it is this very clarity emptiness that moves as thoughts, there is no need for any adopting of clarity or rejecting of thoughts. (3) Being tainted by latent tendencies of discursiveness means to know that these latent tendencies have not yet been relinquished when thoughts occur again despite having seen them as clarity emptiness. (4) Connection means to know that when mind experiences objects while not in meditative equipoise, that experiencer is also nothing but clarity emptiness. (5) Concordance means that all appearances of bodies, possessions, places, and the beings of the six realms are connected with this mind in terms of having the same nature. In brief, it is said in many ways that all arising thoughts are understood as having the nature of nonthought. This is exactly the same as the sūtras and treatises explaining that one understands mere mind through determining that the connection between words and referents is imaginary. According to Götsangpa, this yoga corresponds to the paths of accumulation and preparation.

In the yoga of freedom from reference points, all entities are like appearances in illusions and dreams—though they appear to arise, they lack arising. If their nature is not established as themselves, something other, or both, they simply do not arise. Thus they are realized to be without basis or root. This realization expands in the form of five distinctive features. (1) Through seeing that appearances are in concordance with mind, one realizes that all appearances come down to mind—when the mind is happy or suffering, appearances arise in corresponding ways. (2) Through seeing that mind lacks a nature of its own and seeing that appearances are mind's gateways of appearing, one realizes that appearances also lack a nature of their own. (3) By virtue of this realization, the sense faculties revert to the inside and thus the five sense consciousnesses do not engage their objects.

(4) One sees that the eleven conditions for the arising of consciousness (the five sense faculties, their objects, and imperceptible forms) are mere imagination but also lack any nature. (5) Through the expansion of seeing that one's own inner and outer skandhas lack a nature, one realizes that the entirety of the three realms of saṃsāra is produced by the condition that is one's own imagination. According to Götsangpa, this yoga corresponds to the first bhūmi.

As for the yoga of one taste, all entities that consist of mind and objects are merely delusive appearances because they are like mirages, dreams, and seeing falling hairs in an eye disease. There is no need to dam the water of a mirage, take care of the child in a dream, or tie those falling hairs into a knot. Likewise, when one sees the nature of the mind, there is no need for any effort of regarding appearances as its opposite. Therefore, everything that appears as an entity is nothing but this very mind as such that lacks a nature of its own. Through realizing this, one realizes that appearances and the nature of phenomena are of one taste. Therefore, there is nothing to be relinquished or to be adopted. You may wonder, "If that is the case, what are these phenomena that appear in distinct forms while having no nature of their own?" They appear due to the power of the beginningless "impregnations of the negative tendencies of discursiveness." This term means that conceptions are discursiveness, while their latent tendencies are impregnations of negative tendencies. All the many kinds of appearances that arise from these latent tendencies are also called "latent tendencies" by virtue of labeling the result with the name of its cause. Conceptions of clinging to all kinds of appearances arise, and further appearances similar to them rearise later from the latent tendencies that were planted by them. Thus, this mechanism of alternating conceptions and latent tendencies has no beginning in time. However, the ultimate foundation of such latent tendencies is naturally luminous mind. It is because one realizes that mind and appearances are of one taste in such a way that this yoga is called "one taste." According to Götsangpa, this yoga corresponds to the second through seventh bhūmis.

The yoga of nonmeditation refers to personally experienced wisdom, which does not depend on any ordinary perceptual or inferential valid cognitions, or on any trustworthy scriptures. Therefore, without relying on any valid cognitions of any person whatsoever, yogins are individually self-aware all on their own, which is why this is referred to as "personally experienced realization." This personally experienced wisdom is called "nonmeditation" because "meditation" is a name for the efforts of wishing

to meditate and the thoughts about characteristics of meditation, while these do not exist here. On the eighth bhūmi (to which this yoga of non-meditation is said to correspond), the final poised readiness for the dharma of nonarising is accomplished.<sup>900</sup> Through this poised readiness, the five sense consciousnesses together with the ālaya-consciousness, the afflicted mind, and the conceptual mind undergo their fundamental change. From among the five dharmas, names, causal features, and imagination also undergo their fundamental change. Likewise, the three natures and the two kinds of identitylessness are superbly realized here. By contrast, on the seventh bhūmi and below, the imaginary nature does not come to an end because the appearances of the conceptual mind have not come to an end. Nor does the dependent nature come to an end because the conceptual mind itself has not come to an end. Also, up through the seventh bhūmi, the latent tendencies of conceiving of the two kinds of identities are not entirely relinquished. On the eighth bhūmi, however, all of these come to an end and therefore this is the culminating realization of the three natures and the two kinds of identitylessness.

Furthermore, GC's section on the four steps of correct yogic practice as the third point in the explanation of nonconceptual wisdom in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* equates these steps not only with *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* X.256–57, *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* VI.8, and *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.6–7ab,<sup>901</sup> but it also matches them with the four yogas of Mahāmudrā:

You may wonder, “Such is certainly the case, but if one holds that this text of the Bhagavān Maitreya is also a text of what is known as the yogas of Mahāmudrā, do the four yogas of this [Mahāmudrā] fit with those [four yogic practices in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*]?” They do fit very well. (1) The first [yoga] is to look inside and then to focus on [everything's being] one's own mind. (2) As for the explanation [in] the second [yogic practice] that there is nothing external, it is the [yoga of] freedom from reference points in which one realizes that all phenomena that are objects of the mind lack any basis or root. (3) The realization that both what appears as [if] external and the inner mind free from reference points are of one taste is the yogic practice of the nonobservation of observation. (4) To not meditate through deliberately focusing on even the nonduality of subject and object is called “nonmeditation,” which is the fourth yoga.<sup>902</sup>

Since GC considers the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* as being a commentary on the fifth vajra point of the *Uttaratantra*, by implication, the connection between the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and Mahāmudrā obviously applies to the *Uttaratantra* too.<sup>903</sup>

Thus, Gö Lotsāwa establishes the connection between Mahāmudrā, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, and in fact all five Maitreya texts through the framework of the four yogic practices. For, besides the above-stated connections with the *Uttaratantra*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, the *Madhyāntavibhāga*, and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, it is well known that the four levels of the path of preparation are discussed in many Yogācāra texts in terms of the corresponding contents of the four yogic practices. In the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* in particular, the four levels of the path of preparation are called “the four factors conducive to penetration.” Taking this into account, GC consequently also matches the four yogas of Mahāmudrā with these four factors as they are explained in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*:<sup>904</sup>

I regard it also as suitable to match the four factors conducive to penetration with the four yogas for the following reasons. (1) On the level of heat [of the path of preparation] in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, [line I.28b] speaks of “being inexpressible,”<sup>905</sup> and it is seen in the phase [of the yoga] of one-pointedness that thoughts are not as things truly are. (2) It is taught that, through the expansion of prajñā in the phase [of the yoga] of freedom from reference points, everything internal and external is seen to be empty and [*Abhisamayālaṅkāra* I.30cd] says on the level of peak:

Prajñā investigates

In terms of all being unobservable.<sup>906</sup>

(3) The realization in the phase [of the yoga] of one taste that unborn mind and the appearances of mind are of equal taste matches the explanation of [*Abhisamayālaṅkāra* I.31ab] on the level of poised readiness:

Form and so on are without nature,

Their nature being their nonbeing.<sup>907</sup>

(4) “Nonmeditation” is called such because there are no thoughts of wishing to meditate, and such a meditation is the supreme one. This



matches what [*Abhisamayālaṅkāra* I.33b] says on the level of the supreme dharma:

And the nonconceptuality of samādhi.<sup>908</sup>

In this context, it is noteworthy that the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* also explains some of the contents of this text in relation to Mahāmudrā and frequently equates Mahāmudrā with prajñāpāramitā, suchness, the nature of phenomena, the tathāgata heart, and so on.<sup>909</sup>

Finally, we find another reference to the four yogas of Mahāmudrā according to Padampa Sangyé in GC's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.31:

By virtue of its essential nature of power,  
Being unchanging, and being moist,  
It resembles the qualities  
Of a precious gem, space, and water.<sup>910</sup>

GC declares that suchness is not a nonimplicative negation but a phenomenon of basic awareness. Therefore, it is endowed with both power and compassion (exemplified by moisture). Also, the dharmakāya and the disposition are merely divisions of nothing but unchanging suchness in terms of its being pure and impure, respectively. Furthermore, the dharmakāya realizes unconditioned suchness and is also endowed with compassion. If suchness is directly realized, consummate power (such as the supernatural knowledges) and compassion arise naturally. Likewise, the disposition is endowed with the dharmakāya since it primordially possesses the qualities such as the ten powers, and it never changes or deteriorates, even when wandering through all kinds of higher and lower realms. On the path, it is through the power of aspiring for the profound buddhadharmas that suchness will be realized, and by virtue of that, compassion for all beings who do not realize it arises. This also shows the progression of the four yogas of Mahāmudrā. As the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* says:

When murky water becomes clear,  
[Its] transparency does not arise from elsewhere,  
But is just its becoming free from pollution.  
The same goes for the purity of your own mind.<sup>911</sup>

Accordingly, through the yoga of one-pointedness, bodhisattvas settle the mind unmoved by thoughts, like clear water. Through this, they realize space-like suchness free from reference points. By virtue of that, through the yoga of one taste, they realize the suchness of the aspects of what is outwardly oriented (the eyes and so on) as being pure. Finally, when the jewellike yoga of nonmeditation free from effort arises in them, through their meditation's being directing toward taking care of beings, their compassion arises effortlessly and thus the welfare of others is accomplished naturally. This, Gö Lotsāwa says, is what Padampa Sangyé holds.

GC's comments on RGVV's introduction to *Uttaratantra* I.153 furthermore describe the four yogas by teaching the manner in which the basic element as it is taught in this passage of RGVV is to be made a living experience through meditation.<sup>912</sup> Though the basic element is explained in the text as the three natures of the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition, when one makes it a living experience, these three are to be practiced as one. What is to be known or viewed in this context is simply the tathāgata heart that has the three distinctive features of being as vast as the dharmakāya, being undifferentiable from suchness, and being the disposition that is certain with regard to buddhahood. More specifically, (1) that this basic element has the nature of basic awareness means that it lacks any difference of being close to some knowable objects and being distant from some others. Since it has neither middle nor end, the basic awareness of the tathāgata heart is just as vast as the fruitional dharmakāya's pervading all realms and sentient beings. (2) That it is not established as any characteristics of reference points whatsoever means that it has the characteristic of being undifferentiable from, and being of one taste with, all phenomena. (3) Finally, it has the nature of being the disposition of being certain as the dharmakāya in the end. This basic element is to be viewed as existing in all sentient beings—existing as changeless suchness because it exists at all times, having the nature of vastness because it exists in all beings without difference, and existing as the nature of the disposition of being certain as the dharmakāya at the end because it exists in the support that is the mind.

Then, GC explains the first three yogas of Mahāmudrā by matching them with these three distinctive features, that is, Mahāmudrā yogins realize these three in a progressive manner as follows. (1) Through the yoga of great one-pointedness, they see the vastness of the basic element because they see that their own mind is without middle or end, just like space. (2) When they, through the yoga of freedom from reference points, realize the identitylessness of all phenomena exactly as it is, they realize that it is not

the case that something that was not empty before has become empty later but that the basic ground is like that from the very beginning and that even buddhahood does not represent a change from this basic ground. Therefore, they see that suchness is undifferentiable. (3) By virtue of realizing through the yoga of one taste that appearance and emptiness are of one taste, they know that the minds of all sentient beings are just like their own minds and also see that the minds of sentient beings and the dharmakāyas of buddhas are very much alike. Therefore, they see the tathāgata heart as having the nature of the disposition of being certain as the dharmakāya at the end. In due order, these three yogas correspond to the first three lines of *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IV.8:

The mind is aware that nothing other than mind exists.  
 Then it is realized that mind does not exist either.  
 The intelligent ones are aware that both do not exist  
 And abide in the dharmadhātu, in which these are absent.

It is indeed realized from the time of the yoga of freedom from reference points onward that mind is primordially unborn. However, the mind to be meditated on and the mind that meditates on it still appear as if they were different. By contrast, when the aspects of subject and object are directly perceived as not being two, just as a self-illuminating lamp, this is expressed by the conventional term “nonmeditation.” This yoga of nonmeditation also has three stages (lesser, middle, and great) by virtue of its being divided in terms of its coarse, middle, and subtle factors to be relinquished. That Maitrīpa described it as being without stages is not because he had in mind that it has no such division as just described but because he had in mind that these are all of one taste as the taste of emptiness.

In addition to speaking about all four yogas of Mahāmudrā, GC also mentions the first three yogas of Mahāmudrā in the context of the superiority of the third dharma wheel’s approach to meditation, which corresponds to Mahāmudrā pith instructions.<sup>913</sup> For example, when one looks at the stream of a river from afar, it looks as if it were unmoving like a stick, but when one comes close, one sees this river as nothing but a sequence of earlier and later waves. Likewise, when mind, external objects, and their differences in terms of time are examined well through the direct perception that arises from the yoga of one-pointedness, one realizes that one cannot observe any nature of entities whatsoever. This is the manner of realizing the lack of arising in a direct manner. (As is clear from descriptions of the second

Mahāmudrā yoga of freedom from reference points elsewhere in GC, what happens during this yoga is precisely that realization of not observing any nature of entities.) The continuum of this direct perception puts an end to thoughts that blend terms and their referents. When these have ceased, as a result, all mistaken appearances cease. This is explained by the former masters as “appearances’ having dissolved into mind.” When one does analytical meditation based on inference, it is not that a direct perception of true reality arises immediately after said thoughts have ceased. Rather, once thoughts have vanished, a mere nonconceptual perception arises, and it is from that perception that the direct perception of true reality arises. However, these two direct perceptions differ only in being far and close, respectively. This progression is also stated in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*:

You should investigate and discriminate  
Continuously through mental discourses.<sup>914</sup>  
You should also analyze through mental engagements  
That are without [mental] discourse and of one taste.<sup>915</sup>

GC also directly relates the first two yogas of Mahāmudrā to lines I.13ab of the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>916</sup> First, Gö Lotsāwa has someone ask, “Mādhyamikas first determine emptiness through inference and then familiarize with it in meditation, which is like a fire that arose from rubbing two sticks burning these sticks. Is the realization of the emptiness that is basic awareness in the third dharma wheel something that arises suddenly in a direct manner or is there a valid cognition of searching for it?” In the system of the pith instructions, to some, this emptiness is taught by having them first engage in the preliminary of investigating what their mind is like throughout day and night. Some others are instructed as follows, “Give up any mental engagement in the three times and settle your mind in an immovable manner. Through this, what is called ‘one-pointedness’ will arise, which has the characteristic of direct perception. Once that has arisen, look at the mind that meditates in the manner of this direct perception’s being turned inward.” Thus, they are made to engage in nothing but such looking, just as when one examines whether there are animals in a body of water and then just looks by energetically focusing one’s eyes. This is the approach of searching through nonconceptual direct perception. From it, the direct seeing that all phenomena are identityless will arise. In the above example, the eye sense faculty that looks at the water stands for devotion to a guru who sees reality, while the consciousness that arises from that eye represents the

direct perception that is turned inward. This approach of the Mahāmudrā yoga of one-pointedness is taught in *Uttarantra* I.13a:

Because they see that, by virtue of the natural luminosity of the mind,  
the afflictions are without nature.

*Uttarantra* I.13b teaches the direct realization of identitylessness, which is given the name “the yoga of freedom from reference points”:

They perfectly realize that the endpoint of the identitylessness of all  
beings is peace.

This freedom from reference points is not just a nonimplicative negation but the dharma of basic awareness that is not established as any characteristics whatsoever. The finger of Mahāmudrā points to the momentary basic awareness that does not fall to either the side of appearance or the side of emptiness. This is what those who are versed in the pith instructions teach. Sahajavajra explains in his *Tattvadaśakaṭikā* that even though this system belongs to the pāramitāyāna, it is given the name Mahāmudrā. The same is also explained in Jñānakīrti’s *Tattvāvatāra*. Thus, the actual path of liberation is the yoga of the Mahāmudrā of awareness and emptiness, but it is not accomplished through merely meditating on an emptiness that is arrived at through analysis. This is taught in detail by Pamo Trupa and his foremost disciples, for example:

Even if you have meditated for eons on a mentally fabricated  
emptiness,  
There is no chance for being liberated from the fetters of this  
golden chain.

By drinking a handful of water from the ocean, one will equally know the taste of all the water in the ocean that one has not drunk. Likewise, when yogins know the true reality of their own minds, through the principle of that true reality, they will know the true reality of the minds of all sentient beings down to the Avīci hell as well as all seven vajra points up through the dharmakāya of a buddha. For the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* says:

Bhagavan, whoever has no doubt about the tathāgata heart that is ensnared by the billions of cocoons of all afflictions also has no doubt

about the dharmakāya of the tathāgata that is liberated from the cocoons of all afflictions.<sup>917</sup>

Likewise, GC matches RGVV's section on I.13ab<sup>918</sup> with the first two yogas of Mahāmudrā,<sup>919</sup> saying that the yoga of freedom from reference points, which represents prajñā, is taught by RGVV's phrase "should be understood by virtue of realizing, just as it is, the endpoint of the identitylessness of the whole world that is referred to as 'persons and phenomena.'" The yoga of one-pointedness, which represents dhyāna and is the cause of the second yoga, is taught by RGVV's passage "This is the realization in terms of the principle that persons and phenomena, by virtue of their nature of being absolutely and primordially at peace, are not annihilated. In brief, [this realization] arises from two causes—through seeing that mind is naturally luminous and through seeing that its proximate afflictions are primordially terminated and ceased." The remaining passage "Now, these two [factors] . . . should be understood in detail according to the sūtra" is the detailed explanation of these two yogas.

A bit further down, GC elaborates on the connection between these two yogas and the superiority of the Mahāmudrā approach of working with direct perceptions rather than inferential conceptual cognitions.<sup>920</sup> GC says that all followers of Buddhist philosophical systems from the Vaibhāṣikas up through the Mādhyamikas are in accord in their making great efforts in meditating on the lack of a self in order to attain liberation. There are two ways of such meditation. Some eliminate the object—a self—through reasoning and then meditate on identitylessness. Others follow what the *Kāśyapaparivarta* teaches, which favors the second one from among the following two approaches—to first eliminate the object resembles a dog's chasing after a stone thrown toward it, whereas to scrutinize the views about a self through a nonconceptual state of mind of direct perception is like a lion's chasing the one who throws the stone. The followers of Mahāmudrā use this second approach. Thus, when a thought of viewing a self has arisen, without giving rise to any subsequent thoughts of trying to relinquish that first thought or analyzing it through reasoning, they merely look at that thought of viewing a self with the previously attained state of mind of the yoga of one-pointedness. Nevertheless, for those who do not have faith in this approach and also do not have the mental power for it, the meditation that is based on inferences that analyze for the lack of a self is an excellent path.<sup>921</sup>

In brief, GC states,<sup>922</sup> the remedy that prevents such views about a self from arising again later must be something that entails valid cognition because the *Pramāṇavārttika* says:

Whoever among them has valid cognition  
Will invalidate the other one.<sup>923</sup>

In that regard, the followers of Mahāmudrā operate with nothing but perceptual valid cognitions, while others work with inferential valid cognitions.

Just as for the above meditation on personal identitylessness, with regard to meditating on phenomenal identitylessness, GC makes the same distinction of two approaches depending on people's different capacities.<sup>924</sup> The first one is to give rise to the *prajñā* of realizing that phenomena lack a nature of their own, which arises from valid cognition as a remedy for thinking that inner and outer phenomena have a nature of their own. The second one is to see that the root of the three realms of *saṃsāra*—thinking that entities have a nature of their own and clinging to characteristics—arises from mere mental appearances and then to familiarize with pure appearances through the Mahāmudrā yoga of self-awareness. Through that, in the manner of the result's coming to an end by virtue of the cause's having come to an end, the clinging to all phenomena as being real entities will not arise anymore. In this regard, GC says, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* says many times that the mental appearances of one's own mind stream are pure, and the stages of meditation consist of the five steps of the completion stage practice of the *Guhyasamājatantra* (physical isolation, mental isolation, self-blessing, luminosity without appearance, and union), which are also found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.<sup>925</sup>

In the context of discussing the reality of the path, GC identifies a *bodhisattva's* nonconceptual wisdom on the paths of seeing and familiarization as the nature of the path.<sup>926</sup> After outlining the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga's* list of five distinctive features that are excluded from being nonconceptual wisdom,<sup>927</sup> its nature is identified as being the direct perception that is free from conceptions that entail terms and referents. The reason for calling it “nonconceptual” is that it serves as the remedy for the conceptions of clinging to the four characteristics of antagonistic factors, the remedy, suchness, and the dharmas of realization. Then, GC summarizes the discussion on the relinquishment of these characteristics by again referring to the two approaches of Kamalaśīla and Maitrīpa, with the latter's being said to be the

superior one to be followed in the context of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and thus also the *Uttaratantra*:

What is discussed in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* in this way is the presentation of the meaning of the *Avikalpapraveśa* [dhāraṇī]. When engaging in the meaning of this sūtra, there appear to be two approaches. Master Kamalaśīla holds that the conceptions to be relinquished are relinquished through discriminating prajñā alone. The commentary on Maitrīpa's *Tattvadaśaka* maintains that [those conceptions] are not relinquished through discriminating [prajñā], but through the samādhi of reality as it is, which is to know that the nature of the [conceptions] to be relinquished is luminosity. Here it is reasonable to follow Maitrīpa who has found this text.<sup>928</sup>

As a further support for Maitrīpa's and Gampopa's sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach's being an authentic path on which even ordinary beings can directly realize mind's true nature, GC then points out that, contrary to the regular sūtra approach but according to the *Vairocanābhisambodhitāntra*, it is possible to directly see the nature of phenomena even during the phase of "engagement through aspiration,"<sup>929</sup> that is, prior to the path of seeing.<sup>930</sup> Thus, this tantra says, the realization of the nature of phenomena on the first bhūmi refers to its arising as self-aware direct perception.

However, according to Gö Lotsāwa, for ordinary beings, such direct realizations of mind's true nature are possible only through relying on the principle of the nature of phenomena<sup>931</sup> as it comes to life in one's own mind through devotion to a guru. Gö Lotsāwa quotes RGVV's introduction to *Uttaratantra* I.153 (which says that the tathāgata heart can be realized only through confidence) as an indication of the necessity for that principle also in the context of the sūtra-based approach of Mahāmudrā:

Now, [the fact that] the tathāgata heart, which is as vast as the dharmakāya, has the characteristic of not being different from suchness, and has the nature of being the disposition that is certain [with regard to buddhahood], exists at all times and everywhere in a manner that is without difference is to be considered in terms of taking [nothing but] the true nature of phenomena as the [supreme] valid authority. As [the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*] says:



Son of noble family, this is the true nature of phenomena: no matter whether tathāgatas arise or do not arise, these sentient beings always have the tathāgata heart.<sup>932</sup>

Here, the nature of phenomena is the principle, the method, and the means through which [it is clear that the true state of phenomena] is just such and that it is not otherwise. In all respects, this very nature of phenomena is the resort, and this very nature of phenomena is the principle for the contemplation of the mind and the realization of the mind. It is neither conceivable nor imaginable. It is [only] accessible to faith.<sup>933</sup>

Gö Lotsāwa elaborates on this as follows.<sup>934</sup> As for the true reality of the mind, a nonconceptual state of mind arises through the dominant condition of devotion to the guru. It is through that very state of mind's becoming more and more lucid that the nonarising of this mind is realized and that its unceasing or luminous quality is known. If one's eyes cannot see clearly or a lamp is not bright enough, one sees only the coarse outlines of a form. On the other hand, if both eyes and lamp are clear and bright, even the subtle details of that form can be seen. Likewise, since the thoughts that engage in terms and their referents are not clear, they will never be able to directly perceive mind's true reality. On the other hand, the fact that through the lucid true nature (*dharmatā*) of clear mind, this mind will be realized as nonarising is the true nature of dependent origination. Therefore, the phenomena (*dharma*) of that lucidity are nothing but this kind of realization of the mind, while the meaning of *-tā* (in *dharmatā*) is that they do not change into anything other, that is, any aspects of superimposition and denial. Therefore, they are called *dharmatā*. This is not something like the expectation about a reason's proving the existence of fire through smoke on the path of reasoning. Therefore, when meditating on mind's nature, it is the nature of phenomena that is taken as the sole valid authority. In order to give rise to a direct perception of true reality, the direct seeing of the nature of phenomena by a guru is necessary. Also, in order to realize the luminous nature of the mind, one needs to have accumulated merit by relying on a guru.

Later, in its actual comments on the above quote from RGVV, GC confirms that the direct perceptions in Mahāmudrā meditation are not something that arise as a result of having meditated on an inferential understanding of buddha nature, or something that arises suddenly without

any cause.<sup>935</sup> Rather, these perceptions are based on the principle of the nature of phenomena. Just as it is certain that a person with clear eyesight who looks at some form for an extended period is able to know even its subtle features, when yogins look at their mind without distraction, they will realize mind's true reality. This is what is called "the principle of the nature of phenomena." Therefore, the tathāgata heart that is endowed with the three distinctive features of the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition should be viewed by taking the nature of phenomena as one's sole valid authority. In that vein, the above quote from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* means that the tathāgata heart is the nature of phenomena because it does not belong only to the phase of purified phenomena, but all afflicted phenomena do not go beyond it either. Therefore, all sentient beings are bearers of the true nature that is the tathāgata heart. It is not something that becomes existent or nonexistent by virtue of tathāgatas' arriving or not arriving, respectively. As for RGVV's saying above that "the nature of phenomena is the principle, the method, and the means through which [it is clear that the true state of phenomena] is just such and that it is not otherwise," the tathāgata heart is called a "reasonable principle" (*yukti*) because it is justified that this nature and its bearers definitely are in accordance and are never in discordance. It is a "joining" (*yoga*) because it causes the bearers of this nature to be joined with it. It is a "means" (*upāya*) because it will be realized through it. This very nature of phenomena is the principle for the contemplation and the realization of the mind. It is neither conceivable through the *prajñā* that arises from studying nor imaginable through the *prajñā* that arises from reflecting. It is only accessible to intense faith, whose cognitive aspect is certainty about its object. As for "intense" here, when mind looks at mind, it is not seen directly from the very beginning. Rather, when mind is looked at through such ascertaining thoughts, this looking eventually becomes free from thoughts in later moments. Even if there is no movement in the mind, this looking is still conceptual for as long as it has not become as clear as a form is to the eye consciousness. And even if this looking is free from thoughts, it represents only calm abiding until the arising of the superior insight of knowing that the appearances of the mind, which manifest to naive beings as if they were external, are not something other than the mind. Once this superior insight has arisen, this means that calm abiding and superior insight are joined. Therefore, it is called "yoga" (Tib. *rnal 'byor*; literally "being joined with the native state").

In sum, in agreement with the above-mentioned definition of Maitrīpa's sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach as being *prajñāpāramitā* in essence

but also being in accordance with the vajrayāna, Gö Lotsāwa highlights the necessity of two elements of tantric or essence Mahāmudrā even within the sūtra-based approach of Mahāmudrā—devotion to a guru and direct pointing-out instructions on mind’s true nature’s being understood as the primordial principle of the nature of phenomena.

Preceded by quotes from Jñānakīrti’s *Tattvāvatāra*, the prajñāpāramitā sūtras, and Sahajavajra’s *Tattvadaśakaṭikā*, GC further elaborates on Maitrīpa’s particular approach to Mahāmudrā by describing just the first yoga of one-pointedness and linking it with Nāgārjuna’s *Bodhicittavivarāṇa*:

Thus, when those who practice according to the pith instructions of Mahāmudrā that originated from Maitrīpa rest in nothing whatsoever, free from any mental engagement in the three times, thoughts that distract from that may arise. Then, they look at just what arises, whatever it may be, without wavering. Such looking is called “examining thoughts as they are.” Through such an [approach], even if all other thoughts have subsided, there is some subtle thought, “The mind meditates and rests on something on which to meditate.” When they look nakedly at that subtle thought, it will also cease, and a mind will arise that, just like space, is free from middle and end. This is called “the yoga of one-pointedness.” Master Nāgārjuna says:

To rest in the mind without any focus  
Has the characteristic of space.  
The [buddhas] assert that meditation  
On emptiness is meditation on space.<sup>936</sup>

At that point, [such practitioners] realize that the aspects of the objects of all thoughts that chase after outer objects are delusive, and the [cognizing] subject too melts into the state of this very mind that is like space. Also, when they see a being, they do not see any [false] imagination that serves as the cause of the afflictions or any focal objects of that imagination (such as being permanent and blissful). In this way, they view [the mind] as [described above]. Therefore, such a yoga is what is to be made a living experience.<sup>937</sup>

Gö Lotsāwa’s comments on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* that are embedded in GC are greatly based on the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* and also compare the two different exegetical approaches to that text’s central notion

of “mental nonengagement” (as seen above, this text is referred to by Maitrīpa and his students as a sūtra source of the Mahāmudrā of mental nonengagement).<sup>938</sup> First, as for Kamalaśīla’s analytical approach of mental nonengagement (which is explained as being “the prajñā of discriminating true reality,” whose outcome is the state of mental nonengagement), GC offers a digest of Kamalaśīla’s *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇīṭikā* on the four types of conceptions. According to GC, this is the approach for people of inferior faculties. The second approach, for those of higher faculties, is found in Maitrīpa’s *Tattvadaśaka* and his student Sahajavajra’s *Tattvadaśakaṭikā*, with the latter’s being cited at length by GC. In this nonanalytical approach based on pith instructions, mental nonengagement means that even beginners take the approach of directly resting in the natural luminosity of whatever conceptions that appear in the mind, which is nothing other than Mahāmudrā.

The topic of the relationship between analytical meditation and the direct realization of mind’s luminosity, including the four yogas of Mahāmudrā in relation to the *Uttaratantra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, is also discussed at length earlier and later in GC.<sup>939</sup> In the present section, GC says that even Kamalaśīla in his three *Bhāvanākramas* and his commentary on the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* declares that at the end of analysis, one rests in nothing but nonconceptuality.<sup>940</sup> Likewise, Atiśa’s *Madhyamakopadeśa* says that once all phenomena have been found to be nonexistent through discriminating prajñā, this prajñā itself ends up being without appearance, luminous, and not established as anything whatsoever. Then, mind is without any thought, does not apprehend anything, and has left behind all mindfulness and mental engagement.<sup>941</sup>

Thus, Gö Lotsāwa makes it clear several times that contrary to Kamalaśīla’s—at least initially—inferential approach to superior insight, in Maitrīpa’s approach, direct cognitions of the true nature of one’s mind can be experienced, and are used, right from the beginning (once that nature has been pointed out by the guru) and may happen simultaneously with calm abiding. In this way, Maitrīpa’s approach of revealing the luminous emptiness of whatever appears in the mind covers all apprehended characteristics or mental factors to be relinquished as well, through which they simply vanish, or rather, are exposed as what they really are, which is the very heart of Mahāmudrā practice.

Somewhat contrary to this approach of enabling ordinary beings to experience direct cognitions of mind’s true nature, the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV declare that ordinary beings never see the tathāgata heart and that

even noble bodhisattvas cannot see it in its entirety.<sup>942</sup> Also, in the classical sūtrayāna approach, direct perceptions of ultimate reality are said to be possible only from the first bhūmi onward; or else they require tantric methods. This highlights the key point mentioned above that though the essence of the sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach is prajñāpāramitā, it is not the same as the regular sūtra approach but needs to be enhanced by certain tantric elements, such as devotion to a guru and direct pointing-out instructions by that guru in terms of mind's stillness, movement, and basic awareness.

Besides the gradual approach to Mahāmudrā through the four yogas and their correspondences to various levels on the five paths and ten bhūmis as described above, Gö Lotsāwa also speaks about a number of other ways of matching them with different paths and bhūmis as well as the instantaneous way of realizing Mahāmudrā.<sup>943</sup> He says that, judging by the *Vairocanābhisambodhitantrapiṇḍārtha*, the presentation of the ten bhūmis actually corresponds only to the level of engagement through aspiration. Thus, the four yogas of Mahāmudrā would correspond only to the path of preparation and below, which also follows from matching them with the four yogic practices and the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*'s presentation of the four factors conducive to penetration. Furthermore, it is also fine to say that from the eighth bhūmi onward, all four yogas of Mahāmudrā are complete in a single instant.

As for the instantaneous realization of Mahāmudrā, GC quotes Lama Shang's *Ultimate Profound Path of Mahāmudrā*, which says that Mahāmudrā is realized in one go, while all calculations in terms of paths and bhūmis are mistaken and are given only in order to please the ignorant. The special instantaneous realization of Mahāmudrā happens on the first bhūmi, and the process of familiarizing with that realization is the path of familiarization. Though suffering does not end completely and the power of all qualities does not arise immediately upon the realization of nonduality, no one would say that this is not the path of seeing. This is similar to the just-risen sun's not being able to melt ice and to warm up stones; no one would therefore deny that this is the sun. GC backs up Lama Shang's description further by quoting Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*'s saying that just like the tracks of a bird's flying in the sky, the bhūmis cannot be distinguished and Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṅkāralokā*'s stating that on the path of familiarization, one does not see anything other than what one has already seen on the path of seeing. However, GC concludes, none of these different explanations are contradictory, just as the two explanations

of bodhisattvas' first giving rise to bodhicitta as beginners and on the first bhūmi are not contradictory.

In this vein, GC also addresses the apparent discrepancy between the position of Haribhadra and others that bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi see the entirety of the dharmadhātu, which has no parts, and RGVV (J76) saying that the tathāgata heart is not even seen by bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi in its entirety (verses 75–76 of the *Dharmadhātustava* also say that the dharmakāya becomes complete only at the end of the ten bhūmis, just like the waxing moon).<sup>944</sup> GC says that since Haribhadra explains the dharmadhātu as having the characteristic of the negation that is phenomenal identitylessness, it is feasible to say that its entirety is seen on the first bhūmi. Here, however, the case is different because the dharmakāya of a buddha has a positive nature—it is only the name “dharmadhātu” that is the same. “But here it is also explained that the dharmadhātu—naturally luminous mind—is even seen by bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi to abide in all sentient beings, so why is it said that bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi see it only a little bit?” Just as they see their own tathāgata heart directly, bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi likewise see directly that the tathāgata heart abides in many sentient beings, and they have also gained the certainty that the same is the case for all beings. However, they do not directly see that this is the case for all beings because they do not see all beings directly. To say that bodhisattvas only “see the tathāgata heart a little bit” means that, when bodhisattvas first see their tathāgata heart, its qualities have not yet unfolded and thus they see only a few small qualities. On the higher bhūmis, the qualities of their tathāgata heart unfold more and more (this is in line with Lama Shang's statement above about the just-risen sun), but compared to a buddha, even the qualities on the tenth bhūmi are fewer.

GC also supports this by referring to the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* to the effect that the attainment of the 112 qualities associated with the first bhūmi happens only in the lifetime after one has attained the first bhūmi.<sup>945</sup> In addition, he refers again to Lama Shang's example of the sun, saying that otherwise it would follow that it would be correct to say that the sun has not risen because the qualities of the just-risen sun are not yet complete. Note that this means that, unlike Dölpopa and others, Gö Lotsāwa does not hold that all buddha qualities exist in a full-blown manner even in sentient beings, but that they need to unfold progressively even in bodhisattvas on the bhūmis. Consequently, a direct or instantaneous insight into Mahāmudrā on the level of an ordinary being does not mean that this being has become a buddha or even a bodhisattva on the bhūmis.

Still, for the notion of Mahāmudrā's being realized in an instantaneous manner in one go, it is crucial to establish that the buddha qualities do exist in sentient beings, even if that is in a subtle form. In its comments on *Uttarantra* I.35–36 on the four pāramitās of purity, self, bliss, and permanence, GC says that all four essentially refer to the direct experience of bliss and not to counteracting the notions of impurity, nonself, suffering, and impermanence of śrāvakas through four opposite notions.<sup>946</sup> For example, the remedy for mistaken sense appearances is not to negate these appearances through reasoning but to understand that they arise from impaired sense faculties and then to purify these faculties. Dharmakīrti holds that all thoughts are ignorance by nature and thus asserts that the inferential valid cognition of realizing that the skandhas lack a self is ignorance too. Therefore, the mistaken appearances of thoughts are relinquished through becoming familiar with the samādhi of how things truly are but not through looking for other valid cognitions that are their opposites. Dharmakīrti asserts that the substance of a thought contains both a part that is darkness and a part that is light, which is called “self-aware perception.” The manner of both eliminating the part of darkness through familiarization and expanding the part of light through familiarization appears in his treatises. If that is understood well, GC says, one will also understand the meaning of the statement in the last dharma wheel that the notions of impurity and so on are relinquished through the notions of purity and so on. Therefore, when all of saṃsāric existence appears as suffering for śrāvaka noble ones, this appearance is relinquished through the remedy that consists of becoming familiar with the path of everything's appearing as bliss, but it is not relinquished through the path of a contrary mode of apprehending suffering. In that regard, Dharmakīrti says:

One is liberated through the view of emptiness,  
While [all] remaining meditations are for the sake of that.<sup>947</sup>

Likewise, here one would say:

One is liberated through the appearance as bliss,  
While [all] remaining appearances are for the sake of that.

Thus, one should be certain that all that appears as purity, permanence, and a self represents branches of the appearance as bliss. In this context, it may be asked, “It is true that the mistaken appearances of falling hairs and so

on that are caused by an eye disease are not eliminated through inference but through an eye medicine that cures this disease. If the elimination of the mistaken appearances of the path of śrāvakas here without searching for inferences is similar to that, what is it that is comparable to that eye medicine?" This is a good question, GC says; the mistaken appearances of śrāvakas are purified through the medicine that is emptiness. Now, what is labeled here with the name "emptiness" is the Mahāmudrā yoga of resting naturally in the sphere of appearances appearing just as they are, without agitating the mind through thoughts of removing and adding or negating and affirming. This is the equivalent of an eye medicine. The teaching on the four notions of purity and so on with regard to the dharmakāya refers to exactly this path of Mahāmudrā—these notions do not represent any notions that cling to characteristics and that are something other than this path.<sup>948</sup>

When *Uttaratantra* I.137/140 speaks of the outbursts of the afflictions as being as repulsive as excrement, this is taught in terms of the path that relies on seeming reality. But here, when an intense thought of desire arises, Mahāmudrā practitioners do not give rise to revulsion for it; nor do they turn their minds away from it. Rather, when they rest naturally right within that thought of desire, the condition that gave rise to this desire—the agitated mental sense faculty—will calm down. It is just this that is called "familiarizing with purity"—thoughts are not impure; nor does this mean to entertain the thought of blindly labeling them as "ultimate purity." Likewise, when one rests in that very same state, resting as one has rested before in this stream of earlier and later moments of mind, there are no highs and lows of dualistic appearances. Therefore, it is labeled as "the notion of permanence." Similarly, when one rests in a single space-like flow after the mind that rests in this way has become free from the clouds of mistaken appearances, this is called "having gained mastery over the mind" or it is labeled as "the notion of self." When one rests in that very same state after having gained certainty that all mistaken appearances result from the dualistic appearances of subject and object, personally experienced nondual wisdom dawns. Through its power, all thoughts of wishing to relinquish saṃsāra and wishing to accomplish nirvāṇa are at peace, and thus the mind is pained no more. This being free from all appearances of suffering is called "familiarizing with bliss." Through these ways of explaining the four pāramitās of purity, self, bliss, and permanence, the teaching that faith, prajñā, samādhi, and compassion are their corresponding four causes is also explained well.



All these explanations by GC obviously refer to the well-known Mahāmudrā principle that any confused or afflicted state of mind can be used as the object of Mahāmudrā meditation. Even the most intense outbursts of otherwise very destructive emotions can thus be experienced as the tathāgata heart's four intrinsic qualities of genuine ultimate purity, self, bliss, and permanence. In other words, as the Mahāmudrā teachings always say, buddhahood is to be found nowhere else than in our afflictions and obscurations. Therefore, in accordance with the Mahāmudrā hallmark "The essence of thoughts is the dharmakāya," GC says that in terms of the definitive meaning, all afflictions ultimately are of the nature of the dharmakāya.<sup>949</sup> By contrast, noble śrāvakas are said to be mistaken because they apprehend the afflictions as being real, just as an eye consciousness's apprehending blue is said to be mistaken in comparison with an ultimate cognition.

In that vein, Gö Lotsāwa's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.24cd–25 about the inconceivability of the basic element, awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity highlight the tathāgata heart as the single source of both confusion and awakening or saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, which is due to its two—ultimately inseparable—aspects of being empty and being aware, respectively.<sup>950</sup> He says that the main subject of the *Uttaratantra* is the awakening (*byang chub*) of a buddha (*sangs rgyas*). Since the first two reasons in I.25 teach the progression of the stains' becoming pure, they teach the two aspects of being cleansed (*byang*) and being purified (*sangs*). Since the latter two reasons teach the qualities and their functions, they teach the two aspects of final realization (*chub*) and unfolding (*rgyas*). In terms of the ground, the first two reasons mainly teach the basic element's aspect of being free from reference points because they teach that due to suffering and its origin's being adventitious, they are primordially empty (and the basic element is empty of them). The latter two reasons mainly teach the aspect that the basic element abides as the phenomenon of basic awareness because they teach its qualities and activity. This is also the case because it is due to the basic element's aspect of being free from reference points that it represents the nirvāṇas of the three yānas by virtue of this aspect of its being free from reference points' being realized partially or in its entirety. It is due to the aspect of the basic element's being basic awareness that it represents the phenomena of saṃsāra because the entirety of saṃsāra arises from the ālaya-consciousness that represents a mere reflection of this phenomenon of basic awareness's appearing.

Note here that though Gö Lotsāwa generally explains the ālaya-consciousness in detail based on passages from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and also quotes passages from this sūtra that equate the ālaya-consciousness with *tathāgatagarbha*, he does not support the total equation of these two. Rather, he says that the ālaya-consciousness, which represents the stains, is the support of saṃsāra and comes to an end upon attaining buddhahood.<sup>951</sup> Though the ālaya-consciousness has come to an end at that point, there still exists the enlightened activity that promotes the welfare of all sentient beings for as long as there is space. Since that is impossible without a support, this support is the actual *tathāgata* heart. The ālaya-consciousness is the most subtle aspect in the minds of sentient beings and therefore is also explained as “what focuses on the dharmadhātu.” It is very similar to the *tathāgata* heart and can likewise not be grasped as “this” or “that” even by those who are learned in the ways of the world. It is just that much that those who know the pith instructions have expressed as “ālaya.” Later, Gö Lotsāwa clearly distinguishes between the ālaya-consciousness and *tathāgatagarbha*, saying that he explains mind as both the ālaya-consciousness and the *tathāgata* heart, but that he does not explain mind as the latter from the perspective of its being the actual *tathāgata* heart.<sup>952</sup> Rather, he explains mind (or the ālaya-consciousness) as a reflection of the *tathāgata* heart. If this is understood well, the direct seeing of suchness will arise swiftly.

Gö Lotsāwa's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55/157–58 also stress the ultimate oneness of confusion and awakening or of the *tathāgata* heart (being the correct understanding of emptiness) and its adventitious stains.<sup>953</sup> He says that if one realizes the *tathāgata* heart to be pure of adventitious stains, one will definitely direct one's mind toward its qualities, just as when one hears that the blurred vision of one's old father has been cured and thus immediately understands that he can see forms clearly now. Bodhisattvas who understand the twofold principle of the distinctive features of emptiness—being empty of the adventitious stains but not being empty of the qualities—see that this is the true actuality of emptiness. Those bodhisattvas whose minds stray from this understanding of emptiness and who mentally engage in many ways in what is not it (regarding it as a kind of extinction or as being the same as or different from form and so on) are said to be distracted from it. During the phase of the view, those who hold such wrong views about emptiness do not rest in meditative equipoise in this true actuality and thus do not attain superior insight; nor will they attain one-pointed calm abiding. Therefore, it is said that their minds are distracted from emptiness during the phases of both view and meditation.

If one understands the emptiness explained here, one will neither think that the extinction of desire is emptiness, nor that this very desire is emptiness, nor that emptiness exists somewhere else than in that desire. Therefore, through resting free from negation and affirmation right within, however this very desire may appear, one will see its natural luminosity through superior insight. At the same time, no matter which thoughts may arise, they function as aids for samādhi and thus this resting will also be one-pointed. Here, it is ultimate emptiness that is explained as emptiness, which is the tathāgata heart that is also explained to be the ultimate reality that is called “the reality of the noble ones.” Without the samādhi during the level of engagement through aspiration that familiarizes with this tathāgata heart, one is not able to realize the basic expanse without adventitious conceptions on the path of seeing and, through the continuity of that, perceive it directly as the buddhabhūmi. On the other hand, it is taught that one is not distracted toward anything else if one realizes emptiness, just as it is, in the way described.<sup>954</sup>

To wit, Gö Lotsāwa’s stance that the tathāgata heart is the basis of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and that in accordance with the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the adventitious stains (the ālaya-consciousness) and the tathāgata heart are ultimately not different (the former’s merely being a reflection of the latter) greatly matches the Mahāmudrā hallmark that “the essence of thoughts is dharmakāya.” Given that Gö Lotsāwa explains the *Uttarantra* and RGVV in relation to Mahāmudrā, it is thus not so surprising that he relies so heavily on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* despite those two texts’ not quoting this sūtra at all. However, it is important that Gö Lotsāwa, referring to the passage in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that *tathāgatagarbha* was taught in order to prevent fear of emptiness and to attract the tīrthikas, does not subscribe to taking the instructions on *tathāgatagarbha* as a teaching of expedient meaning. He explains:

Some say, “Since this [sūtra says], ‘in order to attract the tīrthikas’ it teaches the tathāgata heart as being of expedient meaning.” Others answer them, “This is an explanation of the purpose of teaching the [tathāgata] heart, but it is not an explanation that it is of expedient meaning.” I do not see either [statement] to be justified. For the intention in this [sūtra] is that terms such as [tathāgata] heart, sentient being, self, and mighty lord (*īśvara*) have an expedient [literally “guiding”] meaning and that through being guided by them, the meaning of ‘tathāgata heart’ needs to be joined with identitylessness. One is not

able to ascertain that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* does not teach the tathāgata heart that is explained in this *Uttara[ tantra from ]* beginning to end. Rather, in terms of guiding, it teaches the suchness that is explained here [in the *Uttaratantra* too].<sup>955</sup>

Though Gö Lotsāwa here and elsewhere endorses the point that the tathāgata heart cannot be realized without realizing emptiness or identitylessness, he makes it equally clear more than once that the tathāgata heart is not just sheer emptiness, especially not the kind of emptiness that is understood as being a nonimplicative negation. Rather, the tathāgata heart is the union of basic awareness and emptiness. Thus, the teachings on the tathāgata heart are not merely a provisional device for those afraid of emptiness but represent the ultimate instructions on mind's true nature or Mahāmudrā.

Once in his commentary, Gö Lotsāwa explicitly denies the common Tibetan critique of Mahāmudrā's being like the approach of the Chinese monk Hwashang Mahāyāna. As mentioned above, Hwashang's stereotyped position served as a standard tool for accusing certain approaches within Tibetan Buddhism of being guilty of focusing solely on the ultimate (emptiness) while neglecting the accumulation of merit through the first five pāramitās and so on. In general, GC makes it clear that the followers of Mahāmudrā coined the conventional expression "looking at your own nature" for nothing but the perception of directly realizing the lack of any nature—emptiness—through looking (as understood in the general mahāyāna).<sup>956</sup> In the context of addressing the critique that therefore Mahāmudrā is like Hwashang's approach, GC begins by quoting *Bodhicaryāvatāra* IX.54:

Emptiness is the remedy for the darkness  
Of afflictive and cognitive obscurations.  
So how could those who wish for omniscience  
Not swiftly meditate on it?<sup>957</sup>

Then, he has someone object, "Well, isn't the explanation of the Chinese monk Mahāyāna justified then? For he says that since one is able to eliminate everything to be relinquished and realize everything to be known solely through meditating on emptiness, the teachings on the aspect of skillful means (such as compassion, giving rise to bodhicitta, and the other five pāramitās) are only for the sake of guiding naive beings but not for

those of sharp faculties.” GC gives three answers why this explanation is not justified. First, he adduces Nāgārjuna’s *Bodhicittavivarāṇa* 73:

When yogins have meditated  
 On this emptiness in such a way,  
 There is no doubt that a mind-set of being devoted  
 To the welfare of others will arise [in them].

Thus, GC says, through meditating on emptiness, compassion will arise, and through that one will engage in skillful means.

The second answer is that through meditating on emptiness, one will not only attain omniscience at the end but along the way too one will know many knowable objects one did not know before. Therefore, *Bodhicaryāvatāra* VIII.94ab says:

I need to remove the suffering of others  
 Because it is suffering, just like my own suffering.

Thus, it is taught that by virtue of that reason, one gives rise to an inferential valid cognition of realizing that the suffering of all other beings is something to be eliminated and then engages in the welfare of others. When many knowable objects appear through the power of meditation, one realizes through valid cognition that it is not appropriate not to promote the welfare of others.

The third answer is that the great compassion of tathāgatas is included in the teaching of the last dharma wheel that sentient beings are naturally endowed with the buddha qualities. Since *prajñā* and compassion are primordially connected by nature, if one does not train in the vast means for the welfare of others, one does not relinquish the obscuration of not considering the welfare of sentient beings—being ignorant about the welfare of limitless beings. Therefore, it is precisely by virtue of all obscurations’ being terminated through realizing emptiness that one engages in vast means.<sup>958</sup>

Finally, it is to be noted that Gö Lotsāwa takes the nature of phenomena and nonconceptual wisdom to be continua of moments:

Therefore, it is not the case that space—which is the mere existence of providing room, has a momentary nature, and possesses a continuum—is nonexistent. Here, in terms of time, the space at the beginning of an eon is not the space at the time of [its] destruction [and thus

also momentary in a sense]. In terms of location, the very substance that is the mere existence of providing room within a golden container is not the mere existence of providing room in an earthen container. Likewise, the moments of the basic element of sentient beings, which has the property of basic awareness and operates by way of being an uninterrupted series, do not turn into the moments of buddha wisdom. However, the two mere existences of providing room in a golden container and an earthen container, respectively, are not different in type. Likewise, the nonconceptuality of buddhas and the nonconceptuality of sentient beings are very much similar in kind, and there also are conventional expressions for their being one, such as saying, "I and the buddhas say the same."<sup>959</sup>

Thus, for Gö Lotsāwa, the nature of phenomena and nonconceptual wisdom have the nature of momentariness and can thus be taken as the continuity of the stainless true nature of one's mind. This is explicitly made clear in his comments on the defining characteristic of the nature of phenomena:

The commentary [on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* by Vasubandhu] explains [the nature of phenomena] to be nothing but the continuum of stainless mind.<sup>960</sup>

Gö Lotsāwa supports this by referring to *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XIII.19 and Vasubandhu's *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti* that both say that the nature of phenomena is the pure luminous mind.

As mentioned above, among the eight ways of explaining buddha nature, GC presents Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* as an example of teaching it as luminosity. The central importance of this text for Gö Lotsāwa's interpretation of the *Uttaratantra* along the lines of Mahāmudrā is highlighted by his quoting forty-nine verses (about half of that text) and commenting on some from a Mahāmudrā point of view. For example, GC quotes verses 18–22, which are very similar in content to the *Uttaratantra*'s nine examples of the tathāgata heart and its obscurations:

Spotless are the sun and moon,  
But obscured by fivefold stains:  
These are clouds and smoke and mist,  
Rahu's face,<sup>961</sup> and dust as well.

Similarly, mind so luminous  
Is obscured by fivefold stains.  
They're desire, malice, laziness,  
Agitation, and doubt too.<sup>962</sup>

A garment that was purged by fire  
May be soiled by various stains.  
When it's put into a blaze again,  
The stains are burned, the garment not.

Likewise, mind that is so luminous  
Is soiled by stains of craving and so forth.  
The afflictions burn in wisdom's fire,  
But its luminosity does not.

The sūtras that teach emptiness,  
However many spoken by the victors,  
They all remove afflictions,  
But never ruin this dhātu.

GC adds *Uttarantra* I.154–55/157–58 and then links all these verses with the Mahāmudrā approach of directly looking at ordinary mind.<sup>963</sup> GC explains that no matter how the dharmadhātu is examined as emptiness through teaching the lack of any nature in the collection of reasoning, the luminosity that is inextinguishable despite its being associated with the afflictions since beginningless time cannot be negated through all the many sūtras and reasonings that teach it as emptiness. Therefore, the view here is as follows. Without considering the actual way of being of phenomena, if one takes just the way they appear as what is valid, they indeed exist in the form of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, matter and consciousness, the world and its inhabitants, and so on. However, if one takes their actual way of being as what is valid, this is the prajñā of knowing that there is absolutely nothing other than mind and that this mind itself is “ordinary mind,” which is not established as any phenomenon whatsoever that has characteristics. What abides as the emptiness arrived at through reasoned analysis and as luminosity and what cannot be destroyed by anything is the tathāgata heart. The reasonings that establish the lack of any essence whatsoever and the fact of mind's abiding in the mode of being of luminosity indeed appear in many teachings of the Buddha but especially in the detailed explanations

in the *Ghanavyūhasūtra* and the *Lañkāvatārasūtra*. The teachings on being empty of any nature as found in the Madhyamaka treatises no doubt apply here in just the same way too. However, consider that a cloud that appears like a mountain from afar does not exist that way, once you have arrived at it. The flickering of a mirage is not observable, once you have reached it. There is no person in a cairn, once you have come close to it. In just the same way, if minds and mental factors, which consist of afflictions and conceptions, are thoroughly examined through direct perception without relying on reasoning, they are seen to be nothing whatsoever. Therefore, even the features of a correct and false seeming reality are difficult to distinguish. Still, if one takes the world as what is valid, they can be distinguished.

In its comments on *Uttaratantra* I.25 on the inconceivable point of the tathāgata heart's being naturally pure and yet being associated with afflictions, GC quotes *Dharmadhātustava* 36–37 and explains that the tathāgata heart is to be found nowhere else than right within our mental afflictions.<sup>964</sup>

About water at the time of spring,  
 What we say is that it's "warm."  
 Of the very same [thing], when it's chilly,  
 We just say that it is "cold."

Covered by the web of the afflictions,  
 It is called a "sentient being."  
 Once it's free from the afflictions,  
 It should be expressed as "Buddha."

GC comments that it is nothing but the basic element or heart of sentient beings that represents ignorance, desire, and so on—desire and so on do not exist anywhere else than in this heart. Therefore, for those who are skilled in the path, this heart is to be searched for right within desire—it is not that pure phenomena are found anywhere else than in just such afflicted phenomena. Therefore, the statement "The essence of desire is the tathāgata heart, but desire is adventitious" is truly inconceivable.

GC also says that when one trains in the conduct of bodhisattvas by relying on the generation of ultimate bodhicitta, this training becomes very much advanced.<sup>965</sup> When one familiarizes with the bodhicitta of focusing on the nature of the mind, the nature of the five sense consciousnesses and



the mental consciousness will be realized to be luminosity. As it is said in *Dharmadhātustava* 38–43:

In dependence upon eye and form,  
Appearances without a stain occur.  
From being unborn and unceasing,  
The dharmadhātu will be known.

In dependence upon sound and ear,  
A consciousness [comes forth],  
With the mind of these three being dharmadhātu,  
Attained through being without any thoughts at all.<sup>966</sup>

In dependence upon nose and smell,  
A nose consciousness [arises, all] being suchness,  
[But] conceptualizing the dharmadhātu  
That is formless and indemonstrable.<sup>967</sup>

The nature of the tongue is emptiness,  
And the dhātu of the taste is void—  
Being of the dharmadhātu's nature,  
Consciousness is nonabiding.

Through tangible objects that have the characteristic of being  
conditions  
And the nature of a pure body  
[Arises] what is free from such conditions,  
Which I call “the dharmadhātu.”<sup>968</sup>

Once conception and its concepts are relinquished  
With regard to phenomena whose principal is mind,  
Due to the very lack of nature of phenomena,  
You should familiarize with them as dharmadhātu.<sup>969</sup>

Accordingly, when the eighteen kinds of mental movements in the eighteen dhātus (the six consciousnesses, the six sense faculties, and the six objects) occur, one familiarizes with these very movements' being luminosity. Due to being familiar with this, these very eighteen dhātus dawn as luminosity. Once they appear that way, this is called “accomplishment.” Based on

this, one attains the qualities of the completely pure six sense āyatanas as taught in the *Saddharmapūṇḍarīkasūtra*, which says that there arise twelve times one hundred or eight times one hundred qualities in each of these āyatanas.<sup>970</sup>

Furthermore, GC speaks about the buddha qualities (such as the ten powers) existing in sentient beings in a subtle way but not in their full-blown form.<sup>971</sup> This is illustrated by the *Avatamsakasūtra*'s example of a huge canvas with a map of an entire universe's being contained in a single minute particle and the example of the six sense faculties of a cakravartin's already existing in his embryo in the womb. In particular during the ten bhūmis, these qualities increase further until they reach their perfection on the buddhabhūmi. To support this, GC quotes verses 5–7 and 75–76 of the *Dharmadhātustava*:

Just as a lamp that's sitting in a vase  
Does not illuminate at all,  
While dwelling in the vase of the afflictions,  
The dharmadhātu is not seen.

From whichever of its sides  
You punch some holes into this vase,  
From just these various places then,  
Its light rays will beam forth.

Once the vajra of samādhi  
Has completely smashed this vase,  
To the very limits of all space,  
It will shine just everywhere.<sup>972</sup>

...

Just as when the waxing moon  
Is seen more in every moment,  
Those who've entered on the bhūmis,  
See its increase step by step.

On the fifteenth day of waxing,  
Eventually, the moon is full.  
Just so, when the bhūmis' end is reached,  
The dharmakāya's full and clear.

However, GC says that this should be understood in the following way. It is only the factor of the dharmadhātu's being pure of adventitious stains to a lesser or a greater degree that accounts for the buddha qualities' first appearing to be subtle and then appearing to increase while progressing on the path, whereas the dharmadhātu itself never becomes something whose nature undergoes any change. This is just as when the space confined within a house becomes vast unrestrained space once this house collapses. However, just through that, space does not become something whose nature has changed. Therefore, verse 8 of the *Dharmadhātustava* says:

Unarisen is the dharmadhātu,  
 And never cease it will.  
 At all times without afflictions,  
 Stainless through beginning, middle, end.<sup>973</sup>

Similarly, GC says about the relationship between the basic element and the notion of “fundamental change” in the *Uttarantra* that they are the same in essence (suchness) and are only distinguished by the presence or absence of stains, respectively. Thus, in a general way, the tathāgata heart is the primordial foundation for both afflicted and purified phenomena but is completely changeless in its own nature. “Change” refers only to its first also serving as the support of afflicted phenomena and later as the support of purified phenomena alone:

The basic element or cause serves as the foundation of afflicted phenomena—its [state of] not being liberated from the cocoons of the afflictions is expressed by the name “tathāgata heart.” Since it functions as the support of afflicted phenomena, it is the foundation [in the expression “fundamental change”]. Once its stains including their latent tendencies have become pure and do not return again, it does not function [anymore] as the foundation of afflictions. Therefore, having reverted from its former [state], it [then] functions as the support of purified phenomena alone. Hence, this should be understood as the very essence of the fundamental change. The two of the basic element and the fundamental change are only distinguished through the existence or nonexistence of stains, but their essence is nothing but suchness.<sup>974</sup>

Finally, as mentioned above, CMW's introduction, most of the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim, the *Lamp*, and GISM all exhibit a number of connections between the *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā. For details on these connections, see the chapter "Overview of the Indian and Tibetan Texts Presented in This Book" and the translations below.

In sum, all the sources presented here not only relate Mahāmudrā and the *Uttaratantra* but also show that there are clear sources for a sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach (whether it is based on the *Uttaratantra* or not) in India, in the Kagyü School, and even from the very beginning of the Kadampa School.

### *The Geden Kagyü Tradition of Mahāmudrā*

This tradition of Mahāmudrā is said to be transmitted through two lineages.<sup>975</sup> The short lineage originated with Vajradhara, who passed it on to Mañjuśrī, and the latter directly revealed it to Tsongkhapa. The long lineage also begins with Vajradhara but then goes through Vajrapāṇi, Saraha, and Śavaripa. From the latter, there are two branches, which unite again in Marpa Chökyi Lodrö (1012–1097). The first one goes from Śavaripa to Lūipa, Ḍārika, Dingkampa,<sup>976</sup> Tilopa, Nāropa, and Marpa. The second one involves Śavaripa, Maitrīpa, and Marpa. Marpa transmitted both these lineages to Milarepa, who is followed by several Tagpo Kagyü masters up through the eleventh abbot of Drikung, Chökyi Gyalpo<sup>977</sup> (1335–1407), who taught it to Tsongkhapa. Another Kagyü master from whom Tsongkhapa received Mahāmudrā teachings was Umapa Pawo Dorje,<sup>978</sup> whose guru was the Drugpa Kagyü master Barawa Gyaltsen Balsang, a student of the Third Karmapa. In addition, Tsongkhapa received tantric Mahāmudrā-related transmissions from two students of Butön—Kyungpo Lhepa<sup>979</sup> and Chökyi Balpa<sup>980</sup> (both born fourteenth century)—as well as from two Sakyapas, Chöjé Töndrub Rinchen<sup>981</sup> (1309–1385) and Rendawa Shönnu Lodrö. Thus, it is obvious that at least the long Gelug Mahāmudrā lineage derives from well-established Kagyü lineages and does not include any Kadampa masters (therefore also not relying on texts such as those by Mönlam Tsültrim). Though there is thus evidence that Tsongkhapa received Mahāmudrā teachings, there is not much evidence, if any, that he ever taught it. In any case, the short and long Gelug Mahāmudrā lineages are considered to have been transmitted orally by five more Gelug masters after Tsongkhapa in the form of an "ear-whispered lineage"<sup>982</sup> until the teachings were written down for the first time by the First Paṅchen Lama, Lobsang Chökyi

Gyaltzen<sup>983</sup> (1570–1622) in his *Root Text of the Mahāmudrā of the Precious Geden Kagyü, Highway of the Victors* and its autocommentary.<sup>984</sup>

The autocommentary includes many quotes from Indian siddhas such as Saraha and from early Kagyü Mahāmudrā masters (almost two-thirds of the quotes from Tibetan sources) and generally shows that its author was very familiar with Kagyü literature on Mahāmudrā. By contrast, Tsongkhapa is only quoted four times. However, the expression “Geden Kagyü” in the title of the root text is ambiguous—it is not clear whether it means a combined Gelug-Kagyü system or a distinct “Gelug (oral) teaching lineage” (the literal meaning of *kagyü*). The Pañchen Lama does not explain it one way or the other, but almost all subsequent Gelugpa commentators on his text have supported the latter meaning, while the present Dalai Lama advocates the former.<sup>985</sup> The autocommentary exhibits a convergence of the Gelugpa *lamrim* tradition and Kagyü Mahāmudrā by pointing to the early figures of these two schools—Atiśa and early Kagyü masters such as Milarepa, Lama Shang, Pamo Trupa, and Jigden Sumgön. Of course, this is at first glance reminiscent of Gampopa’s blending the two streams of Kadampa and Mahāmudrā but, as the section on superior insight in the Pañchen Lama’s text shows, his manner of presenting Kagyü and Gelug teachings side by side—rather than actually blending them—is quite different.

Like Kagyü Mahāmudrā, the Pañchen Lama explicitly supports the division into sūtra and tantra Mahāmudrā, and his text focuses primarily on explaining the former. He rejects Sakya Paṇḍita’s above-mentioned critique of sūtra Mahāmudrā, while approvingly referring to Jigden Sumgön and Gö Lotsāwa to the effect that Mahāmudrā is found on all levels of the path. However, for the Pañchen Lama, the Mahāmudrā in the teachings of Saraha, Nāgārjuna, Śavaripa, Nāropa, Maitrīpa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Pamo Trupa, and so on, is the quintessence of the completion stage practices of the Yogānuttara class of tantra, while sūtra Mahāmudrā refers to meditating on emptiness as explained in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras. According to the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, “the special feature of the mahamudra presentation of voidness meditation is that such meditation is focused primarily on the nature of the reality of mind.”<sup>986</sup>

Among the Pañchen Lama’s explanations of calm abiding and superior insight as the twofold progressive approach to cultivate this sūtra-based Mahāmudrā, the discussion of calm abiding accords for the most part with similar Kagyü presentations, such as those by Tagpo Dashi Namgyal<sup>987</sup> and Padma Karpo.<sup>988</sup> However, he regards some of what is usually considered as part of superior insight in Kagyü Mahāmudrā as only falling under the

scope of calm abiding. He also says that everything that he classifies here as calm abiding only pertains to the conventional nature of the mind but not to its ultimate nature (a distinction not made in *Kagyü Mahāmudrā*).

By contrast, the explanation of superior insight (which takes up about half of the Paṅchen Lama's text) only superficially resembles *Kagyü* accounts. According to the Paṅchen Lama, it represents the guiding instructions of his main guru Sangyé Yeshé. By virtue of the Paṅchen Lama's specific emphases and terminologies, it is the most distinctly Gelug section in his text. He begins by simply listing five general pointing-out instructions in terms of "cutting through a basis or root of mind":<sup>989</sup> (1) seeking the mind on the inside and the outside or in its arising, abiding, and ceasing, (2) seeking the mind in matter, (3) settling in uncontrived present awareness, (4) observing the nature of whatever arises, and (5) allowing thoughts to arise freely and become self-liberated, all of which are supported by quotes from Indian and *Kagyü Mahāmudrā* masters. Of course, these methods are considered crucial by numerous *Kagyüpas* and found in many of their *Mahāmudrā* texts. However, the Paṅchen Lama does not elaborate on them but goes on to present his detailed "teaching on the quintessence of these methods." Here, he emphasizes the analysis of the person and the mind in terms of emptiness that is key to Gelug *Madhyamaka*. In this context, he also discusses distinctly Gelug topics such as the identification of the object of negation (*dgag bya*), the refutation of *Madhyamaka* versions that define the ignorant mistakeness of sentient beings either too narrowly or too widely, emptiness' and dependent origination's being equivalent, phenomena's merely nominal existence versus their being empty of real existence (*bden grub*), and the object generality of emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation. Given the importance of superior insight—or the correct view—in *Madhyamaka* and the serious disagreements between Tibetan schools in that area, it is not too surprising that the First Paṅchen Lama adopts such a typical Gelug stance in this crucial section of his text.

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama explains that in the Gelugpa system, the general difference between the *sūtras* and the *tantras* lies in the type of mind through which emptiness is realized, while the emptiness of real existence that both *sūtra* and *tantra* aim at is the same.<sup>990</sup> In particular, he says:

Concerning the difference in mind that meditates on voidness, in the *sūtra* tradition we employ an individualizing discriminating awareness for meditation to gain a correct view. For achieving *vipashyana*, an exceptionally perceptive state of mind, we need scrutinizing or

“analytical” meditation. We use individualizing discriminating awareness in meditation to scrutinize intelligently in order to discern voidness. In the anuttarayoga tantra system, on the other hand, the mind that recognizes voidness engages only in absorptive, or “formal” meditation with placement on certain vital points in the subtle vajra-body that are more special and more powerful than others. This is a great difference. By the force of there being a special mind that is aimed at voidness, there is the circumstance for attaining together, at the same occasion, both serenely stilled and settled, as well as exceptionally perceptive states of mind. Thus, by relying on special methods, we attain shamata and vipashyana simultaneously with anuttarayoga tantra meditation, whereas with the sūtra methods we first achieve shamata by itself and then combine it with vipashyana. In either case, however, as our foundation we must meditate on a correct view of reality as explained by Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti. Therefore the First Panchen Lama bases his presentation of voidness meditation on the teachings of Nagarjuna.

In short, what does “mahamudra” mean in this context? Because voidness is the actual nature of all phenomena, or the manner in which all things exist, voidness is a “mudra” or seal. Voidness, as the manner in which everything exists, is the seal that guarantees the nature of all things in the sense that there is nothing that can go beyond this. Everything has voidness as its nature. Furthermore, because the realization of voidness liberates us from all the fetters of suffering and their causes, it is “maha” or great.<sup>991</sup>

Obviously this understanding of sūtra Mahāmudrā meditation as the analytical meditation on emptiness through discriminating prajñā (which is by definition conceptual and inferential) is very different from the above-explained sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach of Maitrīpa and his students, Jñānakīrti, Gampopa, and all other Kagyü masters. For their approach does not rely on inference, always emphasizes direct pointing-out instructions of mind’s true nature, and works with direct perceptions of this nature from the very beginning.

On the general connection between prajñāpāramitā and Mahāmudrā, a Gelugpa commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* by Kungtang Göncho Denpé Drönmé (1762–1823) declares:

In general, all sūtras flow into Mantra, but among these [sūtras], the Perfection of Wisdom sūtras have ways of directly flowing into Mantra that are unlike other sūtras . . . such as . . . how the name “mother of Conquerors” is asserted to teach the great seal (*mahāmudrā*) of definitive meaning.<sup>992</sup>

Finally, it should be mentioned that the late Nyingma master Dūjom Rinpoche, in his discussion of buddha nature, not only uses the *Uttaratantra* and some tathāgatagarbha sūtras but also quotes several Mahāmudrā texts, such as Tilopa’s *Pith Instructions on Mahāmudrā* that he gave to Nāropa on the banks of the Ganges, Maitrīpa’s *Tattvadaśaka*, and Lama Shang’s *Ultimate Profound Path of Mahāmudrā*.<sup>993</sup>



## Overview of the Indian and Tibetan Texts Presented in This Book

### *The Uttaratantra and Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā*

The authorships and the meanings of the titles of these two texts, as well as their relationship, were already explained above.<sup>994</sup> As for an overview of their contents, the *Uttaratantra*'s first chapter begins with a brief introduction of the seven vajra points (I.1–3),<sup>995</sup> followed by descriptions of the first three of these points—the jewels of the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha (I.4–22)—and an overview of the inconceivability of the last four vajra points (I.23–26). The tathāgata heart (vajra point 4) is discussed by way of three reasons for all beings' possessing it (I.27–28), a presentation in ten points (its nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, manifestation, phases, all-pervasiveness, changelessness, and inseparability of qualities; (I.29–95ab), nine examples for its being covered but being unaltered by adventitious stains (I.95cd–152), its being realized through faith or confidence (I.153), its being empty of adventitious stains but not being empty of its inseparable qualities (I.154–55), and the purpose of its being taught, which also removes qualms about other sūtras' teaching that all phenomena are emptiness (I.156–67).

Chapter 2 on buddha awakening (vajra point 5) starts by listing the eight points through which this topic is discussed (II.1–2). This is followed by the detailed explanation of these eight: its nature and cause (II.3–7), fruition (II.8–17), function (II.18–28), endowment (II.19–37), manifestation (II.38–61), permanence (II.62–68), and inconceivability (II.69–73).

Chapter 3 on the qualities of awakening (vajra point 6) briefly introduces the thirty-two qualities of freedom pertaining to the dharmakāya and the thirty-two qualities of maturation pertaining to the rūpakāyas (III.1–3). This is followed by a verse with an example for each one of the three sets of the qualities of freedom: the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the eighteen unique buddha qualities (III.4), which are then explained in

detail (III.5–7, 8–10, and 11–16, respectively). Next, there is a list of the thirty-two qualities of maturation (III.17–26). The chapter is concluded by a summary of all sixty-four qualities (III.27–39).

Chapter 4 on enlightened activity (vajra point 7) opens with two verses about this activity's being effortless and uninterrupted (IV.1–2). Buddha activity is explained in more detail through six points: deliverance (the ten bhūmis), their cause (the two accumulations), the result of that (awakening), those who take hold of it (bodhisattvas), its obscurations (afflictions and their latent tendencies), and the condition for overcoming them (a buddha's compassion). Then, the features of enlightened activity are illustrated through nine examples and their summary (IV.13–88). Finally, it is explained how enlightened activity is partially similar and yet superior to each one of these examples (IV.89–98).

Chapter 5 on the benefit of the teaching on the tathāgata heart first demonstrates how the merit of even just hearing about it, let alone studying and practicing it, is superior to generosity, discipline, and dhyāna (V.1–15). This is followed by four verses that describe on which basis the *Uttaratantra* was explained, what caused its composition, how it was explained, and what its characteristics are (V.16–19). Then, there are several verses on the means of protecting oneself from becoming deprived of the dharma, as well as on the causes and results of deviating from the dharma (V.20–24). The next verse is the dedication of the merit attained by the author through this teaching (V.25). The last three stanzas are a summary of the meaning of the previous ten verses (V.26–28).

RGVV comments quite thoroughly in classical Indian scholarly fashion on the first four vajra points (with the exception of the nine examples), while it contains only a few brief comments on the fifth vajra point and almost none on the remainder of the *Uttaratantra*. The text begins by correlating the seven vajra points individually with several sūtras as well as matching them all with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. This is followed by detailed explanations of the eight qualities of the ultimate Buddha (buddhahood), the eight qualities of the ultimate dharma (the realities of cessation and the realization of the path), and the two qualities of the ultimate saṃgha (irreversible bodhisattvas). The discussion of the inconceivability of the last four vajra points and their relationship is concluded by outlining the cause-and-result connection between all seven vajra points.

In the context of explaining the fourth vajra point, RGVV offers thorough explanations on the three types of beings: those who crave for saṃsāra (ordinary beings), those who crave to be free from saṃsāra (tīrthikas,

śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas), and those who do not crave for either (bodhisattvas). Among these, only the latter are able to eventually realize the tathāgata heart. This is connected with extensive comments on the intrinsic qualities of the tathāgata heart that consist of the four pāramitās of supreme purity, self, bliss, and permanence, as well as their causes. RGVV's actual comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55 are preceded by a detailed explanation of the four beings who do not realize the tathāgata heart—ordinary beings, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have newly entered the mahāyāna and are distracted by misunderstanding emptiness. The correct defining characteristic of emptiness in the case of the tathāgata heart is said to be presented by those two verses in terms of being free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.

As for the scriptural sources and citations in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, except for two verses from the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, all quotes and references are related to sūtras:

*Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, twenty-seven times (one related to vajra point 5; plus one reference to the explanation of the Buddha as the everlasting ultimate refuge)

*Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, nine times (vajra points 4 and 6)<sup>996</sup>

*Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, seven times

*Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, six times (plus a lengthy summary of its introduction to identify all seven vajra points)

*Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, two times (plus a reference to the nine examples for buddha nature's being obscured by adventitious stains as stemming from this sūtra)<sup>997</sup>

*Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*, two times

*Mahāyānābhīdharmasūtra*, two times

*Dṛḍhādhyāśayaparivarta* (or *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*), one time (vajra points 1–3)

*Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviśayāvatāranirdeśa*, one time (vajra point 7)

*Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*, one time

*Kāśyapaparivarta*, one time

*Gaganagañjaparipṛcchāsūtra*, one time

*Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*, one time (plus the example of the painters)

*Mahāparinirvānasūtra*, one time

*Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, one time

*Samyutta Nikāya*, one time

*Ratnadārikāsūtra* (one reference to being the source of the sixty-four qualities)

*Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* (referred to in *Uttaratantra* II.58)  
 prajñāpāramitā sūtras (one reference in terms of understanding the  
 paths of seeing and familiarization)

As mentioned above, in terms of the number and the extent of these quotes, the main sources of the *Uttaratantra* as per RGVV are clearly the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, and the *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*.<sup>998</sup> In addition, RGVV says that the seven vajra points come from the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, the *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, and the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviśayāvātāranirdeśa*. Thus, all in all, there is an explicit attempt by RGVV to portray the teachings of the *Uttaratantra* as being squarely based on the mahāyāna sūtras (primarily some from the third wheel of dharma). In terms of the contents of the *Uttaratantra*, three more sūtras appear to be crucial. The nine examples of buddha nature's being covered by adventitious stains derive from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. The sixty-four qualities of the dharmakāya and the rūpakāyas together with their causes are found in the *Ratnadhārikāsūtra*, and the examples for enlightened activity stem from the *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*. In total, quotes or paraphrases from all these sūtras occupy more than one third of RGVV.

However, as mentioned above, it is somewhat mysterious why the *Uttaratantra* identifies the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* as its main source. For the passages from this sūtra that RGVV correlates with the seven vajra points show hardly any correspondences to the specific terms and templates through which the *Uttaratantra* explains these vajra points. The sūtra uses the terms "disposition/lineage of the three jewels" and "the dhātu (or basic element) of sentient beings" several times, adding sometimes that this dhātu is impure, not stainless, and associated with afflictions or flaws. The Buddha is said to look at the impure dhātus of sentient beings and then guide those who are suitable through his enlightened activity. The sūtra also distinguishes this dhātu as threefold—"being certain in terms of what is correct," "being uncertain," and "being certain in terms of what is mistaken." Though those terms and the related explanations are also found in RGVV (not in the *Uttaratantra*), they are not distinct enough from those found in other sūtras and they do not cover enough of the thematic ground of the *Uttaratantra* for the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* to occupy its assigned central place in the *Uttaratantra*. In addition, there are many passages in other sūtras, especially on the last four vajra points, that appear to be more

explicit and use more of the typical terminology of the *Uttaratantra*, such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Mahābherīsūtra*, and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

Among the sūtras that were identified above as *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras, neither the *Uttaratantra* nor RGVV quote or refer to the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Mahābherīsūtra*, or the *Ghanavyūhasūtra*, despite these sūtras' discussing the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* and the first four explaining it in detail. Naturally, the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV do not agree with the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*'s equation of the tathāgata heart with emptiness and the ālaya-consciousness, as well as its statement that the tathāgata heart is only taught for the sake of removing fear of emptiness and attracting non-Buddhists. Likewise, the different explanations in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* of what "sentient beings' possessing buddha nature" means and this sūtra's ambivalent stance on those who lack the disposition to become buddhas (*icchāntika*) are obviously very problematic for texts like the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV. As for the other sūtras above, especially those that were clearly in existence before the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, it is unclear why they were not used in these two texts.<sup>999</sup>

Likewise, one cannot help wondering why the author of RGVV chose the quotes from the four other sūtras (the *Sthirādhyāsayaparivartasūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, and the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvātāranirdeśa*) that he presents as the alternative sources of the seven vajra points besides the *Dhāraṇīśvarārājasūtra*. CMW provides an explanation on how each one of these quotes relates to one of the seven vajra points through pointing out the fact that these points are difficult to realize.<sup>1000</sup> It is acceptable that this general feature of being difficult to realize, which is common to all seven vajra points and is explained in RGVV as the reason for their bearing this name, is mirrored more or less explicitly in those quotes. However, passages on the general feature of the topics that correspond to the seven vajra points' being difficult to realize can be found in many sūtras, not just the four quoted in RGVV. More significantly, in their brevity and quite general tone, those quotes do not specifically match the particular ways and terms through which the *Uttaratantra* itself explains the seven vajra points.

As for the contents of the *Uttaratantra* as per some of the Tibetan commentaries used in this book, CMW says that this text teaches the subject matter that consists of the profound and vast seven vajra points, which represents the mahāyāna.<sup>1001</sup> RYC states that Maitreya composed the *Uttaratantra* in order to make those who have the highest faculties and

minds with consummate faith and virtue understand the more than sixteen “sūtras that ascertain the ultimate and teach the definitive meaning” (such as the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*), which are very profound and difficult to realize.<sup>1002</sup> YDC says that the *Uttaratantra* is a commentary on the quintessence of the mahāyāna, which consists of the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras.<sup>1003</sup> It is the extraordinary commentary on the intention of the final wheel of dharma that clearly teaches the ultimate definitive meaning—the sugata heart. GC says that the *Uttaratantra* teaches the meaning of all yānas, but that its primary meaning concerns the last or unsurpassable turning of the wheel of dharma.<sup>1004</sup> It also shows the difference between the expedient and the definitive meanings of the Buddha’s words. According to HLS,<sup>1005</sup> the *Uttaratantra* is the one among the five works of Maitreya that teaches the ultimate definitive meaning, the heart of the matter, and its intention also accords with the teachings on the heart of the matter by Śavaripa and Maitrīpa (that is, Mahāmudrā).

JKC explains that the *Uttaratantra* is the highest of all dharmas taught by the Buddha, being the unsurpassable one or the peak of the mahāyāna scriptures.<sup>1006</sup> It is the commentary on the intention of teaching the heart of the matter, the lion’s roar of irreversibility, thus being the king of all treatises. It is a treatise that clearly teaches all the topics of the profound sūtras of definitive meaning (the four sūtras of definitive meaning of Mere Mentalism and the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras as listed above in JKC) through summarizing them into the seven vajra points. JKC adds that Rongtön and others assert that the *Uttaratantra* is not just a commentary on the intention of only the last dharma wheel but represents a general commentary on the sūtras that teach the definitive meaning. They are said to enumerate about fifteen of these sūtras, such as the *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśasūtra*, *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*, and *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*.

Mipham Rinpoche states that the single essential point of all dharmas in the sūtras and tantras is solely the all-pervading sugata heart, and the text that teaches it clearly is the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>1007</sup>

### *The Indian Texts on the Uttaratantra*

When not counting RGVV as a separate work, there are three known and preserved Indian works on the *Uttaratantra*—Sajjana’s SM, Vairocanarakṣita’s VT, and a commentary by Ratnavajra (presently unavailable). While Ratnavajra’s text is an actual commentary, VT provides only brief glosses on certain words and phrases of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, and SM is

a versified synopsis of the *Uttaratantra*. In this study, RGVV and SM are translated in full, while VT is excerpted.

### Sajjana's *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstropadeśa*

Among modern scholars, E. H. Johnston first mentioned Sajjana's work (SM) in 1950 (having seen a plate photographed by Sāṅkṛtyāyana that is preserved in Patna),<sup>1008</sup> and then Giuseppe Tucci mentioned it and photographed the manuscript himself (probably in the Tibetan Shalu<sup>1009</sup> monastery).<sup>1010</sup> Based on this photocopy by Tucci, Takasaki (1974) first published a transcription of the text (without the interlinear notes). At present, the original manuscript is not accessible, but its photographs by Sāṅkṛtyāyana and Tucci are.<sup>1011</sup> Tucci's photograph in the possession of Professor Takasaki was provided to Kazuo Kano, who used it for his critical edition of the text (Kano 2006, 513–18). The manuscript in one folio is in Śāradā script, and it was written sometime between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. The text consists of thirty-seven verses with interlinear glosses on verses 1–8, 10–17, 19–26, 28–29, 31, and 33 (both verses and glosses are written in the same hand).

In order to present an overview of SM, let's compare the outlines of Sajjana's text by Takasaki and Kano as well as my own.

### Takasaki's Outline<sup>1012</sup>

Verses 1–6: The three jewels (*Uttaratantra* I.1–3)

Verses 7–15: Buddha nature and its three characteristics (I.27–28)

Verses 16–19: The soteriological path consisting of the ten topics (I.29–94)

Verses 20–25: The ten topics related to the nine defilements (I.130–43)

Verses 26–27: The ten topics related to the three characteristics of buddha nature (I.144–52)

Verse 28: Refuting the objection to the authoritative teaching (*āptabādhoddhāra*) (I.156–167)

Verses 29–32: Buddha's awakening (II)

Verse 33: Buddha qualities (III)

Verse 34: Buddha activities (IV)

Verses 35–36: Virtue of blessing and protecting the treatise (V.1–24)

Verse 37: Dedication (V.25–28)<sup>1013</sup>

Kano's Outline<sup>1014</sup>

- Verses 1–4: The three jewels (I.1–22)
- Verses 5–7: The seven vajrapadas (I.3 and 23–26)
- Verses 8–15: The buddha nature (I.26–28, 145, and 149)
- Verses 16–19: The ten topics (I.29–94)
- Verses 20–22: The ten topics and defilements (I.96–143)
- Verses 23–27: The threefold nature (I.144–52)
- Verse 28: *Āptabādhoddhāra* (I.156–67)
- Verses 29–32: Bodhi (II)
- Verse 33: Guṇa (III)
- Verse 34: Karman (IV)
- Verses 35–36: Anuśamsa (V.1–24)

## Brunnhözl's Outline

- Verses 1–5: The three jewels (I.3–22)
- Verses 6–7: Synopsis of the remaining four vajra points (I.23–26)
- Verses 8–28: The basic element (*dhātu*) (I.27–167)
- 8–9: The three reasons (I.27–28)
- 10–15: The divisions and fruitions of the disposition (I.1–3, 26, 28, 145, and 149)
- 16–19: Function of the ten topics (I.29–95ab)
- 20–22: The ten topics and the afflictions in the nine examples (I.95cd–143ab)
- 23–27: Familiarization with the threefold nature of the basic element through the ten topics and the nine examples (I.143cd–155)
- 28: Refutation of objections to the teachings on buddha nature's being authoritative (I.156–67)
- Verses 29–32: Awakening (II)
- Verse 33: The qualities (III)
- Verse 34: Activity (IV)
- Verses 35–36: Benefit and protection (V.1–24)
- Verse 37: Dedication (V.25)

As for the contents of Sajjana's text, it is significant that its title identifies it as a "pith instruction" (*upadeśa*) on the *Uttaratantra* and not as a summary (*saṃgraha*, *piṇḍārtha*, or the like). Indeed, the text is not just a simple synopsis of Maitreya's text but also presents Sajjana's original interpretation that is based on his own contemplative approach to the *Uttaratantra*. Generally



speaking, verses 1–15 of SM outline a contemplative system based on the seven vajra points, and verses 16–27 teach how “the threefold nature” of the basic element (the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition as briefly summarized in *Uttaratantra* I.27–28), the ten topics, and the nine examples fit into this system and flesh it out. In particular, Sajjana (explicitly or implicitly) reveals the mutual correlations between the *Uttaratantra*’s key themes of “the threefold nature,” the ten topics, the nine examples, and the nine afflictions illustrated by these examples. These correlations can be regarded as a brief contemplative manual for using the contents of the *Uttaratantra* (in particular its first chapter) as a soteriological path.

This soteriological approach to the *Uttaratantra* is explicitly outlined in verses 2–4, 6–7, 10–27, and 29–30. The purpose of teaching the ultimate refuge, the Buddha, is to generate bodhicitta, which eventually results in the attainment of full awakening (verses 2–3), through showing the ultimate fruition of this bodhicitta. Besides the well-known twofold classification of the disposition for awakening (the tathāgata heart) into the naturally abiding disposition and the accomplished (or unfolding) disposition (verse 10), Sajjana also presents his own threefold classification as the disposition that is suchness, naturally abiding, and accomplished (verse 15). He says that, in general, those who gradually purify the tathāgata heart progress through the paths of accumulation, preparation, seeing, and familiarization (verse 6). However, the actual path in terms of the unfolding of the naturally abiding disposition begins only with the path of seeing (verse 10), when the tathāgata heart is directly seen for the first time. In order to accomplish this, the causes or focal objects of the path of purifying the tathāgata heart are six—the three jewels and the three conditions that consist of the awakening of a buddha, its qualities, and the resulting enlightened activity for sentient beings, with the latter primarily manifesting as the teaching of the profound and the vast (verses 11–12). In particular, the three jewels manifest as (external) conditions for those who have not yet gathered the accumulations of merit and wisdom (verse 4).

Based on these causes and conditions, those who wish to reveal their tathāgata heart should engage in reflection and familiarization by relying on the ten topics discussing the basic element (verse 7). Among these ten topics, to contemplate (1) the “nature” of the basic element represents the foundation of the path. This nature is matured or comes to life through (2) its “cause” (faith in the dharma, supreme prajñā, samādhi, and compassion). To reflect on (3) “fruition” leads to firm conviction in the Buddhist path. Thus, the contemplation of topics (1)–(3) makes one free from

mundane desire, that is, one is left only with the latencies of desire, hatred, and ignorance. Through contemplating (4) the “function” of the tathāgata heart (weariness of suffering and striving for nirvāṇa), one actually engages in the path. (5) “Endowment” in terms of the basic element’s being associated with three causal and three resultant qualities makes up the path of seeing. (6) “Manifestation” (the suchness of ordinary beings, noble ones, and buddhas) is the basis of the path of familiarization. The actual path of familiarization consists of (7) “phases” and (8) “all-pervasiveness,” which leads to the relinquishment of obscurations such as aiming at lesser forms of awakening. The evolution of the path on the last three bhūmis is due to (9) the “changelessness” of the dharmadhātu. For, by virtue of its being nonempty, unbound, inexhaustible, and unceasing, the dharmadhātu has the intrinsic nature of nonconceptuality. That the final fruition of the path can be reasonably expected to occur is due to the nature of (10) the “inseparability” of the tathāgata heart and all buddha qualities, due to which it is identical with the final result of the path (verses 16–19). In this way, the ten topics not only describe the stages of the entire path, but the reflection on, and familiarization with, them is what actually constitutes the path.

In this process of contemplating the ten topics and familiarizing with them, the nine except for “manifestation” (due to suchness’s being explained as not serving as a basis for afflictions) make one understand the following eight kinds of afflictions or clingings. (1) Nature, (2) cause, and (3) fruition make one understand (1)–(3) the latencies of desire, hatred, and ignorance, respectively; (4) function makes one understand (4) the intense outbursts of these afflictions; (5) endowment with three results makes one understand (6) the afflictions to be relinquished through seeing; (7) phases and (8) all-pervasiveness make one understand (7) the afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization; (9) changelessness makes one understand (8) the afflictions on the impure bhūmis; and (10) inseparability makes one understand (9) the afflictions on the pure bhūmis.<sup>1015</sup> In addition, the nine examples assist one in understanding the natures of these kinds of afflictions or clingings (verses 20–22).

Sajjana also mentions the close relationship between the ten topics and the nine examples (verse 24), though he does not spell out their detailed correlations. However, based on the familiar correlations between the nine examples and the nine afflictions as described in *Uttaratantra* I.130–43 and in analogy to Sajjana’s above correlations between the ten topics and the nine afflictions, the correlations between the ten topics and the nine examples can be established too. Thus, topics (1) nature, (2) cause, and (3)

fruition correlate with examples (1)–(3)—a buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amid bees, and kernels in their husks, respectively; (4) function correlates with (4) gold in filth; (5) the basic element's endowment with three results correlates with (6) a sprout from a fruit; (6) manifestation correlates with (5) a treasure below the earth;<sup>1016</sup> (7) phases and (8) all-pervasiveness correlate with (7) a buddha image in a tattered garment; (9) changelessness correlates with (8) a cakravartin in the womb of a destitute woman; and (10) inseparability correlates with (9) a precious statue in clay.

According to Sajjana, the basis of this entire process of contemplating the ten topics, the nine examples, the nine afflictions, what they obscure, and the mutual relationships between all of those sets consists of “the threefold nature” of *tathāgatagarbha*—the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition—as briefly summarized in *Uttaratantra* I.27–28 (verse 23). In other words, as is also pointed out by RGVV's comments on I.27–28,<sup>1017</sup> the ten topics as well as the nine examples represent the detailed explanations of the condensed meaning of “the threefold nature” (verses 25 and 27). In particular, the brief synopsis of “the threefold nature” is the basis for engaging in reflection, while the ten topics are what one should familiarize with extensively through meditation (verses 25–26).

Thus, based on the correlations between “the threefold nature” and the nine examples as described in *Uttaratantra* I.144–52 as well as Sajjana's correlations between these examples and the ten topics, one can also establish the correlations between “the threefold nature” on the one hand and the ten topics and the nine afflictions on the other hand.

In more detail, *Uttaratantra* I.144–52 outlines the correlations between “the threefold nature” and the nine examples such that the dharmakāya corresponds to the examples of (1) a buddha, (2) honey, and (3) a kernel; suchness corresponds to (4) gold; and the disposition corresponds to (5) a treasure, (6) a sprout, (7) a buddha image, (8) a cakravartin, and (9) a precious statue.

Consequently, among the three natures, the dharmakāya correlates with the topics of (1) nature,<sup>1018</sup> (2) cause, and (3) fruition; suchness correlates with (4) function; and the disposition correlates with (5) endowment, (6) manifestation,<sup>1019</sup> (7) phases, (8) pervasiveness, (9) changelessness, and (10) inseparability.

Likewise, as for the relationships between “the threefold nature” and the nine afflictions, through the dharmakāya, one understands (1)–(3) the latencies of desire, hatred, and ignorance; through suchness, one understands (4) the intense outbursts of these afflictions; and through the disposition,

one understands (6)–(7) the afflictions to be relinquished through seeing and familiarization, (8) the afflictions on the impure bhūmis, and (9) the afflictions on the pure bhūmis.<sup>1020</sup>

In particular, *Uttaratantra* II.15–17 describes buddhahood, the dharmakāya, as having nine superior characteristics, which are illustrated by what is obscured in the nine examples: the Buddha, showing that buddhahood has the nature of being equal to the unequaled; honey, symbolizing that buddhahood bestows the taste of the genuine dharma; a kernel, illustrating that buddhahood is free from what is useless; gold, standing for buddhahood's purity; a treasure, meaning that buddhahood has ended poverty due to its qualities; a tree, symbolizing that buddhahood grants the fruit of liberation; a precious figure, showing that the “body” of buddhahood consists of the jewel of the dharma; a cakravartin, indicating that a buddha is the supreme lord of human beings; and a golden image, showing that buddhahood has the appearance of a precious form.

Finally, as for matching the three or four kāyas, the three dispositions mentioned in SM, and the nine examples, the dharmakāya corresponds to the examples of (1) a buddha, (2) honey, and (3) a kernel. Its equivalent, the svābhāvikakāya, corresponds to (7) a precious statue. The sambhogakāya corresponds to (8) a cakravartin, and the nirmāṇakāya corresponds to (9) a golden image. Among SM's three dispositions, the disposition as suchness corresponds to (4) gold; the naturally abiding disposition corresponds to (5) a treasure; and the accomplished disposition corresponds to (6) a fruit tree. In due order, these three dispositions are the causes of the svābhāvikakāya,<sup>1021</sup> the dharmakāya, and the two rūpakāyas.

Sajjana concludes (verses 23–27) that, by virtue of familiarizing with the ten topics and the progression of the nine examples (as presented in *Uttaratantra* I.144–52), the brief summary of “the threefold nature” is found to implicitly include also the presentation of what is to be relinquished (the nine afflictions) and what is to be attained (the corresponding levels of purity of the tathāgata heart).

This process of purifying the basic element culminates in two results—the impure result consists of progressively attaining what the three jewels embody (the first three vajra points) on the eighth, ninth, and tenth bhūmis, respectively,<sup>1022</sup> while the pure result consists of instantaneously attaining awakening, its qualities, and its enlightened activity (the last three vajra points) on the buddhabhūmi. Sajjana also refers to that impure result as “the threefold kāya” and refers to the pure result as “the threefold dharmakāya” (verses 3, 12–15, and 29–30).

In sum, by combining what is said in *Uttaratantra* I.3, I.23, I.26, and RGVV, Sajjana presents a single continual soteriological system of revealing the unconditioned and luminous tathāgata heart (vajra point 4) by shedding its adventitious stains through the six conditions of the first three and the last three vajra points. The first three vajra points, the three jewels, are the conditions that motivate one to generate bodhicitta and gather the accumulations of merit and wisdom up through the seventh bhūmi, while they also represent results that are attained on the eighth, ninth, and tenth bhūmis, respectively. The last three vajra points are the conditions for attaining the final fruition up through the tenth bhūmi, while they also represent the instantaneous final result on the eleventh bhūmi. In this way, Sajjana describes these six vajra points as having the double function of being conditions extrinsic to the tathāgata heart on lower levels of the path (someone else who is a buddha, his teachings, and his saṃgha, as well as his awakening, qualities, and enlightened activity) and being results intrinsic to the tathāgata heart on higher levels (one's own tathāgata heart's manifesting as the three jewels, awakening, its qualities, and its enlightened activity). It seems that the double functions of the six vajra points in Sajjana's presentation in connection with the differences in *Uttaratantra* I.3, I.23, and I.26 led Ngog Lotsāwa to speak of two cycles in terms of the causal relationship between the seven vajra points.<sup>1023</sup> According to Sajjana's SM, the process through which the tathāgata heart is revealed is primarily contained in the fourth vajra point because this process consists of contemplating its threefold nature (the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition) as the basis, which is deepened through the ten topics, the nine examples, and the multiple correlations between these three sets.

The following charts provide an overview of all the explicit and implicit correlations between "the threefold nature," the ten topics, the nine examples, and the afflictions illustrated by these examples that are found in the *Uttaratantra*, RGVV, and SM.

## THE TEN TOPICS AND THE STAGES OF THE PATH (SM 16–19)

Topic	Stage of the path
nature	foundation of the path
cause (wisdom)	maturation
fruition	firm conviction in the path
function	engaging in the path
endowment	path of seeing
manifestation	basis of the path of familiarization
phases and all-pervasiveness	path of familiarization
changelessness	evolution of the path on the last three bhūmis
inseparability	expecting the final fruition

## THE TEN TOPICS AND THE NINE EXAMPLES (IMPLICIT)

Topic	Example
nature	buddha in a decaying lotus
cause	honey amid bees
fruition	kernels in their husks
function	gold in filth
endowment	a sprout from a fruit
manifestation	a treasure below the earth
phases and all-pervasiveness	a buddha image in a tattered garment
changelessness	a cakravartin in the womb of a destitute woman
inseparability	a precious statue in clay

## THE TEN TOPICS AND THE NINE AFFLICTIONS (SM 20–22)

Topic	Afflictions to be understood
nature	latencies of desire
cause	latencies of hatred
fruition	latencies of ignorance
function	the intense outbursts of these afflictions
endowment	afflictions to be relinquished through seeing
phases and all-pervasiveness	afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization
changelessness	afflictions on the impure bhūmis
inseparability	afflictions on the pure bhūmis

THE NINE AFFLICTIONS AND THE NINE EXAMPLES (*UTTARATANTRA* I.130–43)

Afflictions	Examples
latencies of desire	decaying lotus
latencies of hatred	bees
latencies of ignorance	husks
the intense outbursts of these afflictions	filth
afflictions to be relinquished through seeing	fruit
afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization	tattered garment
afflictions on the impure bhūmis	womb of a destitute woman
afflictions on the pure bhūmis	precious statue in clay

THE NINE EXAMPLES AND THE NINE FEATURES OF THE FRUITION  
(*UTTARATANTRA* II.15-17)

Features of the fruition	Examples
having the nature of being equal to the unequaled	buddha
bestowing the taste of the genuine dharma	honey
being free from what is useless	kernel
being pure	gold
having ended poverty due to its qualities	treasure
granting the fruit of liberation	tree
its body consisting of the jewel of the dharma	precious figure
being the supreme lord of human beings	cakravartin
having the appearance of a precious form	golden image

THE THREEFOLD NATURE AND THE TEN TOPICS (IMPLICIT)

Nature	Topic
dharmakāya	nature cause fruition
suchness	function
disposition	endowment manifestation phases pervasiveness changelessness inseparability



THE THREEFOLD NATURE AND THE NINE EXAMPLES  
(*UTTARATANTRA* I.144–52)

Nature	Example
dharmakāya	buddha honey kernel
suchness	gold
disposition	treasure sprout buddha image cakravartin precious statue

THE THREEFOLD NATURE AND THE NINE AFFLICTIONS (IMPLICIT)

Nature	Afflictions to be understood
dharmakāya	latencies of desire latencies of hatred latencies of ignorance
suchness	the intense outbursts of these afflictions
disposition	the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance afflictions to be relinquished through seeing afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization afflictions on the impure bhūmis afflictions on the pure bhūmis

THE THREE KĀYAS, THE THREE DISPOSITIONS, AND THE NINE EXAMPLES  
(*UTTARATANTRA* I.146–47 AND II.149–52; SM 15)

Kāya/Disposition	Example
dharmakāya/svābhāvīkākāya	(1) tathāgata (2) honey (3) kernel/(7) precious statue
sambhogakāya	(8) cakravartin
nirmāṇakāya	(9) golden image
disposition as suchness (svābhāvīkākāya)	(4) gold
naturally abiding disposition (dharmakāya)	(5) treasure
accomplished disposition (rūpakāyas)	(6) fruit tree

*Vairocanarakṣita's Mahāyānottaratantraṭīpanī*

The Sanskrit manuscript of this brief commentary<sup>1024</sup> (VT) in nine folios is among the texts photographed by Rāhula Sāṃkṛtyāyana and later by Giuseppe Tucci at Ngor EVAM Monastery in Tibet.<sup>1025</sup> It is written in the so-called Māgadhī of the Pāla period and is datable between the eleventh and thirteen centuries. However, its authorship is not clear because there were two paṇḍitas by the name Vairocanarakṣita.

The first Vairocanarakṣita is an eleventh-century contemporary of Atiśa from Vikramaśīla who authored the *Śikṣākusumāñjalī* (a commentary on Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*), a *Bodhisattvacaryāvatārapañjikā*, and a *Śiṣyalekhaṭīpanī*. Given the sūtra-based nature of the *Uttaratantra* and the scholarly style of VT, this Vairocanarakṣita may seem a more likely candidate as VT's author, but this is not conclusive.

The second Vairocanarakṣita is a twelfth-century tantric master from Somapurī in Dakṣiṇa Kośala (present-day western Orissa), who stayed in Nepal for some time between 1101 and 1106 and in Tibet in the 1140s and 1150s. It is known that Vairocanarakṣita/-rakṣa was another name of Vairocanavajra, and the biographies under each name show several common features, in particular the birth place, the same time of flourishing, certain practices, the prominent role in the transmission and translation of the dohās, and the same students. Therefore, we must be looking at the same figure. When Vairocanarakṣita stayed at Nālandā, he received many pith instructions from a yogin named Surapāla, which included Maitrīpa's cycle

on mental nonengagement, many dohās, Mahāmudrā, and the Hevajratātra. Later, he also studied prajñāpāramitā, Madhyamaka, and various tantras with Paṇḍita Guṇarakṣita from Vikramaśīla. He received Śāntideva's texts and many sādhanas from Dhanarakṣita and also learned from Jayākara and the paṇḍitas Śarana, Sudhanagupta, and Abhayākara. He traveled widely in India, went to China, and visited Tibet five times. He was a main figure in the dohā tradition and also became a teacher of the Nepalese Asu Kyemé Dorje,<sup>1026</sup> the First Karmapa, Lama Shang Dsöndrū Tragpa, and Tropu Lotsāwa Jampa Bal.

In the *Tengyur*, besides the above sūtric works authored by the first Vairocanarakṣita, we find the name Vairocanakṣita as the author of a sādhana and a maṇḍala ritual for Vajrabhairava, as well as the translator of Saraha's *Dohākośanāmamahāmudrōpadeśa*, Āryaśūra's *Pāramitāsamāsa*, Viśeṣamitra's *Vinayaśaṅgraha*, and several sādhanas. The name Vairocanavajra is given as the translator of Saraha's *Kakhasya Dohā* and its autocommentary, the *Dohākośas* of Kṛṣṇa and Tilopa, Maitrīpa's *Dohakośapañjikā*, the *Śrīvirūpapadacaturaśīti*, as well as a number of sādhanas and other tantric texts.

Vairocanarakṣita's brief commentary VT does not present his own philosophical view or any general discussions but simply glosses selected words or phrases from the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV by offering synonyms and sometimes analyzing the grammatical structure of certain words and phrases. This commentary is no doubt very helpful for understanding the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV and is also useful in establishing the correct reading of the Sanskrit manuscript of RGVV. However, it obviously had no noticeable impact on the Tibetan exegetical tradition of the *Uttaratantra*.

### *The Tibetan Commentaries*

#### *A Commentary on the Meaning of the Words of the "Uttaratantra"*

The colophon of this commentary (CMW) says that it preserves the words of Marpa Lotsāwa's teachings on the *Uttaratantra*<sup>1027</sup> and was prepared according to the assertions of Parahitabhadrā. Thus, it appears to have been composed or compiled by a student of Marpa Dopa. As mentioned above, the latter had received teachings on the *Uttaratantra* from Parahitabhadrā and possibly Sajjana (it is possible that this student of Marpa also received direct teachings from Parahitabhadrā or Sajjana, but it is not very likely). BA says that Marpa Dopa transmitted the Maitreya texts to Nyingpugpa Chökyi Tragpa (1094–1186), so the latter could be the actual author of

CMW.<sup>1028</sup> In any case, this author must have had access to, and knowledge of, the Sanskrit text of the *Uttaratantra* since he refers to it in comparison to Ngog Lotsāwa's translation. This and the fact that CMW mentions some of Ngog's positions show that it was composed later than Ngog's commentary.<sup>1029</sup>

CMW is a commentary on both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV (also providing headings or referential glosses for different parts of RGVV). However, CMW never quotes the verses of the *Uttaratantra* in full when commenting on them (sometimes, CMW provides the initial words of a verse or of the first one in a number of verses that it comments on). In its comments on RGVV, CMW follows the common Indian style of a subcommentary by briefly indicating the beginnings (and often the ends) of the passages in RGVV that it comments on.<sup>1030</sup> At the same time, CMW also includes an extensive outline, though it is not strictly held to. Thus, CMW's comments are sometimes given in a looser fashion than later Tibetan commentaries with their strictly structured outlines.

The introduction to CMW (called "the explanation of the stainless basic element"), which precedes its actual comments on the verses of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, is sometimes sketchy and often feels more like personal notes. It identifies itself as containing the pith instructions on the *Uttaratantra* and corresponds very much with Mahāmudrā instructions in both its experiential style and contents (though the term "Mahāmudrā" is never mentioned). By contrast, the actual commentary is much more scholarly, and sometimes clearer and easier to understand. Though included under the same title, these two parts of CMW seem like two different texts written for two different purposes—more personal meditation instructions based on the *Uttaratantra* versus the actual commentary on the verses of this text and RGVV.

CMW's introduction uses the term "pointing out" many times and discusses the pith instructions on the basic element in three main points: (1) the results (the three jewels) being condensed in the Buddha—the ultimate place of refuge that is the dharmakāya of one's own mind, (2) the cause (the tathāgata heart) being condensed in the Buddha—taking the three natures into one's mind,<sup>1031</sup> and (3) the conditions (awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity) being condensed in the Buddha—being free from the stains of conception.

In more detail, the introduction refutes all external phenomena and affirms the internal nature of the mind as being the dharmakāya—the inseparability of the unconditioned expanse and self-arisen, self-aware wisdom,

whose nature is lucid and unceasing. All adventitious stains are nothing but thoughts, and through realizing the luminous nature of the mind and letting thoughts be as lucid wisdom in an uncontrived manner, their essence is realized as lacking any root and thus they are self-liberated. In other words, sentient beings are nothing but the adventitious flaws of thoughts and therefore one familiarizes with them as being nonentities.<sup>1032</sup> Buddhahood is nothing but the luminosity of one's own mind having become free from these adventitious stains. Without thoughts and clinging, everything that appears and exists dawns as the essence of the three kāyas. This is the way to bring the naturally luminous tathāgata heart onto the path to buddhahood. This path starts with the path of accumulation, when one's own mind is pointed out as luminosity. On the path of preparation, one familiarizes with what was pointed out. The realization of luminous mind on the path of seeing is the dharmakāya. On the path of familiarization, one still needs effort to realize luminous mind, which represents the sambhogakāya. On the buddhabhūmi, although self-arisen wisdom has been seized within oneself, one has the welfare of others in mind, which represents the nirmāṇakāya.

Besides such Mahāmudrā-like instructions in CMW's introduction (it also repeatedly uses the typical Mahāmudrā term "beyond mind"),<sup>1033</sup> the text likewise exhibits terms and explanations that are familiar in the Dzogchen teachings. The text speaks of "alpha-pure (*ka dag*) ultimate luminosity" and also repeatedly mentions basic awareness (*rig pa*), while distinguishing it from the ordinary dualistic mind (*sems*). It says that, first, at the time of basic awareness's being pointed out, one directs the mind toward basic awareness, scrutinizes thoughts, and rests in this unconditioned basic awareness. Second, at the time of basic awareness's entering the path, one rests in assessing how to separate the pure essence from the dross in terms of the stains of thoughts and luminous self-arisen wisdom.<sup>1034</sup> Third, as for wisdom's seizing its own ground, one scrutinizes thoughts with some effort. As for thoughts' not needing to be relinquished and being pure, the *Uttaratantra* says, "There is nothing to be removed in this." As for self-arisen wisdom dawning without needing to be accomplished, it says, "not the slightest to be added." Fourth, as for self-arisen wisdom's being pointed out, one needs to search for the reality of thoughts, and the aftermath of that is the realization of the lucid nature of phenomena as being like space. In this way, one familiarizes with separating the pure essence from the dross with regard to basic awareness. The pure essence is self-arisen wisdom, and the dross consists of thoughts—ordinary cognitions. The fruition

is the twofold separation of the pure essence from the dross with regard to basic awareness—self-arisen wisdom's ability to stand its own ground being the nonconceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise, and the ability to cope with all kinds of circumstances through having mastered appearances being subsequent attainment.

In its actual comments on the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, CMW says that the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* represents the primary sūtra source of the *Uttaratantra*, while the remaining sūtras that are referred to in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV are the secondary sources. Accordingly, CMW includes lengthy paraphrases and quotes from most of the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*'s introduction and the beginning of its main part on the three jewels, the sixty kinds of factors of purifying the buddha element, and the eighty attributes of buddhas, which are given as the sources for all seven vajra points in this sūtra (beyond that, there are four more quotes from the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*). The further sūtra quotes are:

- Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, sixteen times
- Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, six times
- Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, four times
- Anūnatvāpūrṇatvasūtra*, three times
- Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*, two times
- Daśabhūmikasūtra*, two times
- Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*, two times
- Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, two times
- Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*, two times
- Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra*, two times
- Mahāparinirvānasūtra*, one time
- Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, one time
- Tathāgataḡajñānācintyaṣayāvātāranirdeśa*, one time
- Gaganagaṅjaparipṛcchāsūtra*, one time

Quotes from Indian treatises or masters:

- Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, six times
- Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, six times
- Mahāyānasamgraha*, four times
- Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā*, three times
- Pañcaskandhaprakaraṇavaibhāṣya*, one time
- Parahitabhadra*, six times
- Sajjana*, four times

Through CMW's introduction, its above-mentioned explanation of the term "tantra" in *Uttaratantra*, and also in some other passages, the *Uttaratantra* is presented as a bridge between sūtra and tantra, which is how this text is commonly considered in the Kagyü School. In particular, CMW says, among the seven vajra points, the basic element resembles the causal tantra; the means to purify it (awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity) resemble the method tantra; and the three jewels resemble the fruitional tantra.

CMW emphasizes that the dharmadhātu or self-arisen wisdom exists right now in all sentient beings without exception and that there is no cut-off disposition. This self-arisen wisdom is not realized at present due to the two obscurations, which are however primordially nonexistent. Referring to RGVV's passage about "sound mind" and "unsound mind" in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, CMW says that "sound mind" refers to the wisdom of realizing luminosity, while "unsound mind" refers to the adventitious dependent<sup>1035</sup> mind. Since these two are the remedy and what is to be relinquished, respectively, they do not operate at the same time. Thus, like other Yogācāra texts (such as the *Mahāyānasamgraha*), CMW basically speaks about an impure dependent nature that is ultimately nonexistent. For CMW equates the dependent nature here with the adventitious stains, which it explains throughout to be nonexistent. Similar to SM 9cd ("The suchness of the dhātu is devoid of what is afflicted—the dependent") and all the implications explained there, this also clearly suggests that, in terms of the relationship between the three natures in Yogācāra, the perfect nature is empty of both the imaginary and the dependent natures (if the dependent nature is merely adventitious, the same goes even more for the imaginary nature). Obviously, all of these themes are discussed in great detail in later Shentong works.

Generally, in its quotes and commentarial explanations, CMW exhibits a very strong and exclusive Yogācāra underpinning (it does not refer to or quote any Madhyamaka works).<sup>1036</sup> In particular, its discussion of the ālaya and its relation to the disposition is primarily based on the first chapter of the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (which is in line with the Third Karmapa's great reliance on this chapter) and its commentary *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā*. According to Parahitabhadra, "the naturally abiding ālaya" is equivalent to the naturally abiding disposition, and "the adventitious ālaya" is equivalent to the unfolding disposition (thus, the unfolding disposition basically refers to the ālaya-consciousness's progressively disappearing to the same extent that the naturally abiding ālaya or disposition becomes manifest).<sup>1037</sup> In

general, the ālaya functions as the basis of both contaminated and uncontaminated phenomena. However, in the minds of sentient beings, though the uncontaminated seeds exist in the ālaya, they do not exist substantially in it and thus are not able to directly produce manifest uncontaminated results, whereas the opposite is true for the contaminated seeds and their results. The uncontaminated seeds are not the primary seeds in the ālaya but represent a minority in it, whereas the contaminated seeds represent a majority. Both coexist like water and milk in a single bowl as their basis. Through the path, the seeds of afflicted phenomena decrease, and the seeds of purified phenomena increase, just as geese are able to extract the essence (the milk) from the dross (the water). Until one focuses on the naturally abiding ālaya through the remedy that is the path, the seeds of afflicted phenomena exist in it in the manner of adventitious stains, which are then purified through the path. RGVV is said to actually refer to the disposition not only as the nature of phenomena but also as the uncontaminated seeds by speaking of the basic element as “the seed of the supramundane attributes.”<sup>1038</sup> Thus, since the disposition and the ālaya are the same, RGVV is said to discuss this in detail.

Being phrased throughout in classical Yogācāra diction, this section of CMW is the clearest example of an early Tibetan commentary (based on the position of the Indian master Parahitabhadrā) often explicitly combining Yogācāra teachings with those on buddha nature. This is exactly what later Tibetans such as the Third Karmapa, Dölpopa, and virtually all other Shentongpas did in great detail. In addition, just like later Shentongpas, CMW distinguishes between Yogācāra and Mere Mentalism, saying that the tathāgata heart is not an object of the Mere Mentalists who assert a really existing self-awareness empty of apprehender and apprehended as the ultimate (which is contrasted with “the wisdom of ultimate emptiness”).

### Dashi Öser's *Heart of the Luminous Sun*

Dümo Dashi Öser was born in the late fifteenth century as the son of the chief of Dümo, an area in Dritö,<sup>1039</sup> in northeast Kham.<sup>1040</sup> At a young age, he received the name Dashi Öser and a transmission for meditating on the mantra OM MAṆI PADME HÜM from the Seventh Karmapa, Chötra Gyatso (1454–1506). Later, he was ordained as a novice by the First Gyaltsab Rinpoche, Baljor Töndrub<sup>1041</sup> (1427–1489). Eventually, these two masters were to become Dashi Öser's principal teachers. He began studying basic monastic educational texts such as *The Collected Topics*<sup>1042</sup> with some Gelugpa masters at the age of eight and later went to Central Tibet, where



he trained in the Gelugpa approach to the sūtra-based scriptures and the vajrayāna and became very learned in it. From the great abbot Chödruḅ Sangpo,<sup>1043</sup> he received his full monastic vows as well as various vajrayāna empowerments, such as Cakrasaṃvara, in the Sakya tradition.

When he was on his way back to his homeland, he met the Seventh Karmapa in Namtökyi Riwo,<sup>1044</sup> in Kongpo in southern Tibet. Uncontrollable devotion arose in him, and he discarded his plans to travel home, requesting instead various instructions and transmissions of Mahāmudrā, the Six Dharmas of Nāropa, Saraha's dohās, several texts by the Third Karmapa (such as *Pointing Out the Three Kāyas*, *The Nonduality of Prāṇa and Mind*, and *The Profound Inner Reality*), and many other teachings of sūtra and tantra. He also received teachings from the Third Situpa, Dashi Baljor<sup>1045</sup> (1498–1541). Dashi Öser practiced all of these diligently, and his realization is said to have become as vast as the sky. In that way, he became very learned in all major Tibetan scriptural traditions but remained mostly in solitary mountain retreats, during which he had visions of all the buddhas in the ten directions.

Later, he taught various topics from the sūtras and tantras, particularly at Surmang<sup>1046</sup> Monastery, where he also received teachings in return. Eventually, he became one of the four principal teachers of the Eighth Karmapa and widely instructed on *The Profound Inner Reality*, the Six Dharmas, Saraha's dohās, and so on, in the Karmapa's nomad-style encampment. Mikyö Dorje considered him as a bodhisattva on the eighth bhūmi and to be equal in kindness to his main teacher, the First Sangyé Nyenpa Rinpoche, Dashi Baljor (1457–1519). Later, Dashi Öser returned to Surmang to continue teaching, went into retreat again, and also founded a monastery in Rongwo Pengar.<sup>1047</sup> Over the years, he gave many instructions in various places in eastern Tibet, always teaching solely the uncommon intention of the Kagyü lineage. Besides the Eighth Karmapa, his numerous disciples included the Third Gyaltsab Rinpoche, Tragba Baljor<sup>1048</sup> (1519–1549).

Except for the introduction and a few other passages, Dashi Öser's commentary (HLS) consists primarily of the Third Karmapa's lost topical outline of the *Uttaratantra* and mostly literal passages from RGVV (which is quoted explicitly only once), including its sūtra sources.<sup>1049</sup> Just like RGVV, the bulk of HLS's comments is on the first four vajra points. Thereafter, the text mostly just intersperses its outline with the verses of the *Uttaratantra*. The introduction provides a brief account of the role of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu in the transmission of the Maitreya works in India and how they were transmitted to the Kagyü lineage in Tibet. In its comments, HLS states

a number of typical Kagyü positions on *tathāgatagarbha*. For example, at the end of the first chapter, HLS discusses the positions on the nature of the tathāgata heart in the Gelug, Sakya, and Kagyü schools, denying that it is just a nonimplicative negation or a teaching of expedient meaning. In particular, HLS's comments equate the tathāgata heart with "ālaya-wisdom" and state that it exists, while mistaken appearances (the adventitious afflictions) are primordially nonexistent. Also, though awakening, which has the nature of the fundamental change, is a "result of freedom," it performs the function of fulfilling one's own welfare and that of others. As for this "fundamental change," "the foundation" refers to the sugata heart taught in the first chapter, while "its change" refers to the awakening of this sugata heart, its having become free from obscurations, which is taught in the second chapter.

### Rinchen Yeshé's *Light of Definitive Meaning*

Rinchen Yeshé, an expert on the five works of Maitreya, flourished in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and was primarily a teacher of Ngülchu Togmé<sup>1050</sup> (1295–1369). He also briefly taught Dölpopa and is mentioned in Butön's biography as an esteemed colleague. Rinchen Yeshé's commentary (RYC), which is not translated in its entirety here but only excerpted, follows the Indian style of lacking a topical outline and headings. Like most other commentaries on the *Uttaratantra*, it incorporates a great number of passages from RGVV and (as its longer title indicates) quotes from many supporting sūtras, some at great length (especially from the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, and the *Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvātārajñānālokālamkārasūtra*). Rinchen Yeshé says that the reason for writing his commentary by matching it with the sūtras is that other Tibetans who are renowned as scholars had composed commentaries on the *Uttaratantra* without having looked at the Indian sūtras and thus accrued flaws in both words and meaning.

It is interesting that RYC has been published in both the collected works of Kadampa masters and a series of Jonang works. As noted before, Butön is said to have referred to Rinchen Yeshé as the one whose philosophical system was later maintained by Dölpopa, who enhanced it greatly (this was my main reason to consult RYC in the first place). RYC does comment on the tathāgata heart in positive terms and subscribes to the disclosure model (as do most commentaries on this text), and, like Dölpopa's main works, it abounds in sūtra quotes (though it lacks tantric sources). In addition to these more general features, as mentioned above, RYC also contains some

passages that can be read as being in accordance with Dölpopa's later Shentong view (though RYC does not use Dölpopa's specific terminologies). However, there are also several differences between Rinchen Yeshé and Dölpopa, such as the former's asserting (like Ngog Lotsāwa and others but unlike Dölpopa) that all sentient beings are pervaded by the dharmakāya (or the three kāyas) as being suitable to be attained as the manifest kāyas and have the disposition of the manifest three kāyas as being suitable to be attained.

### Yeshé Dorje's *Jewel Treasure of the Definitive Meaning*

Yeshé Dorje Bal Sangpo<sup>1051</sup> (born fourteenth century) from Minyag in Kham was a student of the Karma Kamtsang master Masé Dönpa Rinchen Sangpo<sup>1052</sup> (1317–1383), the second Kangar<sup>1053</sup> Lama. The latter is known as one of “the five learned ones from Minyag” and was a student of the Third and Fourth Karmapas, Dölpopa, Butön, and several Kadampa masters.

Yeshé Dorje's commentary (YDC) is not translated in full here, but relevant excerpts are included as notes to the translations of RGVV and CMW as well as in appendices 5 and 6. The colophon of Yeshé Dorje's text says that it was composed on the basis of the oral teachings by his guru and through bringing together many commentaries on the sūtras of definitive meaning and numerous expositions composed by former masters. Accordingly, YDC quotes many sūtras and also a great number of tantric sources (notably, it cites Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* several times). The commentary occasionally refers to the Sanskrit of the *Uttaratantra*, several times to differences in its translations by Nagtso Lotsāwa, Ngog Lotsāwa, Patsab Lotsāwa, and (once) a Lhotragpa Dharma Sengé, as well as frequently referring to comments by Dölpopa, Ngog Lotsāwa, Chaba Chökyi Sengé, Bang Lotsawa<sup>1054</sup> (1276–1342), and Masé Dönpa Rinchen Sangpo. Once, YDC also mentions the Third Karmapa.

At the very end of YDC, there is a list of lineage gurus up through Yeshé Dorje's own teacher (it is not clear whether this is Yeshé Dorje's own list). Interestingly, the list contains Maitreya, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Sthiramati, Gayādharma (994–1043),<sup>1055</sup> Ratnavajra, and Sajjana on the Indian side, while all the figures on the Tibetan side, beginning with Ngog Lotsāwa as Sajjana's student, are Kadampa teachers—Shang Tsebong Chökyi Lama,<sup>1056</sup> Nyangtrenpa Chökyi Yeshé,<sup>1057</sup> Chaba Chökyi Sengé,<sup>1058</sup> Mawé Sengé,<sup>1059</sup> Lotsāwa Sherab Dsöndrü,<sup>1060</sup> a Lama Wengewa,<sup>1061</sup> Chöbal Gyaltzen,<sup>1062</sup> a Dashi Sengé,<sup>1063</sup> and Masé Dönpa.

YDC clearly subscribes to the disclosure model of buddha nature, asserting that the stainless tathāgata heart adorned with all major and minor marks as well as awakening exists in all beings, refuting that the reality of cessation is a nonimplicative negation, and denying the position that the fully qualified sugata heart exists solely on the buddhabhūmi, while it is only nominal at the time of sentient beings. Also, besides CMW and Mi-pham's commentary, YDC is the only other commentary I have reviewed that explicitly connects the name and contents of the *Uttaratantra* with the vajrayāna notion of tantra, thus underlining the text's reputation as a bridge between the sūtras and tantras. In addition, YDC's concluding verses say that the *Uttaratantra* is far distant from extreme views and excellently teaches the supreme middle path free from reference points.

YDC contains two interesting general presentations on the basic element and the purpose of teaching the tathāgata heart (for details, see appendices 5 and 6). The first one refutes several wrong views about the tathāgata heart (such as its being mere awareness, a nonimplicative negation, or the skandhas) and elaborates on the natures of the naturally abiding and the unfolding dispositions. The second presentation begins by identifying the three dharma wheels by following the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and then distinguishes between what is of expedient meaning and of definitive meaning in these three according to the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*. The second dharma wheel is said to teach primarily the way in which the phenomena of which the basis of emptiness is empty do not exist, while the third wheel teaches mainly that basis of emptiness. Therefore, there is no inner contradiction between these two dharma wheels. In particular, YDC refutes that the teaching on the tathāgata heart is one that bears an intention because its claimed bases of intention are not tenable, its purpose is not established, and there is no invalidation of this teaching. Also, the emptiness taught in the buddha nature sūtras and the *Uttaratantra* is not "the emptiness of one's being empty of something other," which is said to be the worst kind of emptiness in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, but corresponds to this sūtra's "great ultimate emptiness of the wisdom of the noble ones."<sup>1064</sup> Finally, YDC denies that the *Uttaratantra* is a work that belongs to Mere Mentalism.

### Gö Lotsāwa's *Mirror That Clearly Shows True Reality*

Gö Lotsāwa is well known for his historical work *The Blue Annals*, and he also translated a number of works in the Tibetan canon.<sup>1065</sup> Beginning his monastic training at age nine in a Kadampa monastery, he later studied with all of the important masters of his time, including the Indian Paṇḍita

Vanaratna (1384–1468), the Fifth Karmapa, Teshin Shegpa<sup>1066</sup> (1384–1415), Rongtön Shéja Günsi, Tsongkhapa, and several Nyingma and Sakya teachers, thus becoming a master in all fields of Buddhist knowledge. He also was a teacher of the Seventh Karmapa, the Fourth Shamarpa, Chötra Yeshé (1453–1524), the Second Drugchen, Kunga Baljor<sup>1067</sup> (1428–1476), and many others. Some of Gö Lotsāwa's translations of Indian tantric works are found in the *Tengyur*, and it is said that his own collected writings once covered ten volumes. At present, only a few of his works are preserved—besides BA and GC, there are a biography of Vanaratna and a collection of Gö Lotsāwa's letters and statements to others.

Despite his strong Kagyü affiliations, Gö Lotsāwa maintained a nonsectarian approach to all Buddhist schools throughout his life. For example, he received instructions on the six-branch yoga of the Kālacakratantra from both Vanaratna and Jonang masters, as well as on “the trilogy of bodhisattva commentaries” from the latter (both the six-branch yoga and these commentaries form the basis of the Jonang tantric Shentong approach). He was also advised by one of his early Kagyü teachers, Rimibabpa Sönam Rinchen (1362–1453), not to abandon either the Mahāmudrā or the Gelugpa views. This is also confirmed by the Eighth Karmapa's saying that Gö Lotsāwa accepted Tsongkhapa's view as valid but also wished to uphold the tradition of the Tagpo Kagyü.<sup>1068</sup> The colophon of Gö Lotsāwa's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (GC)<sup>1069</sup> says that he explained this text based on (1) the exegetical tradition of Ngog Lotsāwa, (2) Gampopa's Mahāmudrā interpretation of the *Uttaratantra*, and (3) the explanations coming from Dsen Kawoché as well as the meaning of the three dharma wheels, both of which are in accordance with Mahāmudrā.<sup>1070</sup> Thus, Gö Lotsāwa is another example of someone who explicitly combined Shentong and Mahāmudrā teachings (though the term *shentong* itself is absent from GC). Although Gö Lotsāwa at times agrees with Ngog Lotsāwa on some more technical or scholastic points, there are also numerous differences, in particular his explanations of crucial passages of the *Uttaratantra* from a Mahāmudrā point of view and his denial that the tathāgata heart is merely emptiness in the sense of a nonimplicative negation, while affirming rather that it is mind's natural luminosity or basic awareness free from all reference points. In any case, GC does not mention Tsongkhapa or any typical Gelugpa interpretations of buddha nature and the *Uttaratantra*.

Gö Lotsāwa's massive commentary (698 folios in *dbu med*; composed in 1473) is a commentary on both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV that contains many valuable explanations on a broad range of topics. A comprehensive

survey or translation of this highly interesting work is beyond the scope of this study, but I use significant excerpts from GC throughout. The following is just a brief sketch of some major features of this commentary.<sup>1071</sup> Similar to RYC, GC hardly uses the characteristic Tibetan outline system but follows the Indian exegetical style of first quoting a portion of the text to be explained and then commenting on it. GC also retains the Indian division of RGVV into five chapters. Being an expert in Sanskrit, Gö Lotsāwa had access to a Sanskrit version of the text, which is obvious from occasional Sanskrit quotes of RGVV as well as critical remarks on Ngog Lotsāwa's translation and comparisons with Nagtso Lotsāwa's. Indeed, many passages of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV quoted in GC correspond better to the currently available Sanskrit version. GC also cites numerous mahāyāna sūtras and treatises (both Yogācāra and Madhyamaka), as well as tantric sources and the teachings of Indian and Tibetan siddhas, in particular Saraha, Maitrīpa, his student Sahajavajra, and early Kagyü masters such as Gampopa and Lama Shang.

However, it is surprising that GC does not cite many typical *tathāgata-garbha* sūtras found in other commentaries. Among these sūtras, GC mainly cites the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* but otherwise relies heavily on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (about sixty references and quotations, some of them lengthy). The *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* as well as the other four Maitreya works besides the *Uttaratantra* are also quoted frequently, and Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* is represented by quoting about half of its 101 verses. As mentioned above, Gö Lotsāwa's comments on some of these verses link them to Mahāmudrā and its key notion of ordinary mind.

GC begins with paying homage to Maitreya, Maitrīpa, Dampa Sangyé, and Gampopa, and this is followed by a short introduction about the validity of the teachings of the Buddha, the transmission of the five works of Maitreya in India and Tibet, and eight different ways of explaining the meaning of "tathāgata heart" (see above). Thereafter, GC is divided into three main sections: (1) the brief explanation of the title for those of sharpest faculties, (2) the explanation of the first three verses of the *Uttaratantra* for those of medium faculties, and (3) the explanation of the entire remainder of the text for those of lesser faculties.<sup>1072</sup>

GC says that, in general, the *Uttaratantra* teaches the meaning of all yānas and that all words of the Buddha are authentic. However, the primary meaning of the *Uttaratantra* concerns the last or unsurpassable turning of the wheel of dharma, and it also shows the difference between the expedient and the definitive meanings of the Buddha's words.<sup>1073</sup> Uniquely

among all commentators on the *Uttaratantra*, Gö Lotsāwa explicitly links this text to the Mahāmudrā in the tradition of Maitrīpa, Sahajavajra, Gampopa, and other Kagyü masters.<sup>1074</sup> Following the hermeneutical approach of the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*, he says that the bhūmis are completely perfected only through the third dharma wheel but not through the second. The fruitional bhūmis of the third dharma wheel are the last three pure bhūmis, while those of the second wheel are only the bhūmis up through the seventh.<sup>1075</sup> Gö Lotsāwa also justifies the superiority of the third dharma wheel through the Mahāmudrā instructions of several Indian and Tibetan masters, which are primarily included in the detailed analysis of the seven vajra points in section (2) of GC. In addition, he explains that the four yogas of Mahāmudrā are contained in a hidden form in both the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the *Uttaratantra*. However, he also implies that in their being a gradual approach, even these four yogas are inferior to the actual realization of Mahāmudrā in an instantaneous manner because he says that this realization cannot be calculated in terms of different paths and bhūmis.

Besides establishing the connection of these four yogas with the *Uttaratantra* directly as above, Gö Lotsāwa also includes them in his detailed comments on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*'s entire section on the nature of phenomena that is included in GC.<sup>1076</sup> As already stated above, he says that this section of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* represents a commentary on the fifth vajra point of the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>1077</sup> For “stainless suchness” in the *Uttaratantra* corresponds to “the nature of phenomena” in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, with both texts explaining that stainless suchness consists of the fundamental change, whose cause is nonconceptual wisdom. The conclusion of GC's comments on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* states that the distinction between the existent nature of phenomena (suchness or mind's luminosity) and nonexistent phenomena in this text matches the explanation in the *Uttaratantra* that the ultimately existent tathāgata heart is empty of adventitious stains but not empty of buddha qualities.<sup>1078</sup>

Thus, in both the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, the fundamental change indicates a primordial ultimate that is described in positive terms and is revealed by eliminating ultimately nonexistent adventitious stains (as illustrated by the examples of primordially pure space, gold, and water). By extension, this also means that the section on phenomena in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* is a commentary on the adventitious stains as discussed in the *Uttaratantra*. Thus, the contents of these two texts are very closely related, which is also supported by the concluding part of Vasubandhu's *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*'s explaining the examples of

space, gold, and water in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* as illustrating the manner in which there is a fundamental change in terms of permanent natural luminosity, without this luminosity's being changed in its own nature but only becoming free from adventitious stains.

As mentioned above, GC compares several times the two different approaches to meditation by Kamalaśīla and Maitrīpa (analytical meditation versus direct realization of mind's luminosity), with the latter's being said to be superior. In addition, GC's section on the four yogas of Mahāmudrā in relation to the *Uttaratantra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* refers even to Atiśa's *Madhyamakopadeśa* as well as Kamalaśīla's three *Bhāvanākramas* and his commentary on the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*'s saying that once all phenomena have been found to be nonexistent through analysis, one needs to rest in luminous nonconceptuality without mental engagement. In this vein, Gō Lotsāwa repeatedly states that the tathāgata heart—basic awareness beyond affirmation and negation—is not a nonimplicative negation and that it cannot be found anywhere else than right within our own mental afflictions.

### Jamgön Kongtrul's *Lion's Roar of Irreversibility*

Though this commentary (JKC) is the one that is used most widely in the Kagyü tradition at present, it is not translated in this volume for two reasons. First, except for its introduction (which incorporates a significant number of passages from BA and GC), JKC is for the most part an almost literal copy of Dölpopa's commentary on the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>1079</sup> Interestingly, this commentary does not exhibit the strong Shentong approach so familiar from Dölpopa's major other works (it probably was composed prior to the revelation that led to the formulation of his Shentong view). Secondly, JKC has already been translated.<sup>1080</sup> However, some relevant excerpts from this commentary are incorporated throughout this book.

### *Instruction Manuals*

#### Six Texts by Kyotön Mönlam Tsültrim

Mönlam Tsültrim (1219–1299) was born in Dana<sup>1081</sup> into the Kyotön clan. He received the entire corpus of Kadampa instructions from the seventh abbot of Nartang, Chim Namkatra (1210–1285).<sup>1082</sup> Following that, he practiced Vajrapāṇi in a place where he could not see the sun for eleven years and thus obtained great power, being able to dispel illnesses and evil spirits. In fact, he was considered as an emanation of Vajrapāṇi. From 1285 until his death, he served as the eighth abbot of Nartang, and he also built a



great temple there. Besides the six brief texts discussed below, his preserved works include an incomplete commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, brief guiding instructions on prajñāpāramitā, a general commentary on Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā*, a brief commentary on Atiśa's *Madhyamakopadeśa*, *Instructions on Mahāyāna Madhyamaka*, a brief *lamrim* text, several other brief guiding instructions (such as on Śāntideva's *Śikṣasamuccaya*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, and bodhicitta according to Śāntideva), and several biographies. His students included Jomden Rigpé Raltri (1227–1305), the ninth and the tenth abbots of Nartang, Nyima Gyaltsen<sup>1083</sup> (c. 1225–1305) and Tragba Dsöndrū<sup>1084</sup> (1253–1316), and Séu Chökyi Gyaltsen,<sup>1085</sup> to whom most of the following six texts were transmitted.

### *Instructions on "The Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna"*

As for the transmission of the *Uttaratantra*, this text (IM) says that Maitrīpa (referred to as Maitreyañātha), while staying in a monastery in Magadha, dreamt that he had put instructions on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra* in a four-storied sandalwood stūpa and then received pointing-out instructions on them directly from Maitreya in that dream.<sup>1086</sup> The next day, Maitrīpa found the instructions from his dream in a stūpa that he had circumambulated before.<sup>1087</sup>

The actual instructions on the *Uttaratantra* in IM contain Maitreya's very direct pointing-out instructions on the nature of the mind, which are based on first making Maitrīpa recognize that he is dreaming and then using his awareness of having a lucid dream. Generally, these pointing-out instructions are very similar to pointing-out instructions in the Mahāmudrā tradition, repeatedly advising Maitrīpa to look directly at the essence of his thoughts and discover their nature as being luminous self-arisen wisdom. IM also uses some typical technical terms, such as "mind as such" (Tib. *sems nyid*), "beyond mind" (Tib. *blo 'das*), "connate ignorance" (Tib. *lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa*), and "imaginary ignorance" (Tib. *kun brtags pa'i ma rig pa*) in the same way as they are explained in the Mahāmudrā teachings.

In more detail, first, Maitreya says that the *Uttaratantra*, which makes buddha nature a living experience, combines the triad of the cause (the tathāgata heart), the conditions (awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity), and the results (the three jewels). In particular, he points out the tathāgata heart through the inconceivability of the last four vajra points as described in *Uttaratantra* I.24–25 in a very immediate experiential manner. This is followed by eight further guiding instructions closely based on the

*Uttaratantra*. These instructions consist of identifying one's own mind as a buddha, being mistaken as a sentient being through thoughts, there being no difference in terms of the benefit of natural luminosity during its three phases (in sentient beings, bodhisattvas, and buddhas), trusting that the guru who points out luminous self-arisen wisdom is a buddha, discussing the scriptural passages on the first three vajra points that are the results, discussing the naturally pure basic element that is the luminous dharmadhātu, being free from the stains of adventitious thoughts (which discusses the last three vajra points), and explaining great nonconceptual wisdom (which mainly consists of a discussion of the five flaws to be counteracted by teaching the tathāgata heart).

These pointing-out instructions also contain typical Yogācāra elements, such as an explanation of the eight consciousnesses that echoes the one in verse 9 of Vasubandhu's *Trisvabhāvanirdeśa* and the equation of saṃsāra with adventitious thoughts, which are nothing but the adventitious stains of mind's luminosity. These teachings also refer to the vajrayāna instructions on "fourfold luminosity" (for details, see below). In typical vajrayāna and Mahāmudrā fashion, the guru is identified as being equal to a buddha due to being the key person who directly points out the nature of one's mind.

Furthermore, in agreement with the *Uttaratantra*, IM equates the tathāgata heart with mind's ultimate true nature, mind's natural luminosity, self-arisen nonconceptual wisdom, buddhahood, and the dharmakāya, all of which are said to exist already in sentient beings, but are merely obscured by imaginary adventitious stains. This is also fully in line with the *Avataṃsakasūtra*'s example of comparing the immeasurable buddha qualities within the mind streams of ordinary beings to a huge silk cloth with a painting of the universe inside a minute particle (see RGVV on I.25). Needless to mention, all of this is in accord with the Shentong view.

Interestingly, IM also specifies that its instructions are very advanced teachings that should not be pointed out to four kinds of people: (1) those who cling to the illusionary appearances of saṃsāra as being real (those with great desire), (2) those who cling to the skandhas as being a real self (tīrthikas), (3) those who do not realize great bliss within saṃsāra and thus abandon it for their own benefit (śrāvakas), and (4) those who lack the compassion that benefit others (pratyekabuddhas). These four correspond to the ones that are identified as not being able to realize the tathāgata heart in *Uttaratantra* I.32–33ab and RGVV. This shows clearly that IM does not explain away positive descriptions of the ultimate as being teachings with

only provisional meaning but takes them as definitive instructions for the most advanced practitioners on the Buddhist path.

### *The Repository of Wisdom*

Given its unique title and its contents, there is no doubt that this text (RW) is identical with the text of the same name (*Ye shes kyi bzhaḡ sa*) mentioned in BA in the context of the early transmission of the five texts of Maitreya above. Just as IM, RW was given to Séu Chök̄yi Gyaltsen but seems to represent Mönlam Tsültrim's own oral instructions (for the most part in the form of questions and answers) that are based on the lineage of Dsen Kawoché and the *Uttaratantra*. Similar to IM, the style and contents of RW conform with both the Shentong view and direct Mahāmudrā instructions on realizing adventitious confusion, thoughts, and afflictions as mind's natural luminosity, that is, self-arisen nonconceptual wisdom.

In line with what Dsen Kawoché is reported to have said to Sajjana about why he wishes to study the works of Maitreya, RW begins by declaring that the texts of Maitreya are the ones into which one should put one's trust when making a teaching one's "death dharma." In particular, the *Uttaratantra* is said to be Maitreya's instruction on true actuality, which is contained in the text's seven vajra points. This is followed by describing buddha, dharma, and saṃgha (the first three vajra points) based on the corresponding verses of the *Uttaratantra*, but explaining them primarily in terms of mind's luminosity and self-arisen nonconceptual wisdom.

Next, the text speaks about the fourth vajra point—the basic element—versus the adventitious stains that obscure it. Interestingly, a "sentient being" is equated here with these obscurations, which consist of thoughts or conceptions (in the widest sense of this term as the all-pervasive and unceasing activity of saṃsāric mind constructing its own world in terms of subject-object appearances). Mind's natural luminosity is unchanging and beyond any need for purification or remedy, and the mahāyāna is explained from an internal perspective as the union of prajñā and compassion within this luminosity. The two types of disposition—the naturally abiding disposition and the accomplished disposition—are defined respectively as the unconditioned dharmakāya and the weariness of saṃsāra that is the seed for realizing the luminosity that is the naturally abiding disposition. Ultimately, there are no beings with "cut-off disposition," since this term refers only to the lack of faith in the mahāyāna in certain beings.

As for the fifth vajra point, the text defines the dharmakāya as mind's natural purity's having become pure of all stains of thought. What is called

“buddha wisdom” refers to the realization of the actuality that is inexpressible and inconceivable by the stains of thought. This wisdom of buddhas is said to know what appears to sentient beings through wisdom (realizing the luminosity of the minds of these beings to be as pure as their own) as well as compassion (realizing that the adventitious stains of these beings are actually nonexistent). In this way, buddhas are able to promote the welfare of sentient beings through wisdom and compassion (the seventh vajra point). The sixth vajra point is touched upon later by mentioning the major and minor marks of the two rūpakāyas.

The text says that when meditating in the tradition of Maitreya, there are two ways of thoughts disintegrating, which never mix—either through analyzing how characteristics of having an intrinsic nature appear and what their actual nature is or without depending on meditating on an image that appears in the mind.

Both rūpakāyas are explained as being nothing but appearances of images of samādhi and wisdom in those to be guided. Through gaining certainty that they are appearances of one’s own mind, on the bhūmis, they appear as sambhogakāyas. When apprehended as independently existing buddhas outside of one’s mind, they appear as nirmāṇakāyas.

The text denies the existence of any external objects—all appearances are appearances of one’s own thoughts.

Elaborating on the difference between ordinary beings and bodhisattvas, our text explains that the former cling to the real existence of the conceptions that obscure their buddha nature, while bodhisattvas realize all appearances to be illusion-like. Since ordinary beings do not recognize appearances for the illusions that they are, they lack altruistic compassion. Since bodhisattvas recognize the clinging to real existence as luminosity, their realizations are not just realizations for their own benefit (as in śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas). This also means that pure buddha realms such as Sukhāvātī are experienced by them right here and now, while such realms are obscured in ordinary beings.

The text separates ultimate reality and seeming reality, saying that self-arisen wisdom exists, while thoughts and their objects (adventitious stains) do not exist. The ultimate is equated with buddhahood and the seeming is equated with sentient beings. Furthermore, from what RW says in different places, seeming reality is also equated with adventitious stains and thoughts, while ultimate reality is equivalent to the dharmakāya and nonconceptual wisdom free from adventitious stains or thoughts. Still, the text also says that “the essence of thoughts is self-arisen wisdom—the dharmadhātu,”

that “at the time of realizing their luminosity, thoughts are self-arisen wisdom—the dharmakāya,” and “from the perspective of a buddha [even] a single subtle thought in itself *is* [wisdom].” Such statements are obviously equivalent to the Kagyü Mahāmudrā hallmark “the essence of thoughts is dharmakāya.” At first glance, this seems to be an assertion of both Dölpopa’s separation of ultimate and seeming reality and the Kagyü Mahāmudrā approach (thus not following Dölpopa’s critique of this approach by strictly separating the two realities and saying that the permanent ultimate beyond the three times cannot be the nature of what is adventitious and impermanent). However, as mentioned before, since all phenomena of seeming reality are not really existent in the first place (and Dölpopa and Mahāmudrā agree on this), there is always only one ultimately real phenomenon to begin with, which is buddha nature or mind’s natural luminosity. Therefore, there is only a single actual reality, and thus any presentation of two separate realities is necessarily of expedient meaning.

Just like the Eighth Karmapa’s *Lamp*, RW says that the existence of self-arisen wisdom is beyond the reach of Madhyamaka because Madhyamaka dismantles only the conditioned adventitious stains of this wisdom through stopping the clinging to their real existence.

IM also brings up the question about the difference between the self-awareness of Mere Mentalism and self-arisen wisdom, if that wisdom is said to exist. In reply, the text says that the assertion of all appearances’ being appearances of thoughts accords with Mere Mentalism. Here, however, it is held that when the luminosity of thoughts is realized, they are self-arisen wisdom—the dharmakāya. All of this accords with the typical Shentong distinction between Mere Mentalism and Shentong in terms of the final word’s being the ultimate existence of mind versus the ultimate existence of nonconceptual or self-arisen wisdom.

Throughout, RW says that self-arisen wisdom exists primordially and that it just needs to be made manifest with all its qualities through seeing its adventitious obscurations for what they are—mere illusion-like thoughts without any real existence. This is said to be similar to the removal of dross from a precious gem. As for the progressive process of removing or rather liberating thoughts, the thoughts of ordinary beings are liberated through the thoughts of śrāvakas, while those of the latter are liberated through the thoughts of bodhisattvas. Finally, all thoughts of bodhisattvas dissolve through being liberated as uncreated buddha wisdom.

*The Heart of the Matter of Luminosity*

This brief work (HML) ascertains one's own mind as luminosity by way of (1) this luminosity's abiding as buddhahood, (2) the purification of its adventitious stains of thought, and (3) the manner in which the tathāgata heart dawns as wisdom. It follows the *Uttaratantra* in presenting (1) luminous mind (the tathāgata heart) through its threefold meaning (the dharma-kāya, suchness, and the disposition), its nine examples in relation to the three kāyas and the nine types of obscurations, and its ways of being present in ordinary beings, noble ones, and buddhas. (2) The purification of the adventitious stains of thought consists of (a) taking refuge in the dharma-kāya (the result), (b) familiarizing with the naturally pure basic element (the cause), and (c) dwelling on the path (the condition). Unfortunately, the last two pages of this text, which cover most of points (2) and (3), are missing, but more information related to these two points can be gleaned from IM and RW.

*Pith Instructions on the Wisdom at the Point of Passing when about to Die*

This short text (PIW) relies on the *Atyantajñānasūtra* for its Mahāmudrā instructions at the moment of death. It says that one needs to understand that all appearances as well as mind are not really existent and are unfindable, and then one needs to settle within the state of nonconceptuality. Thus, the nonconceptuality that abides as the natural state and the nonconceptuality of meditation meet like mother and child, through which one will attain Mahāmudrā in the intermediate state.

*Guiding Instructions on the Path of the Nature of Phenomena*

This text says that it presents a summary of the pith instructions on the path according to the intention of Maitreya, consisting of the foundation of the path, the way of being mistaken in the form of saṃsāra, the stages of the path arising in the mind stream, and the manner in which buddha wisdom arises.<sup>1088</sup> The foundation of the path is the disposition that is mind's natural luminosity. Those who are said to lack the disposition are explained according to *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* III.11. According to *Uttaratantra* I.41, in those who have the dispositions of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and the mahāyāna, weariness of saṃsāra and striving for nirvāṇa arise from the disposition. The remainder of the text follows the outline of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and is essentially a summary of that text with some additional comments. At the time of the fruition, since

the nature of phenomena is free from stains, pure mind is buddhahood—this is the nature of phenomena’s having seized its own ground (*rang sa zin pa*). There are three ways buddha wisdom arises. Since its essence is free from the stains of thoughts, all knowable objects appear as the nature of phenomena—appearances are the dharmakāya (this is certainly reminiscent of the Kagyü Mahāmudrā hallmark “the essence of thoughts is dharmakāya”). To teach the dharma to others is the sambhogakāya and to attain mastery over the mind is the nirmāṇakāya.<sup>1089</sup> Enlightened activity is presented as in the *Uttaratantra* through its two main features of being without thoughts and being uninterrupted. Since the nature of phenomena has seized its own ground,<sup>1090</sup> it does not arise through thoughts. Since the nature of phenomena is permanent, the stream of its own wisdom is uninterrupted. Also, since the dharmadhātu abides as the essence of a body of wisdom and since mastery over appearances is attained, the realization of the three kāyas increases.

The colophon of this text presents the following transmission lineage up to Mönlam Tsültrim—Maitreya, Ratnākaraśānti, Sajjana, Su Gawé Dorje, Purangpa Chenpo,<sup>1091</sup> Dölpa,<sup>1092</sup> Trelhepa,<sup>1093</sup> uncle and nephew Chepa,<sup>1094</sup> and a certain Shangpa.<sup>1095</sup>

### *The Essential Pith Instructions That Summarize the Quintessence of the Piṭakas*

This instruction<sup>1096</sup> was given by Mönlam Tsültrim at the request of two Geshés, Gönden Ö<sup>1097</sup> and Yönten Ö.<sup>1098</sup> It explains the paths of the three types of individuals of lesser, medium, and highest capacities. In the context of the latter, we find Mahāmudrā-style instructions and a quotation from the *Uttaratantra*. These instructions begin by saying that one should cut through thoughts of the three times—not following the past, not anticipating the future, and relaxing and settling the present mind. For thoughts are the cause of saṃsāra, while nonthought is the cause of nirvāṇa. In particular, one needs to cut through all outer reference points in terms of being real and delusive and look at the essence of the mind inside. Through that, a mind to look at is not seen and thus the looker naturally is at peace, relaxes, and settles. It is taught that the mind was not seen, is not seen, and will not be seen by the buddhas of the three times. The nature of the mind is primordially luminous. Since this luminous and empty mind is the dharmakāya, if one realizes it as it is, one will be liberated. As the sūtras say, “The nature of the mind is luminosity.” *Uttaratantra* I.154cd states:

Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.

Though this luminous and naturally empty mind exists intrinsically within one, one wanders in saṃsāra due to not knowing this. The means to put an end to this wandering are that one's guru demonstrates the true nature of one's mind as it is. Through that, one sees that the preceding moment of mind is no more after it has ceased, the next one is not there either as it has not arisen yet, and if one searches for the present one, it is without abiding. Nor does one find any shape, color, or essence of this present moment of the mind, but it is empty and transparent. Then, one relaxes and settles within that state. If one rests in that way, one realizes that one had tainted one's own natural condition before. During subsequent attainment, out of the state of realizing that everything lacks real existence, one solely engages in activities for the welfare of others and dedicates all this to great awakening in a nonreferential manner.

In sum, CMW as well as Mönlam Tsültrim's texts are important works in that they shed new light on both the contents and the transmission of the early meditative tradition of the *Uttaratantra*. In that vein, the combination of Mahāmudrā pointing-out instructions with all the vajra points of the *Uttaratantra* in CMW, IM, and RW supports Gampopa's famous statement "The text for this Mahāmudrā of ours is the *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*." All of these texts are evidence for the existence of a sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach and also for the compatibility of the Shentong view and Mahāmudrā. Gampopa's statement and the existence of corresponding Mahāmudrā instructions in CMW and all the texts by Mönlam Tsültrim show that such teachings must have existed earlier in India (at least from the tenth century onward) and Tibet. It is also noteworthy that the transmission of Mönlam Tsültrim's works proves that the lineage of the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* according to the tradition of Sajjana, Su Gawé Dorje, and Dsen Kawoché continued at least into the fourteenth century and that it was part of the Kadampa tradition, which at that time clearly represented mainstream Tibetan Buddhism. Whether the early Kagyü lineage holders, such as Gampopa and the First and Third Karmapas, received teachings of the type found in Mönlam Tsültrim's works during their extensive studies in the Kadampa tradition is not certain, but it is very likely.



Mikyö Dorje's *Lamp That Excellently Elucidates the System of the Proponents of Shentong Madhyamaka*

Interestingly, despite its title, the term *shentong* never occurs in this work. In its own words, its topic is “the meaning of the two realities [according to] the dharma principles that derive from the levels of yogic pursuit,” which indicates that the Eighth Karmapa wrote his text from the perspective of the direct realization of ultimate reality. Indeed, despite its occasional refutations of wrong views, the *Lamp* is primarily not a polemical text but largely an instruction to be contemplated. Thus, its multilayered meanings come to the fore only when read several times, reflecting on each sentence and also consulting the materials in the notes.<sup>1099</sup>

In terms of its contents, the *Lamp* represents a digest of the *Uttaratantra*, discussing its seven vajra points. In particular, the text's structure closely follows the first chapter of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, explaining the first four vajra points in detail. Thus, the *Lamp* refers to both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV throughout, though each one is only quoted explicitly once. In addition, the text cites the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, the *Avataṃsakasūtra*, and the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāṣya* (once each). It also refers to the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, the *Madhyāntavibhāga*, the *Kālacakratantra*, and six verses from the *Dharmadhātustava*.

The *Lamp*'s presentation of the vajra points of the *Uttaratantra* is repeatedly contrasted with the limited views on emptiness or ultimate reality of those Mādhyamikas who do not understand the “Great Madhyamaka” of Maitreya, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu. Those Mādhyamikas include Candrakīrti, Haribhadra, and other Indians and Tibetans “who flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas.” In particular, the *Lamp* repeatedly denies that merely not finding phenomena as either existent, nonexistent, both existent and nonexistent, or neither existent nor nonexistent under analysis through Madhyamaka reasoning does not represent the true seeing of ultimate reality. The Karmapa also denies that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas realize phenomenal identitylessness.

Despite never using the term *shentong*, the *Lamp* does advance some classical Shentong positions, such as the perfect nature's being empty of both the imaginary and the dependent natures. The text says that the adventitious stains to be relinquished consist of both the imaginary and the dependent natures, while what is to be adopted is the tathāgata heart (which is thus implicitly equated with the perfect nature). Throughout, the text follows the disclosure model of buddha nature's existing with all its qualities

primordially and only needing to be revealed through realizing that the adventitious stains are ultimately nonexistent. In that vein, the *Lamp* says that through the reality and the blessing of the unconditioned tathāgata heart and of the natural purity of the dharmadhātu, initially and seemingly, it is the conditioned adventitious stains (and not the tathāgata heart) that, while actually always being nonexistent, become weary of suffering and aspire for nirvāṇa. Later, it is through the light of wisdom arising from the tathāgata heart itself that these adventitious stains are actually overcome. That is, through self-arisen wisdom's looking at the adventitious stains of its own continuum, no attributes or bearers of attributes, which make up the adventitious stains, are to be seen. At that point, through this wisdom's being free from all stains, it manifests true actuality just as it is.

At the same time, the Eighth Karmapa's Shentong view is often characterized by the Kagyü School as representing "expanse Shentong"<sup>1100</sup> as opposed to "wisdom Shentong"<sup>1101</sup> or "luminosity Shentong."<sup>1102</sup> The latter means that the wisdom of buddha nature is empty of adventitious stains (the "other") and that this wisdom itself is not empty but really existent as the ultimate nature of luminosity. Thus, this approach emphasizes the luminous nature of the mind and its innate buddha qualities (typical proponents are Dölpopa and his followers, including Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé). "Expanse Shentong" means that buddha nature's wisdom itself is free from any reference points, which emphasizes the space-like quality of mind's nature. This approach, which is highlighted by the *Lamp's* frequent use of the word "expanse" in connection with, or as a synonym for, the tathāgata heart, is also predominant in the sections of the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* that discuss Shentong and in the writings of the Sixth Shamarpa, Chökyi Wangchug.<sup>1103</sup>

The *Lamp* also contains some Mahāmudrā elements, such as speaking several times of instantaneous awakening or buddhahood, the dharmakāya's being nothing but self-aware wisdom realizing itself, the knots of discriminating thinking being undone, and the power of yoga, without thinking, relinquishing all improper conceptions.

### Jamgön Kongtrul's *Guiding Instructions on the View of Great Shentong Madhyamaka*

Jamgön Kongtrul's GISM begins by identifying the general sources of Shentong as the sūtras of the third turning as well as the works of Maitreya, Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, their successors, Su Gawé Dorje, Dsen Kawoché, the Third Karmapa, Dölpopa, Longchenpa, the Seventh Karmapa, Śākya

Chogden, Tāranātha, the Eight Situpa, the Thirteenth Karmapa, and the Ninth Situpa. Among the two sources of guiding instructions on the view, the specific source of the instructions in GISM is said to be Maitrīpa's tradition with its emphasis on the intended meaning of the *Uttaratantra*, which was further transmitted through Ratnavajra, Sajjana, and so on. This approach corresponds to what Jamgön Kongtrul calls "sūtra Mahāmudrā" in his TOK (see above). However, in accordance with Dölpopa and his followers, GISM also speaks about the vajrayāna aspect of the Shentong system by presenting the completion stage practice of the Kālacakratāntra as mainly transmitted in the Jonang tradition. The second source of guiding instructions on the view is identified by GISM as the well-known Kagyü approach of Marpa—the uncommon Mahāmudrā of the union of sūtra and tantra.

The structure of the actual guiding instructions in GISM thus consists of (1) the sūtra approach and (2) the tantra approach. (1) The sūtra approach is discussed in two parts: (a) what is to be understood (the two approaches of the Niḥsvabhāvavādins and the Yogācāras) and (b) the actual practice. The practice consists of the preliminaries (contemplating the four seals in accordance with the first turning of the wheel of dharma) and the main practice. The latter has three parts: refuge and bodhicitta, resting in freedom from reference points in accordance with the second turning, and pointing out and distinguishing existence, nonexistence, and so on, in accordance with the third turning and the vajrayāna based on calm abiding and superior insight. (2) The vajrayāna approach consists of two parts: (a) what is to be understood and (b) the main practice (the six-branch yoga of the Kālacakratāntra). The text concludes with presenting the benefit of these instructions and practices as well as a brief account of the Shentong lineage through the Jonang tradition and its transmission to the Nyingma and Kagyü lineages.

In this vein, it is noteworthy that Jamgön Kongtrul wrote his GISM at the main seat of the Jonang lineage in Dzamtang after having received teachings from the Jonang lineage holder Ngawang Chöpel Gyatso (c. 1788–1865), the teacher of the famous Bamda Tubten Gelé Gyatso (1844–1904). Generally speaking, Jamgön Kongtrul's works, as represented by the contents and the Shentong lineage in GISM as well as the discussions of Shentong in TOK, present a Shentong system that is an eclectic blend of what could be called "Kagyü Shentong" (primarily based on Maitrīpa, the Third and Seventh Karmapas, and the Eighth and Ninth Situpas) and "Jonang Shentong" (based on Dölpopa and especially Tāranātha), as well as some elements of Śākya Chogden's Shentong.

Similar to several of Mönlam Tsültrim's texts, both the contents and terminology of GISM's sūtra approach accord not only with Shentong but also very much with Mahāmudrā instructions. Synonyms for mind's nature include the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, natural luminosity, Mahāmudrā, and the tathāgata heart. This tathāgata heart is the basis of all appearances of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and, at present, is the self-aware wisdom that is lucid and unceasing. GISM speaks about "mental nonengagement" and meditating in the manner of not meditating. It refers to the triad of mind's stillness, movement, and awareness and that it is essential to recognize naked awareness in anything that the mind may appear as. All appearances and experiences are said to be self-arising and self-liberated, without ever tainting the essence of this awareness. Thus, there is nothing to meditate on apart from solely recognizing this basic nature. The text also speaks about "searching for the mind"—the common Mahāmudrā approach of cultivating superior insight through searching for any essence or characteristics of the still mind and whether it is different from the moving mind. GISM even mentions two among the four deviations from emptiness that are taught in Mahāmudrā ("deviating from emptiness by mistaking it as the path" and "deviating from emptiness as the fundamental ground of all knowable objects"). In addition, the text also contains many Yogācāra elements, such as the eight consciousnesses and the imaginary nature of the adventitious stains.

As for establishing the scriptural connections between sūtra Shentong, Mahāmudrā, and the *Uttaratantra*, GISM quotes the *Sthirādhyāśayapari-vartasūtra* on the ultimate three jewels and then uses crucial verses from the *Uttaratantra* to cover the remaining four vajra points (the sequence of all seven is presented through *Uttaratantra* I.3). The fourth vajra point is covered by *Uttaratantra* I.28 (all sentient beings possess buddha nature), I.37–38 (the four pāramitās), I.51cd (its changeless nature), I.96–97 (the nine examples), and I.154–55 (the natural absence of obscurations and the intrinsic qualities of the tathāgata heart). The fifth vajra point is discussed through II.3 and II.38 (the characteristics of awakening), II.5 (awakening as possessing all buddha qualities). The sixth vajra point is covered by III.1 (the sixty-four qualities), and the seventh is covered by IV.1 (the characteristics of enlightened activity). The benefit is explained by referring to V.3–6, and the dedication consists of V.25. In this way, GISM highlights the essential points in all of the chapters of the *Uttaratantra*. The text also quotes *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* VI.8 and *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* X.256–57 on

the four yogic practices. In addition, it repeatedly recommends studying Dölpopa's *Mountain Dharma: The Ocean of the Definitive Meaning*.

In sum, though they show many overlaps and together cover a wide range of the contents of the *Uttaratantra*, the contemplative instructions on the *Uttaratantra* in SM, CMW's introduction, Mönlam Tsültrim's texts, the *Lamp*, and GISM also differ in either style or some of their contents. SM is far more theoretical than all the other works here, mainly focusing on the three natures (the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition) and the ten topics of explaining the tathāgata heart as the objects of reflection and meditation. At the same time, SM provides numerous explicit and implicit cross-references between several topics within primarily the fourth vajra point (such as the nine examples and the nine afflictions), which are also presented as contemplative templates. SM lacks the Mahāmudrā-like style of direct pointing-out instructions that is so pervasive in all the other above texts (though the *Lamp* does not exhibit that style as much as the others).

CMW's introduction includes all seven vajra points but mainly focuses on pointing-out instructions on the three natures in a style that is usually found in the Mahāmudrā and Dzogchen traditions.

The general theme in Mönlam Tsültrim's works and GISM is that buddhahood is nothing but the natural luminosity of one's own mind and that all obscuring thoughts are merely adventitious stains that need to be seen through. Like CMW, those texts largely couch this theme in pointing-out instructions in Mahāmudrā style. In particular, IM discusses this theme through touching upon the contents of all seven vajra points, the inconceivability of the last four, and the five flaws and their opposites. RW treats it primarily through referring to the first five vajra points. GISM presents its Mahāmudrā instructions by quoting several key verses from all seven vajra points (though mainly focusing on the fourth one) as the direct objects of contemplation.

The *Lamp* is largely a digest of the presentation of the fourth vajra point in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, with occasional polemics against Indian and Tibetan "pseudo-Mādhyamikas." Nevertheless, its tone is mostly contemplative in nature and requires deeper reflection in order to appreciate its profound points.

In conclusion, it seems worth noting that despite the great importance of the *Uttaratantra* in the Kagyü School, there are only six known Kagyü commentaries (plus the Third Karmapa's outline) on the text. Among them, three (those by Karma Göncho Shönnu, the first Karma Trinlépa, and Surmang Lhalungpa) are lost. HLS is essentially a combination of the Third

Karmapa's outline with excerpts from RGVV, plus a few brief and more typical Kagyü paragraphs on *tathāgatagarbha*. Except for its introduction (which includes passages from BA and GC), JKC closely follows Dölpopa. That leaves only Gö Lotsāwa's commentary as an actual Kagyü commentary on the *Uttaratantra*. Still, even among Kagyü commentaries, GC appears to be unique in a number of ways, such as when it agrees with Ngog Lotsāwa and in its particular Mahāmudrā interpretation of the *Uttaratantra* that is in turn greatly based on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

If one looks for truly indigenous Kagyü works on the *Uttaratantra* (though not actual commentaries) besides GC, one needs to turn to the Eighth Karmapa's *Lamp* and especially to the Third Karmapa's *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* (essentially a digest of the *Uttaratantra*) with Jamgön Kongtrul's commentary. In a wider sense, as works that discuss *tathāgatagarbha* in detail, one may include the Third Karmapa's commentary on the *Dharmadhātustava*, the first chapter of his *Profound Inner Reality* with its autocommentary, and the commentaries on this chapter by several authors, in particular, the first Karma Trinlépa, Tagbo Rabjampa Chögyal Denba<sup>1104</sup> (1449–1524), and Jamgön Kongtrul.<sup>1105</sup>

## TRANSLATIONS





# Ratnagoṭravibhāga Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra—An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna

Om namaḥ Śrī Vajrasattvāya—Om I pay homage to Glorious Vajrasattva<sup>1106</sup>

Buddha, dharma, assembly, basic element,  
Awakening, qualities, and finally buddha activity—  
The body of the entire treatise  
Is summarized in these seven vajra points. I.1

{P75a} “Vajra point”<sup>1107</sup> refers to the footing or locus of the actuality of the realization that is like a vajra. This actuality, which is to be realized through personally experienced [wisdom] and has an inexpressible nature, is to be understood as being like a vajra because it is difficult to penetrate by any cognitions that arise from studying and reflecting.<sup>1108</sup> The words that express this actuality<sup>1109</sup> through teaching the path that accords with attaining it are [also] called “footings” because they serve as the support of this [actuality]. In this way, in the sense of being what is difficult to penetrate and in the sense of being [its] support, respectively, that actuality and the letters [that describe it] are [both] to be understood as “vajra footings.”

So what does “actuality” and what does “letters” refer to? “Actuality” refers to the sevenfold actuality of realization, that is, the actuality of the Buddha, the actuality of the dharma, the actuality of the assembly, the actuality of the basic element, the actuality of awakening, the actuality of [its] qualities, {J2} and the actuality of [enlightened] activity. These are called “actuality.” The words that point out and elucidate this sevenfold actuality of realization are called “letters.”

This discussion of the vajra points should be known in detail according to [a number of] sūtras.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is indemonstrable. He cannot be seen with the eyes. Ānanda, the dharma is inexpressible. It cannot be heard with the ears. Ānanda, the saṃgha is unconditioned. It cannot be worshipped with body or mind.<sup>1110</sup>

Thus, these three vajra points should be understood by following the *Dṛḍhādhyāśayaparivarta*.<sup>1111</sup>

Śāriputra, {D75a} this actuality<sup>1112</sup> is the object of the Tathāgata and [solely] the sphere of the Tathāgata. First of all, Śāriputra, this actuality cannot be correctly [known,]<sup>1113</sup> seen, or discriminated even by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas through their own prajñā, let alone by ordinary naive beings, unless they realize [this actuality] through trust in the Tathāgata. {P75b} Śāriputra, what is to be realized through trust is the ultimate. Śāriputra, “the ultimate” is a designation for the basic element of sentient beings.<sup>1114</sup> Śāriputra, “the basic element of sentient beings” is a designation for the tathāgata heart. Śāriputra, “the tathāgata heart” is a designation for the dharmakāya.<sup>1115</sup>

Thus, the fourth vajra point is to be understood by following the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*. {J3}

Bhagavan, “supreme awakening” is a designation for the dhātu of nirvāṇa. Bhagavan, “the dhātu of nirvāṇa” is a designation for the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata.<sup>1116</sup>

Thus, the fifth vajra point is to be understood by following the *Āryaśrīmālā[devī]sūtra*.

Śāriputra, the dharmakāya that is taught by the Tathāgata is endowed with inseparable attributes and qualities that [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it],<sup>1117</sup> which [manifest] in the form of the attributes of a tathāgata that far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>1118</sup>

Thus, the sixth vajra point is to be understood by following the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*.

Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think and does not conceptualize. Nevertheless, his activity, which has such a nature, operates effortlessly and without thinking and conceptualizing.<sup>1119</sup>

Thus, the seventh vajra point {D75b} is to be understood by following the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvātāranirdeśa*.

In brief, these seven vajra points should be known as the “body” of the entire treatise, in the form of the [seven] summary topics that are the gateways to [what this treatise] teaches.

In accordance with their specific characteristics {P76a}  
 And in due order, the [first] three points of these [seven]  
 Should be understood from the introduction in the *Dhāraṇirājasūtra*  
 And the [latter] four from the distinction of the attributes of the  
 intelligent and the victors. I.2

Among these seven vajra points, in accordance with the discussion of their specific characteristics and in due order, the first three points should [also] be understood from the introductory section of the *Āryadhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*<sup>1120</sup> and the remaining four thereafter from [this sūtra’s sections on] the distinction of teaching the [various] attributes of bodhisattvas and tathāgatas.<sup>1121</sup> This [sūtra] says:

The Bhagavān has completely and perfectly awakened to the equality of all phenomena, has excellently turned the wheel of dharma, and was endowed with limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples.<sup>1122</sup>

Through these three basic phrases, in due order, one should understand the presentation of [how] to arrive at the full knowledge of the successive arising of the three jewels. The remaining four points are to be understood as the instructions on accomplishing the causes that correspond to the arising of the three jewels.

Here, when dwelling on the eighth bhūmi of bodhisattvas, the [Buddha] attained mastery over all phenomena. {J4} Therefore, [the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*] says that he who went to the supreme heart of awakening is “the one who has completely and perfectly awakened to the equality of all phenomena.” When dwelling on the ninth bhūmi of bodhisattvas, he was endowed with [the power of] proclaiming the supreme dharma,<sup>1123</sup> correctly knew the ways of thinking of all sentient beings, attained the highest

perfection of [teaching in accordance with their] faculties, and was skilled in destroying the concatenations of the latent tendencies of the afflictions of all sentient beings.<sup>1124</sup> {D76a} Therefore, [this sūtra] says that he who has completely and perfectly awakened is “the one who has excellently turned the wheel of dharma.” On the tenth bhūmi, immediately upon having received the empowerment of a crown prince of the supreme dharma of the Tathāgata, {P76b} his effortless buddha activity became [completely] unhindered. Therefore, [this sūtra] says that he who excellently turned the wheel of dharma is “the one who was endowed with limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples.” That he superbly guided limitless assemblies of disciples<sup>1125</sup> is also taught immediately after [the above passage in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*] by the following passage:

... together with a great bhikṣu saṃgha ... together with an immeasurable saṃgha of bodhisattvas.<sup>1126</sup>

Since [the Buddha] is the one who has superbly guided [disciples] in a progressive manner to the awakening of śrāvakas and the awakening of buddhas, [this sūtra says that he was together with] “those who are endowed with all these qualities.”<sup>1127</sup>

Then, immediately after the discussion of the praiseworthy qualities of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas, one should know the presentation that discriminates the qualities of the jewel of the Buddha through [the passage about] the manifestation of a palace<sup>1128</sup> richly adorned with jewels, which is based on the inconceivable supreme samādhi<sup>1129</sup> of the Buddha, the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata, their arranging various kinds of offerings of divine substances, and their showering down clouds of praises.<sup>1130</sup>

Following that, one should know the presentation that discriminates the qualities of the jewel of the dharma through [the passage about] the splendid arrangement of the dharma throne, light [emerging from the Buddha's forehead], and the proclamation of the names and the qualities of [various] specifications of the dharma.<sup>1131</sup>

Right after that, one should know the presentation that discriminates the qualities of the jewel of the saṃgha through [the passage about] the mutual display of the powers of the spheres that are the objects of the samādhis of bodhisattvas and the description of praising their various qualities.<sup>1132</sup>

Thereafter, {J5} again, [one should know] the presentation that discriminates the supreme qualities of these three jewels in their due order, which is to be regarded as the end of the introductory section [of the

*Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*.<sup>1133</sup> [This is taught] by [Dhāraṇīśvararāja,] this oldest son of the supreme dharma king, becoming endowed with the highest fearlessness and self-confidence through [having received] the empowerment of the Buddha's light rays. {D76b} {P77a} Based on this, he presents a praise of the ultimate [as embodied in] the true qualities of the Tathāgata and discusses the subject matters of the highest dharma of the mahāyāna. [Finally, the Buddha refers to the saṃgha by] describing [how] to attain the fruition of realizing the [mahāyāna dharma], which is the supreme mastery over [all] phenomena.<sup>1134</sup>

Next, after the introductory section of the sūtra, the buddha element is explained through a description of the sixty kinds of factors that purify its [natural] purity because it is [only] if the object to be purified is endowed with qualities that purifications of its purity are justified. Taking up this motive, [the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*] adduces the specific example of the purification [process] of gold [to illustrate the purification process of the buddha element] on the ten bhūmis of bodhisattvas.<sup>1135</sup> In this [*Dhāraṇīśvararāja*] sūtra here, following the description of [the thirty-two kinds of] the activity of the Tathāgata, the example of an impure beryl<sup>1136</sup> gem is used:

O son of noble family, take an expert jeweler who knows the procedure of refining gems very well. Having extracted unrefined precious gems from a jewel mine, he washes them in a caustic alkaline solution and then polishes them by cleansing them with a black-hair cloth. However, he does not cease his efforts at [having done] just that. Next, he washes them in caustic [acidic] food liquid<sup>1137</sup> and polishes them by cleansing them with a woolen towel.<sup>1138</sup> [Again,] however, he does not cease his efforts at [having done] just that. Next, he washes them in a great medicinal elixir<sup>1139</sup> and polishes them by cleansing them with a very fine cloth. Thus cleansed and freed from impure substances, [a refined beryl] is called "a noble beryl." {J6} Likewise, O son of noble family, the Tathāgata too, {P77b} upon perceiving the impure basic element of sentient beings, creates weariness in those sentient beings who delight in saṃsāra through his fear-provoking discourses on impermanence, suffering, identitylessness, and impurity, {D77a} thus making them enter the noble discipline of the dharma. However, the Tathāgata does not cease his efforts at [having done] just that. Next, he makes them realize the guiding principle of the tathāgatas through his discourses on emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness.<sup>1140</sup> [Again,] however, the Tathāgata does not cease his efforts at [having done] just that. Next, through his discourses on the dharma

wheel of irreversibility,<sup>1141</sup> that is, his discourses on the complete purity of the three spheres,<sup>1142</sup> he makes sentient beings enter the domain of the tathāgatas. Those [sentient beings] with various causal natures [of entering this domain] who enter it all together and realize the true nature of a tathāgata are called “unsurpassable venerable ones.”<sup>1143</sup>

Having in mind the pure disposition, the tathāgata element, it is said:

Just as within stony debris  
Pure gold is not seen,  
And then becomes visible through being purified,  
Tathāgatas [become visible] in the world.<sup>1144</sup>

Now, what are those sixty kinds of factors of purifying the buddha element? They are the four kinds of ornaments of bodhisattvas,<sup>1145</sup> the eight kinds of illuminations of bodhisattvas,<sup>1146</sup> the sixteen kinds of the great compassion of bodhisattvas,<sup>1147</sup> and the thirty-two kinds of the activity of bodhisattvas.<sup>1148</sup>

After the discussion of that, [the sūtra] explains buddha awakening through teaching the sixteen kinds of the great compassion of great awakening.<sup>1149</sup> Following the discussion of that, the buddha qualities are explained through teaching the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha.<sup>1150</sup> {P78a} After the discussion of that, buddha activity is explained through teaching the thirty-two kinds of the unsurpassable activity of a buddha.<sup>1151</sup> In this way, the seven vajra points should be understood in detail by way of discussing their specific characteristics according to the *[Dhāraṇīśvararāja]sūtra*. {D77b}

What is the connection between these [seven points]? {J7}

From the Buddha [comes] the dharma and from the dharma, the noble saṃgha.  
Within the saṃgha, the [tathāgata] heart leads to the attainment of wisdom.  
The attainment of that wisdom is the supreme awakening that is endowed with  
The attributes such as the powers that promote the welfare of all sentient beings. I.3

This describes the connection of [the seven vajra points in] the treatise.<sup>1152</sup>

## THE THREE JEWELS AND THE TATHĀGATA HEART

[Now,] the meaning of these verses is to be explained. Those sentient beings who are guided by the Tathāgata, having taken refuge in the Tathāgata, also take refuge in the dharma and the saṃgha due to their openness that is the natural outflow of the nature of phenomena. Therefore, first [there is] a verse on the jewel of the Buddha.

You awakened to peaceful buddhahood without beginning, middle,  
or end.

Upon your self-awakening, you taught the fearless everlasting path  
so that the unawakened may awake.

I pay homage to you who wield the supreme sword and vajra of  
wisdom and compassion, cut the sprouts of suffering to pieces,  
And break through the wall of doubts concealed by the thicket of  
various views. I.4

What is taught by this?

Being unconditioned, effortless,  
Not being produced<sup>1153</sup> through other conditions,  
And possessing wisdom, compassion, and power,  
Buddhahood is endowed with the two welfares. I.5

This [verse] describes buddhahood in brief as consisting of eight qualities. What are these eight qualities? They are being unconditioned, effortless, an awakening not through other conditions, {P78b} wisdom, compassion, power,<sup>1154</sup> the fulfillment of one's own welfare, and the fulfillment of the welfare of others. {J8}

It is unconditioned because its nature  
Is to be without beginning, middle, and end.  
It is declared to be effortless  
Because it possesses the peaceful dharma body.<sup>1155</sup> I.6

It is not produced through other conditions  
 Because it is to be realized personally. {D78a}  
 Thus, it is wisdom because it is threefold awakening.  
 It is compassion because it teaches the path. I.7

It is power because it overcomes suffering  
 And the afflictions through wisdom and compassion.  
 One's own welfare is by virtue of the first three qualities  
 And the welfare of others by virtue of the latter three. I.8

Being “unconditioned” should be understood as the opposite of being conditioned. Here, what is called “conditioned” is that in which arising is perceived and abiding and ceasing are perceived too. Because of the lack of these [three characteristics], buddhahood is to be regarded as being without beginning, middle, and end and as consisting of the unconditioned dharmakāya. It is effortless because all reference points and conceptions are at peace.

It is not produced by other conditions because it is to be realized by self-arisen wisdom (here, *udaya* means “awakening” and not “arising”).<sup>1156</sup> Even though it is unconditioned and has the characteristic of being inactive, from tathāgatahood all activities of the perfect Buddha unfold without effort in an unimpeded and uninterrupted manner until the end of saṃsāra. Thus, buddhahood, which is a truly amazing and inconceivable object, is completely and perfectly realized as being inexpressible in nature by [the Buddha] himself, [that is,] not after having heard [about it] from others, but through the self-arisen wisdom that is not caused by a master. Thereafter, in order to help awaken<sup>1157</sup> others, who have not awakened to such an awakening {P79a} and are blind by birth,<sup>1158</sup> [the Buddha] teaches them the path that leads to that [awakening].<sup>1159</sup> Therefore, one should understand that [the Buddha] is endowed with unsurpassable wisdom and compassion.

The fearlessness of the path is due to its being beyond the world. Its being beyond the world is due to its never turning back. In due order, the examples of a sword and a vajra elucidate that both the wisdom and compassion of the Tathāgata have the power to overcome the roots of the suffering and the afflictions of others. Here, in brief, the root of suffering consists of anything that comes about as [the five skandhas of] name and form within [any possible saṃsāric] existence. The root of the afflictions {D78b} consists of any views and doubts that are preceded by clinging to



a real personality. Here, by virtue of its characteristic of coming forth, the suffering that consists of name and form is to be understood as being represented by a sprout. {J9} Since the power of both the wisdom and the compassion of the Tathāgata cuts through this [suffering], it should be known to be illustrated by the example of a sword. The afflictions to be relinquished through seeing, which consist of said views and doubts and are difficult to understand through mundane wisdom, are difficult to penetrate. Therefore, they resemble a wall concealed by a thick forest. Due to being what breaks through these [afflictions], the power of both the wisdom and the compassion of the Tathāgata should be understood to be illustrated by the example of a vajra.<sup>1160</sup>

The instruction on the detailed analysis of these six qualities of the Tathāgata as described should be known in this order according to the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatarājñānālokāṃkārasūtra*. There it is said:

Mañjuśrī, [through this specification,] “what is without arising and without ceasing” {P79b} [should be understood to be a designation of] the Tathāgata Arhat, the completely perfect Buddha.<sup>1161</sup>

Through this, it is explained first that the Tathāgata has the characteristic of being unconditioned. Right after this, the Tathāgata’s being without arising and without ceasing [is illustrated] by nine examples, starting with the example of a reflection of Śakra<sup>1162</sup> on a ground of stainless beryl.<sup>1163</sup> With regard to the meaning [of this], [the sūtra] says:

Mañjuśrī, likewise, the Tathāgata Arhat, the completely perfect Buddha, does not move, does not reflect, is not discursive, does not think, and does not conceptualize. He is without thought, without conception, without reflection, without mental engagement, peaceful, without arising, and without ceasing. He cannot be seen, cannot be heard, cannot be smelled, cannot be tasted, and cannot be touched. {D79a} He is without characteristics, without cognizing, and without being cognizable.<sup>1164</sup>

Thus and further goes the [sūtra’s] discussion of different aspects of peacefulness.<sup>1165</sup> Through this, it is explained that the Tathāgata is effortless because in his own actions all discursiveness and conceptions are at peace. Then, the discussion of the [nine] examples in the following passage [of the sūtra] explains the completely perfect awakening of the Tathāgata without

any other conditions with regard to the gateways to the completely perfect awakening to the suchness of all phenomena. At the end, after having taught the sixteen aspects of the awakening of the Tathāgata, [the sūtra] says the following:

Here, Mañjuśrī, once the Tathāgata has completely and perfectly awakened to all phenomena's having such a nature and {P80a} has seen the dharmadhātu of sentient beings to be impure, not stainless, and blemished,<sup>1166</sup> {J10} his great compassion, which is called "playful mastery," unfolds for [all] sentient beings.<sup>1167</sup>

This states that the Tathāgata is endowed with unsurpassable wisdom and compassion. [In this passage,] "all phenomena's having such a nature" [refers to phenomena] as they have been taught above as having the nature of the lack of entity.<sup>1168</sup> "Completely and perfectly awakened" [means] "realized by nonconceptual buddha wisdom that accords with reality." "Of sentient beings" [means] "of those who are categorized as the groups [whose disposition] is certain [in terms of what is correct], [whose disposition] is uncertain, and [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is mistaken."<sup>1169</sup> "The dharmadhātu" [refers to their] tathāgata heart, which in essence is not different from the [Buddha's] own true nature.<sup>1170</sup> "Has seen" [means] "having seen all the aspects [of this tathāgata heart in different beings] with the Buddha's unobscured eyes." "Impure" [refers to the impurity] of ordinary naive beings due to their afflictive obscurations. "Not stainless" [refers to the impurity] of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas due to their cognitive obscurations. {D79b} "Blemished" [refers to the impurity] of bodhisattvas due to their remainders of either one of both of those [obscurations]. [The Buddha's compassion is called] "playful mastery" because of having entered into various gateways of perfect means of guidance. That this "compassion unfolds for [all] sentient beings" is because [the Buddha], as being the one who possesses the awakening of having completely and perfectly awakened for the sake of all sentient beings due to [their] being equal [for him to himself], has the intention to [make them] attain the realization of [the Buddha's] own true nature [that abides in them too]. Thereafter, due to the unfolding of unsurpassable wisdom and compassion, [the Buddha] engages in bringing about his turning of the wheel of the unequaled dharma in an uninterrupted manner. {P80b} This is to be understood as the power of both [wisdom and compassion] with regard to promoting the welfare of others.

Here, from among these six qualities of the Tathāgata, in due order, to be endowed with the first three [qualities] (such as being unconditioned) represents the fulfillment of one's own welfare, while [being endowed] with the latter three (such as wisdom) represents the fulfillment of the welfare of others. Or, [one can say that] it is [the quality of] wisdom that elucidates the fulfillment of one's own welfare, which is due to its having the property of being the basis of the completely perfect self-awakening that is the supreme and eternal abode of peace. Compassion and power [indicate] the fulfillment of the welfare of others due to their having the property of being the basis of [the activity of] turning the wheel of the great unsurpassable dharma.

Then, since the jewel of the dharma arises from the jewel of the Buddha, after the [presentation of the Buddha], there follows a verse on the [dharma]:

Inscrutable as neither nonexistent nor existent nor [both] existent  
and nonexistent nor other than existent and nonexistent,  
Free from etymological interpretation, to be personally experienced,  
and peaceful—{J11}  
I pay homage to this sun of the dharma, which shines the light of  
stainless wisdom  
And defeats passion, aggression, and [mental] darkness with regard  
to all focal objects.<sup>1171</sup> I.9

What is taught by this?

By virtue of its being inconceivable, free from the dual,  
nonconceptual,  
Pure, manifesting, and a remedial factor,<sup>1172</sup>  
It is what is and what makes free from attachment, respectively—  
The dharma that is characterized by the two realities. I.10

This [verse] describes the jewel of the dharma in brief as consisting of eight qualities. {D80a} What are these eight qualities? They are its being inconceivable, free from the dual, nonconceptual, pure, making manifest, being a counteractive factor, being free from attachment, and being the cause of being free from attachment.

Freedom from attachment {P81a} consists of  
 The two realities of cessation and the path.  
 In due order, these two are to be understood  
 Through three qualities each. I.11

In due order, among these six qualities, the first three [qualities] (being inconceivable, free from the dual, and nonconceptual) explain the reality of cessation. Therefore, it should be understood that freedom from attachment consists of these [three qualities]. The remaining three qualities (being pure, manifesting, and remedial) explain the reality of the path. Therefore, it should be understood that the cause of being free from attachment consists of those [three qualities]. What is free from attachment is the reality of cessation. What makes free from attachment is the reality of the path. Taking these two together, it is explained that this is “the dharma free from attachment that is characterized by the two realities of purification.”<sup>1173</sup>

Because of being inscrutable, because of being inexpressible,  
 And because of being the wisdom of the noble ones, it is  
 inconceivable.

Because of being peaceful, it is free from the dual and without  
 conceptions.

[In its] three [qualities] such as being pure, it is like the sun. I.12

In brief, the reality of cessation should be understood as being inconceivable for three reasons. For which three [reasons]? [It is inconceivable] because of not being the sphere of scrutiny through the four permutations of nonexistence, existence, [both] existence and nonexistence, or neither; because of being inexpressible through any terms, voices, articulations, avenues of speech, etymologies, designations, conventions, or expressions; and because of being what is to be personally experienced by the noble ones. {J12} {D80b}

How should it be understood here that the reality of cessation is free from the dual and without conceptions? {P81b} It is as the Bhagavān said [in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*]:

Śāriputra, the dharmakāya is peace,<sup>1174</sup> having the nature of being free from the dual and having the nature of being without conceptions.<sup>1175</sup>

“The dual” here refers to [the dual obscurations of] karma and the afflictions. “Conception” refers to improper mental engagement,<sup>1176</sup> the cause of the arising of karma and the afflictions. By virtue of realizing the natural cessation of this [improper mental engagement], there is no manifestation of the duo [of karma and the afflictions] or conception. Consequently, there is absolutely no arising of suffering. This is called “the reality of the cessation of suffering.” However, it is not that the reality of the cessation of suffering is explained by virtue of the destruction of any phenomenon. As [the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*] says at length:

Mañjuśrī, in what lacks arising and lacks ceasing, mind, mentation, and consciousness<sup>1177</sup> do not operate. Wherever there is no operation of mind, mentation, and consciousness, there is no improper mental engagement through which any [false] imagination could be taking place. Those who engage in proper mental engagement do not cause ignorance to arise. In those in whom ignorance does not arise, the twelve links of [saṃsāric] existence do not arise. This is nonarising.<sup>1178</sup>

As [the *Śrīmālādeviśiṃhanādasūtra*] says:

However, Bhagavan, the cessation of suffering is not the destruction of phenomena. The name “cessation of suffering,” Bhagavan, indicates the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, which is beginningless, unproduced, unborn, unarisen, without extinction, free from extinction, permanent, eternal, peaceful, everlasting, naturally pure, free from the cocoon of all afflictions, and endowed with inseparable {P82a} and inconceivable buddha attributes that far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number]. {D81a} Bhagavan, this very dharmakāya of the Tathāgata that is not freed from the cocoon of the afflictions is called “tathāgata heart.”<sup>1179</sup>

Thus, the presentation of the reality of the cessation of suffering in its entire detail should be understood according to the sūtras.

The paths of seeing and familiarization that [consist of] nonconceptual wisdom are the causes for attaining this dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, which bears the name “cessation of suffering.” [This wisdom] is to be understood as resembling the sun by way of being similar to it in three ways for the following reasons. By virtue of being similar to the orb [of the sun’s] being completely pure, it is free from all stains of the proximate afflictions.<sup>1180</sup> By

virtue of being similar to [the sun's] being what makes forms manifest, it shines its light on all aspects of knowable objects. By virtue of being similar to [the sun's] being the remedy for darkness, it serves as the remedy for all aspects of what obstructs seeing reality. {J13}

As for "what obstructs," due to the rising of their latencies, passion, hatred, and bewilderment, which are preceded by mentally engaging in focal objects that have the characteristic of being unreal entities, arise. For naive beings, it is by virtue of these latencies that unreal entities that lack the nature of those [entities that they seem to appear as], through the arising of passion, serve as the causes for [appearing] as something that looks pleasant; through the arising of hatred, as something that looks antagonistic; or, through the arising of bewilderment, as something that looks obscure. In those who take such causes of passion, hatred, and bewilderment, which do not accord with reality, as their focal objects, improper mental engagement {P82b} completely occupies the mind. In those whose minds are occupied with improper mental engagement, any affliction among passion, hatred, and bewilderment manifests. Due to this, they commit actions with body, speech, and mind that arise from passion and {D81b} also commit such actions that arise from hatred and from bewilderment. In turn, from these actions, there will be the succession of rebirths.

In this way, improper mental engagement manifests in naive beings who possess those latencies, grasp at [certain] characteristics, and engage in them as their focal objects. From that, the afflictions arise. From the arising of the afflictions, actions arise. From the arising of actions, there is the arising of birth. So all aspects of the afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth<sup>1181</sup> of naive beings operate by virtue of not realizing and not seeing the single basic element in just the way it is in true reality.

[However,] this [afflictiveness] should be seen in the same manner as a thorough investigator [sees] who does not see any characteristics or focal objects of this [afflictiveness]. When neither characteristics nor focal objects are seen, true reality is seen. Thus, these phenomena are completely and perfectly realized by the Tathāgata as being equal by virtue of their equality. In this way, [the Tathāgata] does not see characteristics and focal objects, which are nonexistent, and sees ultimate reality, which is existent, in just the way it is in true reality. By virtue of [this seeing and nonseeing, the Tathāgata] completely and perfectly realizes the equality of all phenomena through the wisdom of equality, in which neither of these two [nonexistent characteristics and the existent ultimate reality] is to be removed or added. This [realization] should be understood as the remedy for all aspects

of what obstructs the seeing of true reality. Through the arising of this [remedy], [the Tathāgata] knows<sup>1182</sup> that [his mind] is absolutely disassociated and disconnected from the counterpart [of this remedy, that is, everything that obstructs seeing true reality]. {P83a} The paths of seeing and familiarization that consist of nonconceptual wisdom and are the causes for attaining the dharmakāya are to be understood in detail according to the sūtras by following the prajñāpāramitā [sūtras].

Now, since the jewel of the saṃgha of irreversible bodhisattvas<sup>1183</sup> arises from the jewel of the mahāyāna dharma, after the [presentation of the dharma], there follows a verse on the [saṃgha]: {J14}

They perfectly realize that the endpoint of the identitylessness of the  
entire world is peace

Because they see that, by virtue of the natural luminosity of the  
minds in this [world], the afflictions are without nature. {D82a}

I pay homage to those who see that perfect buddhahood is all-  
pervading, whose intelligence is unobscured,

And whose wisdom vision has the purity and infinitude of beings as  
its objects. I.13

What is taught by this?

By virtue of the purity of the inner

Wisdom vision of suchness and variety,

The assembly of the irreversible intelligent ones

Is [endowed] with unsurpassable qualities. I.14

This [verse] explains in brief that the jewel of the assembly of irreversible bodhisattvas is endowed with unsurpassable qualities by virtue of the purity of the vision of supramundane wisdom in terms of two aspects— [the tathāgata heart as] being suchness and [as] being variety.<sup>1184</sup>

[The wisdom of] suchness<sup>1185</sup> by virtue of

Realizing the world's true nature of peace

Is due to the natural complete purity [of the mind]

And due to seeing the primordial termination of the afflictions.

I.15

Here, [the wisdom of knowing the tathāgata heart as] being suchness should be understood by virtue of realizing, just as it is, the endpoint of the identitylessness of the whole world that is referred to as “persons and phenomena.” This is the realization in terms of the principle that persons and phenomena, by virtue of their nature of being absolutely and primordially at peace, are not annihilated. {P83b} In brief, [this realization] arises from two causes—through seeing that mind is naturally luminous and through seeing that its proximate afflictions are primordially terminated and ceased.

Now, {J15} these two [factors]—“mind’s natural luminosity” and “its [concomitant] proximate afflictions”—in relation to the uncontaminated basic element are extremely difficult to understand. For both sound and unsound minds [always] occur alone, without [one of them ever] being associated with the other<sup>1186</sup> one. Therefore, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, the sound mind is momentary. It is not afflicted by the afflictions. The unsound mind is [also] momentary. Even this [unsound] mind is not afflicted by the afflictions. Bhagavan, the afflictions do not touch the mind, {D82b} nor does the mind [touch] the afflictions.<sup>1187</sup> So how, Bhagavan, does the mind, which has this nature of being untouchable [by the afflictions], still become afflicted by darkness? Bhagavan, there is proximate affliction and there is the mind that is proximately afflicted. Still, Bhagavan, the meaning of naturally pure mind’s being afflicted is difficult to understand.<sup>1188</sup>

Thus, the instruction on the meaning of [the above passage] “being suchness . . . difficult to understand” should be understood in detail according to the sūtra.

[The wisdom of] being variety is due to  
The intelligence that encompasses the entire range of the knowable  
Seeing the existence of the true nature  
Of omniscience in all sentient beings. I.16

Now, [the wisdom of the tathāgata heart as] being variety is to be understood due to the supramundane prajñā that encompasses the entire range of knowable entities seeing {P84a} the existence of the tathāgata heart in all sentient beings, even in those who are born in the animal realm.<sup>1189</sup> This seeing of bodhisattvas arises on the first bodhisattvabhūmi



since they realize the dharmadhātu as being the actuality of omnipresence.  
{J16}

Such a realization is the vision  
Of one's own personal wisdom.  
It is pure in the stainless basic element  
Because it lacks attachment and lacks obstruction. I.17

Thus, in this way, by virtue of [the wisdoms of the tathāgata heart as] being suchness and [as] being variety, the realization of the supramundane path is meant to be the vision of the [mahāyāna] noble ones' own personal supramundane wisdom, which is not in common with others. In brief, compared to the visions of any other limited [kinds of] wisdom, it is described as being utterly pure<sup>1190</sup> for two reasons. For which two [reasons is this]? [It is so] because [this wisdom] lacks attachment and because it lacks obstruction. Here, by virtue of [its knowing the tathāgata heart as] being suchness, [this wisdom] has the naturally pure basic element of sentient beings as its object. {D83a} Therefore, it lacks attachment. By virtue of [its knowing the tathāgata heart as] being variety, it has limitless knowable entities as its objects. Therefore, it lacks obstruction.<sup>1191</sup>

By virtue of this purity of the vision of wisdom,  
The noble ones, who are irreversible<sup>1192</sup>  
From unsurpassable buddha wisdom,<sup>1193</sup>  
Are the refuge of all that lives. I.18

Thus, this purity of the vision of the wisdom of bodhisattvas who dwell on the level of irreversibility is to be understood as being unsurpassable because it serves as the basis [or precursor]<sup>1194</sup> of the unsurpassable purity of the vision of tathāgata wisdom. {P84b} Or, [it is unsurpassable compared] to the other qualities of bodhisattvas, such as generosity and discipline. Since irreversible bodhisattvas are endowed with this [purity of vision], they represent the refuge of all sentient beings.<sup>1195</sup>

There is no mention of the jewel of the śrāvaka saṃgha after the jewel of the assembly of bodhisattvas because the [former] is not worthy of being venerated.<sup>1196</sup> Indeed, no learned ones who know the distinction between the qualities of bodhisattvas and śrāvakas would ever cast away the new moon of bodhisattvas with its disk of wisdom and compassion perfecting the vast accumulations of merit and wisdom for great awakening, which

is engaged in illuminating the mind streams that consist of the multitudes of<sup>1197</sup> the basic elements of innumerable sentient beings and has entered the path that accords with approaching the full moon of the unsurpassable Tathāgata, {J17} and then pay homage to the śrāvakas [instead], who have reached the consummation of their limited wisdom, but [only] engage in illuminating their own mind streams, just as the forms of stars [illuminate only themselves]. Even those bodhisattvas who have given rise to [bodhi] citta for the first time, by virtue of its quality of being based on the purity of their intention to promote the benefit of others, outshine noble śrāvakas, who lack compassion and belong to the class of those who do not support others,<sup>1198</sup> though<sup>1199</sup> they have reached the perfect purity of immaculately observing [proper] discipline. {D83b} So how much more is this the case for the other qualities of bodhisattvas, such as the ten masteries? Indeed, it is to be said [here]:

Those who nourish discipline performed for their own sake, {P85a}  
Devoid of compassion for sentient beings with bad discipline,  
And possess the purity of the wealth of discipline [only for] their own  
nourishment—

Those noble ones are not called “those with pure discipline.”

Those who give rise to supreme compassion for others  
And adopt discipline support the livelihood of others,  
Just like fire, wind, water, and earth.  
They [truly] possess discipline, [but] others are [only] a likeness of  
that.

Now, for what purpose and based on what did the Bhagavān teach the three refuges?

For the purpose of the teacher, the teaching, and the disciples,  
The three refuges are taught  
With regard to those in the three yānas  
And those who have faith in the three activities. I.19

{J18} [The instruction that] “the Buddha is a refuge because of being the highest among humans”<sup>1200</sup> is taught and discussed for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the teacher, with regard to the persons in the bodhisattvayāna<sup>1201</sup> who are suitable to [attain] the state of the Buddha,

and those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the Buddha. [The instruction that] “the dharma is a refuge because of being the highest among what is free from attachment” is taught and discussed for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the teaching of the teacher, with regard to the persons in the pratyekabuddhayāna who are suitable to realize the profound dharma of dependent origination by themselves, and those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the dharma. [The instruction that] “the saṃgha is a refuge because of being the highest among assemblies” is taught and discussed for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the disciples who have well entered the teaching of the teacher, with regard to the persons in the śrāvakayāna who are suitable to realize the discourses that they heard from others, and {P85b} those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the saṃgha. {D84a}

In brief, through this, the Bhagavān taught and discussed these three refuges for those three purposes and with regard to the [above] six [kinds of] persons by distinguishing them from the standpoint of seeming [reality] so that sentient beings enter this [dharma] system in successive order.<sup>1202</sup>

Because of being abandoned, because of having a deceptive nature,  
 Because of being nonexistent, and because of being fearful,  
 The twofold dharma and the noble saṃgha  
 Are not the ultimate supreme refuge. I.20

The dharma is twofold: the dharma as teaching and the dharma as realization. Here, the dharma as teaching refers to reading [or reciting]<sup>1203</sup> the teachings, such as the sūtras, and it consists of the collections of the names, words, and letters [of the sūtras and so on]. [This dharma] is said to be like a raft,<sup>1204</sup> because it comes to its end through being clearly realized on the path.

The dharma as realization is twofold through being divided into cause and result. That is, [it consists of] the reality of the path and the reality of cessation, {J19} which refers to that through which it is realized and that which [is realized]. Here, the path is included in what has the characteristic of being conditioned. What is included in what has the characteristic of being conditioned has a deceptive and false nature; what has a deceptive and false nature is unreal; what is unreal is impermanent; and what is impermanent is not a [lasting] refuge. Also, according to the system of the śrāvakas, the cessation realized by that path consists of the mere nonexistence of

afflictions and suffering, just like the extinction of a lamp. But a nonexistence is not suitable to be either a refuge or a nonrefuge. {P86a}

“The *saṃgha*” is a term for the assemblies of those in the three *yānas*. They are always fearful because they take refuge in the *Tathāgata*, search for final deliverance, [still] have to learn [more] and have [many more] things to do, and are [only] approaching unsurpassable completely perfect awakening. How are they fearful? Even the arhats, who have terminated further existences [in *saṃsāra*], {D84b} did not destroy their latent tendencies and therefore are always and continuously immersed in a strong sense of fear of all formations [of *saṃsāra*], as if [being afraid] of an executioner with raised sword. Therefore, even they have not attained the ultimate and blissful final deliverance. [In general, what constitutes a genuine] refuge does not seek refuge [elsewhere]. Just as sentient beings without a refuge are frightened by this or that fear and consequently seek deliverance from those [fears], likewise, arhats have their [kind of] fear and, being frightened by that fear, consequently take refuge in the *Tathāgata*. Thus, since they have fear, they take refuge and undoubtedly seek for deliverance from that fear. Since they seek for deliverance from fear, they [still] have [more] to learn and have [many more] things to do with regard to destroying the basis of that fear. Since they [still] have [more] to learn, {J20} they are [only] approaching the attainment of the fearless supreme<sup>1205</sup> state, that is, unsurpassable completely perfect awakening. Therefore, since the [*saṃgha*] too is [only] a refuge that is a branch of the [ultimate refuge], it is not the ultimate refuge. Thus, these two refuges [the *dharma* and the *saṃgha*] are called “temporary refuges.” {P86b}

· Ultimately, however, the single<sup>1206</sup> refuge

Of the world is buddhahood

Because the sage possesses the body of the *dharma*

And because it is the consummation of the assembly. I.21

By virtue of the principle stated earlier, this [verse about the buddha's being the ultimate refuge explains the following]. Because the sage who is characterized by being unarisen and unceasing possesses the *kāya* of the *dharma* that is [characterized by]<sup>1207</sup> the two realities of purification<sup>1208</sup> and is free from attachment and because the assembly of those in the three *yānas* has [nothing but] the attainment of the consummate purity of the *dharmakāya* as its goal, {D85a} ultimately,<sup>1209</sup> [buddhahood] is the inexhaustible refuge, the permanent refuge, and the everlasting refuge,

which lasts as long as the end of time<sup>1210</sup> in this world without protection and refuge. That is, [the ultimate refuge] consists of the tathāgata arhats, the completely perfect buddhas. This instruction on the permanent, everlasting, peaceful, and eternal refuge should be understood in detail according to the *Āryaśrīmālā[devī]sūtra*.<sup>1211</sup>

**They are jewels because their appearance is difficult to encounter,  
Because they are stainless, because they possess power,  
Because they are the ornaments of the world,  
Because they are supreme, and because they are changeless. I.22**

In brief, these three that are called “Buddha,” “dharma,” and saṃgha” are said to be “jewels” by virtue of their resemblance to a jewel in six ways. That is, [they are jewels] by virtue of resembling [jewels] in that **their appearance is difficult to encounter** because those who have not acquired roots of virtue do not get a chance to meet them even during many eons. [They are also jewels] by virtue of resembling [jewels] in that **they are stainless** because they are free from all kinds of stains. [They are furthermore jewels] by virtue of resembling [jewels] in their power {P87a} because they are endowed with qualities of inconceivable power, such as the six supernatural knowledges. [They are likewise jewels] by virtue of resembling [jewels] in that **they are the ornaments of the world** because they are the causes of the splendid<sup>1212</sup> intentions of the entire world. [They are also jewels] by virtue of resembling [jewels] in that **they are supreme** [compared to] artificial jewels because they are supramundane. [Finally, they are jewels] by virtue of resembling [jewels] in that **they are changeless** through praise, blame, and so on, because their nature is unconditioned. {J21}

Following the discussion of the three jewels, [there follows] one verse about the source of mundane and supramundane purity, from whose existence the three jewels arise.

**Suchness with stains, the one without stains,  
Stainless buddha qualities, and the activity of the victors  
Are the objects of those who see the ultimate,  
From which the three splendid<sup>1213</sup> jewels arise.<sup>1214</sup> I.23**

What is elucidated by this?

The disposition of the three jewels  
 Is the object of those who see everything. {D85b}  
 It is fourfold and is inconceivable  
 For four reasons in due order I.24

Here,<sup>1215</sup> suchness with stains is the basic element that is not liberated from the cocoon of the afflictions, which is called “the tathāgata heart.” Stainless suchness is this very same [basic element] as it is characterized by the fundamental change<sup>1216</sup> on the buddhabhūmi, which is called “the dharmakāya of a tathāgata.” The stainless buddha qualities are the supramundane buddha attributes (such as the ten powers) within that very dharmakāya of a tathāgata that is characterized by the fundamental change. The activity of the victors {P87b} consists of the distinct unsurpassable activities of these very buddha attributes (such as the ten powers), continuing to give prophesying speeches about bodhisattvas in an endless, uninterrupted, and unceasing manner. According to their order, these four points are inconceivable for four reasons. Therefore, they are said to be “the object of omniscience.” For which four [reasons are they inconceivable]?

Since it is pure and yet associated with afflictions,  
 Since it is not afflicted and yet becomes pure,  
 Since its qualities are inseparable,  
 And since [its activity] is effortless and nonconceptual. I.25

Here, suchness with stains is pure and afflicted at one and the same time. This point is inconceivable because it is an object that is not even within the sphere of the pratyekabuddhas who have faith in the principle of the profound dharma. Therefore, {J22} [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Devī, these two dharmas are difficult to understand. It is difficult to understand that mind is pure by nature. It is difficult to understand that this very mind is proximately afflicted. Devī, those who are able to hear these two dharmas are only you or the bodhisattvas who are endowed with the great attributes. Devī, the remaining ones—all śrāvakas and {D86a} pratyekabuddhas—can understand these two dharmas only through confidence in the Tathāgata.<sup>1217</sup>

Now, the point that suchness without stains is originally not afflicted by stains [but] becomes pure later is [also] inconceivable. Therefore, [the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*] says:

The mind is luminous by nature. This is realized just as it is. Therefore, {P88a} it is said, “[The Tathāgata] fully awakened to completely perfect awakening through the prajñā that is characterized by having a single instant.”<sup>1218</sup>

Next, even on the level of ordinary beings who are absolutely afflicted, there exist the stainless buddha qualities that are without difference earlier and later by virtue of their nature of being inseparable [from the basic element]. This point is [likewise] inconceivable. Therefore, [the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra*] says:

Within the hosts of sentient beings, there is no sentient being whatsoever that is not pervaded by tathāgata wisdom in its entirety. However, through their discriminating clinging,<sup>1219</sup> they do not realize tathāgata wisdom. By virtue of becoming free from discriminating clinging, omniscient wisdom, which is self-arisen wisdom, becomes manifest in an unimpeded manner.<sup>1220</sup>

O son of the victor, it is as follows. Suppose there were a big canvas<sup>1221</sup> the size of the worldly realm that is the biggest chiliocosm in a trichiliocosm. On this big canvas the entire worldly realm that is the biggest chiliocosm in a trichiliocosm would be painted in its complete form. That is, the great ring of iron mountains would be painted in the size of the great ring of iron mountains.<sup>1222</sup> The great [golden] ground would be painted in the size of the great [golden] ground. The worldly realm of a dichiliocosm would be painted in the size of the worldly realm of a dichiliocosm, the worldly realm of a chiliocosm in the size of the worldly realm of a chiliocosm, the four-continent [worlds] in the size of the four-continent [world], the great oceans in the size of the great ocean, the continents of Jambū in the size of the continent Jambū, the continents of Pūrvavideha in the size of the continent Pūrvavideha {D86b}, the continents of Godāvārī in the size of the continent Godāvārī, the continents of Uttarakuru in the size of the continent Uttarakuru, {P88b} the [Mount] Sumerus in the size of Sumeru, {J23} the palaces of the gods living on the earth in the size of the palaces of the gods living on the earth, the palaces of the gods living in the desire

[realm] in the size of the palaces of the gods living in the desire [realm], and the palaces of the gods living in the form [realm] in the size of the palaces of the gods living in the form [realm]. [Thus,] this big canvas would have the size of the vast expanse of the worldly realm that is the biggest chiliocosm in a trichiliocosm. Then, this big canvas would be inserted into a single particle [the size] of the minutest particle. Likewise, just as this big canvas would be inserted into a single particle [the size] of the minutest particle, big canvases of that same size would be inserted inside all particles [the size] of the minutest particle without exception.<sup>1223</sup>

Then, there would appear some learned person, clever, intelligent, wise, and endowed with the profound investigative skill pertinent to [these canvases] here. His divine eye would be perfectly pure and lucid. With that divine eye, he would look [and think], “This big canvas of such a nature stays here in such a limited single particle [the size] of the minutest particle. It does not sustain any sentient being.” So he would think, “Breaking apart this particle [the size] of the minutest particle with the strength and power of great vigor, I shall make this big canvas into what sustains the whole world.” Giving rise to the strength and power of great vigor, he would break apart that particle [the size] of the minutest particle with a tiny vajra and, according to his intention, make that big canvas into what sustains the whole world. Just as for one, he would do the same for all minutest particles without exception.

Likewise, O son of the victor, tathāgata wisdom, {P89a} the immeasurable wisdom {D87a} that is the wisdom that sustains all sentient beings, pervades the mind streams of all sentient beings in its entirety. All these mind streams of sentient beings are also as immeasurable<sup>1224</sup> as tathāgata wisdom. Nevertheless, naive beings, who are bound by discriminating clinging, {J24} do not know, cognize, realize, and perceive this tathāgata wisdom. Therefore, the Tathāgata, after having seen the states of all sentient beings [whose nature is the] dharmadhātu<sup>1225</sup> with unobstructed tathāgata wisdom, resolves to be a teacher. [He thinks,] “What a pity! These sentient beings do not realize tathāgata wisdom, just as it is, [though] they are pervaded by this tathāgata wisdom. Through teaching them the noble path, I shall remove all the fetters of these sentient beings that they create through discrimination so that they, by themselves, undo the big knot of discrimination through adopting the power of that noble path<sup>1226</sup> and then recognize<sup>1227</sup> that tathāgata wisdom [in themselves] and attain equality with the Tathāgata.”



[Accordingly,] through the teaching of the path of the Tathāgata, they remove all fetters created by discrimination. In those in whom all fetters created by discrimination have been removed, this immeasurable tathāgata wisdom becomes what sustains the entire world.<sup>1228</sup>

Now, the activity of the victors operates for sentient beings everywhere simultaneously at all times, **effortlessly, nonconceptually, and flawlessly** in the respectively appropriate manner in accordance with the intentions of [sentient beings] and {P89b} in accordance with how they are to be guided.<sup>1229</sup> This point is inconceivable. Therefore, [the *Dhāraṇīśvararāja-sūtra*] says:

Though tathāgata activity<sup>1230</sup> is immeasurable, in order to introduce sentient beings [to it] in just a brief form, it is taught as if having some measure. {D87b} However, O son of noble family, the true tathāgata activity of the Tathāgata is immeasurable, inconceivable, unknowable by the entire world, indescribable by words, difficult to accomplish by others, abiding {J25} in all buddha realms, entailing equality with all buddhas, beyond all activities with effort, nonconceptual due to being equal to space, and without any difference due to being the activity of the dharmadhātu.<sup>1231</sup>

After [the sūtra's] having given the example of the pure beryl, [tathāgata activity] is taught in detail as follows:

Son of noble family, by this specification, inconceivable tathāgata activity is to be understood as entailing equality, being without blame in all respects, being related to the three times,<sup>1232</sup> and not interrupting the lineage of the three jewels. Abiding in this inconceivable tathāgata activity, the Tathāgata never abandons the space[-like] nature of his body and yet displays it in all buddha realms. He does not abandon the inexpressible nature of his speech and yet teaches the dharma for sentient beings by way of concordant verbal representations. He is free from all focal objects of the mind and yet knows the activities and intentions of the minds of all sentient beings.<sup>1233</sup> {P90a}

As for what is to be awakened, awakening,  
Its branches, and what causes awakening, in due order,

One point is the cause and three  
Are the conditions for its purity. I.26

Due to these four topical points comprising everything to be known, the first one is to be regarded as the point of what is to be awakened. Awakening refers to the awakening of that [which is to be awakened]—the second point of awakening. The buddha qualities serve as the branches of awakening—the third point of the branches of awakening. {D88a} It is these very branches of awakening that cause the awakening of others—the fourth point of what causes awakening.<sup>1234</sup> Thus, the presentation of the disposition of the three jewels should be understood based on these four points in terms of being the state of a cause and [its three] conditions.

Here, the first one among these four points, due to its being the seed of the supramundane attributes, should be understood as the cause for the arising of the three jewels, which is by virtue of its becoming pure based on one's personal mental engagement in a proper manner. Thus, "one point is the cause." How is it that the [other] three [points] are conditions? A tathāgata, upon having fully awakened to unsurpassable completely perfect awakening, performs the thirty-two kinds of tathāgata activities through the buddha qualities (such as the ten powers). Thus, by virtue of the voice of someone else [this tathāgata], the [obscured tathāgata heart in certain beings] becomes pure. Based on that, [the latter three points] should be understood as the conditions for the arising of the three jewels. Thus, "three are the conditions."

One should understand that, hereafter, the instruction on the detailed analysis of these four points [will be given] gradually by the remainder of the text.

Now, with regard to suchness with stains, it is said that "all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart."<sup>1235</sup> {P90b} By virtue of which purport is that [said]? {J26}

Since buddha wisdom enters into the multitudes of beings,  
Since its stainlessness is nondual by nature,  
And since the buddha disposition is metaphorically referred to by  
[the name of] its fruition,  
All beings are said to possess the buddha [heart].<sup>1236</sup> I.27

Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates,  
Since suchness is undifferentiable,

And because of the disposition,  
All beings always possess the buddha heart. I.28

In brief, it is in a threefold sense that the Bhagavān spoke of “all sentient beings always possessing the tathāgata heart.”<sup>1237</sup> {D88b} That is, [he spoke of this] in the sense that the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata radiates in [or into] all sentient beings, in the sense that the suchness of the Tathāgata is undifferentiable [from the suchness of beings], and in the sense that the tathāgata disposition really exists<sup>1238</sup> [in these beings].<sup>1239</sup> These three topical points will be taught [in detail] below [through nine examples] according to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*.<sup>1240</sup> Prior to that, however, the topic [consisting of these three points] is pointed out in all its aspects in the sense in which it is invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha].<sup>1241</sup> It is based on this that I shall discuss it [now, beginning with] a synopsis.<sup>1242</sup>

In terms of nature and cause, fruition, function, endowment,  
manifestation,  
Phases, all-pervasiveness,  
Ever-changeless qualities,<sup>1243</sup> and inseparability,  
The topic in mind, the ultimate basic element, should be understood.  
I.29

In brief, the presentation of the tathāgata element, the object of the ultimate wisdom of true reality,<sup>1244</sup> should be understood by having in mind ten topics. Which are these ten topics? They are as follows: (1) the topic of the nature, (2) the topic of the cause, (3) the topic of the fruition, (4) the topic of the function, (5) the topic of endowment, (6) the topic of manifestation, (7) the topic of the distinction through phases, (8) the topic of all-pervasiveness, (9) the topic of changelessness, and (10) the topic of inseparability.

Now, {P91a} [there is] a verse in terms of (1) the topic of the nature and (2) the topic of the cause.

It is always unafflicted by nature,  
Just like a pure jewel, space, and water.  
It comes to life<sup>1245</sup> through having faith in the dharma,  
Supreme prajñā, samādhi, and compassion. I.30

{J27} What is taught by the first half of this verse here?

By virtue of its nature of power,  
 Being unchanging, and being moist,  
 It resembles the qualities  
 Of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water. I.31

Now, these three [points] were already mentioned above.<sup>1246</sup> According to the order of these three, the tathāgata element should be understood to resemble the qualities of the purity of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water in terms of its specific characteristics and its general characteristics. To begin with the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata here, in terms of its specific characteristic that is its nature of [having] the power to fulfill what one wishes for and so on, {D89a} it is to be understood as resembling a wish-fulfilling jewel. As for suchness, in terms of its specific characteristic that is its nature of being unchanging, it is to be understood as resembling space. As for the tathāgata disposition, in terms of its specific characteristic that is its nature of moistening sentient beings [through its] compassion, it is to be understood as resembling water. As for all [three points] here, in terms of the general characteristic [of the tathāgata element] that is its natural purity of always being absolutely unafflicted by nature, it is to be understood as resembling the quality that is the [natural] purity of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water.

Now, what is taught by the latter half of verse [I.30]?

Hostility toward the dharma, views about a self,  
 Fear of saṃsāra's suffering,  
 And indifference about the welfare of sentient beings—  
 These are the four obscurations I.32 {P91b}

Of those with great desire,<sup>1247</sup> tīrthikas,  
 Śrāvakas, and self-arisen [buddhas],  
 The causes of purity are the four dharmas  
 Of having faith and so forth. I.33

In brief, one finds three kinds of sentient beings within the host of sentient beings: (1) those who crave for [saṃsāric] existence, (2) those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence, and (3) those who do not crave for either. Here, (1) those who crave for [saṃsāric] existence are to be known as twofold. {J28} (1a) Those sentient beings who are hostile toward the path to liberation and have no disposition for [attaining] parinirvāṇa only

desire saṃsāra but not nirvāṇa. (1b) Some who do follow this dharma of ours,<sup>1248</sup> [but] have fallen into the ways of those [who are hostile toward the dharma], dislike the dharma of the mahāyāna. With reference to them, the Bhagavān said [in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*]:

I am not their teacher; nor are they my śrāvakas. Śāriputra, I say that they are greatly filled with darkness, proceeding from one darkness into another darkness, from gloom into greater gloom.<sup>1249</sup>

Next, (2) those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence are [also] twofold: (a) those who have entered what is not the means [for liberation] and {D89b} (b) those who have entered these means. Here, (2a) those who have entered what is not the means [for liberation] are again threefold. (2aa) Those who are outside of this [dharma] of ours are the many different kinds of tīrthikas who are other [than us], such as the Carakas,<sup>1250</sup> Parivrājakas,<sup>1251</sup> and Nirgranthas.<sup>1252</sup> (2ab) As for those who follow this dharma of ours [but] whose conduct accords with these [tīrthikas], though they have confidence [in the dharma], they cling to [views] that are difficult to grasp.<sup>1253</sup> Who are these [people]? They are those who have views about the person [as being a self] and lack faith in the ultimate.<sup>1254</sup> About them, the Bhagavān said:

Those who do not have confidence in emptiness are not different from the tīrthikas.

(2ac) For those who have views about emptiness and are full of pride [about that], when they are taught emptiness,<sup>1255</sup> this very emptiness, which is in fact the door to liberation in this [dharma] of ours, becomes a [wrong] view.<sup>1256</sup> {P92a} With respect to them, [the Bhagavān] said [in the *Kāśyapaparivarta*]:

O Kāśyapa, a view about the person that has the size of Sumeru is indeed preferable to the view of emptiness of those who are proud of it.<sup>1257</sup>

(2b) Those who have entered the means [for liberation] are again twofold: (a) those who belong to the śrāvakayāna and (b) those who belong to the pratyekabuddhayāna. [Both] proceed on the set way of what is rightful.

(3) As for those who do not crave for either [saṃsāric existence or freedom from it], they are those sentient beings with supremely sharp faculties who are perfectly grounded in the mahāyāna. They neither desire saṃsāra (like those with great desire), nor do they fall into what is not the means [for liberation] (like the tīrthikas and so on), nor do they enter [any limited] means [for liberation] (like śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas). Rather, being those who have entered the path to attain the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, their motivation [is to attain] the nonabiding nirvāṇa, their activities are based on saṃsāra without [however] being afflicted [by it], and their fundamental purity lies in being firmly grounded in compassion and the superior intention.<sup>1258</sup> {J29}

Here, (1) those sentient beings who crave for [saṃsāric] existence (those with great desire and those who follow this dharma of ours [but] have fallen into the ways of those [with great desire]) are called “the group of sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is mistaken.”<sup>1259</sup> {D90a} (2a) Those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence but have entered what is not the means [for liberation] are called “the group of sentient beings [whose disposition] is uncertain.” (2b) Those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence and have entered the means [for liberation] as well as (3) those who crave for neither [saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa] and have entered the path to attain the equality [of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa] are called “the group of sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is correct.”

Now, apart from those sentient beings who are firmly grounded in the mahāyāna and proceed in an unobscured manner,<sup>1260</sup> [all] other sentient beings [can be divided into] {P92b} the following [four kinds]—those with great desire, tīrthikas, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas. In these [four groups], there operate four [kinds of] obscurations with regard to not realizing and not perceiving the tathāgata element. What are these four [obscurations]? They are as follows. Hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma is the obscuration of those with great desire, whose remedy is a bodhisattva’s cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna dharma. Views about a self with regard to phenomena is the obscuration of the tīrthikas who are other [than us], whose remedy is a bodhisattva’s cultivation of prajñāpāramitā. The notion of suffering, that is, the fear of suffering in saṃsāra, is the obscuration of those belonging to the śrāvakayāna, whose remedy is a bodhisattva’s cultivation of samādhis such as the Sky Treasure. To turn away from the welfare of sentient beings or indifference about the welfare of sentient beings is the obscuration of those belonging to the pratyekabuddhayāna,

whose remedy is a bodhisattva's cultivation of great compassion. These are the four kinds of obscurations of the four kinds of sentient beings. Having cultivated their four remedies (having faith [in the mahāyāna dharma] and so forth), bodhisattvas attain the supreme purity of the dharmakāya, which is the unsurpassable actuality. Those who possess these four causes of accomplishing purity become children of the dharma king in the family of the tathāgatas. How is that? {D90b}

Those whose seed is the faith in the supreme yāna,  
 Whose mother is the prajñā that gives birth to the buddha qualities,  
 {J30}  
 Whose womb is blissful samādhi, and whose nanny is compassion  
 Are the children who take after the sages. I.34

{P93a} Now, [there is] a verse in terms of (3) the topic of the fruition and (4) the topic of the function [of the tathāgata heart].

The fruition consists of the pāramitās that are  
 The qualities of purity, self, bliss, and permanence.  
 It has the function of being weary of suffering  
 As well as striving and aspiring to attain peace. I.35

What is taught by the first half of this verse here?

In brief, the fruition of those [causes]  
 Is characterized by being the remedies  
 That counteract the four kinds of  
 Mistakenness about the dharmakāya. I.36

The four dharmas such as having faith [in the mahāyāna dharma were described] as the causes of the purity of the tathāgata element. In brief, the fruition of those [four causes] should be regarded, in due order and by virtue of their being the remedies that counteract the four kinds of mistakenness, as the four kinds of pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata.

Here, the notion that impermanent entities such as form are permanent, the notion that [entities entailing] suffering are blissful, the notion that [entities] lacking a self have a self, and the notion that impure [entities] are pure are called "the fourfold mistakenness." The fourfold unmistakenness

should be understood by way of the opposites of those [four notions]. What is this fourfold [unmistakenness]? It consists of the notion that entities such as form are impermanent, the notion that they [entail] suffering, the notion that they lack a self, and the notion that they are impure. These [notions] are called “the opposite of the fourfold mistakenness.” In turn, these [opposites of the fourfold unmistakenness] are meant here to be mistakennesses with regard to the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, which has the characteristics of being permanent and so on. By virtue of being the remedies for that [latter mistakenness, there is] the presentation of the four kinds of pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, that is, the pāramitā of permanence, the pāramitā of bliss, {P93b} the pāramitā of a self, and the pāramitā of purity. This passage {D91a} is to be understood in detail according to the [*Śrīmālādevī*]sūtra:

Bhagavan, sentient beings are mistaken about the five appropriating skandhas that they have taken on. They entertain the notion that what is impermanent is permanent, the notion that what is suffering is bliss, the notion that what lacks a self has a self, and the notion that what is impure is pure. Bhagavan, even all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are mistaken about the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, which has not been seen by the wisdom of emptiness before and is the object of omniscient wisdom [alone].<sup>1261</sup> {J31} Bhagavan, those sentient beings who<sup>1262</sup> entertain the notion of permanence, the notion of bliss, the notion of a self, and the notion of purity are the legitimate heart sons of the Bhagavān. Bhagavan, these sentient beings are unmistaken. Bhagavan, these sentient beings have the correct view. For what reason is that so? Bhagavan, this dharmakāya of the Tathāgata is indeed the pāramitā of permanence, the pāramitā of bliss, the pāramitā of a self, and the pāramitā of purity. Those sentient beings who see this dharmakāya of the Tathāgata in that way see correctly. Those who see correctly are the legitimate heart sons of the Bhagavān.<sup>1263</sup>

The reverse order of these four pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata should be understood by way of the order of the [above-mentioned four] causes [of purity]. Here, (1) by way of being the opposite of those with great desire who are hostile toward the mahāyāna dharma {P94a} taking delight in impure saṃsāra, the attainment of the pāramitā of purity should be regarded as the fruition of bodhisattvas’ having cultivated faith in the mahāyāna dharma.



(2) By way of being the opposite of the tīrthikas, who are other [than us] and regard the five appropriating skandhas as a self, taking delight in clinging to a nonexistent self, {D91b} the attainment of the pāramitā of the supreme self should be regarded as the fruition of [bodhisattvas'] having cultivated prajñāpāramitā. Thus, all tīrthikas, who are other [than us], claim that [certain] entities such as form, which do not have the nature of that [which they appear as], are the self. [However,] since these entities as they are apprehended by those [tīrthikas] are deceiving<sup>1264</sup> in terms of the characteristic of being a self, they never are a self. On the other hand, the Tathāgata has attained the pāramitā of the supreme lack of self of all phenomena through the wisdom of [realizing] true reality just as it is. Since this lack of self, just as it is seen by the [Tathāgata], is undeceiving in terms of its characteristic of not being a self, it is taken to be a self at all times. [Thus, here,] it is the very lack of self that is referred to as "self,"<sup>1265</sup> just as [the prajñāpāramitā sūtras] speak of "abiding in a nonabiding manner."

(3) By way of being the opposite of those who belong to the śrāvakayāna, who are afraid of the suffering of saṃsāra, {J32} taking delight in the mere pacification of saṃsāric suffering, the attainment of the pāramitā of all mundane and supramundane bliss should be regarded as the fruition of [bodhisattvas'] having cultivated samādhis such as the Sky Treasure.

(4) By way of being the opposite of those who belong to the pratyekabuddhayāna, who are indifferent about the welfare of sentient beings, taking delight in dwelling in solitude, {P94b} the attainment of the pāramitā of permanence should be regarded as the fruition of [bodhisattvas'] having cultivated great compassion because [bodhisattvas] are always and without interruption consumed by their desire<sup>1266</sup> for the welfare of sentient beings for as long as saṃsāra exists.

Thus, in due order, the fourfold cultivation of faith, prajñā, samādhi, and compassion by bodhisattvas accomplishes the fruition that is called "the four kinds of pāramitās that are the qualities of purity, self, bliss, and permanence in the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata." By virtue of these [pāramitās], the Tathāgata said, "having reached the full extent of the dharmadhātu, extending to the limits of the element of space, {D92a} and lasting until the end of time."<sup>1267</sup> Through having cultivated faith in the supreme dharma of the mahāyāna, the Tathāgata attained the supreme state of the utterly pure dharmadhātu. Therefore, he accomplished the supreme dharmadhātu. Through having cultivated prajñāpāramitā, [the Tathāgata] perfectly realized the space-like lack of self of the world [that consists] of sentient beings and their container. Through having cultivated samādhis

such as the Sky Treasure, he displays his mastery over being the supreme lord of dharma everywhere. For the two reasons [presented in the last two sentences, the Tathāgata] extends to the limits of the element of space. Through having cultivated great compassion, [the Tathāgata] is endowed with compassion for all sentient beings beyond the limits of time. It is based on this that [the Tathāgata] lasts until the end of time.

Now, even though they abide in the uncontaminated basic element, for arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have attained the [ten] masteries,<sup>1268</sup> there are four obstructions to acquiring the four pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata. {P95a} These are [the obstructions] that have (1) the characteristic of a condition, (2) the characteristic of a cause, (3) the characteristic of arising, and (4) the characteristic of perishing.

Here, (1) [the obstruction] that has the characteristic of a condition [refers to] the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, similar to ignorance [being the condition] of [karmic] formations.<sup>1269</sup> (2) [The obstruction] that has the characteristic of a cause [refers to] the uncontaminated karma that is conditioned by the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance and is similar to the [karmic] formations [of ordinary beings]. (3) [The obstruction] that has the characteristic of arising [refers to] the occurrence of three kinds of bodies<sup>1270</sup> that are of mental nature and are caused by the uncontaminated karma that is conditioned by the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, {J33} which is similar to the occurrence of the three [kinds of saṃsāric] existences caused by the contaminated karma that is conditioned by the four appropriating factors.<sup>1271</sup> (4) [The obstruction] that has the characteristic of perishing [refers to] the death that is an inconceivable transformation<sup>1272</sup> and is conditioned by the occurrence of the [above-mentioned] three kinds of bodies that are of mental nature, similar to aging and death being conditioned by birth.

Here, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have attained the masteries {D92b} have not relinquished the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance that represents the foundation of all proximate afflictions. Therefore, they have not attained the excellent final pāramitā of the purity of all latent tendencies<sup>1273</sup> of the foul-smelling afflictive stains.<sup>1274</sup> On account of this ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, they [still] possess subtle [kinds of] engaging in [certain] reference points of characteristics. Therefore, they have not attained the pāramitā of self that is utterly without any [mental] formations. On account of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance and the uncontaminated karma that is triggered

by the subtle engagement in [certain] reference points of characteristics as conditioned by this ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, there is the arising of the [seemingly physical] skandha that has a mental nature. Therefore, they have not attained the pāramitā of the utter bliss of such [a skandha's] having ceased. For as long as {P95b} they do not perceive the tathāgata element, which becomes apparent<sup>1275</sup> due to the cessation of all afflictiveness in terms of affliction, karma, and birth without exception, they are not free from the death that is an inconceivable transformation. Therefore, they have not attained the pāramitā of permanence that is the state of being absolutely unchanging.

Here, the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance is similar to the afflictiveness of affliction. The formations of uncontaminated karma are similar to the afflictiveness of karma. The occurrence of the three kinds of bodies that are of a mental nature and the death that is an inconceivable transformation are similar to the afflictiveness of birth. This passage is to be understood in detail according to the [Śrīmālādevī]sūtra:

O Bhagavan, the three [kinds of saṃsāric] existences arise [through] being caused by the contaminated karma that is conditioned by the [four] appropriating factors. Likewise, Bhagavan, {J34} the three bodies of a mental nature of arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have attained the masteries arise [through] being caused by the uncontaminated karma that is conditioned by the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. Bhagavan, the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance is the condition<sup>1276</sup> for the arising of these three bodies of a mental nature on the three levels [of arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas] and for the origination of uncontaminated karma.<sup>1277</sup> {D93a}

Therefore, in these three bodies of a mental nature of arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have attained the masteries, there are no pāramitās that are the qualities of purity, self, bliss, and permanence. Hence, [the Śrīmālādevīsūtra] says:

This dharmakāya of the Tathāgata is indeed the pāramitā of permanence, the pāramitā of bliss, the pāramitā of a self, and the pāramitā of purity.<sup>1278</sup>

Because the [dharmakāya] is naturally pure {P96a}  
And free from latent tendencies, it is pure.

It is the supreme self because the reference points  
Of self and no-self are at peace.<sup>1279</sup> I.37

It is bliss because the skandha of a mental nature  
And its causes have come to an end.  
It is permanent because the equality  
Of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is realized. I.38

In brief, the pāramitā of purity in terms of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata should be understood through two reasons—by virtue of the natural purity that is its general characteristic and by virtue of the purity of being stainless that is its particular characteristic. [Its] pāramitā of self should [also] be understood through two reasons—by virtue of being free from the reference points of a self due to having abandoned the extreme of the tīrthikas and by virtue of being free from the reference points of no-self due to having abandoned the extreme of the śrāvakas. [Its] pāramitā of bliss should [likewise] be understood through two reasons—by virtue of having overcome [all] linking [to saṃsāra] through latent tendencies due to having relinquished all aspects of the origin of suffering and by virtue of perceiving the cessation of the skandha<sup>1280</sup> of a mental nature due to perceiving all aspects of the cessation of suffering. [Its] pāramitā of permanence should [also] be understood through two reasons—by virtue of not falling into the extreme of extinction due to not denying impermanent saṃsāra and by virtue of not falling into the extreme of eternity due to not superimposing<sup>1281</sup> permanent nirvāṇa. As [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, if someone were to see formations as being impermanent, this would be their view of extinction. {J35} It would not be their correct view. Bhagavan, {D93b} if someone were to see nirvāṇa as being permanent, this would be their view of eternity. It would not be their correct view.<sup>1282</sup>

By virtue of this introduction to the principle of the dharmadhātu, it is said that, ultimately, saṃsāra itself is nirvāṇa, {P96b} because [tathāgatas] realize the nonabiding nirvāṇa in which neither [saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa] are conceived.<sup>1283</sup>

Moreover, they are free from being close to, or distant from, all sentient beings without difference for two reasons. Therefore, what is explained [here] is the mere attainment of the abode of nonabiding. For which two

[reasons is that so]? [In this world] here, without difference, bodhisattvas are not close to any sentient beings because they have relinquished all latencies of craving without exception due to their *prajñā*. Nor are they distant [from sentient beings] because they do not abandon them due to their great compassion. This is the means for attaining the completely perfect awakening that has the nature of being nonabiding. By virtue of having relinquished all latencies of craving without exception due to their *prajñā*, bodhisattvas are intent on passing into *nirvāṇa* for their own benefit and do not remain<sup>1284</sup> in *saṃsāra* like those who do not have the disposition for passing into *parinirvāṇa*. By virtue of not abandoning suffering sentient beings due to their great compassion, they make efforts in entering *saṃsāra* for the benefits of others and do not remain in *nirvāṇa* like those who have the disposition of solely seeking [the personal] peace [of *nirvāṇa*].<sup>1285</sup> In this way, these two dharmas [*prajñā* and compassion] are taught<sup>1286</sup> to be the fundamental ground for [attaining] unsurpassable awakening:

With *prajñā*, they cut through all self-cherishing without exception.  
Because they cherish sentient beings, those full of compassion do not  
approach peace.

Relying in this way on intelligence and compassion, the two means  
for awakening,

The noble ones approach neither *saṃsāra*<sup>1287</sup> nor *nirvāṇa*. I.39

Now, what is taught by the latter half of verse [I.35] about (4) the topic of function, which was referred to above [in that verse]?

If the buddha element did not exist,  
There would be no weariness of suffering,  
Nor would there be the wish, striving, {D94a}  
And aspiration for *nirvāṇa*. I.40

{J36} As [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says: {P97a}

Bhagavan, if the tathāgata heart did not exist, there would be no weariness of suffering nor the wish, striving, and aspiration for *nirvāṇa*.<sup>1288</sup>

Here, in brief, even in those sentient beings who have [the dispositions that are] certain in terms of what is mistaken, the buddha element, which is the disposition for purity, readily procures this twofold function. It gives

rise to weariness of saṃsāra based on seeing the flaws of suffering, and it produces the longing, wish, striving, and aspiration for nirvāṇa based on seeing the benefits of [its] bliss. Here, “longing” [means] “desire.”<sup>1289</sup> As for “wish,” “striving,” and “aspiration,”<sup>1290</sup> “wish” [refers to] not being cowardly<sup>1291</sup> about one’s desired aim. “Striving” [means] to search for the means to attain one’s desired aim. “Aspiration” [refers to] applying one’s intention and mind to one’s desired aim.<sup>1292</sup>

This seeing of the flaws of suffering and the qualities of happiness  
 In [saṃsāric] existence and nirvāṇa  
 Occurs [only] when the disposition exists  
 Because it does not [occur] in those without the disposition.<sup>1293</sup> I.41

That persons with pure qualities<sup>1294</sup> see the flaws of suffering in saṃsāra and see the qualities of happiness in nirvāṇa occurs [only] when the disposition exists. [Thus,] this [seeing] is not something without a cause or something without a condition. For what reason [is this so]?<sup>1295</sup> If such [seeing] could happen without the disposition, without a cause, without a condition, and without entailing the termination of wrongdoing,<sup>1296</sup> it would also happen in those with great desire who are without the disposition for nirvāṇa. [However, this seeing] does not occur as long as [sentient beings] have not given rise to faith in the dharma of one of the three [yānas]—the disposition for being pure of adventitious stains<sup>1297</sup>—by way of bringing together the four wheels of relying on wise persons<sup>1298</sup> and so on.<sup>1299</sup> {P97b} Therefore, [the *Jñānālokālamkārasūtra*] says:

Therefore, after that, {D94b} the rays of wisdom<sup>1300</sup> of the orb of the sun of the Tathāgata fall upon the bodies of even those sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is mistaken, [thus benefiting them and,]<sup>1301</sup> due to producing the causes of future [happiness], {J37} making them thrive through virtuous dharmas.<sup>1302</sup>

Also, the statement [in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and others] that “those with great desire have the nature of absolutely not [attaining] parinirvāṇa” [means] that their hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma is the cause for their having great desire. [Thus,] this statement was made for the sake of turning [such people] away from their hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma, having in mind another time.<sup>1303</sup> Since the naturally pure disposition exists [in all sentient beings], no one can have the nature

of being absolutely impure. Therefore, having in mind that all sentient beings without difference are suitable to become pure, the Bhagavān said:

Though beginningless, [saṃsāra] entails an end.  
 What is naturally pure and consists of permanent dharmas  
 Is not seen since it is externally obscured by a beginningless cocoon,  
 Just as a golden image that is concealed.<sup>1304</sup>

Now, [there follows] a verse about (5) the topic of endowment.

Just like the ocean, [the disposition of the victors] is an inexhaustible  
 source  
 Of immeasurable jewels [in the form of its] qualities.  
 Just like a lamp, it is endowed with  
 Inseparable qualities by its nature.<sup>1305</sup> I.42

What is taught by the first half of this verse here?

Since the basic element consists of the dharmakāya,  
 As well as the wisdom and the compassion of the victor,  
 It is taught to be like the ocean  
 In terms of a vessel, jewels, and water. I.43

In the due order of [the following] three points, {P98a} the tathāgata element resembles the great sea in three ways. By virtue of that, the topic of endowment is to be understood in terms of [the tathāgata element's] being associated with [certain] causes. Which are these three points? They consist of [being associated with] (1) the cause of the purity of the dharmakāya, (2) the cause of the attainment of buddha wisdom, and (3) the cause of a tathāgata's great compassion's engaging [all beings]. {J38} (1) Here, the cause of the purity of the dharmakāya is to be regarded as the cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna [dharma]. {D95a} (2) The cause of the attainment of buddha wisdom is to cultivate the doors of prajñā and samādhi. (3) The cause of a tathāgata's great compassion's engaging [all beings] is a bodhisattva's cultivation of great compassion. Here, the cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna [dharma] resembles [the ocean's] being a [big] vessel because the jewels of prajñā and samādhi as well as the water of compassion, [all of which] are immeasurable and inexhaustible, are assembled in it. The cultivation of the doors of prajñā and samādhi

resembles the jewels [in this ocean] because it is nonconceptual and is endowed with qualities of inconceivable power.<sup>1306</sup> A bodhisattva's cultivation of compassion resembles the water [in this ocean] because it possesses the characteristic of the single taste that is its nature of supremely moistening [the mind streams of] all beings. [Here, the fact of] these three dharmas<sup>1307</sup> being associated with the three kinds of causes [mentioned above, that is], their being connected with them, is called "endowment."

Now, what is taught by the latter half of verse [I.42]?

**In the stainless foundation, the supernatural knowledges,  
Wisdom, and stainlessness<sup>1308</sup> are inseparable from suchness.  
Therefore, they are similar, respectively, to  
The light, heat, and color of a lamp.<sup>1309</sup> I.44**

In the due order of [the following] three points, the tathāgata element is similar to a lamp in three ways. By virtue of that, the topic of endowment is to be understood in terms of [the tathāgata element's] being associated with [certain] results. {P98b} Which are these three points? They consist of [being endowed with] (1) the supernatural knowledges, (2) the wisdom of the termination of contaminations, and (3) the termination of contaminations. Here, (1) the five supernatural knowledges resemble the light<sup>1310</sup> [of the flame of a lamp] because they have the characteristic of providing the approach to overcome the darkness of the antagonistic factors of the wisdom<sup>1311</sup> of experiencing [true] actuality. (2) The wisdom of the termination of contaminations resembles the heat [of the flame of a lamp] because it has the characteristic of providing the approach to consume the entire fuel of karma and afflictions without exception. (3) The termination of contaminations that is the change of the foundation<sup>1312</sup> resembles the color [of the flame of a lamp] because it has the characteristic of utterly stainless {D95b} and pure luminosity. {J39} Here, it is stainless by virtue of the afflictive obscurations' having been relinquished. It is pure by virtue of the cognitive obscurations' having been relinquished.<sup>1313</sup> It is luminous by virtue of not having the nature of these two<sup>1314</sup> adventitious [stains]. Thus, in brief, these seven dharmas in the mind streams of nonlearners (which consist of the [five] uncontaminated<sup>1315</sup> supernatural knowledges, wisdom, and relinquishment) [that exist] in the uncontaminated basic element are inseparable from each other, not distinct [from each other], and associated with the dharmadhātu in terms of [both] being equal.<sup>1316</sup> This is what is called "endowment" [here].



This example of a lamp with regard to the topic of endowment is to be understood in detail according to the [*Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa*]sūtra:

Śāriputra, it is as follows. A lamp is endowed with inseparable attributes and possesses indivisible qualities. That is, it is [inseparable] from its light, heat, and color. Or, a jewel is [inseparable] from its radiance, color, and shape. Likewise, Śāriputra, the dharmakāya that is taught by the Tathāgata is endowed with inseparable attributes and qualities that [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it], which [manifest] in the form of the attributes of a tathāgata that far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>1317</sup>

Now, [there follows] {P99a} a verse about (6) the topic of manifestation.

Manifesting differently as the suchness  
Of ordinary beings, noble ones, and perfect buddhas,<sup>1318</sup>  
The disposition of the victors is taught  
To sentient beings by those who see true reality. I.45

What is taught by this?

Ordinary beings are mistaken,  
Those who see reality are the opposite,  
And tathāgatas are most exactly unmistaken  
And free from reference points.<sup>1319</sup> I.46

With regard to introducing bodhisattvas to nonconceptual wisdom, it is taught in the prajñāpāramitā [sūtras] and others that the tathāgata element has the general characteristic of being the [natural] purity of the suchness of all phenomena. It should be understood that, in brief, the three [types of] persons engage it in three different ways—ordinary beings who do not see true reality,<sup>1320</sup> noble ones who see true reality, and tathāgatas who have reached the ultimate purity of seeing true reality.<sup>1321</sup> {D96a} That is, [these persons] are mistaken, unmistaken, {J40} and perfectly unmistaken and free from reference points, respectively. Here, “mistaken” refers to [the way of engaging] of naive beings because they are mistaken in terms of discrimination, mind, and view. “Unmistaken” refers to [the way of engaging] of the noble ones because they, being opposite [to naive beings], have relinquished such [mistakenness]. “Perfectly unmistaken and

free from reference points” refers to [the way of engaging] of completely perfect buddhas because they have overcome [all] afflictive and cognitive obscurations, including their latent tendencies.

Following this, the four topics other than this one should be understood as instructions on specific aspects of the topic of manifestation.<sup>1322</sup>

Now, [there follows] a verse about (7) the topic of the distinction [of the tathāgata heart] through the phases of those three [kinds of] persons. {P99b}

Its being impure, its being both impure and pure,  
 And its being completely pure, in due order,  
 Are expressed as “the basic element<sup>1323</sup> of sentient beings,”  
 “Bodhisattva,” and “tathāgata.” I.47

What is taught by this?

The basic element that consists of<sup>1324</sup> these  
 Six topics, such as [its] nature,  
 Is taught<sup>1325</sup> through three names  
 In its three phases. I.48

Any instructions on the uncontaminated basic element that the Bhagavān taught in detail in various dharma specifications are all contained, in brief, in these six topics of its nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, and manifestation. [This basic element] is to be understood [here] as being taught by way of teaching it, in due order, through three names in its three phases. That is, in its phase of being impure, it is [called] “the basic element of sentient beings.” In its phase of being both pure and impure, it is [called] “bodhisattva.” In its phase of being completely pure, it is [called] “tathāgata.” As the Bhagavān said [in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*]:

Śāriputra, this very dharmakāya, [when] covered by infinite millions of cocoons of afflictions, {D96b} carried away by the stream of saṃsāra, and circling through [all kinds of] births and deaths in the realms of saṃsāra without beginning and end, is called “the basic element of sentient beings.” Śāriputra, this very dharmakāya, [when] weary of the suffering in the stream of saṃsāra, free from all objects of desire, and {J41} engaging in conduct for the sake of awakening through the eighty-four thousand dharma collections that are contained in the ten pāramitās,

is called “bodhisattva.” Śāriputra, this very same dharmakāya, [when] liberated from all cocoons of afflictions, {P100a} having gone beyond all suffering, and being free from all stains of proximate afflictions, has become pure, completely pure, and abides in the supremely pure nature of phenomena. It has ascended to the level to be looked upon by all sentient beings, has attained the power over all levels of knowable objects that belongs to the person who is second to none, and has obtained the strength of mastering all phenomena, which has the nature of being unobscured and is unhindered. This is called “the Tathāgata Arhat, the completely perfect Buddha.”<sup>1326</sup>

[There follows] a verse about (8) the topic of the tathāgata element’s being all-pervading throughout these three phases.

Just as space with its character  
Of nonconceptuality is present everywhere,  
So the stainless basic element that is  
The nature of the mind is omnipresent. I.49

What is taught by this?

[Its] general characteristic is that it pervades  
Flaws, qualities, and perfection,  
Just as space [pervades] inferior, middling,  
And supreme kinds of forms. I.50

The nonconceptual nature of the mind of ordinary beings, noble ones, and perfect buddhas is their general characteristic. Therefore, it penetrates, enters, is the same as, is not different from, and is always present in these three phases of flaws, qualities, and the perfection of the purity of these qualities, {D97a} just as space [pervades] earthen, silver, and golden vessels [alike]. Therefore, immediately after the instruction on the three phases, that same [sūtra] says:

Therefore, Śāriputra, the basic element of sentient beings is not other and the dharmakāya is not other. {P100b} Nothing but the basic element of sentient beings is the dharmakāya, and nothing but the dharmakāya is the basic element of sentient beings. In terms of their meaning, they are not two. They are different in letter only.<sup>1327</sup>

[There follow] fourteen verses about (9) the topic of this tathāgata element's being unchangeable by being afflicted or purified, despite being all-pervading throughout those three phases. The [following verse] is to be understood as the synopsis [that precedes] these [fourteen verses].

Since it is adventitiously associated with flaws  
 And since it is naturally endowed with qualities,  
 Its true nature of being changeless  
 Is the same before as after. I.51

{J42} Since [the basic element] is adventitiously associated with the two flaws of afflictions and proximate afflictions during its phase of being impure and during its phase of being both impure and pure ([taught] by twelve [verses] and by one verse, respectively) and since it is naturally endowed during its phase of being completely pure with the inconceivable buddha qualities that far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number], are inseparable [from this basic element], and [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it]<sup>1328</sup> ([taught] by the fourteenth verse),<sup>1329</sup> it is explained that the tathāgata element has the true nature of being absolutely changeless before and later, just like the element of space.

Now, what are the twelve verses about the topic of [the tathāgata element's] being changeless during its phase of being impure?

Just as all-pervasive space  
 Is untainted due to its subtlety,  
 So this [basic element] that abides everywhere  
 In sentient beings is untainted. I.52

Just as the worlds everywhere  
 Are born and perish in space,  
 So the faculties arise and perish  
 In the unconditioned basic element. I.53

Just as space was never {D97b}  
 Burned before by any fires, {P101a}  
 So this [basic element] is not consumed  
 By the fires of death, sickness, and aging. I.54

Earth rests upon water, water on wind,  
 And wind on space,  
 [But] space does not rest on the elements  
 Of wind, water, or earth.<sup>1330</sup> I.55

Likewise, skandhas, dhātus, and faculties<sup>1331</sup>  
 Rest on karma and afflictions,

And karma and afflictions always rest on  
 Improper mental engagement. I.56

Improper mental engagement  
 Rests on the purity of the mind,  
 [But] this nature of the mind does not rest  
 On any of these phenomena. I.57

The skandhas, āyatanas, and dhātus  
 Should be understood as being like the element of earth.  
 The karma and afflictions of living beings  
 Should be understood as resembling the element of water. I.58 {J43}

Improper mental engagement  
 Is to be known as being like the element of wind.  
 Being without root and not resting [on anything],  
 [Mind's] nature is similar to space. I.59

Improper mental engagement  
 Rests on the nature of the mind,  
 And improper mental engagement  
 Produces karma and afflictions. I.60

Skandhas, āyatanas, and dhātus  
 Arise and disappear  
 From water-like karma and afflictions,  
 Just as the evolution and dissolution of the [world]. I.61

Lacking causes and conditions,  
 Lacking aggregation, and lacking

Arising, ceasing, and abiding,  
The nature of the mind resembles space. I.62

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is completely unchanging, just like space.  
It is not<sup>1332</sup> afflicted by adventitious stains,  
Such as desire, born from false imagination. I.63

How is the tathāgata element's true nature of being changeless in its phase of being impure explained through this example of space? It is described as follows:

The mass of water-like karma  
And afflictions does not generate it,  
Nor do the raging fires of death,  
Sickness, and aging consume it. I.64

{J44} {D98a} {P101b} The arising of the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas (which resemble [the earth of] the world) is conditioned by karma and afflictions (which resemble masses of water), which [in turn] originate from improper mental engagement (which resembles the wind maṇḍala).<sup>1333</sup> [However, their arising] does not generate the nature of the mind (which resembles the element of space). Likewise, the mass of the fires of death, sickness, and aging arises in order to destroy the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas (resembling [the earth of] the world) that rest on the aggregation of wind-like improper mental engagement and water-like karma and afflictions. [However,] it should be understood that [these fires] do not dissolve the [nature of the mind] either. Thus, in its phase of being impure, though the entire afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth arises and disappears (just as the world that is the container does), the unconditioned tathāgata element lacks arising and ceasing (just as space). Therefore, it is explained that its true nature is to be absolutely changeless.

This example of space, which refers to “The Introduction to the Light of dharma [called] ‘The Introduction to the Natural Purity [of the Mind],’”<sup>1334</sup> should be understood in detail according to the [*Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā*] *sūtra*:

Honorable friends,<sup>1335</sup> the afflictions are darkness,<sup>1336</sup> and the purity [of mind] is light. The afflictions are of weak power, and vipaśyanā

is powerful. The afflictions are adventitious, and the nature [of the mind] is fundamentally pure.<sup>1337</sup> The afflictions are imagination, and the nature [of the mind] lacks imagination. Honorable friends, it is as follows. This great earth rests on water, water rests on wind, and wind rests on space. But space does not rest [on anything]. Thus, among these four elements, the element of space is more powerful<sup>1338</sup> than the element of earth, the element of water, and the element of wind. It is stable, immovable, neither increasing<sup>1339</sup> nor decreasing, neither arising nor ceasing, and remains within its own natural state.

Now, those three elements entail arising and ceasing, {P102a} are unstable, and do not remain for a long time. It can be seen that they are changeable, but the element of space lacks any change whatsoever. Likewise, {J45} {D98b} the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas rest on karma and the afflictions, karma and afflictions rest on improper mental engagement, and improper mental engagement rests on the natural purity [of the mind]. Therefore, it is said, “The mind is luminous by nature, [but] it is afflicted by adventitious afflictions.”<sup>1340</sup>

Here,<sup>1341</sup> all these phenomena—improper mental engagement, karma and afflictions, as well as skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas—arise by way of being created by causes and conditions and they cease once they are separated<sup>1342</sup> from these causes and conditions. On the other hand, the nature [of the mind] lacks causes and conditions, lacks aggregation, and lacks arising and ceasing.

Here, the nature [of the mind] is like the element of space, improper mental engagement is like the element of wind, karma and afflictions are like the element of water, and the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas are like the element of earth. Therefore, it is said that all phenomena are completely devoid of any foundation<sup>1343</sup> and have the foundation of being without essence, the foundation of not abiding, the foundation of being pure,<sup>1344</sup> and the foundation of being without foundation.<sup>1345</sup>

It has [already] been stated that, in its phase of being impure, the nature [of the mind] resembles the element of space in terms of its characteristic of being changeless. In terms of their characteristic of being causes, the improper mental engagement that is based upon this [nature] resembles the element of wind, and karma and afflictions resemble the element of water. In terms of their characteristic of being the maturations [of improper mental engagement, karma, and afflictions], the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas that arise from them {P102b} resemble the element of earth.

[However,] it has not been stated that, in terms of their characteristic of being [like] a plague,<sup>1346</sup> the fires of death, sickness, and aging that are the causes of the destruction of the [skandhas and so on] resemble the element of fire. {D99a} [Thus,] the following is said [here]:

The three fires—the fire at the end of an age,  
 The one in hell, and ordinary [fire]—  
 Should be understood, in due order, as the examples<sup>1347</sup>  
 For the three fires of death, sickness, and aging. I.65

It should be understood that, in due order, death, sickness, and aging resemble fire for three reasons because [death] causes the six [inner] āyatanas to no [longer be] what is “mine,” because [sickness] causes one to experience various pains, and because [aging] causes the formations to ripen. [However,] the tathāgata element in its phase of being impure is not changed even through these three fires of death, sickness, and aging. With regard to this, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, “being dead” or “being born” are [merely] worldly conventions. {J46} Bhagavan, “being dead” refers to the cessation of the sense faculties. Bhagavan, “being born” refers to the manifestation of new faculties.<sup>1348</sup> However, Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is not born, does not age,<sup>1349</sup> does not die, does not transit, and does not [re]arise. For what reason is that? Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is beyond being an object that has the characteristic of being conditioned. [Rather,] it is permanent, everlasting, peaceful, and eternal.<sup>1350</sup>

Now, [there follows the one] verse about the topic of changelessness in the phase of [the tathāgata element’s] being both impure and pure.

Having realized the nature of this [basic element] just as it is,  
 Free from birth, death, sickness, and aging,  
 The intelligent, due to giving rise to compassion for beings,  
 Assume the predicaments of birth and so on despite lacking their  
 causes.<sup>1351</sup> I.66

What is taught by this?



The root of the sufferings of death, sickness,  
 And aging is removed by the noble ones.  
 [Such suffering] is born from the power of karma and afflictions,  
 [But] they lack it because they lack these.<sup>1352</sup> I.67

{P103a} The substantial cause of the fires of the sufferings of death, sickness, and aging during the phase of [the tathāgata element's] being impure is the fuel-like being born that is preceded by improper mental engagement, karma, and afflictions. In bodhisattvas during the phase of [the tathāgata element's] being both impure and pure, who have obtained a body of a mental nature, there is no appearance whatsoever [of such a cause]. {D99b} Because of that, it is understood that the others [the fires of death and so on that are the results of being born] do not blaze at all [either]. {J47}

Due to their character of compassion,  
 They display birth, death, aging, and sickness,  
 [But] they are beyond birth and so on  
 Because they see [the basic element] as it really is. I.68

Bodhisattvas who are united with roots of virtue,<sup>1353</sup> by relying on their mastery over [taking] birth as they wish, connect with [saṃsāra] in its three realms due to their compassion. They display birth, and they also display aging, sickness, and death. However, these phenomena of birth and so on do not exist in them because they see the lack of birth and the lack of arising of the basic element as it really is.

This phase of bodhisattvas is to be understood in detail according to the [*Sāgaramatipariṣcchā*]sūtra, which says:

“What are the afflictions that continue saṃsāra and are associated with roots of virtue? They are as follows. [Bodhisattvas] are never content with [their efforts in] seeking out the accumulation of merit, take birth in [saṃsāric] existence as they wish, earnestly desire to meet buddhas, are never weary of maturing sentient beings,<sup>1354</sup> make efforts in grasping the genuine dharma, exert themselves in whatever is to be done for sentient beings, are never separated from the motivation of desiring the dharma, and do not abandon their union with the pāramitās. Sāgaramati, these are the afflictions that are associated with roots of virtue, through which bodhisattvas connect [with saṃsāra], but they are never affected by the flaws of these afflictions.”

Then [Sāgaramati] said, {P103b} “Bhagavan, if these are roots of virtue, for what reason are they called ‘afflictions?’”

[The Bhagavān] answered, “Sāgaramati, it is as follows. It is through afflictions of such a nature that bodhisattvas connect with [saṃsāra] in its three realms. [Saṃsāra] in its three realms arises from afflictions. Now, {D100a} it is through their skill in means and through bringing about the power of their roots of virtue<sup>1355</sup> that bodhisattvas connect with [saṃsāra] in its three realms as they wish. Therefore, [these afflictions] are called ‘afflictions that are associated with roots of virtue.’ [They are called ‘afflictions’] because they connect [bodhisattvas] with [saṃsāra] in its three realms for as long as [these realms] exist, but not because they afflict their minds.

O Sāgaramati, suppose there were a distinguished<sup>1356</sup> householder’s only son, who is beloved, handsome, attractive, and lovely to behold. This boy, being a child, would fall into a pit of excrement while dancing. Then the family and the relatives<sup>1357</sup> of this boy would see that the boy has fallen into that pit of excrement. Upon seeing this, they would sigh deeply, wail, and lament. However, they would not [be able to] enter that pit of excrement {J48} and pull out the boy. Then the father of this boy would come to this place and see his only son fallen into the pit of excrement. Upon seeing that, out of [his fatherly] love, he would wish to seize<sup>1358</sup> his only son, thus hurrying to enter the pit of excrement very quickly without feeling any disgust and pulling him out.

Sāgaramati, this example is given in order to make a certain meaning understood. What is to be regarded as the meaning<sup>1359</sup> [illustrated by this example]? Sāgaramati, “the pit of excrement” is a designation for [saṃsāra] in its three realms. “The only son” is a designation for sentient beings. [For] bodhisattvas entertain the notion about all sentient beings that they are [like] their only son. “The mother and the relatives” {P104a} is a designation for the persons who belong to the yānas of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. [For] upon seeing sentient beings fallen into saṃsāra, they wail and lament, but they are not able to pull them out. “The distinguished householder” is a designation for bodhisattvas who are pure and stainless, possess a mind that is free from stains, and have directly realized the unconditioned dharma {D100b} [but still] link up with [saṃsāra] in its three realms for the sake of maturing sentient beings as they wish. Sāgaramati, such is the great compassion of bodhisattvas that they, despite being completely liberated from all fetters, again assume birth in [saṃsāric] existence. By virtue

of being skilled in means and being embraced by prajñā, they are not harmed<sup>1360</sup> by [their own] afflictions and teach the dharma to sentient beings in order to relinquish all the fetters of their afflictions.”<sup>1361</sup>

The instruction in this sūtra passage explains the [tathāgata element’s] phase of being both impure and pure because (1) bodhisattvas who have gained mastery for the sake of acting for the benefit of others connect with births in [saṃsāric] existence through the powers of their roots of virtue and of their compassion as they wish and (2) because they are not afflicted by this [saṃsāric existence] through the powers of their [skill in] means and prajñā.<sup>1362</sup>

Here, the manner in which<sup>1363</sup> bodhisattvas, upon having arrived at seeing the lack of birth and the lack of arising of the tathāgata element as it really is, attain that true nature of a bodhisattva should be understood in detail according to the [same] sūtra, which says:

Sāgaramati, look at phenomena’s lack of an essence, lack of a creator, lack of an identity, lack of a sentient being, lack of a life force, {J49} lack of a person, and lack of an owner. {P104b} Indeed, they are [simply] created as one wishes. Being thus created,<sup>1364</sup> they do not think or imagine. Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas who believe that phenomena are [thus] created<sup>1365</sup> do not give rise to weariness<sup>1366</sup> of any phenomenon. Their vision of wisdom is immaculate and pure, [seeing] that there is nothing here that causes benefit or harm. In this way, they know the true nature of phenomena as it really is and never cast off the armor of great compassion.

O Sāgaramati, suppose there were a priceless precious jewel of beryl, {D101a} excellently polished, excellently pure, and excellently stainless. Suppose [this jewel] would be thrown into the mud and would remain there for a thousand years. After these thousand years have passed, it would be pulled out of the mud and would be washed and cleansed. Having been rinsed well, perfectly purified, and perfectly polished, it would never lose its nature of being such a pure and stainless precious jewel.

Likewise, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas know the natural luminosity of the mind of sentient beings, but they [also] see that this [luminosity] is afflicted by adventitious proximate afflictions. Now, bodhisattvas think as follows, “These afflictions do not enter the natural luminosity of the mind of sentient beings. These afflictions are adventitious and are

produced by false imagination. I am able to teach the dharma in order to remove the adventitious afflictions of these sentient beings.” In this way, a fainthearted state of mind never arises in them. [Instead,] with much greater intensity than such [potential faintheartedness] and in an immediate manner, they give rise to the mind-set for liberating all sentient beings. They also think thus, “These afflictions do not have any power or strength. These afflictions are powerless and of weak power. They have no real foundation. {J50} These afflictions {P105a} are false imagination. When examined with proper mental engagement that accords with true reality, they do not stir.<sup>1367</sup> We should scrutinize them in such a way that they may never adhere to us [again]. Indeed, it is good when the afflictions do not adhere, but it is not [good] when they do adhere. If the afflictions were to adhere to me, how could I teach the dharma for the sake of relinquishing the fetters of the afflictions of sentient beings who are bound by the fetters of the afflictions? Look, we will not adhere to the afflictions, so we shall teach the dharma to sentient beings in order to relinquish their fetters of the afflictions. {D101b} On the other hand, in order to mature sentient beings, we should adhere to those afflictions that connect us with saṃsāra and are associated with roots of virtue.”<sup>1368</sup>

Here, “saṃsāra” implies the three bodies of a mental nature in the uncontaminated basic element that are a reflection of [the bodies of beings in] the three realms. This is [referred to as] saṃsāra because it is formed by uncontaminated roots of virtue. It is also [referred to as] nirvāṇa because it is not formed by contaminated karma and afflictions. With regard to this, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Therefore, Bhagavan, there is both conditioned and unconditioned saṃsāra. There is both conditioned and unconditioned nirvāṇa.<sup>1369</sup>

Now, this is called “the phase of being impure and pure” because it entails the operation of minds<sup>1370</sup> and mental factors in which the conditioned and the unconditioned are mixed. Furthermore, this [phase] is primarily presented [as occurring] on the [sixth] bodhisattvabhūmi, [called] “The Facing” for the following [two] reasons. [On this bhūmi,] by virtue of having cultivated the unobstructed pāramitā of prajñā, [bodhisattvas] face<sup>1371</sup> the supernatural knowledge of the termination of contaminations.<sup>1372</sup> [On the other hand,] by virtue of having cultivated great compassion, {P105b}

they do not directly realize [this supernatural knowledge of the termination of contaminations] in order to [remain in saṃsāra and] protect all the basic elements of sentient beings.

This is as described in the example of a city<sup>1373</sup> for the wisdom of the termination of contaminations.<sup>1374</sup>

Likewise, son of noble family, bodhisattvas give rise to the five supernatural knowledges through great effort, great vigor, and the firm cultivation of the superior intention. With their minds purified by dhyānas and supernatural knowledges, they come to face [the wisdom of] the termination of contaminations. [However,] by virtue of having generated the mind-set of great compassion, in order to protect all sentient beings, [instead of merging with the wisdom of the termination of contaminations, they consider sentient beings and therefore turn away from this wisdom and return, appearing even at the level of ordinary beings].<sup>1375</sup>

[Thus,] having trained in the wisdom of the termination of contaminations, {D102a} once again, {J51} by virtue of giving rise to unobstructed<sup>1376</sup> prajñā through their excellently purified mind, on the sixth [bhūmi] they come to face the termination of contaminations.<sup>1377</sup>

In this way, they attain mastery over the direct realization of the termination of contaminations on this bodhisattvabhūmi [called] “The Facing.” Therefore, this is explained as the bodhisattvas’ phase [of the tathāgata element’s] being pure. [On the other hand,] by virtue of their character of correctly engaging [in the tathāgata element] and due to their great compassion, thinking, “I shall establish others too in this same correct engagement,” they wish to protect sentient beings who engage in a wrong way. Having trained in the means for the bliss of peace without tasting it, out of consideration for sentient beings who are facing saṃsāra, [bodhisattvas] who are facing nirvāṇa<sup>1378</sup> rise from the dhyānas [that they cultivate] for the sake of completing [all] the factors [concordant with] awakening and again assume birth in the desire realm as they wish. Therefore, wishing to promote the welfare of sentient beings as quickly as possible, {P106a} they gain mastery over displaying the bodies of ordinary beings by way of [assuming] different births [even] in the forms of various animals. Therefore, this is explained as [the bodhisattvas’] phase [of the tathāgata element’s] being impure.

[There is also] another meaning of verse [I.66].

[Despite] their realization<sup>1379</sup> that this true nature  
Is changeless, the children of the victors  
Are [still] seen as [being subject to] birth and so on  
By those blinded by ignorance—this is amazing! I.69

Therefore, the means and the compassion  
Of the friends of beings are supreme—  
They have attained the sphere of the noble ones  
And yet show themselves in the sphere of naive beings. I.70

Being beyond all worlds,  
They do not move away from the world,  
Conducting themselves in the world for the sake of the world  
Without being tainted by worldly stains. I.71

Just as a lotus born in the water  
Is not tainted by the water,  
So they are born in the world  
But are untainted by worldly dharmas. I.72 {J52}

Their mind [set] on accomplishing [beneficial] activity  
Is perpetually blazing like fire,  
While always being immersed<sup>1380</sup> in  
The absorption of the dhyāna of peace. I.73

Through the power of the continuing force of previous [actions]  
{D102b}  
And through being free from all conceptions,  
They do not [need to] make any efforts  
For the sake of maturing living beings. I.74

Knowing who is to be guided in which way by what,  
They [guide] those [beings] in just that way  
Through teaching, the rūpakāyas,<sup>1381</sup>  
[Various forms of] conduct, and [daily] behaviors.<sup>1382</sup> I.75

In that way, without any effort  
 And with unobscured intelligence,  
 They always engage in the welfare of sentient beings  
 In this world that reaches to the limits of space. I.76

Having attained this status,  
 For the worlds, bodhisattvas are equal

To tathāgatas in terms of  
 Delivering sentient beings. I.77

[Actually,] however, the difference  
 Between bodhisattvas and a buddha  
 Is the difference between a particle and the earth  
 Or between [the water in] the hoofprint of an ox and the ocean. I.78

Among these ten verses, [the first] nine verses {P106b} [compare the purity of bodhisattvas] with the utter affliction [of those] below the [first] bodhisattvabhūmi “Supreme Joy,” and the tenth verse compares [the purity of bodhisattvas] with the utter purity [of buddhas who are] above the [tenth] bodhisattvabhūmi “Dharma Cloud.” In brief, [these verses] explain the [respective] purity and impurity of four [kinds of] bodhisattvas on the ten bodhisattvabhūmis. These four [kinds of] bodhisattvas are those who have given rise to [ultimate bodhi]citta for the first time, those who engage in the conduct [of bodhisattvas], those who are irreversible, and those who are prevented [from becoming a buddha] by [only] a single birth.<sup>1383</sup> Here, the first and second verses explain the characteristics of the purity of the qualities of bodhisattvas who have given rise to [ultimate bodhi]citta for the first time because on the bhūmi “Supreme Joy,” they realize for the first time the supramundane true nature that they had not seen before since beginningless time. The third and fourth verses {J53} explain the characteristics of the purity of the qualities of bodhisattvas who engage in the conduct [of bodhisattvas], starting from the bhūmi “The Stainless One” up through the bhūmi “Gone Afar”<sup>1384</sup> because they engage in untainted conduct. The fifth verse {D103a} explains the characteristics of the purity of the qualities of bodhisattvas who are irreversible on the bhūmi “The Immovable One” because they are firmly and uninterruptedly grounded in the samādhis<sup>1385</sup> that are the practices for attaining great awakening. The sixth, seventh, and eighth verses explain the characteristics of the purity

of the qualities of bodhisattvas who are prevented [from becoming a buddha] by [only] a single birth on the [tenth] bhūmi [called] “Dharma Cloud” because they have perfected<sup>1386</sup> all the means for accomplishing their own [welfare] and the welfare of others and thus are prevented from the attainment of unsurpassable, supreme, and fully perfect awakening by [only] a single last birth [after which they attain] the buddhabhūmi. The ninth and tenth verses, respectively, explain the lack of difference and the difference between the purity of the qualities of bodhisattvas who have reached the culmination of [all the means] for the welfare of others and their own welfare and [the purity of the qualities of] tathāgatas.<sup>1387</sup> {P107a}

Now, [there follows] the verse about the topic of changelessness in the phase of [the tathāgata element’s] being completely pure.

[The tathāgata element] is of unchanging character because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.<sup>1388</sup>

It is the refuge of the world because it has no end in time.

It is always nondual because it is nonconceptual.

It also has the nature of indestructibility because its nature is to be uncreated. I.79

What is taught by this?

It is not born, nor does it die.

It does not suffer,<sup>1389</sup> nor does it age

Because it is permanent, everlasting,

Peaceful, and eternal. I.80

It is not [even] born in the form of bodies

Of a mental nature because it is permanent.

It does not [even] die by way of an inconceivable

Transformation because it is everlasting. I.81 {J54}

It does not [even] suffer from the subtle sicknesses

Of latent tendencies because it is peaceful.

It does not [even] age through uncontaminated

Formations because it is eternal. I.82

The tathāgata element, which on the buddhabhūmi abides in its own absolutely stainless, pure, and luminous<sup>1390</sup> nature, is not even born in the



form of bodies of a mental nature because it is permanent in terms of its beginning in time. It does not even die by way of the death that is an inconceivable transformation because it is everlasting in terms of an end in time. {D103b} It does not even suffer from being seized by the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance because it is peaceful in terms of a beginning and an end in time. Not befallen by what is meaningless, it does not even age through the transformation<sup>1391</sup> that is the result of uncontaminated karma because it is eternal.

Here, the meanings of permanent and so on  
With regard to the unconditioned basic element<sup>1392</sup>  
Should be understood through two, two,  
Two, and two phrases, respectively. I.83

Here, as for the four terms permanent, everlasting, peaceful, and eternal with regard to the unconditioned basic element,<sup>1393</sup> {P107b} respectively, the distinction of the meaning of each single term should be comprehended through two phrases each in terms of a brief statement and its explanation according to the [*Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa*]sūtra,<sup>1394</sup> which says:

Śariputra, this dharmakāya is permanent—it is of an unchanging nature due to its true nature of being inexhaustible. Śariputra, this dharmakāya is everlasting—it is the everlasting refuge due to equaling the end of time. Śariputra, this dharmakāya is peaceful—it is of a nondual nature due to its true nature of being nonconceptual. Śariputra, this dharmakāya is eternal—it is of an indestructible nature due to its true nature of being uncreated.<sup>1395</sup>

{J55} [There follows] a verse about (10) the topic of inseparability of the tathāgata element<sup>1396</sup> whose characteristic is that it has reached the culmination of absolute purification in its phase of being completely pure.

Since it is the dharmakāya, the Tathāgata,  
The reality of the noble ones, and the ultimate nirvāṇa,  
There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood  
Due to its qualities' being inseparable, just like the sun and its rays. I.84

What is taught by the first half of this verse?

In brief, {D104a} one should know  
 The four synonyms such as the dharmakāya  
 For the uncontaminated basic element  
 Since it is classified as fourfold in meaning. I.85

In brief, one should know the four synonyms for the uncontaminated basic element, the tathāgata heart, with regard to its four meanings. What are these four meanings?

[They] are the inseparability of the buddha attributes,  
 The disposition for that having been obtained just as it is,  
 Its true nature's being without falsity and deception,  
 And its being natural primordial peace. I.86

With regard to the meaning of the inseparability of the buddha attributes [from the tathāgata heart], {P108a} [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable [from it], [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it], and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>1397</sup>

With regard to the meaning of the disposition for that [buddhahood] (that is, the nature [of the mind])<sup>1398</sup> having been obtained in an inconceivable manner, it is said:

The distinctive feature of the six āyatanas has been obtained through [the nature of] phenomena since beginningless time and is continuing as such [up through the present].<sup>1399</sup>

With regard to the meaning of [its true nature's] being without falsity and deception, it is said:

Here, ultimate reality is the nirvāṇa whose nature it is to be without deception. For what reason [is that so]? This disposition is permanent by virtue of its true nature of being peaceful.<sup>1400</sup>

With regard to the meaning of its being absolute peace, [the *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*] says:

The Tathāgata Arhat, the completely perfect Buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa from the very beginning is without arising and without ceasing.<sup>1401</sup>

{J56} For these four meanings, in due order, there are four synonyms, namely, dharmakāya, tathāgata, ultimate reality, and nirvāṇa. For [the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*] says:

Śāriputra, “tathāgata heart” is a designation for the dharmakāya.<sup>1402</sup>

[The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* states:]

Bhagavan, it is not that the Tathāgata is other and {D104b} the dharmakāya is other. Bhagavan, that very dharmakāya is the Tathāgata.<sup>1403</sup>

And:

Bhagavan, the name “cessation of suffering” indicates the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, which is . . . endowed with such qualities.<sup>1404</sup>

And:

Bhagavan, “the dhātu of nirvāṇa” is a designation for the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata.<sup>1405</sup>

{P108b} Now, what is taught by the latter half of verse [I.84]?

**Being the fully perfect awakening in all aspects  
And the removal of [all] stains and their latent tendencies,  
Buddhahood and nirvāṇa  
Ultimately are not two. I.87**

Those four synonyms for the uncontaminated basic element are contained in the single undifferentiated meaning of the tathāgata element. Therefore, since those [four] are one in their meaning, by way of the principle of the dharma of nonduality, the two called “buddhahood” (due to its being the fully perfect awakening in all aspects with regard to all phenomena) and “nirvāṇa” (due to its being the relinquishment of [all] stains and their latent tendencies immediately upon this fully perfect awakening)<sup>1406</sup> are to

be regarded as **not being two** in the uncontaminated basic element, [that is,] **not being different and being inseparable**. It is said:

Liberation has the characteristic of being inseparable  
 From its qualities, which are of all kinds,  
 Innumerable, inconceivable, and stainless.  
 What is this liberation is the Tathāgata.<sup>1407</sup>

With regard to the parinirvāṇa of arhats and pratyekabuddhas, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, what is called “nirvāṇa” is [just] a means of the tathāgatas.<sup>1408</sup>

This [passage] explains that, just like a city in the middle of the jungle that is magically created for [travelers] who are tired by their long path, this [nirvāṇa of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] is a means [used] by the completely perfect buddhas, who are the supreme lords of dharma, [so that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] do not turn back. [On the other hand, that sūtra] says: {D105a}

Bhagavan, because they have attained nirvāṇa, {J57} the tathāgata arhats, the completely perfect buddhas, are endowed with the qualities that have finally reached their entirety . . . immeasurability . . . inconceivability . . . and . . . purity.<sup>1409</sup>

This [passage] explains that, having attained the nirvāṇa that is characterized by being inseparable from the accomplishment of these four kinds of qualities, {P109a} the completely perfect buddhas have the character of that [nirvāṇa]. Thus since both buddhahood and nirvāṇa have the quality of being inseparable,<sup>1410</sup> there is no one who attains nirvāṇa without buddhahood.

Now, through the example of [various] painters,<sup>1411</sup> it should be understood that the tathāgatas [have perfected] all these qualities within the uncontaminated basic element because they have accomplished the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects.

Suppose there were some painters,  
 [Each] an expert in a different [body part],

So that whatever part is known by one of them  
Would not be understood by any other one. I.88

Then a mighty king would hand  
Them a canvas and order,  
“All of you, on this [canvas]  
Paint my portrait!” I.89

Having agreed<sup>1412</sup> to his [order],  
They would start their painting work,  
[But] then one among these dedicated workers  
Would leave for another country. I.90

With him gone to another country,  
Due to his absence, the painting  
Would not be completed in all its parts—  
Such is the example that is given. I.91

The painters that appear in such a way<sup>1413</sup>  
Are said to be generosity, discipline, patience, and so on,  
While the emptiness endowed with  
All supreme aspects is the painting.<sup>1414</sup> I.92

Here, each one among these [aspects] (generosity and so on) is differentiated into infinite distinctions in terms of being the objects of a buddha. Therefore, they should be understood to be immeasurable. [Also,] they are inconceivable by virtue of their number and power. They are supremely pure because the latent tendencies of the stains that are their antagonistic factors (such as miserliness) have been eliminated.

Here, {D105b} the true nature of nonarising<sup>1415</sup> is attained through having cultivated the door of the samādhi of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects. Therefore, {P109b} on the bodhisattvabhūmi “The Im-movable One,” based on the wisdom of the path that is nonconceptual, flawless, uninterrupted, and bears its own natural flavor, {J58} all qualities of the tathāgatas in the uncontaminated basic element are fully accomplished. On the bodhisattvabhūmi “The Excellent One,” based on the wisdom of seizing the immeasurable buddha attributes through oceans<sup>1416</sup> of innumerable doors of samādhis and dhāraṇīs, the immeasurability of these qualities

is fully accomplished. On the bodhisattvabhūmi “Dharma Cloud,” based on the wisdom of revealing the secret state of all tathāgatas, the inconceivability of these qualities is fully accomplished. Immediately after that, based on the wisdom of being liberated from all afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies in order to attain the buddhabhūmi, the supreme purity of these qualities is fully accomplished.<sup>1417</sup> Since arhats and pratyekabuddhas lack any perceptions based on these four [kinds of] wisdom of said [four] bhūmis, they are said to be far from the dhātu of nirvāṇa that is characterized by being inseparable from the accomplishment of these four kinds of qualities.

Since prajñā, wisdom, and liberation  
 Are illuminating, pervasive, pure,  
 And not different, they resemble  
 The light, the rays, and the orb of the sun. I.93

The dhātu of nirvāṇa that is characterized by being inseparable from the accomplishment of these four kinds of qualities is described by what is prajñā, what is wisdom, and what is liberation. In due order, these are explained to resemble the sun in four ways—due to three aspects<sup>1418</sup> [in terms of prajñā and so on] and due to one [aspect in general]. Here, the supramundane nonconceptual prajñā in the mind stream of a buddha, {P110a} by virtue of engaging in the elimination of the darkness [that obscures] the supreme true reality of [all] knowable objects, {D106a} resembles the illuminating [quality of the sun]. The omniscient wisdom that is attained subsequently to this [prajñā], by virtue of engaging in all aspects of knowable entities without exception, resembles the pervasive web of the rays [of the sun]. The liberation of the nature of the mind that is the basis of these two, by virtue of being utterly stainless and luminous, resembles the purity of the orb of the sun. By virtue of these three having the nature of not being different from the dharmadhātu, they resemble [the fact that] those three [qualities of the sun] are inseparable from it.

Therefore, without attaining buddhahood,  
 Nirvāṇa is not attained,  
 Just as it is impossible to see the sun  
 After its light and its rays are removed. I.94

{J59} Thus is the true nature of the inseparable qualities of the tathāgatas in this basic element that is endowed with the virtuous attributes whose nature it is to be associated with the [basic element since time] without beginning. Therefore, without realizing the tathāgatahood that is endowed with the vision of the *prajñā*<sup>1419</sup> and wisdom that are without attachment and obstruction,<sup>1420</sup> the realization of the dhātu of *nirvāṇa*, which is characterized by being the liberation from all obscurations, is not suitable to manifest, just as it is not [possible] to see the orb of the sun without seeing its light and its rays. Therefore, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says the following:

Bhagavan, those who [distinguish] inferior and excellent phenomena do not attain *nirvāṇa*. Bhagavan, those for whom phenomena are equal attain *nirvāṇa*.<sup>1421</sup> Bhagavan, those for whom wisdom is equal, those for whom liberation is equal, and those for whom the vision of the wisdom of liberation is equal attain *nirvāṇa*. Therefore, Bhagavan, the dhātu of *nirvāṇa* is said to be of one taste and of equal taste. That is, {P110b} [it is of equal taste] as the taste of awareness and liberation.<sup>1422</sup>

The presentation of the heart of the victors  
Has been discussed in this way in ten aspects.  
Now, its being enclosed by the cocoon of the afflictions  
Should be understood through examples. I.95

Thus, it was in terms of understanding the true nature that is as everlasting as the end of time {D106b} that the presentation of the tathāgata heart has been discussed through ten topics.

Now, it is in terms of [this tathāgata heart's] being covered by the afflictions (which have the nature of being associated with it [but] not being connected with it [since time] without beginning) and the pure true nature (which has the nature of being associated and connected with the [tathāgata heart since time] without beginning) that the tathāgata heart's being concealed by infinite cocoons of the afflictions should be comprehended through nine examples according to the sūtras.<sup>1423</sup> What are these nine examples? {J60}

A buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amid bees,  
Kernels in their husks,<sup>1424</sup> gold in filth,  
A treasure in the earth, a sprout and so on from a small fruit,  
An image of the victor in a tattered garment, I.96

Royalty in the womb of a destitute<sup>1425</sup> woman,  
 And a precious statue in clay—just as these exist,  
 This basic element dwells in sentient beings  
 Obscured by the adventitious stains of the afflictions. I.97

The stains resemble the lotus, the insects,<sup>1426</sup> the husks, the filth, the  
 earth, the peel of a fruit,  
 The foul-smelling garment, the body of a lowly woman, and the  
 element of earth heated in a fire.<sup>1427</sup>  
 The supreme basic element has the stainless appearance<sup>1428</sup> of the  
 buddha, the honey, the kernels, the gold, the treasure,  
 The nyagrodha tree, the precious image, the supreme lord of the  
 world, and the precious statue. I.98

[In the first example,] the stains are like the sheath of a decaying lotus,  
 while the tathāgata element resembles a buddha [within].<sup>1429</sup>

Suppose a man with the stainless divine eye were to see  
 A tathāgata shining with a thousand marks,  
 Dwelling enclosed in a fading lotus,  
 And thus would free him from the sheath of the lotus petals. I.99

Similarly, the Sugata beholds his own true nature {P111a}  
 With his buddha eye even in those who dwell in the Avīci [hell]  
 And thus, as the one who is unobscured, remains until the end of time,  
 And has the character of compassion, frees it from the obscurations.  
 I.100 {J61}

Just as someone with the divine eye would perceive an ugly shriveled  
 lotus  
 And a sugata dwelling enclosed in it, thus cutting apart its petals,  
 So the sage beholds the buddha heart obscured by the sheaths of the  
 stains such as desire and hatred,  
 Thus annihilating its obscurations out of his compassion for the  
 world. I.101

[In the second example,] the afflictions are like the insects {D107a} that are  
 bees, while the tathāgata element resembles honey.



Suppose a clever person were to see  
 Honey surrounded by a swarm of insects  
 And, striving for it, would completely separate it  
 From the swarm of insects with the [proper] means. I.102

Similarly, the great seer sees that this basic element,  
 Which he perceives with his omniscient eye, is like honey  
 And thus accomplishes the complete removal  
 Of its obscurations that are like bees. I.103

Just as a person striving for the honey that is covered by billions of  
 insects  
 Would remove them from the honey and use that honey as wished,  
 So the uncontaminated wisdom in beings is like honey, the afflictions  
 are like bees,  
 And the victor who knows how to destroy them resembles that  
 person. I.104

[In the third example,] the afflictions are like the outer husks, while the  
 tathāgata element resembles the inner kernel.

The kernel in grains united with its husks  
 [Can]not be eaten by people, {J62}  
 But those wanting food and so on  
 Extract it from its husks. I.105

Similarly, the state of a victor in sentient beings,  
 Which is obscured by the stains of the afflictions,  
 Does not perform the activity of a perfect buddha in the three existences  
 For as long as it is not liberated from the afflictions added on [to it].  
 I.106

Just as the kernels in grains such as corn, rice, millet, and barley, not  
 extracted from their husks,  
 Still awned, and not prepared well, will not serve as delicious edibles  
 for people, {P111b}  
 So the lord of dharma in sentient beings, whose body is not released  
 from the husks of the afflictions,

Will not grant the pleasant flavor of the dharma to the people pained  
by the hunger of the afflictions. I.107

[In the fourth example,] the afflictions are like an unclean place full of excrement, while the tathāgata element resembles gold.

Suppose a traveling person's [piece of] gold  
Were to fall into a filthy place full of excrement  
And yet, being of an indestructible nature, would remain there  
Just as it is for many hundreds of years. I.108

A deity with the pure divine eye  
Would see it there and tell a person:  
“[There is] gold here, this<sup>1430</sup> highest precious substance.  
You should purify it, and make use of this precious substance.” I.109  
{D107b} {J63}

Similarly, the sage beholds the qualities of sentient beings,  
Sunken into the afflictions that are like excrement,  
And thus showers down the rain of the dharma onto beings  
In order to purify them of the afflictions' dirt. I.110

Just as a deity seeing a [piece of] gold fallen into a filthy place full of  
excrement  
Would show its supreme beauty to people in order to purify it from  
stains,  
So the victor, beholding the jewel of a perfect buddha fallen into the  
great excrement of the afflictions  
In sentient beings, teaches the dharma to these beings for the sake of  
purifying that [buddha]. I.111

[In the fifth example,] the afflictions are like the ground below, while the tathāgata element resembles a treasure of jewels.

Suppose there were an inexhaustible treasure  
Beneath the ground within the house of a poor person,  
But that person would not know about this [treasure],  
Nor would the treasure say to that [person], “I am here!” I.112

Similarly, with the stainless treasure of jewels lodged within the mind,  
 Whose nature is to be inconceivable and inexhaustible,  
 Not being realized, beings continuously experience  
 The suffering of being destitute in many ways. I.113

Just as a treasure of jewels lodged inside the abode of a pauper would  
 not say  
 To this person, "I, the jewel treasure, am here!," nor would this  
 person know about it,  
 So the treasure of the dharma is lodged in the house of the mind, and  
 sentient beings resemble the pauper. {P112a}  
 It is in order to enable them to attain this [treasure] that the seer  
 takes birth in the world. I.114

[In the sixth example,] the afflictions are like the sheath of the peel [of a  
 fruit], while the tathāgata element resembles a germ in a seed. {J64}

The germs of the seeds in tree fruits such as mango and palm  
 Have the indestructible nature [of growing into a tree].  
 Being sown into the earth and coming into contact with water and  
 so on,  
 They gradually assume the form of a majestic tree. I.115

Similarly, the splendid<sup>1431</sup> dharmadhātu in sentient beings, covered  
 By the sheath of the peel around the fruit of ignorance and so on,  
 In dependence on such and such virtues  
 Gradually assumes the state of the king of sages. I.116

Just as, through the conditions of water, sunlight, wind, earth, time,  
 and space,  
 A tree grows forth from within the sheath of palm fruits and mangos,  
 So the germ in the seed of the perfect buddha lodged inside the peel  
 of the fruit of sentient beings' afflictions {D108a}  
 Will grow into the shoot<sup>1432</sup> of dharma through such and such  
 conditions of virtue.<sup>1433</sup> I.117

[In the seventh example,] the afflictions are like a filthy garment, while the  
 tathāgata element resembles a precious figure.

Suppose an image of the victor made of a precious substance  
 And wrapped in a filthy foul-smelling cloth  
 Were left on the road, and a deity, upon seeing it,  
 Speaks about this matter to those traveling by in order to set it  
 free.<sup>1434</sup> I.118

Similarly, the one with unimpeded vision sees the body<sup>1435</sup> of a sugata  
 Concealed by the stains of various kinds of afflictions  
 Even in animals and demonstrates  
 The means for its liberation. I.119

Just as the form of the Tathāgata made of a precious substance,  
 wrapped in a foul-smelling garment,  
 And left on the road would be seen by someone with the divine eye  
 and shown to people in order to set it free, {J65}  
 So the basic element wrapped in the filthy garment of the afflictions  
 and left on the road of saṃsāra  
 Is seen by the victor even in animals,<sup>1436</sup> upon which he teaches the  
 dharma for the sake of liberating it. I.120

[In the eighth example,] the afflictions are like a pregnant woman, while  
 the tathāgata element resembles a cakravartin's having entered the great  
 elements a short time after conception.

Suppose an ugly woman without a protector,<sup>1437</sup> {P112b}  
 Dwelling in a shelter for those without protection  
 And bearing the glory of royalty as an embryo,<sup>1438</sup>  
 Were not to know about the king in her own womb. I.121

Being born in [saṃsāric] existence is like a place for those without  
 protection,  
 Impure sentient beings<sup>1439</sup> resemble the pregnant woman,  
 The stainless basic element in them is similar to her embryo,  
 And due to its existence, these [beings] do have a protector. I.122

Just as this woman whose body is covered with a dirty garment and  
 who has an unsightly body  
 Would experience the greatest suffering in a shelter for those without  
 protection despite this king's residing in her womb,

So beings dwell in the abode of suffering due to their minds' not  
 being at peace through the power of the afflictions  
 And deem themselves to be without a protector despite the excellent  
 protectors<sup>1440</sup> residing right within themselves. I.123

[In the ninth example,] the afflictions are like a clay mold, while the  
 tathāgata element resembles a golden image.

Suppose an image filled with molten gold inside  
 But consisting of clay on the outside, after having settled,<sup>1441</sup> {J66}  
 Were seen by someone who knows about this [gold inside],  
 Who would then remove<sup>1442</sup> the outer covering to purify the inner  
 gold. I.124 {D108b}

Similarly, always seeing the luminosity of [mind's] nature  
 And that the stains are adventitious,  
 The one with the highest awakening purifies beings,  
 Who are like a jewel mine, from the obscurations. I.125

Just as an image made of stainless shining gold enclosed in clay  
 would settle  
 And a skillful jeweler, knowing about this [gold], would remove the  
 clay,  
 So the omniscient one sees that the mind, which resembles pure  
 gold, is settled  
 And removes its obscurations by way of the strokes<sup>1443</sup> that are the  
 means of teaching the dharma. I.126

The summarized meaning of [all] these examples is as follows.

Like within a lotus, insects that are bees,  
 Husks, excrement, the earth,  
 The peel of a fruit, a filthy garment,  
 The womb of a woman, and a covering of clay, I.127

Like a buddha, like honey, like a kernel,  
 Gold, a treasure, and a tree,  
 Like a precious statue, like a cakravartin,  
 And like a golden image, I.128

The beginningless stainlessness of the nature  
 Of the mind within the beginningless<sup>1444</sup> cocoons {P113a}  
 Of the afflictions that are not connected to  
 The basic element of sentient beings is declared to be.<sup>1445</sup> I.129

In brief, this instruction on the examples in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* explains that the beginningless afflicted phenomena of mind in every basic element of sentient beings are adventitious while the beginningless purified phenomena of mind are connate [with] and inseparable [from this basic element]. {J67} Therefore, it is said:

Due to the mind's being afflicted, sentient beings are afflicted. Due to the mind's being purified, they are purified.<sup>1446</sup>

Now, what is the afflictiveness of the mind with regard to which the nine examples such as the sheath of a lotus were taught?

Desire, hatred, ignorance,  
 Their intense outbursts, latent tendencies,  
 The stains pertaining to the paths of seeing and familiarization  
 As well as to the impure and the pure bhūmis I.130

Are elucidated by the nine examples  
 Of the sheath of a lotus and so on,  
 But the cocoons of the proximate afflictions  
 In all their variety are infinite millions. I.131

{D109a} In brief, these nine afflictions always exist in an adventitious manner with regard to the naturally pure tathāgata element, just as the sheath of a lotus and so on do with regard to the image of a buddha and so on. Which are these nine? They are as follows. (1) The afflictions that are characterized as the latencies of desire, (2) those that are characterized as the latencies of hatred, (3) those that are characterized as the latencies of ignorance, (4) those that are characterized as the intense outbursts of desire, hatred, and ignorance, (5) those that consist of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, (6) those to be relinquished through seeing, (7) those to be relinquished through familiarization, (8) those pertaining to the impure bhūmis, and (9) those pertaining to the pure bhūmis.

(1)–(3) Here, the afflictions in the mind streams of those free from mundane desire, which are the causes for the accumulation of immovable [karmic] formations, accomplish [rebirths in] the form [realm] and the formless realm, and are to be overcome by supramundane wisdom, are called “those that are characterized as the latencies of desire, hatred, and ignorance.” (4) The [afflictions] in the mind streams of sentient beings who engage in desire and so on, which are the causes for the accumulation of meritorious and nonmeritorious [karmic] formations, accomplish only [rebirths in] the desire realm, and are to be overcome by the wisdom of familiarizing with the impurity [of the body] and so on, are called “those that are characterized as the intense outbursts of desire, hatred, and ignorance.” (5) The [afflictions] in the mind streams of arhats, which are the causes for the operation of uncontaminated karma,<sup>1447</sup> accomplish a stainless body of a mental nature, and are to be overcome by the wisdom of the awakening of a tathāgata, are called “those that consist of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance.” As for learners, they are twofold—ordinary beings and noble ones. Here, (6) the [afflictions] in the mind streams of the learners who are ordinary beings, which are to be overcome by the wisdom of first seeing the supramundane dharma, are called “those to be relinquished through seeing.” {J68} {D109b} (7) The [afflictions] in the mind streams of the learners who are noble ones, which are to be overcome by the wisdom of familiarizing with the supramundane dharma as it was seen [on the path of seeing], are called “those to be relinquished through familiarization.” (8) The [afflictions] in the mind streams of bodhisattvas who have not reached perfection, which are the antagonistic factors of the [first] seven kinds of wisdom bhūmis and are to be overcome by the wisdom of familiarization on the three bhūmis beginning with the eighth one, are called “those that pertain to the impure bhūmis.” (9) The [afflictions] in the mind streams of bodhisattvas who have reached perfection, which are the antagonistic factors of the wisdom of familiarization on the three bhūmis beginning with the eighth one and are to be overcome by the wisdom of the vajra-like samādhi, are called “those that pertain to the pure bhūmis.”

These<sup>1448</sup>

Nine afflictions such as desire,  
 In brief and in due order,  
 Are elucidated by the nine examples  
 Of the sheath of a lotus and so on. I.132

In detail, however, by virtue of all the variety of the eighty-four thousand divisions [of the afflictions], they are as infinite as the wisdom of the Tathāgata. Due to this, it is said that the tathāgata heart is concealed by infinite millions of cocoons of afflictions.<sup>1449</sup>

The impurities of naive beings,  
Arhats, learners, and the intelligent  
Are [explained] in due order by these four,  
One, two, and two stains, respectively. I.133

The Bhagavān said that all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart. Here, all sentient beings are said to be, in brief, of four kinds, that is, ordinary beings, arhats, learners, and bodhisattvas. Now, according to their order, their [respective] impurities in the uncontaminated basic element are explained by four, one, two, and two stains of afflictions.

How should the resemblances of these nine afflictions such as desire with the sheath of a lotus and so on be understood and how should the similarity of the tathāgata element with the image of a buddha and so on {D110a} be comprehended?

Just as a lotus grown from mud  
Is so beautiful at first  
But is no longer attractive later,  
So is the delight of desire. I.134

Just as the insects that are bees  
Sting sharply upon being agitated,  
So the arising of our hatred  
Produces suffering in our heart. I.135 {J69}

Just as the kernels of rice and so on  
Are covered by outer husks,  
So the seeing of the essential actuality  
Is obscured by the eggshell of ignorance. I.136

Just as excrement is disagreeable,  
So is desire to those free from desire. {P113b}  
Being the causes for indulging in desire,  
The outbursts [of the afflictions] are like excrement. I.137



Just as people would not obtain a treasure  
 Hidden in the earth due to not knowing [about it],  
 So those obscured by the ground of the latent tendencies  
 Of ignorance [do not obtain] the self-arisen.<sup>1450</sup> I.138

Just as the husks of a seed are split apart  
 By the gradual growth of the germ and so on,  
 So the factors to be relinquished through seeing  
 Are removed by seeing true reality. I.139

The factors to be relinquished through the wisdom of familiarization,  
 Whose core—[views about] a real personality—has been relinquished  
 As a necessary consequence of the noble path [of seeing],  
 Are illustrated by a filthy garment. I.140

The stains pertaining to the seven bhūmis  
 Resemble the stains of the enclosure of a womb.  
 Similar to an embryo's being delivered from its enclosure,  
 Nonconceptual wisdom possesses maturation.<sup>1451</sup> I.141

The stains associated with the three [pure] bhūmis  
 Should be known to be like a clay mold.  
 They are to be overcome by the wisdom<sup>1452</sup>  
 Of the vajra-like samādhi of great beings. I.142

Thus, the nine stains such as desire  
 Resemble a lotus and so on.  
 Due to consisting of three natures,  
 The basic element is similar to a buddha and so on. I.143

The similarity of the tathāgata heart—the cause<sup>1453</sup> for the purification  
 of the mind—to the nine kinds [of examples of] a buddha image and so  
 on should be understood in terms of its threefold nature. What is this  
 threefold nature?

Its nature is the dharmakāya,  
 Suchness, and also the disposition,

Which are to be understood through {D110b}  
 Three illustrations, one, and five, respectively. I.144

Through the three examples of a buddha image, honey, and a kernel, the basic element is to be comprehended as having the nature of the dharmakāya; through the one example of gold, as having the nature of suchness; and through the five examples of a treasure, a tree, a precious statue, a cakravartin, and a golden image, {J70} as having the nature of the disposition for the arising of the three kinds of buddhakāyas. Here, what is the dharmakāya?

The dharmakāya is to be known as twofold—  
 The utterly stainless dharmadhātu {P114a}  
 And its natural outflow (teaching  
 The principles of profundity and diversity). I.145

The dharmakāya of buddhas is to be comprehended as twofold. (1) The utterly pure dharmadhātu is the object that is the sphere of nonconceptual wisdom. This is to be understood in terms of being the dharma that is to be personally experienced by the tathāgatas. (2) The cause for [others also] attaining this [pure dharmadhātu], which is the natural outflow of the utterly pure dharmadhātu [of a buddha], consists of the arising of [individually] corresponding [forms of] cognizance in other sentient beings to be guided. This is to be understood in terms of being the dharma that is the teaching.<sup>1454</sup> The teaching is also twofold due to the division of the principles of presenting the dharma that is subtle and coarse. That is, it consists of the teaching of the principle of presenting the profound dharma collection of bodhisattvas in terms of ultimate reality and the teaching of the principle of presenting the diversity of the various dharmas such as sūtras, proclamations in song, prophecies, proclamations in verse, aphorisms, and counsels<sup>1455</sup> in terms of seeming reality.

By virtue of its being beyond the world,  
 No example for it can be observed in the world.  
 Therefore, the basic element is shown  
 To resemble the Tathāgata. I.146

**The teaching of the principle of subtle profundity**

**Is like the single taste of honey.**

**The teaching of the principle of diversity**

**Should be understood to resemble a kernel in its various husks.<sup>1456</sup> I.147**

Thus, {D111a} these three examples of a buddha image, honey, and a kernel explain that all sentient beings possess the heart of a tathāgata in the sense of the tathāgata-dharmakāya's pervading the realm<sup>1457</sup> of all sentient beings without exception. Indeed, there is no sentient being whatsoever in the realm of sentient beings that is outside of the tathāgata-dharmakāya, just as form is [never outside of] the element of space. Thus, [the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*] says: {J71}

Just as {P114b} space is asserted to be always omnipresent,

This [buddhahood] is held to be always omnipresent.

Just as space is omnipresent in the hosts of form,

It is omnipresent in the hosts of sentient beings.<sup>1458</sup>

**Because of being changeless by nature,**

**Because of being excellent, and because of being pure,**

**Suchness is illustrated**

**By the analogy of a piece of gold. I.148**

Though the mind is associated with infinite phenomena of affliction and suffering, by virtue of its natural luminosity, it does not undergo any change.<sup>1459</sup> Therefore, it is called "suchness" in the sense of being unchangeable like excellent gold. Though this [suchness] is without any difference in its nature in all sentient beings, even in those whose mind streams are certain in terms of what is mistaken, it receives the designation "tathāgata" [upon] having become pure<sup>1460</sup> of all adventitious stains.<sup>1461</sup> Thus, in the sense of suchness's being undifferentiable, this one example of gold explains that the tathāgata—suchness—is the heart of all these sentient beings.<sup>1462</sup> In view of the purity of the nature of the mind, the nondual nature of phenomena, the Bhagavān said the following [in the *Jñānālokālaṅkārasūtra*]:

Here, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata knows that the grasping at a self is the root. Thus, by virtue of his own purity, he has realized the purity of all

sentient beings. What is his own purity and {D111b} what is the purity of sentient beings are not two and cannot be made two.<sup>1463</sup>

Thus, [also the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*] says: {P115b}

Though it is without difference in everything,  
Suchness's having become pure  
Is the Tathāgata. Therefore,  
All beings possess its heart.<sup>1464</sup>

The disposition is to be known as twofold,  
Being like a treasure and a fruit tree—  
The naturally abiding one without beginning  
And the accomplished one. I.149 {J72} {P116a}

It is held that the three kāyas are attained  
By virtue of these two dispositions—  
The first kāya, by virtue of the first one,  
And the latter two, by virtue of the second one. I.150

The beauty<sup>1465</sup> of the svābhāvikakāya  
Should be known to be like a precious statue  
Because it is without artifice by nature,  
And is the foundation of precious qualities. I.151

Since it is the emperor of the great dharma,  
The sambhoga[kāya] is like a cakravartin.  
Because it has the nature of a reflection,  
The nirmāṇa[kāya] is like a golden image. I.152

Thus, the remaining five examples of a treasure, a tree, a precious statue, a cakravartin, and a golden image explain that the tathāgata element is the heart of all these sentient beings in the sense that the disposition for the arising of the three kinds of buddhakāyas exists<sup>1466</sup> [in all beings]. Tathāgatahood is indeed what is characterized by the three kinds of buddhakāyas. Therefore, the tathāgata element is the cause for attaining these [buddhakāyas]. Here, the meaning of “dhātu” is the meaning of “cause.” Therefore, [the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*] says:

Now, the tathāgata element exists in each sentient being, arisen in the form of [their] heart, but these sentient beings do not realize this.<sup>1467</sup>

Thus, [the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*] says:

The dhātu of beginningless time  
Is the foundation of all phenomena.  
Since it exists, all forms of existence  
And also nirvāṇa are obtained.

Here, how is it that [the dhātu] is of beginningless time? With regard to this very tathāgata heart, the Bhagavān {D112a} taught and described that a beginning in time is not perceivable. As for “dhātu,” [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, this {J73} tathāgata heart is the supramundane heart. It is the naturally pure heart.<sup>1468</sup>

As for “the foundation of all phenomena,” [this sūtra] says:

Therefore, Bhagavan, {P116b} the tathāgata heart is the foundation, basis, and support of the unconditioned attributes that are connected [to it], inseparable [from it], and [can] not be realized as being divisible [from it]. Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is also the foundation, basis, and support of the conditioned phenomena that are not connected [to it], separable [from it], and [can] be realized as being divisible [from it].<sup>1469</sup>

As for “Since it exists, all forms of existence,” [this sūtra] says:

Bhagavan, since the tathāgata heart exists, the notion of ‘saṃsāra’ is formulated for it.<sup>1470</sup>

As for “also nirvāṇa is obtained,” [this sūtra] says:

Bhagavan, if the tathāgata heart did not exist, there would be no weariness of suffering nor the wish, striving, and aspiration for nirvāṇa.<sup>1471</sup>

It is thus [that this is explained] in detail.

Now, [the fact that] the tathāgata heart, which is as vast as the dharma-kāya,<sup>1472</sup> has the characteristic of not being different from suchness,<sup>1473</sup> and has the nature of being the disposition that is certain [with regard to buddhahood], exists at all times and everywhere in a manner that is without difference<sup>1474</sup> is to be considered in terms of taking [nothing but] the true nature of phenomena as the [supreme] valid authority. As [the *Tathāgata-garbhasūtra*] says:

Son of noble family, this is the true nature of phenomena: no matter whether tathāgatas arise or do not arise, these sentient beings always have the tathāgata heart.<sup>1475</sup>

Here, the nature of phenomena is the principle, the method, and the means through which<sup>1476</sup> [it is clear that the true state of phenomena] is just such and that it is not otherwise.<sup>1477</sup> In all respects, {D112b} this very nature of phenomena is the resort, and this very nature of phenomena is the principle for the contemplation of the mind and the realization of the mind.<sup>1478</sup> It is neither conceivable nor imaginable. It is [only] accessible to intense faith. {J74}

**The ultimate of the self-arisen ones {P117a}**  
**Is to be realized through confidence alone.**  
 Those without eyes do not see  
 The bright and radiant disk of the sun. I.153

In brief, this is a presentation that four persons do not possess the eyes for seeing the tathāgata heart. Who are these four? They are (1) ordinary beings, (2) śrāvakas, (3) pratyekabuddhas, and (4) bodhisattvas who have newly entered the [mahā]yāna. As [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is not the sphere of those who have fallen into the views about a real personality, those who delight in what is mistaken, and those whose minds are distracted from emptiness.<sup>1479</sup>

Here, (1) those who are called “those who have fallen into the views about a real personality” are ordinary naive beings. Thus, claiming that utterly contaminated phenomena (such as the skandhas) are a self and what is “mine,” they cling to the apprehension of “me” and the apprehension

of what is “mine.” Therefore, they are not able to have faith in the uncontaminated basic element that is the cessation of any real personality either. So how could they possibly realize the tathāgata heart that is the object of omniscience? There is no way [for them to do so].

(2)–(3) Now, those who are called “those who delight in what is mistaken” are the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Why is that? For though they should furthermore familiarize with the tathāgata heart as being permanent, they delight [only] in familiarizing with the notion of [all phenomena’s] being impermanent instead of familiarizing with the notion of the [tathāgata heart’s] being permanent. Though they should furthermore familiarize with the tathāgata heart as being bliss, they delight [only] in familiarizing with the notion of [all phenomena’s being] suffering instead of familiarizing with the notion of the [tathāgata heart’s] being blissful. {D113a} Though they should furthermore familiarize with the tathāgata heart as being a self, they delight [only] in familiarizing with the notion of [all phenomena’s] lacking a self instead of familiarizing with the notion of the [tathāgata heart’s] being a self. {P117b} Though they should furthermore familiarize with the tathāgata heart as being pure, they delight [only] in familiarizing with the notion of [all phenomena’s] being impure instead of familiarizing with the notion of the [tathāgata heart’s] being pure. Thus, due to this sequence [of familiarizing with those four notions], they delight in the path that is adverse to<sup>1480</sup> attaining the dharmakāya. Therefore, it is said that the basic element, which is characterized by supreme permanence, bliss, self, and purity, is not even the sphere of any śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. That this [basic element] is not the sphere of those who delight in mistakeness (those who [entertain] the notions of impermanence, suffering, lack of a self, and impurity) was accordingly established by the Bhagavān in detail in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* through the example of a jewel in the water of a pond:

O bhikṣus, it is as follows. Suppose that, at the time of the hot season, people were to hitch up their clothes for bathing and play in the water with their own ornaments and objects of pastime. Suppose then that someone there were to cast a genuine beryl stone into the water. {J75} In order to [retrieve] that beryl, all those [people] would leave their ornaments aside and dive [into the water]. [However,] they would [mistakenly] think that the pebbles and the gravel in the [water] are that jewel, seize them, and draw them out [of the water], thinking, “I got the jewel.” Dwelling at the bank of the pond, they would then properly

discern<sup>1481</sup> that those [pebbles and so on] are not the jewel. [They were deceived because] through the power of that jewel, the water of the pond would sparkle like the shine of that [jewel]. Thus, seeing this sparkling water, they would entertain the notion that [the pebbles in it possess] the qualities of that jewel. Eventually, someone there who is skilled and intelligent would actually retrieve that jewel.

Bhikṣus, likewise, not knowing the true reality of phenomena, which is like that jewel,<sup>1482</sup> {D113b} you repeatedly meditate through all your clinging to everything as being impermanent, everything as being suffering, everything as being without a self, {P118a} and everything as being impure. You do so many times, [but] all such attempts are meaningless. Therefore, bhikṣus, you should not be<sup>1483</sup> like those who are fixated on the pebbles and the gravel in that pond, but you should be skilled in means. Bhikṣus, right within each one of your repeated meditations on everything as being impermanent, everything as being suffering, everything as being without a self, and everything as being impure, which you do many times, [there exists] what is permanent, blissful, pure, and a self.<sup>1484</sup>

Thus, the instruction on those who are mistaken with regard to the presentation of the supreme true reality of phenomena should be understood in detail according to the sūtras.

(4) Now, those who are called “those whose minds are distracted from emptiness” are those bodhisattvas who have newly entered the [mahā]yāna and deviate from the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart.<sup>1485</sup> [Among them, there are] those who [wrongly] assert the door to liberation that is emptiness in order to destroy [really existing] entities, [thinking] that parinirvāṇa refers to the extinction and destruction of [previously] really existing phenomena at a later time. Or, [there are] also those who resort to emptiness through focusing on emptiness [as some real entity, thinking] that what is called “emptiness” exists, by way of being distinct from form and so on, as some entity that is to be realized and with which one should familiarize.<sup>1486</sup>

What is it that is described here as “the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart”?<sup>1487</sup> {J76}

**There is nothing to be removed from this  
And not the slightest to be added.**



Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.<sup>1488</sup> I.154

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable. I.155

What is taught by this? There is no characteristic of afflicted phenomena to be removed from the basic element of the tathāgatas that is completely pure by nature {D114a} because it has the nature of being the emptiness of adventitious stains.<sup>1489</sup> {P118b} Nor is the slightest characteristic of purified phenomena to be added to it because it has the nature of inseparable pure attributes.<sup>1490</sup> Therefore, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

The tathāgata heart is empty of all cocoons of afflictions that are separable [from it] and [can] be realized as being divisible [from it]. It is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable [from it], [can] not be realized as being divisible [from it], and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>1491</sup>

Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent.<sup>1492</sup> These two verses elucidate the unmistakable<sup>1493</sup> defining characteristic of emptiness [in the case of the tathāgata heart] since it [thus] is free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.<sup>1494</sup>

Here, those whose minds are distracted from, and stray outside of, this principle of the meaning of emptiness,<sup>1495</sup> do not cultivate it in samādhi, and are not one-pointed [with regard to it] are therefore called “those whose minds are distracted from emptiness.” Without being introduced to the wisdom of ultimate emptiness, one is not able to realize and directly perceive the nonconceptual basic element. With this in mind, it is said in detail [in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*]:

The very wisdom of [realizing] the tathāgata heart is the tathāgatas’ wisdom of [realizing] emptiness. The tathāgata heart has never been seen before and has never been realized before by any śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.<sup>1496</sup>

Inasmuch as the tathāgata heart is the dharmadhātu<sup>1497</sup> heart, it is said not to be the sphere of those who fall into the views about a real personality because the dharmadhātu is the remedy for [all] views. {P119a} Inasmuch as it is the dharmakāya, the heart of [all] supramundane dharmas, {D114b} it is said not to be the sphere of those who delight in mistakenness because the supramundane dharmakāya<sup>1498</sup> is explained to be the remedy for mundane dharmas, such as impermanence. Inasmuch as it is the heart of the naturally pure dharmas, it is said not to be the sphere of those whose minds are distracted from emptiness<sup>1499</sup> {J77} because the dharmas that are its pure qualities,<sup>1500</sup> which are characterized by being inseparable from the supramundane dharmakāya, have the nature of being the emptiness of adventitious stains.<sup>1501</sup> Here, to have realized the introduction to the wisdom that is not different from the dharmadhātu as the single principle and thus to behold the natural purity of the supramundane dharmakāya is asserted to be the seeing of the wisdom that accords with true reality. It is said that through this [seeing], the bodhisattvas who dwell on the ten bhūmis see the tathāgata heart [only] a little bit. Thus, it is declared:

Just as the sun [seen] in the sky through a gap in the clouds [is not seen in its entirety], you are not seen in your entirety here  
Even by the noble ones who have the pure eye of insight but whose insight is limited.

Bhagavan, [only] those whose perceptiveness is infinite see your dharmakāya

In its entirety, which pervades the infinite firmament of knowable objects.<sup>1502</sup>

[You may wonder,] “If this basic element so difficult to behold is not an object in its entirety even for the supreme noble ones who dwell on the bhūmi that is completely free from attachment, what is the point of this instruction [on the basic element] for [anybody below these bodhisattvas,] beginning with naive beings?”<sup>1503</sup> [There follow] two verses about summarizing the purpose of this instruction, with one [presenting] the question and the second one the explanation [in reply].

Having said here and there<sup>1504</sup> that, just like clouds, dreams, and illusions,

All knowable objects are empty in every respect,<sup>1505</sup>

Why then did the buddhas teach here {P119b}.

That the buddha element exists in each sentient being? I.156

They taught this so that those in whom they exist

May relinquish the five flaws of faintheartedness,

Contempt for inferior sentient beings, clinging to what is unreal,

{D115a}

Deprecating the real dharma, and excessive self-cherishing. I.157

The meaning of these two verses is to be understood in brief by the [following] ten verses. {J78}

It has been stated that the conditioned phenomena

In the myriads of beings<sup>1506</sup> are void in all aspects,

With the entities of afflictions, karma,

And [their] maturations resembling clouds and so on. I.158

The afflictions resemble clouds, the performance

Of actions is like the experiences in a dream,

And the skandhas—the maturations of afflictions and karma—

Are like the magical manifestations in an illusion. I.159

It was presented in this way before

But later in this ultimate continuum<sup>1507</sup> here

It is explained that the basic element exists

In order to relinquish the five flaws. I.160

Thus, not having heard about this,

In some who are fainthearted,

Due to the flaw of self-contempt,

The mind-set for awakening does not arise. I.161

Even if [some] have given rise to bodhicitta,

They may become proud, [thinking,] “I am superior”

And entertain the notion of inferiority

About those in whom bodhicitta has not arisen. I.162

In those who think like that,

Perfect wisdom does not arise.

Therefore, they cling to what is unreal  
 And do not realize true reality.<sup>1508</sup> I.163

The flaws of sentient beings are unreal  
 Because they are fabricated and adventitious.  
 What is real are the qualities, whose nature is pure  
 [Due to] the identitylessness of these flaws.<sup>1509</sup> I.164

Those whose minds cling to unreal flaws  
 And deprecate the real qualities  
 Do not attain the love of seeing  
 Themselves and sentient beings as equal. I.165

However, due to having heard this, there arise in them  
 Great ardor, respect [for all] as for the teacher,  
 Prajñā, wisdom, and great love.  
 Then, through the arising of these five qualities, I.166

They lack [self-]contempt, regard [all] as equal,  
 Are free from flaws, possess the qualities,  
 And cherish themselves and sentient beings equally,  
 Thus attaining buddhahood swiftly. I.167

{P120a} This completes the first chapter,<sup>1510</sup> the topic of the tathāgata heart, in the treatise *An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna*, [with] the exposition of the summarized meaning of the verses. {J79}

## AWAKENING

[Thus far] suchness with stains has been discussed. At this point, stainless suchness shall be treated. Now, what is this stainless suchness? {D115b} Since this [suchness] is free from all kinds of stains in the uncontaminated basic element of the buddha bhagavāns, it is presented as the fundamental change. In brief, this should be understood in terms of eight points. What are these eight points?

[Buddhahood] is purity, attainment, freedom,  
 One's own welfare and that of others, the foundation of this,  
 And profundity, vastness, and magnanimity  
 For as long as time lasts and in accordance [with beings]. II.1

In due order, this verse explains [buddhahood in] eight topics. They are: (1) the topic of [its] nature, (2) the topic of [its] cause, (3) the topic of [its] fruition, (4) the topic of [its] function, (5) the topic of [its] endowment [with qualities], (6) the topic of [its] manifestation, (7) the topic of [its] permanence, and (8) the topic of [its] inconceivability.

(1) Here, the Bhagavān called the basic element that is not liberated from the cocoon of the afflictions “the tathāgata heart.” Its purity is to be understood as the nature of the fundamental change. Therefore, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, those who have no doubt about the tathāgata heart that is covered by all the millions of cocoons of the afflictions do not have doubts about the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata that is liberated from all the cocoons of the afflictions.<sup>1511</sup>

(2) Wisdom is twofold—supramundane nonconceptual [wisdom] and the mundane<sup>1512</sup> [wisdom] that is attained subsequent to it. This mundane and supramundane wisdom—the cause of the fundamental change—is indicated through the term “attainment.” [Here,] “attainment” refers to that through which [this fundamental change] is attained.

(3) The fruition of these [two wisdoms] {P120b} is twofold—the twofold freedom that consists of the freedom from afflictive obscurations and the freedom from cognitive obscurations.

(4) The function [of these two fruitions] is the fulfillment of one's own welfare and that of others, respectively.

(5) Endowment refers to being associated with the foundation of this [function, that is, with the ultimate characteristics of buddhahood].

(6)–(8) Manifestation refers to [this foundation's] permanently manifesting through the three buddhakāyas that are characterized by profundity, vastness, and magnanimity, respectively, in an inconceivable manner for as long as [saṃsāric] existence remains.

[First, there is] a synopsis:

Through nature, cause, fruition,  
Function, endowment, manifestation,  
And its permanence {D116a} and inconceivability,  
The buddhabhūmi is determined.<sup>1513</sup> II.2

{J80} Now, [there follows] a verse on buddhahood and the means for its attainment, which refers to (1) the topic of nature and (2) the topic of cause.

Buddhahood, spoken of as being luminous by nature [but] having  
been obscured by the massive web  
Of the thick clouds of adventitious afflictive and cognitive  
[obscurations], just as the sun and the sky,  
Is endowed with all the stainless buddha qualities and is permanent,  
everlasting, and eternal.  
It is attained based on the wisdom that is nonconceptual about [all]  
phenomena and discriminates them. II.3

The meaning of this verse is to be understood in brief through the [following] four verses.

Buddhahood is characterized  
By [its] inseparable pure attributes—  
The two characteristics of wisdom and relinquishment<sup>1514</sup>—  
Which are similar to the sun and the sky. II.4

It possesses all the buddha attributes  
 Which are beyond the sands of the river Gaṅgā [in number],  
 Luminous, unproduced,  
 And manifesting in an inseparable manner. II.5

By virtue of not being established by any nature,  
 Being pervasive, and being adventitious,  
 Afflictive and cognitive obscurations  
 Are described as being like clouds in it.<sup>1515</sup> II.6

The cause of becoming separated  
 From the two obscurations is twofold wisdom.  
 This wisdom is asserted as the nonconceptual one  
 And the one attained subsequent to that. II.7

As for its being said [above] that “purity is the nature of the fundamental change,” here, in brief, purity is twofold—natural purity and the purity {P121a} of being without stains. Here, natural purity is [in itself] liberation, but it is not [yet] freed because the luminous nature of the mind has not become freed from adventitious stains. The purity of being without stains is [both] liberation and freed because the luminous nature of the mind has become freed from all adventitious stains without exception, just as water and so on [having become freed from] the stains of silt and so on.<sup>1516</sup>

Now, [there follow] two verses on the purity of being without stains, which refer to (3) the topic of fruition. {J81}

Just as a pond with stainless water’s having become abundant with  
 trees and lotus flowers,<sup>1517</sup>  
 Just as the full moon’s having been released from the mouth of Rāhu,  
 And {D116b} just as the sun, with its rays’ having been liberated  
 from the defilements of clouds and so on,  
 This very<sup>1518</sup> [buddhahood] appears as liberation<sup>1519</sup> because it is  
 endowed with stainless qualities. II.8

The state of the victor is like the chief of sages, honey, a kernel, gold,  
 A treasure of excellent jewels, and a big fruit tree,  
 Like a stainless precious representation of the Sugata,  
 A supreme lord of the earth, and a golden image. II.9

The meaning of these two verses is to be understood in brief through the [following] eight verses.

The purity of the adventitious afflictions, such as desire,  
Which is like the water in a pond and so on,  
In brief, is said to be the fruition  
Of nonconceptual wisdom. II.10

The seeing of the buddha state<sup>1520</sup>  
That is endowed with all supreme aspects  
Is explained to be the fruition of the wisdom  
That is attained subsequent to that. II.11

[Buddhahood] is like a pond with very clear water  
Because it has eliminated the turbidity of the silt of desire  
And because it sprinkles the water of dhyāna  
Upon those to be guided, who resemble lotuses. II.12

It resembles the stainless full moon  
Because it has been released from Rāhu-like hatred  
And because it pervades the world  
With its rays of great love and compassion. II.13

This buddhahood is similar to the sun without stains  
Because it is liberated from the clouds of ignorance  
And because it dispels the darkness  
In the world with its rays of wisdom. II.14 {P121b}

Because it has the nature of being equal to the unequaled,  
Because it bestows the taste of the genuine dharma,  
And because it is free from what is useless,<sup>1521</sup>  
It is like the Sugata, honey, and a kernel. II.15 {J82}

Because it is pure, because it has ended poverty  
By virtue of its substance's consisting of qualities,<sup>1522</sup>  
And because it grants the fruit of liberation,  
It is like gold, a treasure, and a tree. II.16



Because its body consists of the jewel of the dharma,  
 Because it is the supreme lord of human beings,  
 And because it has the appearance of a precious form,  
 It is like a precious [representation], a king, and an image. II.17

(4) Twofold wisdom—supramundane nonconceptual [wisdom] and the [wisdom] attained subsequent to it—is the cause of the fundamental change that is called a “result of freedom.”<sup>1523</sup> Its function is the fulfillment of one’s own welfare and that of others. What is the fulfillment of one’s own welfare and that of others here? The attainment of the unobscured dharmakāya by virtue of being liberated from [all] afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies {D117a} is called “the fulfillment of one’s own welfare.” What is based on that [fulfillment of one’s own welfare] and consists of [a buddha’s] engagement by way of the twofold mastery over displaying and teaching in the form of the two [rūpa]kāyas in an effortless manner for as long as the world lasts is called “the fulfillment of the welfare of others.”

[There follow] three verses on the fulfillment of one’s own welfare and that of others, which refer to this topic of function.

Being the uncontaminated all-pervasive matrix of indestructible  
 nature

That is everlasting, peaceful, eternal, and imperishable,  
 Tathāgatahood, just as space, is the cause

For the wise experiencing the objects of the six sense faculties.<sup>1524</sup> II.18

[Though] always serving as the cause for his powerful form and  
 objects<sup>1525</sup>

Being seen, for his perfect and pure discourses<sup>1526</sup> being heard,  
 For the pure discipline of the tathāgatas being smelled,<sup>1527</sup>

For the supreme flavor of the great and noble genuine dharma’s  
 being tasted, II.19 {83}

For the pleasurable touch of samādhi’s being relished,

And for the principle<sup>1528</sup> that is profound by nature being realized,  
 The Tathāgata, being the ultimate depth of very subtle thinking,<sup>1529</sup>  
 Is free from [being] a cause, just as space. II.20

{P122a} The meaning of these three verses is to be understood in brief through the [following] eight verses.

In brief, the function of the two wisdoms  
Is to be understood as this—  
The perfection of the [vi]muktikāya  
And the purification of the dharmakāya. II.21

The vimukti[kāya] and the dharmakāya  
Are to be understood in two ways<sup>1530</sup> and in one way—  
As<sup>1531</sup> being uncontaminated, as being all-pervasive,  
And as being the unconditioned matrix. II.22

[The vimuktikāya] is uncontaminated because of the cessation  
Of the afflictions together with their latent tendencies.  
Wisdom is held to be all-pervasive  
Because it is without attachment and without obstruction. II.23

Being unconditioned is due to having  
The nature of being absolutely indestructible.  
This character of indestructibility is the brief statement  
That is explained by “everlasting” and so on. II.24

Destructibility is to be understood as four kinds  
By virtue of the opposites of “everlasting” and so on,  
Which are putridity, sickness, extinction,  
And death in an inconceivable manner. II.25

Since it lacks these, it is to be understood as  
Everlasting, peaceful, eternal, and imperishable.  
This stainless wisdom is the matrix  
Because it is the foundation of [all] pure attributes.<sup>1532</sup> II.26

Just as space, which is not a cause,  
Is the cause for forms, sounds, smells,  
Tastes, tangible objects, and phenomena  
Being seen, heard, and so on, II.27 {J84} {D117b}

Likewise, on account of being unobscured,  
 The two kāyas are the cause  
 For the arising of uncontaminated qualities  
 Within the objects of the sense faculties of the wise. II.28

As for its being said [here] that the Buddha has the characteristic of space, this was said with the ultimate unique buddha characteristics of the tathāgatas in mind. As [the *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*] says:

If the Tathāgata were to be viewed [just] by way of the thirty-two marks of a great being, a cakravartin king too would become a tathāgata.<sup>1533</sup>

(5) Now, [there follows] a verse on the ultimate characteristics, which refers to the topic of endowment. {P122b}

Buddhahood is inconceivable, permanent, everlasting, quiescent,<sup>1534</sup>  
 eternal,  
 Peaceful, all-pervasive, and free from conception, just like space.  
 It is everywhere without attachment and obstruction, free from  
 harsh sensations,  
 Invisible, ungraspable, splendid, and stainless. II.29

Here, the meaning of this verse is to be understood in brief through the [following] eight verses.

One's own welfare and that of others is taught  
 Through the vimukti[kāya] and the dharmakāya.  
 This foundation of one's own welfare and that of others  
 Is endowed with the qualities such as being inconceivable. II.30

Buddhahood is the object of omniscient wisdom [alone].  
 Since it is not the object of the three wisdoms,  
 It is to be understood as being inconceivable  
 [Even] by people with wisdom.<sup>1535</sup> II.31

Since it is subtle, it is not an object of study.  
 Since it is the ultimate, it is not [an object] of reflection.  
 Since it is the depth of the nature of phenomena,  
 It is not [an object] of worldly meditation and so forth. II.32

For naive beings have never seen it before,  
 Just as those born blind [have never seen] form.  
 Even noble ones [see it only] as an infant [would glimpse]  
 The orb of the sun while lying in the house<sup>1536</sup> of a new mother. II.33

It is permanent because it is free from arising.  
 It is everlasting since it is free from ceasing.  
 It is quiescent because it is without duality.  
 It is eternal since the nature of phenomena [always] remains. II.34  
 {J85}

It is peaceful because it is the reality of cessation.  
 It is all-pervasive since it realizes everything.  
 It is nonconceptual because it is nonabiding.  
 It is without attachment since the afflictions are relinquished. II.35

It is everywhere without obstruction  
 Because it is pure of all cognitive obscurations.  
 It is free from harsh sensations  
 Since it is a state of gentleness and workability.<sup>1537</sup> II.36

It is invisible because it has no form. {D118a}  
 It is ungraspable since it has no characteristics.  
 It is splendid because it is pure by nature.  
 It is stainless because the stains are eliminated. II.37

(6) Now, this tathāgatahood manifests<sup>1538</sup> as being inseparable from its unconditioned qualities, just as space. Nevertheless, since it is endowed with unique attributes, one should see that it, through its particular applications of inconceivable great means, compassion, and prajñā and by way of the three stainless kāyas (svābhāvika[kāya], sām̐bhogika[kāya], and nairmāṇika[kāya]), manifests as the cause that brings about the benefit and happiness of beings {P123a} in an uninterrupted, endless, and effortless manner for as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts. [Thus, there follow] these four verses here<sup>1539</sup> on the distinction of the [three] buddhakāyas, which refer to the topic of manifestation.

Without beginning, middle, and end, undifferentiable,  
 Nondual,<sup>1540</sup> freed<sup>1541</sup> in three ways,<sup>1542</sup> stainless, and nonconceptual—

This is the nature of the dharmadhātu, which is seen  
In meditative equipoise by yogins who strive for it.<sup>1543</sup> II.38

It is the stainless basic element<sup>1544</sup> of the tathāgatas,  
Which is endowed with qualities that are immeasurable, inconceivable,  
Unequaled, and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in  
number] {J86}  
And which has eradicated all flaws including their latent tendencies.  
II.39

Through physical appearances in the form of various light rays of  
the genuine dharma,<sup>1545</sup>  
It makes efforts in accomplishing the goal of liberating beings,<sup>1546</sup>  
In its actions resembling the precious king of wish-fulfilling jewels  
[In assuming] various appearances but not having their nature.<sup>1547</sup> II.40

The cause in [various] worlds for introducing [beings]  
To the path of peace, maturing them, and giving them the prophecies  
Is this apparitional form [of the dharmakāya], which always abides  
in it,  
Just as the element of form does in the element of space.<sup>1548</sup> II.41

Now, the summarized meaning of these four verses is to be understood  
through the [following] twenty verses.

What is called “buddhahood”  
Is the omniscience of the self-arisen ones,  
The highest nirvāṇa,<sup>1549</sup> and the inconceivable  
Personal attainment of the arhats.<sup>1550</sup> II.42

Its division is its manifestation as three  
Kāyas, such as the svābhāvika[kāya],  
Which are characterized by the attributes that are the qualities  
Of profundity, vastness, and magnanimity. II.43

Here, the svābhāvikakāya of the buddhas {D118b}  
Is to be understood, in brief,  
As having five characteristics  
And being endowed with five kinds of qualities. II.44

It is unconditioned, undifferentiable,  
 Free from the two extremes,  
 And liberated from the three obscurations—  
 Afflictive, cognitive, and those of meditative absorption. II.45 {J87}

Because of being stainless, because of being nonconceptual, {P123b}  
 And because of being the sphere of yogins,  
 It is pure and luminous by virtue of  
 Having the nature of the dharmadhātu.<sup>1551</sup> II.46

The svābhāvika-body is endowed with  
 The qualities of being immeasurable,  
 Innumerable, inconceivable, unequalled,  
 And having reached the perfection of purity. II.47

By virtue of being vast, not enumerable,  
 Not the sphere of dialecticians,  
 Absolutely unique, and the elimination of latent tendencies,  
 It is, in due order, immeasurable and so on. II.48

By way of appearing as the dharma [due to]  
 Enjoying all kinds of dharma and [due to] form,<sup>1552</sup>  
 By way of the welfare of sentient beings being uninterrupted  
 [Due to] its being the natural outflow of pure compassion, II.49

By way of fulfilling [all aims] as wished  
 In a nonconceptual and effortless manner,  
 And by way of [resembling] the miraculous power of a wish-fulfilling  
 jewel,  
 The sambhoga [kāya] is presented. II.50

In terms of instruction, display,  
 Uninterrupted activity, effortlessness,  
 And appearing [in these ways but] not having their nature,<sup>1553</sup>  
 Its variety is described as being fivefold. II.51

Due to the variety of conditions of [different] colors,  
 A jewel does not [appear] in its actual state.

Likewise, due to the variety of conditions of [different] sentient beings,  
The lord does not [appear] in his actual state. II.52

With great compassion, the knower of the world  
Beholds the world in its entirety.  
Without moving away<sup>1554</sup> from the dharmakāya  
And through various emanated forms, II.53

[He assumes his previous] births, appears  
In Tuṣita, descends from there,  
Enters the womb [of his mother], is born,  
Becomes skilled in the field of arts and crafts,<sup>1555</sup> II.54 {J88}

Enjoys entertainments in the circle of his queens,  
Renounces [all of it], practices asceticism,  
Reaches the seat of awakening,  
Vanquishes the armies of Māra, II.55

Becomes completely awakened, [turns] the wheel of dharma,  
And passes into nirvāṇa. [All] these deeds  
He demonstrates in impure worlds  
For as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts. II.56 {D119a}

Through the words “impermanence,” “suffering,”  
“Lack of self,” and “peace,” the knower of the means  
Creates weariness of the three realms in sentient beings {P124a}  
And makes them cross over into nirvāṇa. II.57

Those who have entered the path of peace  
And think that they have attained nirvāṇa,  
Through his teachings about the true reality of phenomena,  
Such as in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka[sūtra]*, II.58

He turns away from their former clinging<sup>1556</sup> and,  
Through embracing them with prajñā and means,  
Matures them in the supreme yāna  
And prophesies their highest awakening. II.59

By virtue of subtlety, by virtue of the perfection of power,<sup>1557</sup>  
 And by virtue of the guidance that [serves] the welfare<sup>1558</sup> of naive  
 beings,  
 In due order, [the buddhakāyas] are to be understood  
 As profundity, vastness, and magnanimity for them.<sup>1559</sup> II.60

Here, the first one is the dharmakāya ·  
 And the latter two are the two rūpakāyas.  
 Just as form abides in space,  
 The latter dwell in the first one.<sup>1560</sup> II.61

(7) [There follows] a verse on these three kāyas' manifesting [in order to] bring about the benefit and happiness of beings, which refers to the topic of permanence.

By virtue of the causes' being infinite, by virtue of the realms of  
 sentient beings being inexhaustible,  
 By virtue of being endowed with compassion, miraculous powers,  
 wisdom, and fulfillment, {J89}  
 By virtue of mastering [all] dharmas, by virtue of having vanquished  
 the māra of death,  
 And by virtue of lacking any nature, the protector of the world is  
 permanent. II.62

The summarized meaning of this is to be understood through [the following] six verses.<sup>1561</sup>

By virtue of having upheld the genuine dharma  
 Through giving up body, life, and possessions,  
 By virtue of fulfilling the initial commitment  
 In order to benefit all sentient beings and so on, II.63

By virtue of completely pure compassion  
 Manifesting in buddhahood,  
 By virtue of the one who displays<sup>1562</sup> the limbs of miraculous power  
 Being able to remain [in the world]<sup>1563</sup> through them, II.64

By virtue of being liberated through wisdom from grasping  
 At [saṃsāric] existence and nirvāṇa as being two,



By virtue of always being endowed with the fulfillment  
Of the bliss of inconceivable samādhi, II.65

By virtue of being untainted by worldly dharmas  
While acting in the world,  
By virtue of the māra of death not stirring  
Within the attainment of the state of immortality and peace, II.66

By virtue of the sage, whose nature  
Is unconditioned, being primordially at peace,  
And by virtue of being tenable as the refuge and so on<sup>1564</sup>  
Of those without refuge, [the Buddha] is permanent.<sup>1565</sup> II.67 {P124b}

The first seven reasons [show]  
The permanence of the teacher in terms of the rūpakāyas, {D119b}  
And the latter three [demonstrate]  
His permanence in terms of the dharmakāya. II.68

(8) This manner of the tathāgatas' attaining [buddhahood], which is characterized by being the fundamental change, is to be understood by its manner of being inconceivable. [Thus, there follows] a verse about the topic of inconceivability.

Because of being unutterable, because of consisting of the ultimate,  
Because of not being examinable, because of being beyond  
example,<sup>1566</sup> {J90}  
Because of being unsurpassable, and because of not being included  
in [samsaric] existence or [nirvāṇic] peace,  
The sphere of the Buddha is inconceivable even for the noble ones.  
II.69

The summarized meaning of this is to be understood through [the following] four verses.

It is inconceivable because it is inexpressible.  
It is inexpressible because it is the ultimate.  
It is the ultimate because it is incomprehensible by reason.  
It is incomprehensible by reason because it is immeasurable.<sup>1567</sup> II.70

It is immeasurable because it is unsurpassable.

It is unsurpassable because it is not included [in saṃsāra or nirvāṇa].

It is not included [in them] because it does not abide [in either one]

Since it lacks conceptions about their flaws and qualities,  
respectively. II.71

Due to the [first] five reasons, [buddhahood] is subtle

And therefore is inconceivable in terms of the dharmakāya.

Due to the sixth one, it is not [manifest in] its truly real state

And therefore is inconceivable in terms of the rūpakāya. II.72

By virtue of the qualities of unsurpassable wisdom and great  
compassion,

The victors, who have accomplished [all] qualities, are inconceivable.

Therefore, this final stage of the self-arisen ones is not even known

By the great seers who have obtained the empowerment.<sup>1568</sup> II.73

[This completes] the second chapter, entitled the topic of awakening, in the treatise *An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna*. {J91}

## THE BUDDHA QUALITIES

[In the second chapter,] stainless suchness has been treated. What is to be discussed now are the qualities that are based on this [suchness] and are absolutely stainless due to their nature's being undifferentiable [from it], just as the radiance, color, and shape of a jewel [are inseparable from that jewel]. Thus, following [the presentation of stainless suchness, there is] {P125a} a verse about the analysis of the buddha qualities.

One's own welfare and the welfare of others consist of the ultimate  
 kāya  
 And the seeming kāya that is based on it, respectively.  
 Due to representing the states of freedom and maturation,  
 respectively,  
 They represent the fruition, which is classified as sixty-four  
 qualities.<sup>1569</sup> III.1

What is taught [by this]?

The ultimate body {D120a}  
 Is the support of the fulfillment of one's own [welfare].  
 The conventional body of the seer  
 Is the support of the fulfillment [of the welfare of] others. III.2

The first body is endowed with  
 The qualities of freedom, such as the powers,  
 And the second one, with those of maturation,  
 Which are the marks of a great being.<sup>1570</sup> III.3

The text hereafter is about what the powers and such are and how they are to be understood.<sup>1571</sup>

The powers are like a vajra for the obscurations of ignorance,  
 The fearlessnesses amid the retinue resemble a lion,  
 The unique [qualities] of the Tathāgata are similar to space,  
 And the sage's two kinds of display<sup>1572</sup> are like the moon [reflected in]  
 water. III.4

[There follow two verses about] the statement that [the Buddha] is endowed with the powers.

What is the case and what is not the case,  
 Maturation of karmas, faculties,  
 Constitutions, inclinations,  
 The path that leads everywhere, III.5 {J92}

Afflicted and stainless dhyānas and so on,  
 Recollection of [former birth]places,  
 The divine eye, and peace<sup>1573</sup>—  
 Knowing these represents the ten kinds of power. III.6

As for its being said that [these powers] are like a vajra, [the next verse says:]

[In knowing] what is the case and what is not the case, maturation,  
 constitutions, the various inclinations of beings, the means,  
 What is afflicted and purified, the collection of faculties,<sup>1574</sup>  
 recollection of former [birth]places,  
 The divine eye, and the mode of the termination of contamination,  
 the powers are like a vajra  
 Because they pierce the armor, break the immovable wall, and cut  
 down the tree of ignorance. III.7

[There follow two verses about] its being said that [the Buddha] has attained the four fearlessnesses.

The four kinds of fearlessness are with regard to  
 The complete realization of all phenomena,  
 The termination of [all] obstacles,<sup>1575</sup>  
 Teaching the path, and attaining cessation. III.8 {P125b}

By virtue of knowing and making others<sup>1576</sup> know all one's own  
 entities and those of others that are to be known,  
 By virtue of having relinquished and making [others] relinquish<sup>1577</sup>  
 the entities to be relinquished, by virtue of having relied [and  
 making others rely] on the means to be relied on,

And by virtue of having attained and making others attain the  
 unsurpassable and utterly stainless [state] to be attained,  
 The noble ones<sup>1578</sup> are never paralyzed with fear<sup>1579</sup> anywhere since  
 they teach the reality of one's own welfare and that of others. III.9

As for its being said that [these fearlessnesses] resemble a lion, [the next  
 verse says:]

Just as the king of animals is never frightened  
 And roams about fearlessly among the animals in the jungle, {J93}  
 The lion who is the lord of sages dwells amid his retinue {D120b}  
 Independently,<sup>1580</sup> indifferently, firmly, and powerfully.<sup>1581</sup> III.10

[There follow five verses about] the statement that [the Buddha] is endowed  
 with the eighteen unique buddha attributes.

The teacher is without mistakenness and chatter,  
 Is never bereft of mindfulness,  
 Lacks a mind not resting in meditative equipoise,  
 Is free from notions of diversity, III.11

Lacks indifference without examination,  
 His striving, vigor, mindfulness,  
 Prajñā, liberation,<sup>1582</sup> and vision  
 Of the wisdom of liberation never deteriorate, III.12

His actions<sup>1583</sup> are preceded by wisdom,  
 And his wisdom in the three times is unobscured.  
 These eighteen are the guru's qualities  
 That are unique compared to others.<sup>1584</sup> III.13

The seer lacks mistakenness, chatter, mindlessness, mental  
 agitation,<sup>1585</sup>  
 Notions of difference, and natural indifference, while there is never  
 any deterioration  
 Of his striving, vigor, mindfulness, pure stainless prajñā and  
 liberation,  
 And vision of the wisdom of liberation (seeing all objects to be  
 known).<sup>1586</sup> III.14

He engages in the three actions with regard to objects<sup>1587</sup> that are  
 preceded by omniscience,  
 And the operation of his vast wisdom is always unobstructed with  
 regard to the three times. {J94}  
 Thus is this state of the victor, which is endowed with great  
 compassion and realized by the victors.  
 By virtue of this realization, he fearlessly turns the great wheel of the  
 genuine dharma in the world.<sup>1588</sup> III.15

{P126a} As for its being said that [these unique qualities] are similar to  
 space, [the next verse says:]

What is the true nature of earth and so on is not found as the true  
 nature of space,  
 And the characteristic qualities of space (such as being unobscured)  
 are not [found] in forms [either].  
 [Still,] earth, water, fire, wind, and space are equal in being common  
 to [all] the worlds,  
 But the unique buddha [qualities] are not in the least<sup>1589</sup> common to  
 the worlds.<sup>1590</sup> III.16

[There follow nine verses about] the statement that [the Buddha] possesses  
 a physical form with the thirty-two marks of a great being.

His feet are firmly placed, marked with wheels,<sup>1591</sup>  
 And have broad [heels] and nonprotruding [ankles].  
 His fingers and toes<sup>1592</sup> are long,  
 Joined by webs on hands and feet. III.17

His skin is soft and youthfully tender,  
 His body has seven convex surfaces,  
 His calves are antelope-like,  
 And his private parts are concealed as [they are] with an elephant.  
 III.18

His upper body is lionlike, {D121a}  
 The flesh between the shoulders<sup>1593</sup> is broad and compact,  
 His shoulders are evenly rounded,  
 And his arms are rounded, soft, and not uneven.<sup>1594</sup> III.19 {J95}

His arms are hanging [down to the knees],  
 [His body] has a pure halo of light around it,  
 His neck is stainless like a conch,<sup>1595</sup>  
 And his jaws are like those of the king of animals. III.20

His forty teeth are equally [distributed],<sup>1596</sup>  
 Very bright, and well arranged.  
 His teeth are pure and of equal [size],<sup>1597</sup>  
 And his eyeteeth are very white. III.21

His tongue is big and tastes the supreme taste,  
 Which is infinite and inconceivable.  
 The voice of the self-arisen is like that of a kalaviṅka [bird]<sup>1598</sup>  
 And has the melodious tone [of the voice] of Brahmā. III.22

His eyes are beautiful like blue water lilies, with eyelashes like a bull,  
 His face is handsome, endowed with the white immaculate ūrṇā hair,  
 His head [is crowned by] an uṣṇiṣa, and the skin  
 Of the supreme of beings is pure, delicate, and has a golden hue. III.23

His body hairs, each one separate by itself, are soft and subtle,  
 Pointing upward from the body and curling to the right.  
 His hair is [colored] like a stainless blue sapphire,  
 And he is [well proportioned] like the maṇḍala of a perfect  
 nyagrodha tree. III.24 {P126b}

The ever-excellent and incomparable body of the great seer  
 Is firm and possesses the strength of Nārāyaṇa.<sup>1599</sup>  
 The teacher declared these thirty-two [marks]  
 Of infinite splendor to be the signs of the lord of humans.<sup>1600</sup> III.25

As for its being said that [the Buddha's display] is like the moon [reflected  
 in] water, [the next verse says:]

Just as the splendor of the moon in a cloudless sky  
 Is seen in the blue autumn waters of great ponds, {J96}  
 So the hosts of the children of the victors see the splendor  
 Of the lord on the surfaces of the circles [around] the perfect  
 Buddha.<sup>1601</sup> III.26

Thus, these ten powers of the Tathāgata, the four fearlessnesses, the eighteen unique buddha attributes, and the thirty-two marks of a great being, being combined as a single [set],<sup>1602</sup> make up sixty-four.

These sixty-four qualities,  
Each one together with their causes,  
Are to be understood in due order  
Through following the *Ratna[dārikā]sūtra*. III.27

Here, the instruction that distinguishes these sixty-four qualities of the Tathāgata, as they were explained [above], in detail in the same sequence,<sup>1603</sup> {D121b} is to be understood by following the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*.<sup>1604</sup>

Also, four examples were stated [above] for these [four] points [the powers, the fearlessnesses, the unique qualities, and the marks of a great being] in due order—a vajra, a lion, space, and the moon [reflected in] water. The summarized meaning of these is to be understood through the [following] twelve verses.

As for the powers and so on,<sup>1605</sup> due to being penetrating,<sup>1606</sup>  
At ease, exclusive, and effortless, respectively,  
They are illustrated by a vajra, a lion,  
Space, and the moon [reflected in] clear water. III.28

Through six powers, three,  
And one, in due order,  
All stains in terms of what is to be cognized, meditative absorption,  
And [the afflictions] including their latent tendencies are eliminated.  
III.29

Therefore since these [three stains] are pierced, broken, and cut down  
Like an armor, a wall, and a tree, respectively,  
The powers of the seer are like a vajra,  
Being weighty, firm, strong, and unbreakable. III.30 {P127a}

Why are they weighty? Because they are firm.  
Why are they firm? Because they are strong.  
Why are they strong? Because they are unbreakable.  
Since they are unbreakable, they are like a vajra. III.31



Because of being unafraid, because of being indifferent,  
 Because of being firm, and because of being supremely powerful,  
 The lion of sages resembles a lion,  
 Being fearless amid the assemblies of his retinue. III.32 {J97}

By virtue of possessing all supernatural knowledges,  
 He abides independently without being afraid of anything.  
 He is indifferent because he sees that he is by nature  
 Not equal even to pure sentient beings. III.33

He is firm because his mind is always  
 In samādhi with regard to all phenomena.  
 He is powerful because he has supremely transcended  
 The ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. III.34

As for worldly people, śrāvakas, those who live in solitude,  
 The intelligent, and the self-arisen,  
 Their insight is increasingly more subtle.  
 Therefore, they are illustrated by the five elements.<sup>1607</sup> III.35

Since [the first four] sustain all the worlds,  
 They are like earth, water, fire, and wind.  
 Since [the fifth] is characterized by being beyond the mundane  
 And the supramundane, it resembles space.<sup>1608</sup> III.36

These thirty-two qualities mentioned  
 [Here] make up the dharmakāya  
 Because they are undifferentiable [from it],  
 Just as its radiance, color, and form are [inseparable from] a precious  
 jewel. III.37

What are called “the thirty-two marks”<sup>1609</sup>  
 Are the qualities that delight upon being seen  
 And are based on the two rūpakāyas—  
 The nirmāṇa[kāya] and the one enjoying the dharma. III.38

For those who dwell far from and close to purity,  
 In the world and in the maṇḍala of the victor,

**They display in two ways,<sup>1610</sup> just as [does] the form  
Of the moon in pure water and in the sky.<sup>1611</sup> III.39 {D122a}**

[This completes] the third chapter, entitled the topic of the qualities, in the treatise *An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna*. {J98}

## BUDDHA ACTIVITY

[In the third chapter,] the stainless buddha qualities have been discussed. [Now,] we shall treat the activity [based on] these [qualities], the deeds of a victor. In brief, this [activity] operates in the two manners of being effortless and uninterrupted.<sup>1612</sup> Thus, {P127b} following [the presentation of the buddha qualities], [there are] two verses about the effortless and uninterrupted acts of a buddha.

The lord always engages without effort

In the constitutions<sup>1613</sup> of those to be guided, the means to guide them,

The activities of guidance [that suit] the constitutions of those to be guided,

And in finding the [proper] place and time for this [activity]. IV.1

Having churned<sup>1614</sup> the entire [ocean-like mahā]yāna,<sup>1615</sup> which contains the jewels of the host of supreme qualities and the water of wisdom,<sup>1616</sup>

And having seen buddhahood, which is like the vast sky without middle and end pervaded by the sun rays of merit and wisdom,<sup>1617</sup> [Existing] as a treasure of stainless qualities in all sentient beings without difference,

The wind-like compassion of the victors blows away the web of the clouds of afflictive and cognitive [obscurations]. IV.2

The summarized meaning of these [two verses] is to be understood through [the following] two and eight verses, respectively.

Since they lack conceptions as to

For whom, whereby, where,

And when which<sup>1618</sup> guiding activity [is to be performed],

[The activity] of the sages is always effortless. IV.3

“For whom” [refers to] the constitutions of those to be guided;

“Whereby,” to the abundant means;

“Which,” to the guiding activity;  
 And “where and when,” to the [proper] place and time for this  
 [activity]. IV.4

For [this activity]<sup>1619</sup> lacks conceptions about deliverance,  
 The support of that,<sup>1620</sup> the result of that,  
 Taking hold of that, the obscurations of that,  
 And the condition for eliminating them. IV.5 {J99}

“Deliverance” [refers to] the ten bhūmis;  
 “The cause of that,” to the two accumulations;  
 “The result of that,” to supreme awakening;  
 “Taking hold,” to the beings of awakening;<sup>1621</sup> IV.6

“The obscurations of that,” to the infinite afflictions,  
 Secondary afflictions, and their latent tendencies;  
 And “the condition for overcoming them  
 That is [present] at all times,” to compassion. IV.7

These six points, in due order,  
 Are to be understood  
 As being like the ocean, the sun,  
 The sky, a treasure, clouds, and wind. IV.8

Since it [contains] the water of wisdom {D122b} and the jewels of  
 the qualities,  
 The highest yāna<sup>1622</sup> resembles the ocean. {P128a}  
 Since they sustain all sentient beings,  
 The two accumulations are like the sun. IV.9

Since it is vast and is without middle and end,  
 Awakening is similar to the element of space.  
 Since it has the nature of completely perfect buddhahood,  
 The basic element of sentient beings is like a treasure. IV.10

Since they are adventitious, pervasive, and not established,  
 Its afflictions resemble cloud banks.  
 Since it accomplishes the dispersion of these [clouds],  
 Compassion is like a strong wind. IV.11

Because of [accomplishing] deliverance for the sake of others,  
 Because of regarding sentient beings and oneself as equal,  
 And because of there being no end to what is to be done,  
 [Buddha] activity is uninterrupted as long as [saṃsāric] existence  
 lasts. IV.12

It has been declared that buddhahood is characterized by being without arising and without ceasing. How is it then that from this unconditioned buddhahood, which has the characteristic of lacking functionality, effortless, uninterrupted, and nonconceptual buddha activity manifests functionality here for as long as the world lasts? In order to give rise to faith in the inconceivable object of the Buddha in those in whom dissent and doubt about the Buddha's nature of magnanimity have arisen, [there follows] a verse on his magnanimity.

Like Śakra and a drum, like clouds,  
 Brahmā, the sun, and a precious jewel,  
 Like an echo, like space and the earth,  
 Thus is the Tathāgata. IV.13

{J100} It should be understood that the instruction on the detailed analysis of this verse that represents what the [*Jñānālokālaṃkāra*]*sūtra* [says about this topic will be given] in the remainder of the text in due order. (1) [This *sūtra*] says that [buddha activity] resembles the appearance of Śakra.<sup>1623</sup>

Suppose the ground of the earth  
 Consisted of pure beryl  
 And, due to its clarity, one would see in it  
 The chief of gods with his host of apsaras IV.14

As well as his palace Vaijayanta,  
 Celestial dwellers other than him,  
 Their various palaces,  
 And their divine abundances. IV.15

Upon that, the assemblies of men and women {P128b}  
 Who dwell on the ground of the earth  
 Would take sight of this appearance  
 And make the following prayer: IV.16

“May we too before long  
 Become like that lord of gods!”  
 Then, in order to attain that [state], {D123a}  
 They would immerse themselves in adopting virtue. IV.17

Though being unaware that this  
 Was merely an appearance, they would pass away  
 From the earth and be born in heaven  
 By virtue of their pure karma. IV.18

Though this appearance would be absolutely  
 Without thought and without activity,  
 Its taking place on the earth in that way  
 Would nevertheless be of great benefit. IV.19

Likewise, sentient beings see in their own mind,  
 Once it is stainless through confidence and such  
 And has cultivated the qualities such as confidence,  
 The appearance of the perfect Buddha, IV.20

Who is endowed with the major and minor marks,  
 Performs the various forms of conduct  
 (Walking, standing,  
 Sitting, and lying), IV.21 {J101}

Speaks the dharma of peace,  
 Rests silently in meditative equipoise,  
 Demonstrates all kinds of miraculous displays,  
 And possesses great splendor. IV.22

Having seen it, those who long for it  
 Devote their efforts to this buddhahood.  
 And, through adopting its causes,  
 Attain the state they wish for. IV.23

Though this appearance is absolutely  
 Without thought and without activity,  
 Its taking place in the worlds  
 Is nevertheless of great benefit. IV.24

Ordinary beings do not understand  
 That this is an appearance in their own minds.  
 Nevertheless, to see this image  
 Becomes fruitful for them. IV.25

Gradually, based on seeing that [appearance],  
 Those who dwell in this method<sup>1624</sup>  
 See the inner kāya of the genuine dharma<sup>1625</sup>  
 Through their eye of wisdom. IV.26

Suppose the earth became completely free from all uneven places,  
 gaps, and dirt<sup>1626</sup>  
 And were a surface of clear and spotless<sup>1627</sup> beryl, with the stainless  
 qualities of a jewel, splendid, and even.  
 Due to its purity, a reflection of the array of the abode of the lord of  
 gods, Indra [himself], and the maruts<sup>1628</sup> would appear in it,  
 But since the earth would gradually lose those qualities, {P129a}  
 [that reflection] would disappear again. IV.27

In order [to attain] this state, the assemblies of men and women  
 who are devoted to generosity and such,  
 Through observing the rules of fasting and spiritual discipline and  
 with a determined mind, would strew flowers and so on.  
 Likewise, for the sake of attaining the reflection of the lord of sages  
 in their minds, which resemble a transparent beryl,  
 The children of the victors give rise to the mind-sets [of  
 awakening]<sup>1629</sup> with a joyful mind. IV.28

Just as on the pure ground of beryl {D123b}  
 The reflection of the body of the lord of gods appears,  
 On the pure ground of the minds of beings,  
 The reflection of the body of the lord of sages is displayed. IV.29 {J102}

The appearance and disappearance of this reflection manifests in  
 the world  
 Through the power of one's own mind manifesting in a clear or  
 turbid way.  
 Just as the appearance of a reflection in the worlds,  
 It should not be regarded as either real or unreal. IV.30

(2) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is like the drum of the gods.<sup>1630</sup>

Just as in the heaven of the gods,  
As a result of their previous virtue  
And free from effort, location,  
Mind, form, and conception, IV.31

The drum of the gods<sup>1631</sup> again and again  
Summons all the heedless gods  
Through the sounds “impermanence,”  
“Suffering,” “lack of self,” and “peace,” IV.32

So the lord, who pervades the world  
In its entirety, with his buddha voice,  
Teaches the dharma, free from effort  
And so on, to those who are suitable. IV.33

Just as the sound of the divine drum in the heaven of the gods arises  
from their own karma,  
The sage’s teaching of the dharma in the world also arises from [the  
world’s] own karma.  
Just as [the drum’s] sound, free from effort, location, body, and  
mind, brings forth peace,  
So this dharma devoid of those four factors brings forth peace. IV.34

Just as, when engaging in the troubles of battle in the city of the  
gods, the sound of this drum  
Arises as the cause for them to be fearless and to engage<sup>1632</sup> in the  
[war]play of being victorious over the forces of the asuras,  
So in the world the dhyānas, formless [absorptions], and so on, arise  
as the cause for the [Buddha’s] speech {P129b}  
About the principle of the unsurpassable path that destroys the  
afflictions and pacifies the suffering in sentient beings. IV.35

[You may wonder,] “Why does [this example] here refer [only] to the drum of dharma and not to the cymbals and other kinds of divine [musical instruments]? Due to the power of the previously committed virtuous karma of the gods, without being played [by anybody], these [other



instruments] too produce divine sounds pleasant to hear.” {J103} [They are not referred to here] because they are dissimilar to the Tathāgata’s voice in terms of four kinds of qualities. What are these? They are as follows: being limited, not beneficial, unpleasant, and not conducive to deliverance. By contrast, the drum of dharma is explained to be unlimited because it summons all the assemblies of heedless gods without exception {D124a} and never misses the [proper] time for [doing] so. It is beneficial because it protects [the gods] from being afraid of any harm [caused by] the hosts of their adversaries, such as the asuras, and because it connects them with the [crucial] point of heedfulness.<sup>1633</sup> It is pleasant because it makes [the gods] abandon<sup>1634</sup> the delight and pleasure due to wrong desire and because it brings them close to the [true] delight and pleasure of relishing the dharma. It is explained to be conducive to deliverance because it utters the sounds “impermanence,” “suffering,” “emptiness,” and “lack of self” and because it pacifies misfortune and mental disturbance.

In brief, by virtue of being similar to the drum of dharma through these four aspects, the sphere of the voice of the Buddha is most eminent. Thus, [there follows] a verse on the sphere of the voice of the Buddha’s being most eminent.

Since it is universal, beneficial, pleasant,  
 And endowed with the three miraculous displays,<sup>1635</sup>  
 The voice of the sage is more eminent .  
 Than the divine cymbals. IV.36

It should be understood that a brief instruction on these four aspects {P130a} [is given] in due order by the [following] four verses.

The great sounds of the drums in heaven  
 Do not reach the hearing of those dwelling on earth,  
 But the sound of the drum of the perfect Buddha<sup>1636</sup>  
 Reaches [even] those in the lowest region of saṃsāra.<sup>1637</sup> IV.37

In heaven, the many myriads of divine cymbals  
 Sound [only] for the sake of kindling the flame of desire,  
 But the single voice of those whose character is compassion  
 Manifests for the sake of pacifying the cause of the fire of suffering.  
 IV.38 {J104}

The beautiful and pleasing sounds of the cymbals in heaven  
 Are the causes for increasing mind's agitation,  
 But the voice of the magnanimous tathāgatas  
 Encourages the intention of entrusting the mind to samādhi.<sup>1638</sup> IV.39

In brief, what is the cause of happiness in [all]  
 Infinite worldly realms, the celestial and the earthly,  
 Is stated with reference to this voice that appears  
 Pervasively in all worlds without exception. IV.40

That the [Buddha] pervades all worldly realms in the ten directions without exception through assuming various physical forms indicates “the miraculous display of miraculous powers.” {D124b} That he illuminates the impenetrable mental conduct of all the sentient beings who belong to these [worlds]<sup>1639</sup> through his wisdom of [knowing all] ways of the mind is “the miraculous display of pointing out.” That he gives instructions and directions about the path that is conducive to deliverance through the utterances of his voice is “the miraculous display of advice.”

Thus, the sphere of the Buddha's voice, like the element of space, is unimpeded and operates without limitation. Still, it is not perceived everywhere in all aspects,<sup>1640</sup> but this is not the flaw of the sphere of the Buddha's voice. In order to teach this [there follows] a verse on its being their own fault for those who are not aware of this [voice].<sup>1641</sup>

Just as those deprived of ears do not hear subtle sounds  
 And not all [sounds] become audible even for those with the  
 divine ear,  
 So the subtle dharma, the object of the most acute wisdom, {P130b}  
 Becomes audible only for those whose minds are not afflicted. IV.41

(3) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is similar to clouds.<sup>1642</sup>

Just as in the rainy season  
 Clouds effortlessly rain down  
 Their masses of water on the earth,  
 Thus causing abundant harvests,<sup>1643</sup> IV.42 {J105}

So the victor showers down  
 The rain of the genuine dharma

From the clouds of compassion without a thought  
For the sake of the harvests of virtue of beings. IV.43

Just as clouds, driven by the wind, pour down rain  
On the world where people engage in the path of virtuous actions,  
So, due to the growth of virtue in the world by the wind of compassion,  
The cloud that is the Buddha showers down the rain of the genuine  
dharma. IV.44

In [all saṃsāric] existences, [due to] bearing awareness<sup>1644</sup> and  
compassion,  
Abiding in the sky's sphere without being affected by what is  
perishable and not perishable,<sup>1645</sup>  
And carrying the stainless waters of samādhi and dhāraṇī within it,  
The cloud that is the lord of sages is the cause of the harvests of  
virtue.<sup>1646</sup> IV.45

As for the vessels [of buddha activity] being different in measure:<sup>1647</sup>

Cool, sweet, clear, soft, and light is the rain that is released from  
clouds,  
[But] it assumes a great many tastes due to coming in contact with  
places on earth that are full of salt and so on.  
Likewise, the rainwater of the eightfold [path of the] noble ones that  
is released from being contained in the vast cloud of compassion  
{D125a}  
Assumes many kinds of tastes due to the differences in the places  
that are the mind streams of beings. IV.46

As for [buddha activity's] manifesting indifferently:

Those who are very open, those who are intermediate,<sup>1648</sup>  
And those who are hostile toward the highest yāna,  
These three categories of [beings] respectively  
Resemble humans, peacocks, and hungry ghosts. IV.47

At the end of the summer, when there are no clouds, humans and  
the birds that cannot fly in the sky

[Suffer] on the ground, but hungry ghosts suffer due to the abundance of rainfall during the rainy season. {J106} Similarly, those in the world who desire the dharma<sup>1649</sup> and those who are hostile toward the dharma [suffer], respectively, When the water of the dharma from the cloud banks of compassion<sup>1650</sup> does not appear or appears. IV.48

By raining down thick drops and bringing down hail and lightning,<sup>1651</sup> Clouds are indifferent toward subtle creatures and those who travel rocky terrains.<sup>1652</sup>

Likewise, the cloud of prajñā and compassion, through its subtle and vast means, methods, and applications, {P131a}

Is indifferent in all respects toward those with afflictions and those with the latencies of views about a self.<sup>1653</sup> IV.49

As for [buddha activity's] pacifying the fire of suffering:

Samsāra means to be born and to die without beginning and end, and in this ongoing cycling, there are five kinds of paths.<sup>1654</sup>

In these five kinds of pathways, there is no happiness, just as there is no sweet scent in excrement.

The suffering in it is constant and as if produced from contact with fire, weapons, ice, salt, and so on.

In order to pacify this [suffering], the cloud of compassion showers down the great rain of the genuine dharma. IV.50

Since they realize that the suffering of gods is dying and the suffering of humans is searching [for objects of desire],

Those with prajñā do not even crave for the supreme powerful states among gods and humans.

For through their prajñā and by virtue of following their confidence<sup>1655</sup> in the Tathāgata's words,

They discriminate with wisdom, "This is suffering, this is [its] cause, and this is [its] cessation."<sup>1656</sup> IV.51

Just as a disease is to be known, the cause of the disease is to be relinquished,

The state of well-being is to be attained, and medicine is to be relied upon,

Suffering, [its[ cause, its cessation, and likewise the path, respectively,  
Are to be known, to be relinquished, to be reached, and to be relied  
upon. IV.52

(4) {J107} [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is like Mahābrahmā.<sup>1657</sup>

Just as Brahmā, without moving away  
From the abode belonging to Brahmā,  
Effortlessly displays his appearance  
Everywhere in the sphere of the gods, IV.53

So the sage, without moving away  
From the dharmakāya,  
Effortlessly displays himself to the suitable {D125b}  
Through emanations in all realms. IV.54

Just as Brahmā does not move away from his palace and yet his  
constant manifestation in the desire realm  
Is seen by the gods, with their desire for objects being relinquished  
through this seeing,  
So the Sugata does not move away from the kāya of the genuine  
dharma and yet is seen by the suitable ones  
In all worlds, with their stains always being relinquished in their  
entirety by this seeing. IV.55

Just as, by virtue of his own previous aspiration prayers  
And as a result of the virtues of the gods,  
Brahmā manifests his appearance without effort,  
So does the self-arisen one by means of the nirmāṇakāya. IV.56

As for the invisibility [of the nirmāṇakāya for some beings]:

Descending [from Tuṣita], {P131b} entering into a womb, being  
born, arriving at his father's palace,  
Engaging in amorous sports, living in the forest, vanquishing Māra,  
Attaining great awakening, and teaching the path to the city of  
peace—  
Displaying [such feats], the sage does not reach the sight of those  
who do not thrive [through virtue].<sup>1658</sup> IV.57

(5) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] resembles the sun.<sup>1659</sup>

When the sun warms them, the hosts of lotuses bloom  
 And kumuda [flowers]<sup>1660</sup> close at the very same time. {J108}  
 However, just as the sun does not think about the blooming and  
 closing of these  
 Water-born [flowers] as being a quality or a flaw, the sun of the  
 noble one here [does not think thus either]. IV.58

The basic elements of sentient beings are of two kinds—those not to be guided and those to be guided. Here, with regard to those to be guided, [there follow] the example of lotuses and the example of vessels with clear water.

Just as the sun, without thoughts  
 And with a single shining of its own rays,  
 Causes lotuses to bloom  
 And also ripens other [plants], IV.59

So the sun of the Tathāgata  
 Engages, without thoughts,  
 The lotuses of the persons to be guided  
 With its rays of the genuine dharma. IV.60

With the two bodies of dharma and form  
 Rising in the sky of the seat of awakening,  
 The sun of omniscience pervades  
 Beings with its rays of wisdom. IV.61

Due to this, everywhere in [the minds of] those to be guided,  
 Which are like receptacles of pure water,  
 The innumerable reflections of the sun  
 Of the Sugata [appear] simultaneously. IV.62

Thus, though they are without thoughts, the buddhas manifest among the three groups of sentient beings<sup>1661</sup> through their display and their instructions. With regard to the order of [this manifesting, there follows] an example of mountains.<sup>1662</sup>

Though always and everywhere pervading  
 The sphere of the sky of the dharmadhātu, {D126a}  
 The sun of the Buddha shines on the mountains  
 Of those to be guided as is appropriate. IV.63 {J109}

Just as the sun here extending its thousands of beams .  
 Rises and illuminates the entire world,  
 Gradually shining on high, middling, and low mountains,  
 So the sun of the victor gradually shines on the hosts of sentient  
 beings. IV.64

As for the orb of light [of the sun of the Buddha's] being more eminent  
 [than the actual sun]: {P132a}

The sun does not pervade all realms or the [entire] sphere of the sky,  
 Nor does it show [all] knowable objects enveloped in the dense  
 darkness of ignorance,  
 But those whose character is compassion illuminate the world and  
 show [all] knowable objects  
 With an abundance of light rays that radiate in all kinds of colors  
 and stream forth from each body hair.<sup>1663</sup> IV.65

When the buddhas enter a city, people without eyes [can] see what  
 is meaningful  
 And, by virtue of that seeing, know how to be free from the web of  
 what is meaningless.  
 Also, the minds of those blinded by ignorance, who have fallen into  
 the foaming sea of [saṃsāric] existence  
 And are obscured by the darkness of views, are illuminated by the  
 sun of the Buddha and see matters unseen [before]. IV.66

(6) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is similar to a wish-fulfilling  
 jewel.<sup>1664</sup>

Just as a wish-fulfilling jewel,  
 Though it is without a thought,  
 Simultaneously and individually fulfills  
 All desires of those who are in its reach,<sup>1665</sup> IV.67

So those of individual intentions who rely  
 On the wish-fulfilling jewel of the Buddha  
 Hear about the nature of phenomena in its various [aspects],  
 But he does not think about them. IV.68

Just as the precious jewel without thoughts  
 Effortlessly grants others their desired gifts, {J110}  
 So the sage always remains without effort as is appropriate  
 For the sake of others for as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts. IV.69

As for its being said that the appearance of tathāgatas is difficult to find:<sup>1666</sup>

Just as it is very hard in this world here to obtain a pure gem,  
 Be it located in the ocean or resting below the earth, which makes  
 [people] yearn for it,  
 So the sight of a tathāgata should be understood as something not  
 easily found  
 In the minds of very unsuitable beings who are in the grip of all  
 kinds of afflictions. IV.70

(7) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is like the sound of an echo.<sup>1667</sup>

Just as the sound of an echo  
 Arises in the cognizance of others,  
 Is without thought, effortless,  
 And abides neither inside nor outside, IV.71

So the voice of the Tathāgata {D126b}  
 Arises in the cognizance of others,  
 Is without thought, effortless,<sup>1668</sup>  
 And abides neither inside nor outside. IV.72

(8) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is similar to space.<sup>1669</sup>

Though it is insubstantial, without appearance,  
 Without support, {P132b} without basis,  
 Beyond the pathway of the eyes,  
 Formless, and indemonstrable,<sup>1670</sup> IV.73



Highs and lows are seen in space,  
 But it is not like that at all.  
 Likewise, everything can be seen in the buddhas,  
 But they are not like that at all. IV.74

(9) [That sūtra also] says that [buddha activity] is similar to the earth.<sup>1671</sup>

Just as all that grows on the earth  
 Comes to grow, thrive, and expand  
 Through relying on the ground  
 That is without thoughts, IV.75

So the roots of virtue of beings  
 Come to grow without exception  
 By relying on the earth of a perfect buddha  
 Who is without thoughts. IV.76

{J111} The summarized meaning of [all those] examples [is as follows].

Since some do not see that activity  
 Can be performed without effort,  
 The nine kinds of examples were given  
 In order to eliminate the doubts of those to be guided. IV.77

The purpose<sup>1672</sup> of this is elucidated  
 By the very name of the sūtra  
 In which these nine examples  
 Are explained in detail.<sup>1673</sup> IV.78

The intelligent who are excellently adorned  
 With this light of the wisdom<sup>1674</sup>  
 That arises from study will swiftly  
 Enter the sphere of the buddhas in its entirety. IV.79

To that end, the nine kinds of examples  
 Of Śakra's appearance on beryl  
 And so on were discussed. The [following]  
 Describe their summarized meanings— IV.80

The display, the instruction, the all-pervasiveness,  
 The emanation,<sup>1675</sup> the radiance of wisdom,  
 The secrets of body, speech, and mind,  
 And the attainment of those whose character is compassion.<sup>1676</sup> IV.81

The nonconceptual mind<sup>1677</sup> [of the Buddha],  
 In which all stirring of effort is at peace,  
 Resembles the manifestation of the appearance  
 Of Śakra in stainless beryl and so on. IV.82

In order to establish the meaning of this matter,  
 The thesis is “effort is at peace,”  
 The reason is “the nonconceptuality of the mind,”<sup>1678</sup>  
 And the examples are “the appearance of Śakra” and so on. IV.83

Here, the meaning of this matter  
 Is that the nine [features] such as “display”  
 Manifest in an effortless manner and without  
 The teacher arising or disappearing. I.84

{J112} {D127a} With regard to this point, [there follow] four verses to summarize [all nine] examples. {P133a}

The one who, like Indra, like a drum, like clouds,  
 Like Brahmā, the sun, the precious king of wish-fulfilling jewels,  
 Like an echo, space, and the earth, promotes the welfare of others  
 Without effort for as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts is the knower  
 of yoga. IV.85

The display [of his body] resembles the lord of the gods appearing in  
 a jewel.  
 As the one who excellently gives instructions, he is like the drum of  
 the gods.<sup>1679</sup>  
 His all-pervasive cloud banks of great wisdom and compassion  
 Pervade infinite numbers of beings<sup>1680</sup> up through the Peak of  
 Existence. IV.86

Like Brahmā, without moving from his immaculate abode,  
 He displays himself by way of many kinds of emanations.

Similar to the sun, the brilliance of his wisdom always radiates.  
His mind resembles a pure and precious wish-fulfilling jewel. IV.87

Like an echo, the voice of the victors is unutterable.<sup>1681</sup>  
Similar to space, their body is pervasive, formless, and eternal.  
Resembling the earth, here, the buddhabhūmi is the abode of all  
Pure dharmas that are the remedies for beings in every respect. IV.88

Why are the buddha bhagavāns, who are always without arising and ceasing, explained through this instruction on the [nine] examples as being seen to entail arising and disappearing as well as uninterrupted and effortless buddha activity for all beings?

The beryl-like purity in the mind  
Is the cause for the display<sup>1682</sup> of the Buddha.  
This purity is the flourishing  
Of the faculty of irreversible<sup>1683</sup> confidence. IV.89 {J113}

Owing to the arising and disappearing of virtue,  
The reflection of the Buddha arises and disappears,  
But in terms of the dharmakāya, just like Śakra,  
The sage neither arises nor disappears. IV.90

Thus, in an effortless manner, his activity,  
Such as displaying [his body], manifests  
From the dharmakāya, which lacks arising and ceasing,  
For as long as [saṃsāric] existence remains. IV.91

This is the summarized meaning  
Of these examples, and they are discussed  
In this order by way of the latter ones  
Eliminating the dissimilarities of the former. IV.92

Buddhahood is like [Śakra's] reflection and yet is dissimilar  
In that [the latter] is not endowed with a voice.  
[In having a voice,] it is like the drum of the gods {P133b} and yet is  
dissimilar  
In that [the latter] does not promote the welfare [of beings] in every  
way. IV.93

[In performing such welfare,] it is similar to a great cloud and yet is  
dissimilar

In that [the latter] does not relinquish the seeds of what is  
meaningless.<sup>1684</sup> {D127b}

[In relinquishing these seeds,] it resembles Mahābrahmā and yet is  
dissimilar

In that [the latter] does not mature [beings] completely. IV.94

[In completely maturing,] it is like the orb of the sun and yet is  
dissimilar

In that [the latter] does not dispel darkness completely.

[In dispelling darkness,] it is similar to a wish-fulfilling jewel and yet  
is dissimilar

In that [the latter] is not as difficult to be obtained. IV.95

It resembles an echo and yet is dissimilar

In that [the latter] arises from conditions.

It is similar to space and yet is dissimilar

In that [the latter] is not the basis of virtue.<sup>1685</sup> IV.96

It is similar to the maṇḍala of the earth,

Since it is the foundation that serves as

The support for the fulfillment<sup>1686</sup> of all mundane

And supramundane virtues of beings without exception. IV.97 {J114}

Since the supramundane path arises

On the basis of the awakening of the buddhas,

The path of virtuous actions, the dhyānas,

The immeasurables, and the formless [absorptions] originate. IV.98

This completes the fourth chapter, the topic of the performance of tathāgata activity, in the treatise *An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna*, [with] the exposition of the summarized meaning of the verses. {J115}

## THE BENEFIT

Hereafter, [there follow] six verses on the benefit of the faith of those who have trust in these four points<sup>1687</sup> as they have been described.

The buddha element, buddha awakening,  
 The buddha attributes, and buddha activity,  
 Being the sphere of the guides [alone],  
 Are inconceivable even for pure sentient beings.<sup>1688</sup> V.1

The intelligent whose minds<sup>1689</sup> have faith in this object of the victors  
 Become the vessels for the collection of qualities.  
 Through possessing the desire for these inconceivable qualities,  
 They outshine the attainment of merit of all sentient beings. V.2

Suppose some who strive for awakening were constantly to offer  
 golden realms adorned with jewels,  
 Equal [in number] to the particles in [all] buddha realms, to the lords  
 of dharma always, day after day, {P134a}  
 While some others were to hear [just] one word of this [dharma]<sup>1690</sup>  
 and, upon hearing it, would have faith in it—  
 The latter would attain far more merit than the virtue arising from  
 such generosity. V.3

Suppose some intelligent ones who desire unsurpassable wakening  
 Were to effortlessly maintain immaculate discipline with body,  
 speech, and mind for many eons,  
 While some others were to hear [just] one word of this [dharma]  
 {D128a} and, upon hearing it, would have faith in it—  
 The latter would attain far more merit than the virtue arising from  
 such discipline. V.4

Suppose some were absorbed here in the dhyānas that extinguish the  
 fire of the afflictions in the three realms of existence

And would arrive at the perfection of the [meditative] states of the gods and Brahmā,<sup>1691</sup> thus possessing the immutable means for perfect awakening,<sup>1692</sup>

While some others were to hear [just] one word of this [dharma] and, upon hearing it, would have confidence in it—

The latter would attain far more merit than the virtue arising from such dhyānas. V.5 {J116}

Since generosity just leads to wealth,

Discipline [just leads to] heaven, and meditation [just] relinquishes the afflictions,

While prajñā eliminates all afflictive and cognitive [obscurations],

It is supreme, and its cause is to study this [dharma]. V.6

The summarized meaning of these verses should be understood by the following nine verses.

With regard to the foundation, its change,

Its qualities, and the promotion of welfare,

These four aspects of the object of the wisdom

Of the victors as they were described, V.7

The intelligent have faith in [the foundation's] existing,

[Its change's] being possible,<sup>1693</sup> and its being endowed with qualities.

Therefore, they swiftly become suitable

To attain the state of a tathāgata. V.8

They are full of confidence and faith, [thinking,]

“This inconceivable object exists,

Can be attained by someone like me,

And, once attained, possesses such qualities.” V.9

Thereby, bodhicitta as the receptacle

Of qualities such as confidence, vigor,

Mindfulness, dhyāna, and prajñā

Is present in them at all times. V.10

Since that [bodhicitta] is always<sup>1694</sup> present,

The children of the victors are irreversible {P134b}

And reach the completion  
And purity of the pāramitā of merit. V.11

Merit refers to the [first] five pāramitās,  
Its completion is due to being nonconceptual  
About the three aspects,<sup>1695</sup> and its purity  
Is by virtue of the relinquishment of its antagonistic factors. V.12

Generosity is the merit that arises from giving,  
Discipline is declared to arise from discipline,  
The pair of patience and dhyāna arises  
From meditation, and vigor is present in all. V.13 {J117}

Conceptions in terms of the three spheres  
Are asserted as the cognitive obscurations.  
Antagonistic factors<sup>1696</sup> such as envy<sup>1697</sup>  
Are held to be the afflictive obscurations. V.14

Without prajñā, the other [pāramitās] do not represent  
The causes for relinquishing these [obscurations].  
Therefore, prajñā is the highest one, and its<sup>1698</sup> root {D128b}  
Is study, so study is supreme [too]. V.15

{Hereafter, {there follow four} verses that describe on which basis {this treatise} was explained, what caused {its composition}, how {it was explained}, and what {its characteristics} are. First, there is a verse about its basis and what caused {its composition}.]<sup>1699</sup>

Thus, on the basis of trustworthy scriptures and reasoning,  
I expounded this [treatise] in order to purify just myself  
And also for the sake of supporting those who are endowed  
With intelligence, faith, and fulfillment of virtue. V.16

[[Next, there is] a verse about how {this treatise} was explained.]

Just as those with eyes [can] see in dependence on  
A lamp, lightning, a jewel, the moon, and the sun,  
So I expounded this [treatise] in dependence on the sage  
Who is the sun that illuminates<sup>1700</sup> the dharma of great meaning. V.17

[{There follows} a verse about what {the characteristics of what} was explained are.]

Any utterance that is meaningful, is connected with the words<sup>1701</sup> of  
 the dharma,  
 Relinquishes the afflictions of the three realms,  
 And teaches the benefit of peace  
 Is the speech of the seer, while others are its opposite. V.18

[{Next, there is} a verse about {the means} by which it was explained.]

Whatever is said by those with undistracted minds  
 Who recognize the victor alone as their teacher {J118}  
 And accords with the path of the accumulations for attaining liberation  
 Should be respected as much as [the words of]<sup>1702</sup> the seer. V.19

[{There follow two} verses about the means of protecting oneself {from becoming deprived of the dharma}.]

In this world, there is no one wiser than the victor, {P135a}  
 No other one anywhere who is omniscient and properly knows  
 supreme true reality in its entirety.  
 Therefore, one should not deviate from the sūtras taught to be  
 definitive by the seer himself .  
 Otherwise, this will harm the genuine dharma through destroying  
 the guidance of the sage. V.20

The entirety of deprecating the noble ones and blaming the dharma  
 taught by them  
 Is the affliction of those with foolish character,<sup>1703</sup> created by views  
 that entail clinging.  
 Therefore, one's mind should not be mingled with what is stained by  
 views that entail clinging<sup>1704</sup> —  
 [Only] a clean garment can be dyed but not one that is tainted by  
 grease or dirt. V.21



[{Next, there is} a verse about the causes for deviating {from the dharma}.]

Because of weak intelligence, because of lacking faith in what is  
 pure,<sup>1705</sup> because of relying on false pride,  
 Because of having the character of being obscured through  
 destroying<sup>1706</sup> the genuine dharma, because of grasping at the  
 expedient meaning as being true reality,  
 Because of coveting gain,<sup>1707</sup> because of being under the sway of  
 views, because of relying on those who hate the dharma,  
 Because of keeping at a distance<sup>1708</sup> from those who maintain the  
 dharma, and because of desiring what is inferior, the dharmas of  
 the arhats are rejected. V.22

[{There follow two} verses about the result of deviating {from the dharma}.]

The wise should not be as deeply afraid of fire, terrible snake poison,  
 murderers,<sup>1709</sup> or lightning  
 As they should be of the loss of the profound dharma. {D129a}  
 Fire, snakes, enemies, and lightning may [at most] end one's life,  
 But one would not wander to the most fearsome realm of those in  
 Avīci through such causes. V.23 {J119}

Even persons who, repeatedly relying on bad friends, [injured] a  
 buddha with bad intention,  
 Committed the acts of killing their mother, father, or an arhat, or  
 split the highest community  
 Will be swiftly liberated from these [actions] through being absorbed  
 in the meaning of the dharma,<sup>1710</sup>  
 But how could there be liberation in those<sup>1711</sup> whose minds are  
 hostile toward the dharma?<sup>1712</sup> V.24

[Finally, there is a verse in order to dedicate the merit attained by the author  
 through this teaching.]<sup>1713</sup>

Having properly expounded the seven topical points (the [three]  
 jewels, the pure basic element,  
 Stainless awakening, the qualities, and activity), through the merit  
 I obtained by that,

May [all] beings behold the seer Amitāyus endowed with infinite  
light

And, having seen him, {P135b} attain supreme awakening by virtue  
of the stainless eye of dharma arising [in them]. V.25

The summarized meaning of these [last] ten verses is to be understood  
through the [following] three verses.

The [first] four verses explain

On what [basis] it was expounded,

What caused it, how and what [was expounded],

And what the natural outflow [of the dharma] is.<sup>1714</sup> V.26

Two explain the means of protecting oneself;

One, the causes for the loss [of the dharma];

And the following two verses,

The result [of this loss]. V.27

As for poised readiness in the maṇḍala of the retinue<sup>1715</sup>

And the attainment of awakening, in brief,

This twofold result of propounding the meaning

Of the dharma<sup>1716</sup> is taught by the last [verse]. V.28

This completes the fifth chapter, entitled the topic of the benefit, in the  
treatise *An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the Ultimate  
Continuum of the Mahāyāna*, [with] the exposition of the summarized  
meaning of the verses.<sup>1717</sup>

## Pith Instructions on “The Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna” by Sajjana

### *The Three Jewels*<sup>1718</sup>

Those who follow the three methods<sup>1719</sup>  
Or those who wish for common results,<sup>1720</sup>  
Having recognized the [three] jewels, resort to these jewels  
As they manifest for different mind streams.<sup>1721</sup> [1]

### Interlinear gloss after 1b:<sup>1722</sup>

The [words] “with regard to those in the three yānas” [in *Uttaratantra* I.19c state that the three jewels are] a refuge in relation to persons whose goal is the ultimate good.<sup>1723</sup> The [words] “those who have faith in three activities” [in I.19d] state [that the three jewels are] a refuge in accordance with beginners whose goal is merely [mundane] happiness. For in beginners the intention [to achieve] nirvāṇa has not yet grown and their goal is merely mundane prosperity.

However, [the three jewels] are [included in] the ultimate refuge—  
They are not different in actuality.  
Here, the purpose [of the ultimate refuge] is to generate [bodhi]citta,  
Which has the full attainment [of awakening] as its sphere.<sup>1724</sup> [2]

### Interlinear gloss after 2a:

[This refers to the Buddha,] “the single refuge of the world” [in *Uttaratantra* I.21a].

This full attainment is accomplished  
Through [the stages of] impurity and purity,  
By way of the distinction of one’s own welfare and that of others  
And through engaging in this [ultimate] refuge among those to be  
taken refuge in.<sup>1725</sup> [3]

Interlinear glosses:

After 3b: [One speaks of] “impurity” due to obtaining the three jewels on the eighth and the following [two] bhūmis.<sup>1726</sup> “Purity” [refers to obtaining] awakening, the qualities, and [buddha] activity on the eleventh [bhūmi] alone.<sup>1727</sup>

After 3c: [The three jewels] such as the Buddha represent one’s own welfare. Awakening and the qualities have the nature of the welfare of others because they establish all sentient beings in the fruition that is the [awakening with its qualities]. [Buddha] activity is the cause of that [awakening of sentient beings]. The basic element is the nature of the [other] six [vajra] points. Thus, [there are] seven [vajra points].

Therefore, without having gathered the accumulations,  
The Buddha, the dharma, and likewise the assembly  
Turn into being conditions  
That successively arise in their due order. [4]

Interlinear glosses:

After 4a: The dharma[kāya], sambhoga[kāya], and nirmāṇakāya, respectively, are what bring about the three jewels [of Buddha, dharma, and saṃgha on the level of] seeming [reality].

After 4d: [The three jewels arise successively] because [beings without the accumulations] are not [proper] vessels for [perceiving] all [three jewels] at first sight.

From the perfect Buddha, the turning of the wheel  
Of the dharma [arises], whose sphere is the saṃgha.  
The saṃgha [consists of] its authoritative properties,<sup>1728</sup>  
Which are the manifestations of the qualities of compassion. [5]

Interlinear gloss:<sup>1729</sup>

[The saṃgha consists of] ordinary beings and noble ones because they have relinquished [saṃsāric] existence.<sup>1730</sup>

### *Synopsis of the Remaining Four Vajra Points*

Those who gradually purify the basic element  
Through the [buddha]dharmas<sup>1731</sup> and through means (*upāya*)  
Progress on the paths of what is conducive to liberation  
And penetration as well as on the uninterrupted path. [6]

Interlinear gloss:

[This pertains to four verses in the *Uttaratantra*], starting with [I.23] “Suchness with stains, the one without stains, stainless buddha qualities, and the activity of the victors are the objects [of those who see] the ultimate . . .” up through [RGVV I.26] “As for what is to be awakened, awakening, its branches, and what causes awakening, in due order . . .”<sup>1732</sup>

Based on the directly manifest conditions<sup>1733</sup>

Called “awakening,” “the qualities,” and “activity”

And then based on the [ten] topics of the basic element,

One should engage in reflection and familiarization.<sup>1734</sup> [7]

### *The Basic Element*

#### The Three Reasons

Since [all beings] possess the heart of a tathāgata,

Since the welfare of sentient beings depends on the victor,<sup>1735</sup>

And because suchness operates in accordance with<sup>1736</sup> the welfare [of beings],

A tathāgata is what their heart is. [8]

Interlinear gloss:<sup>1737</sup>

. . . Ultimately, the basis of the three jewels is the threefold dharmakāya . . .<sup>1738</sup>

[Beings are endowed with] the heart of a tathāgata,

Because the disposition for the [tathāgata] exists<sup>1739</sup> [in them].

The suchness of the dhātu is devoid

Of what is afflicted—the dependent (*kliṣṭaparatantra*).<sup>1740</sup> [9]

Interlinear gloss after 9bc:

The seed that represents the disposition of the victors is [covered by] the two kinds of obscurations.

#### The Divisions and Fruitions of the Disposition

[The disposition is twofold:] the one that always<sup>1741</sup> abides naturally

And the one that bears the name “the accomplished one.”

The accomplished one is asserted [to be present]  
 On the path whose character is seeing and familiarization.<sup>1742</sup> [10].

Interlinear gloss after 10ab:

However, [there is also] a threefold [classification of the disposition] by virtue of the distinction between [the dispositions that are] (1) suchness, (2) naturally abiding, and (3) accomplished.<sup>1743</sup>

Awakening, the qualities, and the dharmakāya  
 Do not surpass<sup>1744</sup> each other.  
 Therefore, the cause of this [dharmakāya]  
 Is the teaching of the profound and the vast. [11]

Interlinear gloss after 11b:

[*Uttaratantra* I.145] “The dharmakāya is to be known as twofold—the utterly stainless dharmadhātu and its natural outflow (teaching the principles of profundity and diversity)” is to be understood as [relating to *Uttaratantra* I.28] “Because the perfect buddhakāya radiates . . .”

With Buddha, dharma, saṃgha, awakening,  
 The qualities, and activity, in due order,  
 As focal objects, the basic element reaches  
 The results differing [on the bhūmis] of impurity and purity.<sup>1745</sup> [12]

Interlinear gloss after 12c:

The focal objects [are twofold]—those that are the [three] refuges and those that are the [three] conditions [awakening, the qualities, and activity].<sup>1746</sup>

Buddha, dharma, and saṃgha [are attained] in gradual order  
 On the [last] three bhūmis of bodhi[sattvas].  
 However, what are called “awakening,” “the qualities,” and “activity”  
 Are attained on the buddhabhūmi in a nongradual manner. [13]

Interlinear glosses:

After 13ab: [The three jewels are] said to be the impure results.

After 13cd: [Awakening, the qualities, and activity] are said to be the pure [results].<sup>1747</sup>

The threefold kāya [belongs to] those who have not fully gathered [the accumulations],  
 [While] the threefold dharmakāya [belongs to] those who have gathered [them] fully  
 Since [the latter has] an uninterrupted continuity, [whereas the former] is discontinuous.  
 It is based on [these] cooperating causes [that the basic element is purified]. [14]

Interlinear gloss after 14a:

Dharma[s], enjoyment (*sambhoga*), and emanation (*nirmāṇa*) are the basis of the dharmakāya<sup>1748</sup> . . . The threefold dharmakāya in the phase of the accumulations' having been gathered fully, [that is, on the buddhabhūmi,] is the actuality in which awakening, the qualities, and activity are in their natural order.<sup>1749</sup>

[The basic element] consists of the threefold disposition  
 That is suchness, naturally abiding, and accomplished.  
 The fruitions in terms of the threefold kāya  
 And the threefold dharmakāya differ.<sup>1750</sup> [15]

[This was] an intermediate verse.

Interlinear gloss after 15cd:

The threefold kāya consists of [the three jewels] such as the Buddha, [which are realized on the eighth bhūmi, called] “The Immovable,” and onward. The threefold dharmakāya consists of awakening, the qualities, and activity, [which are realized] on the buddhabhūmi.<sup>1751</sup>

### The Functions of the Ten Topics

Now, one should mentally engage in the instruction  
 Whose range consists of the [ten] topics such as nature.  
 The naturally descended (*avatīrṇa*) [basic element]<sup>1752</sup>  
 Is matured through [its] cause.<sup>1753</sup> [16]

Interlinear gloss after 16b:

[“Topics” refers to *Uttaratantra* I.29] “In terms of nature and cause, fruition, function . . .” The three [topics] such as nature [pertain] to those free from mundane desire.<sup>1754</sup>

By virtue of fruition, one is endowed with firm conviction.<sup>1755</sup>

By virtue of function, one engages in the path.<sup>1756</sup>

The endowment with the path is an instruction on this.<sup>1757</sup>

The topic “manifestation” is the basis of [the path of]  
familiarization.<sup>1758</sup> [17]

Interlinear gloss:

The topic of the endowment with [three] results, which is produced by the topic of the endowment with [three] causes, consists of the path of seeing.<sup>1759</sup>

By virtue of relying on the path of familiarization,  
[Which consists of] the two topics “phases” and “all-pervasiveness,”<sup>1760</sup>  
The relinquishment [of obscurations] such as aiming  
At lesser [forms of] awakening comes about. [18]

The evolution of the path on the [last] three bhūmis  
Is due to the changelessness [of the dharmadhātu].<sup>1761</sup>  
The expectation of the fruition of that path  
Has the nature of the topic “inseparability.”<sup>1762</sup> [19]

Interlinear gloss on verse 19:

By virtue of being nonempty, unbound, inexhaustible, and unceasing, the nonoperative (*avyṛttika*) dharmadhātu [is changeless]. For [the dharmadhātu] displays its own intrinsic nature (*svarasavāha*) of nonconceptuality.<sup>1763</sup> The cause of this [dharmadhātu] is the teaching of the profound and the vast.<sup>1764</sup>

### The Ten Topics and the Afflictions in the Nine Examples

Thus, with regard to these [ten topics],  
Familiarization has a ninefold character,  
In which the latencies of desire and so on [should be understood]  
through three topics  
And [their] intense outbursts, through one topic.<sup>1765</sup> [20]

Interlinear glosses:

After 20ab: For the topic “manifestation” is not counted as being a basis [of afflictions].<sup>1766</sup>



After 20c: [The three afflictions] such as desire [should be understood] through [the topics] “nature,” “cause,” and “fruition,” respectively.

After 20d: [The intense outbursts of these afflictions should be understood] through [the topic] “function”—the aspiration of wishing to attain the lasting termination of suffering.

The [afflictions] to be relinquished through seeing are understood through one [topic];<sup>1767</sup>

Those to be relinquished through familiarization, through two [topics];

And the afflictions that are the objects [to be relinquished on] the pure and impure [bhūmis, respectively],<sup>1768</sup>

One by one, through the perfect termination [of the afflictions]. [21]

Interlinear glosses:

After 21a: [They are understood] through the topic “endowment with [three] results.”

After 21b: [They are understood] through the topics “phases” and “all-pervasiveness.”

After 21cd: The afflictions that are the objects [to be relinquished on] the impure [bhūmis are understood] through the topic “changelessness” and the afflictions that are the objects [to be relinquished on] the pure [bhūmis], through the topic “inseparability.”<sup>1769</sup>

Here, the [nine] examples of a lotus and so on

Make the [nine kinds of] clinging known.

Proper investigation removes arrogance<sup>1770</sup>

By virtue of becoming indifferent<sup>1771</sup> toward desire and so on. [22]

Interlinear gloss after 22a:

[“Here” refers to *Uttaratantra* I.29] “In terms of [nature and] cause, fruition, function, endowment, manifestation . . .” [“Lotus and so on” refers to *Uttaratantra* I.96–129] “A buddha in a decaying lotus . . .”

### Familiarization with the Threefold Nature of the Basic Element through the Ten Topics and the Nine Examples

In order to put an end to clinging

One should familiarize with the threefold nature

That entails the distinction between the dharmakāya and so on<sup>1772</sup>

Because [this nature] is explained to be virtuous. [23]

Interlinear glosses:

After 23a: [“Clinging” consists of] desire and so on.

After 23c: [This refers to] the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition. The dharmakāya is threefold, [that is, the dharmakāya,] suchness, and the disposition.

After 23cd: The nine examples such as a buddha in a lotus eliminate clinging by virtue of [the threefold nature’s] being explained to be wholesome. This is the distinctive characteristic.

Therefore, the familiarization that has the character of purification  
Is the familiarization with [the ten topics] such as nature.<sup>1773</sup>  
The familiarization that has the character of purification  
Is [taught] through [nine] refutational examples<sup>1774</sup> for the [ten  
topics].<sup>1775</sup> [24]

Interlinear glosses:

After 24b: [“Nature” refers to the ten topics] such as nature, cause . . .<sup>1776</sup>

After 24d: [This refers to *Uttaratantra* I.96–129] “A buddha in a decaying lotus . . .”

[There follows] an intermediate verse:

In this treatise, the progression [of purification] that consists of  
reflection and so on  
Is apparently indicated by the disposition and so forth,<sup>1777</sup>  
That is, it contains the summarized meaning<sup>1778</sup>  
As a concealed form of [the ten topics] such as nature. [25]

Interlinear glosses:

After 25a: “The nature of reflection and so on” [includes] familiarization though [the progression] through reflection and familiarization is not [explicitly] stated [here].

After 25b: [This refers to *Uttaratantra* I.28] “Because the perfect budhakāya radiates . . .”

In this regard, the instruction on the summarized meaning  
[Given] previously is the basis for engaging in reflection.  
Therefore, the manifestation<sup>1779</sup> of [the ten topics] such as nature  
Corresponds to being what one should familiarize with. [26]

Interlinear gloss after 26ab:

[The summarized meaning refers to *Uttaratantra* I.27] “Since buddha wisdom enters into the multitudes of beings, since its stainlessness is nondual by nature, and since the buddha disposition is metaphorically referred to by [the name of] its fruition, all beings are said to possess the buddha [heart].”<sup>1780</sup>

[Implicitly,] the instruction on the summarized meaning,  
Through the subsequent progression of the [nine] examples,<sup>1781</sup>  
States what is to be relinquished and what is to be attained  
By virtue of familiarizing with [the ten topics] such as nature. [27]

### Refutation of Objections to the Teachings on Buddha Nature’s Being Authoritative

The remainder of the [first] chapter in this [text]  
Is held to be the means for purifying [wrong] views.  
This is presented through reasoning (*yukti*), accomplishment  
(*prasādhana*),  
And the refutation of objections to [this teaching’s] being  
authoritative (*āptabādhoddhāra*). [28]

Interlinear glosses:

After 28a: [This refers to] “The dhātu of beginningless time . . .” [J72.13ff.]<sup>1782</sup>  
After 28c: [“Accomplishment” refers to the passage] “Son of noble family, this is the true nature of phenomena . . .” [J73.11ff.] up through “[The ultimate of the self-arisen ones] is to be realized through confidence alone . . .” [*Uttaratantra* I.153]. [Thus, accomplishment] has the nature of direct perception [or experience] (*pratyakṣarūpa*).

At the end of the backside of the manuscript: [As for “reasoning,]” the objection to [this teaching’s] being authoritative refers to “[Having said here and] there that, just like clouds, dreams, [and illusions,] all knowable objects are empty in every respect . . .” [*Uttaratantra* I.156]. The refutation of this [objection starts with] “faintheartedness, [contempt for] all sentient beings . . .” [*Uttaratantra* I.157]. Since [the statement] “Everything is empty because it is conditioned, just like clouds and so forth” is known everywhere in the teachings [such as in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras*] without difference, the statement in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* that the nature of the mind is the ultimate is contradictory. This is the meaning of the objection to [this teaching’s] being authoritative. In this regard, what is conditioned is

[indeed] necessarily empty, but luminous mind is not conditioned.<sup>1783</sup> For there is no activity through conditions in this [luminous mind], which is due to [its] complete seamlessness (*saṃhati*) in that the arising of a following [moment of this basic] awareness (*saṃvid*) is contingent on nothing but the occurring of a preceding [moment of this awareness] that is of the same kind.<sup>1784</sup> The examples of clouds, dreams, and illusions are [presented] for the sake of pointing out [the natures of] the subjects of the probandum (*sādhyadharmin*)—the afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth, respectively<sup>1785</sup>—because emptiness is the probandum (*sādhya*) with regard to the afflictiveness of afflictions and so on.<sup>1786</sup> For, if [the examples] were just examples [that did not exactly match the deceptive nature of this three-fold afflictiveness], it would follow that the [syllogism] is meaningless because [afflictiveness] would not occur in a manner that is erroneous. [Thus,] the examples [refer to] the afflictions not being established independently. [Consequently,] it is not [really] the case that “the tathāgata heart is [just] the nonarising of the afflictions and so on” (*kleśādyanudbhūta*).<sup>1787</sup> [This was taught only] in order to avoid contradictions between the *Tathāgata-garbhasūtra* and other sūtras [such as the prajñāpāramitā sūtras]. Here, “faintheartedness . . .” [in *Uttaratantra* I.157 justifies that the tathāgata heart is being taught] despite its inconceivability because [teaching it] has the purpose to convince<sup>1788</sup> [those who are fainthearted and so on].<sup>1789</sup>

### *Awakening*

Setting out through engaging in familiarization

In this way, [awakening] will be attained.

On [the bhūmis] such as “The Immovable,” [attainment] is incomplete,

Which was already explained before [in the first chapter]. [29]

Interlinear gloss after 29d:

This here refers to [RGVV (J3.17–19) quoting the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*]: “[The Bhagavān] has completely and perfectly awakened to the equality of all phenomena, has excellently turned the wheel of dharma, and was endowed with the assemblies of limitless very disciplined disciples.”<sup>1790</sup>

But complete [attainment] (awakening and so on)

Pertains [only] to the bhūmi of perfect buddhahood.

Here, awakening is twofold due to the explanation of its qualities

And due to the exclusion of superimpositions.<sup>1791</sup> [30]

Purity, freedom, one's own welfare and that of others,  
 As well as manifestation represent the sequence of the qualities.  
 [Awakening] has the character of excellence due to the double  
 Cessation of the wisdom of the two paths.<sup>1792</sup> [31]

Interlinear gloss after 31ab:

Natural purity, relinquishment, activity, as well as profundity, vastness, and  
 magnanimity are the basis of that [awakening].

Four kinds of superimposition [arise]  
 In the form of mundane experiential objects.  
 The exclusion of such [superimpositions] is due to attainment,  
 Foundation, permanence, and inconceivability. [32]

### *The Qualities*

Being based on the two kāyas that are  
 Ultimate and illusory, respectively,  
 The qualities of freedom [belong] to the wisdom [kāya],  
 And the qualities of maturation, to the rūpa[kāya].<sup>1793</sup> [33]

Interlinear glosses:

After 33a: [The two kāyas refer to] the dharma[kāya] and the rūpa[kāya].

After 33c: [The wisdom kāya and the rūpakāya correspond, respectively, to]  
 the dharma[kāya] and the rūpa[kāya].

### *Activity*

From those qualities in turn [arises buddha] activity<sup>1794</sup>  
 With [its two] aspects of [knowing] suchness and variety,<sup>1795</sup>  
 Which are taught through the corresponding numbers  
 Of six [topics] and nine [examples].<sup>1796</sup> [34]

### *Benefit and Protection*

That much [teaches] the mountain-instruction<sup>1797</sup>  
 In this treatise, [which is followed by its] supreme praise  
 Through [describing its] benefit,<sup>1798</sup> and the treatise's protection  
 Through the remaining [verses] by means of inquiry.<sup>1799</sup> [35]

Having seen [its] benefit, those who recite  
 [This treatise] continuously engage in [it].<sup>1800</sup>

By virtue of [its] protection, those who know  
 What is flawed<sup>1801</sup> refrain from dishonor. [36]

### *Dedication*

[Being composed] not only for the sake of [performing]  
 Some spiritual activity for oneself<sup>1802</sup> alone,  
 But also due to [the wish to] protect the virtue of others,  
 [A verse of] dedication is taught here [in this treatise].<sup>1803</sup> [37]

[This concludes] the *Pith Instructions on "The Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna"* composed by the one called "glorious venerable Sajjana."

# A Commentary on the Meaning of the Words of the “Uttaratantra”

## *Explanation of the Section on the [Tathāgata] Heart*

You are the foremost among the minds of the buddhas in the three  
times,  
Promoting the welfare of beings through a nirmāṇakāya  
And endowed with the quintessence of the nectar of the ear-whis-  
pered lineage,  
To the mind of the guru, I bow with devotion.

Written for the sake of illuminating<sup>1804</sup> the instructions on the essen-  
tial points  
That condense the definitive meaning of the heart of the matter,  
All with an excellent mind stream that is suitable and full of faith  
Should familiarize with this dharma through their eye of prajñā.

As for the pith instructions on the *Mahāyānottaratantra*, their condensed form consists of the three dharmas that are the pith instructions on the basic element:]

- A. The results’ being condensed in the Buddha, which refers to the [ultimate] place of refuge—the dharmakāya of one’s own mind
- B. The cause’s being condensed in the Buddha—taking the three natures<sup>1805</sup> into one’s mind
- C. The conditions’ being condensed in the Buddha—being free from the stains of conception<sup>1806</sup>

### A. [The results being condensed in the Buddha]

This has three parts:

1. Through negating what is external, not apprehending the three jewels as independent entities

2. Through affirming what is internal, recognizing one's own mind as the buddhahood that is the dharmakāya
3. Through resolving [that one's mind] is the dharmakāya, familiarizing with the three natures

(A1) The path (the dharma of realization) is conditioned and deceiving, cessation (the dharma of peace) is a nonexistence [the nonexistence of suffering, karma, and afflictions], and the saṃgha—even arhats—[still] possesses fear of saṃsāra. Therefore, they are not the [ultimate] refuge.<sup>1807</sup> As for the Buddha, the two rūpakāyas are pitfalls—[the actual Buddha] refers to the taking of refuge that is the realization of one's own mind as the dharmakāya. One's own mind is without the triad of arising, abiding, and perishing and is unconditioned or luminous. Within that state, thoughts are apprehended as unreal, peaceful, and stainless,<sup>1808</sup> while self-arisen wisdom is let be as being without speech, thought, and expression.<sup>1809</sup>

(A2) As for the inner Buddha that is the dharmakāya of one's own mind, [the *Uttaratantra* says]:

Ultimately, the refuge  
Of beings is the Buddha alone.<sup>1810</sup>

One's own mind free from the identification of all kinds of thoughts, characterized by the inseparability of the pair of the unconditioned expanse and self-arisen wisdom, whose nature is lucid and unceasing, is beyond [ordinary states of] mind.<sup>1811</sup>

(A3) As for resolving [that one's mind] is the dharmakāya, the nature of the mind is the stainless dharmadhātu, the dharmakāya. What arises at present as all kinds of thoughts does not taint the nature of phenomena—suchness is like space. {415}<sup>1812</sup> The two [types of] disposition are the naturally luminous mind and the realization<sup>1813</sup> that the stains of conceptions are adventitious. The first one is the naturally [abiding] disposition, which is illustrated [in the *Uttaratantra*] by a treasure of jewels. The second one is the supreme accomplished disposition, which is illustrated by the seed of a tree. [The *Uttaratantra*] asserts that the three kāyas are attained from these two dispositions. [One familiarizes with] one's own luminous mind—the dharmakāya—[as being] like a precious statue. Through realizing this [luminous mind], thoughts are liberated as being without a basis. This is the disposition for the sambhogakāya, [which one familiarizes with as being] like a cakravartin. The arising of compassion for those sentient beings who



do not realize [this luminous mind] is the disposition for the nirmāṇakāya, which one familiarizes with as being like a golden image.<sup>1814</sup>

### B. The cause's being condensed in the Buddha<sup>1815</sup>

This consists of making the three natures a living experience. [The three natures] are:

1. The stainless dharmakāya
2. Changeless suchness
3. The disposition endowed with qualities

#### B1. [The stainless dharmakāya]

This has three parts. The stainless dharmadhātu of one's own mind, by its very essence<sup>1816</sup> beyond [ordinary states of] mind and inconceivable by thoughts, is the instruction beyond expression on the definitive meaning, that is, the profound that is of one taste. Though this mind—the nature of phenomena free from speech, thought, and expression—is expressed by all kinds of yānas [in different ways], regard it as the definitive meaning of the heart of the matter, luminous mind as such. There are three guiding instructions about this dharmakāya. First, the mind's appearing as all kinds of thoughts is the means. This being free from identification is prajñā. Mind's appearing but being without nature, lucid yet without clinging, is the nondual path. This is [how to] rest in the dharmakāya first. In between, if thoughts arise, their being examined by prajñā is the indication of profundity. In the end, letting them be as lucid wisdom in an uncontrived manner is the indication of guidance through means.

#### B2. Suchness not changing through thoughts

This has three parts. (B2a) With regard to guidance through examples, as the example for [suchness's] being changeless, consider the sky—no matter how much dust and smoke may arise [in it], the sky is not tainted. Thoughts are like this example. As the example for [suchness's] being untainted, consider gold—gold is not tainted by a film and stains [on it], which are like thoughts. As the example for [suchness's] being pure, consider water—if water is not muddied, [this resembles suchness's] not being muddied by thoughts.<sup>1817</sup>

(B2b) Guidance through the meaning is sixfold. (1) At the time of being a sentient being, the true nature of the mind—suchness—does not change into the stains in its essence, no matter which afflictions and thoughts may arise. If suchness became the stains of thoughts, one would not become

a buddha. (2) At the time of being a buddha, [suchness] does not change into qualities—there is no enhancement in the essence of the dharmakāya, which is self-arisen wisdom. If there were, one would not become a buddha through the path. (3)–(4) The stainless true nature of the mind is not tainted by flaws at the time of being a sentient being, nor is it tainted by qualities at the time of being a buddha. [As the *Uttaratantra* says:]

There is nothing to be removed in this  
And not the slightest to be added.<sup>1818</sup>

[And:]

Similarly, with the treasure of jewels lodged within the mind,<sup>1819</sup> {416}  
Whose true nature is stainless and without anything to be added or  
removed,  
Not being realized, all these beings continuously experience  
The suffering of being destitute in many ways.<sup>1820</sup>

(5) Sentient beings are the adventitious flaws of thoughts. Therefore, one familiarizes with them as being nonentities. (6) Buddhahood is one's own mind's being stainless of these adventitious stains of thoughts.<sup>1821</sup> [Thus,] one familiarizes with this luminosity of one's own mind.

(B2c) You may wonder, “How does one familiarize [with this]?” [One does so through] the three inconceivable [ways of] taking these very [guiding instructions] as the path. (1) At the time of being a sentient being, suchness is naturally pure and the essence of the mind is real as self-arisen wisdom. Through [mind's] not recognizing its own face, the stains of thoughts arise, which is inconceivable. What one makes a living experience is thoughts being pointed out to be unidentifiable. (2) At the time of being a buddha, naturally stainless mind is real as self-arisen wisdom. Through [mind's] recognizing its own face, it is free from the adventitious stains of thoughts, which is inconceivable purity. One makes this certainty about natural luminosity a living experience. (3) The [tathāgata] heart—the dharmakāya, self-arisen wisdom—is without distinction in buddhas and sentient beings. Its essence—alpha-pure ultimate<sup>1822</sup> luminosity—is the inconceivable nature. The temporary lack of realizing the true nature of the mind is its inconceivable appearance as all kinds of thoughts and flaws for sentient beings. The realization of the true nature of the mind is its inconceivable appearance as the kāyas and wisdoms for buddhas. [Thus,] natural

luminosity is to be resolved through the view, temporarily to be made a living experience through familiarization, and thereafter one should train in compassion and bodhicitta.

### B3. The disposition endowed with qualities

This has five parts. (B3a) The luminosity of one's own mind is the disposition for the dharmakāya. Since it abides primordially and by nature as buddhahood, it is not that something nonexistent is accomplished. There is not the slightest buddhahood to be added apart from<sup>1823</sup> the realization of one's own mind. (B3b) To realize thoughts as being adventitious is the sambhogakāya. (B3c) The arising of compassion for those who do not realize this is the nirmāṇakāya.<sup>1824</sup> (B3d) By virtue of the wisdom of realizing the two rūpakāyas, which is the supreme accomplished disposition, [luminosity] is free from the stains of thoughts—the buddhahood that is the dawn of realization is unceasing. Through realizing one's own mind, there is not the slightest to be removed because there is no sentient being to be relinquished apart from [mind's] playing as thoughts without a basis. (B3e) [The *Uttaratantra* says]:

It is held that the three kāyas are attained

By virtue of these two dispositions.<sup>1825</sup>

Therefore, through that, at the time of recognizing one's own mind as the inseparability of the expanse and wisdom, the following kind of experience arises. Since one's own mind's being unidentifiable (the expanse) and its being lucid and unceasing (wisdom) are inseparable, {417} the characteristics [of mind's nature] are beyond [ordinary states of] mind. Therefore, without thoughts and clinging, [all] that appears and exists dawns as the essence of the three kāyas. This has three parts. (1) The nature of the mind is the dharmakāya—the essence of the minds of all sentient beings in the three realms is real as luminosity. (2) The arising of one's own realization of this actuality through instructions and familiarization is the sambhogakāya. Through that, though [this luminosity] itself may arise as all kinds of thoughts, one realizes that their essence lacks a root. (3) The arising of compassion without deliberately familiarizing with apprehending the conceptual cognitions of mind to be independent real entities is the nirmāṇakāya. Through various means, this is what arises in the mind stream [as] the bodhicitta that is associated with the thoughts of

sentient beings. Those are [the ways of] bringing the naturally luminous [tathāgata] heart onto the path to buddhahood.

[As the reverse side of these ways of the three kāyas manifesting,] these [ways also] represent the three paths of temporary adventitious stains' not being real: (1) bringing the cause that looks like the basic element onto the path, (2) bringing the condition that looks like awakening onto the path, and (3) bringing the fruition—the intrinsic three kāyas—onto the path.

(1) [As for bringing the cause that looks like the basic element onto the path,] the basic element represents the natural bringing onto the path: (a) its spontaneously being present as the dharmakāya (self-arisen buddhahood), (b) its arising as nonconceptual self-aware wisdom, and (c) through being liberated in that way, the mind stream's becoming pure and the disposition, which is the path of the noble ones, being perfected in the mind.

(1a) The dharmakāya (stainless self-arisen buddhahood) is spontaneously present in the sheath of the lotus of desire. However, since the adventitious stains (the objects of fixating thoughts) are not real, there is no mental clinging. [This means] to bring the essence of the mind onto the path as being beyond [ordinary states of] mind.

(1b) As for [the essence of the mind's] arising as nonconceptual self-aware wisdom, the dharmakāya in the enclosure of the bees of hatred resembles honey. It is self-luminous as the mind of uncontaminated prajñā whose essence is to be free from reference points. That is, without the adventitious stain of lacking faith in the dharma, one brings certainty onto the path through the triad of scriptures, reasoning, and pith instructions. As for the self-awareness of this wisdom, the vast dharmakāya exists like a grain in the sheath of the husks of dullness, which is to be relinquished. This means to bring the dharma that becomes the remedy for the afflictions onto the path.

(1c) As for liberated self-awareness, the mind stream's becoming pure, the suchness of the mind (natural liberation) abides like gold in the enclosure of each one of the manifest three poisons of the afflictions arising. This means to bring thoughts onto the path as being without a basis, just like clouds or smoke in the sky. As for the disposition, which is the path of the noble ones, those of sharp faculties understand this, their own mind, as being natural buddhahood, that is, through the three natural trainings, they master the level of arhathood. [As for the three natural trainings,] that mind's nature is not tainted by the stains of thoughts is [the training in] discipline. Self-arisen self-luminous wisdom is the training in mind [or samādhi]. Its essence of being free from reference points is [the training

in] prajñā. {418} Through realizing the essence of one's own mind as being arhathood or buddhahood in this way, the attachment of clinging to adventitious wrongdoing and mental desires as well as [all] coarse and subtle thoughts of fixating on appearances as being real cease. This is the wisdom of learning.

These two [the suchness of the mind and the disposition that is the path of the noble ones] are the two dispositions—they are the naturally abiding disposition and the supreme accomplished disposition. As for the dispositions for the three kāyas, one's own mind exists as the cause of the essence of the dharmakāya of a buddha. To lack clinging to thoughts as being entities is generosity. Not being tainted by thoughts is discipline. The natural nonarising [of thoughts] is patience. Nonreferential virtue is vigor. Being undistracted is dhyāna. [Mind's] essence free from reference points is prajñā. The realization that the six pāramitās are naturally perfected represents the first bhūmi. The second [disposition] is the realization that thoughts are adventitious and not real, which represents [the disposition for] the sambhogakāya. It is attained from the second up through the seventh bhūmis through the six pāramitās of realizing that however self-arisen wisdom may appear, it is enjoyed as the nature of phenomena. The third [disposition for the nirmāṇakāya] is the certainty that all sentient beings who do not realize [this] are naturally buddhas. Through compassion's arising for those who are temporarily bound through their own thoughts of suffering in saṃsāra, the three [pure bhūmis] such as the eighth bhūmi are attained.

By virtue of not engaging in cognitions of clinging to thoughts as being real, those of highest faculties understand that mind is natural buddhahood. Those of medium faculties understand that thoughts are not real but are self-arisen wisdom, through which they master the appearances of the buddhahood of realization. Though those of lowest faculties know that thoughts are not real, they are born under the influence of clinging. Therefore, they understand the buddhahood of having cultivated clinging and grasping through having familiarized with self-arisen wisdom, that is, they complete the five paths in their minds on a single seat. As for how the five paths arise on a single seat, the path of accumulation consists of knowing that thoughts are not real. The path of preparation is to know that the factors to be relinquished through seeing are not real. The path of seeing is to know that the factors to be relinquished through familiarization are not real. The path of familiarization is to know that the cognitive obscurations are not real. The buddhabhūmi is the liberation without relinquishing the

two obscurations. Thus, the five [types of] thoughts [to be relinquished on the path] are cut through.

(2) As for taking the condition that looks like awakening as the path, the conditions for the dharmakāya of one's own mind becoming free from the stains of thoughts are the five paths. On the path of accumulation, one's own mind is pointed out as luminosity. That is, the realization that innate ignorance is reversed is the cause of buddhahood. On the path of preparation, one familiarizes with what was pointed out. That is, by virtue of the clinging to one's own mind stream as being a self's having perished, the realization of [what] the views about a real personality [are] is the condition for buddhahood. The realization of luminous mind on the path of seeing is the dharmakāya. {419} On the path of familiarization with its ten bhūmis, one [still] needs efforts to realize luminous mind, which represents the sambhogakāya. On the final path, although self-arisen wisdom has been seized within oneself, one has the welfare of others in mind, which represents the nirmāṇakāya.

With regard to this, [there are] five essential points about the condition [that looks like awakening]. On the path of accumulation, through luminosity's having been pointed out, one knows that the ground of latent tendencies—ignorance—is not real, which represents arhathood. On the path of preparation, one knows that clinging to a self is not real, which represents [the path of] learning [of bodhisattvas]. The realization of the dharmakāya represents [the object condition of] the first bhūmi; the realization of the sambhogakāya, [the object condition of the following] six bhūmis; and the realization of the nirmāṇakāya, the object condition of the [last] three bhūmis. Through realizing that just as the factors to be relinquished and realization are not real, mind-made wisdom is not real [either], the five paths are perfected in the mind.

(3) As for the intrinsic fruition, the stains such as the sheath of a lotus are nine. The realization of the nature of the mind, which arises in oneself as desire [and so on], represents the dharmakāya.<sup>1826</sup> The understanding that the adventitious stains of desire [and so on] lack a real essence but are empty represents the sambhogakāya. The arising of compassion for [all] sentient beings who do not realize [this] is [called] “bringing the dharmakāya onto the path.”

### C. The conditions' being condensed in the Buddha

The focal object is awakening, that is, through having realized the luminosity of one's own mind, one familiarizes [with it] by focusing on the

awakening that is without the stains of thoughts. When awakening is attained, [its] qualities represent the dominant condition—through having attained mastery over the two [sets of] qualities that represent one's own welfare and the welfare of others, one is like Dhanapati.<sup>1827</sup> Enlightened activity represents the immediate condition—wherever beings to be guided with pure mind streams are, the promotion of their welfare takes place immediately without being interrupted in terms of place or time.

These are the six essential points of bringing [mind's luminosity] onto the path:<sup>1828</sup>

1. Pointing out the cause that is the basic element (the essential point of the disposition)<sup>1829</sup>
2. Pointing out the fruition that is the dharmakāya (the essential point of awakening)
3. Pointing out the dharmakāya (the essential point of the qualities of freedom)
4. Pointing out the rūpakāyas (the essential point of [the qualities of] maturation)
5. Enlightened activity's being nonconceptual (the essential point of prajñā)
6. [Enlightened activity's] being uninterrupted (the essential point of compassion)

(C1–2) First, through the ninefold matching of the [tathāgata] heart [with its adventitious stains through the nine examples in the *Uttaratantra*], sentient beings (the cause) and buddhas (the fruition) are joined, that is, the three phases [of the tathāgata heart's being impure, impure and pure, and completely pure] are blended as having a single nature. The three phases are the luminosity of the dharmakāya of sentient beings (which is like the space in a clay vessel), the luminosity of the noble ones (which is like the space in a copper vessel), and the luminosity of buddhas (which is like the space in a golden vessel). As for these three [phases, the *Uttaratantra* says]:

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.<sup>1830</sup>

The conditioned element that can be disconnected<sup>1831</sup> consists of the stains of thoughts, which are like a vessel. As for what is naturally inseparable, just as space is without difference [in different vessels], the luminous essence of

the mind {420} is without difference in both sentient beings and buddhas. [The *Uttaratantra* continues:]

It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.<sup>1832</sup>

The unconditioned basic element that cannot be disconnected consists of the stainless nature of the mind, which is like space. [The explanation of] this has eight parts.

(C1-2a) As for identifying its essence, buddhahood is the self-arisen wisdom, in which thoughts have been relinquished, dawning in the mind stream through realizing natural luminosity.

(C1-2b) As for eliminating obstacles with regard to the cause, the cause for sentient beings' not attaining buddhahood consists of the conceptions of the two obscurations, but nonconceptual wisdom<sup>1833</sup> identifies this luminosity of one's own mind as self-arisen buddhahood. To determine through the instructions that these two [points] are inseparable from one's own mind is to familiarize with the changeless nature of phenomena. One gives rise to the certainty that it is inconceivable in that it is beyond [ordinary states of] mind because dialecticians do not realize it. If the afflictions are at peace by virtue of the adventitious thoughts in one's own [mind stream's] having been scrutinized by<sup>1834</sup> nonconceptual wisdom, there is no effort.<sup>1835</sup> Subsequently, without the essence of the dharmakāya's stirring [in any way whatsoever], whatever appears for the wisdom of one's own pure mind stream displays as an indication of the dharmakāya. [In this way,] the two kāyas dawn for those who are suitable. As one's own welfare, one realizes the uncontrived nature of phenomena by virtue of the [tathāgata] heart's (the cause) being free from stains.

As for the pair of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment, first, at the time of basic awareness's (*rig pa*) being pointed out, one directs [the mind] toward this basic awareness (the space-like nature of phenomena), scrutinizes<sup>1836</sup> thoughts, and rests in unconditioned [basic awareness]. [During] subsequent [attainment], one lets one's own unconditioned mind, self-arisen wisdom, be in an uncontrived manner.

Second, at the time of basic awareness's entering the path, during meditative equipoise, one rests in assessing [how to] separate the pure essence from the dross<sup>1837</sup> in terms of the pair that consists of the stains of thoughts and luminous self-arisen wisdom. [During] subsequent [attainment], there



dawns the experiential appearance of the self-arisen wisdom of one's own mind and the stains of thoughts being inseparable.

Third, as for wisdom's seizing its own ground, during meditative equipoise, one scrutinizes thoughts with<sup>1838</sup> [some] effort. [During] subsequent [attainment], the luminous nature of phenomena is realized. This represents the level of these two [meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment] being inseparable in essence. As for thoughts not [needing to] be relinquished and being pure, [the *Uttaratantra* says:]

There is nothing to be removed in this.<sup>1839</sup>

As for self-arisen wisdom's dawning without [needing] to be accomplished, [the text says]:

And not the slightest to be added.<sup>1840</sup>

Therefore, that the essence of the mind dawns on its own as self-arisen wisdom is the nonconceptual [wisdom of meditative equipoise]. The true nature of subsequent attainment is that [any] clinging to appearing objects as being real is at peace. The gist of this is that it is said that self-arisen wisdom's dawning on its own in an uncontrived manner is the nonconceptual [wisdom of meditative equipoise]. To gain mastery over appearances through this and thus to be able to remove<sup>1841</sup> [all] thoughts of delusion is the subsequent knowledge. It is stated that this is an important guiding instruction.

Fourth, as for the self-arisen's being pointed out, [during meditative equipoise,] one needs to search for<sup>1842</sup> the reality of thoughts, and the aftermath [of that] is the realization of the lucid nature of phenomena as being like space. [Thus,] on the path, one familiarizes with separating the pure essence from the dross with regard to basic awareness. {421} The pure essence is self-arisen wisdom, and the dross consists of thoughts—ordinary cognitions.<sup>1843</sup> The fruition is the twofold separation of the pure essence from the dross with regard to basic awareness—self-arisen wisdom's ability to stand its own ground being the nonconceptual [wisdom of meditative equipoise] and the ability to cope with [all kinds of] circumstances through having mastered appearances being subsequent [attainment]. [Thus] it is said.

(C1–2c) As for connecting this with the fruition, [the fruition] is the stainless wisdom of the [tathāgata] heart that is the dharmakāya—the

wisdom of having seemingly attained the changeless [tathāgata] heart that is suchness and the abiding [tathāgata] heart that is the disposition. In this [context], at the time of the cause, self-arisen wisdom, being obscured by three [kinds of] stains,<sup>1844</sup> abides as the basic element. At the time of the conditions, the self-arisen wisdom that is free from the stains is the fruition.

As for blending these two [times], first, meditative equipoise consists of examining the stains of thoughts, and subsequent [attainment] consists of regarding them as the stainless nature of phenomena. In between, at the time of training on the path, [meditative equipoise] consists of immediately cutting through [all] coarse and subtle stains of thoughts in it, and subsequent [attainment] consists of taking the bare nature of phenomena as the path. [This means] to know how to separate the pure essence from the dross with regard to the pair of luminous basic awareness and thoughts. Third, when [wisdom] has seized its own ground, during meditative equipoise, self-arisen wisdom effortlessly dawns on its own without being obscured by thoughts. [During] subsequent [attainment], due to not being harmed by appearances, [wisdom] is mastered through the path without being subdued by bad circumstances. Therefore, one finally resolves that one's own mind is buddhahood.<sup>1845</sup>

(C1-2d) As for accomplishing the welfare of [enlightened] activity, one's own welfare is the attainment of the vimuktikāya. That is, through realizing one's own mind, thoughts are relinquished. Through wisdom's shining like the sun, thoughts play as self-arisen wisdom. As for the purified dharmakāya accomplishing the welfare of others, just as space, the dharmakāya is without arising and perishing and thus provides space. Through its being pervaded by the sun of self-arisen wisdom free from the clouds of the obscurations, it performs the activity of the arising of wisdom in the mind streams of the suitable ones in whose mind streams the path has arisen.

(C1-2e) As for the qualities (the purpose), the inconceivable luminosity of one's own mind is the dharmakāya. It lacks birth as a body of a mental nature and also lacks the inconceivable death, the sickness of latent tendencies, and the aging [through] uncontaminated karma.<sup>1846</sup> It is the ultimate reality of cessation. Through the wisdoms of suchness and variety, the three obscurations of thoughts<sup>1847</sup> are relinquished. [Thus,] the three kāyas are attained.

The final resolve consists of (C1-2f) resolving the manifestation of [mind's] nature, (C1-2g) resolving [its] everlasting state, and (C1-2h) [resolving its] inconceivable characteristics.

(C1–2f) First, the [following] three [points] represent the manifestation as the profound dharmakāya: the nature of one's own mind's being the triad of its characteristic (being unconditioned), its heart (the inseparability of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa), and its essence (the relinquishment of extremes);<sup>1848</sup> the threefold relinquishment of the stains of thoughts through realizing this; and nonconceptual wisdom—the nature of self-arisen wisdom—shining clearly as the nature of phenomena.<sup>1849</sup> As for the vast sambhogakāya, in pure mind streams, it is this very dharmakāya that appears [as] the sambhogakāya, just as the moon in the sky. {422} In impure mind streams, the nirmāṇakāya manifests as the magnanimity that guides naive beings.<sup>1850</sup>

(C1–2g) [That the dharmakāya and the rūpakāyas are] permanent<sup>1851</sup> states is made a living experience through seven and three [reasons, respectively].

(C1–2h) [The explanation of] inconceivability has six parts. [There are] the five [points of the dharmakāya's being inconceivable through the prajñā] arisen from study because the dharmakāya of one's own mind is inexpressible; [being inconceivable through the prajñā] arisen from reflection because it cannot be examined; [being inconceivable through the prajñā] arisen from meditation because it is beyond conceptual [states of] mind; [being inconceivable through] inference because it is beyond example; and being inconceivable through direct perception because it is beyond experience.<sup>1852</sup> [The sixth point] is the resolve about the sambhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya not being contained in the factors of nirvāṇa and saṃsāra,<sup>1853</sup> respectively.

### C3. Pointing out the dharmakāya (the essential point of [the qualities of] freedom)

At the time when one's own mind—the dharmakāya, which is like a precious jewel—is free from the stains of thoughts, the light of the powers, the color of the fearlessnesses, and the shape of the unique [buddha qualities]<sup>1854</sup> are its inseparable qualities.<sup>1855</sup>

### C4. Pointing out the rūpakāyas (the essential point of [the qualities of] maturation)

It is the very wisdom of the dharmakāya that appears as the sambhogakāya in pure mind streams and as the nirmāṇakāya in impure mind streams. To recognize that what appears as a buddhakāya is an appearance of one's mind is the sambhogakāya. What appears as an independent buddha is the nirmāṇakāya. If this is described [in such a way], it is convenient. The

maturation [of the rūpakāyas] is explained to be [their] mere effortless manifestation, being the [resultant] appearance of [buddhas] previously having attained mastery over form [through] the samādhi and prajñā of the dharmakāya. The appearances of buddhakāyas are included in all [possible] appearances<sup>1856</sup> of all three ways of guiding sentient beings—in virtuous, nonvirtuous, and neutral [ways].

#### C5. Enlightened activity's being nonconceptual (the essential point of prajñā)

At the time of realizing the dharmakāya of one's own luminous mind, it is not that wisdom becomes nonexistent due to the extinction of thoughts. Rather, buddhas are endowed with self-arisen wisdom in their minds due to [all] stains of thoughts being at peace, and then appear to teach the path by virtue of their aspiration prayers and compassion. Through vajra-like wisdom,<sup>1857</sup> buddhas have relinquished the cognitive obscurations—by virtue of [any] cognition in which subtle ignorance exists being terminated, the continuum of cognition is severed through wisdom<sup>1858</sup> and thus the dharmakāya abides free from reference points, just like space. Without realizing the meaning of the mind's [making] aspiration prayers, [some] say that it is like a wish-fulfilling tree. This is not the case. Through [assuming that] there is no difference between the peace of śrāvakas and the single path to travel, it would follow that outer referents represent independent matter. Also, what appears as the two kāyas for sentient beings<sup>1859</sup> and the continuum of the wisdom of the ten bhūmis would be equal. Furthermore, [the line] “Masterful [virtue] cannot be exhausted through the subsiding of the skandhas” [in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*]<sup>1860</sup> says that due to the exhaustion of thoughts, wisdom is inexhaustible in that it does not cease.<sup>1861</sup> Therefore, [the above statement] is not the case.<sup>1862</sup>

#### C6. [Enlightened activity's] being uninterrupted (the essential point of compassion)

[This point] applies to seeing buddhas and sentient beings as equal and so on.<sup>1863</sup>

This completes the explanation of the stainless basic element.

{423}...<sup>1864</sup>

It may be said, “This is not the case—if entities abide by being established as ignorance, what valid cognition that invalidates the explicit statement is there?” The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* says:

Though beginningless, [saṃsāra] entails an end.  
 What is naturally pure and possesses permanent dharmas<sup>1865</sup>  
 Is not seen [since] it is externally obscured by a beginningless cocoon,  
 Just as a golden image’s being obscured.<sup>1866</sup>

The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* states that “all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart.”<sup>1867</sup> Therefore, [the explicit statement] is invalidated by [these quotations from the scriptures]. This represents the manner of introducing this explanation [of the *Uttaratantra*].

You may wonder, “If this is explained, in what manner is it explained?” It consists of:

1. The explanation of the name of the treatise
2. The explanation of the meaning of the treatise that possesses this name.<sup>1868</sup>

### 1. The explanation of the name of the treatise

Since [this text] is taught in accordance with the meaning of the name of the treatise, this name is explained [first]. Here, mahāyāna in the Sanskrit language [means] “great vehicle.” Uttara [means] “ultimate.” Tantra [means] “continuum.” Śāstra<sup>1869</sup> [means] “treatise.” As for the mahāyāna, the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* explains that “the mahāyāna is a ‘vehicle’ because one proceeds through it. . . . ‘Great’ [refers to] its being endowed with the seven greatnesses.”<sup>1870</sup> In this context, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* explains:

Due to vastness and due to profundity,  
 Maturation and nonconceptuality [occur].  
 Therefore, these two are taught in this [mahāyāna],  
 Which is the means for the unsurpassable.<sup>1871</sup>

Therefore, since [the *Uttaratantra*] teaches the subject matter that consists of the profound and vast seven vajra points, it represents the mahāyāna.

It may be said, “In general, ‘tantra’ refers to words spoken by the Buddha, but after the body of the teacher had passed into nirvāṇa, [treatises] were composed by persons of later generations in order to determine the

meaning of his words. Therefore, [the terms] ‘tantra’ and ‘treatise’ are mutually exclusive.” Since [the term] “mutually exclusive” is considered with regard to a single subject [in question], it is not considered with regard to different subjects [in question]. It is considered with regard to a single time, but it is not considered with regard to different times. Since it is considered with regard to two [phenomena] that actually fulfill their definitions, it is not considered with regard to two [phenomena among which one] actually fulfills its definition and [the other one] is [only] nominal. Here, if both were [tantra in the sense of] actually fulfilling the definition [of tantra], they would be mutually exclusive. However, in this case here, [the designation of the *Uttaratantra* as] “tantra” is nominal, while it is a treatise that actually fulfills the definition [of a treatise]. Therefore, there is no mutual exclusion.

You may wonder, “Something nominal needs [to possess] the three criteria [of being nominal].<sup>1872</sup> Therefore, what purpose is there for labeling [this treatise] as ‘tantra’? What is the reason for labeling it? If it is a nominal [tantra] and does not actually fulfill the definition [of tantra],<sup>1873</sup> what valid cognition is there that invalidates the explicit [expression ‘tantra’]?” As for the purpose, though it is not a tantra, through labeling it as “tantra,” those who have faith in the tantras will engage in this treatise merely on the basis of its name. On the one hand, in terms of entities, this is a treatise, but {424} since it is present with the label “*Uttaratantra*,” [others] will realize that this treatise teaches an unsurpassable eminent meaning and thus engage in it with confidence and respect. The first are the persons who follow their confidence and will engage [a treatise] merely on the basis of its name. The second are the persons who follow the dharma and will engage [a treatise] through realizing the meaning expressed through its name by way of [hearing or seeing] this name because persons of sharp faculties realize merely on the basis of the name of a treatise what subject matter it teaches.

As for the reason for labeling [this treatise “tantra”], it is a tantra in the sense of resembling a tantra. You may wonder, “How is that?” [There are] two [resemblances]. A tantra is a tantra in the sense of being concealed, hidden, or secret, that is, it is presented [as “tantra”] by keeping it secret from those who are not [proper] vessels. Likewise, if this treatise is taught to those who are not [proper] vessels (those who have the dispositions of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas and those with the cut-off disposition), fear will arise [in them]. Therefore, it is presented by keeping it hidden or secret from them. Or, in tantra there is the triad of causal tantra, fruitional tantra, and method tantra. Likewise, in this treatise, what resembles the

causal tantra is the basic element. What resembles the method tantra are the means to purify this [basic element]: awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity. What resembles the fruitional tantra are the three jewels. Therefore, [this treatise] is labeled [“tantra”] by taking its resemblance [to tantra in those ways] as the reason [for doing so].<sup>1874</sup>

“Ultimate” [means] unsurpassable and eminent because it teaches the meaning of the sūtra collection of definitive meaning that is difficult to realize—the seven vajra points.

In the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, [the term] “treatise” is explained through the triad of the essence, the hermeneutic etymology, and the defining characteristic of “treatise.”<sup>1875</sup> Here, in the Sanskrit language, there is [the term] “śāstra.” If pronounced [with] a brief [first “a”], it assumes [the meaning] “weapon.” If pronounced [with] a long [first “a”], through adding a diacritic sign,<sup>1876</sup> it assumes [the meaning] “treatise.” Taking [its first syllable] śa[s]- as śāsana, [this syllable means] “teaching.” Taking [its second syllable] -tra as trāyana, [this syllable] means “protecting.” The meaning of that [explanation] is this: through teaching the unmistakable meaning of the mahāyāna—the seven vajra points—to disciples with the mahāyāna disposition, the minds of these disciples are set right and thus these disciples are protected from falling into lower yānas.

## 2. The explanation of the meaning of the treatise that possesses this name

This has three parts:

1. Presentation of the body [of the text]
2. Detailed explanation of the branches
3. Identifying the tasks of concluding the treatise in the end

### 2.1. Presentation of the body [of the text]

This has two parts:

1. Identifying the own essence of the seven vajra points
2. Presenting the connection between the scriptures and the treatise

#### 2.1.1. Identifying the own essence of the seven vajra points

This has two parts:

1. [Their] actual [essence]
2. The author of the root text’s matching [the seven vajra points] with the scriptures

**2.1.1.1. [Their] actual [essence]**

This has two parts: {425}

1. The meaning of the root text
2. The meaning of the commentary<sup>1877</sup>

**2.1.1.1.1. The meaning of the root text**

This has two parts:

1. The meaning of the first half [of verse I.1]
2. The meaning of the latter half [of verse I.1]

**2.1.1.1.1.1. The meaning of the first half [of verse I.1]**

**Buddha, dharma, assembly, basic element, awakening, Qualities, and finally buddha activity— I.1ab<sup>1878</sup>**

This has four parts:

1. Identifying the own essence of the seven vajra points
2. The reason for their number's being definite
3. The reason for their order's being definite
4. Eliminating the flaw of mutual repetition among them

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1. Identifying the own essence of the seven vajra points**

This has seven parts:

1. The essence of the Buddha
2. [The essence] of the dharma
3. [The essence] of the saṃgha
4. [The essence] of the basic element
5. [The essence of] awakening
6. [The essence of] the qualities
7. The essence of enlightened activity

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.1. The essence of the Buddha**

The seeming Buddha consists of the two rūpakāyas. Since śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings with pure karma are able to look at the [rūpakāyas] with their eyes, they are not a vajra point that is difficult to realize. Rather, [the first vajra point] is the ultimate Buddha—the dharma-kāya. You may wonder, “How many qualities does this [dharmakāya] possess?” It possesses eight characteristics or qualities. “Through what does



one know this?" They are explained [in verse I.5] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

Being unconditioned, effortless,  
 Not being realized through other conditions,  
 And possessing knowledge, loving-kindness, and power—  
 This is buddhahood endowed with the two welfares.

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.2. The essence of the dharma

The seeming dharma is the dharma of the teachings (the twelve branches of the Buddha's speech). Since śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings are able to listen to it with their ears, it is not a vajra point that<sup>1879</sup> is difficult to realize. Rather, [the second vajra point] is the ultimate dharma—the dharma of realization. This [dharma] is twofold: the dharma of realization that is cessation (due to being that which is to be realized) and the dharma of realization that is the path (due to being that through which this is realized). The first one is the nature of phenomena that exists throughout the phases during which the respectively appropriate [portions of the] afflictions are relinquished through the path of seeing and the path of familiarization. The second one consists of the path of seeing and the path of familiarization, which [here] refer to the meditative equiposes [of these paths], which in turn refer to their respective uninterrupted paths. The [dharma] also possesses eight qualities. "Through what does one know this?" They are explained [in verse I.10] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

By virtue of its being inconceivable, free from the dual,  
 nonconceptual,  
 Pure, luminous, and a remedial factor,  
 It is what is and what makes free from attachment, respectively—  
 The dharma that is characterized by the two realities.

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.3. The essence of the saṃgha

The seeming saṃgha consists of the four pairs of individuals or the eight persons [in the śrāvakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna]. Since one can venerate them and render services to them with body and mind, they are not a vajra point that<sup>1880</sup> is difficult to realize. Rather [the third vajra point] is the ultimate saṃgha—the medium [persons] who are irreversible, the bodhisattvas dwelling on the ten bhūmis.<sup>1881</sup> [However,] this [saṃgha] is not

presented as the mere bodies [of these bodhisattvas] that are established on the basis of flesh and blood. [Rather, this saṃgha] has the essence of two qualities or wisdoms. “Through what {426} does one know this?” They are explained [in verse I.14] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

Because of the purity of the inner  
 Wisdom vision of suchness and variety,  
 The assembly of the irreversible intelligent ones  
 Is endowed with unsurpassable qualities.

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.4. The essence of the basic element

It is the nature of phenomena free from superimposition and denial. “Through what does one know this?” It is explained [in verse I.157] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

There is nothing to be removed in this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.5. The essence of awakening

Since the awakening of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas is not a vajra point, [the fourth vajra point] is the unsurpassable awakening [of a buddha]. It possesses eight qualities or characteristics. “Through what does one know this?” They are explained [in verse II.1] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

[Buddhahood] is purity, attainment, freedom,  
 One’s own welfare and that of others, the foundation of this,  
 And profundity, vastness, and magnanimity  
 For as long as time lasts and in accordance [with beings].

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.6. The essence of the qualities

The qualities based on the dharmakāya are the thirty-two qualities of freedom, and the qualities based on the rūpakāyas are the thirty-two qualities of maturation. “Through what does one know this?” They are stated [in verse III.1] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

One's own welfare and the welfare of others consist of the ultimate kāya  
 And the seeming kāya that is based on it, respectively.  
 They are the results of freedom and maturation  
 That are these qualities, which are classified as sixty-four.

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.7. The essence of enlightened activity

This is twofold: effortless enlightened activity and uninterrupted enlightened activity. In [the *Uttaratantra*'s] presentation in five aspects,<sup>1882</sup> the first one [is said to] operate in a nonconceptual manner. "Through what does one know this?" This is explained [in verse IV.1] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

The all-pervading lord always engages without effort  
 In the constitutions of those to be guided, the means to guide them,  
 The activities of guidance that<sup>1883</sup> [suit] the constitutions of those to  
 be guided,  
 And in arriving at the [proper] place and time for this [activity].

The second one is the uninterrupted promotion of the welfare of sentient beings through making them understand the six fields of knowledge.<sup>1884</sup> "Through what does one know this?" This is explained [in verse IV.5] in the detailed explanation of the branches [below]:

For [this activity] lacks conceptions  
 About deliverance, the support of that,  
 The result of that, taking hold of that,  
 The obscurations of that, and the condition for cutting through them.<sup>1885</sup>

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.2. The reason for their number's being definite

For those with the mahāyāna disposition, who strive for or wish to attain the fruition that is buddhahood, [the seven vajra points] are definite as the pair of causes and results. The three jewels are the results for which the remaining four [points] are the causes. You may wonder, "Why are the results presented as three?" It is in terms of [the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha] being the teacher of the path, the path's own essence, and the companions while practicing it, respectively, {427} that [the results] are presented [as three] in this order. For example, this is similar to the triad of a skilled physician, excellent medicine, and a skilled nurse being necessary

when a skilled physician is curing a sick person. In due order, [these three] match the three jewels.

You may wonder, “What certainty is there about the number of causes being presented as four?” In the commentary on [*Uttaratantra* I.26ab] “Because of what is to be realized, realization, its branches . . . ,” it is explained:

Due to these four<sup>1886</sup> topical points’ comprising everything to be known, they are definite as four.<sup>1887</sup>

It may be asked, “Well, do they comprise what is to be known by way of detailed elaboration or do they comprise it by way of summarizing it? In the first case, since all seven [vajra points] are not included in these [last four], they are too few [to cover everything to be known]. In the second case, since [these four] are included in the basic element alone, there is the flaw of their being too many.” It is not like that because “what is to be known” refers to the three jewels (the results) and “comprise” to [the causes] that produce these three results—if there were more than four [causes], they would be unnecessary, and if there were fewer, they would not be sufficient. “How is it that if there were more, they would be unnecessary and if there were fewer, they would not be sufficient?” For the production of the results that are the three jewels, both a substantial cause and cooperating conditions are necessary, just as the [substantial] cause of a seed and the conditions of a field and so on are necessary for the production of the result that is a sprout. Here, in the commentary on [I.26ab] “Because of what is to be realized, realization, its branches . . . ,” it is explained that the substantial cause is the basic element “due to its being the seed of the supramundane attributes.” The conditions are the remaining three [vajra points]. “Why are three conditions necessary for this?” The actual condition is enlightened activity. Since it arises based on the qualities, the qualities are necessary [too]. Since the [qualities] arise from awakening, awakening is [also] necessary. How these three function as conditions will be explained below in the section on the manner in which [the last four vajra points] serve as [one] substantial cause and [three] cooperating conditions.<sup>1888</sup>

Now, what is to be explained is [the following:]

#### 2.1.1.1.1.1.3. The reason for their order’s being definite

In general, order is of two [kinds]. This one is not an order of arising because if it were, the four [vajra points] that are the cause and the conditions would come first and the three that are the results would come later.

Rather, [the order of the seven vajra points] is the order of clear realization in terms of the arising of the path. Therefore, the results that are the three jewels are realized through teaching that they possess [certain] qualities because [thereby] enthusiasm for these results will arise and thus one will assiduously engage in its cause. [Thus,] the three jewels are taught first, and then the four that are the cause and its conditions are taught.

You may wonder, “Why are the results that are the three jewels taught in such an order?” This is [their] order of arising. After a bhagavān like<sup>1889</sup> Prince Siddhārtha has attained the complete and perfect awakening to the equality of all phenomena, the dharma of excellently turning the wheel of dharma arises from him. Therefore, {428} the Buddha is explained first, and then the dharma is explained. That [wheel of] dharma is not turned for the earth nor is it turned for stones, but it is turned for the saṃgha. Since it happens that [the Buddha] is endowed with limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples, after the [dharma], the saṃgha is explained.<sup>1890</sup>

Since the results that are the three jewels are present as being endowed with [certain] qualities in this way, they do not arise without causes or without conditions. Therefore, the realization [of the three jewels] arises from<sup>1891</sup> [their] causes and conditions. It is due to wondering, “What are the causes and conditions for attaining them?” that the four [vajra points] that are the cause and the conditions [for them] are taught thereafter. “Why is the order of these four taught as it is?” The commentary on [the jewel of] the dharma explains:

So all aspects of the afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth of naive beings operate by virtue of not realizing and not seeing the single basic element in just the way it is in true reality.<sup>1892</sup>

Therefore, if this basic element that exists in one’s own mind stream is realized, the three [kinds of] afflictions are relinquished and thus the three jewels will be attained. Hence, the basic element is what is to be strived for<sup>1893</sup> or to be realized by those with the mahāyāna disposition who wish to attain the results that are the three jewels. Consequently, the point of what is to be realized—the basic element—is explained first of all.

You may wonder, “Who is it that realizes this basic element as it is?” It is not even<sup>1894</sup> realized by bodhisattvas who dwell on the ten bhūmis in a part of purity, [but] it is realized by the awakening [of a buddha]. Therefore, after that, the point of realization—awakening—is explained.

You may think, “This awakening should then be [much more] expansive [than states] without qualities (such as [the state] of an ordinary being) or [states] with small qualities (such as [the states of] śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas).” [Indeed, awakening] is endowed with qualities [as vast as] the extent of the ocean, but, in brief, it is endowed with sixty-four qualities. Consequently, thereafter, the point of the branches of this [awakening]—the qualities—is explained.

“What do these qualities do?” Through performing the thirty-two-fold enlightened activity that accords with those qualities, they give rise to realization in the mind streams of others. Therefore, next, the point of giving rise to realization in others—enlightened activity—is explained. “Through what does one know such?” Maitreya himself explains this well:

Because of what is to be realized, realization,  
Its branches, and what causes realization,  
In due order, one point is the cause for purity  
And three are the conditions.<sup>1895</sup>

[2.1.1.1.1.4. Eliminating the flaw of mutual repetition among them]  
Now, as for eliminating the flaw of mutual repetition among [these vajra points] through connecting them in terms of the causes and results in dependence on the mind stream of a single person, or, as for thinking that [this order of causes and results] is mistaken, it may be asked, “What is the difference between the Buddha and awakening? Since the dharma represents the buddha qualities, what is the difference between them? Also, what is the difference between the saṃgha and enlightened activity?” If one connects [the vajra points in terms of the causes and results] in dependence on [all] persons in the three times, [the above points] are without difference. However, through connecting [them] in terms of the causes and results with regard to a single person who has the mahāyāna disposition, there is no flaw of repetition. {429} “How is there no [such flaw]?” In dependence on just [such a single] person, the basic element that exists in his or her own mind stream is definite as nothing but a cause<sup>1896</sup>—there is no occasion for it to be presented as a condition or a result. The means to purify this basic element that exists in [that person’s] own mind stream consist of the awakening, the qualities, and the enlightened activity that have already arisen in the mind stream of another. Therefore, in dependence on [that person’s] own mind stream, these three are definite as nothing but conditions—there is no occasion for them to be presented as a cause or a result. By virtue of

having purified [that person's] own basic element through these three functioning as the conditions, the basic element becomes pure. Through that, at one time on the buddhabhūmi, [that person] will attain the three jewels by himself or herself. In dependence on [that person's] own mind stream, these three are definite as nothing but the results—there is no occasion for them to be presented as a cause or a condition.

In dependence on [all] persons in the three times, the triad of awakening, [qualities,] and enlightened activity is also the result of a buddha himself, the three jewels also become the conditions for the basic element of other subsequent persons' becoming pure, and there is no difference in essence between a buddha and awakening either.

#### 2.1.1.1.1.2. The meaning of the latter half of verse [I.1]

This has four parts:

1. The essence of the presentation of the body [of the text]
2. Its division
3. The reason for applying the term ["body"]
4. The point of the purpose of placing the presentation of the body at the outset

##### 2.1.1.1.1.2.1. The essence [of the presentation of the body of the text]

If summarized, the body of the entire treatise  
Consists of these seven vajra points. I.1cd

In brief form, this teaches the pair of what is to be expressed and the means to express it from the beginning to the end [of the text]. "How does one know such?" In the commentary on this, one finds:

In brief, these seven vajra points should be known as the "body" of the entire treatise, in the form of the [seven] summary topics that are the gateways to [what this treatise] teaches.<sup>1897</sup>

The summarized teaching is the summary of what is to be expressed, while the summarized gateways are the summary of the means to express it.

##### [2.1.1.1.1.2.2. Its division]

If divided, [the body of the treatise] is twofold: the body in terms of the division of terms and the body in terms of the division of meanings. The

first one is the summary of the means of expression, and the latter is the summary of what is to be expressed. It is explained that the body in terms of the division of the lesser supreme dharma<sup>1898</sup> is twofold—“terms and meanings.”

#### 2.1.1.1.1.2.3. The reason for applying the term [“body”]

You may wonder, “Why is it called ‘body’?” It is the body [of the text] because it resembles a body. For example, this support that is the physical body<sup>1899</sup> functions as the support of all inner and outer āyatanas. Likewise, this presentation of the body [of the text] functions as the support of the entire detailed explanation of the branches below. “How does one know such?” It is explained like that in the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭikā*.<sup>1900</sup> From one point of view, in the sense of being pervasive, the body—this physical body that is the support—pervades everything such as the major and minor limbs, fingers and toes, forehead,<sup>1901</sup> and thumbs. Likewise, this presentation of the body also pervades the entire detailed explanation of the branches below. {430}

#### 2.1.1.1.1.2.4. The purpose [of placing the presentation of the body at the outset]

The purpose is that the disciples will easily understand the meaning of the detailed explanation of the branches, just like a horse that is shown familiar turf runs in an unhindered manner. This is what is to be described as the presentation of the body: it means that, through teaching them briefly as just a rough outline, the seven vajra points are easy to understand in the detailed explanation of the branches. “How does one know this?” The *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭikā* explains:

It may be said, “Through understanding the treatise, will one not understand its body? Therefore, it is pointless to present this [body] at the beginning.” It is not pointless because it benefits the disciples. If the disciples understand the meaning [of the body], they will also easily understand the detailed discussion, just like a horse that is shown familiar turf runs in an unhindered manner.<sup>1902</sup>

This completes the explanation of the meaning of the root text [of *Uttaratantra* I.1].

Having explained the meaning of the root text in that way, it is matched [with the scriptures] in the following way. It may be said, “Now, there is



an explanation of the seven vajra points in the tantras of secret mantra, [but] there is no explanation in the pāramitā sūtras. Therefore, isn't this a fabrication or presumptuous with regard to the scriptures?" Since it is possible for such wrong ideas to arise, in order to put an end to them, the author of the root text matches [the vajra points] with the scriptures, saying that the results that are the three jewels are explained in the introduction of the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and that the four that are the cause and its conditions are explained in the actual sūtra following the introduction. For the sake of [matching the vajra points with the sūtras], he pronounces verse [I.2, which starts with] "In accordance with their specific characteristics . . ." The actual text of this [verse] is explained below [in detail], but its [essential] meaning is [already] laid out here.

#### 2.1.1.1.2. The meaning of the commentary

This has two parts:

1. The commentary on the first half of verse [I.1]
2. The commentary on the latter half of verse<sup>1903</sup> [I.1]

##### 2.1.1.1.2.1. The commentary on the first half of verse [I.1]

This has three parts:

1. The reason for applying the term "seven vajra points" (the hermeneutical etymology)
2. The objects to which these terms apply
3. Matching their being established as vajra points with the scriptures because they are difficult to realize

It may be asked, "Now, why is it that the commentary does not explain the essences or characteristics of the Buddha and so on but explains the meaning of 'vajra' and 'point'?" It is because the essences or characteristics of the Buddha and so on [are explained] in the detailed explanation of the branches, while the root text itself does not explain the meanings of the words "vajra" and "vajra point" in that detailed explanation.

##### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1. The reason for applying the term "seven vajra points" (the hermeneutical etymology)

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. [Concluding] summary

### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.1. Brief introduction

It is said that the Brahman Sajjana explains this [brief introduction] in due order as follows:

This is twofold: the brief introduction of establishing what is to be expressed as a vajra and the brief introduction of establishing the means of expression as letters. The actuality of realization is a footing that is like a vajra.

And:

Since it is a basis, it is a vajra point.

Since this is [also] what is found as the two points of the detailed explanation and the conclusion, it is the heart intention of the commentary. {431} Guru Parahita explains it thus:

This sevenfold actuality is beyond being an object of [ordinary states of] mind and beyond being an object of terms. Since it is to be realized by the nonconceptual wisdom of buddhas and bodhisattvas in the manner of being personally experienced, the actuality of realization is a vajra point.

You may wonder, “Why are these seven called ‘vajras?’” They are referred to as “vajra-like points,” that is, they have the purport of “vajra” because they resemble the vajra that is a conditioned substance. For example, a substantial vajra is difficult to penetrate by wood, clods of earth, and so on. Likewise, since these seven vajra points are difficult to realize through the prajñās of studying, reflecting, and meditating of [everybody] from ordinary beings up through śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, they are called “vajras.” “And why are these seven referred to as ‘vajra points?’” It is said [that they are so called] because they are bases. They are footings because<sup>1904</sup> they are the focal objects or bases to be realized by the personally experienced wisdom of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.2. Detailed explanation

This has two parts:

1. Detailed explanation of establishing the seven [actualities] to be expressed as vajras

## 2. Detailed explanation of establishing the letters (the means of expressing [them]) as footings

### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.2.1. Detailed explanation of establishing the seven [actualities] to be expressed as vajras

This is explained as follows. The seven actualities [of the *Uttaratantra*] are to be understood as being like the vajra that is a conditioned substance. “What kind of actualities are these actualities?” They are actualities that are eminent by virtue of three distinctive features. [RGVV’s phrase] “because it is difficult to penetrate by any cognitions<sup>1905</sup> that arise from studying and reflecting” teaches that they are beyond being objects of the minds of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings. This also includes not being an object of [their] prajñā that arises from meditation. [The phrase] “inexpressible nature” teaches that they are beyond being objects of terms. You may wonder, “Well, the objects of what are they then?” [The phrase]<sup>1906</sup> “which is to be realized through personally experienced [wisdom]” teaches that they are the objects of the nonconceptual wisdom of buddhas. Now [follows:]

### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.2.2. The detailed explanation of establishing the letters (the means of expressing [them]) as footings

This has two parts:

1. The actual [explanation]
2. Elimination of disputational flaws

#### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.2.2.1. The actual [explanation]

This is expressed [by the phrase] “The words that express this actuality . . . are [also] called ‘footing.’” “Why?” Because they serve as the supports that teach or elucidate these seven actualities. Now [follows:]

#### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.2.2.2. Elimination of disputational flaws

It may be said, “Well, having explained above that these seven actualities are inexpressible through terms, it is stated here what the letters are that express those actualities. Therefore, [what is said] earlier and later is contradictory.” There is no such flaw. There is contradiction if two contradictory attributes come together in a single bearer of attributes, but here [the text] has different bearers of attributes in mind. “How is that?” Above, it is said {432} in accordance with the realization of buddhas and bodhisattvas in terms of ultimate reality that the specifically characterized actualities [of

the vajra points] are inexpressible. Here, in accordance with the appearances of ordinary beings who see just this life in terms of seeming reality, the seven actualities are what teach the path in accordance with subsequent attainment<sup>1907</sup> by way of letters such as “This is the Buddha.” Therefore, there is no contradiction.

Here, through first studying, reflecting in the middle, and finally meditating, there arise the direct realizations of the seven vajra points that represent the supreme familiarization (the ninth bhūmi), the final supreme [familiarization] (the tenth bhūmi), and the yogic cognition that arises from this final [familiarization]—the wisdom of a buddha. For example, this is just as the actualities of impermanence, suffering, and so on, are inexpressible by words and [yet] are expressed through letters such as “impermanence,” “suffering,” and “empty.”

### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.3. Concluding summary

This has two parts:

1. Concluding summary of establishing the seven [actualities] to be expressed as vajras
2. Concluding summary of establishing the letters (the means of expressing [them]) as footings

#### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.3.1. Concluding summary of establishing the seven [actualities] to be expressed as vajras

This is correlated to [RGVV’s phrase] “actuality . . . are to be understood as ‘vajra . . .’” “Why?” In the sense of being difficult to realize or penetrate by the minds of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings.

#### 2.1.1.1.2.1.1.3.2. Concluding summary of establishing the letters (the means of expressing [them]) as footings

This is correlated to [RGVV’s phrase] “the letters [that describe it] are . . . to be understood as ‘. . . footings.’” “Why?” [In the sense of being] the means to teach or to elucidate the seven kinds of actuality or in the sense of [serving as their] supports.

### 2.1.1.1.2.1.2. Understanding the objects to which these terms apply

It may be asked, “For example, if one wonders what the object of the meaning of the hermeneutical etymology of saying ‘stambha ānaya’<sup>1908</sup> is, [when hearing this, people] think something like, ‘Where should I bring it? Where is it?’<sup>1909</sup> Likewise, what are the objects of [the words] ‘vajra’ and ‘point’?”

The formulation of this question [is represented by RGVV's phrase] "So what does 'actuality' and what does 'letters' refer to?" The objects of the word "vajra" are the Buddha and so on. The objects of "point" are the letters. In order to teach that, [RGVV] says, "'Actuality'<sup>1910</sup> refers to the seven-fold actuality of realization, that is . . ." Now [follows:]

**2.1.1.1.2.1.3. The commentary's explanation by matching their being established as vajra points with the scriptures because they are difficult to realize**

You may wonder, "Is there an explanation from the scriptures that presents the seven vajra points as vajras—isn't it just arbitrary?" As for "vajra," since the seven actualities are difficult to realize, they are explained as "vajras." [Likewise,] since they are difficult to realize, they are explained from the scriptures. It is in that way that the commentary matches them with the scriptures in the manner of supporting the root text. This has two parts:

1. Matching [the fact that] the results that are the three jewels are established as vajra points through the scriptures because they are difficult to realize
2. Matching [the fact that] the four that are the cause and its conditions are established as vajra points<sup>1911</sup> through the scriptures because they are difficult to realize

**2.1.1.1.2.1.3.1. Matching [the fact that] the results that are the three jewels are established as vajra points through the scriptures because they are difficult to realize**

{433} The *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*<sup>1912</sup> says:

"Ānanda, to those bhikṣus who engage in yoga and wish to directly perceive arhathood, teach the dharma such that desire, hatred, and dullness are not to be relinquished.<sup>1913</sup> Teach the dharma such that the Tathāgata is indemonstrable, the dharma is inaudible, and the saṃgha cannot be worshipped. . . ." Then, venerable Ānanda said to the Tathāgata, "Bhagavan, how is the Tathāgata indemonstrable? How is the dharma inaudible? How can the saṃgha not be worshipped?" The Tathāgata said . . ."<sup>1914</sup>

The three sentences [from this sūtra that are quoted in RGVV] appear right after this [passage].<sup>1915</sup> [Thus,] the three essences of the three jewels are

matched [with the scriptures] here in the same way as they are explained in the section on identifying the essences of the seven vajra points [in RGVV].

As for the reason for establishing the Buddha as a vajra point because he is difficult to realize, you may wonder, “How does [the phrase] ‘He cannot be seen with the eyes’ exist as a scriptural passage that establishes [the Buddha] as a vajra point?” The eye is the support, which illustrates what is supported by it—the eye consciousness. If the Buddha is not realized by nonconceptual cognitions ([such as] the eye consciousness), he is even less realized by conceptual cognitions (the *prajñās* of the triad of studying, reflecting, and meditating of *śrāvakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, and ordinary beings). Thus, it is established that [the Buddha] is a vajra point because he is difficult to realize. It may be said, “However, all [levels] up through the *buddhabhūmi* are again realized through the conceptual *prajñās* of studying and reflecting, but they are not realized by nonconceptual [cognitions]. Therefore, does this not become a contradictory reason?” It is flawless. Conceptual cognitions take<sup>1916</sup> the seeming [reality] of object generalities as their objects [but] are not able to take specifically characterized referents as their objects, whereas the consciousnesses of the five [sense] gates take specifically characterized referents as their objects. Here, it is established that the specifically characterized phenomenon that is the Buddha is difficult to realize. Object generalities are realized by the cognitions of ordinary beings. Therefore, if the specifically characterized referent that is the Buddha is realized, it is allotted to being realized by a nonconceptual cognition, but if it is not realized by that, how could it be realized by a conceptual cognition? It is not realized [by such]. This is the gist of this explanation.

As for establishing the dharma as a vajra point because it is difficult to realize, it is correlated to [the phrase “It cannot be heard with the ears”] in the same way [as above] by exchanging the subject “eye consciousness” with “ear consciousness.”

With regard to the *saṃgha*, [the phrase] “because it is unconditioned” refers to not being conditioned by karma and afflictions. As for [the *sūtra*’s phrase] “it cannot be worshipped with body or mind,” it cannot be worshipped with the body—*bodhisattvas* on the ten *bhūmis* simply consist of [the kind of] flesh and blood that do not perish because they are not conditioned by karma and afflictions. Rather, {434} since they are presented as having the essence of the wisdoms of knowing suchness and variety, one cannot do things such as give them a massage. As for the mind, through reflecting on the meaning [of this term] here, mind refers to the consciousnesses of the five [sense] gates, [that is,] their being nonconceptual. Since

they are nonconceptual cognitions, they are correlated [here] as in the above [explanations of] how [the phrases “He cannot be seen with the eyes” and “It cannot be heard with the ears”] become scriptural passages that establish [the Buddha and the dharma] as vajra points. Now [follows:]

**2.1.1.1.2.1.3.2. Matching [the fact that] the four that are the cause and its conditions are established as vajra points through the scriptures [because they are difficult to realize]**

This has four parts:

**2.1.1.1.2.1.3.2.1. Establishing the basic element as a vajra point because it is difficult to realize**

This is established [through] the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvasūtra*.<sup>1917</sup> Since “actuality” in this [quote] is what is to be realized, this actuality is a general term for all seven [vajra points]. Through correlating the meaning of this general term with its particular instance by virtue of the context, it [here] refers to the basic element. For example, this is like [the phrase] “Bring what is beyond the earth” referring to salt when spoken by the king’s cook but referring to a horse when spoken by the king’s general. As for the phrase “[this actuality] cannot be [correctly] known, seen, or discriminated [even by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas],” in due order, Ngog [Lotsāwa] matches the triad [of “known,” “seen,” and “discriminated”] with the triad of the path of preparation, the path of seeing, and the path of familiarization, and also with the triad of preparation, main phase, and conclusion.<sup>1918</sup> However, this is not the case. Rather, in due order, [these three] are matched with the *prajñās* of studying, reflecting, and meditating. “How does one know such?” Because [RGVV] explained above that “[this actuality] is difficult to penetrate by any cognitions that arise from studying and reflecting.”

You may wonder, “Why are there three names in the *sūtra* for the single actuality that is the basic element?”<sup>1919</sup> Because [*Uttaratantra* I.48 and RGVV on it] teach that this basic element is labeled with three names during its phase of being impure (ordinary beings), its phase of being both pure and impure (the ten *bhūmis*), and its phase of being completely pure (buddhahood). In due order, these are correlated to the [three] statements [that start with] “Śāriputra, ‘the ultimate’ . . .” You may wonder, “At the time of the *sūtra*, how does this become<sup>1920</sup> a scriptural passage that establishes the basic element as a vajra point because it is difficult to realize?” This is clearly explained [by RGVV’s saying] that it cannot be realized by

the three prajñās of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, let alone by ordinary naive beings.

[2.1.1.1.2.1.3.2.2. Establishing awakening as a vajra point because it is difficult to realize]

You may wonder, “How does awakening become a vajra point by virtue of its being taught as the three synonyms ‘awakening,’ ‘nirvāṇa,’ and ‘dharma-kāya’ in the *Śrīmālāsūtra*?” [Through the passage] “The Tathāgata is indemonstrable. He cannot be seen with the eyes” in the *Sthirādhyāśayasūtra*<sup>1921</sup> above, the dharmakāya was already established as a vajra point. Therefore, the awakening that is not different from it becomes a vajra point [too].

[2.1.1.1.2.1.3.2.3. Establishing the qualities as a vajra point because they are difficult to realize]

You may wonder, “How do the qualities become a vajra point by virtue of its being taught in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvasūtra* that the dharmakāya and its qualities are inseparable and not different?” This is analogous to the above [argument for awakening’s being a vajra point].

[2.1.1.1.2.1.3.2.4. Establishing enlightened activity as a vajra point because it is difficult to realize]

{435} You may wonder, “How does the [*Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvātāra*]-*jñānālokāṃkārasūtra*<sup>1922</sup> establish enlightened activity as a vajra point?” If the Buddha does not have thoughts, how does his enlightened activity that promotes the welfare of sentient beings come about? Śrāvakas and so on understand this to be contradictory [by thinking], “If he promotes the welfare of sentient beings, how can he not have thoughts?” Thus, since this is difficult to realize, it becomes a vajra point.

2.1.1.1.2.2. The commentary on the latter half of verse [I.1]

[This consists of RGVV’s sentence that begins with] “In brief, [these seven vajra points] . . .” As for [the phrase] “the [seven] summary topics that are the gateways to [what this treatise] teaches,” [these seven] were already explained as the essence of the presentation of the body [of the text]. Now [follows:]



### 2.1.1.2. The explanation of the author of the root text matching [the seven vajra points] with the scriptures

In accordance with their specific characteristics  
 And in due order, the [first] three points<sup>1923</sup> of these [seven]  
 Should be understood from the introduction in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*  
 And the [latter] four, from the distinction of the attributes of the  
 intelligent and the victors. I.2

The connection of the [vajra points with the scriptures in general] was already explained above. This [particular way of matching them here with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*] has two parts:

1. The meaning of the root text<sup>1924</sup>
2. The meaning of the commentary

#### [2.1.1.2.2. The meaning of the commentary]

This has three parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation
3. Conclusion

##### 2.1.1.2.2.1. Brief introduction

[In RGVV, this consists of the passage] “Among these seven vajra points . . . the arising of the three jewels.” The gist of [the phrase] “the discussion of their specific characteristics” is “In the same way as the characteristics of the seven vajra points (such as the Buddha’s being endowed with eight characteristics and so on) are taught in the *Uttaratantra*, look them up in<sup>1925</sup> the [*Dhāraṇīśvararāja*]*sūtra* too.” “In accordance with and in due order” means “in the exact same way as the order of the seven vajra points is taught in the *Uttaratantra*, look it up in the *sūtra* too.” [The phrase] “the remaining four, from [this *sūtra*’s sections on] the distinction of [teaching] the [various] attributes of bodhisattvas and tathāgatas” refers to the basic element’s being taught in the section that teaches the sixty factors that purify the basic element (such as the four ornaments and the eight illuminations) in the actual [part] of the *sūtra* following the *sūtra* [passages on the three jewels] in the introduction.<sup>1926</sup> In the detailed explanation below, it is established through the structure of a single probative argument [by way of scripture that all sentient beings possess the basic element]. The three conditions such as awakening are taught in the section on the eightyfold

distinction [of teaching the attributes] of the victor, which consists of the sixteen [kinds of the] great compassion of great awakening and so on. [All] these will be explained in detail below.<sup>1927</sup>

Among the words of the sūtra on the three jewels, “the Bhagavān” refers to the one who is endowed with overcoming the four māras or is endowed with the six qualities such as sovereignty.<sup>1928</sup> As for “all phenomena,” since they bear their own specific characteristics, these phenomena comprise [all] conditioned and unconditioned phenomena. “Equality” refers to the equal nature of phenomena, which teaches lack of attachment. “Completely and perfectly awakened” refers to direct enlightened realization, which teaches lack of obstruction. As for “has excellently turned the wheel of dharma,” you may wonder, “Why is this referred to as ‘wheel?’” It is the wheel of dharma that is endowed with the eightfold path of the noble ones. Therefore, it is a wheel because it resembles a wheel. For example, a wheel {436} has three attributes. What resembles the hub that brings [the spokes] together is samādhi. What resembles the rim that prevents [the wheel] from splitting asunder is firmness. What resembles the spokes that cut through is the correct view. Or, just as a wheel makes those who have not arrived at a battle arrive [there], this [wheel of dharma] makes those who have not realized the [true] actuality realize it. Or, it is similar to the wheel of a chariot—just as that [wheel] functions as the support for progressing further and further, this [wheel of dharma] functions as the support for all qualities progressing further and further. In [the phrase] “endowed with limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples,” “disciplined” [means that] those with the three dispositions possess the capacity to attain their individual three [kinds of] awakening. “Being endowed” [means] being surrounded.

As for “the remaining four points,” it was [already] explained that they are taught in the main part of the sūtra following the introduction.<sup>1929</sup> It is said that some scholars are mistaken [in claiming] that without the intention of implying the main part of the sūtra, the mere essence of the seven vajra points without being specified by their specific characteristics is taught for all seven in the sūtra [passages] of the introduction itself. [The phrase] “the causes that correspond to the arising of the three jewels” [refers to] the substantial cause, that is, the basic element. “Accomplishing” [indicates] the means for purifying the basic element from adventitious stains, that is, the three conditions [that are awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity].

### 2.1.1.2.2.2. Detailed explanation

This has two parts:

1. Detailed explanation of the results that are the three jewels
2. [Detailed] explanation of the disposition for accomplishing the [three jewels] (the four that are the cause and its conditions)

#### 2.1.1.2.2.2.1. Detailed explanation of the results that are the three jewels

This has three parts:

1. The qualities of the consummate causes of the three jewels
2. The infinite qualities [of the three jewels]
3. The unsurpassable qualities [of the three jewels]

The first one refers to [the three jewels'] being attained in dependence on [their respective] primary causes that make one attain them. The second one refers to the infinite enumeration of their qualities. The third one refers to their ultimate qualities. [In RGVV,] there is only the explanation of the [three] basic phrases in the introduction of all three<sup>1930</sup> [jewels in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*]: “The Bhagavān has completely and perfectly awakened to the equality of all phenomena.”

##### 2.1.1.2.2.2.1.1. The qualities of the consummate causes [of the three jewels]

[According to the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*,] this means the following. When [the Buddha] dwelled on the eighth bhūmi, through nonconceptual wisdom's engaging the dharmadhātu on its own accord (the primary cause of attaining the jewel of the Buddha), he attained mastery over relinquishing contaminated conditioned phenomena and [also] attained mastery over perceiving uncontaminated unconditioned phenomena, thus attaining mastery over all phenomena. Therefore, based on this most fundamental of [all] causes [for becoming a buddha], the jewel of the complete and perfect buddhahood [of realizing] all phenomena as equality is attained at the time of the fruition.

After the cause of the Buddha has been explained by this, {437} now the cause of the dharma is explained. It is said that when [the Buddha] dwelled on the ninth bhūmi, he attained the wisdom of the four [kinds of] discriminating awareness and thereby explained the dharma of the mahāyāna. Therefore, based on this most fundamental of [all] causes [for completely realizing and teaching the dharma] (being endowed with [the

power of] proclaiming the unsurpassable dharma and so on), the jewel [of the dharma] is attained at the time of the fruition.

As for the explanation of the cause of the saṃgha, it is said [in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*] that on the tenth bhūmi, the light rays [called] “Fearless Self-Confidence” from the crown of the head of the Buddha circled the entire assembly of the retinue seven times, circled [bodhisattvas like] the bodhisattva Dhāraṇīśvararāja one hundred times, and then became absorbed into the crown of their heads. Through this, [a bodhisattva] like Dhāraṇīśvararāja received the empowerment as the unsurpassable dharma regent of the Tathāgata.<sup>1931</sup> Immediately upon that, based on this causal seed that makes the deeds of a buddha effortless and uninterrupted, [the jewel of] the saṃgha was obtained at the time of the fruition. You may think, “Explain these limitless disciplined assemblies of disciples.” Since this is explained by having in mind that it is difficult, [the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*] says, “the limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples . . .” Now [follows:]

#### 2.1.1.2.2.1.2. The explanation of the infinite qualities [of the three jewels]

This has three parts:

##### 2.1.1.2.2.1.2.1. The infinite qualities of the Buddha

[This consists of RGVV’s passage] “Then, immediately after the discussion of the praiseworthy qualities . . .” As for “the discussion of the praiseworthy qualities of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas,” [the passage] in the introduction of the [*Dhāraṇīśvararāja*]sūtra [starting] with “resided together with a great bhikṣu saṃgha of sixty thousand bhikṣus, all of whom were all-knowing” and ending in “had solely entered the word of the Buddha”<sup>1932</sup> teaches fifteen qualities of śrāvakas. Then, [the passage starting] with “together with an immeasurable saṃgha of bodhisattvas, that is, together with bodhisattva mahāsattvas who are delivered through their sphere of omniscience without attachment” and ending in “who are exclusively endowed with all qualities through their uninterrupted bodhisattva conduct for hundreds of thousands of eons that are immeasurable, infinite, and endless”<sup>1933</sup> explains fourteen qualities [of bodhisattvas]. Thereafter, [the sūtra] explains, “It is as follows: together with the bodhisattva mahāsattva \*Samantāvabhāsānāvarenaḷoka . . .,” which represents the enumeration of the names of eight bodhisattvas, [ending in] “and other innumerable and immeasurable bodhisattvas.”<sup>1934</sup> Through these very<sup>1935</sup> [passages in the sūtra’s introduction], the

above words of the sūtra that explain the particular distinction of the qualities of the samgha<sup>1936</sup> are also to be understood. {438}

[RGVV's phrase] "which is based on the inconceivable supreme samādhi of the Buddha" [corresponds to the following passage in the sūtra:] "When sixteen years had passed after the Bhagavān had become a buddha, he knew that pure conduct had been flourishing, also saw and knew the great assembly of bodhisattvas, and knew, 'How amazing, these assemblies of bodhisattvas are the ones who seize the treasure of the dharma of the Tathāgata.' Then, he thought, 'I will vastly take care of these bodhisattvas as follows. In order to introduce these bodhisattva mahāsattvas to the object of the Tathāgata, through the Tathāgata's great emanations and the Tathāgata's great miraculous displays, I shall teach them the dharma specification called "the door to unobscured final deliverance through entering the conduct of a bodhisattva."'"<sup>1937</sup> If this very [teaching] is given a name due to the one who requested it, it is [called] the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*.

Now, in order to build a mansion for explaining this sūtra, on Vulture Flock Mountain,<sup>1938</sup> [the sūtra says that] "the Bhagavān rested in meditative equipoise in the samādhi of a tathāgata called 'Displaying the Emanation of the Object<sup>1939</sup> of a Buddha Just as It Is.'"<sup>1940</sup> This samādhi is inconceivable because it is inconceivable for the minds of ordinary beings, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas. [Also,] this samādhi is a bull because it resembles a bull. For example, it is said, "Among cattle, this is the bull." Likewise, among the many samādhis that the Buddha has, this one alone is supreme and therefore is [like] a bull [among them].

Through the blessings of the Bhagavān's resting in meditative equipoise in that samādhi on Vulture Flock Mountain, now a vast garden made of jewels was established [in the space] above the desire realm gods who have power over others' emanations and below the form gods of Brahmakāyika.<sup>1941</sup> This has two parts: (1) through which particular causes it was established and (2) for what purpose it was established. (1) The causes are twofold: (a) the direct cause and (b) the indirect cause. The direct cause is represented by [the phrase] "made of jewels," that is, the cause that is the ground whose shape is that of white beryl, golden houses, arched doorways [made of] swords, gate houses [made of] precious diamond stones, and ledges [by the gateways] made of the precious stones [called] "stainless light." The indirect cause is represented by [the phrase] "being established by the roots of virtue of the Tathāgata." (2) The purpose is "to purify the thinking of bodhisattvas, illuminate the worldly realms of the ten directions, satisfy the thinking of limitless sentient beings, {439} outshine all

the palaces of the gods, and exhort all bodhisattvas of the ten directions to listen to this sūtra.”

Inside this garden, on the periphery, there arose many billions of lion thrones on which bodhisattvas resided, which were countless, had many varieties, were beautiful to behold, high, very excellent, broad, vast, pleasing to the mind, and delighting to the mind. Then, [there was] a staircase to ascend to it, surrounded by a circumference the size of seven humans, its width being half a yojanā,<sup>1942</sup> made of sapphires,<sup>1943</sup> and adorned by all kinds of jewels. Through the movements of a web of small bells [made] of jewels, there arose a [lovely] chime. From each of the four continents, four thousand [continents] arose. Then, [such a staircase] arose in [all] four-continent [worlds] of all the chiliocosms of a trichiliocosm. Then, the Bhagavān arose from that samādhi, shook the greatest chiliocosm in this trichiliocosm [six times], and a great light arose too. Then, the Bhagavān ascended the staircase and went to that garden [by gradually passing through the six realms of the desire gods].

He had two retinues: (1) the retinue that dwelled together with [the Buddha] and (2) the retinue that arrived suddenly. (1) The first one is the one that had gone to Vulture Flock Mountain<sup>1944</sup> as the physical location: [the Buddha] was surrounded by an assembly of bodhisattvas, an assembly of śrāvakas was before him, and gods and nāgas offered praises, showered down a great rain of flowers, covered [everything] with a great rain of garments, scattered a great rain of [aromatic] powders, incense, and ointments, had the great [sounds of] cymbals and melodies resound, shook the great worldly realm, and illuminated countless worldly realms. [At that point,] the great power of the Buddha and the great miraculous display of the Buddha illuminated only Vulture Flock Mountain. Many billions of great gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kiṃnaras, and uragas followed as attendants,<sup>1945</sup> ascended the staircase [made] of all kinds of precious gems, and went to that vast garden. [All] these represent the retinue that dwelled together with [the Buddha]. (2) Now, the retinue that arrived suddenly is explained. [The sūtra says that] then, once the Bhagavān and his retinue [on their way up the staircase] had arrived at the location of the gods who belong to the Four Kinds of Great Kings, the gods who belong to the Four Kinds of Great Kings knew that the Bhagavān with his retinue had come to their location, and thus the assemblies of the gods who belong to the Four Kinds of Great Kings approached the Bhagavān. On this, the commentary [RGVV merely says], “the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata.” {440} In order to perform activities of venerating the Bhagavān,

they showered down clouds of flowers [made] of divine substances as presents. On this, [RGVV] says, “their arranging various kinds of offerings of divine substances.” [In this way,] the gods who belong to the Four Kinds of Great Kings [praised]<sup>1946</sup> the Bhagavān. The fire of the sun and the moon, the shine of jewels, and the very stainless divine light of those in the land of gods were all outshone by the light of the sage, and thus he pacified even all three lower realms. Through [his light] falling onto Mount Meru and the peaks of its surrounding [mountain] enclosure, the realms were illuminated. Having been pleased and delighted through that, [these gods] praised the victor who fulfills all goals, [saying,] “We take refuge [in you],” and followed the arrived Bhagavān as attendants. This [is represented by RGVV’s phrase] “their showering down clouds of praises.”

In the sūtra, the same is found in detail for the remaining five classes of gods [of the desire realm].<sup>1947</sup> To summarize, the remaining five classes of gods knew that the Bhagavān with his retinue had come to their location and thus approached the Bhagavān. On [all] this, [RGVV merely] says, “the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata.” In order to perform activities of venerating the Bhagavān, the gods of the Thirty-Three showered down clouds of incense [made] of divine substances as presents. The gods of Free from Combat showered down clouds of garments [made] of divine substances. The gods of Tuṣita showered down clouds of jewels<sup>1948</sup> [made] of divine substances. The gods of Enjoying Emanations showered down clouds of ornaments [made] of divine substances. The gods of Power over Others’ Emanations showered down clouds of pearl necklaces [made] of divine substances. On [all] this, [RGVV] says, “their arranging various kinds of offerings of divine substances.” Each one [of these classes of gods also] uttered verses of praise to the Bhagavān, on which [RGVV] says, “their showering down clouds of praises.”

Then, the Bhagavān with this retinue reached that garden and sat on the lion throne as it had been arranged.<sup>1949</sup> Then, after having gathered everyone within the six classes of gods of the desire realm as his retinue, he saw that the retinue was too small for explaining this sūtra and thought about gathering [a larger] retinue, thus resting in meditative equipoise in the buddha samādhi “[The Buddha’s] playing in unobscured liberation.”<sup>1950</sup> Immediately upon resting in meditative equipoise in that samādhi, light rays equal [in number] to the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā came forth from the pores of the Buddha and, upon having come forth, illuminated all ten directions. Upon having illuminated [all] worldly realms, through the touch of each light ray, all sufferings of the lower realms were discontinued

and all stirring of the afflictions of all sentient beings was pacified. Then, in order to exhort all bodhisattvas in the ten directions to listen to this sūtra, {441} four verses appeared at the tips of those light rays, [ending with the following verse]:

It is what has not been turned, is unequalled, and is turned by all victors—  
This genuine wheel [of dharma] with ten powers I turn today out of  
loving-kindness for sentient beings.

[This turning] that is praised by living beings, difficult to find, excellent,  
and vast will happen today.

Those with very vast and open devotion and striving, look [at it] today!

[Thereafter, the light rays] returned and melted into the crown of the head of the Bhagavān. Then, those light rays pervaded the east, and in the eastern buddha realm \*Lokadhātuguṇānantaratnapuṇyavyūhavistaravati<sup>1951</sup> of the Tathāgata \*Vimalaviśuddharatnaprabhābodhyaṅgavadanucchedadharmaraśmivyūharāja,<sup>1952</sup> the bodhisattva called Puṣpaśrīgarbhasarvadharmavaśavartin<sup>1953</sup> was exhorted by those light rays. Immediately upon that, bodhisattvas ten times the number of sand grains in the river Gaṅgā surrounded him and dwelled in front [of him]. All together, they disappeared from that buddha realm and arrived in Sahā, this worldly realm [of ours], in just a single instant. Having arrived in this garden, they sat down on seats that they created through their individual miraculous powers. [All] this is represented by [RGVV's phrase] “the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata.” In order to perform activities of venerating the Buddha, they showered down a web of divine beryls as presents. On this, [RGVV] says, “their arranging various kinds of offerings of divine substances.” Then, they praised [the Buddha] with [verses] such as:

Bhagavan, completely without equal and the perfection of qualities,  
The garlands of the praises of your qualities are uttered in all ten  
directions.

The host of qualities that you own is a treasury of qualities that fills  
[all] realms.

We who strive for the dharma have come here.

On this, [RGVV says], “their showering down clouds of praises.”

Then, through those light rays' pervading the south, in the buddha realm \*Lokadhātupratibhāna of the Tathāgata \*Guṇānantaratnatibhāna, the



bodhisattva called Ratnayaṣṭi was exhorted by those light rays. In further detail, the same as [described] above applies. After having covered the Buddha with a web of gold as a present, [the bodhisattva] praised him with two verses.

Then, through those light rays' pervading the west, in the buddha realm \*Lokadhātvaabhāsavati of the Tathāgata \*Samantāvabhāsa, the bodhisattva \*Ravaṇabalarāja was exhorted by those light rays, covered the Buddha with a web of necklaces [made] of gems and pearls as a present, and praised him with two verses. {442}

Then, through that light's pervading the north, in the buddha realm \*Lokadhātusarvaratnaraṇā of the Tathāgata \*Guṇānantaratnapratibhāna,<sup>1954</sup> the bodhisattva \*Agramatisagara was exhorted by those light rays, covered the Buddha with necklaces [made] of gems and webs [made] of jewels as presents, and praised him with two verses. Just as before, these three [passages] also correspond to [RGVV's passage] "the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata, their arranging various kinds of offerings of divine substances, and their showering down clouds of praises."

Likewise, the [same] three [activities] are explained in the sūtra for each [of the instances of those light rays' traveling] to the four intermediate [directions] as well as above and below. At the end, through pervading the zenith, in the buddha realm \*Lokadhātvalaṃkārabhūṣitā<sup>1955</sup> of the Tathāgata \*Ravaṇotkrṣṭabalarāja, the bodhisattva \*Sarvadharmavikurvaṇarāja was exhorted by those light rays. Immediately upon that, bodhisattvas ten times the number of sand grains in the river Gaṅgā surrounded him and dwelled in front [of him]. They disappeared from that buddha realm<sup>1956</sup> and arrived in Sahā, this worldly realm [of ours], in just a single instant. In this garden, they sat down on seats that they created through their individual miraculous powers. On this, [RGVV says,] "the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata." In order to perform activities of venerating the Bhagavān, they covered the Buddha with a web of small bells [made] of jewels as a present. On this, [RGVV] says, "their arranging various kinds of offerings of divine substances." Then, they praised [the Buddha] with two verses [beginning with]:

The enlightened activity of the bodies of the sugatas without middle  
and end

And the infinite sphere of speech and mind of the unsurpassable ones  
Is known by the buddhas but not by other sentient beings,  
Just as in the example of people not finding the end of space.

This represents [RGVV's phrase] "their showering down clouds of praises."

Then, the Bhagavān arose from his samādhi and made a sound of clearing his throat.<sup>1957</sup> This was heard in all chiliocosms of this trichiliocosm<sup>1958</sup> as a melody, and [all] bhikṣus, upāsakas, upāsikās, and nonhumans with devotion ascended that staircase and came to that garden. They paid homage to the Bhagavān and then sat down on seats in accordance with [their status]. Through the sound of [the Buddha's] clearing his throat, all gods [of the form realm] from Brahmakāyika up through Akaniṣṭha came to that garden, paid homage to the Bhagavān, and sat down on their individual firm seats. {443} These [passages also correspond to RGVV's phrase] "the gathering of the retinues of the Tathāgata." Now, what is to be explained is [the following:]

#### 2.1.1.2.2.2.1.2.2. The infinite qualities of the dharma

[In RGVV, the description of these qualities begins with the phrase] "Following that, . . . the splendid arrangement of the dharma throne . . ." [According to the sūtra,]<sup>1959</sup> then, wishing to utter this sūtra, the Bhagavān thought of making<sup>1960</sup> the bodhisattva Puṣpaśrīgarbha<sup>1961</sup> build a lion throne and thus emitted the light rays called "Demonstrating the Power of Bodhisattvas" from the ūrṇā hair between his eyebrows. These light rays circled the entire assembly of the retinue seven times and then became absorbed into the assembly of bodhisattvas. Then, immediately upon those light rays' touching the bodhisattva Puṣpaśrīgarbha, Puṣpaśrīgarbha rested in meditative equipoise in the bodhisattva samādhi "Array of Ornaments." Through this, in the middle of the garden arrayed with jewels, there arose [a seat for the Buddha—] a lion throne the height of eight hundred quintillions the size of a palm tree, adorned with all [kinds of] jewels, its circumference being made from all [kinds of] ornaments, spread with all [kinds of] arrays of cloths, strewn<sup>1962</sup> with all [kinds of] flower petals, adorned<sup>1963</sup> with all [kinds of] pleasing canopies, and satisfying the thinking of all sentient beings. Then, after Puṣpaśrīgarbha had risen from that samādhi, he thought of requesting the Bhagavān to sit on that seat. Thus, with respect and honorific language, he folded his palms and requested this through eight verses [ending in]:

For the sake of serving and paying respect to you and listening to the  
dharma,

These pure sentient beings have arrived from the ten directions.

Please clarify the topic for whose sake they have arrived.

Please reside on this lion throne and also explain the dharma.

Then, knowing the superior intention of Puṣpaśrīgarbha, [the Buddha] sat on the lion throne. [RGVV's phrase] "light [emerging from the Buddha's forehead]" refers to the Buddha's emitting the light rays [called] "Demonstrating the Power of Bodhisattvas" for the sake of making [Puṣpaśrīgarbha] build this throne. It is said that guru Parahita stated:

After having sat down on the lion throne, the Bhagavān emitted all kinds of light rays in order to guide those to be guided.

[The following corresponds to RGVV's phrase] "the proclamation of the names and the qualities of [various] specifications of the dharma." Then, after the Bhagavān had found unobscured liberation, he explained a twenty-two-fold enumeration of names such as "the dharma specification 'the door to unobscured final deliverance through entering the conduct of a bodhisattva,' which focuses on establishing [disciples] on the bodhisattva path." Since these {444} represent the qualities of the dharma, [they correspond to RGVV's phrase] "the proclamation of the qualities." It is said that Parahita declared:

From the dharma of explanation (the twelve branches of the Buddha's speech), the dharma of accomplishment (the eightfold path of the noble ones) and the ultimate dharma (nirvāṇa) arise. The latter arises from this [dharma of accomplishment] and the former [dharma of explanation].

Now [follows:]

2.1.1.2.2.2.1.2.3. The explanation of the infinite qualities of the saṃgha [In RGVV, the description of these qualities begins with the phrase] "Right after that . . . the mutual display of the powers of the spheres . . . of the samādhis of bodhisattvas . . ." <sup>1964</sup> The meaning of that is this: [According to the sūtra,] then, the Bhagavān and his retinue sat on their seats and there displayed the power of samādhi until [the Buddha] spoke the dharma. The bodhisattva Ratnayaṣṭi rested in meditative equipoise in the samādhi called "Array of the Ornaments <sup>1965</sup> of the Buddha" and thus blessed all the bodies of [the beings] in the entire assembly of the retinue to be adorned with the ornaments [of the Buddha]. The bodhisattva \*Ravaṇabalarāja, through resting in meditative equipoise in the samādhi called "Lotus Array," [blessed the members of] the entire assembly of the retinue [so that they had] strings

[made] of flowers and little containers of flowers in their hands [and also] strew [such strings and containers of flowers] over the Bhagavān and the bodhisattvas.<sup>1966</sup> The bodhisattva \*Agramatigandhavyūha, through resting in meditative equipoise in the samādhi called “Array of Fragrance,” blessed the entire retinue so that the fragrance of Sarpeṣṭa sandalwood emerged from [all] their pores. Likewise, all other [bodhisattvas] (such as the bodhisattvas in the four intermediate directions, above, and below) each demonstrated various powers of samādhi.

[The following corresponds to RGVV’s phrase] “the description of praising their various qualities.” [According to the sūtra,] then, the Bhagavān graced the assembly of the retinue by saying, “This is good,” and the bodhisattva Dharmeśvararāja<sup>1967</sup> knew that the time for explaining the dharma had come. Thus, he described the qualities of bodhisattvas, saying, “Bhagavan, how amazing, these assemblies of bodhisattvas are great.<sup>1968</sup> These assemblies of bodhisattvas don the inconceivable armor. Those who play with the wisdom of supernatural knowledge, . . . have gathered immeasurable merit, are close to the omniscient wisdom that is endowed with all supreme aspects, and whose praise does not reach<sup>1969</sup> an end until the final end of time make up the assemblies of such [bodhisattvas].” Now<sup>1970</sup> [follows:]

### 2.1.1.2.2.1.3. The explanation of the unsurpassable qualities of the three jewels

This has three parts:

#### 2.1.1.2.2.1.3.1. The unsurpassable qualities of the Buddha

{445} [This corresponds to RGVV’s passage] “Thereafter . . .” [This passage contains the sentence] “[This is taught] by [Dhāraṇīśvararāja,] this oldest son of the supreme dharma king, becoming endowed with the highest fearlessness and self-confidence through [having received] the empowerment of the Buddha’s light rays.” As for [this sentence, the sūtra says<sup>1971</sup> that,] then, the Bhagavān<sup>1972</sup> looked at those assemblies of bodhisattvas and thought,<sup>1973</sup> “How amazing, these bodhisattvas are the ones who strive for the dharma and hold the treasury of the Tathāgata’s dharma. Now, to explain this sūtra I shall engage in<sup>1974</sup> bringing it clearly to the mind of bodhisattva Dhāraṇīśvararāja.” Thus, the light rays called “Fearless Self-Confidence” came forth from the crown of the head of the Buddha. These light rays circled the entire retinue seven times, circled the bodhisattva Dhāraṇīśvararāja one hundred times, and then vanished into the crown of his head. The light

went all the way down to his heart, and Dhāraṇīśvararāja outshone the light of the assemblies of bodhisattvas, their lion thrones, and their bodies by a hundred times,<sup>1975</sup> and thus his body, light, power, and prajñā became the most eminent among all bodhisattvas. Thinking, “I have received empowerment through the light rays of the Buddha,” he rose from his seat, threw his robes over one shoulder, placed his right kneecap on the ground, folded his palms, [and bowed]. In the space right above the crown of the head of the Buddha, [Dhāraṇīśvararāja] opened an umbrella [made] of jewels, named “Ornament of the Tathāgata.” Its handle was made of beryl; its covering, of gold; its top ornament, of a kiṃśuka jewel;<sup>1976</sup> and its spokes, of sapphires. Pearl garlands dangled [from it], silken tassels embellished it, and a web of small bells [on it] was ringing. It was held by the body of the bodhisattva as the one to seize it, and its size covered a trichiliocosm. Then, [Dhāraṇīśvararāja] praised [the Buddha] through ten verses, such as:

Through this supreme person,<sup>1977</sup> light rays emerged.  
 Your face is pure and<sup>1978</sup> emits light.  
 After<sup>1979</sup> this guide had made [his light] circle my body  
 One hundred times, it came to rest in the crown of my head.

Through being touched by the light of the guide of humans,  
 My previously attained mindfulness,  
 The shine of my insight’s self-confidence, and likewise my total recall<sup>1980</sup>  
 Have become a thousand times more eminent.<sup>1981</sup>

And ending with:

Please explain how the Bhagavān<sup>1982</sup> engaged his knowledge,  
 How he trained for a long time,  
 The training of Dharmeśvararāja,<sup>1983</sup>  
 And the sphere of the guides.

{446} Since these [verses] are solely a praise of the ultimate [qualities] of the Buddha, the commentary, by summarizing the meaning of these instructions, says, “He presents a praise of the ultimate [as embodied in] the true qualities of the Tathāgata.” Now [follows:]

### 2.1.1.2.2.2.1.3.2. The explanation of the unsurpassable qualities of the dharma

[This corresponds to RGVV's phrase] "and discusses the subject matters<sup>1984</sup> of the highest dharma of the mahāyāna." [In the sūtra,]<sup>1985</sup> then, the bodhisattva Dhāraṇīśvararāja said, "Bhagavan, the object<sup>1986</sup> of the Tathāgata is inconceivable. The sphere of bodhisattvas is without measure. Bhagavan, being aware that the Tathāgata teaches the dharma without becoming weary<sup>1987</sup> and seeing that the Tathāgata abides in the compassion of not abandoning sentient beings,<sup>1988</sup> I request you to discuss this topic. Bhagavan, what are the ornaments of bodhisattvas? Through which ornaments is the conduct of bodhisattvas embellished? Bhagavan, how do bodhisattvas,<sup>1989</sup> after they have attained the light of the dharma, become free from the darkness of ignorance and without<sup>1990</sup> doubt? The great gates of the dharma are very pure. Bhagavan, how do bodhisattvas engage in the correct actions<sup>1991</sup> of bodhisattvas, [how] do they perform well-performed actions,<sup>1992</sup> and [how] are the outcomes of their actions without suffering?"<sup>1993</sup> Thus he formulated his questions that request [the Buddha to teach]. Now [follows:]

### 2.1.1.2.2.2.1.3.3. The explanation of the unsurpassable qualities of the saṃgha

[This corresponds to RGVV's phrase] "describing [how] to attain the fruition of realizing the [mahāyāna dharma], which is the supreme mastery over [all] phenomena." [In the sūtra, Dhāraṇīśvararāja continued with] his request:<sup>1994</sup> "Bhagavan, the insight of the Tathāgata is very certain that after bodhisattvas have overcome [all] māras and opponents and have become free from doubt by all means, they will engage in the object of the Tathāgata, will rise to the object of bodhisattvas, engage in the thinking of sentient beings, thoroughly know the [mental] conducts of [all] sentient beings,<sup>1995</sup> purify buddha realms,<sup>1996</sup> annihilate the māras, correctly seize the teachings of the Tathāgata, and swiftly attain mastery over all phenomena. Therefore, please explain the dharma gate of [bodhisattvas] rising through<sup>1997</sup> engaging in bodhisattva conduct."

### 2.1.1.2.2.2.2. Explanation of the disposition for accomplishing the [three jewels] (the four that are the cause and its conditions)

This has three parts: {447}

1. Eliminating the flaw of the basic reason's being uncertain<sup>1998</sup>
2. [Identifying the essence of the attributes of] the intelligent
3. Identifying the essence of the attributes of the victors

2.1.1.2.2.2.1. Eliminating the flaw of the basic reason's being uncertain [The proof] in order to establish through the scriptures that the basic element (the cause) exists in all sentient beings is found as the structure of a single probative argument. You may wonder, "How [is that]?" The subject [of that probative argument] is "the buddha element." It is called such because it is realized by buddhas just as it is and serves as the cause for attaining buddhahood. The probandum is "is explained," that is, "it is explained that this naturally pure [buddha element] exists in all sentient beings." "Why is that?" The reason says, "because the sixty conditions for purifying the basic element are taught in the main part of the sūtra following the introduction." [All of] this [corresponds to RGVV's passage] "Next, after the introductory section of the sūtra . . ."1999

It may be said, "If sixty conditions for purifying the basic element are taught, this contradicts teaching three conditions when ascertaining the number of the seven vajra points." This is not contradictory—it is said that these sixty are presented as certain particular [features] of the basic element itself, [such as] "oneself engaging properly." The teaching on the four [factors] such as faith [in the mahāyāna dharma] during the causal phase of the basic element should also be understood in that way.

It may be said, "The sixty factors for purifying the basic element are taught in the sūtra, but if there is no basic element in sentient beings, why is [the above reason] not uncertain?" The answer to this question is twofold: eliminating the flaw of [the reason's] being uncertain by way of reasoning and eliminating the flaw of [the reason's] being uncertain by way of scripture.

First, the certainty about the positive concomitance appears in the text [of RGVV as the phrase] "the object to be purified," which [means] that there is a basis to be purified.<sup>2000</sup> [The phrase] "if [the object to be purified] is endowed with qualities" [means] that there also is a purpose<sup>2001</sup> if it is purified. The latter phrase means that the explanation of the means of purification is justified. Implicitly, this [also] applies to the certainty about the negative concomitance, which means that if neither the basis to be purified—the basic element—exists in sentient beings nor a purpose in purifying it exists, an explanation of the means of purifying it is not justified, just as in the example of [trying to purify] gold versus charcoal.

The elimination of the flaw of [the reason's] being uncertain through scripture consists of three sections from the sūtras [in RGVV]. Among these three, the elimination of the flaw of [the reason's] being uncertain [through] the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* consists of [the passage] "Taking up this

motive . . .” This [initial] phrase [in that passage means] “this motive of the naturally pure basic element’s existing in all sentient beings.” That scriptural passage represents the certainty about the positive concomitance. The certainty about the negative concomitance is established implicitly, which means that if the basic element (the basis to be purified) did not exist in all sentient beings, the explanation in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* about the manner of purifying the basic element on the ten bhūmis by giving the manner of purifying fine gold as an example {448} would not be justified.

The elimination of the flaw of [the reason’s] being uncertain through the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* consists of [the passage] “In this *sūtra* here . . .” “This *sūtra* here” means the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. [The explanation] in this [sūtra] consists of an example and its meaning. The example is the teaching of the threefold example of purifying the basic element in three phases. This is to be thought of as [consisting of] four points. (1) What purifies<sup>2002</sup> is represented by [the sūtra’s phrase] “an expert jeweler who knows the procedure of refining gems very well.” (2) The object to be purified is represented by [the phrase] “having extracted . . . jewel mine.” (3) The means of purification is represented by [the passage] “he washes them in a caustic acidic solution . . .” As for the three means of cleansing, the first one is soda, the second one is the broth from having cooked fish, and the third one is a toxic fluid because these three are caustic. It is said that the third one in the sūtra is quicksilver. (4) The manner of [presenting] the purpose or the result of purification is represented by [the passage] “Thus cleansed . . .”

The meaning [of this] also has four parts. (1) The agent who purifies consists of [the phrase] “the Tathāgata too.” (2) The object to be purified consists of [the phrase] “upon perceiving the impure basic element of sentient beings.” (3) The means of purification consist of [the phrase] “creates weariness . . .” Among the three phases [of purification], the first phase<sup>2003</sup> consists of teaching the four realities and thus making [those to be guided] attain [the fruitions of] a stream-enterer [and so on]. This refers to temporarily teaching nothing but seeming [reality]. During the second phase, [the basic element] is purified through the three doors to liberation. That is, subsequent to the [first phase], the dharma of the lack of characteristics—the two realities—is taught, which establishes [those to be guided] in the mahāyāna and then introduces them to [mahāyāna] mind training. As for the purification through the third phase (the discourses<sup>2004</sup> of irreversibility), then, through not teaching seeming [reality] to those who have become followers of the mahāyāna but making them familiarize with



nothing but ultimate reality (emptiness), they are established in the pure dharmakāya. (4) The manner of [presenting] the purpose or the result of purification consists of [the passage] “Those [sentient beings] with various causal natures . . .”

The certainty about the negative concomitance is established implicitly, which means that if the basic element (the basis to be purified) did not exist in sentient beings, the explanation in the sūtra<sup>2005</sup> about the manner of purifying the basic element in three phases by giving the manner of purifying a beryl as an example [for the existence of] the basic element or the tathāgata heart even in worldly people would not be justified.

The elimination of the flaw of [the reason’s] being uncertain through a quote from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Having in mind the pure disposition, the tathāgata element . . .”<sup>2006</sup> In this [passage] too, the certainty about the negative concomitance is established implicitly, which means that if {449} the basic element to be purified did not exist in sentient beings, there would be no justification for the explanation in the sūtra that by giving the example of pure gold’s becoming visible if it is purified, the basic element—the tathāgata heart—[that exists] even in worldly people becomes visible if the adventitious stains are purified.

### 2.1.1.2.2.2.2.2.–3. Identifying the essences of the attributes of the intelligent and the victors

This has two parts. [First,] with [the reader’s] wondering what the intelligent’s own sixtyfold essence is in itself, the [corresponding] question [“What are those sixty kinds of factors of purifying the buddha element?”] is formulated in the text [of RGVV]. This [essence] consists of one’s own welfare and the welfare of others. The first one is twofold: the four ornaments<sup>2007</sup> (the causes) and the eight illuminations (the results). The welfare of others is also twofold: the sixteen [kinds of] compassion (the causes) and the thirty-two [kinds of] activity (the results).

Here, as for the four ornaments of bodhisattvas, the sūtra says:

Those that embellish<sup>2008</sup> this genuine supreme yāna  
 Are the four ornaments of those with great insight—  
 Discipline, samādhi, likewise supreme<sup>2009</sup> prajñā,  
 Which has the meaning of great ascertainment, and also dhāraṇī.<sup>2010</sup>

You may wonder, “Why are these four called ‘ornaments?’” Bodhisattvas who are endowed with these four embellish their conduct [with them].

Therefore, since they resemble ornaments [in this way], they are called “ornaments.”

The eight kinds of illumination are the illuminations of (1) mindfulness, (2) insight, (3) realization, (4) dharmas, (5) wisdom, (6) reality, (7) the supernatural knowledges, and (8) practice. “Why are these eight called ‘illuminations?’” For, through being endowed with these eight, one attains the illumination of the dharma and becomes free from the darkness of ignorance, thus attaining the utterly lucid door of the dharma.

The sixteen kinds of the great compassion of bodhisattvas are the [sixteen forms of] compassion for sentient beings who (1) possess all kinds of [wrong] views, (2) [entertain] the four mistakennesses, (3) cling to “me” and what is mine, (4) [possess] the five obscurations, (5) are attached to the objects of the six āyatanas, (6) [possess] the seven [kinds of] pride, (7) deviate from the path of the noble ones, (8) lack self-control, (9) are angry, (10) commit evil actions, (11) lack the *prajñā* of the noble ones, (12) do not realize profound dependent origination, (13) have not relinquished the latent tendencies of [wrong] views, (14) are not free from the burden of suffering, (15) behave in deceitful and arrogant ways, and (16) deviate from the higher realms and liberation. [In this way,] “compassion for sentient beings” applies to [all sixteen], with [this compassion only] being divided by way of its [different] focal objects. “Why are they called ‘compassion?’” Because they [all] represent [states of mind] that have the [cognitive] aspect of wishing to relinquish these [sixteen forms of] mistakenness.

The thirty-two activities of bodhisattvas are (1) to awaken [sentient beings] from the sleep of ignorance, (2) to bring those with inferior faith to vast [faith], (3) to bring those who wish for what is not the dharma to wishing for the dharma, {450} (4) to establish those who have impure livelihood in pure [livelihood], (5) to establish those with bad views in the correct view, (6) to establish those with improper mental engagement in proper mental engagement, (7) to establish those who abide in wrong dharmas in the right dharma, (8)–(13) to establish those who abide in the antagonistic factors of the six *pāramitās* in the six *pāramitās* (these six are counted separately), (14) to bring those who are not skilled in means to being skilled in means, (15) to bring those with afflictions to [the state of] lacking afflictions, (16) to bring those who have reference points to [the state of] being without reference points, (17) to bring those without discipline to discipline, (18) to bring those who do not repay kindness to repaying kindness, (19) to bring those who have fallen into the four rivers to [the state of] being liberated from them, (20) to bring those who do not heed advice to heeding advice,<sup>2011</sup> (21)

to bring those who have a lot of clinging to [the state of] lacking clinging, (22) to bring those who lack the riches of the noble ones to the riches of the noble ones, [(23) to bring the sick to being without sickness,]<sup>2012</sup> (24) to bring those without the light of wisdom to the light of wisdom, (25) to bring those who do not understand the three realms to understanding them, (26) to bring those who have entered<sup>2013</sup> the left-sided path to the right[-sided path], (27) to bring those who are attached to body and life-force to lacking attachment to them, (28) [with bodhisattvas' seeing that sentient beings] are separated from the [three] jewels, while [ultimately] they do not interrupt [the continuum of] the disposition of the [three] jewels, to bring them to [the realization of] not interrupting [the continuum of that disposition],<sup>2014</sup> (29) to bring those who deviate from the dharma to embracing the dharma, (30) to bring those without the six recollections to [cultivating] these six, (31) to bring those with the obscurations of the afflictions [and karma] to being without afflictions [and karma], and (32) to bring those who possess nonvirtuous dharmas to [the perfection of all] virtuous dharmas. "Why are these called 'activities'?" Because they promote the welfare of sentient beings.

[Second, as for the attributes of the victors, RGVV's passage] "After the discussion of that . . ." teaches the eighty divisions of the attributes of the victors. By way of that, the [remaining three vajra points of] awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity are taught.

From among these three, first, after one has attained the sixteen great [aspects of] awakening, sixteen [corresponding forms of] great compassion engage those who have not attained those [aspects of awakening]. These are the sixteen [kinds] of compassion of great awakening. They are explained by way of their essences, which are explained as follows. (1) One consists of [the phrase] "without root and without ground." [This means that] after one has attained the awakening that is without root and without ground,<sup>2015</sup> one's great compassion engages [by thinking], "These sentient beings shall realize the awakening that is without root and without ground!" [The same] applies to all [fifteen remaining forms of great compassion]. (2) One consists of "peace and quiescence."<sup>2016</sup> (3) One consists of "natural luminosity."<sup>2017</sup> (4) One consists of "without adopting and without rejecting."<sup>2018</sup> (5) One consists of "without characteristics and without focal objects."<sup>2019</sup> {451} (6) One consists of "the equality of the three times."<sup>2020</sup> (7) One consists of "without a body and being unconditioned."<sup>2021</sup> (8) One consists of "inseparable and without foundation."<sup>2022</sup> (9) One consists of "not an object of body or mind."<sup>2023</sup> (10) One consists of "ungraspable and

without basis.”<sup>2024</sup> (11) One consists of “emptiness.”<sup>2025</sup> (12) One consists of “equal to space.”<sup>2026</sup> (13) One consists of “the ground of how things are.”<sup>2027</sup> (14) One consists of “engaging what is without aspects through engaging aspects.”<sup>2028</sup> (15) One consists of “uncontaminated and without appropriation.”<sup>2029</sup> (16) One consists of “pure, stainless, and without afflictions.”<sup>2030</sup> The explanation of these [sixteen] is well explicated in the sūtra itself.<sup>2031</sup>

Now, [second,] within the explanation of the essence of the qualities [of awakening],<sup>2032</sup> the ten powers consist of the powers of (1) knowing what is the case and what is not the case, (2) knowing all kinds of karmas, {452} (3) knowing all kinds of faculties, (4) knowing all kinds of constitutions, (5) knowing all kinds of inclinations, (6) knowing all kinds of paths, (7) knowing afflicted phenomena and purified phenomena, (8) knowing the recollection of former states, (9) knowing the deaths, transitions, and rebirths [of all sentient beings], and (10) knowing the termination of contamination.

The four fearlessnesses consist of (1) having attained fearlessness by virtue of seeing no reason<sup>2033</sup> for [anyone’s being able to] dispute that [the Buddha] himself has relinquished suffering and also makes others relinquish it, (2) having attained fearlessness [by virtue of seeing no reason for anyone’s being able to dispute that the Buddha] himself has relinquished the origin [of suffering] and also makes others relinquish it, (3) having attained fearlessness [by virtue of seeing no reason for anyone’s being able to dispute that the Buddha] himself has directly perceived the cessation [of suffering] and also makes others directly perceive it, and (4) having attained fearlessness [by virtue of seeing no reason for anyone’s being able to dispute that the Buddha] himself has cultivated the path and also makes others cultivate it.

The eighteen unique [buddha qualities] consist of (a) the six unique [qualities] in terms of conduct: (1) lacking mistakenness with regard to the body, (2) lacking useless chatter with regard to speech, (3) lacking any deterioration of mindfulness with regard to the mind, (4) lacking a mind that is not settled in meditative equipoise, (5) lacking all kinds of discriminations, and (6) lacking nonexamining indifference; (b) the six unique [qualities] in terms of realization: lacking any deterioration of (7) striving, (8) vigor, (9) mindfulness, (10) prajñā, (11) liberation, and (12) the vision of the wisdom of liberation;<sup>2034</sup> (c) the three unique [qualities] in terms of wisdom: (13) the vision of wisdom operating with regard to the past without attachment and without obstruction, with the same applying for (14) the time that happens now and (15) the time of the future; and (d) the three unique [qualities] in terms of enlightened activity: (16) all enlightened activities of

the body being preceded by wisdom and being followed by wisdom, with the same applying for (17) the enlightened activities of speech and (18) the enlightened activities of mind.<sup>2035</sup>

There is no separate enumeration of teachings on the [thirty-two kinds of] enlightened activity in the sūtra. Rather, [the text] explains that the [above] thirty-two qualities perform thirty-two [kinds of] enlightened activity that accord with these qualities. Therefore, it is these very thirty-two qualities that [also] represent the thirty-two [kinds of] enlightened activity.

### 2.1.1.2.3. Conclusion

[This corresponds to RGVV's passage] "In this way, the seven vajra points . . ." Now [follows:]<sup>2036</sup>

### 2.1.2. The explanation of presenting the connection<sup>2037</sup> between the scriptures and the treatise

From the Buddha [comes] the dharma and from the dharma, the noble saṃgha.

From the saṃgha, the [tathāgata] heart—the basic element of wisdom—is attained.

Finally, the attainment of that wisdom is the attainment of the supreme awakening and so on

That is endowed with the attributes that promote the welfare of all sentient beings. I.3

[This corresponds to RGVV's passage] "What is the connection between these [seven points]? . . ." You may wonder, "What is the difference between the connection between the scriptures and the treatise [on the one hand] and matching the root text<sup>2038</sup> with scripture [in] the above verse [I.2 on the other hand]?" [Maitreya would] say, "Matching the root text with scripture [in I.2 means that] there is an explanation of the seven vajra points in the scriptures. So [qualms about] the arbitrariness [of these vajra points, thinking,] 'Are they not arbitrary?', are eliminated by [saying] that they are explained in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. {453} Here, I also teach [the vajra points] as they are explained in the scriptures [on the tathāgata heart in general]. Therefore, the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* is what is to be understood, and this treatise is the means for understanding it, thus making understood what is to be understood. Or, that scripture is what is to be elucidated, and this [treatise] is the means for elucidating it. That is, there

exists a connection between what is to be elucidated and what elucidates it.” Therefore, this passage [of the *Uttaratantra*] teaches the meaning of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Akṣayamati[nirdeśa]sūtra*,<sup>2039</sup> and so on, while the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* represents the actual sūtra or the primary sūtra [on which the *Uttaratantra* is based]. The remaining sūtras appear [in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV] for the sake of [serving] as the favorable conditions or supplements of the [*Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*]. Therefore, they represent the branch sūtras or the secondary sūtras. Thus, there is no flaw.

This completes the presentation of the body [of the text] through the first three verses [of the *Uttaratantra*].

Now I will explain:

## 2.2. The detailed explanation of the branches

This has two parts:

1. Detailed explanation of the meaning of the results that are the three jewels
2. Detailed explanation of the disposition for accomplishing the [three jewels] (the four that are the cause and its conditions)

### 2.2.1. Detailed explanation of the meaning of the results that are the three jewels

This has five parts:

1. The essence of the Buddha
2. The essence of the dharma
3. The essence of the saṃgha
4. The differences between the objects of refuge
5. The reason for applying the term “jewel” (the hermeneutical etymology)

#### 2.2.1.1. The essence of the Buddha

This has two parts:

1. The meaning of the root text
2. The meaning of the commentary

##### 2.2.1.1.1. The meaning of the root text

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Distinct explanation

## 2.2.1.1.1.1. [Brief] introduction

As for connecting [the preceding verses of the *Uttaratantra* with the following], the reason for teaching [the jewel of] the Buddha first is adduced [in RGVV's sentence that ends in] "the nature of phenomena."<sup>2040</sup> You may wonder, "Which persons take [refuge]?" [RGVV says,] "those sentient beings." "What kind of sentient beings?" "[Those] who are guided by the Tathāgata," that is, those with the mahāyāna disposition who have faith in the Buddha and have faith in activities related to the Buddha.<sup>2041</sup> By virtue of its being these persons who take [refuge], this becomes a stable taking of refuge because they do not revert [from it] after they have taken refuge. "In which object do they take [refuge]?" "In the Tathāgata," that is, in the Buddha endowed with eight characteristics. "For what reason do they take [refuge]?" "Due to their openness."<sup>2042</sup> "Which kind of open confidence?" "[The one] that is the natural outflow of the nature of phenomena." The present open confidence in the Buddha serves as the concordant cause of realizing the dharmakāya at a [certain future] time. When they take refuge in the Buddha through their open confidence, they also take refuge in the dharma spoken by him as well as in his retinue, the saṃgha. "For what reason do they take [refuge in the dharma and the saṃgha]?" "Due to their openness that is the natural outflow of the nature of phenomena." Since this is just as in the case of the eyes of a Kata<sup>2043</sup> bird, [the phrase "openness that is the natural outflow of the nature of phenomena"] applies to both [taking refuge in the Buddha and taking refuge in the dharma and the saṃgha].

Here, the essence of the Buddha is the ultimate Buddha—the dharmakāya. Its qualities are (1) six in terms of substance and (2) two in terms of name.

You awakened yourself to peaceful<sup>2044</sup> buddhahood without  
beginning, middle, or end.

Upon your awakening, you taught the fearless everlasting path so  
that those who lack realization may realize.

I bow to you who wield the supreme sword and vajra of knowledge  
and loving-kindness, cut the sprouts of suffering to pieces,  
And break through the wall of doubts surrounded by the thicket of  
various views. I.4

(1) As for the [six qualities in terms of substance, the phrase] "without beginning, middle, or end" {454} refers to the [Buddha's] quality of being unconditioned.<sup>2045</sup> In due order, these three words correspond to there

being no arising [in the sense] of what had not originated before originating in dependence on a collection of causes and conditions, there being no abiding in between arising and ceasing, and there being no ceasing, once the power of those causes and conditions has become exhausted. “Peaceful” refers to the quality of being effortless, which [can] simply be understood by the commentary. “You awakened yourself to buddhahood” refers to the quality of **not being realized through other conditions**. For example, there is no benefit in saying to those who have eye sense faculties with blurred vision [caused by] a web of phlegm, “There are not two moons.” However, after that blurred vision has been terminated, they realize that [there is only] one moon, even if that is not demonstrated [to them]. Likewise, until the two obscurations have become pure, [sentient beings] do not realize the statement of spiritual friends (the condition of others explaining the dharma) “The dharmakāya is endowed with twofold purity.” However, when the two obscurations have become pure, self-arisen wisdom arises and realizes the [dharmakāya’s twofold purity] in the manner of experiencing it personally. This self-arisen wisdom exists now but is not realized due to the two obscurations. “Awakening” refers to knowledge, that is, [the Buddha] himself knowing the above three [qualities]. Since [the Buddha], upon his awakening, is “the one who proclaims the path that the protector himself sees,” this corresponds to “you taught the path.” “Which kind of path does he teach?” It is the fearless everlasting path. Since this is the supramundane path, it is fearless<sup>2046</sup> of saṃsāra. Once attained, it does not revert, and therefore it is everlasting. “For what purpose is it [taught]?” “So that those who lack realization may realize.” It is [taught] so that, or in order that, [all] sentient beings who lack the realization of the first three qualities may realize them. This teaches compassion. Now, the essence of power is the power of accomplishing the welfare of sentient beings through knowledge and compassion<sup>2047</sup> without obstruction. There are three ways of identifying that [power]. “If having power is identified, it is the power that exists in what?” [It exists in] “knowledge and loving-kindness”—it is the power that exists in these two because it is by virtue of these two that the welfare [of beings] is promoted through turning the unequaled wheel of dharma. “If an example for this power is identified, what kind of example is it?” [The example is to] “wield the supreme sword and vajra”—it is said that [this power] resembles a sword because it cuts through and that it resembles a vajra because it destroys. “If the object of this power is identified, it is the power of being powerful with regard to which object?” This is stated [in the phrase] “cut the sprouts of suffering to



pieces, and break through the wall of doubts surrounded by the thicket<sup>2048</sup> of various views.” The explanation of that [can] be simply understood by the commentary.

(2) As for the two [qualities] in terms of name, they correspond to what the root text explains below through the distinct [explanation].<sup>2049</sup> [With regard to that,] the commentary explains that the first four [among the six qualities in terms of substance] represent one’s own welfare, while the latter two represent the welfare of others. {455} It is to be analyzed below what the intention of these two [sets of qualities] is.

### 2.2.1.1.1.2.–3. Detailed explanation and distinct explanation

In due order, these are represented by [the following] one and three verses<sup>2050</sup> and thus are [merely] pointed to [here].

Being unconditioned, effortless,  
Not being realized through other conditions,  
And possessing knowledge, loving-kindness, and power—  
This is buddhahood endowed with the two welfares. I.5

It is unconditioned because its nature  
Is to be without beginning, middle, and end.  
It is declared to be effortless  
Because it possesses the peaceful dharmakāya. I.6

It is not realized through other conditions  
Because it is to be realized personally.  
Thus, it is knowledge because it realizes those three aspects.  
It is compassion because it teaches the path. I.7

It is power because it relinquishes suffering  
And the afflictions through wisdom and compassion. I.8ab

### 2.2.1.1.2. The meaning of the commentary

This has three parts:

1. Identifying the essence of the six qualities of the Buddha by way of explaining merely the meaning of the root text
2. Detailed explanation of their individual characteristics by way of explaining them through matching them with the scriptures
3. Concluding instruction by way of teaching the common qualities

### 2.2.1.1.2.1. Identifying the essence of the six qualities of the Buddha by way of explaining merely the meaning of the root text

Among these six [qualities], in the context of not being realized through other conditions, [RGVV says] that *udaya*<sup>2051</sup> is asserted here [to mean] “clear realization” but not “arising.” In Sanskrit, there is this term “*udaya*.” Through the power of conditions, it applies to two [different meanings]. This means that if one says *parapratyayodaya* (“realized through other conditions”),<sup>2052</sup> it applies to “clear realization.” Therefore, here, it refers to that, that is, to the assertion that the dharmakāya is clearly realized through self-arisen wisdom in the manner of experiencing it personally. However, if one says *bijodaya* (“arising of a seed”),<sup>2053</sup> it pertains to arising, which is not the case [here]. Why? For the dharmakāya would be conditioned if it pertained to arising.

As for the essence of knowledge, it is explained [by line I.7c] “Thus, it is knowledge because it realizes those three aspects” in the root text. Therefore, [RGVV says,] “Even though it is unconditioned and has the characteristic of being inactive, from tathāgatahood . . .” Hence, it is unconditioned. [RGVV’s passage] “all activities . . . until the end of saṃsāra” teaches that it is effortless. [RGVV’s passage] “Thus, buddhahood . . . not caused by a master” teaches that it is not realized through other conditions.

### 2.2.1.1.2.2. [Detailed] explanation [of their individual characteristics] through matching them with the scriptures

One may think, “Are such six qualities of the Buddha [in terms of substance] not arbitrary?” They are not—[RGVV] teaches that they are explained in the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*. Thus, [RGVV says], “The instruction on the detailed . . .” Here, [the qualities] that are present as the six points [above] are explained together under the categories of knowledge and compassion through matching them with the scriptures. This has two parts: (1) the actual scriptural phrases and (2) presenting the explanation of these scriptural phrases.

(1) From among the six phrases in the [*Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkāra*]sūtra,<sup>2054</sup> the first four are the scriptural phrases on knowledge. The first sūtra phrase is “Here, Mañjuśrī . . . all phenomena’s having such a nature.” The second one is “has completely and perfectly awakened.” The third one is “has seen the dharmadhātu of sentient beings.” The fourth one is “to be impure, not stainless, and blemished.” [RGVV] matches [these phrases with knowledge, saying] that they express the Tathāgata’s being endowed with wisdom. {456} Two sūtra phrases are

scriptural phrases on compassion. The fifth one is “which is called ‘playful mastery,’ for [all] sentient beings.” The sixth one is “the Tathāgata . . . his great compassion . . . unfolds . . .” [RGVV] matches [these phrases with compassion, saying] that they express the Tathāgata’s being endowed with compassion.

(2) Presenting the explanation of these scriptural phrases has six parts, that is, the first words of each [explanatory passage in RGVV] are taken and matched [with the above sūtra phrases] in due order: (a) “all phenomena,” (b) “completely and perfectly,” (c) “of sentient beings,” (d) “Impure,” (e) “playful mastery,” and (f) “That this ‘compassion . . .’” It is said that “certain”<sup>2055</sup> refers to those who are certain as the three of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, or bodhisattvas, that is, [those whose disposition can] not be taken away by conditions. “Uncertain” refers to those who are not certain as those three, that is, [those whose disposition can] be taken away by conditions. “Certain in terms of what is mistaken” refers to those whose disposition is cut off.

We think that those who have entered the means [for liberation] (śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas) and those who crave for neither [saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa] (bodhisattvas) represent the sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is correct. Those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence but have entered what is not the means [for liberation]—the three of the tīrthikas, the Vātsīputriyas,<sup>2056</sup> and the persons full of pride who entertain views about emptiness—are those whose disposition is uncertain. Those with great desire who crave for [saṃsāric] existence—the Lokāyatas—and the Sendhapas<sup>2057</sup> who have fallen into the hīnayāna are the sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is mistaken. “Through what does one know this?” It is explained in the commentary on the causes [for awakening] the basic element below.<sup>2058</sup>

As for matching power with the scriptures, this consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Thereafter, due to the unfolding of unsurpassable wisdom and . . .” [In this passage,] “engages” refers to demonstrating the twelve deeds [of a buddha].

### 2.2.1.1.2.3. Concluding instruction by way of teaching the common qualities

This has two parts:

1. Commenting on the meaning of the root text
2. Presenting another explanation

## 2.2.1.1.2.3.1. Commenting on the meaning of the root text

One's own welfare is by virtue of the first three qualities,  
And the welfare of others, by virtue of the latter three. I.8cd

[RGVV's direct] comment on the intention of the root text's saying that the first three are one's own welfare and the latter three are the welfare of others is [the passage] "Here, from among these six qualities of the Tathāgata . . ."

## 2.2.1.1.2.3.2. Presenting another explanation

The author of the commentary [alternatively] provides the explanation that the first four [qualities] present one's own welfare and the latter two present the welfare of others. The meaning of this being explained in this way corresponds to [RGVV's phrase] "Or, [one can say that] it is [the quality of] wisdom that elucidates the fulfillment of one's own welfare." You may wonder, "Why is wisdom one's own welfare?" The reason [for this is found in RGVV's phrase] "which is due to its having the property of being the basis of the completely perfect self-awakening that is the supreme and eternal abode of peace." As for knowledge, [*Uttaratantra* I.7c] explains, "Thus, {457} it is knowledge because it realizes those three aspects." Therefore, [the phrase] "the supreme and eternal" represents [buddhahood's first aspect or] quality of being unconditioned. "The abode of peace" refers to [all] karma, afflictions, reference points, and thoughts' being primordially at peace, which is the quality of being effortless. "The completely perfect self-awakening" refers to not being realized through other conditions. Since these three [aspects or qualities] are realized by wisdom, all suffering that exists in [a buddha's] own mind stream is at peace. Therefore, [wisdom] is presented as one's own welfare.

"But is that not contradictory to the root text explaining, 'One's own welfare is by virtue of the first three qualities and the welfare of others, by virtue of the latter three?'" There is no contradiction here. In the root text, it is the promotion of the welfare of others through the wisdom of subsequent attainment that is explained as knowledge's being one's own welfare. The explanation of "Thus, it is knowledge because it realizes those three aspects" by the commentary presents [knowledge] as one's own welfare with the intention that all one's own suffering is at peace through [the wisdom of] meditative equipoise knowing these three [aspects or qualities] just as they are. "Through what does one know that meditative equipoise

promotes one's own welfare, while subsequent attainment promotes the welfare of others?" In the chapter on instructions and directions [of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*], it is said:

Nonconceptual wisdom

Is what purifies the buddha attributes.

The other one, which establishes accordingly,

Is what matures sentient beings.<sup>2059</sup>

"So is knowledge then not necessary in order to promote the welfare of others through turning the wheel of the Buddha's speech in three stages due to his compassion and power?" It is [of course] necessary but since the knowledge of the welfare of others is included in power, it is not mentioned separately. For one's own welfare, it is necessary to realize the three qualities [of buddhahood] (such as its being unconditioned), and what is necessary for that is the knowledge that is the wisdom of meditative equipoise. Thus, since it is the primary [form of wisdom], it is taught explicitly.

### 2.2.1.2. Explanation [of the essence] of the dharma

This has two parts:

1. The meaning of the root text
2. The meaning of the commentary

#### 2.2.1.2.1. The meaning of the root text

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Distinct explanation

##### 2.2.1.2.1.1. [Brief] introduction

Inscrutable as neither nonexistent nor existent nor [both] existent and nonexistent nor other than existent and nonexistent,  
Free from etymological interpretation, to be personally experienced,  
and peaceful—

I bow to this sun of the genuine dharma, which is endowed with the  
shine of the light rays of stainless wisdom

And defeats passion, aggression, and [mental] darkness with regard  
to all focal objects. I.9

To explain this, if you wonder what the essence of the dharma is, the dharma consists of the dharma of the teachings and the dharma of realization. Among these, it is the latter that is referred to [here]. It has two parts: (1) since it is that which is to be realized, it is the dharma of realization that is cessation and (2) since it is that which realizes this, it is the dharma of realization that is the path. (1) The Sautrāntikas assert [cessation such that] the five appropriating skandhas, which abide earlier through being established as<sup>2060</sup> the nature of suffering, become utterly nonexistent later through having cultivated the path or the remedies, just as ice on a lake having melted, clouds in the sky having disappeared, or a lamp, whose oil and wick are exhausted, [having become extinguished]. This is not [how cessation] is asserted [here]—the natural cessation of the mahāyāna is the dharmakāya. {458} [However,] this is not the dharmakāya that consists of the fruition of the path<sup>2061</sup> but rather the dharmakāya that consists of the path. You may wonder, “What difference is there between this cessation that is the dharma [of realization] and buddhahood?” This cessation refers to the causes and results that consist of the path of learning—it is the nature of phenomena that exists during the phases of the path of seeing and the path of familiarization relinquishing the factors to be relinquished through seeing and the factors to be relinquished through familiarization as is appropriate. [On these paths,] there are still remaining factors to be relinquished to be relinquished and remaining factors to be attained to be attained. Buddhahood consists of the path of nonlearning, on which there is no remaining factor to be relinquished to be relinquished and no remaining factor to be attained to be attained. “So what difference is there between the cessation that exists on the buddhabhūmi (the fruition of the path) and buddhahood?” There is no difference, [they refer to the same state’s simply] being labeled with different names. Or, there is no difference in essence, but they are different isolates. “How so?” [This state is referred to as] cessation from the perspective of the expanse’s being free from adventitious stains. From the perspective of wisdom’s being free from adventitious stains, it is [referred to as] buddhahood. It is stated in this text in such a way too:

Being the fully perfect awakening in all aspects<sup>2062</sup>  
 And the relinquishment of [all] stains and their latent tendencies,  
 Buddhahood and nirvāṇa  
 Ultimately are not two.<sup>2063</sup>

(2) As for the dharma of realization that is the path, since it is that which realizes [this cessation], it is presented as the remedies that actually relinquish the [corresponding] factors to be relinquished. Therefore, among the four paths, the path of accumulation merely invalidates [its factors to be relinquished], and the path of preparation merely suppresses [its factors to be relinquished]. Hence, since there is no actual relinquishment of the seeds of the afflictions through these two [paths], they are not presented [as the path] here. Rather, [the actual path] consists of the path of seeing and the path of familiarization. These two have the two [phases of] meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. Among them, subsequent attainment takes all kinds of phenomena as objects and is merely that which assesses the [preceding] realization of the nature of phenomena during meditative equipoise, but it is not the remedy for the seeds of the afflictions. Therefore, it is not presented [as the path] here, but [the path consists of] meditative equipoise. This [meditative equipoise] is also twofold: the uninterrupted<sup>2064</sup> path and the path of liberation. Among them, the path of liberation is the manifestation of the fundamental change that is relinquishment and therefore is not presented [as the path] here. Rather, it is the uninterrupted path that serves as the remedy that [actually] relinquishes the factors to be relinquished.<sup>2065</sup> “Through what does one know that Maitreya<sup>2066</sup> asserts the essence of the dharma that is the path as being the remedy that relinquishes the factors to be relinquished?” Because he explains [in I.9cd], “I bow to this sun of the genuine dharma, which . . . defeats [passion], aggression, and [mental] darkness.”

This [dharma] has eight qualities, (1) six in terms of substance and (2) two in terms of name. (1) Among the six in terms of substance, cessation has three [qualities]. First, the quality of being inconceivable<sup>2067</sup> is to be understood through three reasons. “What [are they]?” [First,] with regard to all thinking’s {459} being done by way of dialectics, [*Uttaratantra* I.9a says that cessation] is not an object of dialectics. “Through what does one know this?” With regard to dialecticians’ assessing [all phenomena] as [one or the other among] the four extremes, [the text says that] the reality of cessation is free from the four extremes. “How is it free?” With regard to some dialecticians, such as the Lokāyatas, assessing [phenomena] as non-existent, [it says that] the reality of cessation is not nonexistent. With regard to some dialecticians, such as those who propound Īśvara as the cause [of the world], assessing [phenomena] as existent, [it says that] the reality of cessation is not existent. With regard to some dialecticians’ assessing [phenomena] as the third possibility in terms of affirmation (“being both

existent and nonexistent”), [it says that] the reality of cessation is not both existent and nonexistent either. With regard to some dialecticians’ assessing [phenomena] as the third possibility in terms of negation (“being neither existent nor nonexistent”), [it says that] the reality of cessation is not neither existent nor nonexistent. Therefore, it says, “inscrutable as other than existent and nonexistent.”<sup>2068</sup>

As for the second reason, with regard to all thinking’s being done by way of terms, [the text] says that the reality of cessation is “free from etymological interpretation.” In the commentary, it is explained that it is beyond being an object of the terms that are known in the world and beyond being an object of the terms that are known in the treatises.

As for the third reason, with regard to all thinking’s being done in dependence on other thinking, [the text says that] the reality of cessation is to be personally experienced by the nonconceptual wisdom of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

“Peaceful” teaches two meanings—since karma and afflictions are at peace in the reality of cessation it is peaceful. This teaches the quality of being free from the dual. It is [also] peaceful since [all] conception that is improper mental engagement—the cause that motivates karma and afflictions—is at peace. This represents the quality of being nonconceptual.

The dharma of realization that is the path, since it is that which realizes [this cessation, also] has three qualities. “Stainless” represents the quality of being pure—the two paths [of seeing and familiarization] lack the stains of the afflictions to be relinquished through seeing and to be relinquished through familiarization. “Endowed with the shine of the light rays of wisdom” represents the quality of being luminous, referring to being endowed with the shine of the wisdom of realizing true reality. “Defeats passion, aggression . . .” represents the quality of serving as the remedy for [all] antagonistic factors. How the genuine dharma is similar to the sun is clearly explained in the commentary.

(2) As for the two [qualities] in terms of name, since the first three [qualities] are referred to as “what is free from desire,” they are the dharma that is cessation (what is free from desire). Since the latter three [qualities] are referred to as “what makes free from desire,” they are the dharma that is the path (what [makes] free from desire).

### 2.2.1.2.1.2.–3. Detailed explanation and distinct {460} explanation

In due order, these are represented by [the following] one and two verses.



By virtue of its being inconceivable, free from the dual,  
 nonconceptual,  
 Pure, manifesting, and a remedial factor,  
 It is what is and what makes free from attachment, respectively—  
 The dharma that is characterized by the two realities. I.10

Freedom from attachment consists of  
 The two realities of cessation and the path.  
 In due order, these two are to be understood  
 Through three qualities each. I.11

Because of being inscrutable, because of being inexpressible,  
 And because of being known by the noble ones,<sup>2069</sup> it is inconceivable.  
 What is peaceful is free from the dual and nonconceptual.  
 [In its] three [qualities] such as being pure, it is like the sun. I.12

#### 2.2.1.2.2. The meaning of the commentary

This has two points:

1. Instruction on the qualities of cessation (what is free from desire)
2. Instruction on the qualities of the path (what makes free from desire)

##### 2.2.1.2.2.1. Instruction on the qualities of cessation (what is free from desire)

This has two parts:

1. Instruction on the essence of the qualities of cessation
2. Explaining them by matching them with the scriptures

###### 2.2.1.2.2.1.1. Instruction on the essence of the qualities of cessation

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "In brief, the reality of cessation . . ." With regard to teaching that it is beyond being an object of terms, [the phrase] "[because of being inexpressible through any] terms, voices, articulations" teaches that it is beyond being an object of terms known in the world, and [the phrase] "because of being inexpressible through any avenues of speech, etymologies, designations, conventions, or expressions" teaches that it is beyond being an object of terms known in the treatises.

### 2.2.1.2.2.1.2. Explaining them by matching them with the scriptures

This has two parts:

1. Presenting the scripture that contradicts [this cessation's] being the cessation of the śrāvakas
2. Presenting the scripture that establishes [this cessation] as being the cessation of the Mādhyamikas

#### 2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1. Presenting the scripture that contradicts [this cessation's] being the cessation of the śrāvakas

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "it is not that the reality of the cessation of suffering is explained by virtue of the destruction of any phenomenon . . ." This means that the Sautrāntikas assert [cessation such that] the five appropriating skandhas, which abide earlier through being established as the nature of suffering, become utterly nonexistent later through having cultivated the path or the remedies, just as ice on a lake's having melted, clouds in the sky's having disappeared, or a lamp, whose oil and wick are exhausted, [having become extinguished]. [This assertion] is not what is taught as cessation [here]. "How is it not taught [in that way]?" [This is answered by RGVV's saying,] "As [the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*] says: 'Mañjuśrī, in what lacks arising and lacks ceasing, mind, mentation, and consciousness do not operate.'" If [the term] "mind" is explained based on an uncommon reason for applying that term, [that is,] in the sense of accumulated,<sup>2070</sup> "mind" refers to the ālaya[-conscientiousness]. Since mentation is the thinking that is conceited about "me" and a self,<sup>2071</sup> "mentation" refers to the afflicted mind. Since consciousness is clearly aware of all kinds of focal objects,<sup>2072</sup> "consciousness" refers to the [remaining] six collections [of conscientiousnesses].<sup>2073</sup> "At the time of the sūtra, how does this become<sup>2074</sup> a scriptural passage that contradicts [this cessation's here] being the cessation of the śrāvakas?" Because the śrāvakas that are Sautrāntikas assert cessation as the subsequent ceasing of the five appropriating skandhas that existed from the beginning, whereas in this [sūtra], the five appropriating skandhas are explained as lacking arising and ceasing.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2. Instruction on there being a scripture that establishes [this cessation] as being the cessation of the Mādhyamikas in the mahāyāna

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "As [the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādasūtra*] says: 'However, Bhagavan, the cessation of suffering is not the destruction

of phenomena.” [As for the phrase] “permanent, eternal, peaceful, indestructible” [in this passage, the cessation here] is permanent because it lacks arising. It is eternal because it lacks aging. It is peaceful because it lacks sickness. {461} It is indestructible because it is without being harmed. [However,] these four do not refer to the lack of the four, such as arising, that exist in the mind streams of sentient beings. They consist of the lack of the arising of a mentally created body of bodhisattvas, the lack of the aging that is the maturation of uncontaminated karmic formations, the lack of the sickness that is the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, and the lack of the death and the transition that are an inconceivable transformation. “Why?” As for being permanent, [Uttaratantra I.79 says,] “[The tathāgata element’s] character does not change into anything other because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.” As for being eternal, [it says,] “It is the refuge of beings because it has no end in time.” As for being peaceful, [it says,] “It is always nondual because it is nonconceptual.” As for being indestructible, [it says,] “It also has the nature of indestructibility because its nature is to be uncreated.” Thus, the same applies to the cases below that accord with this.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2. Instruction on the qualities of the path

This has four parts:

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.1. Identifying the essence of the reality of the path and establishing the congruence between the example and its meaning

This consists of [RGVV’s passage] “The paths of seeing and familiarization . . .” “Why is the dharmakāya called ‘that which bears the name “cessation of suffering”?’” In accordance with the appearances of the noble ones who see reality, there is neither suffering nor cessation. [Thus,] the name “the dharmakāya that bears the name ‘cessation of suffering’” is given in accordance with the appearances of ordinary beings who see just this life. The congruence between the example and its meaning is simply pointed to [here].<sup>2075</sup>

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2. Instruction on the characteristics of the obstructions that obscure the path

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. [Concluding] summary

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.1. [Brief] introduction

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "As for "what obstructs" . . ." What is taught [explicitly in this brief introduction here] is solely the afflictiveness of afflictions, which is twofold: seeds and manifest [afflictions]. As for the seeds, in terms of what inputs latent tendencies, [RGVV says,] "which are preceded by mentally engaging in focal objects that have the characteristic of being unreal entities." These are the conceptions of clinging to what is not something as being that something. In terms of the latent tendencies that are input through these conceptions, [it says,] "their latencies." In terms of manifest [afflictions, it says,] "Due to the rising of . . . passion, hatred, and bewilderment . . . arise." [The two remaining afflictivenesses of] karma and birth are explained through this [passage's] implicitly pointing to them.

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2. [Detailed] explanation

[In the detailed explanation,] the afflictiveness of afflictions is represented by [the passage] "For naive beings . . ." The afflictiveness of karma is represented by [the sentence] "Due to this,<sup>2076</sup> they commit . . ." The afflictiveness of life is represented by [the sentence] "In turn, from these actions, there will be the succession of rebirths."

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.3. Teaching this through a concluding summary

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "In this way, improper mental engagement manifests in naive beings . . ." {462} This comes down to understanding that this [passage] represents a concluding summary of the three [kinds of] afflictiveness.

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.3. Instruction on the remedies that relinquish these obscurations

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "[However,] this [afflictiveness] should be seen . . ." It explains the manner in which the two paths [of seeing and familiarization] become the remedies for the obstructions. The gist of this is that through the *prajñā* of the triad of studying, reflecting, and meditating, one realizes the nature of phenomena as equality—neither is any primordially existent affliction to be removed nor is the *dharmadhātu* to be added. The meaning of that is this: First, on the level of engagement through aspiration, one determines through the *prajñā* of studying and reflecting that there are no outer referents that are different from one's own mind. Through familiarizing with that actuality, the wisdom of the path

of seeing arises. Through that, one realizes that all primordially non-existent afflictions do [indeed] not exist, and one realizes that the primordially existent dharmadhātu [indeed] exists. At that time, the factors to be relinquished through seeing have been relinquished. Through familiarizing with that actuality, the afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization are relinquished. It is through this that [these two paths] serve as the remedies for the obstructions.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.4. Teaching this by matching it with the scriptures

This is explained by [RGVV's passage] "The paths of seeing and familiarization . . ." There is not the slightest [bit more] to be explained about this [here].

#### 2.2.1.3. Explaining the essence of the saṃgha

This has two parts:

1. Instruction on the essence of the saṃgha by way of teaching the qualities of the bodhisattva saṃgha
2. Instruction on the reason for the śrāvaka saṃgha's not being mentioned here

#### 2.2.1.3.1. Instruction on the essence of the saṃgha by way of teaching the qualities of the bodhisattva saṃgha

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Distinct explanation

##### 2.2.1.3.1.1. [Brief] introduction

Because they see that by virtue of the natural luminosity of the mind,  
the afflictions are without nature,

They perfectly realize that the endpoint of the identitylessness of all  
beings is peace.

I bow to those who see that perfect buddhahood is all-pervading,  
who possess unobscured intelligence,

And who are endowed with the wisdom vision that has the purity  
and infinitude of beings as its objects. I.13

To explain this, if you wonder, “What is presented as the essence of the irreversible *saṃgha*?” there is a presentation of it as [being bodhisattvas] on the eighth bhūmi and above, but this is not [the one meant here]. For it is explained that its defining characteristics—the wisdoms of knowing suchness and variety—exist [already] on the first bhūmi. You may wonder, “What is the flaw [accrued] by the [first] explanation?” According to you [who follow this first explanation], while the instances and the defining characteristics of [irreversible] sentient beings are [actually] not different, these two would then [mistakenly] be different.<sup>2077</sup> Rather, [the irreversible *saṃgha*] is presented in this way: The highest irreversible<sup>2078</sup> [*saṃgha*] is explained as those with sharpest faculties—[in them, irreversibility exists already] from [the level of] medium poised readiness [of the path of preparation]. The medium [irreversible *saṃgha*] consists of those with medium faculties—[in them, irreversibility] exists from the first bhūmi onward. The lowest [irreversible *saṃgha*] consists of those with dull faculties—[in them, irreversibility] exists on the eighth bhūmi and above.<sup>2079</sup> Here, [the irreversible *saṃgha*] is presented as [the bodhisattvas of] medium irreversibility.<sup>2080</sup>

This [irreversible *saṃgha*] has two qualities—the wisdom of knowing suchness and the wisdom of knowing variety. The first one has two parts—essence and cause. Its essence is to realize that all inner and outer entities are identityless. This is taught in the text by [line I.13a] “They . . . is peace.” This essence exists on the first bhūmi and above. “From which causes does this essence arise?” It arises from two [causes]—{463} because of realizing that the natural luminosity of the mind exists primordially and [because of] seeing that the adventitious afflictions, which are without nature, are [indeed] nonexistent. This is explained by the first<sup>2081</sup> line of verse. Therefore, that the wisdom of knowing suchness does not exist on the path of preparation and below is because of the nonexistence of these two causes [on the paths of accumulation and preparation]. The wisdom of knowing variety is to see that there is no one among all sentient beings who is not pervaded by the buddha element—the dharmadhātu. This is taught by [the phrase] “those who see that perfect buddhahood is all-pervading.”

Now, the explanation of the difference between these two wisdoms [lies in the phrase] “who possess unobscured intelligence,” which refers to being liberated from the obscurations of attachment through the wisdom of knowing suchness and being liberated from the obscurations of obstruction through the wisdom of knowing variety. Since [line I.13d] summarizes these two wisdoms, [the phrase] “being endowed with the wisdom vision

of the **purity of sentient beings**” summarizes the wisdom of knowing suchness and “being endowed with the wisdom vision of having infinite objects” summarizes [the wisdom of] knowing variety.

#### [2.2.1.3.1.2. Detailed explanation]

The detailed explanation is [taught] through the one verse that follows.

Because of the purity of the inner  
 Wisdom vision of suchness and variety,  
 The assembly of the irreversible intelligent ones  
 Is endowed with unsurpassable qualities. I.14

#### 2.2.1.3.1.3. Distinct explanation

This has three parts:

1. Explaining the aspect of the wisdom of knowing suchness
2. Explaining the aspect of the wisdom of knowing variety
3. Explaining the distinctive feature of these two—the aspect of being without obscurations

##### 2.2.1.3.1.3.1. Explaining the aspect of the wisdom of knowing suchness

The [wisdom of] suchness because of realizing  
 The true nature of peace of beings  
 Is due to the natural complete purity [of the mind]  
 And due to the primordial termination of the afflictions. I.15

In the root text, [this is described by] the two [points] of essence and cause, which are explained by half a verse each. In the commentary, [there is] (1) the explanation of just the meaning of the root text and (2) the explanation by matching this with the scriptures. The first one has three parts:

- (a) Essence
- (b) Cause
- (c) Instruction on its being difficult to realize

(1a) The essence is represented by [RGVV’s sentence] “Here, [the wisdom of knowing the tathāgata heart as] being suchness<sup>2082</sup> . . . ‘persons and phenomena.’” “Phenomena” refers to the world that is the [outer] container. “Persons” refers to the sentient beings who are the inner contents.

You may wonder, “Why is the world that is the container called ‘going’?” Because it moves on<sup>2083</sup> without remaining for a second moment.

(1b) “From which cause does the wisdom of knowing suchness arise?” This is explained by [RGVV’s next two sentences] “This is the realization in terms of . . .”

(1c) The meaning of the instruction on its being difficult to realize is this: Since the luminous mind and the afflicted mind are not different in the uncontaminated expanse, two mutually exclusive attributes come together in a single bearer of these attributes. You may say, “If natural luminosity is pure, this is mutually exclusive with being impure. If it is impure, this is mutually exclusive with being pure.” In terms of entities, these two are not different in the dharmadhātu. Therefore, it is taught that this is difficult to realize by ordinary beings. You may wonder, “By what is it realized that these two are not mutually exclusive?” It is realized by the wisdom of knowing suchness that exists on the first bhūmi. “So are they then mutually exclusive or not mutually exclusive in terms of entities?” {464} [In general,] if two mutually exclusive attributes come together in a single bearer of these attributes, they are mutually exclusive. Here, [the author] has in mind that the bearer of these attributes [luminous mind and afflicted mind] consists of the two realities. [When speaking of] natural purity, he has ultimate reality in mind, whereas [when he speaks of] impurity, he has seeming reality in mind. The text [passage] on this is “Now, these two [factors]—‘mind’s natural luminosity’ and . . .” As for [the phrase] “both sound and unsound minds [always] occur alone, without [one of them ever] being associated with the other one,” since mind is momentary, at the time of a sound mind’s occurring, there is no occurrence of an unsound mind at the same time, and at the time of an unsound mind’s occurring, there is no occurrence of a sound mind at the same time. “Sound mind” refers to the wisdom of realizing luminosity. “Unsound mind” refers to the adventitious dependent<sup>2084</sup> mind. Since these two are the remedy and what is to be relinquished, respectively, they do not operate at the same time.

(2) As for the explanation by matching this with the scriptures, Śrīmālādevī said to the Bhagavān:

Bhagavan, I think that this naturally pure tathāgata heart that is proximately afflicted by adventitious proximate afflictions is the object of the Tathāgata, thus being inconceivable. Why is that?<sup>2085</sup>



What is found after that [in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] is the instruction on the reason for [this point's] being difficult to realize. This has two parts—[being difficult to realize] in terms of ultimate reality and in terms of seeming reality. As for being difficult to realize [in terms of] the first one, [RGVV says]:

Therefore, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, the sound mind is momentary. It is not<sup>2086</sup> afflicted by the afflictions . . .

The meaning of this is that when an unsound mind arises in the second moment, the sound mind that has arisen in the first moment ceases and thus does not exist [anymore]. Or, when an unsound mind has arisen in the first moment and a sound mind arises in the second moment, the unsound mind that has arisen in the first moment ceases and thus does not exist [anymore]. [Both] are dismantled in terms of their momentary perishing. “The mind” [in the above sūtra passage] means “the sound mind.”

The scriptural passage [for this being difficult to realize] in terms of seeming reality is

Bhagavan, there is proximate affliction and . . .

#### 2.2.1.3.1.3.2. Explaining the aspect of the wisdom of knowing variety

This is taught by the one verse of the root text [that begins with] “The [wisdom of] being variety . . .” and its commentary.

The [wisdom of] being variety

Is due to the intelligence that realizes the entire range of the knowable,

Seeing the existence of the true nature

Of omniscience in all sentient beings. I.16

#### 2.2.1.3.1.3.3. Explaining the distinctive feature of these two wisdoms— the aspect of possessing a mind without obscurations

This has two parts: the actual [explanation] and the reason for [the irreversible saṃgha's] serving as a refuge. {465} In due order, [these two parts correspond to] the two verses [beginning with] “That realization is the vision . . .”

That realization is the vision  
 Of one's own personal wisdom.  
 It is pure in the stainless basic element  
 Because it lacks attachment and lacks obstruction.<sup>2087</sup> I.17

By virtue of the purity of the vision of wisdom,  
 Buddha wisdom is unsurpassable.  
 Therefore, the irreversible noble ones  
 Are the refuge of all that lives. I.18

Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.1.3.2. The explanation of the reason for the śrāvaka saṃgha's not being mentioned here

Here, there is this question, "With the śrāvaka saṃgha's being mentioned in this *Dhāraṇīśvararāja[sūtra]* ([saying] right after [the phrase] '[the Buddha] was endowed with limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples'<sup>2088</sup> that '[he resided] together with a great bhikṣu saṃgha'),<sup>2089</sup> why is it solely the bodhisattva saṃgha that is mentioned in the *Uttaratantra*?" The answer to this thought [is found in RGVV's phrase] "There is no mention of the jewel of the śrāvaka saṃgha after the jewel of the assembly of bodhisattvas." "So is the mentioning of the śrāvaka saṃgha in the sūtra meaningless, or what is the reason for its being mentioned?" [RGVV] says that the śrāvaka [saṃgha] "is not worthy of being venerated." "Still, why is the śrāvaka saṃgha not mentioned in the *Uttaratantra*?" [RGVV] explains [that this is] because the śrāvaka saṃgha is not a refuge for bodhisattvas. "Well, why is it not a refuge?" It is established through both scripture and reasoning that it is not a refuge. First, the establishment through reasoning [corresponds to RGVV's passage] "Indeed, no learned ones . . ." The establishment through scripture [corresponds to the following passage with] the two verses [that begin with] "Indeed, it is to be said [here]: Those who nourish discipline performed for their own sake . . ." The meaning of those [verses from a] sūtra is to teach that, in general, those who do not possess the three trainings are not objects of refuge, and since the training in discipline is impure in śrāvakas [when compared to bodhisattvas], they are not an object of refuge. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.1.4. The differences between the objects of refuge

This has two parts:

1. Presenting the temporary seeming objects of refuge
2. The ultimate object of refuge

##### 2.2.1.4.1. Presenting the temporary seeming objects of refuge

This has two parts:

1. Meaning of the words
2. The gist [of this]

##### 2.2.1.4.1.1. Meaning of the words

Since it is easy to understand the gist if one understands the meaning of the words, the meaning of the words is explained first. Here, the commentary [implicitly] asks two questions. [The first question asks,] “It is said in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* that the three jewels are the protectors of sentient beings who lack a protector and the refuges of those who lack a refuge. So in terms of which reasons did the Bhagavān present the three refuges?” [The *Uttaratantra*] says:

For the purpose of the teacher, the teaching,<sup>2090</sup> and the disciples,  
The three refuges are presented I.19ab

The second question is: “In terms of which persons did the Bhagavān present the three refuges?” [The *Uttaratantra*] says:

The three refuges are presented  
With regard to those in the three yānas  
And those who have faith in the three activities.<sup>2091</sup> I.19bd

{466} Thus, [there] are three reasons and six [kinds of] persons.

Now the meaning of the commentary is explained. It is [first] explained by covering each reason and each of the two [kinds of] persons [in due order]. As for the six [kinds of] persons, as entities, they are those with the three dispositions, that is, those with the dispositions of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas. They become six because each one of them is divided into two—the persons who strive for definite excellence<sup>2092</sup> and the persons who strive for the higher realms. The three persons with faith in the three yānas are the persons who strive for definite excellence. The three

persons with faith in the three activities are the persons who strive for the higher realms.

Now, this is explained by not following the order of the text. This correlates to RGVV's phrase) "the Buddha is a refuge with regard to the persons in the bodhisattvayāna."<sup>2093</sup> "Based on what reason do they take refuge in the Buddha?" [RGVV] says, "For the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the teacher." Thus, the reason for demonstrating the qualities of the Buddha (such as "The Bhagavān is the Tathāgata Arhat, the completely perfect Buddha who is aware<sup>2094</sup> and venerable")<sup>2095</sup> is that the Buddha is "the highest among humans." After the triad of open confidence, longing confidence, and trusting confidence [in this sense] has arisen, they take refuge [by saying], "I take refuge in the Buddha, the highest among humans." "If one takes [refuge] based on that reason, which person is it that takes [refuge]?" It is someone with the mahāyāna disposition who takes [refuge].

Among the two [kinds of persons with the mahāyāna disposition], in the persons who strive for definite excellence, there arises the striving for, or the wish of, attaining the state of buddhahood for the welfare of others. Since one needs to practice the mahāyāna for that [to come true], it is the persons who are bodhisattvas with faith in the mahāyāna who take refuge by thinking, "I shall practice the mahāyāna and attain buddhahood." Or, based on the reason of demonstrating the qualities of the teacher, after the threefold confidence as above has arisen in them, the persons with the mahāyāna disposition who strive for the higher realms take refuge in the Buddha by thinking, "I shall attain the bodies and possessions of gods and humans in the next [life]." In order to attain those, they must perform the necessary activities of gathering the accumulations [of merit and wisdom] with regard to the Buddha. Therefore, those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the Buddha take refuge by thinking, "I shall perform the activities of gathering<sup>2096</sup> [the accumulations] with regard to the Buddha."

Or, with regard to those with the pratyekabuddha disposition, [their taking refuge] correlates with [RGVV's passage] "the dharma is a refuge." [Thus,] someone with the pratyekabuddha disposition takes refuge in the dharma. "Based on what reason {467} do they take [refuge]?" [RGVV] says, "for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the teaching."<sup>2097</sup> [Thus,] based on the reason of demonstrating the qualities of the dharma (such as "The genuine dharma is virtuous in the beginning, virtuous in between, virtuous in the end, of excellent meaning, and of excellent words" and "The dharma<sup>2098</sup> that perfectly teaches the unmixed, completely perfect, completely pure, and completely spotless pure conduct is what the wise should

know with discriminating awareness”), there arises the threefold confidence, [thinking,] “The dharma is the supreme among what is free from attachment.” Upon that, they take refuge [by saying], “I take refuge in the dharma, the supreme among what is free from attachment.” “If one takes [refuge] based on that reason, which person is it that takes [refuge]?” It is someone with the pratyekabuddha disposition who takes [refuge].

Among the two [kinds of persons with the pratyekabuddha disposition], the persons who strive for definite excellence think, “I shall realize the profound dharma of dependent origination by myself and shall attain the awakening of a pratyekabuddha.” Since one needs to practice the pratyekabuddhayāna for that [to come true], it is the persons [with] the pratyekabuddha [disposition and] faith in the pratyekabuddhayāna who take [refuge in this way]. Or, based on the reason of demonstrating the qualities of the teaching of the teacher, after the threefold confidence as above has arisen in them, the persons with the pratyekabuddha disposition who strive for the higher realms take refuge in the dharma, thinking, “I shall attain [the bodies and possessions of] gods and humans in the next [life].” In order to attain those, they must perform the necessary activities of gathering the accumulations [of merit and wisdom] with regard to the dharma. Therefore, those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the dharma take refuge in the dharma by thinking, “I shall perform the activities of gathering the accumulations with regard to the dharma.”

With regard to those with the śrāvaka disposition, [their taking refuge] correlates with [RGVV’s passage] “the saṃgha is a refuge.” “Based on what reason do those with the śrāvaka disposition take refuge in the saṃgha?” [RGVV] says, “for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the disciples who have well entered the teaching of the teacher.” [Thus,] based on the reason of demonstrating the qualities of the saṃgha (such as “The saṃgha consists of the eight persons<sup>2099</sup> who have entered accordingly, have entered well, have entered straightforwardly, have entered appropriately, and have entered in accordance with the dharma”), the threefold confidence arises [in them, thinking,] “The saṃgha is the supreme among assemblies.” Upon that, they take refuge [by saying], “I take refuge in the saṃgha, the supreme among assemblies.” “If one takes [refuge] based on that reason, which person is it that takes [refuge]?” It is someone with the śrāvaka disposition who takes [refuge].

Among the two [kinds of persons with the śrāvaka disposition], the persons who strive for definite excellence think, “I shall realize the words that I heard from others and shall attain the awakening of a śrāvaka.” {468}

Since one needs to practice the śrāvakayāna for that [to come true], it is the persons in the śrāvakayāna with faith in the śrāvakayāna who take [refuge in this way]. Or, based on the reason of demonstrating the qualities of the saṃgha as above, after the threefold confidence has arisen [in them], the persons with the śrāvaka disposition who strive for the higher realms take refuge in the saṃgha, thinking, “I shall attain [the bodies and possessions of] gods and humans in the next [life].” In order to attain those, they must perform the necessary activities of gathering the accumulations [of merit and wisdom] with regard to the saṃgha. Therefore, those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the saṃgha take refuge in the saṃgha by thinking, “I shall perform the activities of gathering the accumulations with regard to the saṃgha.”

#### [2.2.1.4.1.2. The gist of this]

If explained through the gist [of this], there are four parts:

1. Definition
2. Purpose
3. Persons
4. Reasons

(1) The definition [of taking refuge] is to take refuge in the three jewels that have already arisen in the mind streams of others. (2) As for the purpose, in the commentary it is said, “from the standpoint of seeming [reality] so that sentient beings enter this [dharma] system<sup>2100</sup> in successive order.” [That is, people take refuge] for the sake of those with the three dispositions’ successively entering the three yānas in the manner of [successively] writing an [entire] message with words. Therefore, this is an explanation that brings out the aspect of the expedient meaning. (3) The persons [who take refuge] are of six [kinds]. These six are the three [kinds of] persons who have faith in the three yānas and the three [kinds of] persons who have faith in the three activities [related to the three jewels]. In actual fact, they are [simply] those with the three dispositions, as explained above. That those with the three dispositions take refuge in the three jewels as being different is [explained] in terms of the root text. [However,] without [any of the three jewels’] being primary, all three [persons] take refuge in all three [jewels], and the ritual is also performed in common [for all three]. (4) The reasons [for taking refuge] are three, being for the purpose of the teacher, the teaching, and the disciples.

### 2.2.1.4.2. The ultimate object of refuge

Because of being abandoned, because of having a deceptive nature,  
 Because of being nonexistent, and because of being fearful,  
 The twofold dharma and the noble assembly  
 Are not the ultimate supreme refuge. I.20

This has the two parts of the dharma and the saṃgha not being the ultimate objects of refuge. This refutation [here of their being the ultimate objects of refuge] is [presented] in terms of the dharma and the saṃgha of the śrāvakas. [The status of the dharma and saṃgha of] the mahāyāna is explained implicitly through being pointed to by this [refutation].

As for the refutation of the dharma and the saṃgha of the śrāvakas not being the ultimate objects of refuge, it is taught that the defining characteristics of an object of refuge are to be free from fear oneself, to be able to liberate others from fear, and to have an utterly stable essence, and since [the dharma and saṃgha of the śrāvakas] lack these three [characteristics], they are not the [ultimate] objects of refuge. The first three reasons [in I.20] teach that [the dharma and the saṃgha] lack permanence. The last [reason] teaches that they lack being free from fear themselves. When they lack these two [characteristics], it is implicit that they [also] lack the ability to liberate others from fear.

You may wonder, “How does this refutation implicitly point to the dharma and the saṃgha of the mahāyāna being [proper] objects of refuge?” These four reasons [in I.20] do not apply [to them]. Now, among the two [kinds of] dharma, since the dharma of the teachings {469} is not asserted as being the essence of the mahāyāna dharma, it does not need to be taught here. Rather, [the dharma’s being an object of refuge] refers to the dharma of realization. Among the two [kinds] of the [dharma of realization, this does not refer to] the path because [the path] is impermanent. Cessation is of two [kinds]. Among them, the cessation that consists of the fruition is buddhahood, which was already explained above and is also established as the [ultimate] object of refuge below. Here, the cessation that consists of the path refers to the cessations that are presented as the results of the [path] in dependence on the path because they are impermanent.

The saṃgha is presented as the mahāyāna saṃgha that dwells on the ten bhūmis. Therefore, since those on the seventh bhūmi and below [need to] make efforts in order to [accomplish] the welfare of sentient beings, they lack the ability to liberate others from fear. Those who dwell on the

three fruitional bhūmis lack permanence because those on the eighth one proceed to the ninth one and those on the ninth one proceed to the tenth one. Therefore, it is not asserted that [the bodhisattvas on the bhūmis] are correlated with [the phrase] “because of being fearful.”<sup>2101</sup>

The commentary on this has three points: (1) explaining just the meaning of the root text, (2) matching being fearful with the scriptures, and (3) presenting the explanation of the scriptures. [Among them,] (2) [RGVV’s] explanation by matching [being fearful] with the scriptures consists of five sūtra phrases. These five are “They are always fearful,” “take refuge in the Tathāgata,” “search for final deliverance,” “[still] have to learn [more] and have [many more] things to do,” and “are [only] approaching unsurpassable completely perfect awakening.”

(3) As for presenting the explanation of these scriptural phrases, the first sūtra phrase is explained by [the passage] “How are they fearful? . . . [In general, what constitutes a genuine] refuge does not seek refuge [elsewhere].” The second sūtra phrase is explained by “Just as sentient beings . . .” The third sūtra phrase is explained by “Thus, since they have fear . . .” The fourth sūtra phrase is explained by “Since they seek for deliverance from fear . . .” The fifth sūtra phrase is explained by “Since they [still] have to learn [more] . . .”

Ultimately, the refuge

Of beings is the Buddha alone

Because the sage possesses the dharmakāya

And because he also is the consummation of the assembly. I.21

As for establishing the Buddha alone as the ultimate object of refuge, he is established as an object of refuge because he is endowed with the [above] three defining characteristics of an object of refuge. “The sage” refers to [the Buddha’s] permanence because the commentary says, “By virtue of the principle stated earlier . . . the sage who is characterized<sup>2102</sup> by being unarisen and unceasing.” [The phrase] “because . . . possesses the dharmakāya” explains that he himself is free from fear. [The phrase] “because he is also<sup>2103</sup> the consummation of the assembly” explains the ability to liberate others from fear because the Buddha<sup>2104</sup> frees the saṃgha from all suffering and thus establishes it in the dharmakāya.



### 2.2.1.5. The reason for applying the term “jewel” {470} (the hermeneutical etymology)

They are jewels because their occurrence is rare,  
 Because they are stainless, because they possess power,  
 Because they are the ornaments of the world,  
 Because they are supreme, and because they are changeless. I.22

You may wonder, “This [expression] ‘Namo ratnatrayāya’ in the sūtras in Sanskrit means ‘I pay homage to the three jewels.’ Therefore, why are the three rare and supreme ones called ‘jewels?’” It means that they are called “the three jewels” because there is a sixfold similarity with a jewel. In the commentary, this is explained in the manner of a detailed elaboration, and it is [also] explained in the manner of a brief summary. Among these two, the learned Ngog [Lotsāwa] discarded the first one, thinking that it is unnecessary,<sup>2105</sup> and thus it does not appear in most [Tibetan] commentaries.

This concludes the explanation of the topic of the results that are the three jewels.

### 2.2.2. Explanation of the disposition for accomplishing the [three jewels] (the four that are the cause and its conditions)

This has two parts:

1. General instruction
2. Distinct explanation

#### 2.2.2.1. General instruction

Among its two parts, [the first one] is to establish the four that are the cause and its conditions as being inconceivable.

Suchness with stains, the one without stains,  
 Stainless buddha qualities, and the deeds of the victors  
 Are the objects of those who see the ultimate,  
 From which the three virtuous jewels arise. I.23

The disposition of these three jewels  
 Is the object of those who see everything.  
 It is fourfold and is inconceivable  
 For four reasons in due order I.24

Since it is pure and yet associated with afflictions,  
 Since it is not afflicted and yet becomes pure,  
 Since its qualities are inseparable,  
 And since [its activity] is effortless and nonconceptual. I.25

Since the explanation of this is clear [in the commentary], it is not presented here.<sup>2106</sup> There are also some [people] who are afraid of too many letters.

The second part is the identification of the substantial cause and its three cooperating conditions. This has two parts:

1. The meaning of the root text
2. The meaning of the commentary

(1) The meaning of the root text

Because of what is to be realized, realization,  
 Its branches, and what causes realization,  
 In due order, one point is the cause for purity  
 And three are the conditions. I.26

The first half [of this verse] represents the order of the four that are the cause and its conditions. The latter half represents the manner in which they become the substantial cause and the cooperating conditions.

(2) The meaning of the commentary

This has three points:

1. Definite order
2. Definite number
3. The manner in which they become the substantial cause and the cooperating conditions

(1) The first [point] is represented by [RGVV's passage] "Due to these four topical points' comprising everything to be known." Since this is explained well in the presentation of the body [of the text, that presentation] applies accordingly to this [passage too]. (2) The second [point] consists of [the passage] "the first one is to be regarded as the point of what is to be awakened." Since the explication of this too was already explained in detail in the presentation of the body [of the text, that presentation] applies accordingly to this [passage too]. (3) The third point consists of [the passage] "Here, the first one among these four points . . ." This has two

parts: (a) the manner in which the basic element becomes the substantial cause and (b) the manner in which the three such as awakening become the cooperating conditions.

(3a) The explanation of the first [point] consists of [the passage] “Here, the first one among these four points . . .” As for [the phrase] “due to its being the seed of the supramundane attributes,” from the point of view of this basic element itself serving as the fundamental cause that produces all the qualities such as the powers, it is given the name “seed.” It is said that the Brahman Sajjana, having exactly this in mind, [says that] venerable Maitreya asserts the system of speaking of the naturally abiding seed. “How is this system of the basic element {471} the cause or seed of all supramundane qualities?” Bringing up [the phrase] “by virtue of the voice of someone else” from the context of the [three] conditions below, since the essence of enlightened activity is to explain the dharma, [this phrase means] “by virtue of the explanation of the dharma by buddhas and bodhisattvas.” As for [the phrase] “based on one’s personal mental engagement in a proper manner,” one first hears the voice of someone else teaching [the dharma] through the prajñā that arises from hearing. In the middle, one reflects [on that dharma] through the prajñā that arises from reflecting. In the end, one familiarizes [with that dharma] through the prajñā that arises from mundane meditation. Through this, one attains the endpoint of the highest [mundane] meditation and of the highest poised readiness—the supreme dharma. Through the path of seeing that is the yogic cognition that arises from this endpoint, the nature of phenomena is seen directly, which relinquishes the factors to be relinquished through seeing. Based on that, one familiarizes [with this nature of phenomena] again and again through the wisdom that arises from supramundane meditation and thereby attains the endpoint of the highest [supramundane] meditation and of the highest [level of the] ninth bhūmi—the tenth bhūmi. Thus, through the uninterrupted path that is the vajra-like samādhi (the end of the continuum of the ten bhūmis), [all] afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies have been purified. Based on that, in the second moment [after the vajra-like samādhi], which is the [final] path of liberation, the dharmakāya is directly realized through<sup>2107</sup> the yogic cognition that arises from the endpoint [of this samādhi]—the self-arisen wisdom of buddhahood. Through this, the buddhahood of a bhagavān completely and fully awakening to the equality of all phenomena is obtained. Based on that, the dharma of excellently turning the wheel of dharma is obtained. Based on that, the saṃgha of [the Buddha’s] being endowed with limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples is obtained.

(3b) Now, having asserted the explanation of the manner in which the three such as awakening become the cooperating conditions, [RGVV has someone] ask, “How is it that the [other] three [points] are conditions?” As for “A tathāgata, upon having fully awakened to unsurpassable completely perfect awakening,” someone like Prince Siddhārtha first attains awakening. Since this [awakening] is neither without [qualities] nor of small qualities, [the phrase,] “through the buddha qualities (such as the ten powers)” represents the qualities that are based on that [awakening]. Since these qualities perform the enlightened activity that accords with these qualities, enlightened activity is represented by [the phrase] “performs the thirty-two kinds of tathāgata activity.” Since the essence of enlightened activity is to explain the dharma, [RGVV says] “by virtue of the voice of someone else,” which refers to buddhas’ and bodhisattvas’ explaining the dharma. The dharma explained by buddhas consists of the words spoken from their mouths, while the one spoken by bodhisattvas consists of the words that are blessed [by buddhas], such as the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. Based on that, {472} bringing down [the phrase] “based on one’s personal mental engagement in a proper manner” from the context of the cause [above], the way in which the three jewels arise after the basic element has become pure through hearing and so on corresponds to how [this was explained] before. That [the two phrases] “based on one’s personal mental engagement in a proper manner” in the context of the cause and “by virtue of the voice of someone else” in the context of the conditions are taught as two gates [of understanding] is for the sake of understanding the actual true meaning.

Those who wish to realize how the seven vajra points become one cycle of cause and result for a single person should make efforts in [understanding] this.

Through the nature of phenomena functioning as cause and the  
 nature of phenomena functioning as conditions,  
 The impure nature of phenomena is purified.  
 How [could] the wheel of the dependent origination of purified  
 phenomena be relinquished?  
 The intelligent [see this, but] the eyes of worldly beings are closed to it.

This one verse represents Maitreya’s intention  
 Of the seven vajra points in this root text and its commentary

Being a single cycle of clear realization of those with the mahāyāna disposition—

The excellent benefit for others is realized through that.

If those with equal minds make no effort

In this meaning of the words that is the key to open

This treatise, the most essential treasure among the words of Maitreya,

It becomes [like] a fire offering without a mantra.

#### 2.2.2.2. Distinct explanation

From among the five chapters [of the *Uttaratantra*], first, there is the explanation of [the basic element].

##### 2.2.2.2.1. The chapter on the basic element

This chapter is explained through six points, and the reason that [the basic element] must be determined through those six points is this: (1) This treatise is the one that determines the meaning of the sūtra collection of definitive meaning. Therefore, in order to determine the intended meaning of the statement in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* that “All sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart,” first, the comments on the intention of the scriptures of the Tathāgata about the basic element are explained. (2) Now, beginning with the time of [trying to] make ordinary beings understand this basic element or [tathāgata] heart that is explained in this way in the scriptures and exists in all sentient beings, it cannot be demonstrated [directly]. Therefore, it needs to be determined through a tenfold presentation. Hence, after the [first point], the determination of the basic element through this tenfold presentation is explained. (3) You may wonder, “If this basic element that is determined through that tenfold presentation in this way exists in all sentient beings, why do they not realize it?” [In response] to that, after the [tenfold presentation, there follows] the explanation of [how] it is established by way of nine examples that despite the existence [of the basic element] that is determined through that tenfold presentation, it is not realized. (4) You may think, “If such a basic element is not directly realized by sentient beings, based on which means should sentient beings ascertain it at the time of ascertaining that it exists in all sentient beings?” [In response] to that, [it is said,] “Ascertain it based on scriptures that teach the nature of phenomena!” In order to teach that, {473} after the [examples], the means to ascertain it are explained. (5) You may wonder, “What is the essence or the defining characteristic of this basic element that is to be

ascertained based on the scriptures that teach the nature of phenomena?” [In response] to that, in order to teach that the nature of phenomena is something that is free from superimposition and denial, after the [means to ascertain it], the basic element’s defining characteristic and its own essence are explained. (6) You may wonder, “[If] sentient beings do not directly realize this basic element that is endowed with such a defining characteristic, what is the purpose of teaching the basic element in the *Uttaratantra* here by following the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, [saying,] ‘all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart?’” [In response] to that, [it is said] that the purpose of the basic element’s not being realized directly and yet being taught is that it is discussed in order to relinquish the five flaws that obscure all paths. In order to teach that, after the [defining characteristic of the basic element], the purpose of teaching the basic element is taught at the very end of the first chapter].<sup>2108</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.1.1. Explanation of the comments on the intention of the scriptures

Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates,  
 Since suchness is undifferentiable,  
 And since the disposition exists,  
 All beings always possess the buddha heart. I.28<sup>2109</sup>

Here, [RGVV] explains, “These three topical points will be taught [in detail] below [through nine examples] according to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*.” That is, these three [points] appear in detail by way of the examples that illustrate the purity [of the basic element] in the context of [the *Uttaratantra*’s saying] below:

Its nature is the dharmakāya,  
 Suchness, and also the disposition.<sup>2110</sup>

Therefore, they are correlated [here] with that [section]. Consequently, this [verse here] is explained by taking up the meaning below. The basic element has three phases—the phase of its being pure, the phase of its being both pure and impure, and the phase of its being impure. The phrase “Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates” refers to the phase of its being pure. [In it,] “kāya” [means] the dharmakāya, which [actually] refers to all three kāyas. “Through what does one know that?” Maitreya himself says [below]:

The dharmakāya is to be known as twofold—  
 The utterly stainless dharmadhātu  
 And its natural outflow (teaching  
 The principles of profundity and diversity).<sup>2111</sup>

“Radiates” [means] that these three kāyas pervade all sentient beings. “How do they pervade them?” In order to purify the basic element of sentient beings for as long as saṃsāra is not empty, with the dharmakāya functioning as the support, the sambhogakāya promotes the welfare [of sentient beings] through pervading the pure retinues who dwell on the bhūmis, and the three [kinds of] nirmāṇakāya promote the welfare [of sentient beings] through pervading the impure retinues. Therefore, the basis to be purified—the [tathāgata] heart or basic element—exists in [all] sentient beings. “Why?” If the basis to be purified—the basic element—did not exist [in sentient beings], their being pervaded by the three kāyas would be pointless. Having that in mind, [Maitreya] says, “All beings always possess the buddha heart.”<sup>2112</sup> Such is explained not only in the *Uttaratantra* alone but the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* states:

Just as space is asserted to be always omnipresent,  
 This {474} is held to be always omnipresent.  
 Just as space is omnipresent in the hosts of forms,  
 It is omnipresent in the hosts of sentient beings.<sup>2113</sup>

The phrase “since suchness is undifferentiable” refers to the phase of the basic element’s being both pure and impure—the naturally pure suchness of buddhas and sentient beings is without any difference. This is declared in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* [as follows]:

Though it is without difference in everything,  
 Suchness’ having become pure  
 Is the Tathāgata. Therefore,  
 All beings possess its heart.<sup>2114</sup>

[The phrase] “since the disposition exists” refers to the phase of the basic element’s being impure—since the disposition of a tathāgata exists in all sentient beings, it abides as what is suitable to give rise to the dharmakāya. Exactly this is explained [in the *Uttaratantra*] below:

It is held that the three buddhakāyas  
 Are obtained from these two dispositions—  
 The first kāya, by virtue of the first one,  
 And the latter two, by virtue of the second one.<sup>2115</sup>

In its comments [on I.31] below, which explain the essence [of the basic element, RGVV says], “these three [points] were already mentioned above.”<sup>2116</sup> This is clearly explained through these comments [here] on the intention of the scriptures.<sup>2117</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2. Determining the basic element by way of a tenfold presentation

This has three points:

1. Brief introduction by way of a synoptical verse on the number [of topics]
2. Detailed explanation by differentiating the topics of the synopsis
3. Concluding summary

##### [2.2.2.2.1.2.1. Brief introduction by way of a synoptical verse on the number of topics]

Nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, engagement,  
 Phases, and likewise the topic of all-pervasiveness,  
 Ever-changelessness, and the inseparability of the qualities  
 Are to be understood as representing the ultimate expanse, the topic  
 in mind. I.29

There are the ten topics of the synopsis, with the first one among them being [the nature].

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1. The nature

In terms of the particular [characteristics of the nature of the basic element], during the phase of the basic element's being pure, the dharmakāya radiates into all sentient beings, thus possessing the power<sup>2118</sup> to accomplish the goals that sentient beings think about. Therefore, it is similar to a precious gem. During the phase of the basic element's being both pure and impure, the suchness of buddhas and sentient beings is undifferentiable. Therefore, it is similar to space. During the phase of the basic element's being impure, the mahāyāna disposition exists in all sentient beings.



Therefore, it is similar to water since it moistens the mind streams [of beings] by way of compassion. In terms of its general characteristic, in analogy with these three examples [of a jewel, space, and water] being pure by nature, their meaning refers to the basic element's being pure by nature.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2. The cause

The following are the causes that make one realize what has not been realized. The persons who are those with great desire<sup>2119</sup> have the obscuration that consists of aversion toward the mahāyāna dharma. Being concerned that this may arise in bodhisattvas [too], bodhisattvas cultivate its remedy—faith in the mahāyāna. The persons who are tīrthikas have the obscuration that consists of views about a personal self. As its remedy, bodhisattvas cultivate the lack of a self. The persons who are śrāvakas have the obscuration {475} that consists of fear of saṃsāra's suffering. As its remedy, bodhisattvas cultivate superior samādhi. The persons<sup>2120</sup> who are pratyekabuddhas have the obscuration that consists of indifference about the welfare of sentient beings.<sup>2121</sup> As its remedy, bodhisattvas cultivate superior great compassion.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.3. The fruition

[Here,] there is no fruition of what has not arisen before being [newly] produced, but one needs to realize what has not been realized before. "How?" Through cultivating faith in the mahāyāna dharma at the time of the cause, when the dharmakāya is attained later, the fruition that consists of the pāramitā of purity<sup>2122</sup> [is attained]. Through cultivating superior prajñā at the time of the cause, the fruition that consists of the pāramitā of the supreme self [is attained]. Through cultivating superior samādhi at the time of the cause, the fruition that consists of the pāramitā of bliss is attained. Through cultivating superior compassion at the time of the cause, when the dharmakāya is attained later, the fruition that consists of the pāramitā of permanence is attained.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.4. The function

Since the naturally pure basic element exists [in beings, they develop] revulsion due to the arising of weariness<sup>2123</sup> based on seeing the shortcomings of saṃsāric suffering. Based on seeing the benefit of the bliss [of nirvāṇa], one gives rise to longing, wishing, striving, and aspiring for the object that is nirvāṇa. Thus, [the basic element] performs five functions.

### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.5. The qualities of endowment

This has two parts:

1. Endowment with causes
2. Endowment with results

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.5.1. Endowment with causes

The basic element at the time of being a bodhisattva is endowed with three causes. “Which?” (1) The cause for later attaining the dharmakāya<sup>2124</sup> is to cultivate faith in the mahāyāna dharma now. (2) The cause for later attaining the wisdom of a victor is to cultivate superior prajñā and samādhi now. (3) The cause for the great compassion of a victor operating later is to cultivate superior great compassion now. [Thus, the basic element] is endowed with these three [causes].

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.5.2. Endowment with results

The basic element [at the time of being] a buddha is inseparably endowed with three qualities. “Which?” It is inseparably endowed with the triad of (1) supernatural knowledges, (2) the wisdom of the termination of contaminations, and (3) the termination of contaminations.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.6. The specification of manifestation

Though the three [ways of the] basic element’s [manifesting during its three phases] are inseparable, it is classified as three by way of the different bearers of the nature [of this basic element]. “Which?” [The three] represent the basic element that exists in the bearers of this nature, which are the mind streams of sentient beings<sup>2125</sup> (who are mistaken), the basic element that exists in the mind streams of bodhisattvas<sup>2126</sup> (who are unmistaken), and the basic element that exists in the mind streams of buddhas (who are perfectly unmistaken and free from reference points).

Now there follows the explanation of the other four [topics] that are elaborations on [the topic of] manifestation. “How?”

#### [2.2.2.2.1.2.1.7. Phases]

It may be said, “Well, through making a threefold division of the basic element, it follows that the basic element—the nature of phenomena—has three different pieces or essences.” [The response] to that is that though a threefold division {476} [of the basic element] is made, there are no different essences. Thus, it is presented by way of [three] different phases. For example, the single essence of [a person called] Devadatta is given different

names during different phases—he is given different names [such as] the Devadatta who gathers grass, when he gathers grass, the Devadatta who carries water, and the Devadatta who grinds flour. Likewise, when [the basic element] manifests in sentient beings, this is the phase of its being **impure**.<sup>2127</sup> Therefore, since this represents the phase of sentient beings, it is given the name “the basic element of sentient beings.” During<sup>2128</sup> the phase of its being **both pure and impure**, it is given the name “the basic element of bodhisattvas.” When it manifests in buddhas, since it is the phase of its being **completely pure**, it is given the name “the basic element of buddhas.” In order to teach that, after the [topic of its manifestation, its three] **phases** are explained.

#### [2.2.2.2.1.2.1.8. All-pervasiveness]

Elaborating on that, it may be said, “That [just] these phases are different is not established for me, but the [basic element’s] essence itself is different. I do not assert that the phases themselves are different if the essence is not different.” [The response] to that concern is that if the essence is different, one [can]not assert that one pervades all. For example, a vase, a blanket, and a pillar, which [all] have different names,<sup>2129</sup> do not pervade each other. Likewise, the same applies for the basic element. For example, now space<sup>2130</sup> pervades inferior vessels (clay vases), **middling vessels** (copper vases), and **supreme vessels** (golden vases). Likewise, the basic element pervades the triad of sentient beings, bodhisattvas, and buddhas. In order to teach that, after the [topic of its phases, its] **all-pervasiveness** is taught.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.1.9. Changelessness

Elaborating on that, it may be said, “That [the basic element] pervades all is not established for me. For example, it is true that space pervades all, [but as far as] the meaning [of this example goes], the basic element does not pervade all—the basic element of sentient beings does not pervade the basic element of bodhisattvas, and the basic element of bodhisattvas does not pervade the basic element of buddhas.” [The response] to that concern is that if this were the case, the basic element would change—since the basic element of sentient beings would not pervade the basic element of bodhisattvas, a new basic element would arise in bodhisattvas, and since the basic element of bodhisattvas would not pervade the basic element of buddhas, a new basic element would arise in buddhas. Thus, just as space does not change,<sup>2131</sup> the basic element does not change [either]. Thus, after the [topic of its all-pervasiveness, its] **changelessness** is taught.

## [2.2.2.2.1.2.1.10. Inseparability]

Elaborating on the changelessness [of the basic element] in the phase of its being completely pure (buddhahood) from among the three [phases of its] being changeless, it is taught that during the phase of its being completely pure (buddhahood),<sup>2132</sup> the four of the dharmakāya, the Tathāgata, ultimate reality, and nirvāṇa are synonyms. {477} One may think, “Does nirvāṇa [not] exist in śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas too?” When the four of the dharmakāya and so on are [used as] synonyms, with śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas not attaining the dharmakāya, they lack the attainment of the nirvāṇa that is not different from the [dharmakāya]. In order to teach that, after the [topic of the changelessness of the basic element, the] inseparability from its qualities is taught.

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2. [Detailed] explanation by differentiating the topics of the synopsis

By taking both the nature and the cause as one and by taking the fruition and the function as one, the topics are presented as eight.<sup>2133</sup>

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.1. Nature and cause

It is always unafflicted by nature,  
Just as a pure jewel, space, and water.  
It arises from having faith in the dharma,  
Supreme prajñā, samādhi, and compassion. I.30

By virtue of its essential nature of power,  
Being unchanging, and being moist,  
It resembles the qualities  
Of a precious gem, space, and water. I.31

[Other than what was said above,] there is nothing [more] to be explained about the nature.<sup>2134</sup>

Aversion toward the dharma, views about a self,  
Fear of saṃsāra’s suffering,  
And indifference about the welfare of sentient beings—  
These are the four obscurations of those with great desire, I.32

Tīrthikas, śrāvakas, and self-arisen [buddhas].

The causes of purity are the four dharmas

Of having faith and so forth.<sup>2135</sup> I.33

As for the cause, in the root text, the essence of the obscurations is explained first. Then, the persons who possess these obscurations are explained. Finally, the remedies for these obscurations are explained.

In the commentary, the persons who possess these obscurations are explained first. [That is,] among those who crave for [saṃsāric] existence, there are those with great desire. Among those who have entered what is not the means [for liberation], there are the tīrthikas. Among those who have entered these means, there are śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. In between, the essence of the obscurations is explained [by RGVV's passage] "Now, apart from those sentient beings who are firmly grounded in the mahāyāna . . . and not perceiving the tathāgata element."<sup>2136</sup> As for [RGVV's sentence] below "These are the four kinds of obscurations of the four kinds of sentient beings,"<sup>2137</sup> in the Indian manuscript, it does not occur below but is present here.<sup>2138</sup> Therefore, the [above passage including this sentence] refers to the essence of the obscurations [as] in the root text. Now, the explanation of the remedies that relinquish these obscurations is given by [RGVV's passage] "What are these four? They are as follows. Hostility toward . . ." Now, according to the translation of the spiritual friend Ngog, [this passage] becomes [the description of] the essence of the obscurations, but according to the Indian manuscript of the *Uttaratantra*, it serves as [the description of] the remedies. Therefore, [what RGVV means to] ask [by the question "What are these four?" is] "What are the remedies that relinquish these four obscurations?" [Thus, in translation,] the text is arranged in this way: "They are as follows. Hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma is the obscuration of those with great desire, whose remedy is a bodhisattva's cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna dharma." That same procedure is also applied to the following [three sentences].<sup>2139</sup>

You may wonder, "How is it that those who possess these four causes are the children of the Buddha's mind?" This is described in the verse [beginning with] "Those whose seed is the faith in the supreme yāna . . ."

Those whose seed is the faith in the supreme yāna,  
Whose mother is the prajñā that gives birth to the buddha attributes,  
Whose womb is the bliss of samādhi, and whose nanny is compassion  
Are the children who take after the sages. I.34

This [Sanskrit] śloka teaches the *pratīka*<sup>2140</sup> first while the [Tibetan] root text teaches it later. [Here, I refer to the Tibetan] root text. Some assert that the author of the commentary [here] adduces words from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2. The topics of the fruition and the function

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

##### [2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1. Brief introduction]

The fruition consists of the pāramitās that are  
The qualities of purity, self, bliss, and permanence.  
It has the function of being weary of suffering  
As well as striving and aspiring to attain peace. I.35

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2. Detailed explanation

This has two parts:

- [1. Explanation of the fruition
2. Explanation of the function]

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1. Explanation of the fruition

This has two parts:

1. The actual [fruition]
2. Presenting the valid cognition that makes one understand this

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1. The actual [fruition]

This has two parts:

- [1. Meaning of the root text
2. Meaning of the commentary]

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.1. Meaning of the root text

In brief, the fruition of those [causes]  
Is characterized by being the remedies  
That are the opposites of the four kinds of  
Mistakenness about the dharmakāya. I.36

This is explained in the following way. {478} **The fruition of those four causes such as cultivating faith for the mahāyāna dharma consists of the four pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya. “But does the dharmakāya have only four qualities?” [Its qualities are these four] in brief. “From which point of view are these four qualities identified?” “The four kinds of mistakenness” are the four such as the clinging to what is impure as being pure that exist in the mind streams of ordinary beings. The four [kinds of relative] unmistakenness that are the opposites of those [four] are the very four such as clinging to what is impure as being impure that exist in the mind streams of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. “Is characterized by being the remedies” [means that] these very four [kinds of] unmistakenness of śrāvakas [and pratyekabuddhas] in turn represent [four kinds of] mistakenness about the dharmakāya. Therefore, as the remedies of those four [kinds of mistakenness], the dharmakāya is endowed with the four qualities such as the pāramitā of purity.<sup>2141</sup>**

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2. Meaning of the commentary

This has four points:

1. Presenting the four pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya as the remedies that are the opposites of the four [kinds of] mistakenness
2. Instruction on the causes that accomplish these four qualities
3. Commenting on the intention of the scriptures about these four qualities
4. Establishing that these four qualities are the uncommon qualities of buddhas alone

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.1. Presenting the four pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya as the remedies that are the opposites of the four [kinds of] mistakenness

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Explanation by matching this with the scriptures

As for [discussing] all three [at once here], as explained in the root text, this is correlated with [the following]. [There are] the four [kinds of] mistakenness that exist in the mind streams of ordinary beings and the four [kinds of] mistakenness that exist in the mind streams of śrāvakas

[and pratyekabuddhas]. As the remedies of those four, the dharmakāya has these four qualities. You may wonder, “[Apart from being the remedies of those four kinds of mistakenness,] to what do these four qualities of the dharmakāya refer in themselves?” Since [the dharmakāya] is pure of the filth of karma and afflictions, it is the pāramitā of purity. Since it is not deceived about the lack of a self’s being the lack of a self, it is the pāramitā of the supreme self. Since it is endowed with uncontaminated bliss, it is the pāramitā of bliss. Since it always engages in the welfare of sentient beings until saṃsāra is empty, it is the pāramitā of permanence.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.2. Identifying the causes that accomplish these four qualities

This is explained by [RGVV’s passage] “The reverse order of these four pāramitās that are the qualities of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata should be understood by way of the order of the [above-mentioned four] causes [of purity].” As for [the phrase] “The reverse order . . . of the order of the . . .,” in [RGVV’s quote from the *Śrīmālādevī*]sūtra that precedes [this passage], the result that is permanence is explained first and purity is explained last. Therefore, the reverse [order] of that is that [RGVV] explains purity first and explains permanence last. In that way, the causes [such as faith in the mahāyāna] and their results accord in their order.<sup>2142</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.2.3. Commenting on the intention of [a passage in] the scriptures of the Buddha about these four qualities

This has two parts:

1. The actual scriptural passage {479}
2. Presenting the explanation of that scriptural passage

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.2.3.1. The actual scriptural passage

You may wonder, “Through what does one know that the four qualities of the dharmakāya are attained due to the four causes such as faith [in the mahāyāna dharma]?” In order to teach that this is known through<sup>2143</sup> the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, [RGVV] says, “By virtue of these [pāramitās], the Tathāgata . . .”

##### [2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.2.3.2. Presenting the explanation of that scriptural passage]

You may wonder, “How come, on account of these three sūtra phrases, [one can say that] the four fruitions are attained due to the four causes?”



[In response] to that, the comment on the intention of this scripture ([with the commentator saying,] “I shall comment on the intention”) consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Thus, in due order . . .” Here, what [the sūtra phrase of] the Tathāgata’s “having reached the full extent of the dharmadhātu” intends is that through having cultivated faith in the mahāyāna at the time of the cause, the pāramitā of purity is attained at the time of the fruition. The comment on [this intention consists of RGVV’s two sentences] “Through having cultivated faith . . . supreme dharmadhātu.” What [the sūtra] phrase “extending to the limits of the element of space” intends is that through having cultivated superior prajñā at the time of the cause, the pāramitā of the supreme self is attained at the time of the fruition. The comment on [this intention consists of RGVV’s sentence] “Through having cultivated prajñāpāramitā . . . container.” This very sūtra phrase [also] intends that through having cultivated superior samādhi at the time of the cause, the pāramitā of bliss is attained at the time of the fruition. The comment [on this intention consists of RGVV’s sentence] “Through having cultivated samādhis . . .” [The sūtra phrase “lasting until the end of time”] intends that through having cultivated great compassion at the time of the cause, the pāramitā of permanence is attained at the time of the fruition. The comment [on this intention consists of RGVV’s two sentences] “Through having cultivated great compassion . . .”

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.4. Establishing that these four qualities are the uncommon qualities of buddhas alone

This consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Now, even though they abide in the uncontaminated basic element, for arhats . . .,” and there is nothing to explain [about it].

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2. Presenting the valid cognition that makes one understand this

Because the [dharmakāya] is naturally pure  
 And because it is free from latent tendencies, it is pure.  
 It is the supreme self because the reference points  
 Of self and no-self are at peace. I.37

It is bliss because the skandha of a mental nature  
 And its causes have come to an end.

It is permanent because it is realized  
As the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. I.38

With prajñā, they cut through all craving for a self without exception.  
Because they have a passion for sentient beings, those endowed with  
loving-kindness do not attain peace.  
Relying in this way on intelligence and loving-kindness, the means  
for awakening,  
The noble ones neither circle [in saṃsāra] nor pass into nirvāṇa. I.39

[The reason for the qualities of the four pāramitās' belonging to buddhas alone is] "because only this dharmakāya has the four qualities."<sup>2144</sup> That this is established through an inference that is based on the scriptures is represented by the root text's and the commentary's saying, "Because the [dharmakāya] is naturally pure . . ." <sup>2145</sup> The verse [that starts with] "With prajñā, they cut through all craving for a self without exception . . ." corresponds to the explanation of verse [I.34] "Those whose seed is the faith in the supreme yāna . . ." above.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2. Explanation of the topic of the function

If the buddha element did not exist,  
There would be no weariness of suffering,  
Nor would there be the wish, striving,  
And aspiration for nirvāṇa. I.40

This seeing of the flaws of suffering and the qualities of happiness  
In [saṃsāric] existence and nirvāṇa  
Occurs [only] due to the existence of the disposition  
Because it does not [occur] in those without the disposition. I.41

This has three [points]. (1) That the arising of weariness of saṃsāra, the arising of enthusiasm for nirvāṇa, and the arising of the wish and so on [for nirvāṇa] coincide with whether the disposition exists or does not exist is established by way of its positive concomitance and its negative concomitance.<sup>2146</sup> [This is explained in] the first verse of the root text and its commentary. In the root text, only the certainty about the negative concomitance appears, while in the commentary the negative concomitance is taught in [the quote from the *Śrīmālādevī*]sūtra and thereafter the

certainty about the positive concomitance is taught too. In the root text, the [positive concomitance] is implied.

(2) As for the second point, that [sentient beings] see the shortcomings of suffering in the object that is *saṃsāra* {480} and see the benefit of happiness in the object that is *nirvāṇa* coincides with whether the disposition exists or does not exist is established by way of its positive concomitance and its negative concomitance. [This is explained in] the second verse of the root text and its commentary.<sup>2147</sup>

You may wonder, “What is the difference in meaning between these two verses?” [They refer to] cause and result—the cause for the arising of the weariness of *saṃsāric* suffering, [which is mentioned] in the former [verse], is the seeing of the shortcomings of suffering in the object that is *saṃsāra*, [which is stated] in the latter [verse]. The cause for the arising<sup>2148</sup> of the wish and so on for *nirvāṇa*, [which is mentioned] in the former [verse], is the seeing of the benefit of happiness in the object that is *nirvāṇa*, [which is stated] in the latter [verse]. Here, in the root text, both the certainty about the positive concomitance and the certainty about the negative concomitance are found, but their meaning is merely pointed to. In the commentary,<sup>2149</sup> [we find the passage] “That persons with pure qualities see the flaws of suffering in *saṃsāra* and see the qualities of happiness in *nirvāṇa* occurs [only] when the disposition exists. [Thus,] this [seeing] is not something without a cause or something without a condition. For what reason [is this so]? If such [seeing] could happen without the disposition, without a cause, without a condition, and without entailing the termination of wrongdoing,<sup>2150</sup> it would also happen<sup>2151</sup> in those with great desire who are without the disposition for *nirvāṇa*.” This means that it follows that the seeing of the shortcomings of *saṃsāra* and the seeing of the benefit of happiness in *nirvāṇa* would [also] arise [in those with great desire].

Now, with regard to the explanation about the time of this [absurd] consequence’s being formulated, you may wonder, “At which time [does] it [apply]?” It follows that this twofold [seeing] would occur even<sup>2152</sup> during the [entire] time of [sentient beings’] not having given rise to faith in the *dharma* of one of the three [*yānas*—the disposition for being pure of adventitious stains—by way of bringing together the four wheels of relying on wise persons and so on. This actual piece of text [of *RGVV*] first pertains to the time of formulating this consequence, but now this consequence is to be reversed, which means that this twofold [seeing] does not occur at any time as long as [sentient beings] are not endowed with these four wheels.

“In relation to what is this reversal of the consequence here established?” It is established in relation to the first subject [in question].<sup>2153</sup>

Now, this being established by way of scripture consists of [RGVV’s passage that quotes the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*], “Therefore, after that, the rays of wisdom . . .” The meaning of this sūtra passage is that even these persons with wrong craving<sup>2154</sup> thrive through virtuous dharmas because they have the naturally pure disposition. For if they did not have the naturally pure disposition, they would not thrive through the light rays of the wisdom of the tathāgatas and virtuous dharmas. You may wonder, “Above it was explained that seeing saṃsāra as a flaw {481} and seeing nirvāṇa as a quality does not occur in those with wrong craving, who have the disposition of absolutely<sup>2155</sup> not passing into nirvāṇa. Is that not contradictory to the explanation in this sūtra that [even] those with wrong craving generate virtue—the cause for meeting a buddha in the future?”<sup>2156</sup> It is not contradictory—the above [explanation pertains] to the time of those with wrong craving not being endowed with the four wheels. In this [sūtra] here, at the time of being struck by the light rays of the wisdom of the Tathāgata, their time of being endowed with the four wheels has come.

(3) Now, the third point is the explanation of eliminating the flaw of the scriptural passages’ [in the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*] being mutually exclusive. Here, some think, “The above sūtra passage and the statement in the [Mahāpari]nirvāṇasūtra that those with wrong craving absolutely<sup>2157</sup> do not pass into nirvāṇa are contradictory.” The gist [of the answer to this] is that these two [statements] would be contradictory in a single sūtra of definitive meaning, but here the sūtras are different. The above sūtra is a sūtra of definitive meaning whereas that statement in the [Mahāpari]nirvāṇasūtra is a sūtra passage of expedient meaning. Therefore, they are not contradictory. “Through what does one know that that statement in the [Mahāpari]nirvāṇasūtra is of expedient meaning?” In order to teach that such is known because there is a basis of intention and an intention, [RGVV] says, “Also, the statement [in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and others] that ‘those with great desire . . .’ [The phrase] “for the sake of turning [such people] away from their hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma” represents the intention of the [Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra’s] statement that bears an intention. [RGVV’s phrase] “another time” represents the basis of that intention. Now, that statement in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* [is known to] be of expedient meaning not only by virtue of there being these two

[contrasting] sūtra [passages], but it is known to be of expedient meaning by virtue of this sūtra [itself]. In order to teach that, [RGVV] says, “Since the naturally pure disposition exists . . .” It is said that the Brahman Sajjana [comments], “If this were not something with an intention, a valid cognition that invalidates the explicit statement would not<sup>2158</sup> be presented [here in RGVV].”<sup>2159</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.3.–6. Endowment, manifestation, phases, and all-pervasiveness

Just like the great ocean, [the disposition of the victors] is an  
inexhaustible source

Of immeasurable jewels [in the form of its] qualities.

Because it has the nature of being endowed

With inseparable qualities, it is like a lamp. I.42

Since the basic element consists of the dharmakāya,

As well as the wisdom and the compassion of the victor,

It is taught to be like the ocean

In terms of<sup>2160</sup> a vessel, jewels, and water. I.43

In the stainless foundation, the supernatural knowledges,

Wisdom, and stainlessness are inseparable from true reality.

Therefore, they are respectively similar to

The light, heat, and color of a lamp. I.44

Ordinary beings, noble ones, and perfect buddhas

Engage distinctly in suchness. Due to that,

This disposition of the victors is taught

To sentient beings by those who see true reality. I.45

Ordinary beings are mistaken,

Those who see reality are the opposite,

And tathāgatas are most exactly unmistaken

And free from reference points. I.46

Its being impure, its being both impure and pure,

And its being completely pure, in due order,

Are expressed as “sentient being,”  
 “Bodhisattva,” and “tathāgata.” I.47

The basic element that consists of these  
 Six topics, such as [its] nature,  
 Is taught through three names  
 In its three phases. I.48

Just as space with its character  
 Of nonconceptuality is present everywhere,  
 The stainless basic element that is the nature of the mind  
 Is likewise omnipresent. I.49

Its general characteristic is that it pervades  
 Flaws, qualities, and perfection,  
 Just as space [pervades] inferior, middling,  
 And supreme kinds of form. I.50

[Other than what RGVV says,] there is nothing [more] to be explained  
 [about these topics].<sup>2161</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7. Changelessness

This has two parts:

1. General instruction
2. Distinct explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.1. General instruction

Since it is adventitiously associated with flaws  
 And is naturally associated with qualities,  
 Its true nature of being changeless  
 Is the same before as after. I.51

[The phrase] “fourteen verses” in the commentary refers to the main fourteen verses [of the distinct explanation of this topic]. They consist of the twelve verses [below that begin with] “Just as all-pervasive space . . . ,” the one verse [that starts with] “Having realized the nature of this [basic element] just as it is . . . ,” and the one verse [that begins with] “[The tathāgata element’s] character does not change into anything other

because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.” [However,] there are [also] many [other] verses [on this topic of changelessness] that are not these main ones.<sup>2162</sup> [Also,] the first [point]—the general instruction [in I.51]—is not included in these fourteen [verses] either.

You may wonder, “What is the difference between possessing adventitious afflictions during the phase of being impure and possessing adventitious proximate afflictions during the phase of being impure and pure?”<sup>2163</sup> {482} In the abhidharma, the afflictions are six and are explained as the primary afflictions. The proximate [or secondary] afflictions are twenty and are explained as the secondary afflictions. However, here, there is a difference [between them in their] density. Afflictions are dense—they consist of all primary and secondary afflictions such as desire that exist in the mind streams of sentient beings. Proximate afflictions exist in the mind streams of bodhisattvas—they are the subtle [afflictions] that<sup>2164</sup> are the latent tendencies of ignorance.<sup>2165</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2. Distinct explanation

This has three parts:

##### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.1. The explanation of changelessness during the phase of being very impure (ordinary beings)

Here, (1) six verses present the examples and their meanings:

Just as all-pervasive space  
Is untainted due to its subtlety,  
So this [basic element] that abides in all  
Sentient beings is untainted. I.52

Just as the worlds everywhere  
Are born and perish in space,  
So the faculties arise and perish  
In the unconditioned basic element. I.53

Just as space was never  
Burned before by any fires,  
So this [basic element] is not consumed  
By the fires of death, sickness, and aging. I.54

Earth rests upon water, water on wind,  
 And wind on space,  
 [But] space does not rest on the elements  
 Of wind, water, or earth. I.55

Likewise, skandhas, dhātus, and faculties  
 Rest on karma and afflictions,  
 And karma and afflictions always rest on  
 Improper mental engagement. I.56

Improper mental engagement  
 Rests on the purity of the mind,  
 [But] the nature of the mind does not rest  
 On any of all these phenomena. I.57

(2) Eight verses explain [how] the similarities between the examples and their meanings are established:

The skandhas, āyatanas, and dhātus  
 Should be understood as being like earth.  
 The karma and afflictions of living beings  
 Should be understood as resembling the element of water. I.58

Improper mental engagement  
 Is to be regarded as being like the element of wind.  
 Just like space, [mind's] nature  
 Is without basis and does not rest [on anything]. I.59

Improper mental engagement  
 Rests on the nature of the mind,  
 And improper mental engagement  
 Produces karma and afflictions. I.60

Skandhas, āyatanas, and dhātus  
 Originate from water[-like] karma and afflictions.  
 Just as the dissolution and evolution of the [world],  
 They arise and perish. I.61



The nature of the mind, just as the element  
 Of space, lacks causes, lacks conditions,  
 Lacks aggregation, and lacks  
 Arising, ceasing, and abiding. I.62

The luminous nature of the mind  
 Is unchanging, just like space.  
 It is not afflicted by adventitious stains,  
 Such as desire, born from false imagination. I.63

The mass<sup>2166</sup> of water[-like] karma  
 And afflictions does not generate this,  
 Nor do the unbearable fires of death,  
 Sickness, and aging consume it. I.64

The three fires—the one at the end of time,  
 The one in hell, and ordinary [fire]—  
 Should be understood, in due order, as being like  
 The three fires of death, sickness, and aging. I.65

Since the comments on these two [sets of verses] are provided [in RGVV] by [a passage from the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā*]sūtra below, the gist of that sūtra [passage] is this: First, the examples are the five that consist of the four elements and space when the world that is the container forms. [In due order,] their meanings consist of sentient beings' improper mental engagement, karma and afflictions, the triad of skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas, the fires of death, sickness, and aging, and the basic element. Just as in the examples of the four elements' changing and space's not changing, [in terms of] the meaning, improper mental engagement and so on change while the basic element does not change.

As for (1) presenting the examples and their meanings, the two verses [beginning with] “Just as all-pervasive space . . .” present the example and its meaning that consist of space (the example) and the basic element (the meaning). The one verse [that starts with] “Just as space was never . . .” presents the example and its meaning that consists of fire (the example) and the fires of death, sickness, and aging (the meaning). The three verses [beginning with] “Earth rests upon water, water on wind . . .” present the examples and their meanings that consist of the triad of [earth,] water,

and wind (the examples) and the triad of improper<sup>2167</sup> mental engagement, karma and afflictions, and skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas (the meanings).

(2) Now, as for establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings, (a) the seven verses [beginning with] “The skandhas, āyatanas, and dhātus . . .” teach that the example of the order of the arising [of the elements] and its meaning are established to be similar through providing the correspondences between the triad of earth,<sup>2168</sup> water, and wind (the examples) and the triad of improper mental engagement, karma and afflictions, and skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas (the meanings). (b) The one verse [starting with] “The three fires—the one at the end of time . . .” of the root text and its commentary teach the similarities of the examples and the meanings that consist of the [three] fires (the examples) and the three fires of death, sickness, and aging (the meanings). {483} “Through what does one know such?” These two [sections (a) and (b)] are clearly explained in [the commentary]’s own [way of] making the connections.

(2a) The first one has four parts: (a) the actual establishment of the similarities between the examples and their meanings, (b) rebuttal of disputational flaws, (c) explanation through matching this with the scriptures, and (d) conclusion. (2aa) The first six verses teach the actual [establishment of the similarities between the examples and their meanings]. (2ab) The rebuttal of disputational flaws has two parts: (1) *quālm* and (2) *answer*. (2ab1) The *quālm* is represented by [RGVV’s sentence] “How is the tathāgata element’s true nature . . . ?” The meaning of this is as follows: “Your example and its meaning do not match. Though it is true that space (the example) is without arising and perishing, the basic element (its meaning) entails arising and perishing—when sentient beings are born, the basic element arises and when sentient beings die, the basic element perishes.” (2ab2) The meaning of the answer that follows [RGVV’s phrase] “It is described as follows” is simply understood [on its own]. (2ac) The explanation through matching this with the scriptures [has two parts]: (1) teaching the name of the sūtra [passage] and (2) explaining the meaning of the sūtra [passage] that bears this name. (2ac1) “The Introduction to the Natural Purity [of the Mind]” refers to the antagonistic factors’ being weak. “The Introduction to the Light of dharma” refers to the remedy’s being powerful. These [two] comprise the many meanings of this sūtra [passage]. To explain the meaning of the name of this sūtra [passage], [the phrase] “Honorable friends,<sup>2169</sup> the afflictions are darkness” refers to the antagonistic factors’ being weak. “The purity [of mind] is light” refers to the remedy’s being powerful. The following six phrases [in this sūtra passage] are to be matched in the same

way. (2ac2) The explanation of the meaning of the sūtra [passage] that bears this name consists of [the remainder of the quote, beginning with] “Honorable friends, it is as follows.” This has three parts: presenting the examples, presenting the meanings, and establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings. However, there is nothing to be explained [further about these]. (2ad) The conclusion consists of [RGVV’s passage] “It has [already] been stated that . . . [resemble the element of earth.]”

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.2. The instruction on changelessness during the phase of being both impure and pure

This has two parts:

1. The presentation of [bodhisattvas] being impure and pure by way of their births and deaths appearing despite their being free from birth and death
2. The presentation of their being impure and pure in comparison with buddhas and sentient beings, respectively

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.2.1. The presentation of [bodhisattvas] being impure and pure by way of their births and deaths appearing despite their being free from birth and death

This has two parts:

1. The meaning of the root text
2. The meaning of the commentary

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.2.1.1. The meaning of the root text

This is [briefly] introduced through one verse and explained [in detail] through two.

Having realized the nature of this [basic element] just as it is,  
Free from birth, death, sickness, and aging,  
The intelligent, despite lacking the predicaments of birth and so on,  
Rely on their causes due to having given rise to compassion for  
beings. I.66

In the [brief] introduction, the first half [of the verse] represents the pure aspect and the latter half the impure aspect. In actual fact, through taking the first and the last lines as the causes of purity and impurity, respectively, [the brief introduction] is taken to have three points.

The root of the sufferings of death, sickness,  
 And aging is removed by the noble ones.  
 As for birth under the influence of karma and afflictions,  
 They lack this because they lack that. I.67

Because they see [the basic element] as it really is  
 They are beyond birth and so on, but  
 Their character of compassion displays  
 As birth, death, aging, and sickness. I.68

In the [detailed] explanation, the first verse explains the pure aspect, and the latter explains the impure aspect. In the first [verse], the first half represents the feature that is the thesis. “As for birth under the influence of karma and afflictions” is the feature that is the reason. “They” refers to the subject “the bodhisattvas on the ten bhūmis.” {484} “Lack this” refers to the thesis “lack sufferings such as aging, which are like fire.” “Because they lack<sup>2170</sup> that” refers to the reason “because they lack births under the influence of karma and afflictions, which are like firewood.”

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2.1.2. The meaning of the commentary

This has two parts:

1. Explaining the nature of being impure and pure by way of explaining merely the meaning of the root text
2. Explaining this through matching it with the scriptures

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2.1.2.1. Explaining the nature of being impure and pure by way of explaining merely the meaning of the root text

This has two parts. (1) The explanation of the impure aspect consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Bodhisattvas . . . sickness, and death.” Now, (2) as for the explanation of the pure aspect, you may wonder, “Since they display [birth and so on] in this manner, do they possess birth and so on in terms of [real] entities?” These phenomena of birth and so on do not exist in them. “Why?” [The commentary] says, “because they see the lack of birth and the lack of arising of the basic element as it really is.” You may wonder, “Why is it that they, due to realizing the basic element in this manner, lack birth and so on?” To realize the basic element in this manner is the realization of emptiness, through which the clinging to entities is put to an end. Through having put an end to that, the arising of attachment and hatred in dependence on entities is put to an end [too]. By virtue of having put an end to

that, no contaminated karma is accumulated. Through not accumulating karma and afflictions, there is no birth and so on [either] because it is the nature of phenomena that a result comes to an end once its cause has come to an end.

Now, as for [explaining this through matching it with the scriptures]:

### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.2.1.2.2. Explaining this through matching it with the scriptures

This has two parts: (1) matching the presentation of bodhisattvas on the ten bhūmis as being both pure and impure with the scriptures and (2) matching the [fact that bodhisattvas are both pure and impure] due to realizing the nature of phenomena with the scriptures. (1) The first one has two parts: (a) the actual scriptural passage and (b) presenting the explanation of this scriptural passage. (1a) The first one consists of (a) the scriptural passage on impurity and (b) the scriptural passage on purity. (1aa) The first one has three parts: (1) [presenting] the meaning, (2) presenting the example, and (3) presenting the similarity between the example and its meaning. (1aa1) Presenting the meaning consists of [RGVV's passage that starts with] "This phase of bodhisattvas is to be understood in detail according to the [*Sāgaramatipariṣṭchā*]sūtra." Since each of these eight roots of virtue [listed at the beginning of this sūtra passage] entails clinging and craving, it is from this point of view that they represent afflictions, which refer to [the elements in these eight that are] not being content, taking [birth], desiring, not being weary, making efforts, exerting themselves, not being separated, and not abandoning. The other [elements in these eight] represent virtues. Since it is within [the sphere of] these eight roots of virtue that [bodhisattvas] need to be reborn in saṃsāra, these eight are the causes for their connecting with saṃsāra. Some say, "These are [only] nominal afflictions—they are solely virtues." This is not the case because if it were like that, {485} the term "associated with" in "the afflictions that are associated with roots of virtue" would not be justified. (1aa2) Presenting the example consists of [the sūtra passage] "O Sāgaramati, suppose there were a distinguished householder's . . ." (1aa3) Establishing the similarity between the example and its meaning is represented by [the sūtra passage] "Sāgaramati, this example is given in order to make a certain meaning understood." Through these three [passages in RGVV's first quote from the *Sāgaramatipariṣṭchāsūtra*], the above explanation of the impure aspect [of the phase of bodhisattvas] is matched with the scriptures.

(1ab) Now, [RGVV's phrase] "However, these phenomena of birth and so on do not exist in them" [right before the first quote from the *Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*] is the explanation of the scriptural passage on the pure [aspect of the phase of bodhisattvas, which is represented by the sūtra passage that says], "By virtue of being skilled in means and being embraced by prajñā . . ." "Through what does one know such?" It is said that this is found in [RGVV's further] explanation that follows this sūtra passage.

(1b) The explanation of this scriptural passage [on the pure and impure aspects] has two parts. The explanation of the scriptural portion on the impure [aspect] is [RGVV's passage] "The instruction in this sūtra passage explains the phase of being . . . impure . . . because . . . their compassion as they wish." The explanation of the scriptural [portion] on the pure [aspect] is [RGVV's passage] "explains the phase of being . . . pure because they are not afflicted by this [saṃsāric existence] through the powers of their [skill in] means and prajñā."

(2) Now, the explanation of [RGVV's] phrase above "because they see the lack of birth and the lack of arising of the basic element as it really is" [right before this quote from the *Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*] through matching it with the scriptures is called "matching it with the scriptures that [state that] the presentation of the purity and impurity of those who dwell on the ten bhūmis is made due to their realizing the nature of phenomena." Such is also clearly explained by the author of the commentary through the corresponding words.

This has two parts: (a) the actual scriptural passage and (b) presenting the explanation of this scriptural passage. (2a) The first one has three parts: (a) presenting the meaning, (b) presenting the example, and (c) [presenting] the similarity between the example and its meaning. (2aa) Presenting the meaning is represented by [RGVV's passage] "Here, the manner in which bodhisattvas . . . [never cast off the armor of great compassion]." (2ab) Presenting the example is represented by [the sūtra passage] "O Sāgaramati, suppose there were . . ." (2ac) Presenting the similarity between the example and its meaning is represented by [the sūtra passage] "Likewise, Sāgaramati . . ."

(2b) Presenting the explanation of this scriptural passage has two parts. (2ba) The explanation in an abbreviated manner is represented by [RGVV's passage] "Here, 'saṃsāra' implies the three bodies of a mental nature." (2bb) The explanation in the manner of a detailed elaboration is represented by [RGVV's passage] "This is as described in the example . . ." As for "described in the example of a city,"<sup>2171</sup> one finds in the [*Ratnacūḍapari-*

*prcchāsūtra*]*sūtra*<sup>2172</sup> that [once] a great famine had occurred, during which a father and his son had nothing to eat. Having heard about the fame of a [wonderful great] city, [the father] went [in the direction of that city], carrying the son. When they came upon a great river, the father left the son behind at the hither shore of the river and crossed that river. {486} When the father had set one foot inside the threshold of the city while the other foot was [still] set [outside], he saw the excellences of this city and looked around inside it with [one] eye,<sup>2173</sup> [but] with [the other] eye he looked upon his only son because he had left that son behind on the other side of the river.<sup>2174</sup>

2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.2.2. Presentation of the phase of being impure and pure in comparison with buddhas and sentient beings, respectively  
This consists of [the ten verses beginning with] “Having realized that this true nature . . .”

Having realized that this true nature  
Is changeless, the children of the victors  
Are [still] seen as [being subject to] birth and so on  
By those blinded by ignorance—this is amazing! I.69

Those who have attained the sphere of the noble ones  
Show themselves in the sphere of naive beings.  
Therefore, the means and the compassion  
Of the friends of beings are supreme. I.70

Though being beyond all worlds,  
They do not move away from the world,  
Conducting themselves in the world for the sake of the world  
Without being tainted by worldly stains. I.71

Just as a lotus is born in the water  
But is not tainted by the water,  
So they are born in the world  
But are untainted by worldly dharmas. I.72

Their mind always [set] on accomplishing [beneficial] activity  
Is blazing like fire,  
While always being immersed in  
The absorption of the dhyāna of peace. I.73

[Because of] the power of the continuing force of previous [actions]  
 And because of being free from all conceptions,  
 They do not [need to] make any effort  
 For the sake of maturing living beings. I.74

Through teaching, the rūpakāyas,  
 [Various forms of] conduct, and [daily] behaviors,  
 Knowing who is to be guided in which way by what,  
 They [guide] those [beings] in just that way. I.75

In that way, without any effort,  
 Those with unobscured intelligence  
 Always engage in the welfare of sentient beings,  
 For beings whose [number] reaches to the limits of space. I.76

The attainment of this status  
 Of bodhisattvas is equal, for the world,  
 To tathāgatas in terms of  
 Delivering sentient beings. I.77

Though this is the case, [actually] the difference  
 Between bodhisattvas and a buddha  
 Is the difference between a particle and the earth  
 Or between [the water in] the hoofprint of an ox and the ocean. I.78

Since this is clearly explained [through] the summarized meaning and the meaning of the words [provided] by the commentary, there is nothing [further] to be explained here.

[Here,] this is to be considered. It may be said, “Isn’t there a contradiction between the explanation in this [text] that [buddhas and bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi] are equal with regard to the welfare of others<sup>2175</sup> and the instruction in the chapter on awakening in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* by way of the example of the four great rivers’ having merged or not having merged into the ocean<sup>2176</sup> that there is a great difference [between them] with regard to the welfare of others?” There is no contradiction. In terms of the [actual] entities [of buddha activity and bodhisattva activity], it is as the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* [explains]. “So what is the intention behind this [explanation here]?” Since the difference [between buddhas and bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi] with regard to the welfare of others is small



compared to the big difference with regard to their own welfare, [our text] speaks of “no difference” by having merely a small difference in mind. [This is analogous to] the manner of [speaking about] “a girl without a belly” and “a goddess without a waist.” Or, just as buddhas perform the welfare of sentient beings without effort and thoughts in a spontaneous manner, bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi also perform the welfare of sentient beings in that way. Thus, [our text] speaks of “no difference” by having in mind that the [activity of bodhisattvas] accords with [buddha activity] merely in its way of manifesting.<sup>2177</sup> Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.3. Instruction on changelessness during the phase of being completely pure (buddhas)

This has three parts:

1. Essence
2. Gist
3. Explanation by matching it with the scriptures

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.3.1. Essence

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Distinct explanation

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.3.1.1. Explanation of the [brief] introduction

[The tathāgata element’s] character does not change into anything other because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.

It is the refuge of beings because it has no end in time.

It is always nondual because it is nonconceptual.

It also has the nature of indestructibility because its nature is to be uncreated. I.79

The “it” that is pronounced at the beginning [of verse I.79] refers to the dharmakāya, which is the subject [of the reasonings in the above verses]. Similar to the eyes of a Kata bird, this [subject] applies to everything [in these verses] above and below it. “Is permanent” is the thesis.<sup>2178</sup> “Why?” Because it has the character that does not change into anything other. “And why is that?” Because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.

The same applies [for the remaining reasonings: Again,] “the dharmakāya” is the subject, and “is everlasting” is the thesis. “Why?” Because it is the refuge of all sentient beings. “Through what does one know this?” Because it has no end in time.

[Again,] “the dharmakāya” is the subject, and “is peaceful” is the thesis. “Why?” Because it is always without the duo of karma and afflictions. “Through what does one know this?” Because it is nonconceptual, that is, it lacks the conceptions of improper mental engagement, which are the cause that stirs karma and afflictions.<sup>2179</sup>

[Again,] “the dharmakāya” is the subject, and {487} “is eternal” is the thesis. “Why?” Because it has the nature of indestructibility. “Through what does one know this?” Because its nature is to be uncreated by causes and conditions. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.1.2. [Detailed explanation]

**It is not born, nor does it die.**

**It is not impaired, nor does it age**

**Because it is permanent and everlasting,**

**Because it is peaceful, and because it is eternal. I.80**

“What meaning teaches the [detailed] explanation?”<sup>2180</sup> It establishes that if something possesses the four characteristics of conditioned phenomena (such as being born), it changes, whereas the dharmakāya does not change because it lacks these four characteristics of conditioned phenomena.

As for matching the words here, that the “it” in the beginning [of these verses] refers to the dharmakāya, which is the subject [of the reasonings], was [already] taken up above and applies to all four [reasonings]. “Is not born” is the thesis. “Why?” The reason appears in the latter half [of these verses]—“because it is permanent.” “Why is it permanent?” This was already established [in I.79a] above through the two reasons “Because it has the character<sup>2181</sup> that does not change into anything other and because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.” Likewise, taking the dharmakāya as the basis in the other three [reasonings] too, the first half of this verse teaches each probandum, while the latter half establishes each reason in due order. As for each reason’s [here (such as being permanent)] being established, [the fact] that they are established through two reasons each—[which are those presented] in the [brief] introduction above—is to be understood as [explained] above.

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.3.1.3. [Distinct explanation]

It is not [even] born [in the form] of a body  
 Of a mental nature because it is permanent.  
 It does not [even] die [by way of] the death and transition  
 That are an inconceivable transformation because it is everlasting.<sup>2182</sup>  
 I.81

It is not [even] impaired by the sicknesses  
 Of subtle latent tendencies because it is peaceful.  
 It does not [even] age through uncontaminated  
 Formations because it is eternal. I.82

“What is the meaning of the distinct explanation?” The middle explanation [above] teaches in general that the dharmakāya lacks the four [characteristics] such as being born, but it does not explain in particular whether [the dharmakāya] lacks the four [characteristics] of being born and so on of ordinary beings or whether it lacks the four [characteristics] of being born and so on of bodhisattvas. Therefore, this is explained [here], which means that [the dharmakāya] lacks the four [characteristics] of being born and so on of bodhisattvas. In that regard, the structure of each probative argument [consisting of subject, thesis, and reason] shall be provided. The subjects for the first two [reasonings] appear in the text, and it is just these former two [subjects] that are [also] taken as the subjects for the latter two [reasonings].<sup>2183</sup> [Thus, “it”]—the dharmakāya—is the subject, and “is not born” is the thesis. “What kind of not being born [is this]?” The distinctive feature of the thesis is “[in the form] of a body of a mental nature.” “Why?” Because it is permanent. “Why is it permanent?” This was already established through the two reasons “Because it has the character that does not change into anything other” and “because it has the nature of being inexhaustible” [in I.79a].

In the latter three [reasonings], the three [phrases] “does not die,” “is not impaired,” and “does not age” are taken as the respective theses; the three [phrases] “because it is everlasting,” “because it is peaceful,” and “because it is eternal” are taken as the respective reasons; and the remaining [phrases] are taken as the respective distinctive features of these theses. That these three reasons themselves are established was established in the first verse [I.79] through two reasons each. In detail, this is just as above. Now [follows:]

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.3.2. Determination of the gist

Here, through two phrases, again two,  
 Two, and two, in due order, one should understand  
 The meanings of permanent and so on  
 With regard to the unconditioned expanse. I.83

{488} You may wonder, “One should understand the meanings of permanence and so on with regard to the unconditioned expanse—the dharmakāya. How or through what are these to be known?” They are to be understood [through the verse that starts with] “Here, through two phrases, again two, two, and two, in due order, one should understand . . .” The explanation of the meaning of this is as above.

This applies to all three [explanations above—the brief introduction, the detailed explanation and] the distinct explanation. If applied to the [brief] introduction, “Here, through two phrases” [means that] the dharmakāya is to be understood as permanent through two [phrases]—the one phrase “character does not change into anything other” and the one phrase “because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.” “Again two” [means that] the dharmakāya is to be understood as everlasting through two [phrases]—the one phrase “is the refuge of beings” and the one phrase “because it has no end in time.” “Two” [means that] the dharmakāya is to be understood as peaceful through two [phrases]—the one phrase “is always nondual” and the one phrase “because it is nonconceptual.” “And two” [means that] the dharmakāya is to be understood as eternal through two [phrases]—the one phrase “has the nature of indestructibility” and the one phrase “because its nature is to be uncreated.”

Now this is explained for the [detailed] explanation. The dharmakāya is to be understood [as permanent]<sup>2184</sup> through two [phrases]—the one phrase “is not born” and the one phrase “because it is permanent.”<sup>2185</sup> The same applies for the other three [reasonings] too.

Now, if this is applied to the distinct explanation, the dharmakāya is to be understood as permanent through two [phrases]—the one phrase “it is not born” and the one phrase “[in the form] of a body of a mental nature.” The same applies to the other three [reasonings] too.<sup>2186</sup> Now [follows:]

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.7.2.3.3. Explanation by matching it with the scriptures

The meaning of being permanent is its character of not changing  
into anything other

Because it has the quality of being inexhaustible.

The meaning of being everlasting is its character of being a refuge

Because it is equal to the final end. I.84

The meaning of being peaceful is its true nature of nonduality

Because it has the nature of being nonconceptual.

Being eternal has the meaning of being indestructible

Because it has the quality of being unfabricated.<sup>2187</sup> I.85

You may wonder, “Aren’t such explanations self-styled?” [In response] to that concern, the two verses [beginning with] “The meaning of being permanent is its character of not changing into anything other” provide the explanation that matches [these explanations] with [certain] scriptural passages on the tathāgata heart. These two [verses here] are said to represent the words of those scriptural passages themselves.<sup>2188</sup> The explanation of those scriptural passages through [another] scriptural passage is represented by [RGVV’s quote from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra*] which says: “Śariputra . . .”

This concludes the explanation [of the topic] of changelessness.

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8. The inseparability of the qualities

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8.1. [Brief] introduction

Since it is the dharmakāya, the Tathāgata,

The reality of the noble ones, and ultimate nirvāṇa,<sup>2189</sup>

There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood

Due to its qualities being inseparable, just like the sun and its rays. I.86

[This contains] the reason, the example, the distinctive feature of the thesis, and the actual thesis [of the reasoning]. As for matching this with the words here, the affirmative thesis is that the nirvāṇa without any

remainder of the skandhas exists in buddhahood alone. The negative thesis is that the nirvāṇa without any remainder of the skandhas does not exist in what is apart from that [buddhahood].<sup>2190</sup> “What kind of nirvāṇa is that?” It is the nirvāṇa that is endowed with four qualities. The above [two sentences] represent the actual thesis, and this [latter sentence] represents the distinctive feature of that thesis. “For what reason or argument [does] it [have these qualities]?” This is because the four [qualities in the phrase] “since it is the dharmakāya, the Tathāgata, the reality of the noble ones, and ultimate nirvāṇa” {489} are included in the tathāgata heart. “What is the example?” The example is “just like the sun and its rays.”

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8.2. [Detailed] explanation

This has two parts:

1. [Explanation of] the meaning of the first half of this verse
2. Explanation of the meaning of the latter half [of this verse]

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8.2.1. [Explanation of] the meaning of the first half of this verse

In brief, one should know the four  
 Synonyms such as the dharmakāya  
 For the uncontaminated expanse  
 Since it is classified as fourfold in meaning. I.87

[They] are the inseparability of the buddha attributes,  
 The disposition for that having been obtained just as it is,  
 Its true nature's being without falsity and without deception,  
 And its being natural primordial peace. I.88

This has two parts. The root text of the first verse and its commentary represent the establishment of the names for the tathāgata heart that are its four qualities, which are based on four different specific isolates that are the reasons for applying these terms. The root text of the second verse and its commentary represent the instruction on the essence of the reasons for applying these names.

The root text has four parts. “What is the reason for labeling the tathāgata heart as dharmakāya?” It is [the phrase] “the inseparability of the buddha attributes.” Buddhahood is the dharmakāya, and “dharma” refers to its qualities. “Inseparability” refers to the qualities of the dharmakāya and the

tathāgata heart's being inseparable. It is based on merely this reason that the tathāgata heart is labeled with the name "dharmakāya."

"What is the reason for labeling the tathāgata heart with the name 'Tathāgata'?" It is [the phrase] "the disposition for that having been obtained just as it is." "That" refers to buddhahood.<sup>2191</sup> As for "having been obtained just as it is," the buddha disposition functions as the cause for obtaining the aspect of the inconceivable lack of contamination and for obtaining inconceivable wisdom. It is based on merely this reason that the tathāgata heart is labeled with the conventional expression "Tathāgata."

"What is the reason for labeling the tathāgata heart with the name 'the ultimate reality of the noble ones'?" It is [the phrase] "its true nature's being without falsity and without deception." The seeming is false and deceptive, and what lacks these two is the ultimate. It is based on merely this reason that the tathāgata heart is labeled with the conventional expression "the ultimate reality of the noble ones."

"What is the reason for labeling the tathāgata heart with the name 'natural nirvāṇa'?" It is [the phrase] "its being natural primordial peace." "Primordial" [means] from the start. "Natural peace" [means] suffering being at peace because<sup>2192</sup> it is without arising and ceasing. It is based on [merely this] reason that the tathāgata heart is labeled with the conventional expression "nirvāṇa."

The commentary has two parts. The explanation of just the meaning of the root text accords with the very meaning of the words [explained above]. Matching this with the scriptures has two parts: the explicit scriptural passage and the indirect scriptural passages. Since the explicit scriptural passage teaches explicitly that the tathāgata heart and the dharmakāya are not different, it is called "the explicit scriptural passage," {490} which consists of [RGVV's quoting the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*] "For [the sūtras] say the following: 'Śāriputra, "tathāgata heart" is a designation for the dharmakāya.'"

From among the three indirect scriptural passages [from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*], the scriptural passage of the tathāgata heart and the Tathāgata's not being different is "Bhagavan, it is not that the tathāgata is other and . . ." You may wonder, "This sūtra passage presents itself as a scriptural passage of the Tathāgata and the dharmakāya's not being different, so how does it become a scriptural passage of the tathāgata heart and the Tathāgata's not being different?" The instruction in this sūtra [passage] that the Tathāgata and the dharmakāya are not different amounts to one's own tathāgata heart and the Tathāgata's not being different because

it is taught in the above sūtra [passage from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*] that the tathāgata heart and the dharmakāya are not different. Therefore, it is called “an indirect scriptural passage.” The same is to be understood for the two sūtra passages below. Now, the scriptural passage of the tathāgata heart and the ultimate reality of the noble ones not being different is “Bhagavan, the name ‘cessation of suffering’ . . .” The cessation of suffering and the ultimate reality<sup>2193</sup> of the noble ones are synonyms. Now, the scriptural passage of the tathāgata heart and nirvāṇa’s not being different is “Bhagavan, ‘the dhātu of nirvāṇa’ . . .”

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8.2.2. Explanation of the meaning of the latter half [of this verse]

This has four parts:

1. Explanation of the element that is the thesis (“There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood”)
2. Explanation of the element that is the distinctive feature of the thesis (“its qualities being inseparable”)
3. Explanation of the element that is the example (“just like the sun and its rays”)
4. Concluding summary of the meaning of all these

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8.2.2.1. Explanation of the element that is the thesis (“There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood”)

Being the fully perfect awakening in all aspects

And the relinquishment of [all] stains and their latent tendencies,

Buddhahood and nirvāṇa

Ultimately are not two. I.89

From the point of view of consummate wisdom, [awakening] is buddhahood. From the point of view of consummate relinquishment, it is nirvāṇa. [Thus,] it is explained differently from the point of view of these different isolates, but there is no difference in essence. This is the instruction that makes up the root text of this first verse [beginning with] “Being the fully perfect awakening in all aspects” and its commentary. Now [follows] the second point:



[2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.8.2.2.2. Explanation of the element that is the distinctive feature of the thesis (“its qualities being inseparable”)]

Liberation has the characteristic of being inseparable  
From its qualities, which consist of all aspects  
And are innumerable, inconceivable, and stainless.  
What is this liberation is the Tathāgata.<sup>2194</sup> I.90

[Suppose there were] some painters,  
[Each] an expert in another [body part],  
So that whatever part is known by one of them  
Would not be determined by any other one. I.91

Then a mighty king would hand  
Them a canvas and order,  
“All of you, on this [canvas]  
Paint my form!” I.92

Then, having heard this [order],  
They would apply themselves to the painting work.  
[But] if one or the other among these dedicated workers  
Would leave for another country, I.93

With him gone to another country,  
Due to the [painters’] being incomplete, the painting  
Would not be completed in all its parts—  
Such is the example that is given. I.94

The painters of these [body parts]  
Are said to be generosity, discipline, patience, and so on,  
While the emptiness endowed with  
All supreme aspects is the form [of the king]. I.95

You may wonder, “To what qualities does ‘the nirvāṇa with inseparable qualities’ refer?” [In response] to that, it is explained that it refers to four qualities. This [explanation] has two parts: root text and commentary.

The root text is “Liberation has the characteristic of being inseparable . . .” This refers to these four [qualities]—qualities that consist of all

aspects, innumerable qualities, inconceivable qualities, and stainless qualities. Since they are explained in detail below, they are not explained here. The commentary has four points:

1. Eliminating the flaw of these four qualities contradicting the scriptures {491}
2. Instruction on the essences of the four qualities
3. Instruction on the causes that accomplish the four qualities
4. Concluding summarizing instruction<sup>2195</sup> on śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas' lacking nirvāṇa]

(1) As for the first point, it may be said, “Maitreya, your instruction that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack nirvāṇa because they do not attain the dharmakāya and the explanations in the scriptures that these two [kinds of persons] possess nirvāṇa are contradictory.” To that, [Maitreya would answer,] “There is no contradiction. My explanation that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack nirvāṇa is the explanation that brings out the aspect of the definitive meaning, while the scriptures [that bring out] the aspect of their possessing [nirvāṇa] are of expedient meaning.” “Through what does one know that they are of expedient meaning?” It is explained that this is known through the two passages from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* [in RGVV]. [This consists of RGVV’s passage] “With regard to the parinirvāṇa of arhats and . . . ,” which consists of the actual [two] sūtra [passages] and the two explanations of these [passages].

(2) Now [follows] the explanation of the essences of the [four] qualities. Having in mind that “the qualities that consist of all aspects” in the root text are difficult [to understand], [the following] five verses explain the example of the painters. That the remaining three [qualities] are not explained [by the root text] after<sup>2196</sup> [merely being listed] in the first [verse of the] root text represents the intention of the root text. [As for explaining “the qualities that consist of all aspects,” RGVV’s phrase] “because they have accomplished the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects” refers to the prajñā of realizing emptiness that is embraced by the means that consist of the six pāramitās. You may wonder, “What is this emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects [mentioned] in the *Ratnacūḍapari-prcchāsūtra*?” It is like [that sūtra] says in detail:

It lacks incompleteness of generosity, lacks incompleteness of discipline, lacks incompleteness of patience, lacks incompleteness of vigor, lacks incompleteness of dhyāna, and lacks incompleteness of means . . .<sup>2197</sup>

Since the five verses [on the example of the painters] are easy [to understand], the commentary<sup>2198</sup> does not comment [on them].<sup>2199</sup> [However,] since the root text lacks an explanation of the latter three qualities in the first [verse of the] root text, [the commentary] provides comments on these [qualities]. Here, the explanation of innumerable qualities consists of RGVV's passage "Here, each one among these [aspects] (generosity and so on) . . ." The explanation of inconceivable qualities consists of [the sentence] "[Also,] they are inconceivable by virtue of their number and power." You may wonder, "What is the difference between these two?" The immeasurable divisions that are present within each one of the six pāramitās that exist on the buddhabhūmi represent innumerable [qualities]. These very [qualities also] represent inconceivable qualities because they cannot be conceived by the minds of śrāvakas and so on. The explanation of stainless qualities refers to [the sentence] "They are supremely pure . . ."<sup>2200</sup>

(3) Now, you may wonder, "What are the causes that accomplish these four qualities?" To explain this, {492} [RGVV says,] "Here, the true nature of nonarising is attained through having cultivated the door . . ."<sup>2201</sup> This is just a [brief] indication of the meaning of the four causes.

(4) Now, the conclusion by way of teaching that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack nirvāṇa consists of [RGVV's passage] "Since arhats and pratyekabuddhas lack . . ." The words ["these four kinds of wisdom" in this passage] refer to the four [kinds of wisdom] of the eighth [bhūmi] and so on. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.8.2.2.3. Explanation of the element that is the example ("just like the sun and its rays")

Since prajñā, wisdom, and liberation  
Are illuminating, radiating, and pure,  
And since they are not different, they resemble  
The light, the rays, and the orb of the sun. I.96

[The sun and its rays] being taken as an example in terms of their particular characteristics refers to "Since prajñā, wisdom, and liberation are illuminating, radiating, and pure." That they are taken as an example in terms of their general characteristics refers to "and since they are not different, they resemble the light, the rays, and the orb of the sun." There is nothing to be explained about the commentary [on this verse].

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.8.2.2.4. Concluding summary of the meaning of all these

Therefore, without attaining buddhahood,  
 Nirvāṇa is not attained,  
 Just as it is impossible to view the sun  
 After its light and its light rays are removed. I.97

[This summary] consists of the verse in the root text [that begins with] “Therefore, without attaining buddhahood . . .” and its commentary.

This concludes the explanation of the inseparability of the qualities.

## 2.2.2.2.1.2.3. Instruction on the meaning of the synopsis through a concluding summary

This consists of the [following] root text:

The presentation of the heart of the victors  
 Has been discussed in this way in ten aspects. I.98ab

The commentary on this consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Thus, it was in terms of . . . has been discussed through ten topics.”

## [2.2.2.2.1.3. Explanation of how it is established by way of nine examples that despite the existence of the basic element that is determined through the tenfold presentation, it is not realized]

You may wonder, “If this basic element that is determined by way of that tenfold presentation in this way exists in all sentient beings, why do they not realize it?” [In response] to that, it is taught [how] it is established by way of nine examples that [the basic element] is not realized despite its existence. This has two parts:

1. The gist
2. The summarized meaning

## 2.2.2.2.1.3.1. The gist

This is thought of as three points: (1) the reasons for enumerating nine each among the eighteen examples, which consist of the nine examples that illustrate afflicted phenomena and the nine examples that illustrate purified phenomena, (2) establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings, and (3) determining the definitiveness of these meanings.

(1) Since there are nine [kinds of] afflictions to be illustrated, the examples that illustrate them (a lotus and so on) are also certain to be nine. “What are the nine [afflictions] to be illustrated?” They are the latencies of desire, the latencies of hatred, the latencies of mental dullness, the intense outbursts of these three, the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, the afflictions to be relinquished through seeing, the afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization, the stains pertaining to the impure bhūmis, and the stains pertaining to the pure bhūmis.

As for the nine examples that illustrate purified phenomena, since there are nine [kinds of] purified phenomena to be illustrated, the examples that illustrate them (a buddha, honey, and so on) are also certain to be nine. “What are the nine purified phenomena?” In brief, they are the dharmakāya, suchness, and {493} the disposition. The dharmakāya is twofold—the stainless dharmakāya and the dharmakāya that is its natural outflow. The [latter] is twofold—the profound dharmakāya and the vast dharmakāya. The disposition is twofold in terms of its essence and its power. Its essence is twofold—the naturally abiding disposition and the unfolding disposition. Its power is threefold—the dharmakāya’s [manifesting] by virtue of the naturally abiding disposition and the sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya’s [manifesting] by virtue of the unfolding disposition.

(2) Establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings has two parts. (2a) Establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings with regard to the nine examples such as a lotus and the causes that are afflicted phenomena is explained by [verses I.137–46ab]:

Just as a lotus grown from mud  
 Delights the mind when right in front  
 But is no longer delightful later,  
 So is the delight of desire . . .

(2b) [Establishing] the similarities between the nine purified phenomena and the nine examples such as a buddha is explained following [that] below in [verses I.149–55]:

Since it is beyond the world, no example  
 For this can be observed in the world.  
 Therefore, the basic element is taught  
 To resemble the Tathāgata . . .

(3) Now, determining the definitiveness of the meanings [of the examples] has two parts: (a) determining whether the meanings [of the examples] are definitive in terms of the factors to be obscured and the factors that obscure them and (b) determining whether the meanings [of the nine afflicted phenomena] differ among each other [and whether the nine purified phenomena differ among each other].

(3a) As for understanding the first one, it may be said, “In the examples, the lotus obscures only the buddha statue, the bees obscure only the honey, [and so on], whereas the meaning is that the latencies of desire [and so on] obscure all purified phenomena. Therefore, there follows the flaw of the examples and their meanings’ not corresponding.” [In response] to that, it is said that the latencies of desire [generally] obscure all purified phenomena without any one’s being the primary one, but what they primarily obscure is only the stainless dharmakāya. The latencies of hatred primarily obscure only the profound dharmakāya. The others are to be understood in the same way. Since the reasons for being primary and not primary are [somewhat] arbitrary, one should consider the following. About this, Ngog [Lotsāwa] says that the examples and their meanings are not presented by virtue of the meaning that the factors to be obscured and the factors that obscure them are certain, such that a certain purified phenomenon to be obscured is obscured by only a certain obscuration. Rather, the examples and their meanings are presented by virtue of there being similarities between the examples and their meanings in terms of the nine afflicted phenomena to be illustrated and the nine examples that illustrate them as well as there being similarities between the examples and their meanings in terms of the nine purified phenomena to be illustrated and the nine examples that illustrate them. Therefore, there is no flaw of the examples and their meanings’ not corresponding.<sup>2202</sup> This is an explanation without wrongdoing.

(3b) As for determining whether the meanings [of the nine afflicted phenomena] differ among each other, {494} it may be asked, “Are these nine afflicted phenomena the same in essence or different?” In being the latencies of desire and so on, they are different in essence. They are also different in support—[*Uttaratantra* I.136] says:

Through these stains, naive beings,  
Arhats, learners, and the intelligent  
Are [explained] to be impure in due order  
Through four, one, two, and two, respectively.

It may be said, “But in that case, since the afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization, the stains pertaining to the pure bhūmis, and the stains pertaining to the impure bhūmis are [all] factors to be relinquished through familiarization, what difference is there between them?” From the point of view of bodhisattvas, there is no difference. [But] here, the factors to be relinquished through familiarization are those that exist in mere noble learners, thus being explained from the point of view of the factors to be relinquished that are common [to śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas]. However, the stains pertaining to the impure bhūmis and the stains pertaining to the pure bhūmis [are explained] in terms of the uncommon factors to be relinquished by bodhisattvas because the śrāvakas themselves lack these very bhūmis as factors to be obscured.

It may be asked, “Are the nine purified phenomena the same in essence or different?” There is no difference in their essence—all represent the nature of phenomena. [However,] their phases are different in that there are differences between [them in terms of the nature of phenomena] being clearly manifest or not being clearly manifest. The phase of the disposition (being impure) refers to [the nature of phenomena] not being clearly manifest. The phase of suchness (being both pure and impure) refers to its being a little bit clearly manifest. The phase of the dharmakāya’s (being completely pure) refers to its being clearly manifest in a complete manner.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2. The summarized meaning

This has two parts:

1. The meaning of the connecting [lines]
2. The actual establishment of this through the nine examples by way of explaining them through matching them with the [*Tathāgata*]-*garbhasūtra*

##### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.1. The meaning of the connecting [lines]

[Now,] its dwelling in the cocoons of the afflictions  
Should be understood through examples. I.98cd

The commentary on this consists of [RGVV’s sentence] “Now, it is in terms of [this tathāgata heart’s] being covered by the afflictions . . .”

### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2. The actual establishment of this through the nine examples

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Distinct explanation

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.1. [Brief] introduction

A buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amid bees,  
 Kernels in their husks, gold in filth,  
 A treasure in the earth, a sprout and so on [from] a small fruit,  
 A statue of the victor in a rotten garment, I.99

The lord of humans in the belly of a lowly woman,  
 And a precious image in clay—just as these exist,  
 This basic element dwells in sentient beings,  
 Obscured by the adventitious stains of the afflictions. I.100

The two verses [beginning with] “A buddha in a decaying lotus . . .” explain each example that illustrates the afflicted phenomena and each example that illustrates the purified phenomena in a combined manner.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.2. [Detailed] explanation

The stains resemble the lotus, insects, husks, filth, the earth, the fruit,  
 The rotten garment, the woman tormented by the blaze of suffering,  
 and the element of earth.

The stainless supreme basic element resembles the buddha, the  
 honey, the kernels, the gold, the treasure,  
 The nyagrodha tree, the precious statue, the supreme lord of the  
 world, and the precious image. I.101

The first half of the verse<sup>2203</sup> [that begins with] “The stains resemble the lotus, insects, husks . . .” represents the nine examples that illustrate the afflicted phenomena and the latter half the nine examples that illustrate the purified phenomena.



## 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3. Distinct explanation

[This consists of the following] fifty-three verses.<sup>2204</sup> Their [explanation] has three points:

1. Distinct explanation of the meaning of the first two verses
2. Distinct explanation of the meaning of the examples that illustrate the afflicted phenomena (the stains such as the lotus)
3. Distinct explanation of the meaning of the examples that illustrate the purified phenomena (the buddha, honey, and so on) {495}

## 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.1. Distinct explanation of the meaning of the first two verses

This has two parts:

1. Explanation by way of a detailed elaboration
2. Explanation by way of a summary

## 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.1.1. Explanation by way of a detailed elaboration

Just as a man with the stainless divine eye would see  
 A tathāgata's blazing with a thousand marks,  
 Dwelling enclosed in a lotus of ugly color,  
 And thus would extract him from the sheath of the lotus petals, I.102

Similarly, the Sugata beholds his own true nature  
 With his buddha eye even in those who dwell in the Avīci [hell]  
 And thus, as the one who is unobscured, remains until the end of time,  
 And has the character<sup>2205</sup> of compassion, liberates it from the  
 obscurations. I.103

Just as someone with the divine eye, if seeing a sugata dwelling  
 Enclosed in an ugly closed lotus, would cut apart its petals,  
 So the sage beholds beings with the perfect buddha heart obscured  
 by the sheaths of the stains  
 Such as desire and hatred, thus overcoming these obscurations out  
 of his compassion. I.104

Just as a skilled person striving for honey  
 Would see it surrounded by a swarm of insects  
 And would completely separate it  
 From the swarm<sup>2206</sup> of insects with the [proper] means, I.105

Similarly, the great seer beholds with his omniscient eye  
 This disposition, the basic element, that is like honey  
 And thus completely removes  
 Its obscurations that are like bees. I.106

Just as a person striving for the honey that is obscured by billions  
 of insects  
 Would remove these bees and use that honey as wished,  
 So the uncontaminated wisdom in living beings is like honey,  
 The afflictions are like bees, and the victor who is skilled in  
 overcoming them resembles that person. I.107

Just as the kernel in grains possessing its husks  
 [Can]not be enjoyed by people,  
 [But] those striving for food and so on  
 Extract it from its husks, I.108

Similarly, the victor that exists in sentient beings  
 And is mixed with the stains of the afflictions  
 Does not perform the activity of a victor in the three existences  
 For as long as he is not liberated from being mixed with the stains  
 of the afflictions. I.109

Just as the kernels in grains such as rice, buckwheat, and barley, not  
 having emerged from their husks,  
 Still awned, and not prepared well, will not serve as delicious food  
 to be enjoyed by people,  
 So the mighty lord of dharma in sentient beings, whose body is not  
 released from the sheaths<sup>2207</sup> of the afflictions,  
 Will not grant the pleasant flavor of the dharma to beings pained by  
 the hunger<sup>2208</sup> of the afflictions. I.110

Just as a traveling person's [piece of] gold,  
 Would fall into a place full of rotten refuse  
 And yet, being of indestructible nature, would remain there  
 Just as it is for many hundreds of years, I.111

[When] a deity with the pure divine eye  
 Would see it there and tell a person:

“The gold that exists here, this highest precious substance,  
You should purify it and make use of this precious substance,” I.112

Similarly, the sage beholds the qualities of sentient beings,  
Sunken into the afflictions that are like excrement,  
And thus showers down the rain of the genuine dharma onto all beings  
In order to purify them of the afflictions’ mire. I.113

Just as a deity seeing a [piece of] gold fallen into a place<sup>2209</sup> full of  
rotten refuse  
Would eagerly show its supreme beauty to people in order to purify it,  
So the victor, beholding a precious perfect buddha fallen into the  
great excrement of the afflictions  
In sentient beings, teaches the dharma to living beings for the sake  
of purifying that [buddha]. I.114

Just as there would exist an inexhaustible treasure  
Beneath the ground within the house of a poor person,  
But that person would not know about this [treasure],  
Nor would the treasure say to that [person], “I am here!,” I.115

Similarly, with the treasure of jewels lodged within the mind,  
Whose true nature is stainless and without anything to be added or  
removed,  
Not being realized, all these beings continuously experience  
The suffering of being destitute in many ways. I.116

Just as an inexhaustible treasure of jewels lodged inside the house  
of a pauper would not say  
To this person, “I, the jewel treasure, am [here]!,” nor would this  
person know about it,  
So the treasure of the dharma is lodged in the house of the mind  
and sentient beings resemble the pauper.  
It is in order to enable them to attain this [treasure] that the seer  
takes birth in the world. I.117

Just as a sprout [from] a seed that exists in tree fruits  
Such as mango has the indestructible nature [of growing into a tree]

And, due to being endowed with [conditions] such as plowed earth  
and water,  
Gradually becomes established as the entity of the king of trees, I.118

Similarly, the virtuous dharmadhātu lodged within the sheath of the  
peel  
Of the fruit of ignorance and so on of sentient beings,  
In dependence on such and such virtues,  
Gradually becomes the entity of the king of sages. I.119

Just as, through the conditions of water, sunlight, wind, earth, time,  
and space,  
A tree grows forth from within the sheath of palm and mango fruits,  
So the sprout [from] the seed of the perfect buddha lodged inside  
the peel of the fruit of sentient beings' afflictions  
Will increase the seeing<sup>2210</sup> of the dharma through such and such  
conditions of virtue. I.120

Just as an image of the victor made of precious substance  
And wrapped in a rotten foul-smelling garment  
Would be sitting on the road, and a deity, upon seeing it, would  
speak about  
This matter of [a statue's] sitting on the road to those [traveling by]  
in order to set it free, I.121

Similarly, the one with unimpeded vision<sup>2211</sup> sees the entity  
Of a sugata wrapped in various kinds of afflictions  
Even in animals and thus demonstrates  
The means for the sake of liberating it. I.122

Just as a statue of the Tathāgata whose nature is a precious substance,  
wrapped in a rotten foul-smelling garment,  
And sitting on the road would be seen by someone with the divine  
eye and shown to people in order to set it free,  
So the basic element wrapped in the rotten garment of the afflictions  
and abiding on the road of saṃsāra  
Is seen by the victor even in animals, upon which he teaches the  
dharma for the sake of liberating it. I.123

Just as some poor ugly woman without a protector,  
 Dwelling in a shelter for those without protection  
 And bearing the glory of a king in her womb,  
 Would not to know about the lord of humans in her own belly, I.124

Being born in [saṃsāric] existence is like a house for those without  
 protection,  
 Impure sentient beings resemble the pregnant woman,  
 The stainless basic element in them is similar to what dwells in her  
 womb,  
 And due to its existence, [these beings] do have a protector. I.125

Just as this woman whose body is dressed in a stained garment and  
 who has an unsightly body  
 Would experience the greatest suffering in a house for those without  
 protection despite the lord of the earth's residing in her womb,  
 So beings dwell in the foundation of suffering due to their minds'  
 not being at peace through the power of the afflictions  
 And deem themselves to be without a protector despite the existence  
 of the protector that dwells right within themselves. I.126

Just as an image filled with molten gold inside  
 Having settled, which has the nature of clay on the outside,  
 Would be seen by those who know about this [gold inside],  
 Who would then remove the outer covering in order to purify the  
 inner gold, I.127

Similarly, seeing natural luminosity  
 And that the stains<sup>2212</sup> are adventitious,  
 Highest awakening purifies beings,  
 Who are like a jewel mine, from the obscurations. I.128

Just as an image made of stainless shining gold lodged in clay  
 Would settle and someone skilled in the nature of such [an image],  
 knowing about it, would remove the clay,  
 So the omniscient one knows the settled mind, which resembles  
 pure gold,  
 And removes its obscurations by way of applying the strokes that  
 are the manner of teaching the dharma. I.129

These twenty-eight verses represent the nine meanings [of the nine examples]. Among these nine meanings, the meaning of gold and refuse is taught [briefly] by three verses and explained [in detail] by one. The remaining eight are taught [briefly] by two verses each and explained [in detail] by one each.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.1.2. Explanation by way of a summary

This is [explained] by three verses:

Within a lotus, insects that are bees,  
 Husks, excrement, the earth,  
 The peel of a fruit, a rotten garment,  
 The womb of a woman, and a covering of clay, I.130

Like a buddha, honey, and a kernel,  
 Like gold, like a treasure, like a tree,  
 Like a precious statue and a cakravartin,  
 And like a golden image, I.131

The beginningless stainlessness of the nature  
 Of the mind within the beginningless cocoons  
 Of the afflictions that are not connected to  
 The basic element of sentient beings is declared to be. I.132

The first verse summarizes the examples that illustrate the afflicted phenomena. The second verse<sup>2213</sup> summarizes the examples that illustrate the purified phenomena. If one wonders in which manner of illustration the nine examples that illustrate the afflicted phenomena illustrate the nine afflicted phenomena to be illustrated by the first half of the third verse, they are illustrated as being adventitious.<sup>2214</sup> If one wonders in which manner of illustration the nine examples that illustrate the purified phenomena illustrate the nine purified phenomena to be illustrated by the latter half of the third verse, they are taught to be illustrated as having different phases but lack a different essence.<sup>2215</sup> In the brief introduction, each example that illustrates the afflicted phenomena and each example that illustrates the purified phenomena are taught in combination. Therefore,<sup>2216</sup> they are explicated in combination in their distinct explanation too. Now [follows:]

### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.2. Distinct explanation of the meaning of the examples that illustrate the afflicted phenomena (the stains such as the lotus)

This has four parts:

1. The essences of the nine afflictions
2. The essences of the remedies that relinquish them
3. Instruction on which persons possess these nine
4. Establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.2.1. The essences of the nine afflictions

Desire, hatred, dullness,  
 Their intense outbursts, latent tendencies,  
 The stains to be relinquished through the paths of seeing and  
 familiarization  
 As well as those pertaining to the impure and the pure bhūmis I.133

Are taught by the nine kinds of examples  
 Of the sheath of a lotus and so on,  
 But the cocoons of the proximate afflictions  
 In all their variety are infinite millions. I.134

These nine afflictions such as attachment,  
 In brief and in due order,  
 Are taught by the nine examples  
 Of the sheath of a lotus and so on. I.135

This [explanation of the essences of the nine afflictions] consists of [RGVV's passage] "Now, what is the afflictiveness of the mind with regard to which the nine examples such as the sheath of a lotus were taught? . . ." In response to the questions "What are the essences of these stains? How many divisions are there?," the root text and the commentary give the following answers. First, the essences of the nine [stains] are the latencies of desire and so on. If divided, they are "these nine afflictions . . ." You may wonder, "Why are the three poisons counted as three from [the perspective of] latent conceptions and counted as one from [the perspective of] manifest conceptions?" The latencies give rise to later results of a distinct similar type each—from the latencies of desire, manifest desire is produced, and the [other] two [types of latencies] are like that too. [On the other hand,]

all three manifest [poisons] engage in a single flawed [form of] physical and verbal conduct, such as killing. These are the words of master [Marpa]. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.2.2. The instruction on the essences of the remedies that relinquish these nine afflictions

This [instruction] consists of [RGVV's passage] "Here, the afflictions in the mind streams of those free from mundane desire . . ." It is by virtue of [this passage] primarily teaching the two [factors] of having control over the afflictions and {496} supramundane wisdom and so on that Parahita speaks [of this passage as] "[the instruction on] the remedies." [On the other hand,] this master [Marpa] said: [Some] state that since the remedies—the nine purified phenomena—are taught below, [the passage] preceding this one provides the divisions of the nine afflictions, while this [passage] that starts with the [phrase "Here, the afflictions"] is to be taken as [describing] the individual characteristics [of the nine afflictions]. But this is not the case because factors to be relinquished and their remedies are mutually exclusive in terms of not [being able to] coexist, [whereas] all nine purified phenomena below are not mutually exclusive with the afflictions in terms of not [being able to] coexist. If they were [mutually exclusive in terms of not being able to coexist], it would be difficult [even] for Śakra to prevent the flaw of its following that sentient beings have no afflictions because they have suchness or the disposition.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.2.3. Instruction on which persons possess these nine afflictions

Through these stains, naive beings,  
Arhats, learners, and the intelligent  
Are [explained] to be impure in due order  
Through four, one, two, and two, respectively. I.136

This [instruction] consists of the root text [that starts with] "Through these stains, naive beings" and its commentary.

#### 2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.2.4. Establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings

The words of the question consist of [RGVV's phrase] "How should the resemblances of these nine afflictions such as desire with the sheath of a



lotus and so on be understood?” The answer consists of the detailed explanation and the concluding summary. The detailed explanation consists of nine points, that is, the similarities between the factors that obscure in the examples (such as a lotus) and the factors that obscure in terms of the meaning (such as the latencies of desire). These are explained in each [of the following] verses:

Just as a lotus grown from mud  
Delights the mind when right in front  
But is no longer delightful later,  
So is the delight of desire. I.137

Just as the insects that are bees  
Sting upon being very agitated,  
So the arising of our hatred  
Produces suffering in our heart. I.138

Just as the kernels of rice and so on  
Are obscured by outer husks,  
So the seeing of the heart of the matter  
Is obscured by the eggshell of ignorance. I.139

Just as excrement is disagreeable,  
So is [desire] to those free from attachment.  
Since they are the causes for relying on desire  
The outbursts [of the afflictions] are like excrement. I.140

Just as a treasure is not obtained by someone ignorant [about it]  
Due to [its] riches' being obscured,  
So the self-arisen in people is obscured  
By the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. I.141

Just as the husks of a seed are cut apart  
By the gradual growth of the germ and so on,  
So the factors to be relinquished through seeing  
Are removed by seeing true reality. I.142

The factors to be relinquished through the wisdom of the path of  
familiarization,

Whose core—[views about] a real personality—has been overcome  
 Due to [its] being connected to the noble path [of seeing],  
 Are taught to resemble a rotten garment. I.143

The stains pertaining to the seven bhūmis  
 Resemble the stains of the enclosure of a womb.  
 Similar to [an embryo's] being freed from the enclosure of the womb,  
 Nonconceptual wisdom is like maturation. I.144

The stains associated with the three [pure] bhūmis  
 Should be known to resemble being smeared with clay.  
 They are to be overcome by the vajra-like  
 Samādhi of great beings. I.145

The concluding summary consists of [the two lines]:

Thus, the nine stains such as attachment  
 Resemble a lotus and so on. I.146ab

In the first half<sup>2217</sup> of this verse [I.146ab] that teaches this, [only] one portion of the nine examples—that which illustrates the afflicted phenomena—is taught. Therefore, in the distinct explanation of these [nine] too, only the afflicted phenomena are taught. Their remedies are provided by the author of the commentary as a service [to the reader]. Now [follows:]

2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.3.3. Distinct explanation of the meaning of the examples that illustrate the purified phenomena (the buddha, honey, and so on)  
 This is the explanation of the answer to the question [that is the continuation of the question in RGVV] above “and how should the similarity of the tathāgata element with the image of a buddha and so on be comprehended?”

This has two parts. The brief introduction to the examples for the purified phenomena and their meanings consists of the one and a half verses of the root text [that begin with] “Due to consisting of three natures, the basic element” and their commentary.

Due to consisting of three natures, the basic element  
 Is similar to a buddha and so on. I.146cd

Its nature is the dharmakāya,  
Suchness, and also the disposition,  
Which are to be understood through  
Three examples, one, and five, respectively. I.147

The detailed explanation has three parts:

1. The detailed explanation of the dharmakāya
2. The detailed explanation of suchness
3. The detailed explanation of the disposition

The detailed explanation of the dharmakāya has two parts:

- a. The essence of the dharmakāya
- b. The similarities between the examples and their meanings

(1a) The essence of the dharmakāya

The dharmakāya is to be known as twofold—  
The utterly stainless dharmadhātu  
And its natural outflow (teaching  
The principles of profundity and diversity). I.148

This [essence of the dharmakāya] consists of [RGVV's passage] "Here, what is the dharmakāya? . . ." The stainless dharmakāya is the actual dharmakāya—suchness endowed with twofold purity. The dharmakāya that is its natural outflow consists of the two rūpakāyas. {497} You may wonder, "Why is it called 'its natural outflow'?" The two rūpakāyas explain the dharma of the mahāyāna, and the dharmakāya will be attained through studying, reflecting, and meditating on this [dharma]. Since this serves as the cause that is the concordant cause of the dharmakāya, it is called the "concordant cause." Such is the intention of the commentary because it explains that it is "the cause for attaining this [dharmakāya]." From a certain [other] perspective, by virtue of a buddha himself attaining the dharmakāya, it happens that [this dharmakāya] appears as the two rūpakāyas for his retinues. Therefore, since [these rūpakāyas] represent the result that is concordant with the cause that is the dharmakāya, there is no flaw if one says that [the dharmakāya] itself is the kāya that is a concordant cause.<sup>2218</sup> "What subject matters do the<sup>2219</sup> [rūpakāyas] teach?" In terms of ultimate reality, "profundity" refers to their teaching profound emptiness to bodhisattvas. Ultimately, this represents the sambhogakāya. In terms of the

subject matter that is seeming reality, “teaching the principle of diversity” refers to explaining various yānas for those with the three dispositions. Ultimately, this represents the nirmāṇakāya.

(1b) Establishing the similarities between the examples and their meanings

Since it is beyond the world, no example  
For this can be observed in the world.  
Therefore, the basic element is taught  
To resemble the Tathāgata. I.149

The teaching of the principle of subtle profundity  
Is like the single taste of honey.  
The teaching of the principle of diverse aspects  
Should be understood to resemble a kernel in its various husks. I.150

This consists of the two verses of the root text [that begin with] “Since it is beyond the world, no example” and their commentary. They [further] explain [line I.28a] “Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates” [that was already commented on] in the context of commenting on the intention of the scriptures about the basic element.

(2) The detailed explanation of suchness

Because of being changeless by nature,  
Excellent,<sup>2220</sup> and pure,  
This suchness is described  
As resembling a piece of gold. I.151

This consists of the one verse of the root text [that begins with] “Because of being changeless by nature” and its commentary. Gold has three attributes—its color’s being changeless, [being suitable to] be made into ornaments, and being pure by nature. Accordingly and in due order, these are matched with the three meanings [here]. This [further] explains [line I.28b] “Since suchness is undifferentiable . . .” [that was already commented on] in the context of commenting on the intention of the scriptures about the basic element.

(3) The detailed explanation of the disposition

In terms of the meaning of the root text, the first verse explains the essence of the disposition.

The disposition is to be known as twofold,  
 Being like a treasure and a fruit tree—  
 The naturally abiding one without beginning  
 And the supreme accomplished one. I.152

The three following verses explain the power of the disposition.

It is held that the three buddhakāyas  
 Are obtained from these two dispositions—  
 The first kāya, by virtue of the first one,  
 And the latter two, by virtue of the second one. I.153

The beauty of the svābhāvikakāya  
 Should be known to be like a precious statue  
 Because it is unproduced by nature  
 And is a treasure of precious qualities. I.154

Since it possesses the kingdom of the great dharma,  
 The sambhoga[kāya] is like a cakravartin.  
 Because it has the nature of a reflection,  
 The nirmāṇa[kāya] is like a golden image. I.155

Now, as for the similarities between [the disposition and] the five examples, just as a treasure exists, once the world that is the container has formed, and is not created by humans, the naturally abiding disposition exists since [time] without beginning and is not created by the efforts of people. Just as a tree grows through water, manure, and so on, the unfolding disposition represents the arising of proper mental engagement such as studying. Just as a precious statue is not produced now and all kinds of needed and desired things arise if it is supplicated, the dharmakāya too is unproduced by causes and conditions and is a treasure of qualities such as the powers arising. Just as a prince enjoys the sevenfold jewels [of royalty],<sup>2221</sup> the sambhogakāya enjoys the mahāyāna dharma like a kingdom. {498} Just as a statue that is a golden image is not an actual [body] but a reflection of a body, the nirmāṇakāya too arises as a reflection in clear samādhi.

The explanation [of this] by the commentary through matching it with the scriptures consists of the scriptural passage from the *Abhidharma-sūtra*. The explanation of this [scriptural passage] through the sūtras consists of [RGVV's following four quotes from] the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*. It may

be said, “In the abhidharma treatises, this verse from the *Abhidharmasūtra* appears as a scriptural passage to establish the ālaya,<sup>2222</sup> but here it appears as a scriptural passage to establish the disposition. So are the ālaya and the disposition the same?” Guru Parahita asserts:

They are the same—the naturally abiding ālaya and the naturally abiding disposition are the same, and the adventitious ālaya and the unfolding disposition are the same.

Some say, “They are not asserted as the same because the ālaya is the basis of contaminated phenomena, whereas the disposition is the basis of the uncontaminated seeds.” Such is not the case—if [the ālaya] did not function as the basis of uncontaminated phenomena, it would not be the ālaya<sup>2223</sup> because it would function [only] as the basis of one part [of all phenomena]. “But if the ālaya functions as the basis of uncontaminated<sup>2224</sup> or purified phenomena too, this contradicts the following explanation in the *Mahāyānasamgraha*, the [*Pañcaskandhaprakaraṇa*]vaibhāṣya, and the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*: “Why is it called ‘ālaya[-consciousness]’?”<sup>2225</sup> It is called “ālaya[-consciousness]” because all afflicted phenomena that entail arising adhere to it as being its results and it adheres to them as being their cause.”<sup>2226</sup> The author<sup>2227</sup> of the [*Vivṛta*]gūḍhārtha[piṇḍavyākhyā] says that this is without flaw: the uncontaminated seeds exist in the ālaya, but they do not exist substantially—they are not able to directly produce manifest uncontaminated results. They are not the primary [seeds in the ālaya], that is, they represent a minority [in it]. Therefore, [the *Mahāyānasamgraha*] does not explain that [the ālaya] functions as the basis of purified phenomena. [By contrast,] the contaminated seeds [in the ālaya] do exist substantially—they are able to produce manifest contaminated results. They are the primary [seeds in the ālaya], that is, they represent its majority. Therefore, [the *Mahāyānasamgraha*] explains [the ālaya] as the ālaya because it functions as the basis of afflicted phenomena.<sup>2228</sup> “But in that case, it is contradictory that the seeds of both afflicted phenomena and purified phenomena dwell in the single ālaya.” There is no contradiction—the author of the [*Vivṛta*]gūḍhārtha[piṇḍavyākhyā] says that this is like water and milk abiding together in a single metal bowl as their basis.<sup>2229</sup> “But with the seeds of afflicted phenomena and purified phenomena abiding equally in the ālaya, it is contradictory that the seeds of afflicted phenomena decrease and the seeds of purified phenomena increase through cultivating the remedy that is the path.” There is no contradiction in this—the author of the [*Vivṛta*]-

*gūḍhārtha[piṇḍavyākhyā]* says that this is like geese who have a beak [able to extract] the essence separating water from milk with their beak [able to extract] the essence.<sup>2230</sup> Therefore, the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* explains that the virtues conducive to liberation {499} overcome the power [of the arising] of saṃsāra while the virtues conducive to penetration give rise to the power [of the arising] of uncontaminated phenomena.<sup>2231</sup>

“Venerable [Maitreya] asserts that the essence of the disposition is the nature of phenomena. If the nature of phenomena is what purifies the obscurations through [someone’s] focusing on it, how could it be justified that it functions as the basis<sup>2232</sup> of afflicted phenomena?” This is without flaw—until one focuses on the naturally abiding ālaya through the remedy that is the path, the seeds of afflicted phenomena exist [in it] in the manner of adventitious stains. Once one focuses on it through the remedy that is the path, these stains are purified. Therefore, in the manner of wisdom’s being uninterrupted in the uncontaminated seeds, there is no interruption [in them].<sup>2233</sup> “Well, the disposition is the nature of phenomena, but is there<sup>2234</sup> an explanation of it as the uncontaminated seeds?” There is [such an explanation]—in the above context of the basic element’s being presented as a substantial cause, [RGVV] first explains that it “is the seed of the supramundane attributes.”<sup>2235</sup> Thus, since the disposition and the ālaya are the same, this commentary [RGVV] discusses this in detail. The seven phrases<sup>2236</sup> from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* mentioned [above] explain that if [the disposition] were momentary and did not remain, weariness of saṃsāra and wishing for nirvāṇa and so on would not arise. Therefore, it teaches that [weariness and so on] arise in the ālaya. This shall suffice as an analysis here.

[All this further] explains [line I.28c] “And since the disposition exists . . .” [that was already commented on] in the context of commenting on the intention of the scriptures about the basic element. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.1.4. Explanation of the means to ascertain the basic element

The ultimate of the self-arisen ones  
 Is to be realized through confidence alone.  
 Those without eyes do not see  
 The disk of the sun with its blazing light. I.156

There is this question, “Buddhas and bodhisattvas realize that this kind of basic element exists in all [beings, but] through which means should

śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings ascertain that it exists<sup>2237</sup> [in all beings]?” [In response] to that, in order to teach that this is to be ascertained based on the scriptures that teach the nature of phenomena, [RGVV] says, “Now, [the fact that] the tathāgata heart, which is as vast as the dharmakāya . . .” You may wonder, “What are the scriptures that teach the nature of phenomena like?” [RGVV states]: “As [the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*] says: ‘Son of noble family, this is the true nature of phenomena. . . .’” The meaning of the remainder [of RGVV’s comments] is simply understood [on its own].

#### 2.2.2.2.1.5. The essence or defining characteristics of the basic element’s being free from the pair of superimposition and denial

There is nothing to be removed in this  
And not the slightest to be added.  
Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
If actual reality is seen, one is liberated. I.157

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable. I.158

You may wonder, “Who is it that superimposes [something] onto the basic element or denies [something about it]?” It is the śrāvakas who superimpose by saying, “The afflictions exist in the dharmadhātu since the beginning” and deny by saying, “The qualities of the dharmakāya do not exist from the beginning [but] arise later.”

You may wonder, “How do these two verses teach that [the basic element] is free from the pair of superimposition and denial?” This [is explained through] the subject, the thesis, and the reason [of two reasonings], as well as the elimination of a disputational flaw. As for “in this,” the subject is “in this basic element that exists at all times, exists in all sentient beings (the objects), {500} and exists in a manner that is without difference.” The thesis is “there is nothing to be removed.” “Why?” The reason is “because the basic element is empty of what is adventitious, which has the characteristic of being separable.” [As for the second reasoning,] the subject applies again in the same way, and the thesis is “there is not the slightest to be added.”<sup>2238</sup> “Why?” The reason is “[because] it is not empty of the



unsurpassable attributes, which have the characteristic of being inseparable.” It may be asked, “In that case, how is it posited that the fruition of liberation is attained through relinquishing the afflictions and attaining the qualities of the dharmakāya? If there are no afflictions to be relinquished and no qualities of the dharmakāya to be attained at present, it follows that there is no fruition of liberation [later either].” There is no such flaw—this disputational flaw is eliminated by [the line] “Actual reality is viewed as it really is—if actual reality is seen, one is liberated.”

The commentary has three points. (1) The instruction on the defining characteristics or the essence of the basic element that is free from the two extremes consists of [RGVV’s passage] “What is taught by this? . . . free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.”

(2) The second point is to establish that this basic element is not an object of the thinking of the four [kinds of] persons, which is [first] established through reasoning. (2a) As for establishing it through reasoning, it is [first] established that [the basic element] is not an object of persons whose minds are distracted from emptiness, which consists of [RGVV’s] passage “Here, those whose minds are distracted from and stray outside of . . .” [The phrase] “those whose minds are distracted outside” teaches that [the basic element] is not an object of those persons who have views about emptiness and are full of pride [about that]. [The phrase] “those who stray” teaches that [the basic element] is not an object of the Sautrāntikas, who assert that the five appropriating skandhas exist from the beginning and become totally nonexistent later, thus denying [something about] the fruition. [The phrase] “those who do not cultivate it in samādhi” teaches that it is not an object of the Mere Mentalists who assert a self-awareness empty of apprehender and apprehended as the ultimate and contrasts it to “the wisdom of ultimate emptiness” below. The summary of these three [persons] consists of [the phrase] “those who are not one-pointed [with regard to it].” The instruction that [the basic element] is not an object of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings consists of [the sentence] “Without being introduced to the wisdom of ultimate emptiness . . .”

(2b) Establishing [that the basic element is not an object of the thinking of four kinds of persons] through scripture consists of [the passage] “With this in mind, it is said . . .” Here, it is said that [this passage from] the *[Śrīmālādevī]sūtra* explicitly teaches that [the basic element] is not an object of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, with [the word] “any” [in it implicitly] teaching that it is not an object of ordinary beings and those

[bodhisattvas] whose minds are distracted from emptiness [either] because this appears in [RGVV's] explanation of this sūtra [passage].

(3) The third point is the explanation of the instruction that the dharma-kāya is [only] a bit of an object for bodhisattvas dwelling on the ten bhūmis, which is connected [to the previous passage] as follows. {501} You may wonder, “If this basic element that possesses such defining characteristics is not an object of these four [kinds of] persons, the object of which persons is it?” [In response] to that, in order to teach that bodhisattvas on the ten bhūmis do not<sup>2239</sup> see it in a complete manner, while buddhas see it in a pure manner, [RGVV says,] “Here, to have realized the introduction to the wisdom . . .”

#### 2.2.2.2.1.6. The purpose of positing the basic element

This has [two] parts:

[2.2.2.2.6.1. Brief introduction

2.2.2.2.6.2. Detailed explanation]

##### 2.2.2.2.1.6.1. Brief introduction

Having said here and there that just like clouds, dreams, and illusions,  
All knowable objects are empty in every respect,  
Why then did the victors say here  
That the buddha heart exists in sentient beings? I.159<sup>2240</sup>

They taught this so that those in whom they exist  
May relinquish the five flaws of faintheartedness,  
Contempt for inferior sentient beings, clinging to what is unreal,  
Deprecating the real dharma, and excessive attachment to oneself.  
I.160

This is simply understood [on its own].

##### 2.2.2.2.1.6.2. Detailed explanation

This has three parts:

1. The essence of the purpose
2. Instruction on this purpose by way of the positive concomitance
3. Establishing it by way of the negative concomitance

## 2.2.2.2.1.6.2.1. The essence of the purpose

It has been stated that the true end is void  
 Of conditioned phenomena in all aspects,  
 With the entities of afflictions, karma,  
 And [their] maturations resembling clouds and so on. I.161

The afflictions are referred to as resembling clouds,  
 Karma is like the experiences in a dream,  
 And the skandhas—the maturations of afflictions and karma—  
 Are like the magical manifestations in an illusion. I.162

It was presented in this way before,  
 But later in this ultimate continuum here  
 It is taught that the basic element exists  
 In order to relinquish the five flaws. I.163

The explanation of the meaning of this question [in I.159] consists of “It has been stated . . . But later in this ultimate continuum here.” “The true end” refers to the name of [certain] sūtras, that is, [that the contents of I.161–62 are taught] in the sūtras that teach emptiness. The meaning of the [actual] answer [to I.159] consists of the two lines of verse that follow [line I.163b].<sup>2241</sup> Now [follows:]

## 2.2.2.2.1.6.2.2. Explanation of the positive concomitance

You may wonder, “If the basic element is not taught, in what manner do [beings] entertain the five flaws?” The one verse [beginning with] “Thus, not having heard<sup>2242</sup> about this” briefly explains the first flaw of being fainthearted.

Thus, not having heard about this,  
 Due to the flaw of self-contempt,  
 In some who are fainthearted,  
 Bodhicitta will not arise. I.164

The following verse briefly explains the second flaw of having contempt for inferior sentient beings.

When some, by virtue of having given rise to bodhicitta,  
 Become proud, [thinking,] “I am superior,”  
 They entertain the notion of inferiority  
 About those in whom bodhicitta has not arisen. I.165

The next three lines of verse briefly explain the third flaw of clinging to what is unreal, which refers to not realizing that the adventitious afflictions are [indeed] adventitious.

In those who think like that,  
 Perfect wisdom does not arise.  
 Therefore, they cling to what is unreal I.166ac

The following one line of verse briefly explains the fourth flaw of denying the real attributes [of the basic element], which refers to not realizing that the qualities of the dharmakāya exist primordially.

And do not realize true reality. I.166d

Two lines [each] of the next verse teach the justifications for the first two and the latter two flaws.

The flaws of sentient beings are unreal  
 Because they are fabricated and adventitious.  
 What is real are the qualities, whose nature is pure  
 [Due to] the identitylessness of these flaws. I.167

“How do they teach that? [How] does one see the justification for the afflictions’ being adventitious?”<sup>2243</sup> The flaws of sentient beings are unreal because they are fabricated and adventitious. “[How] does one see the justification for the qualities of the dharmakāya’s existing primordially?” What is real are the qualities, whose nature is pure [due to] the identitylessness of these flaws.<sup>2244</sup>

The following one verse briefly explains the fifth flaw, which is “the flaw of excessive attachment<sup>2245</sup> to oneself.”

Those with minds of clinging to unreal flaws  
 And deprecating the real qualities

Will not attain the love of seeing  
 Themselves and sentient beings as equal.<sup>2246</sup> I.168

Now [follows:]

2.2.2.2.1.6.2.3. Explanation of establishing this by way of the negative concomitance

This consists of the next two verses:

Due to having heard that in this way,  
 Ardor, respect [for all] as for the teacher,  
 Prajñā, wisdom, and great love arise.  
 Because these five qualities arise, I.169

They lack wrongdoing, regard [all] as equal,  
 Are free from flaws, possess the qualities,  
 And love themselves and sentient beings equally,  
 Thus attaining buddhahood swiftly. I.170

“You may wonder, “In which manner are the five flaws relinquished through teaching the basic element?” Due to having heard that in this way, one becomes enthusiastic, thinking, “The bhūmis and buddhahood will indeed be attained.” Based on that, [this phrase] is matched with [the phrase] “they lack the wrongdoing of being fainthearted” below. Also, through having heard that, one has respect for all sentient beings {502} as for the teacher. Based on that, [this phrase] is matched with [the phrase] “regard sentient beings and buddhas as equal” below. Again, through having heard that, prajñā arises. Based on that, this [phrase] is matched with [the phrase] “are free from flaws” below—one realizes<sup>2247</sup> that the afflictions are primordially nonexistent, that is, adventitious. Again, this arises through the attainment of wisdom. Based on that, [this phrase] is matched with [the phrase] “possess the qualities” below—one realizes that the qualities of the dharmakāya exist primordially. Again, through having heard, “Sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart,” one trains in the dharma with great love. Therefore, based on that, [this phrase] is matched with [the phrase] “love themselves and sentient beings equally, thus attaining buddhahood swiftly” below.<sup>2248</sup>

This completes the explanation of the basic element.

*Explanation of the Section on Awakening*

## 2.2.2.2.2. The chapter on awakening

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction to its characteristics by way of an eightfold presentation
2. Detailed explanation

## 2.2.2.2.2.1. Brief introduction to its characteristics by way of an eightfold presentation

[Buddhahood] is purity, attainment, freedom,  
 One's own welfare and that of others,<sup>2249</sup> the foundation of this,  
 And profundity, vastness, and magnanimity  
 For as long as time lasts and in accordance [with beings]. II.1

Through nature, cause, fruition,  
 Function, endowment, manifestation,  
 And its permanence and inconceivability,  
 The buddhabhūmi is determined. II.2

This is easy to understand.

## 2.2.2.2.2.2. Detailed explanation

## [2.2.2.2.2.2.1. Nature and cause]

The commentary treats the nature and the cause [of awakening] under the two [headings] of a [brief] introduction and a [detailed] explanation. The guru treats them under the three [headings] of a [brief] introduction, a [detailed] explanation, and a distinct explanation.

## 2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1. Brief introduction

Spoken of as luminous by nature [but] having been obscured by the  
 thick cloud banks  
 Of adventitious afflictive and cognitive [obscurations], just as the  
 sun and the sky,

**Buddhahood is endowed with all the stainless buddha qualities and is permanent, everlasting, and eternal.**

**It is attained based on the two wisdoms that are nonconceptual about [all] phenomena and discriminate them. II.3**

This has four parts: (1) relinquishment, (2) wisdom, (3) the qualities that are based on these two, and (4) the cause. (1)–(2) “Spoken of as luminous by nature” refers to the object of nonconceptual wisdom—since what realizes this<sup>2250</sup> is wisdom, this is an explanation through pointing to the subject by way of its object. “The sun” is the example for this wisdom in that it is similar to clearly cognizing all mountains and valleys through [the light of] the sun. “Having been obscured by the thick cloud banks of adventitious afflictive and cognitive [obscurations] . . . stainless” refers to relinquishment. As for the essence of the two obscurations, the afflictive obscurations represent the obstacles to the arising of the wisdoms of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas in dependence on the objects that consist of the four realities [of the noble ones]. The cognitive obscurations represent the obstacles to the arising of the nonconceptual wisdoms of buddhas and bodhisattvas in dependence on the objects that consist of the five fields of knowledge. “Stainless” refers to the relinquishment of these [two] including their latent tendencies. “Just as the sky” is the example for relinquishment, which means that it resembles the sky endowed with twofold purity. (3) The qualities that are based on these two consist of “the buddha qualities.” {503} (4) You may wonder, “Based on which cause is this buddhahood, which is specified by these three distinctive features [in the sūtras],<sup>2251</sup> attained?” [It is attained through twofold wisdom.] The wisdom of meditative equipoise is [indicated by the phrase] “it is . . . nonconceptual about [all] phenomena.” The pure mundane wisdom [of subsequent attainment is [indicated by the phrase] “and discriminate them.” [Thus,] this one line of verse represents the cause [of awakening].<sup>2252</sup>

#### [2.2.2.2.2.1.2. Detailed explanation]

**Buddhahood is characterized**

**By [its] inseparable pure attributes—**

**The two characteristics of wisdom and relinquishment—**

**Which are similar to the sun and the sky. II.4**

Since the second verse clearly explains the two of relinquishment and wisdom, it is the detailed explanation. Here, the first line of verse points to the subject through its object, thus referring to wisdom. The second line of verse represents relinquishment. [The fourth line,] “which are similar to the sun and the sky,” represents the examples of these two, just as above. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.2.1.3. Distinct explanation

**It possesses all the buddha attributes  
Which are luminous, unproduced,  
Manifesting in an inseparable manner,  
And beyond the sands of the river Gaṅgā [in number]. II.5**

**By virtue of not being established by any nature,  
Being pervasive, and being adventitious,  
Afflictive and cognitive obscurations  
Are described as being like clouds. II.6**

**The cause of becoming free from  
The two obscurations is twofold wisdom.  
This wisdom is asserted as the nonconceptual one  
And the one attained subsequent to that. II.7**

This has four parts. [The phrase] “luminous, unproduced” refers to wisdom, just as above. [The phrase] “in an inseparable manner” and the remainder of the [other] three lines of verse [II.5] explain the qualities that are based on relinquishment and wisdom. The one following verse explains relinquishment, and the verse after that explains the cause. The commentary on this lays the foundation for what follows below. For, [among the two kinds of purity of the basic element,] it presents the fruition as [its] purity of being free from stains because [its] natural purity exists in buddhas and sentient beings without difference.

#### 2.2.2.2.2.2. Fruition

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation



### 2.2.2.2.2.2.1. [Brief] introduction

This has two parts:

1. Relinquishment
2. Wisdom
3. Instruction on the nine examples that illustrate the three kāyas (the result of freedom)

#### 2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1. Relinquishment

Just as a pond with stainless water being covered by gradually unfolding lotuses,

Just as the full moon's having been released from the mouth of Rāhu,  
And just as the sun's having been liberated from the defilements of cloud banks,

This very [buddhahood] possesses radiant light rays because it is endowed with stainless qualities. II.8

This explains the relinquishment of the three poisons. “Just as a pond with stainless water being covered by gradually unfolding lotuses . . . because it is endowed with stainless qualities” teaches that after the affliction of desire (which resembles silt in water) has been relinquished, the stainless water of samādhi showers down on the lotuses of those to be guided. “Just as the full moon's having been released from the mouth of Rāhu . . . because it is endowed with stainless qualities” teaches that after the affliction of hatred (which resembles Rāhu) has been relinquished, the light rays of love and compassion pervade all beings. “And just as the sun's having been liberated from the defilements of cloud banks . . . because it is endowed with stainless qualities” explains that after the affliction of dullness (which resembles clouds) has been relinquished, the light rays of wisdom eliminate the darkness in all sentient beings. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2. Instruction on wisdom

This consists of [the phrase] “possessing the radiant light rays of the wisdom of realizing true reality.” By virtue of this, one becomes free from the cognitive obscurations, and therefore this becomes the result of freedom. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.2.2.1.3. Instruction on the meaning of the nine examples that illustrate the three kāyas

The victor is like the chief of sages, honey, a kernel,  
 The precious substance gold, a treasure, and a tree,  
 Like a stainless precious statue of the Sugata,  
 A lord of the earth, and a golden image. II.9

This is the second verse [within this brief introduction]. “Who possesses these two qualities [of relinquishment and wisdom]?” “The victor”—the victor refers to the three kāyas, which he has or possesses. “Which examples do these three kāyas resemble?” [They accord with] three sets of three examples—the dharmakāya is like the chief of sages, {504} the sambhogakāya is like honey, and the nirmāṇakāya is like a kernel. Also, the dharmakāya is like the precious substance gold, the sambhogakāya is like a treasure, and the nirmāṇakāya is similar to a tree. Also, the dharmakāya is like a stainless precious statue of the Sugata, the sambhogakāya is like a lord of the earth, and the nirmāṇakāya is like a golden image. The [detailed] similarities should be understood from the detailed explanation.

You may wonder, “Having matched these nine examples with the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition in the section on the basic element, why is it that only the three kāyas are explained here through matching them three times [with these examples]?” In the section on the basic element, [the basic element] has not undergone its fundamental change yet. Therefore, the fruition of purification (the three kāyas), the nature (suchness), and the cause (the disposition) are explained through matching them with the nine examples. Here, the phase [of the basic element] has changed—this is the section on teaching<sup>2253</sup> the fruition. Therefore, only the three kāyas are explained through matching them with the three sets of three [examples].

#### 2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. [Detailed] explanation

This has three parts:

1. Detailed explanation of the basis of the qualities
2. Explanation of relinquishment
3. Explanation of the similarities of the three kāyas [with the nine examples]

(1) The first two verses [beginning with] “The purity of the adventitious afflictions” refer to the details of the above [verse II.8]—the explanation of the three kāyas.

The purity of the adventitious afflictions,  
Such as desire, which is like a lake and so on,  
In brief, is said to be the fruition  
Of nonconceptual wisdom. II.10

The definite attainment of the buddhakāya  
That is endowed with all supreme aspects  
Is taught to be the fruition of the wisdom  
That is attained subsequent to that. II.11

The first verse explains the dharmakāya, while the second verse explains the two rūpakāyas.

(2) The three verses [beginning with] “Because it has relinquished the silt of desire” explain relinquishment.

Because it has relinquished the silt of desire  
And because it showers down the water of dhyāna  
Upon the lotuses of those to be guided,  
[Buddhahood] is like a pond with pure water. II.12

Because it has been released from Rāhu[-like] hatred  
And because it pervades beings  
With its light rays of great compassion and love,  
It resembles the stainless full moon. II.13

Because it is liberated from the clouds of dullness  
And because it dispels the darkness  
Of beings with its light rays of wisdom,  
This buddhahood is similar to the sun without stains. II.14

The first verse explains the relinquishment of desire, the second one explains the relinquishment of hatred, and the third verse explains the relinquishment of dullness.

(3) The three verses [beginning with] “Because it has the nature of being equal to the unequaled” explain the similarities of the three kāyas [with the nine examples], with each verse explaining one set of three examples.

Because it has the nature of being equal to the unequaled,  
Because it bestows the taste of the genuine dharma,

And because it is free from its husks,  
It is like the Sugata, honey, and a kernel. II.15

Because it is pure, because it eliminates poverty  
By virtue of its substance consisting of qualities,  
And because it grants the fruit of liberation,  
It is like gold, a treasure, and a tree. II.16

Because it is the body of the precious dharma,  
Because it is the supreme lord of human beings,  
And because it has the aspect of a precious form,  
It is like a precious [representation], a king, and a golden [image]. II.17

### 2.2.2.2.2.3. Explanation of the topic of function

The commentary [begins by] laying the foundation for [the verses on] the function below.

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

#### 2.2.2.2.2.3.1. [Brief] introduction

This has two parts:

1. Instruction on the fulfillment of one's own welfare (the qualities of the dharmakāya)
2. Instruction on the fulfillment of the welfare of others (the qualities of the rūpakāyas)

#### 2.2.2.2.2.3.1.1. Explanation of the instruction on the fulfillment of one's own welfare (the qualities of the dharmakāya)

**Being the uncontaminated all-pervasive matrix of indestructible nature**

**That is everlasting, peaceful, eternal, and without transition II.18ab**

[The phrase] “tathāgatahood, just as space” [in II.18c functions] like the eyes of a Kata bird—just as the eyes of a Kata [bird are able to] look both to the front and the back [at the same time], this phrase also applies to both one's own welfare (the dharmakāya) above and the welfare of others (the rūpakāyas) below. When applied to one's own welfare (the dharmakāya),

just as space is endowed with twofold purity, the dharmakāya is the nature of phenomena endowed with twofold purity. It has four qualities—“uncontaminated” {505} refers to relinquishment. “All-pervasive” refers to wisdom. The quality of<sup>2254</sup> these two being unconditioned [is explained by the phrase] “of indestructible nature” [as the brief] introduction and by [the phrase,] “that is everlasting, peaceful, eternal, and without transition”<sup>2255</sup> [as the detailed] explanation. “The matrix” explains the quality of [awakening] functioning as the matrix or support. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.2.3.1.2. Explanation of the fulfillment of the welfare of others (the qualities of the rūpakāyas)

Tathāgatahood, just as space, is the cause  
For experiencing the referents of the six sense faculties of the wise.  
II.18cd

For nonelemental forms and objects’ being seen, excellent and pure  
discourses’

Being heard, the pure scent of the discipline of the sugatas  
Being smelled, the flavor of the great and noble genuine dharma  
Being tasted, the pleasant touch of samādhi’s being experienced, II.19

And the principle that is profound by its own nature being realized,  
The Tathāgata serves as the cause, [but] when one reflects [about this]  
in a subtle manner,

He, who is the one to bring ultimate happiness,  
Is free from causes, just like space. II.20

As for “tathāgatahood, just as space,” just as space functions as the cause for experiencing the six objects, the two rūpakāyas function as the cause that produces the uncontaminated qualities. This is twofold. [The passage] from “the wise” up through “who is the one to bring ultimate happiness”<sup>2256</sup> is [presented] in terms of seeming reality. [The phrase] “the Tathāgata . . . is free from causes, just like space” is [presented] in terms of ultimate reality. The commentary right below [these verses] is a comment on this [latter] phrase.

### 2.2.2.2.2.3.2. [Detailed] explanation

This has three parts:

1. Explanation that the support of one's own welfare and the welfare of others is the Tathāgata
2. Explanation of one's own welfare (the qualities of the dharmakāya)
3. Explanation of the welfare of others (the qualities of the rūpakāyas)

#### 2.2.2.2.2.3.2.1. Explanation that the support of one's own welfare and the welfare of others is the Tathāgata

This is explained by one and a half verses:

In brief, this is to be understood

As the function of the two wisdoms—

The perfection of the [vi]muktikāya

And the purification of the dharmakāya. II.21

The vimukti[kāya] and the dharmakāya

Are to be understood in two ways and in one way II.22ab

Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.2.3.2.2. Explanation of one's own welfare (the qualities of the dharmakāya)

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.2.3.2.2.1. [Brief] introduction

Because of being uncontaminated, because of being all-pervasive,  
And because of being the unconditioned matrix. II.22cd

##### 2.2.2.2.2.3.2.2.2. [Detailed] explanation of that

[The vimuktikāya] is uncontaminated because of the cessation  
Of the afflictions together with their latent tendencies.

Wisdom is held to be all-pervasive

Because it is without attachment and without obstruction. II.23

Being unconditioned is because of having  
 The nature of being absolutely indestructible.  
 This indestructibility is the [brief] statement  
 That is explained by “everlasting” and so on. II.24

Destructibility is to be understood as four kinds  
 Because of the opposites of “everlasting” and so on,  
 Which are putridity, change, extinction,  
 And transition in an inconceivable manner. II.25

Since it lacks these, it is to be understood as  
 Everlasting, peaceful, eternal, and without transition.  
 This stainless wisdom is the matrix  
 Because it is the foundation of [all] pure attributes. II.26

In due order, [the four qualities “uncontaminated,” “all-pervasive,” “of indestructible nature,” and “the matrix” mentioned in II.18ab] are explained [here] through half a verse, half [a verse], two and a half [verses], and half [a verse]. As for the explanation of the quality of [relinquishment and wisdom] being unconditioned, the meaning of “putridity,<sup>2257</sup> change, extinction, and transition in an inconceivable manner” in this context [is as follows]. Putridity refers to the virtue of maturing those to be guided<sup>2258</sup> that exists in bodhisattvas. Since the dharmakāya<sup>2259</sup> lacks this, it is to be understood as everlasting. Change through sickness refers to the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. Since [the dharmakāya] lacks this, it is peaceful. Extinction [is mentioned] due to the birth of a mentally created body in the last life becoming extinct in this [life]. Since [the dharmakāya] lacks this, it is to be understood as eternal. Transition refers to death and transition in an inconceivable manner. Since [the dharmakāya] lacks this, it is to be understood as being without transition. The remaining [three qualities] are simply understood [by what the verses say].

#### 2.2.2.2.2.3.2.3. Explanation of the welfare of others (the qualities of the rūpakāyas)

This consist of the two verses [beginning with] “Just as space, which is not a cause.”

Just as space, which is not a cause,  
 Is the cause for forms, sounds, smells,

Tastes, tangible objects, and phenomena's  
Being [seen,] heard, and so on, II.27

Likewise, on account of being unobscured,  
The two kāyas are the cause  
For the arising of uncontaminated qualities  
Within the objects of the sense faculties of the wise. II.28

#### 2.2.2.2.2.4. The topic of endowment

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.2.4.1. [Brief] introduction

Being inconceivable, permanent, everlasting, quiescent, eternal,  
Peaceful, all-pervasive, and free from conception, just like space,  
Without attachment and unobstructed everywhere, free from harsh  
sensations,  
Invisible, ungraspable, and virtuous, buddhahood is stainless. II.29

As for “buddhahood,” buddhahood, which is the support of one's own welfare and the welfare of others, is endowed with fifteen qualities. These fifteen consist of the fourteen before [the word “buddhahood”] and the one thereafter. Thus, they are fifteen.

##### 2.2.2.2.2.4.2. [Detailed] explanation

This has two parts:

1. Explanation of the basis of the qualities—buddhahood
2. Explanation of the actual qualities

##### 2.2.2.2.2.4.2.1. Explanation of the basis of the qualities—buddhahood

The first verse {506} explains the basis of the fifteen qualities—buddhahood.

One's own welfare and that of others is taught  
Through the vimukti[kāya] and the dharmakāya.  
This foundation of one's own welfare and the welfare of others  
Is endowed with the qualities such as being inconceivable. II.30



## 2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2. Explanation of the actual qualities

The fifteen [qualities] are explained to be inconceivable qualities through three verses.

**Buddhahood is the object of omniscient wisdom [alone].  
Since it is not the object of the three wisdoms,  
It is to be understood as being inconceivable  
[Even] by those with the body of wisdom. II.31**

**Since it is subtle, it is not an object of study.  
Since it is the ultimate, it is not [an object] of reflection.  
Since it is the profound nature of phenomena,  
It is not an object of worldly meditation and so forth. II.32**

**For naive beings have never seen it before,  
Just as those born blind [have never seen] form.  
Even noble ones [see it only] as an infant [would glimpse]  
The form of the sun [from] within the house of its birth. II.33**

[The reasoning in the first verse] has five<sup>2260</sup> parts—subject, thesis, reason, explanation of the reason, and teaching the example for not realizing<sup>2261</sup> [buddhahood]. [The line] “**buddhahood, the object of omniscient wisdom [alone]**” is the subject. [The two lines] “**is to be understood as being inconceivable [even] by those with the body of wisdom**” are the thesis. [The line] “**since it is not the object of the three wisdoms**” is the reason. Then,<sup>2262</sup> one verse is the explanation of the reason. Then, one verse [teaches] the example. As for the example, those born blind<sup>2263</sup> have not seen form in this life before, nor do they see form now. Likewise, ordinary beings have not seen the nature of phenomena before, nor do they see it now. An infant immediately after birth does not see<sup>2264</sup> the sun—when lying in the house, it does not see the actual sun [but only] sees the light of the sun that shines from stars and planets [as a reflection]. Likewise, śrāvakas see only personal identitylessness [but] do not see phenomenal identitylessness. In addition to that, pratyekabuddhas see only the lack of nature of the apprehended [but] do not see the lack of nature<sup>2265</sup> of the apprehender. Bodhisattvas see the dharmakāya fully but do not see it in a completely pure manner.

The remaining [verses] are only indicated [here]:

It is permanent because it is free from arising.  
 It is everlasting since it is without ceasing.  
 It is quiescent because it is without duality.  
 It is eternal since the nature of phenomena [always] remains. II.34

It is peaceful because it is the reality of cessation.  
 It is all-pervasive since it realizes everything.  
 It is nonconceptual because it is nonabiding.  
 It is without attachment since the afflictions are relinquished. II.35

It is everywhere without obstruction  
 Because it is pure of all cognitive obscurations.  
 It is free from harsh sensations  
 Since it is nondual and workable. II.36

It is invisible because it has no form.  
 It is ungraspable since it has no characteristics.  
 It is virtuous because it is pure by nature.  
 It is stainless because the stains are relinquished. II.37

The commentary<sup>2266</sup> lays the foundation for the [topic of] manifestation below.

#### 2.2.2.2.2.5. Classification of manifestation

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.2.5.1. [Brief] introduction

The first verse teaches the five characteristics of the dharmakāya:

Without beginning, middle, and end, undifferentiable,  
 Nondual, freed [in] three [ways], stainless, and nonconceptual—  
 This is the nature of the dharmadhātu, which is seen  
 By yogins in the meditative equipoise of realizing it. II.38

These are the characteristic of being unconditioned, the characteristic of being undifferentiable, the characteristic of being nondual, the characteristic of being free from the three obscurations, and the characteristic of being

luminous.<sup>2267</sup> These five are matched with the phrases [of this verse] in due order.

The one verse after that teaches the five qualities of the dharmakāya:

Endowed with qualities that are immeasurable, far surpassing the  
sand grains  
In the river Gaṅgā [in number], inconceivable, and unequaled,  
The stainless expanse of the tathāgatas  
Has relinquished [all] flaws including their latent tendencies. II.39

These are the quality of being immeasurable, the quality of being countless, the quality of being inconceivable, the quality of being unique, and the quality of being pure. These are matched with the five phrases [of this verse] in due order.

Then, one verse teaches the five characteristics of the sambhogakāya:

Through bodies endowed with all kinds of light rays of the genuine  
dharma,  
It makes efforts in accomplishing the goal of liberating beings,  
In its actions resembling the king of wish-fulfilling jewels  
[In assuming] various entities but not having their nature. II.40

[The phrase] “all kinds of the genuine dharma” refers to the characteristic of the verbal discourse [of the sambhogakāya] being uninterrupted. [The phrase] “bodies endowed with light rays” refers to the characteristic of its physical appearance’s being uninterrupted. Then, in due order, the following three lines teach the characteristic of its activity’s being uninterrupted, the characteristic of its activity’s being nonconceptual, and the characteristic of appearing as various [entities] but not having the nature of these various [entities].

Then, half a verse teaches the characteristics of the nirmāṇakāya: {507}

The causal form in [various] worlds that introduces [beings]  
To the path of peace, matures them, and gives them the prophecies  
II.41ab

[The phrase] “in [various] worlds that introduces [beings] to the path<sup>2268</sup> of peace” refers to establishing [beings] in [the fruitions] such as stream-enterer through turning the wheel of the dharma of the four realities [of

the noble ones]. [The phrase] “matures them” refers to turning them away from the path of the śrāvakas and thus establishing them in the mahāyāna through turning the wheel of the dharma of the lack of characteristics. [The phrase] “gives them the prophecies” refers to giving the prophecies in terms of what is directly perceived, what is not directly perceived, and so on, through turning the wheel of the dharma of definitive meaning for the first time.

Then, half a verse represents the concluding summary of all three kāyas, teaching that they are permanent:

Always abides in this [dharmakāya],  
Just as the element of form does in the element of space. II.41cd

Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.2.5.2. Detailed explanation

This has three parts:

1. General instruction on the three kāyas
2. The individual characteristics of the three kāyas
3. Teaching the three kāyas in common through a concluding summary

##### 2.2.2.2.2.5.2.1. General instruction on the three kāyas

[This is taught by] two verses:

The omniscience of the self-arisen ones  
Is what is called “buddhahood.”  
It is the highest nirvāṇa, the inconceivable,  
And the personal character of the arhats. II.42

Its division is its manifestation through three  
Kāyas, such as the svābhāvika[kāya],  
Which are characterized by the attributes that are the qualities  
Of profundity, vastness, and magnanimity. II.43

This has four points: (1) the basis of the division, (2) the points of the division, (3) the reason for the division, and (4) the conclusion. (1) As for the basis of the division, the single buddhahood is described in the sūtras by seven synonyms. It is called “self-arisen” because it is not produced by causes and conditions. It is called “omniscience” since it knows everything

to be known in one instant. It is called “**buddhahood**”<sup>2269</sup> because the two sleeplike obscurations have been relinquished and wisdom has unfolded toward everything to be known. It is called “**highest nirvāṇa**” since it lacks such as the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance that exists in the mind streams of bodhisattvas. It is called “**inconceivable**” since it is inconceivable by the minds of śrāvakas and so on. It is called “**great arhat**” because the two obscurations, including their latent tendencies, have been overcome. It is called “**the personal character**” since it is to be personally experienced by nonconceptual wisdom. Thus, it is divided [like that]. (2) The points of the division are three—**profundity** (the dharmakāya), **vastness** (the sambhogakāya), and **magnanimity** (the nirmāṇakāya). (3) The reason for the division consists of [these kāyas’] being “**characterized by the attributes that are the qualities,**” which correspond to the brief introduction to these qualities [above]. (4) The conclusion consists of “**its manifestation through three kāyas, such as the svābhāvika[kāya].**” “**Svābhāvika**” refers to the dharmakāya. “**Such as**” includes the remaining two kāyas.

#### 2.2.2.2.2.5.2.2. Explanation of the individual characteristics of the three kāyas

Among the three parts of this, (1) the explanation of the dharmakāya is [as follows]:

Here, the svābhāvikakāya  
Of the buddhas with five characteristics  
Is to be understood, in brief,  
As being endowed with five qualities. II.44

It is unconditioned, undifferentiable,  
Free from the two extremes,  
And liberated from the three obscurations—  
Afflictive, cognitive, and those of meditative absorption. II.45

Because of being stainless, being nonconceptual,  
And being the object of yogins,  
It is luminous since it is pure  
By virtue of having the nature of the dharmadhātu. II.46

The svābhāvikakāya is endowed  
With the qualities of being

Immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable,  
Unequaled, and having reached the perfection of purity. II.47

Because of being vast, because of not being enumerable,  
Because of not being an object of dialecticians,  
And because of being absolutely unique and having relinquished  
[all] latent tendencies,  
It is, in due order, immeasurable and so on. II.48

Among these five verses, [the dharmakāya] is [briefly] introduced through the first verse [that begins with] “Here, the svābhāvīkākāya.” The remaining four [verses] are its [detailed] explanation. Among them, the first two verses explain its characteristics. Then, two verses explain its qualities. Among them, the first verse [II.47] functions as the thesis, while the second one {508} matches [the elements of the thesis] with their justifications. This matching corresponds to the labels in the context of the conventional terms of the five characteristics and the five qualities [of the dharmakāya] being explained through the brief introduction [above].

(2) Now, the characteristics of the sambhogakāya are explained through four verses:

Because of enjoying all kinds of dharma  
And appearing [through its] natural attributes,  
Because of the natural outflow of pure compassion’s  
Being the uninterrupted welfare of beings, II.49

Because of fulfilling [all aims] as wished  
In a nonconceptual and effortless manner,  
And because of [resembling] the miraculous power of a wish-  
fulfilling jewel,  
The sambhoga[kāya] abides. II.50

In terms of discourse, display,  
Uninterrupted activity, effortlessness,  
And not exhibiting the nature of these,  
Variety is described here as being fivefold. II.51

Just as, due to various colors,  
A jewel appears not in its actual state,

So, due to the variety of conditions of [different] beings,  
The all-pervading lord appears not in his actual state. II.52

[The line] “because of enjoying all kinds of dharma” refers to the characteristic of the verbal discourse [of the sambhogakāya] being uninterrupted. Then, one line of verse refers to the characteristic of its physical appearances’ being uninterrupted. Next, two lines of verse refer to its activity’s being uninterrupted. Then, one verse refers to the characteristic of its activity’s being nonconceptual. Next, one verse refers to the characteristic of its appearing as various [entities] but not having the nature of these various [entities]. Then, one verses teaches an example for this last characteristic.

(3) Next, the characteristics of the nirmāṇakāya are explained:

With great compassion, the knower of the world  
Beholds the world in its entirety.  
Without moving away from the dharmakāya  
And through various emanated natures, II.53

He is born in [his previous] births,  
Descends from Tuṣita,  
Enters the womb [of his mother], is born,  
Becomes skilled in the field of arts and crafts, II.54

Enjoys entertainments in the circle of his queens,  
Renounces [all of it], practices asceticism,  
Reaches the seat of awakening,  
Vanquishes the armies of Māra, II.55  
Becomes completely awakened, [turns] the wheel of dharma,  
And passes into nirvāṇa. [All] these deeds  
He demonstrates in impure worlds  
For as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts. II.56

Through the words “impermanence,” “suffering,”  
“Lack of self,” and “peace,” the knower of the means  
Creates weariness of the three realms in sentient beings  
And makes them enter into nirvāṇa. II.57

Those who have entered the path of peace  
 And entertain the notion of having attained nirvāṇa,  
 Through his teachings about the true reality of phenomena,  
 Such as in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka[sūtra]*, II.58

He turns away from their former clinging and,  
 Through embracing them with prajñā and means,  
 Matures them in the supreme yāna  
 And prophesies their highest awakening. II.59

[The verses] from “with great compassion, the knower of the world” up through “makes them enter into nirvāṇa” explain [the phrase] “the causal form that introduces [beings] to the path of peace” [in II.41ab]. [The following lines,] from “those who have entered the path of peace” up through “matures them in the supreme yāna,” explain [the phrase] “the causal form that matures them” in [II.41b]. [The last line] “prophesies their highest awakening” explains [the phrase] “the causal form that gives them the prophecies” in [II.41b].

#### 2.2.2.2.2.5.2.3. Teaching the three kāyas in common through a concluding summary

[This is taught] through two verses following the [above]:

Because of profundity, the perfection of power,  
 And the guidance in accordance with the welfare of naive beings,  
 In due order, [the buddhakāyas] are to be understood  
 As profundity, vastness, and magnanimity. II.60

Here, the first one is the dharmakāya  
 And the latter two are the rūpakāyas.  
 Just as form abides in space,  
 The latter dwell in the first one. II.61

#### 2.2.2.2.2.6. The topic of permanence

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation



## 2.2.2.2.2.6.1. [Brief] introduction

Because of the causes' being infinite, sentient beings' being  
 inexhaustible,  
 Being endowed with loving-kindness, miraculous powers,  
 knowledge, and fulfillment,  
 Being the sovereign of [all] dharmas, having vanquished the māra  
 of death,  
 And lacking any nature, the protector of the world is permanent. II.62

The first seven among the ten reasons [for the three kāyas' being permanent] establish that the two rūpakāyas are permanent. Here, "the two rūpakāyas" is the subject, and [the phrase] "is permanent" at the end [of this verse] is the thesis. The seven [phrases] "because of the causes being infinite" and so on that appear [at the beginning of this verse are the reasons]. [As for the three reasons for the dharmakāya's being permanent,] "the dharmakāya" is the subject, and [the phrase] "is permanent" at the end [of this verse] is again the thesis. "Why?" Through the three [phrases] "having vanquished the māra of death" and so on, the dharmakāya is established to be permanent.

## 2.2.2.2.2.6.2. Detailed explanation

Because of having upheld the genuine dharma  
 Through giving up body, life, and possessions,  
 Because of fulfilling the initial commitment  
 In order to benefit all sentient beings, II.63

Because of buddhahood's operating [with]  
 Pure and unadulterated compassion,  
 Because of the one who displays the limbs of miraculous power  
 Engaging in remaining [in the world] through them, II.64

Because of being liberated through knowledge from  
 Grasping at saṃsāra and nirvāṇa as being two,  
 Because of always being endowed with the fulfillment  
 Of the bliss of inconceivable samādhi, II.65

Because of being untainted by worldly dharmas  
 When acting in the world,  
 Because of the māra of death not stirring  
 Within the attainment of the state of immortality and peace, II.66

Because of the sage, whose nature  
 Is unconditioned, being primordially at peace,  
 And because of being tenable as the refuge and so on  
 Of those without refuge, [the Buddha] is permanent. II.67

The first seven reasons [show]  
 The permanence of the rūpakāyas,  
 And the latter three [demonstrate]  
 The permanence of the teacher's dharmakāya. II.68

It should be understood that these ten reasons are explained in due order through half a verse each. The last verse is the concluding summary.

#### 2.2.2.2.2.7. The topic of inconceivability

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.2.7.1. [Brief] introduction

Because of not being an object of speech, because of consisting of  
 the ultimate,  
 Because of not being a locus to be examined, because of being  
 beyond example,  
 Because of being unsurpassable, and because of not being included  
 in [samsaric] existence or [nirvāṇic] peace,  
 The object of the victors is inconceivable even for the noble ones. II.69

As for [the phrase] “the object of the victors,” the object of the wisdom of the victors—the three kāyas—is the subject. [The phrase] “is inconceivable even for the noble ones” is the thesis. “Why?” [The phrases] “because of not being an object of speech” and so on are the reasons. In the manner of the former [reasons’] establishing the latter, the first five establish that

the dharmakāya is inconceivable. The last one establishes that the two rūpakāyas are inconceivable.

#### 2.2.2.2.2.7.2. Detailed explanation

[This is taught] through three verses, with the last one's being the concluding summary:

**It is inconceivable because it is inexpressible.**

**It is inexpressible because it is the ultimate.**

**It is the ultimate because it cannot be examined.**

**It cannot be examined because it cannot be inferred. II.70**

**It cannot be inferred because it is unsurpassable.**

**It is unsurpassable because it is not included [in saṃsāra or nirvāṇa].**

**It is not included [in them] because it does not abide [in either one]**

**Since it lacks conceptions about their flaws and qualities, respectively.**

II.71

**Due to the [first] five reasons, [buddhahood] is subtle**

**And therefore the dharmakāya is inconceivable.**

**Due to the sixth one, it is not [manifesting in] its actual state**

**And therefore the rūpakāyas are inconceivable. II.72**

Therefore, {509} there is no contradiction between the commentary's presenting the pair of [brief] introduction and [detailed] explanation for the two [topics of] permanence and inconceivability and [Marpa's] presenting [each of these topics] as the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and concluding summary.

This completes the explanation of awakening.

*Explanation of the Section on the Qualities***2.2.2.2.3. The chapter on the qualities**

This has four parts:

1. Brief introduction by way of the supports
2. Detailed explanation by way of examples
3. Establishing [this] by way of scripture
4. Determining the summarized meaning of<sup>2270</sup> the examples

**2.2.2.2.3.1. Brief introduction by way of the supports**

[This is taught through] three verses:

One's own welfare and the welfare of others consist of the ultimate kāya  
And the seeming kāya that is based on it, respectively.

They are the results of freedom and maturation

That are these qualities, which are classified as sixty-four. III.1

The support of the wealth of one's own [welfare]

Is the ultimate body.

The symbolic body of the seers

Is the support of the fulfillment [of the welfare of] others. III.2

The first kāya is endowed with

The qualities of freedom, such as the powers,

And the second one is endowed with the qualities

Of maturation, which are the marks of a great being. III.3

“In which supports do the sixty-four supported<sup>2271</sup> [qualities] exist?” This means that the thirty-two qualities of freedom exist in the dharmakāya and the thirty-two qualities of maturation exist in the two rūpakāyas. The first [kind of] qualities represents the fruition of the accumulation of wisdom. The second<sup>2272</sup> [kind] represents the fruition of the accumulation of merit.

**2.2.2.2.3.2. Detailed explanation by way of examples**

This has three parts:

1. Brief introduction by way of a synoptical verse
2. Detailed [explanation] through differentiating the meaning of the synopsis
3. Concluding summary

## 2.2.2.2.3.2.1. Brief introduction by way of a synoptical verse

The powers are like a vajra for the obscurations of ignorance,  
 The fearlessnesses resemble a lion amid his retinue,  
 The unique [qualities] of the Tathāgata are similar to space,  
 And the sage's two kinds of display are like the moon [reflected in]  
 water. III.4

There is nothing to be explained about this.

## 2.2.2.2.3.2.2. [Detailed] explanation through differentiating the meaning of the synopsis

This has four parts. (1) The actual explanation of the characteristics of the ten powers has two verses:

What is the case and what is not the case,  
 Maturation of karmas, faculties,  
 Constitutions, inclinations,  
 The path that leads everywhere, III.5

Afflicted and stainless dhyānas and so on,  
 Recollection of [former birth]places,  
 The divine eye, and peace  
 Represent the tenfold power of knowledge. III.6

As for “what is the case and what is not the case,” through knowing<sup>2273</sup> what is the case and what is not the case, [one knows] that it is the case, that it represents the cause, that there is the chance, and that it is possible that higher realms and liberation are attained through the ten virtues and that it does not represent the cause, that it is not the case, that there is no chance, and that it is impossible that the three lower realms are attained [through them]. The same as above applies to it being the case that the lower realms are attained through the ten nonvirtues [and so on]. (2) “Maturation of karmas” refers to knowing the maturation of [all] karmas, that is, knowing the maturation of virtue and nonvirtue. Therefore, the above is the knowledge of the [karmic] causes, while the following one is the knowledge of the results [of these causes]. (3) “Faculties” refers to knowing [higher] faculties [and those] that are not higher. (4) “Constitutions” refers to knowing all kinds of constitutions [of sentient beings], that is, knowing the seeds [in

their ālaya-consciousnesses]. (5) “Inclinations” refers to knowing all kinds of inclinations. (6) “The path that leads everywhere” refers to knowing all kinds of [mundane and supramundane] paths. (7) “Afflicted and stainless dhyānas and so on” refers to knowing afflicted phenomena and purified phenomena. (8) “Recollection of [former birth]places” refers to the knowledge of recollecting former [birth]places. (9) “The divine eye” refers to knowing the transitions, deaths, and rebirths [of all beings]. (10) “Peace” {510} refers to the power of knowing the termination of contamination.<sup>2274</sup> The function of these ten powers is to vanquish the four māras, which applies [here] as it is explained in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*.<sup>2275</sup>

[In knowing] what is the case and what is not the case, maturation,  
 constitutions, the various inclinations of beings,  
 What is afflicted and purified, the collection of faculties, recollection  
 of former [birth]places,  
 The divine eye, and the mode of the termination of contamination,  
 the powers are like a vajra  
 Because they pierce the armor, break the firm wall, and cut down the  
 tree of ignorance. III.7cd

[It is said] that the omission of the power of knowing all kinds of karma in the context of the similarities between the examples and their meanings [means that] it is included in the power of knowing the termination of contamination (the fruition). As for these ten powers, when counting from the beginning of the actual explanation of the characteristics of the ten powers [above], the [first] six powers pierce the armor-like cognitive obscurations, the following three break the obscurations of meditative absorption, which are like a firm wall, and the last power overcomes the treelike afflictive obscurations “because it cuts them down.”

(2) As for the [four] fearlessnesses, the first verse represents the [brief] introduction:

The four kinds of fearlessness are with regard to  
 The complete realization of all phenomena,  
 The stopping of [all] obstacles,  
 Teaching the path, and teaching cessation. III.8

The second [verse] represents the [detailed] explanation:

Because of knowing and making [others] know all one's own entities  
 and those of others that are to be known,  
 Because of having relinquished and making [others] relinquish the  
 entities to be relinquished, because of having relied [and making  
 others rely] on what is to be relied on,  
 And because of having attained and making [others] attain the  
 unsurpassable and utterly stainless [state] to be attained,  
 The seers are not obstructed with regard to anything since they  
 speak of the reality of one's own welfare and that of others. III.9

The third [verse] establishes the similarity between the example and its meaning.

Just as the mighty [lord] of animals is never frightened in the jungle  
 And roams about without fear of [other] animals,  
 The lion who is the mighty [lord] of sages dwells amid his retinue  
 Well poised, independently, and endowed with firm power. III.10

In this context, [the phrase] “dwells well poised, independently, and endowed with firm power” matches the pair of example and meaning at hand. When applied to the example, a lion is well poised because he is never frightened of anybody. He is independent because he does not depend on other animals. He is firm because there is no primary inhabitant [of his territory above him]. He dwells endowed with power because there is no one else stronger than him. To apply this to the meaning, it is the explanation in the nine lines of the verse following [line III.32c] “the lion of sages resembles a lion” in the section on the summarized meaning through examples [below] to which [the example] here applies.<sup>2276</sup>

(3) As for the explanation of the [eighteen] unique [qualities], the first three verses represent the detailed explanation:

The teacher is without mistakenness and chatter,  
 Lacks deterioration of mindfulness,  
 Lacks a mind not resting in meditative equipoise,  
 Lacks all kinds of discriminating notions, III.11

Lacks indifference without examination,  
 Lacks deterioration of striving, vigor,  
 Mindfulness, prajñā, liberation,

And the vision of the wisdom of liberation, III.12

His actions are preceded by wisdom,  
 And his wisdom is unobscured with regard to time.  
 Thus, these eighteen are the teacher's qualities  
 That are unique compared to others. III.13

The two verses following that teach them in a summarized manner:

The seer lacks mistakenness, chatter, mindlessness, mental agitation,  
 Notions of difference, and natural indifference. He lacks any  
 deterioration  
 Of his striving, vigor, mindfulness, pure stainless *prajñā*, constant  
 liberation,  
 And the wisdom of liberation that sees all objects to be known. III.14

He engages in all three actions so that they are preceded by omniscience  
 And the operation of his vast knowledge is always unobstructed with  
 regard to the three times.

[By virtue of this] realization, he fearlessly turns the great wheel of  
 the genuine dharma for beings.

This is the state of the victor, which is endowed with great  
 compassion and found by the buddhas.<sup>2277</sup> III.15

The one verse after that explains [how] the similarity between the example  
 and its meaning is established:

What is the true nature that exists in earth and so on, that true  
 nature is not the one of space,  
 And the characteristics of space (the characteristics such as being  
 unobscured) do not exist in forms [either].  
 [Still,] earth, water, fire, wind, and space are equal in being common  
 to [all] the worlds,  
 But not even an atom of the unique [buddha qualities] is common  
 to the worlds. III.16

This has two parts—teaching the example for being unique and teaching  
 the example for not being unique (being in common in terms of just one  
 aspect). The first one is the last line of verse among the first two lines of



verse. Teaching the example for not being unique<sup>2278</sup> (being in common) consist of [the line] “earth, water, fire, wind, and space are equal in being common to [all] the worlds.” As for the meaning of this, just as the four elements and space as the fifth one function as the common sustaining causes for sentient beings, the thirty-seven dharmas concordant with awakening and so on are common<sup>2279</sup> to the śrāvakas and so on.

(4) The thirty-two major marks are to be understood as the actual [marks in nine verses] and the similarity between the example [of the moon] and its meaning [in the tenth verse].

(1) [His feet are] well placed, (2) marked with wheels,  
And (3) have broad [heels] and nonprotruding ankles.  
(4) His fingers and toes are long,  
(5) Joined by webs on hands and feet. III.17

(6) His skin is soft and youthfully tender,  
(7) His body has seven convex surfaces,  
(8) His calves are antelope-like, and (9) his private parts  
Are couched in a sheath as with an elephant. III.18

(10) His upper body is lionlike,  
(11) The flesh between the shoulders is broad and compact,  
(12) His shoulders are well rounded, and (13) his arms are soft,  
Rounded, and without highs and lows. III.19

His arms are long, (14) his completely pure body  
Is endowed with a halo of light,  
(15) His neck is stainless like a conch,  
And (16) his jaws are like those of the king of animals. III.20

(17) His forty teeth are equal [in number],  
(18) Very bright,<sup>2280</sup> and well-arranged teeth.  
(19) His teeth are pure and of equal [size],  
And (20) his eyeteeth are very white. III.21

(21) His tongue is long and [tastes] the supreme of tastes,  
Which is infinite and inconceivable.  
(22) [The voice of] the self-arisen is [like] the sound of a kalaviṅka  
[bird]

And has the melodious tone [of the voice] of Brahmā. III.22

(23) His eyes [resemble] blue water lilies, (24) with eyelashes like a bull,  
 (25) His face is handsome, endowed with the stainless white ūrṇā hair,  
 (26) His head possesses an uṣṇīṣa, and (27) the skin  
 Of the supreme of beings is pure, delicate, and (28) has a hue like  
 gold. III.23

(29) His body hairs are subtle and soft, each one  
 Pointing upward from the body and curling to the right,  
 (30) His hair is [colored] like a stainless blue jewel,  
 And (31) he is [well proportioned] like the maṇḍala of a perfect  
 nyagrodha tree. III.24

(32) The ever-excellent and incomparable body of the great seer  
 Possesses the strength of Nārāyaṇa and is firm.  
 The teacher declared these thirty-two inconceivable  
 [Marks] to be the signs of the lord of humans.<sup>2281</sup> III.25

Just as the form of the moon in a cloudless sky  
 Is seen in a lake with the blue water of autumn,  
 So the hosts of the children of the victors see the form  
 Of the all-pervading lord in the circles [around] the perfect Buddha.  
 III.26

#### 2.2.2.2.3.2.3. Concluding summary

This consists of [RGVV's passage] "Thus, these ten powers of the Tathāgata . . .," which takes [all these qualities] as three points.<sup>2282</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.3.3. Establishing [this] by way of scripture

These sixty-four qualities,  
 Each one together with their causes,  
 Are to be understood in due order  
 Through following the *Ratna[dārikā]sūtra*. III.27

This consists of the root text [beginning with] "These sixty-four qualities . . ." and its commentary. The phrase "together with their causes" {511} represents what venerable [Maitreya] had in mind [about] each one of the

causes that establish these qualities. Since this is what I see and the guru did not speak [about these causes], I do not present them here, but they should be understood from elsewhere.

#### 2.2.2.2.3.4. Determining the summarized meaning of the examples

The first verse represents the [brief] introduction:

Because of being impenetrable, not being weak,  
Being incomparable, and being unmoving, respectively,  
They are taught by the examples of a vajra, a lion,  
Space, and the moon [reflected in] clear water. III.28

The remaining [verses] represent the [detailed] explanation. This explanation has four points:

(1) Determining the meaning of the example of a vajra

Among the powers and so on, through six powers,  
Three, and one, in due order,  
All [stains] in terms of what is to be cognized, meditative absorption,  
And [the afflictions] including their latent tendencies are eliminated.

III.29

Therefore, since these [three stains] are pierced, broken, and cut down  
Like an armor, a wall, and a tree, respectively, III.30ab

“Through six powers” [means] through the six counted from the beginning of the actual explanation of the characteristics of the ten powers above since they pierce the armor-like cognitive obscurations. The wall-like obscurations of meditative absorption are broken through the three powers after those [six]. The treelike afflictive obscurations including their latent tendencies are gradually cut down through the last power.

You may wonder, “Why do the ten powers function like that?” The [brief] introduction [to this is taught] through half a verse and its detailed explanation through one verse:

The powers of the seer are like a vajra  
Due to being steady, firm, strong, and unbreakable. III.30  
Why are they steady? Because they are firm.  
Why are they firm? Because they are strong.

Why are they strong? Because they are unbreakable.  
 Since they are unbreakable, they are like a vajra. III.31

(2) As for determining the meaning of the example of a lion, the first three lines of verse [that begin with] “Because of being unafraid, because of being indifferent” represent the [brief] introduction:

Because of being unafraid, because of being indifferent,  
 Because of being firm, and because of being supremely powerful,  
 The lion of sages resembles a lion, III.32ac

The explanation of the meaning through [the following] nine lines of verse is only pointed to [here]:

Being fearless amid the assemblies of his retinue. III.32d

By virtue of knowing everything, he abides  
 Without being afraid of anything.  
 He is indifferent because he sees that he is not equal  
 Even to pure sentient beings. III.33

He is firm because his mind is one-pointed  
 With regard to all phenomena.  
 He is powerful because he has supremely transcended  
 The ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. III.34

(3) As for the meaning of the example of space, (a) the first<sup>2283</sup> verse presents the meaning of the example:

As for worldly people, śrāvakas, those who live  
 In solitude, the intelligent, and the self-arisen,  
 Their insight is increasingly more subtle.  
 Therefore, [they are illustrated by] five examples. III.35

(b) Then, one verse provides the similarity between the example and its meaning.

Since [the first four] sustain all the worlds,  
 They are like earth, water, fire, and wind.

Since [the fifth] transcend the characteristics of the mundane  
And the supramundane, they resemble space. III.36

(3a) Presenting the meaning of the example has five points. [Here,] “worldly people” represent the ordinary beings of both higher realms. “Śrāvakas” represent the second point. “Those who live in solitude” are the pratyekabuddhas. “The intelligent” are the bodhisattvas. “The self-arisen” are the buddhas, the fifth point. The five examples are the four elements and space as the fifth one.

(3b) Establishing the similarity between the example and its meaning has two parts: [teaching] the example of being similar in terms of just one aspect and teaching the example of not being similar (or, the example of not being unique and the example of being unique). The first half of the verse represents the example of being similar or not being unique. Just as the supports that consist of the four elements and space as the fifth one [equally] function as the sustaining causes for sentient beings, both the four, such as ordinary beings, and buddhas are in accord in terms of qualities such as the supernatural knowledges. The latter half of the verse represents the example of not being similar or being unique. “The mundane” are the ordinary beings of the higher realms. “The supramundane” are śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas. Buddhas transcend the characteristics of these [persons]—the eighteen unique qualities exist only in buddhas and do not exist in others. As an example, “they resemble space”—[the quality of] being free from [any] tangible object that obstructs exists only in space {512} and does not exist in the other [elements].

You may wonder, “On what<sup>2284</sup> are these thirty-two qualities of freedom based?” They are based on the dharmakāya because it is taught that “they are not different from the dharmakāya.” [This is taught in] the one<sup>2285</sup> verse [beginning with] “These thirty-two qualities.”

These thirty-two qualities

Make up the dharmakāya

Because they are undifferentiable [from it], just as its radiance,

Color, and shape are [inseparable from] a precious jewel. III.37

(4) The meaning of the example of the moon in water is explained through the two verses that follow this:

What are called “the thirty-two marks”

Are the qualities that satisfy when seen

And are based on the two kāyas—the nirmāṇa[kāya]  
And the one completely enjoying the dharma. III.38

For those far from and close to purity,  
In the world and in the maṇḍala of the victor,  
The seeing of these [kāyas occurs] in two ways,  
Just as [does] the form of the moon in pure water and in the sky. III.39

This completes the explanation of the qualities.

## *Explanation of the Section on Enlightened Activity*

### 2.2.2.2.4. The chapter on enlightened activity

This has three points:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation
3. Removing disputational flaws

#### 2.2.2.2.4.1. Brief introduction

This has two parts:

1. Effortless enlightened activity
2. Uninterrupted enlightened activity

##### 2.2.2.2.4.1.1. Effortless enlightened activity

**The all-pervading lord always engages without effort**

**In the constitutions of those to be guided, the means to guide them,**

**The activities of guidance that [suit] the constitutions of those to be guided,**

**And in arriving at the [proper] place and time for this [activity]. IV.1**

The engagement [in enlightened activity] in a nonconceptual manner [is discussed] in a fivefold presentation. “What is this fivefold presentation?” (1) The first presentation consists of [the phrase] “the constitutions of those to be guided,” that is, knowing all sharp and dull faculties, constitutions, and latencies of those to be guided. (2) The second one consists of [the phrase] “the means to guide them,” that is, the welfare [of sentient beings] is promoted by way of “the *nirmāṇakāya* simultaneously displaying in a trichilocosm [the turning of] the wheel of dharma through many hundreds of gates for some [beings], the nonappearance of birth for some, various conducts of beings for some, all [forms of] awakening for some, and *nirvāṇa* for some.” (3) The third one consists of [the line] “the activities of guidance that [suit] the constitutions of those to be guided,” that is, the accomplishment of the fruitions of higher realms and definite excellence in individual mind streams. (4) The fourth one consists of [the phrase] “[arriving] at the [proper] place for this [activity],” that is, arriving at the places where those to be guided dwell. (5) The fifth one consists of [the phrase] “arriving at the [proper] time,” that is, arriving at the time

when those to be guided have reached the proper heat [in terms of being suitable for some realization]. “The all-pervading lord” is the Buddha himself because he pervades [all beings] with prajñā and compassion.

#### 2.2.2.2.4.1.2. Uninterrupted enlightened activity

Having accomplished the entire yāna, which is the wisdom ocean  
 that contains the host of supreme precious qualities  
 And possesses the light of the sun of merit and wisdom, and having  
 seen buddhahood, which is all-pervasive like the vast sky  
 Without middle and end, [to exist as] a treasure of stainless qualities  
 in all sentient beings without difference,  
 The wind of the compassion of the buddhas dispels the web of the  
 clouds of afflictive and cognitive [obscurations]. IV.2

[This consists of] six points to be understood. Having understood them, [buddhas] promote the welfare of sentient beings in an uninterrupted manner. “What are these six points to be understood?” (1) The first point to be understood consists of [the phrase] “having accomplished the entire yāna,” that is, the ten bhūmis that lead to deliverance—the cause of unsurpassable awakening. Since one proceeds to this [awakening] through those bhūmis, they are the yāna. “What is the example for that?” The ten bhūmis are like the ocean. “What similarity is there to the ocean?” The ocean has two attributes. Similar to many precious [substances] existing [in the ocean], [the bhūmis] “contain the host of supreme precious qualities.” Similar to stainless water’s existing [in the ocean], [the bhūmis are] {513} “the wisdom ocean.” (2) The second point to be understood consists of [the phrase] “merit and wisdom,” that is, the conditions or reliances<sup>2286</sup> of the ten bhūmis. “What is the example for that?” It consists of [the phrase] “possesses the light of the sun.” The similarities [between merit and wisdom and this example] are found in the detailed explanation [below]. (3) As for the third point, you may wonder, “What is the fruition of the ten bhūmis and the two accumulations?” It is “vast without middle and end,” that is, unsurpassable buddhahood. “What is the example for that?” It “is all-pervasive like the sky.” (4) As for the fourth point, you may wonder, “Having attained that fruition, what do [buddhas] do?” “Having seen buddhahood [to exist as] stainless qualities in all sentient beings without difference,” they take care of these sentient beings. “What is the example for the basic element of sentient beings?” It is like “a treasure.”



(5) As for the fifth point, you may wonder, “What are the obscurations of this basic element or buddhahood?” They are the “afflictive and cognitive obscurations.” “What is the example for them?” They are [like] “clouds.” (6) As for the sixth point, you may wonder, “What is the remedy or condition that cuts through these obscurations?” It is the compassion of the buddhas. “What is the example for that?” It is [like when] “the wind dispels [clouds].”

#### 2.2.2.2.4.2. Detailed explanation

This has two parts:

##### 2.2.2.2.4.2.1. [Detailed] explanation of effortless enlightened activity

This consists of two verses:

Since there arise no conceptions as to  
 For whom, whereby, which guiding  
 Activity [is to be performed] where and at which time,  
 [The activity] of the sages is always effortless. IV.3

“For whom” [refers to] the constitutions of those to be guided;  
 “Whereby” to the abundant means of guidance;  
 “Which” to the guiding activity; and “where  
 And at which time” to the [proper] place and time. IV.4

The first [verse] represents the [brief] introduction and the second one the [detailed] explanation. The meaning of the words of these two [verses] corresponds to what was explained in the brief introduction.

##### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2. [Detailed] explanation of uninterrupted enlightened activity

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1. [Brief] introduction

This consists of the first verse [that begins with] “For [this activity] lacks conceptions”:

For [this activity] lacks conceptions  
 About deliverance, the support of that,

The result of that, taking hold of that,  
 The obscurations of that, and the condition for cutting through them.  
 IV.5

#### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2. [Detailed] explanation

This has four parts:

1. Presenting the meanings
2. Presenting the examples
3. Establishing the similarities between the meanings and the examples
4. Instruction on the function of uninterrupted enlightened activity's being justified

##### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.1. Presenting the meanings

These are taught through two verses:

“Deliverance” refers to the ten bhūmis;  
 “The cause of that” to the two accumulations;  
 “The result of that” to supreme awakening;  
 “Taking hold” to the beings of awakening; IV.6

“The obscurations of that” to the infinite afflictions,  
 Secondary afflictions, and their latent tendencies;  
 And “the condition for overcoming them  
 That is [present] at all times” to compassion. IV.7

##### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.2. Presenting the examples

These are taught through the three lines of verse after that:

These six points, in due order,  
 Are to be understood as being like the ocean, the sun,  
 The sky, a treasure, clouds, and wind.<sup>2287</sup> IV.8

##### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.3. Establishing the similarities between the meanings and the examples

This consists of the three verses thereafter:

Since they possess the water of wisdom and the jewels  
 Of the qualities, the bhūmis are like the ocean.

Since they sustain all sentient beings,  
The two accumulations are like the sun. IV.9

Since it is vast and is without middle and end,  
Awakening is like the element of space.  
Since it has the nature of completely perfect buddhahood,  
The basic element of sentient beings is similar to a treasure. IV.10

Since they are adventitious, pervasive, and not established,  
Its afflictions are like cloud banks.  
Since it accomplishes the dispersion of these [clouds],  
Compassion is like an inexhaustible wind.<sup>2288</sup> IV.11

#### 2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.4. Instruction on the function of uninterrupted enlightened activity's being justified

This consists of the one last verse:

Because of [accomplishing] deliverance under the influence of others,  
Regarding oneself and sentient beings as equal,  
And activity's not being fully completed,  
[Buddha] activity is uninterrupted<sup>2289</sup> as long as saṃsāra lasts. IV.12

There is not the slightest to be explained about the meanings of the words [here].

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3. Removing disputational flaws

This has two parts:

1. Disputes
2. Answers

##### 2.2.2.2.4.3.1. Disputes

This has two parts. It may be said, "If the Buddha is without arising and ceasing, this contradicts his appearing as arising and ceasing. If he has arising and ceasing, this contradicts his being unconditioned [as explained] in the context of the eight qualities of the Buddha." This dispute consists of [RGVV's passage] "It has been declared that buddhahood is characterized by being without arising and without ceasing. How is it then that from this unconditioned buddhahood, which has the characteristic of lacking functionality . . . ?"

The second dispute is “If the Buddha does not have thoughts, this contradicts his promoting the welfare of sentient beings. If he promotes the welfare of sentient beings, does he not have thoughts?” This dispute {514} consists of [RGVV’s passage] “from this . . . buddhahood . . . effortless, uninterrupted, and nonconceptual buddha activity manifests functionality here for as long as the world lasts?”

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2. Answers

This has six parts:

##### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.1. Brief introduction

Like Śakra, a drum, clouds, Brahmā,  
The sun, and a precious jewel,  
Like an echo, like space and the earth,  
Thus is the Tathāgata. IV.13

This first verse establishes by way of nine examples that being without thoughts and promoting the welfare of sentient beings is not contradictory and that being without arising and ceasing is not contradictory to appearing as arising and ceasing. Here, the brief introduction [through] this verse represents the examples, while their meaning is [found in] the verse below [that begins with] “The display, the instruction, the all-pervasiveness.”<sup>2290</sup> Therefore, it is said that [the examples] here are matched with the nine meanings [below] and [the meanings] below are matched with the nine examples [here]. “The display” refers to the essence of the pure body [of buddhas], which resembles Śakra. “The instruction” refers to the essence of their pure speech, which resembles a drum. “The all-pervasiveness” refers to the essence of their pure mind, which resembles clouds. “The emanation” refers to the enlightened activity of body and speech, which resembles Brahmā. “The radiance of wisdom” refers to the enlightened activity of the mind, which resembles the sun. “The secrets of body, speech, and mind” refers to the three that are inconceivable, which resemble, respectively, a precious jewel, an echo, and space. “The attainment of those whose character is compassion”<sup>2291</sup> refers to the support of all those, which resembles the Tathāgata.

### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2. Detailed explanation of the characteristics of each one of the nine examples

This has nine parts:

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.1. The example of Śakra

[This has three parts]: (1) [brief] introduction, (2) [detailed] explanation, and (3) distinct explanation. (1) [The brief introduction] consists of [the thirteen verses] from “Suppose the surface of the earth” up through “through their eye of wisdom.”

Suppose the surface of the earth  
 Were to assume the nature of pure beryl  
 And, because of its clarity, the chief of gods  
 With his host of divine maidens IV.14

As well as his palace Vaijayanta,  
 Celestial dwellers other than him,  
 Their various palaces,  
 And their many divine substances would be seen in it. IV.15

Then, the assemblies of men and women  
 Who dwell on the surface of the earth  
 Would take sight of this appearance  
 And make the following prayer: IV.16

“May we too before long  
 Become like that lord of gods!”  
 In order to attain that [state],  
 They would abide by adopting virtue. IV.17

By virtue of their pure karma,  
 Despite not knowing that this  
 Was merely an appearance, they would pass away  
 From the surface of the earth and be born as gods. IV.18

This appearance would be very much  
 Without thought and without movement,  
 But it would still abide  
 On the surface of the earth with great benefit. IV.19

Likewise, the perfect Buddha who appears in their own mind  
 (Which is stainless [through] confidence and such  
 And has cultivated the qualities such as confidence),  
 Is endowed with the major and minor marks, IV.20

Performs the various forms of conduct  
 (Walking, standing,  
 Sitting, and lying),  
 Speaks the dharma of peace, IV.21

Rests silently in meditative equipoise,  
 Performs all kinds of miraculous displays,  
 And whose deeds possess great splendor  
 Is seen by sentient beings. IV.22

Having seen it, those who wish for it  
 Make efforts for the sake of buddhahood  
 And, through adopting its causes,  
 Attain the state they wish for. IV.23

This appearance is very much  
 Without thought and without movement,  
 But it nevertheless abides  
 In the world with great benefit. IV.24

Ordinary beings do not understand  
 That this is an appearance in their own minds.  
 Nevertheless, to see this form  
 Becomes meaningful for them. IV.25

Gradually, based on seeing that [appearance],  
 Those who dwell in this yāna  
 Will see the inner kāya of the genuine dharma  
 Through their eye of wisdom. IV.26

(2) The [detailed] explanation consists of [the two verses beginning with]  
 “Suppose the entire earth became free from other desolate places and  
 were a surface.”

Suppose the entire earth became free from other desolate places and  
were a surface

Of stainless, clear, and beautiful beryl, with the stainless qualities of  
a jewel, splendid, and even.

Because of its purity, the forms of the array of the abode of the lord  
of gods, the lord of gods [himself], and [other] gods would appear  
in it,

But since these qualities of the earth would gradually be lost, [those  
reflections] would disappear again. IV.27

In order [to attain] this state, the assemblies of men and women who  
observe the rules of fasting

And spiritual discipline and are oriented toward generosity and such,  
with an aspiring mind, would strew flowers and so on.

Likewise, for the sake of attaining [the state of] the lord of sages who  
appears in their minds, which resemble a pure beryl,

The children of the victors give rise to the mind-sets [of awakening]  
with a joyful mind. IV.28

(3) The distinct explanation consists of [the two verses beginning with]  
“Just as on the pure ground of beryl.”

Just as on the pure ground of beryl

The reflection of the body of the lord of gods appears,

So on the pure ground of the minds of beings,

The reflection of the body of the lord of sages dawns. IV.29

The appearance and disappearance of this reflection manifests for  
beings

Through the power of their own minds manifesting in a clear or  
turbid way.

Just as the appearance of a reflection in the worlds,

It is likewise not regarded as existing and perishing. IV.30

There are also assertions [of the division of these verses] in other forms by  
other scholars, but this is the way Parahita asserts it.

### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.2. Establishing [enlightened activity] by way of the example of a drum

This has four parts:

1. Establishing it as being without thoughts
2. Removing disputational flaws with regard to this example
3. Establishing that the Buddha's speech is more eminent than a golden drum
4. Instruction on the Buddha's speech's being all-pervading and its not being the flaw of that speech if I do not hear it

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.2.1. Establishing it as being without thoughts

This has three parts: (1) [brief] introduction, (2) [detailed] explanation, and (3) distinct explanation. (1) The [brief] introduction consists of [the three verses beginning with] "Just as among the gods, through the power."

Just as among the gods, through the power  
Of the previous pure [karma] of the gods  
And without effort, location,  
Mind, form, and conception, IV.31

The drum of dharma again and again  
Summons all the heedless gods  
Through the sounds "impermanence,"  
"Suffering," "lack of self," and "peace," IV.32

So the all-pervading lord, despite being free from effort  
And so on, pervades all beings  
Without exception with his buddha voice  
And thus teaches the dharma to those who are suitable. IV.33

Here, [the phrase] "without effort" [in IV.31c] refers to the explanation of the dharma's lacking any effort.<sup>292</sup> "Location" refers to the locations of the sounds [of dharma] arising, such as the tongue, the palate, and the teeth. "Mind, form" refers to form's having a mental nature during the explanation of the dharma. "Conception" refers to the thought "[Wouldn't it be good] if I explained the dharma?" {515} These four [phrases] match the section [that contains the phrases] "free from effort" and so on in the context of the meaning [of this example in IV.35ab] below.



(2) The [detailed] explanation consists of [the two verses beginning with] “Just as the sound of the drum of the gods.”

Just as the sound of the drum of the gods  
 Among the gods arises from their own karma,  
 So the sage’s teaching of the dharma  
 [In] the world arises from [the world’s] own karma. IV.34

Just as [the drum’s] sound, free from effort, location,  
 Body, and mind, brings forth peace,  
 So this dharma devoid of effort  
 And so on brings forth peace. IV.35<sup>2293</sup>

[The phrase] “free from effort, location, body, and mind” [in IV.35ab] corresponds to the explanation [in the brief introduction] above.

(3) The distinct explanation consists of [the verse beginning with] “Just as, in the city of the gods, the arising of the cause of the sound of this drum grants them fearlessness.”

Just as, in the city of the gods, the arising of the cause<sup>2294</sup> of the sound  
 of this drum grants them fearlessness  
 So that they dispel the victorious [war]play of the forces of the asuras  
 when engaging in troubling battle,  
 So the arising of the cause of the dhyānas, formless [absorptions],  
 and so, on in the worlds  
 Expresses the manner of the unsurpassable path that destroys the  
 afflictions and pacifies the suffering of sentient beings. IV.36

2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.2.2. Removing disputational flaws [with regard to this example]

This consists of [RGVV’s passage] “Why does [this example] here refer [only] to the drum of dharma . . .”

2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.2.3. Establishing that the Buddha’s speech is more eminent than a golden drum

[This is introduced by RGVV’s passage] “In brief, by virtue of being similar to the drum of dharma . . .” [In the root text,] it is briefly introduced through one verse and explained in detail through four.

Since it is universal, beneficial, pleasant,  
 And endowed with the three miraculous displays,  
 The voice of the sage is more eminent  
 Than the cymbals of divine substance. IV.37

The great sound of the drum among the gods  
 Does not reach the hearing of those dwelling on earth,  
 [But] the sound of the drum of the Buddha reaches  
 [Even] those in the saṃsāric worlds below the earth. IV.38

Among the gods, the many myriads of divine cymbals  
 Sound [only] for the sake of kindling the fire of desire,  
 [But] the single voice of those whose character is compassion  
 Manifests for the sake of pacifying the fire of suffering. IV.39

The beautiful and pleasing sounds of the cymbals among the gods  
 Are the causes for increasing mind's agitation,  
 [But] the voice of the tathāgatas whose character is compassion  
 Encourages the intention of entrusting the mind to samādhi. IV.40

In brief, in all worldly realms without exception,  
 What is the cause of happiness of gods and those who dwell on earth  
 Is stated with reference to this voice  
 That appears pervasively in all worlds without exception. IV.41

Among the [four verses that explain this in detail], the first verse explains that [the Buddha's speech] resounds for all beings. The second one explains that [it resounds] in order to bring peace. The third one explains that [it resounds] in order to bring happiness. The fourth one explains that it is endowed with the three [kinds of] miraculous display. Since [the author of] the commentary had in mind that the three [kinds of] miraculous display are difficult [to understand], he explained them.<sup>2295</sup>

2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.2.4. Instruction on the Buddha's speech's being all-pervading and its not being the flaw of that speech if I do not hear it [This is introduced by RGVV's passage] "Thus, the sphere of the Buddha's voice . . ." <sup>2296</sup> Based on this connecting [passage] in the commentary, an [underlying] dispute should be understood.<sup>2297</sup>

Just as those deprived of ears  
 Do not experience subtle sounds  
 And not all [sounds] become audible  
 Even for divine ears, IV.42

So the subtle dharma, the sphere  
 Of the most acute wisdom,  
 Also becomes audible only  
 For those whose minds are not afflicted. IV.43

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.3. The example of clouds

This has four points, which are to be understood according to [RGVV's] connecting [passages]. (1) Establishing [enlightened activity] as being without thoughts is briefly explained through two verses and explained [in detail] through two.

Just as in the rainy season  
 Clouds—the cause of abundant harvests—  
 Effortlessly and continuously rain down  
 Their masses of water on the earth, IV.44

So the rain of the water of the genuine dharma of the victor—  
 The cause of the harvest of virtue of beings—  
 Showers down without a thought  
 From the clouds of compassion. IV.45

Just as clouds, arisen from wind, pour down rainwater  
 If the world engages in the path of virtue,  
 So, because the wind of loving-kindness increases the virtue of beings,  
 The rain of the genuine dharma showers down from the cloud of the  
 Buddha. IV.46

In [all saṃsāric] existences, [bearing] great knowledge and  
 loving-kindness,  
 Abiding in the center of the sky without being tainted by what is  
 changing and unchanging,  
 And containing the stainless waters of samādhi and dhāraṇī within it,  
 The cloud of the lord of sages is the cause of the harvest of virtue.  
 IV.47

[(2) Establishing the vessels of enlightened activity as being different in measure is explained through two verses.]<sup>2298</sup>

Just as the water that is released from clouds  
Is cool, sweet, clear, soft, and light  
[But] turns into [water with] a great many tastes  
Due to connecting with places on earth full of salt and so on, IV.48

So the rainwater of the eightfold [path of the] noble ones  
That is released from being contained in the vast cloud of  
loving-kindness,  
Due to the differences in the places that are the mind streams of  
beings,  
Is endowed with many kinds of tastes. IV.49<sup>2299</sup>

(3) That [enlightened activity] manifests indifferently is [briefly] introduced through one verse and explained [in detail] through two.

Those who are open, those who are intermediate,  
And those who are hostile toward the highest yāna,  
These three groups of [beings], respectively, resemble  
Humans, peacocks, and hungry ghosts. IV.50

At the end of spring, when there are no clouds, humans and the birds  
that do not roam the sky  
[Suffer], while hungry ghosts suffer when rain showers down on earth  
in the summertime.

Similarly, due to the water of the dharma of the cloud banks of  
compassion not appearing and appearing,  
Those in the world who desire the dharma and those who are hostile  
toward the dharma [suffer respectively as in] this example. IV.51

When raining down thick drops and bringing down hail and  
lightning,  
Clouds are indifferent toward subtle creatures and those who travel  
rocky terrains.

Likewise, the cloud of knowledge and loving-kindness, through its  
subtle and vast means, methods, and manners,

Is indifferent in all respects toward those with afflictions and those with the latent tendencies of views about a self. IV.52

[(4) That enlightened activity pacifies suffering is briefly introduced through one verse and explained in detail through two verses.]<sup>2300</sup>

In this saṃsāric being born and dying without beginning and end,<sup>2301</sup> the paths of beings are of five kinds.

Just as there is no sweet scent in excrement, there is no happiness in these five [kinds of] beings.

The suffering of this [saṃsāra] is constant and as if arising from contact with fire, weapons, snow,<sup>2302</sup> salt, and so on.

It is from the cloud of compassion that the great rain of the genuine dharma that pacifies this [suffering] showers down. IV.53

Since they realize that gods suffer from dying and humans from searching [for objects of desire],

Those with prajñā do not even wish for the supreme powerful states of gods and humans.

For by following their prajñā and their confidence in the Tathāgata's words,

They see with their wisdom that "this is suffering, this is [its] cause, and this is [its] cessation." IV.54

Just as a disease is to be known, the cause of the disease is to be relinquished,

The state of well-being is to be attained, and medicine is to be relied upon,

Suffering, [its] cause, its cessation, and likewise the path, respectively, Are to be known, to be relinquished, to be reached, and to be relied upon. IV.55

2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.4. Establishing [enlightened activity] by way of the example of Brahmā

This has two parts. [(1)<sup>2303</sup> Establishing enlightened activity as not moving away from the dharmakāya is briefly introduced through two verses and explained in detail through two verses.]

Just as Brahmā, while not moving away  
 From the abode of Brahmā,  
 Effortlessly displays [his] appearance  
 In all the abodes of the gods, IV.56

So the sage, without moving away  
 From the dharmakāya,  
 Effortlessly displays himself to the suitable  
 Through emanations in all realms. IV.57

Just as Brahmā never moves away from his palace and yet his  
 manifestation in the desire realm  
 Is seen by the gods, with this seeing relinquishing their delight in  
 objects,  
 So the Sugata does not move away from the dharmakāya and yet is  
 seen by the suitable  
 In all worlds,<sup>2304</sup> with this seeing always eliminating all their stains.  
 IV.58

Just as, through the power of his own previous  
 Aspiration prayers and the virtues of the gods,  
 Brahmā appears without effort,  
 So does the self-arisen nirmāṇakāya. IV.59

[(2) Establishing it as being invisible for certain beings is explained through  
 one verse.]

Descending [from Tuṣita], entering into a womb, being born,  
 arriving at his father's palace,  
 Engaging in sports, living in solitude, vanquishing Māra,  
 Finding great awakening, and teaching the path to the city<sup>2305</sup> of peace—  
 Displaying [such feats], the sage does not reach the eyes of the  
 unsuitable. IV.60

[2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.5. The example of the sun

This has four parts:] (1) establishing [enlightened activity] as being with-  
 out thoughts, (2) establishing it as indifferent,<sup>2306</sup> (3) establishing it as  
 functioning in accordance with [different] vessels, and (4) establishing the  
 light of the Buddha as being more eminent than the light of the sun. [(1)

Establishing enlightened activity as being without thoughts is briefly introduced through one verse and explained in detail through two verses.]<sup>2307</sup>

Just as when the sun strikes them, lotuses and so on bloom  
 And kumuda [flowers] close at the very same time  
 [While] the sun does not think about the blooming and closing of these  
 Water-born [flowers] as being a quality or a flaw, so the sun of the  
 noble one here [does not think thus either]. IV.61

Just as the sun, without thoughts  
 And through the simultaneous radiating of its own light,  
 Causes lotuses to bloom  
 And other [plants] to ripen, IV.62

So the light rays of the genuine dharma  
 Of the sun of the Tathāgata  
 Engage, without thoughts,  
 The lotuses of the persons to be guided. IV.63

(2) Establishing it as indifferent consists of the two verses [beginning with] “With the two kāyas of dharma and form.”

With the two kāyas of dharma and form  
 Rising in the sky of the heart of awakening,  
 The sun of omniscience radiates  
 Its rays of wisdom onto beings. IV.64

Because of this, in all the receptacles of pure water  
 That are [the minds of] those to be guided,  
 The immeasurable reflections of the sun  
 Of the Sugata appear simultaneously. IV.65

[(3) Establishing it as functioning in accordance with different vessels is introduced by RGVV’s passage]<sup>2308</sup> “Thus, though they are without thoughts, the buddhas . . .” [In the root text,] it is briefly introduced through the first verse and explained in detail through the second.

[Though] always pervading everything  
 In the sphere of the sky of the dharmadhātu,

The sun of the Buddha shines down on the mountains  
Of those to be guided as is appropriate. IV.66

Just as the rising sun here with its thousands of vast light rays  
Illuminates the entire world and gradually  
Shines down on high, middling, and low mountains,  
The sun of the victor gradually shines down on the hosts of sentient  
beings. IV.67

(4) Establishing that the light of the Buddha is more eminent than the light of the sun consists of the two verses [that begin with] “The sun does not pervade all realms or the [entire] sphere of the sky.”

The sun does not pervade all realms or the [entire] sphere<sup>2309</sup> of the sky,  
Nor does it show [all] knowable objects enveloped in the darkness of  
ignorance,  
But those whose character is compassion and who, with an  
abundance of light that radiates in all kinds of colors,  
Illuminate [everything] show [all] knowable objects to beings. IV.68

When the buddhas enter a city, people who have no eyes [can] see,  
Are free from the host of what is meaningless, and experience the  
[true] actuality by virtue of their seeing.  
Also, the minds of those blinded by ignorance, who have fallen into  
the ocean of [saṃsāric] existence and are obscured by the darkness  
of views,  
Are illuminated by the sunlight of the buddhas and see matters  
unseen [before]. IV.69

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.6. The example of a jewel

This has two parts: (1) establishing [enlightened activity] as being nonconceptual and (2) establishing it as difficult to find. The first one is [briefly] introduced through one verse and explained [in detail] through two.

Just as a wish-fulfilling jewel,  
Though it is without a thought,  
Simultaneously and individually fulfills  
All intentions of those who dwell in its sphere, IV.70



So those of different intentions, relying  
 On the wish-fulfilling jewel of the Buddha,  
 Hear all kinds of dharma,  
 But he does not think about them. IV.71

Just as the precious jewel without thoughts  
 Effortlessly grants others their desired wealth,  
 So the sage always remains without effort as is appropriate  
 For the sake of others for as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts. IV.72

That it is difficult to find [is explained through] one verse.

Just as it is very hard for those who desire it to find an excellent gem  
 In this world, be it located in the ocean or below the earth,  
 So the sight of a sugata should be understood as something hard to  
 find  
 In these minds of very unsuitable beings who are in the grip of the  
 afflictions. IV.73

2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2.7.-9. The examples of an echo, space, and the earth  
 {516} These three have only one [verse on the] example and one [verse on  
 the] meaning each.

Just as the sound of an echo  
 Arises from the cognizance of others,  
 Is without thought, unfabricated,  
 And abides neither inside nor outside, IV.74

So the voice of the Tathāgata  
 Arises from the cognizance of others,  
 Is without thought, unfabricated,<sup>2310</sup>  
 And abides neither inside nor outside. IV.75

Though it has not the slightest [substance], is without appearance,  
 Without focal object, without support,  
 Beyond the pathway of the eyes,  
 Formless, and indemonstrable, IV.76

Highs and lows are seen in space,  
 But it is not like that.  
 Likewise, everything can be seen in the buddhas,  
 But they are not like that. IV.77

Just as all that arises from the earth  
 Comes to grow, depend on, and expand  
 Through relying on the earth that is without thoughts,<sup>2311</sup> IV.78

So the roots of virtue of beings  
 Come to grow without exception  
 By relying on the earth of a perfect buddha  
 Who is without thoughts. IV.79

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.3. The purpose of stating these examples

This has two parts. The first verse [beginning with] “Since some<sup>2312</sup> do not see that activity” represents the temporary purpose.

Since some do not see that activity  
 [Can be] performed without effort,  
 The nine kinds of examples were taught  
 In order to cut through the doubts of those to be guided. IV.80

As for the meaning of this, you may wonder, “What purpose is there in stating nine examples in these ways?” About this, one may think that if the Buddha is without arising and ceasing, this contradicts his appearing as arising and ceasing. If he has arising and ceasing, this contradicts his being unconditioned. Also, if the Buddha does not have thoughts, this contradicts his promoting the welfare of sentient beings. If he promotes the welfare of sentient beings, this contradicts his not having thoughts. The meaning of [the response] to this is that the doubts of those to be guided are cut through by virtue of teaching the nine examples of there being no contradiction between being unconditioned and having arising and ceasing as well as between not having thoughts and promoting the welfare of sentient beings.

The ultimate purpose is taught by the three verses after that:

The purpose of this is taught  
 By the very name of the sūtra collection

In which these nine examples  
Are taught in detail. IV.81

The intelligent who are adorned  
With this vast light of the wisdom  
That arises from study will swiftly  
Enter the sphere of the buddhas in its entirety. IV.82

To that end, the nine kinds of examples  
Of Śakra's reflection on beryl  
And so on were discussed. The [following]  
Identify their summarized meanings— IV.83

As for the meaning of this, through having studied the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* (the sūtra that teaches that there is no contradiction between lacking arising and ceasing and appearing as arising and ceasing as well as between not having thoughts and promoting the welfare of sentient beings), the ornament of the light of the prajñā that arises from study will arise. Through reflecting about the meaning of that and familiarizing with this meaning through [the prajñā] that arises from meditation, finally, the realization of the wisdom of all buddha qualities arises. [Thus,] the nine examples are taught for the sake of both these purposes.

2.2.2.2.4.3.2.4. Explanation by matching them with the meaning at hand  
You may wonder, “What is the meaning at hand in terms of teaching the nine examples in this way?” [In response] to that, [it is said that] the meaning at hand—there being no contradiction between not having thoughts and promoting the welfare of sentient beings as well as between lacking arising and ceasing and appearing as arising and ceasing—is taught by these nine meanings [in IV.84 (such as “display”)] that are illustrated by the nine examples. This has two parts: (1) [brief] introduction and (2) [detailed] explanation. (1) [The brief introduction] consists of two verses:

The display, the instruction, the all-pervasiveness,  
The emanation, the radiance of wisdom,  
The secrets of body, speech, and mind,  
And the attainment of those whose character is compassion. IV.84

The nonconceptual mind [of the Buddha],  
 In which the entire stream of effort is at peace,  
 Resembles the appearance of the reflection  
 Of Śakra in stainless beryl and so on. IV.85

Here, [the nine phrases] “the display,<sup>2313</sup> the instruction . . .” in the first verse represent the subject. [The line] “in which the entire stream of effort is at peace” represents the thesis, “engage in the welfare of sentient beings with [all] effort being at peace.” The one line of verse after that<sup>2314</sup> is to be taken as the reason. The following two lines of verse are the examples.

(2) [The detailed explanation consists of the two verses] below, explaining that “the thesis is ‘effort is at peace’” [and so on]:

The thesis is “effort is at peace,”  
 The reason is “the nonconceptual mind,”  
 And the examples in order to establish the meaning  
 Of this nature are “the form of Śakra” and so on. IV.86

Here, the meaning at hand is this:  
 The nine kinds [of features] such as “display”  
 Manifest without the teacher’s being born or dying  
 And in an effortless manner. I.87

[The verse that begins with] “Here, the meaning at hand is this”<sup>2315</sup> means the following. You [the opponent] say, “If [the Buddha] has no thoughts, the welfare of sentient beings will not come about.” I [Maitreya] retort that it is not contradictory that the welfare of sentient beings is promoted despite [the Buddha’s] not having thoughts. You say, “If he lacks arising and ceasing, appearing as arising and ceasing will not come about.” I [Maitreya] retort that it is not contradictory to appear as arising and ceasing despite lacking arising and ceasing. [Thus,] the meaning in the context of us two debating is established here.

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.5. Establishing the concordances between the examples and their meanings

{517} This has three parts: (1) brief introduction, (2) detailed explanation, and (3) removing disputational flaws. (1) The brief introduction consists of the first verse [that begins with] “The one who, like Indra, a drum, and clouds.”<sup>2316</sup>

The one who, like Indra, a drum, and clouds,  
 Like Brahmā, the sun, and the precious king of wish-fulfilling jewels,  
 Like an echo, space, and the earth, promotes the welfare of others  
 Without effort for as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts is the knower  
 of yoga. IV.88

(2) The detailed explanation consists of [the three verses beginning with]  
 “The display [of his body] resembles the lord of the gods appearing in a  
 jewel.”

The display [of his body] resembles the lord of the gods appearing  
 in a jewel.

His excellently giving instructions is like the drum of the gods.  
 The cloud banks of the all-pervading lord’s great knowledge and  
 loving-kindness  
 Pervade infinite numbers of beings up through the Peak of  
 Existence. IV.89

Like Brahmā, without moving from his uncontaminated abode,  
 He displays himself as many kinds of emanations.  
 Similar to the sun, the light of his wisdom radiates.  
 His mind resembles a pure and precious wish-fulfilling jewel. IV.90

Like an echo, the voice of the victors is without syllables.  
 Similar to space, their body is pervasive, formless, and permanent.  
 Resembling the earth,<sup>2317</sup> in every respect, the buddhabhūmi serves  
 as the basis of all the medicines without exception that are the  
 bright dharmas of beings. IV.91

(3) Removing disputational flaws has two parts: (a) disputes and (b)  
 answers. (a) There are two disputes. First, [it may be asked,] “Through this  
 description of yours of the similarities between the examples and their  
 meanings, how is there a similarity to the Buddha’s not existing as arising  
 and ceasing and yet appearing as arising and ceasing?” This question  
 [corresponds to RGVV’s passage] “Why are the buddha bhagavāns . . .  
 arising and disappearing?” [Second, it may be asked, “Through these nine  
 examples, how is there a similarity to the Buddha’s not having thoughts and  
 yet promoting the welfare of sentient beings?” This question corresponds

to RGVV's passage "Why are the buddha bhagavāns . . . uninterrupted and effortless buddha activity for all beings?"<sup>2318</sup>

(b) As for the answers to that, [the answer to the first dispute is given by the two verses that begin with "The purity in the beryl-like mind":]

The purity in the beryl-like mind  
Is the cause for seeing the Buddha.  
This purity is the flourishing  
Of the faculty of irreversible confidence. IV.92

Owing to the arising and disappearing of virtue,  
The form of the Buddha arises and disappears,  
[But] just like Śakra, in terms of the dharmakāya,  
There is no arising or disappearing of the sage. IV.93

The answer [to the second dispute] is given by the one verse [that begins with] "Likewise, in an effortless manner":

Likewise, in an effortless manner,  
His activity, such as displaying [his body], manifests  
From the dharmakāya, which lacks arising and ceasing,  
For as long as [saṃsāric] existence remains. IV.94

"Likewise" refers to "like the form of Śakra and so on being without thoughts and yet promoting the welfare of sentient beings." "Displaying" in [the phrase] "his activity, such as displaying" refers to displaying the essence of his completely pure body. "Such as" refers to the summary of the detailed version "the display,"<sup>2319</sup> the instruction, the all-pervasiveness . . ." [in IV.84 above].

#### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.6. The reasons for the definite order of the nine examples

This has two parts:

- 1) [Brief] introduction
- 2) [Detailed] explanation

##### 2.2.2.2.4.3.2.6.1. [Brief] introduction

This consists of the one verse [that begins with] "This is the summarized meaning.":

This is the summarized meaning  
 Of these examples, and they are discussed  
 In this order by way of the latter ones  
 Eliminating the dissimilarities of the former. IV.95

The meaning of this is as follows. Among the examples, each latter one is a better [example of the enlightened activity of the Tathāgata] than the former. Therefore, among them, [the example of] the earth is the best, so the earth resembles the Tathāgata [and his enlightened activity the most]. Since the Tathāgata represents the ultimate relinquishment and wisdom, it is taught [in the detailed explanation below that just as the earth is the ground for everything,] the Buddha is the foundation of all mundane and supramundane qualities. Consequently, in order to teach that [he and his enlightened activity] are more eminent than śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, [the examples] are taught in this way. Hence, [this verse] says: “In this order by way of the latter ones eliminating the dissimilarities<sup>2320</sup> of the former.” This means that since each latter example teaches a better similarity [to enlightened activity] than the former, [this activity of] the Buddha is taught to be better [than each preceding example] by way of relinquishing [all] the former examples of [this activity of] the Buddha<sup>2321</sup> [that match it only partially].

#### [2.2.2.2.4.3.2.6.2. Detailed explanation]

The [eight] half [verses] below and the [two verses] thereafter represent the [nine] points of the entire detailed explanation [of the reasons for the definite order of the nine examples]:

Buddhahood is like [Śakra’s] reflection and yet  
 Is dissimilar in that [the latter] is not endowed with a voice.  
 [In having a voice,] it is like the drum of the gods and yet is dissimilar  
 In that [the latter] does not promote the welfare [of beings] in every  
 way. IV.96

[In performing such welfare,] it is similar to a great cloud and yet is  
 dissimilar  
 In that [the latter] does not relinquish the seeds of what is  
 meaningless.  
 [In relinquishing these seeds,] it resembles Mahābrahmā and yet is  
 dissimilar  
 In that [the latter] does not mature [beings] completely. IV.97

[In completely maturing,] it is like the form of the sun and yet is dissimilar

In that [the latter] does not overcome darkness completely.

[In dispelling darkness,] it is similar to a wish-fulfilling jewel and yet is dissimilar

In that [the latter's] occurrence is not [as] difficult to find. IV.98

It resembles an echo and yet is dissimilar

In that [the latter] arises from conditions.

It is similar to space and yet is dissimilar

In that [the latter] is not the basis of virtue. IV.99

Since it is the foundation for the abiding

Of all mundane and supramundane

Excellences of beings without exception,

It is similar to the maṇḍala of the earth. IV.100

Since the supramundane path arises

On the basis of the awakening of the buddhas,

The path of virtuous actions, the dhyānas,

The immeasurables, and the formless [absorptions] originate. IV.101

If you wonder how [the meaning of the brief introduction] is discussed, it is explained now in detail. Buddhahood is like Śakra's reflection. "Does it resemble [buddhahood] in every respect?" It is dissimilar in that the reflection of Śakra is not endowed with a voice that speaks the dharma. Therefore, it is stated that buddhahood is better than this example. You may say, "Since the explanation of the dharma arises from the drum [of the gods, buddhahood] is similar to that golden drum [of the gods]." [The phrase] "it is like the drum of the gods" teaches that this latter example is better than the former one. {518} "Does it resemble [buddhahood] in every respect?" That drum is dissimilar in that the golden drum does not promote the welfare [of beings] at every time. Therefore, it is stated that buddhahood is better than this example. The same also applies for the remaining [examples].

This completes the explanation of enlightened activity.



## *Explanation of the Section on the Benefit*

### 2.2.2.2.5. The benefit

Now, the fifth<sup>2322</sup> point—the benefit of great faith—is explained. You may wonder, “Among the seven equal vajra points, why does [the text] not explain the benefit of faith in the three points that make up the results but explains the benefit of faith in the four points that make up the causes?” Through explaining the benefit of faith in the four points that make up the causes, others who engage in these four causes will attain the results that consist of the three jewels. Therefore, [the benefit] is explained with regard to the causes. Or, since all seven vajra points are one as the inexpressible nature that is the essence of the nature of phenomena, the explanation of the benefit of faith in the four points that make up the causes becomes [an explanation of] faith in the three points that make up their<sup>2323</sup> results too. Consequently, the benefit [of faith] is not explained with regard to the three points that make up the results. “However, in that case, since an explanation of faith in the three points that make up the results would also be an explanation [of that benefit] with regard to the four points that make up the causes, why is [that benefit] not explained in the context of the results?” Because this was [just] one part [of the treatise] and the treatise was not completed, [whereas] here the treatise is completed.

This has two points:

1. The actual benefit of faith
2. Instruction on the fruition of the treatise

#### 2.2.2.2.5.1. The actual benefit of faith

This has three parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Distinct explanation

The first one consists of six verses; the second one, of two; and the third one, of seven.

##### 2.2.2.2.5.1.1. [Brief] introduction

This has four points: (1) the object in which one has faith, (2) the persons who have faith, (3) the essence of faith, and (4) the benefit of faith. (1) “In

which object does one have faith?" [This is answered in] the first verse and [the phrase] "have faith in this object<sup>2324</sup> of the victors" [in V.2a]:

The buddha element, buddha awakening,  
The buddha attributes, and buddha activity  
Are inconceivable even for pure sentient beings—  
They are the sphere of the guides [alone]. V.1

The intelligent who have faith in this object of the victors  
Become the vessels for the collection of buddha qualities.  
Through desiring the collection of inconceivable qualities,  
They outshine the merit of all sentient beings. V.2

(2) "Which persons<sup>2325</sup> have faith?" "The intelligent," that is, the bodhisattvas. (3) As for the essence of faith, [line V.2c] "through desiring the collection of inconceivable qualities" [means that] through faith in the *Uttara[tantra]* (the wishing that is congruently associated with prajñā, confidence, and striving), one ascertains the four<sup>2326</sup> vajra points [that make up the causes] through prajñā and thus {519} cultivates the striving of wishing to attain them by way of [this striving's] being preceded by a special open-minded confidence in these four points. (4) The benefit of faith has two parts: (a) the benefit of buddhahood's serving as the vessel for all qualities and (b) the benefit of its outshining [all] merit of sentient beings. The first one corresponds to [line V.2b] "become the vessels for the collection of qualities." The second one corresponds to [line V.2d] "they outshine the attainment of merit of all sentient beings . . ."

You may wonder, "How does one know that they outshine the merit of all sentient beings?" [This has two parts]: being established through scripture and being established by way of reasoning. First, this is established through a scriptural passage from the *Akṣayamati[nirdeśasūtra]*, which consists of the three verses [starting with] "If some who strive for awakening were to always offer golden [realms] adorned with jewels":

If some who strive for awakening were to always offer golden  
[realms] adorned with jewels,  
Equal [in number] to the particles in [all] buddha realms, to the  
dharma kings every day,  
While some others were to hear [just] one word of this [dharma]  
and, upon hearing it, were to have faith in it,

These [latter ones] would attain far more merit than the virtue  
arising from [such] generosity. V.3

If some intelligent ones who desire unsurpassable wakening were  
to effortlessly

Maintain immaculate discipline with body, speech, and mind for  
many eons,

While some others were to hear [just] one word of this [dharma]  
and, upon hearing it, were to have faith in it,

These [latter ones] would attain far more merit than the virtue  
arising from [such] discipline. V.4

If some were absorbed here in the dhyānas that extinguish the fire  
of the afflictions of the three existences

And were to arrive at the perfection of the [meditative] states of the  
gods and Brahmā, thus having cultivated the immutable means  
for perfect awakening,

While some others were to hear [just] one word of this [dharma]  
and, upon hearing it, were to have faith in it,

These [latter ones] would attain far more merit than the virtue  
arising from such dhyānas. V.5

These three [verses] represent the words of a scriptural passage [from this  
sūtra] that have been adopted [by Maitreya] as his own verses.<sup>2327</sup>

[That bodhisattvas outshine the merit of all sentient beings] is [also]  
established through reasoning, which consists of the one verse [that begins  
with] “Since generosity”:

Since generosity [just] accomplishes wealth,

Discipline [just accomplishes] higher realms, and meditation [just]  
relinquishes the afflictions,

While prajñā relinquishes all afflictive and cognitive [obscurations],

It is supreme, and its cause is to study this [dharma]. V.6

This means that through the triad of generosity, discipline, and meditation,  
one attains only mere temporary happiness. However, through prajñā, one is  
joined with ultimate happiness, and the cause of prajñā is to study<sup>2328</sup> the four  
vajra points [that make up the causes]. [Here,] meditation is to be understood  
as calm abiding [as opposed to the prajñā of superior insight]. Now [follows:]

## 2.2.2.2.5.1.2. [Detailed] explanation

With regard to the foundation, its change,  
 Its qualities, and the accomplishment of welfare,  
 These four aspects of the object of the knowledge  
 Of the victors as they were described, V.7

The intelligent have faith in [the foundation's] existing,  
 [Its change's] being possible, and its being endowed with qualities.  
 Therefore, they swiftly become suitable  
 To attain the state of a tathāgata. V.8

This has four points. (1) The object in which one has faith [corresponds to] the first verse [that begins with] “With regard to the foundation, its change.” (2) “Which persons have faith?” “The intelligent.” (3) As for the essence of faith, “existing” refers to determining the trust in the existence of the four [vajra] points [that make up the causes], that is, having trusting confidence. [The phrase] “[its change's] being possible” refers to one's being able to attain these four [points], that is, having longing confidence. [The phrase] “have faith in its being endowed with qualities” refers to sentient beings' being open-minded [toward] these four points through understanding that they possess qualities, that is, having open-minded confidence. The essence of these three [kinds of] confidence's being congruently associated with openness, striving, and prajñā is as explained above. (4) The benefit of faith is to be understood as the half verse following this. Now [follows:]

## 2.2.2.2.5.1.3. Distinct explanation

They are full of confident faith, [thinking,]  
 “This inconceivable object  
 Exists, can be attained by someone like me,  
 And this attainment possesses such qualities.” V.9

Therefore, bodhicitta—the receptacle  
 Of qualities such as striving, vigor,  
 Mindfulness, dhyāna, prajñā, and so on—  
 Is present in them at all times. V.10

Since that [bodhicitta] is always present,  
 The children of the victors are irreversible  
 And reach the completion  
 And purity of the pāramitā of merit. V.11

Merit refers to the [first] five pāramitās,  
 Its completion is due to being nonconceptual  
 About it in terms of the three aspects, and its purity  
 Is because of relinquishing its antagonistic factors. V.12

Generosity is the merit that arises from giving,  
 Discipline is what arises from discipline,  
 The pair of patience and dhyāna  
 Arises from meditation, and vigor is present in all. V.13

Conceptions in terms of the three spheres  
 Are asserted as the cognitive obscurations.  
 Conceptions such as miserliness  
 Are held to be the afflictive obscurations. V.14

Other than prajñā, there is no other cause  
 For relinquishing these [obscurations].  
 Therefore, prajñā is the highest one, and its basis  
 Is study, so study is supreme [too]. V.15

This also has four parts. (1) “In which object does one have faith?” [This corresponds to the phrase] “this inconceivable object.” (2) The persons are supplemented here, just as above. (3) The essence of faith corresponds [to the remaining lines of V.9] as above, [with the phrase] “exists” referring to trusting confidence; [the phrase] “can be attained by someone like me,” to longing confidence; and [the phrases] “this attainment possesses such qualities” and “they are full of confident faith,” to open-minded confidence. (4) The benefit of faith has three parts. (a) The benefit of generating bodhicitta, which is the receptacle of all qualities, corresponds to the one verse [that begins with] “Therefore, bodhicitta—the receptacle.” {520} (b) The benefit of bodhisattvas who have generated bodhicitta not [having to] revert to saṃsāra corresponds to the half verse following that. (c) The benefit of irreversible bodhisattvas’ completing the two accumulations and [these accumulations’] having become pure corresponds to the remainder

[of the above verses starting with] “and reach the completion . . . ,” which are connected through one’s elaborating on the other.

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2. Instruction on the fruition of the treatise

This has two parts:

1. Detailed explanation
2. Instruction by summarizing the meaning

##### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1. Detailed explanation

This has nine points:

1. Instruction on the basis on which and the reason or the purpose for which [this treatise] is composed
2. Instruction on the example according to which it is composed
3. Instruction on [the features] through which<sup>2329</sup> the topics [of this treatise] are explained
4. Instruction on this treatise composed by [Maitreya] himself being a result that is concordant with its cause
5. Instruction on the means to protect oneself
- [6. Instruction on the causes for one’s deviating from the mahāyāna dharma]
7. Instruction on the results of such deviating<sup>2330</sup>
8. Requesting poised readiness within the maṇḍala of the retinue
9. Dedication of the roots of virtue

##### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1.1. [Instruction on] the basis on which and the reason or the purpose for which [this treatise] is composed

This consists of one verse:

Thus, on the basis of trustworthy scriptures and reasoning,  
I expounded this [treatise] in order to purify just myself  
And also for the sake of supporting those whose minds  
Are endowed with faith and fulfillment of virtue. V.16

You may think, “Based on what was the composition of this *Uttaratantra* made?” [In response] to that, [the line] “thus, on the basis of trustworthy scriptures and reasoning” refers to the [primary] scripture that preceded [this composition] or the scripture that [was used for this] composition as being the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. The ordinary or secondary scriptures are the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and so on. You may think, “For which<sup>2331</sup> reason

or which purpose was this treatise composed?" [The answer] to that consists of the three lines of verse [that begin with] "I expounded this [treatise] in order to." Now [follows:]

2.2.2.2.5.2.1.2. The instruction on the example according to which it is composed

Just as those with eyes [can] see in dependence on  
A lamp, lightning, a jewel, the sun, and the moon,  
So I expounded this [treatise] in dependence on the sage  
Who radiates the self-confidence of the dharma of great meaning. V.17

You may think, "In accordance with which example is this treatise of yours explained?" [The answer] to that consists of the one verse [that begins with] "Just as those with eyes." Now [follows:]

2.2.2.2.5.2.1.3. Instruction on [the features] through which the topics [of this treatise] are explained

Any utterance that is meaningful, is connected with the dharma,  
Relinquishes the afflictions in the [three] realms,  
And teaches the benefit of peace  
Is the speech of the seer, while others are its opposite. V.18

You may wonder, "[Through] what are the topics in this treatise of yours taught?" In order to teach that the topics [of this treatise] are taught through being specified by those four distinct features, the one verse [that begins with] "Any utterance that is meaningful, is connected with" [is given]. Now [follows:]

2.2.2.2.5.2.1.4. Instruction on this treatise composed by [Maitreya] himself being a result that is concordant with its cause

Whatever is explained by those with undistracted minds  
Who are empowered by the victor, the teacher, alone  
And accords with the path of attaining liberation  
Should be respected as much as the words of the seer. V.19

Since it teaches the meaning of the words of the Buddha, these words represent a cause that is a concordant cause, and the *Uttaratantra* is the result that is concordant with that cause. In order to teach that, [the phrase] “those with undistracted minds” in the verse [that begins with] “Whatever is explained by those with undistracted minds” [means that] Maitreya did not explain [this treatise] for the sake of gain, honor, or fame because he explained it out of compassion.

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1.5. [Instruction on the means to] protect oneself

This has two parts. (1) The means to protect oneself from abandoning the mahāyāna dharma consists of the one verse [that begins with,] “In this world”:

In this world, there is no one wiser than the victor,  
 No other one who properly knows supreme true reality in its  
 entirety through his omniscience.  
 Therefore, one should not mix up the sūtra collections presented  
 by the seer himself.  
 Since this destroys the manner of the sage, it will also harm the  
 genuine dharma. V.20

(2) The means to protect oneself from the afflictions consists of the one verse [that starts with] “The entirety of deprecating the noble ones”: {521}

The entirety of deprecating the noble ones and scorning the dharma  
 taught by them  
 By those whose character is afflicted and ignorant is created by views  
 that entail clinging.  
 Therefore, one’s mind should not be mingled with what is stained  
 by views that entail clinging—  
 [Only] a clean garment can be dyed [but] not one that is tainted  
 by grease. V.21

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1.6. The causes for one’s deviating from the mahāyāna dharma

This consists of the one verse [that begins with] “Because of weak intelligence”:



Because of weak intelligence, because of lacking faith in what is pure, because of relying on false pride,  
 Because of having the character of being obscured through being destitute of the genuine dharma, because of grasping at the expedient meaning as being true reality,  
 Because of coveting gain, because of being under the sway of views, because of relying on those who discredit the dharma,  
 Because of keeping at a distance from those who maintain the dharma, and because of having inferior inclinations, the dharmas of the arhats are rejected. V.22

Here, the causes for deviating [from the mahāyāna dharma] are eight. (1) “Weak intelligence” refers to little prajñā. (2) “Lacking faith in what is pure” refers to lacking the mahāyāna disposition. (3) “Relying on false pride” refers to adopting views of extinction and thus not seeking the true actuality from the learned. (4) [The phrases] “because of having the character of being obscured through being destitute of the genuine dharma, because of grasping at the expedient meaning as being true reality” refer to having gathered the karma of being destitute of the dharma. Based on that, clinging to the expedient meaning as being the definitive meaning occurs. These two [phrases] are one cause. (5) “Because of coveting gain”<sup>2332</sup> is the fifth cause. (6) “Because of being under the sway of views” refers to having come under the sway of wrong views. This primarily refers to [mistaken] views. The above [phrase] “because of relying on false pride” primarily refers to pride. (7) “Because of relying on those who discredit the dharma” refers to relying on evil companions. (8) “Because of keeping at a distance from those who maintain the dharma” refers to not relying on mahāyāna spiritual friends. Based on these eight causes, those who “have inferior inclinations reject the dharmas of the arhats.”<sup>2333</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1.7. Instruction on the results of such deviating

This consists of the two verses [that begin with] “The wise should not be as deeply afraid”:

The wise should not be as deeply afraid of fire, terrible snake poison,  
 executioners, or lightning  
 As they should be of deviating from the profound dharma.  
 Fire, snakes, enemies, and lightning cause merely the end of one’s life,

But due to them one would not wander to the most fearsome realm  
of those in Avīci. V.23

Even persons who, due to repeatedly relying on bad friends,  
[injured] a buddha with bad intention,  
Committed [the killing of] their mother, father, or an arhat, who are  
not to be killed, or split the highest community  
Will be swiftly liberated from these [actions], when they reflect on  
the nature of phenomena,  
But how could there be liberation in those whose minds are hostile  
toward the dharma? V.24

[The phrase] “will be swiftly liberated from these [actions], when they reflect on the nature of phenomena” refers to [persons] like King Ajātaśatru.<sup>2334</sup> With something like King Ajātaśatru’s killing his father King Bimbisara (who was both his father and an arhat) happening, [two actions] without interval<sup>2335</sup> took place. [Afterward, Ajātaśatru] went to his root guru, noble Mañjuśrī, and confessed his evil deeds. Upon [hearing] that, Mañjuśrī said, “Great king, your evil deeds cannot [even] be purified by all buddhas of the three times, let alone [by those of] the present.<sup>2336</sup> Why is that? Because evil deeds lack any nature of their own.” It is said that through saying this, [Ajātaśatru’s] evil deeds became pure. Now [follows:]

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1.8. Requesting poised readiness within the maṇḍala of the retinue

This consists of [the following passage]:

... From properly expounding the seven topical points  
(The [three] jewels, the pure<sup>2337</sup> basic element, stainless awakening,  
the qualities, and activity) V.25ab

The meaning of this is: “I have properly expounded the seven vajra points—you who form the retinue, be poised and ready!” The meaning of [the phrase] “be poised and ready” is “Since the vajra points are what is inconceivable, make them a living experience without being afraid!”

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2.1.9. Dedication of the roots of virtue

This consists of [the following passage]:

Through the virtue I obtained . . .

May [all] these beings behold the seer Amitāyus endowed with  
infinite light

And, having seen him, attain supreme awakening by virtue of the  
stainless eye of dharma arising [in them]. V.25acd

Here, dedication is twofold: (1) temporary and (2) ultimate. {522} (1) Temporarily, having seen the seer Amitāyus, the stainless eye of dharma arises. Since Amitāyus has power over all buddhas who live, [his name] represents the general name of all buddhas [here]. Or, this refers to the buddha Amitāyus himself. “The stainless eye of dharma” is [called] “eye” because it resembles an eye—it is the wisdom of the path of seeing. It is “stainless” because it lacks the stains to be relinquished through seeing. (2) The ultimate dedication consists of [the phrase] “May [all these beings] attain supreme awakening.”

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2.2. Instruction by summarizing the meaning

The [first] four verses teach

On what [basis] it was expounded,

For what reason, how and what [was expounded],

And what the natural outflow [of the dharma] is. V.26

Two teach the means for one’s own purity;

One, the causes for deviating [from the dharma];

And the following two verses,

The result [of such deviating]. V.27

As for poised readiness in the maṇḍala of the retinue

And the attainment of awakening, in brief,

The twofold result of propounding

The dharma is taught by the last [verse]. V.28

[All of this] was already explained above by enumerating [each topic], but these [three verses] here are to be understood as just a brief summary. As for these verses [that summarize] the [above] meaning,<sup>2338</sup> [the phrase] “on what [basis]” [corresponds to the phrase] “Thus, on the basis of trustworthy . . .” [in V.16ab]. [The phrase] “for what reason” [corresponds to the phrase] “in order to purify just myself and . . .” [in V.16bcd].<sup>2339</sup> [The

line] “one, the causes for deviating [from the dharma]” [corresponds to V.22, beginning with] “Because of weak intelligence.” [The two lines] “and the following two<sup>2340</sup> verses, the result [of such deviating]” [correspond to V.23–24, beginning with] “The wise should not be as deeply afraid.” [The line] “as for poised readiness in the maṇḍala of the retinue” refers to [the phrase] “from properly expounding the seven topical points (the [three jewels] . . .” [in V.25ab]. [The phrase] “the attainment of awakening” refers to [the phrase] “Through the virtue I obtained . . . may all these beings . . .” [in V.25acd].

Thus, the presentation of the body [of the text] and the detailed explanation of its branches is completed. Now [follows:]

### 2.3. Explanation of the tasks of concluding the treatise in the end by the author of the commentary

This has four parts: (1) the one who makes the dedication, (2) what is to be dedicated, (3) that from which what is to be dedicated arises, and (4) the dedication. (1) The “I”<sup>2341</sup> as the one who makes the dedication refers to Asaṅga. (2) What is to be dedicated refers to “whatever inconceivable<sup>2342</sup> merit I attained.” (3) That from which [the merit] that is to be dedicated arises refers to [the phrases] “the precious genuine dharma of the supreme yāna” (the meaning of the root text) and “due to explaining” (having composed the commentary on this [root text] and so on). (4) The dedication consists of the latter half of the verse, [meaning,] “May [all beings] become vessels for realizing the subject matter of the *Uttaratantra*—the seven vajra points.”

*I, who am ignorant in that I just see this life, am not able to determine the vajra points and [thus] have presented the words of Marpa Lotsāwa, who drank the nectar stream of the speech of guru Parahita. Therefore, my tongue faculty will not deteriorate in the future and scholars will not scorn me. Hence, I gave up the [self-]contempt of thinking that I do not possess what it takes to compose [a commentary], so those with faith [are able to] make efforts [in studying this commentary on the Uttaratantra]. Since the exposition of this treatise was prepared according to the assertions of Parahita, may it benefit others. This concludes this well-composed approach to summarizing the meaning of the Uttaratantra.*

A Commentary on “The Treatise on the Ultimate  
Continuum of the Mahāyāna,” The Heart of the  
Luminous Sun *by Dashi Öser*

{127}<sup>2343</sup> I pay homage to the guru and the three jewels.

You are the sun of knowledge that emerges victoriously from the  
battle with the darkness of ignorance.

You are the moon of compassion that removes the torment of the  
heat of the afflictions.

The stars and planets of your qualities guide to the farthest limits of  
the sky of the dharmadhātu—

To the incomparable teacher, the perfect Buddha, I pay homage with  
respect.

Though you have already progressed through the stages of the pure  
paths and bhūmis,

You still assume the ways of a protector on the tenth bhūmi.

You hold the teachings of Buddha Śākyamuni

And reside in the realm of Tuṣita—to the protector Ajita, I bow.

You realized the profound ultimate basic nature free from reference  
points.

Abiding on the bhūmi Supreme Joy, you are the main son of the victor.

You overpower the hosts of Buddhist and non-Buddhist dialecticians—

To noble and supreme Nāgārjunagarbha, {128} I pay homage.

You were prophesied by the victor and distinguish what is expedient  
and definitive.

Abiding on the third bhūmi, the Illuminating, you are supreme  
among the learned.

You are the unrivaled heart son of the victor Maitreya—

To noble Asaṅga, I pay homage.

Combining the essential points of the intentions of both Nāgārjuna  
and Asaṅga  
Without contradictions into one, you thus comment  
On the intentions of the victor and his regent Maitreya—  
To the dharma lord, Rangjung Dorje, I pay homage.

At this time of the teachings of the definitive meaning in this land of  
snow mountains  
Having become like a butter lamp whose fuel is exhausted,  
You nourish it with the very essence of the butter of scriptures,  
Reasoning, and pith instructions—to the venerable Chötra Gyatso,  
I bow.

Based on the kindness of this great being, {129}  
My mental eyes of studying, reflecting, and meditating on  
The essential points of the profound words of the victor were  
opened well  
And I thus see them clearly. Therefore, I composed this treatise.

Most small-minded people who just see this life are attached to ordinary philosophical systems and thus do not listen to the profound stream of the speech of the noble ones who clearly teach the excellent path of the supreme yāna. Even if they listen to it a little bit, they are not able to fathom its profound intended meaning<sup>2344</sup> and reject it [by saying], “This is of expedient meaning.” I am certainly not able to lead those biased [persons] onto the supreme excellent path of the powerful heart of the matter, but I give rise to the enthusiasm for composing this scriptural commentary in order to clearly remember it in my own mind.

As for the dharma to be explained here, among the fivefold collection of the dharmas of Maitreya authored by the venerable protector Maitreya, the one that teaches the ultimate definitive meaning, the heart of the matter, is the *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*. After the abhidharma had come under attack three times in the central land of India, the teachings were in danger of vanishing. At that time, the bhikṣuṇī \*Prakāśaśīlā<sup>2345</sup> [gave birth to] noble Asaṅga, the son from her union with a [man from the] Kṣatriya caste, and master Vasubandhu, the son from her union with a [man from the] Brahman caste. Through these two masters, the abhidharmas of the

higher and lower yānas spread and flourished. Master Asaṅga, by virtue of having practiced for twelve years in a rock cave at Mount Kukkuṭapāda in an area in southern India, {130} directly met venerable Maitreya. Based on Maitreya's miraculous powers, they arrived at the god realm Tuṣita. [There, Asaṅga] listened to the dharma [coming] from Maitreya's [mouth] for fifty human years.<sup>2346</sup> Retaining the fivefold collection of the dharmas of Maitreya in his mind, [Asaṅga] returned to Jambudvīpa and explained them in detail to his disciples, such as master Vasubandhu.

[Asaṅga] composed many treatises such as the fivefold bhūmi collection (the [*Bahubhūmi*]vastu of the bhūmi collection, the *Vijñaptiviniścayasamgrahaṇī*, the *Vastusamgrahaṇī*, the *Vivaraṇamukhasamgrahaṇī*, and the *Par-yāyasamgrahaṇī*)<sup>2347</sup> and the two kinds of synopses (the *Mahāyānasamgraha* and the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*).<sup>2348</sup> [Thus,] he made the mahāyāna teachings [radiate] like the sun shining at daybreak. Master Vasubandhu [also] authored [many] treatises that teach the mahāyāna, [called] “the eightfold *prakaraṇa* collection.”<sup>2349</sup> There were four of his disciples who were equal to himself in terms of being learned in the four great [sets of] teachings [of the Buddha]—Guṇaprabha, who was equal to him in the vinaya, the Kashmiri Sthiramati, who was equal to him in the abhidharma, Āryavimuktisena, who was equal to him in prajñāpāramitā, and Dignāga, who was equal to him in valid cognition. They composed many treatises that comment on the intentions of these four great [sets of] teachings. By virtue of having been explained extensively to their disciples, [all these texts] spread and flourish to the present day. {131}

Master Vasubandhu commented on the other dharmas of Maitreya, such as the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*.<sup>2350</sup> [However,] having in mind that this *Uttaratantra* is not the sphere of the common yāna and is very profound, Asaṅga composed a commentary [on it] himself. Thinking that this commentary does not fit into the [narrow] minds of most propounders of [Buddhist] philosophical systems, such as the faction of the śrāvakas, he concealed it for the time being as a treasure inside a stūpa. At a later time, the mighty lord Maitrīpa, when circumambulating this stūpa, saw light rays coming forth from a crack [in it]. Thinking, “What is in there?,” he looked [closer] and thus [was able to] extract a manuscript of the *Uttaratantra* together with Asaṅga's commentary. Seeing that the intention of this treatise was in conformity with the teachings on the heart of the matter<sup>2351</sup> asserted by [his guru Śavarīpa], the mighty lord of mountain hermits, [Maitrīpa] felt very great faith [in it]. Wishing to listen to the reading transmission of this [text], he supplicated the regent Ajita. In the sky between the clouds,

venerable Maitreya arrived, with a crystal stūpa as his crown ornament, and gave the reading transmission of the *Uttaratantra*. Then, lord Maitrīpa explained the *Uttaratantra* including Asaṅga's commentary extensively to his disciples. [One of] Maitrīpa's disciples, the paṇḍita \*Ānandakīrti, carrying the manuscript of Asaṅga's commentary with him, went to the city Anupamapura in the Indian region of Kashmir and explained it to the mahāpaṇḍita Sajjana. The [latter] {132} explained it to both the translator Ngog Loden Sherab and Dsen Kawoché. After both of them had translated it into Tibetan, they spread it [in Tibet].

Then, it was gradually transmitted further [until it came to] the precious dharma lord Rangjung Dorje, who heard it from the dharma lord of Sangpu,<sup>2352</sup> Jamyang Śākya Shönnu,<sup>2353</sup> and composed a commentary that is a topical outline of the *Uttaratantra* and Asaṅga's commentary. He taught it extensively to his disciples, such as Karma Göncho Shönnu,<sup>2354</sup> and thus spread it widely. He also explained the intention of *shentong* to the omniscient Jonangpa.<sup>2355</sup> By virtue of [that explanation], though certainty did not arise [in Dölpopa] at first, extraordinary experiences and realizations were born [in him] later by virtue of having completed the six branches of application [of the *Kālacakratantra*]. [The Karmapa thus] made him look at and realize the sūtras of the final wheel [of dharma] and the treatises of definitive meaning, such as the *Uttaratantra*, including Asaṅga's commentary. Through this, certainty in accordance with the assertions of the dharma lord Rangjung [Dorje] arose [in him], and he thus adopted the philosophical system of Shentong. From the dharma lord Rangjung [Dorje], [the *Uttaratantra*] was gradually transmitted to [other] superior ones, such as the revered Dzamlingpa,<sup>2356</sup> and I requested it from the precious dharma lord Chötra Gyatso.

Now, I shall explain the meaning of this treatise on the basis of Rangjung Dorje's topical outline. This *Mahāyānottaratantra* has two parts:

1. The title and the paying of homage stated by the translators {133}
2. The actual treatise

### 1. The title and the paying of homage stated by the translators

In Indian language: Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra

In Tibetan language: Thegpa chenpo gyü lamé denchö

[In English language: A Treatise on the Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna]



I pay homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

In the refined [language] among the four great types of languages that exist in India, the Sanskrit language, the name of this treatise is *Mahāyānottara*. . . . In that [name], *mahā* [means] “great”; *yāna*, “vehicle”; *uttara*, “ultimate”; *tantra*, “continuum”; and *śāstra*, “treatise.”

## 2. The actual treatise

This has three parts:

1. Presentation of the body [of the text]
2. Detailed explanation of the seven vajra points
3. Concluding tasks

### 2.1. Presentation of the body [of the text]

This has three parts:

1. Teaching the actual body [of the text]
2. Teaching the specific characteristics [of the seven vajra points]
3. Stating their sequence

#### 2.1.1. Teaching the actual body [of the text]

**Buddha, dharma, assembly, basic element, awakening, Qualities, and finally buddha activity—  
If summarized, the body of the entire treatise  
Consists of these seven vajra points.<sup>2357</sup> I.1**

The actuality of the **Buddha**, the actuality of the **dharma**, the actuality of the **assembly** (the *saṃgha*), the actuality of the **basic element** (the disposition), the actuality of **awakening** (the three *kāyas*), the actuality of the **qualities** of having attained awakening, and the actuality of the **activity** of the victor—these seven vajra points represent the summary of the body of this treatise. As for this sevenfold actuality to be realized, {134} it is [referred to as] a “vajra” because it resembles such a [vajra]. It is an actuality whose nature is inexpressible and that is to be experienced personally because it is difficult for [any] cognitions that arise from studying and reflecting to penetrate. The names, words, and letters that express this actuality are called “footings” because they serve as its supports.

## 2.1.2. Teaching the specific characteristics [of the seven vajra points]

In accordance with their specific characteristics  
 And in due order, the [first] three points of these [seven]  
 Should be understood from the introduction in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchā-  
 sūtra*  
 And the [latter] four, from the distinction of the attributes of the  
 intelligent and the victors. I.2

Here, Buddha, dharma, and saṃgha (the [first] three vajra points) are taught in the introductory chapter of the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchā-sūtra*. Thereafter, the basic element (the sugata heart), the awakening of this [basic element] having become free from obscurations, the qualities of awakening, and the buddha activity of being endowed with these qualities (the remaining four vajra points) should be known from [this sūtra's sections] that teach the differences between the attributes of the intelligent bodhisattvas and the attributes of the victors, the buddha bhagavāns.

As it is said in this sūtra,<sup>2358</sup> [its phrase] “The Bhagavān has completely and perfectly awakened to the equality of all phenomena” represents the actuality of the jewel that is the Buddha. [The phrase] “has excellently turned the wheel of dharma” {135} teaches the actuality of the jewel that is the dharma. The phrase “is endowed with limitless peaceful and disciplined assemblies of disciples” teaches the actuality of the jewel that is the saṃgha. After that, the buddha element is elucidated through teaching the sixty kinds of factors that purify [and thus reveal its naturally] pure qualities. Following that, buddha awakening is elucidated through teaching the sixteen kinds of the great compassion of great awakening.<sup>2359</sup> [Following that, the buddha qualities are explained through teaching the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha.]<sup>2360</sup> After having taught that, the thirty-two kinds of buddha activity are elucidated through teaching the unsurpassable activity of a tathāgata. This is the manner in which [the vajra points] are found in a single sūtra.

However, they are also found in many other sūtras. The *Ratnakūṭasūtra* teaches the first three vajra points in the *Sthirādhyāśayaparivarta*.<sup>2361</sup> As this sūtra says:

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is indemonstrable. He cannot be seen with the eyes. Ānanda, the dharma is inexpressible. It cannot be heard with the ears. Ānanda, the saṃgha is unconditioned. It cannot be worshipped with body or mind.<sup>2362</sup>

The fourth vajra point—the basic element, the tathāgata heart—should be understood by following the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra*. As this sūtra says:

Śāriputra, {136} “the ultimate” is a designation for the basic element of sentient beings. Śāriputra, this “basic element of sentient beings” is a designation for the tathāgata heart. Śāriputra, this “tathāgata heart” is a designation for the dharmakāya.<sup>2363</sup>

The fifth vajra point should also be known from this very sūtra:

Bhagavan, this “dhātu of nirvāṇa” is a designation for the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata.<sup>2364</sup>

The sixth vajra point too is to be known from this sūtra. As it says:

Śāriputra, the dharmakāya that is taught by the Tathāgata is endowed with inseparable attributes and qualities that [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it], which [manifest] in the form of the attributes of a tathāgata that far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>2365</sup>

The seventh vajra point is to be understood by following the *Tathāgataḡaṇajñānācintyaṡiṡayāvātāranirdeśa*. [This sūtra] says:

[Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think and does not conceptualize. Nevertheless, his activity, which has such a nature, operates effortlessly and without thinking and conceptualizing.]<sup>2366</sup>

### 1.2.3. Stating their sequence

From the Buddha [comes] the dharma and from the dharma, the noble saṃgha.

From the saṃgha, the [tathāgata] heart—the basic element of wisdom—is attained.

Finally, the attainment of that wisdom is the attainment of the supreme awakening and so on

That is endowed with the attributes that promote the welfare of all sentient beings. I.3

**The Buddha speaks the dharma.** Based on that, {137} there arises the assembly—the *saṃgha* that practices the dharma. From these [three], there arises the realization and attainment of the *sugata heart*—the *ālaya*-wisdom, the basic element of sentient beings. Through having realized that wisdom and having purified the three obscurations, **awakening is attained.** Within that awakening, the qualities such as the ten powers become revealed. Based on that, there occurs the effortless and spontaneously present welfare of the entirety of sentient beings.

## 2.2. Detailed explanation of the seven vajra points

This has four parts:

1. The basis to be realized
2. The awakening that is the realization
3. The qualities that are [its] branches
4. The enlightened activity that is the condition that causes [realization]

### 2.2.1. The basis to be realized

This has two parts:

1. The result to be realized—the [three] jewels
2. The cause—the basic element

#### 2.2.1.1. The result to be realized—the [three] jewels

This has four parts:

1. The Buddha
2. The dharma
3. The *saṃgha*
4. Instruction on analyzing the three refuges

##### 2.2.1.1.1. The Buddha

This has three parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation
3. Summary

###### 2.2.1.1.1.1. Brief introduction

**You awakened yourself to peaceful buddhahood without beginning, middle, or end.**

Upon your awakening, you taught the fearless everlasting path so  
that those who lack realization may realize.

I bow to you who wield the supreme sword and vajra of knowledge  
and loving-kindness, cut the sprouts of suffering to pieces,  
And break through the wall of doubts surrounded by the thicket of  
various views. I.4

#### 2.2.1.1.1.2. Detailed explanation

This has [two parts]:

1. Teaching that [the Buddha] is endowed with eight qualities
2. Stating what establishes that

##### 2.2.1.1.1.2.1. Teaching that [the Buddha] is endowed with eight qualities {138}

Being unconditioned, effortless,  
Not being realized through other conditions,  
And possessing knowledge, loving-kindness, and power—  
This is buddhahood endowed with the two welfares. I.5

This briefly describes buddhahood, which possesses eight qualities. You may wonder, “What are the eight qualities?” [They are] being unconditioned, effortless, not being a clear realization through other conditions, wisdom, compassion, power, the fulfillment of one’s own welfare, and the fulfillment of the welfare of others.

##### 2.2.1.1.1.2.2. Stating what establishes that

It is unconditioned because its nature  
Is to be without beginning, middle, and end.  
It is declared to be effortless  
Because it possesses the peaceful dharmakāya. I.6

It is not realized through other conditions  
Because it is to be realized personally.  
Thus, it is knowledge because it realizes those three aspects.  
It is compassion because it teaches the path. I.7

**It is power because it relinquishes suffering  
And the afflictions through wisdom and compassion. I.8ab**

Here, buddhahood is unconditioned because its nature is to be without arising in the beginning, without abiding in the middle, and without perishing in the end. It is effortless because it is the utter peace of all conceptions and reference points entailing effort and yet is the kāya that is endowed with all buddhadharmas. {139} It is not realized through conditions such as the words of others because it is realized by personally experienced wisdom to be self-arisen. It is endowed with wisdom because it realizes those three aspects (being unconditioned and so on). It is endowed with compassion because it teaches others the path that makes them realize such a [buddhahood]. It is endowed with consummate power because, based on such wisdom and compassion, it relinquishes all suffering and afflictions of those to be guided.

#### 2.2.1.1.1.2.2. Summary

**One's own welfare is by virtue of the first three qualities  
And the welfare of others, by virtue of the latter three. I.8cd**

Buddhahood represents the fulfillment of the two welfares—the fulfillment of one's own welfare and the fulfillment of the welfare of others. The fulfillment of one's own welfare consists of [buddhahood's] being unconditioned, [possessing] spontaneously present qualities, and being realized as self-arisen self-awareness. The fulfillment of the welfare of others consists of its being endowed with the three [qualities] of knowledge, loving-kindness, and power that accomplish the welfare of others.

#### 2.2.1.1.2. The dharma

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

##### 2.2.1.1.2.1. Brief introduction

**Inscrutable as neither nonexistent nor existent nor [both] existent  
and nonexistent nor other than existent and nonexistent,**

Free from etymological interpretation, to be personally experienced,  
and peaceful—

I bow to this sun of the genuine dharma, which is endowed with the  
shine of the light rays of stainless wisdom

And defeats passion, aggression, and [mental] darkness with regard  
to all focal objects. I.9

{140} When taking [the dharma] as the sphere of scrutiny, it is unobservable as any of the four permutations that are mentally scrutable, that is, [any] being existent, nonexistent, both existent and nonexistent, or neither [existent nor nonexistent]. For it is inexpressible through names, words, and letters, that is, it is to be personally experienced by the noble ones. It is the utter peace of all reference points, is endowed with the wisdom of knowing suchness and variety, and eliminates the entirety of passion, aggression, and mistaken dullness with regard to all focal objects. [Thus,] it is like the sun.

#### 2.2.1.1.2.2. Detailed explanation

By virtue of its being inconceivable, free from the dual, nonconceptual,  
Pure, manifesting, and a remedial factor,

It is what is and what makes free from attachment, respectively—

The dharma that is characterized by the two realities. I.10

[The dharma] is endowed with eight qualities—being inconceivable, free from the dual, nonconceptual, pure, fully manifesting, a remedial factor, free from desire, and the cause of being free from desire.

Freedom from attachment consists of

The two realities of cessation and the path.

In due order, these two are to be understood

Through three qualities each. I.11

What is free from desire is the reality of cessation, and the cause that makes one free from desire {141} is the path. These two represent the jewel of the dharma. Here, the reality of cessation is endowed with three qualities—being inconceivable, free from the dual, and nonconceptual. The reality of the path is also endowed with three qualities—being pure, manifesting, and

a remedial factor. [There follows] the detailed explanation of the reasons for these [qualities]:

Because of being inscrutable, because of being inexpressible,  
 And because of being known by the noble ones, it is inconceivable.  
 What is peaceful is free from the dual and nonconceptual.  
 [In its] three [qualities] such as being pure, it is like the sun. I.12

The reality of cessation—the dharmakāya—is inconceivable because of being inscrutable by conceptions, because of being inexpressible by terms and words, and because of being what is to be known by the noble ones alone. The peaceful dharmakāya is free<sup>2367</sup> from the duo of karma and afflictions and is without improper conceptions. [In its] three [qualities] such as being pure, it resembles the sun. As Asaṅga’s commentary says:

“The dual” here refers to [the dual obscurations of] karma and the afflictions. “Conception” refers to improper mental engagement, the cause of the arising of karma and the afflictions. By virtue of realizing the natural cessation of this [improper mental engagement], there is no manifestation of the duo [of karma and the afflictions] or conception.<sup>2368</sup> Consequently, there is absolutely no arising of suffering. {142} This is called “the reality of the cessation of suffering.” However, it is not that the reality of the cessation of suffering is explained by virtue of the destruction of any phenomenon.<sup>2369</sup>

The paths of seeing and familiarization that [consist of] nonconceptual wisdom are the causes for attaining the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata; which bears the name “cessation of suffering.” [This wisdom] is to be understood as resembling the sun by way of being similar to it in three ways. It is similar to the completely pure orb [of the sun] because it is free from all stains of the proximate afflictions. It is similar to [its capacity of] manifesting form because it lights up all aspects of all knowable objects. It is similar to its being the remedy for darkness because it serves as the remedy for all aspects of what obstructs seeing true reality.

### 2.2.1.1.3. The saṃgha

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation



### 2.2.1.1.3.1. Brief introduction

Because they see that, by virtue of the natural luminosity of the mind, the afflictions are without nature,  
 They perfectly realize that the endpoint of the identitylessness of all beings is peace.  
 I bow to those who see that perfect buddhahood is all-pervading,  
 who possess unobscured intelligence,  
 And who are endowed with the wisdom vision that has the purity and infinitude of beings as its objects. I.13

### 2.2.1.1.3.2. Detailed explanation

Because of the purity of the inner  
 Wisdom vision of suchness and variety,  
 The assembly of the irreversible intelligent ones {143}  
 Is endowed with unsurpassable qualities. I.14

The jewel of the saṃgha is endowed with the two [sets of] qualities of awareness and liberation.<sup>2370</sup> When classified, [the noble saṃgha] is threefold—noble śrāvakas, noble pratyekabuddhas, and the noble ones of the mahāyāna.

When the śrāvakas are classified, they consist of the four pairs of individuals or the eight distinct persons. The four pairs of individuals consist of the two of approaching stream-enterers and abiders in the fruition of stream-enterer, the two of approaching once-returners and abiders in the fruition of once-returner, the two of approaching nonreturners and abiders in the fruition of once-returner, and the two of approaching arhats and abiders in the fruition of arhat. Through counting each [component] of these four pairs, [there are] eight distinct persons.

When the pratyekabuddhas are classified, they are twofold—rhino-like ones and group practitioners. When the group practitioners are classified, there are two—the lesser group practitioners and the greater group practitioners.

When the noble ones of the mahāyāna are classified, they are twofold—noble bodhisattvas and noble buddhas. When noble bodhisattvas are classified, [there are] those on the first bhūmi, those on the second bhūmi, and so on, on [up through] those on the tenth bhūmi.

Since those on the paths of accumulation and those on the paths of preparation of all three yānas are ordinary beings, they are not counted as the noble saṃgha.

In this context, the qualities of awareness refer to seeing reality. The qualities of liberation refer to being liberated from the obscurations. Here, in terms of the mahāyāna saṃgha, the qualities of awareness {144} [consist of] the vision of the suchness of the nature of phenomena and the vision of the variety of the bearers of this nature. Both are presented as one's own personally experienced wisdom.

[There follows] the explanation [of wisdom] in terms of seeing the suchness of the nature of phenomena:

The [wisdom of] suchness because of realizing  
 The true nature of peace of beings  
 Is due to the natural complete purity [of the mind]  
 And due to the primordial termination of the afflictions. I.15

This refers to seeing that mind's true nature of primordial peace that is naturally perfectly pure—the sugata heart—exists and that mistaken appearances (the adventitious afflictions) are primordially nonexistent, just like dreams and illusions.

[Next, there is] the explanation [of wisdom] in terms of knowing the variety of the bearers of this nature:

The [wisdom of] being variety  
 Is due to the intelligence that realizes the entire range of the knowable,  
 Seeing the existence of the true nature  
 Of omniscience in all sentient beings. I.16

[The wisdom of knowing variety means] realizing limitless and infinite knowable objects and seeing the true nature of omniscience—the sugata heart—in all sentient beings. This realization arises on the first bodhisattvabhūmi because the dharmadhātu is realized as the actuality of omnipresence.

[That realization is the vision  
 Of one's own personal wisdom.  
 It is pure in the stainless basic element  
 Because it lacks attachment and lacks obstruction. I.17]<sup>2371</sup>

Compared to the vision of the limited wisdoms of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, that realization of the mahāyāna noble ones is a more {145} eminent [vision] because it lacks attachment through the afflictive obscurations and lacks obstruction through the cognitive obscurations.

The irreversible noble ones, who dwell on the first bhūmi and beyond, are close to unsurpassable buddha wisdom due to their being endowed with such a vision of wisdom. Therefore, they are the refuge of all that lives. With this in mind, it is explained here:

By virtue of the purity of the vision of wisdom,  
 Buddha wisdom is unsurpassable.  
 Therefore, the irreversible noble ones  
 Are the refuge of all that lives. I.18

#### 2.2.1.1.4. Instruction on analyzing the three refuges

This has [four parts:]

1. The reasons for presenting them as three refuges
2. Teaching that both the dharma and the saṃgha are not the ultimate refuge
3. Teaching the actual ultimate refuge
4. Explaining the meaning of the term “jewel”

##### 2.2.1.1.4.1. The reasons for presenting them as three refuges

For the purpose of the teacher, the teaching, and the disciples,  
 The three refuges are presented  
 With regard to those in the three yānas  
 And those who have faith in the three activities. I.19

[The instruction that] “the Buddha is a refuge because of being the highest among humans” is taught and presented, for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the teacher, with regard to the persons in the bodhisattvayāna (who engage in striving for the nature of the Buddha) and those who have faith in the supreme activities related to the Buddha. {146} [The instruction that] “the dharma is a refuge because of being the highest among what is free from desire” is taught and presented, for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the teaching of the teacher, with regard to the persons in the pratyekabuddhayāna (who engage [in the teaching] in order to realize the profound dharma of dependent origination by

themselves) and those who have faith in performing the supreme activities related to the dharma. [The instruction that] “the saṃgha is a refuge because of being the highest among assemblies” is taught and presented, for the purpose of demonstrating the qualities of the disciples who have well entered the teaching of the teacher, with regard to the persons in the śrāvakayāna (who engage [in the teaching] in order to realize the words that they heard from others) and those who have faith in performing the supreme activities related to the saṃgha.

#### 2.2.1.1.4.2. Teaching that both the dharma and the saṃgha are not the ultimate refuge

Because of being abandoned, because of having a deceptive nature,  
 Because of being nonexistent, and because of being fearful,  
 The twofold dharma and the noble assembly  
 Are not the ultimate supreme refuge. I.20

Among the two [kinds of] dharma (the teaching that is the dharma of scriptures and the practice that is the dharma of realization), the scriptures, such as the sūtras,<sup>2372</sup> consist of collections of names, words, and letters. {147} At the time of the final clear realization of the path, these are to be abandoned, just like a raft. The dharma of realization is two[fold]—the cause that is the reality of the path and the result that is the reality of cessation. Among them, the path is realized to have the characteristic of being conditioned. It is not the ultimate<sup>2373</sup> object of refuge because what is conditioned has an unreal, impermanent, delusive, and deceptive nature. In the manner of the śrāvakas’ [explaining] cessation, just as the continuum of a butter lamp’s coming to a stop, it is characterized by the mere nonexistence of afflictions and suffering. However, a nonexistence is not suitable to be either a refuge or a nonrefuge.

The saṃghas of the three yānas are not the ultimate refuge because of their always being fearful of saṃsāra. Even arhats who have relinquished saṃsāra, because of their not having relinquished the latent tendencies of the afflictions, [still] are immersed in a sense of fearing that all karmic formations have not been exhausted, just as in the example [of being afraid] of an executioner with raised sword. Therefore, even they have not attained the ultimate and blissful final deliverance. They will [still] engage themselves [further] in order to attain the fearless supreme<sup>2374</sup> state, that is,

unsurpassable completely perfect awakening. Therefore,<sup>2375</sup> the [saṃgha] too is not the ultimate refuge because it [still] searches for the perfect refuge. {148}

#### 2.2.1.1.4.3. Teaching the actual ultimate refuge

Ultimately, the refuge  
Of beings is the Buddha alone  
Because the sage possesses the dharmakāya  
And because he also is the consummation of the assembly. I.21

The ultimate refuge is the Buddha alone because the sage without arising and ceasing is the one who possesses the kāya of the dharma that is characterized by the two realities of cessation and the path and is free from desire and because [the assembly] of [those in] the three yānas has [nothing but] the attainment of the consummate purity of the dharmakāya as its goal.<sup>2376</sup> [Therefore,] in this world without protection and refuge, solely the Buddha is the inexhaustible refuge, the permanent refuge, the everlasting refuge, and the ultimate refuge, [whose duration] is equal to the end of time.

#### 2.2.1.1.4.4. Explaining the meaning of the term “jewel”

They are jewels because their occurrence is rare,  
Because they are stainless, because they possess power,  
Because they are the ornaments of the world,  
Because they are supreme, and because they are changeless. I.22

These three jewels are said to resemble a jewel [in six ways]. Their occurrence is rare because those who have not acquired roots of virtue do not get a chance to meet them even during many eons. They are stainless because they are free from stains such as desire in all respects. They possess power {149} because they are endowed with the inconceivable power of qualities such as the six supernatural knowledges. They are the ornaments of the world because they are the causes of the virtuous intentions of all beings. Just as a wish-fulfilling jewel is more supreme than all artificial jewels, the three jewels [are supreme] because they are the supreme among [all] wise humans, the supreme among [everything] that is free from desire, and the supreme among [all] assemblies, respectively. As for their not changing

into something else, they do not change through the conditions of praise, blame, and so on, because their nature is unconditioned.

Having explained the three jewels (the result to be realized) in this way, [there follows:]

### 2.2.1.2. Explanation of the cause to be realized—the basic element, the sugata heart

This has two parts:

1. General instruction on the basic element including the cause and the conditions
2. Specific explanation of the nature of the actual basic element

#### 2.2.1.2.1. General instruction on the basic element including the cause and the conditions

This has two parts:

1. Teaching it as the object of omniscience
2. Detailed explanation of the manner of its being inconceivable

##### 2.2.1.2.1.1. Teaching it as the object of omniscience

Suchness with stains, the one without stains,  
 Stainless buddha qualities, and the deeds of the victors  
 Are the objects of those who see the ultimate,  
 From which the three virtuous jewels arise. I.23

Sentient beings' suchness with stains, the one without stains (a buddha's suchness), the qualities of that buddha, and {150} the deeds of the buddha (enlightened activity)—based on these four (the cause and its conditions), the three jewels arise. These four (the cause and its conditions) are the experiential objects of those who see the ultimate—the buddhas—alone, whereas they are inconceivable in their being beyond the objects conceivable by ordinary beings.

##### 2.2.1.2.1.2. Explanation of the reasons for this fourfold cause or disposition for the arising of the three jewels being inconceivable

The disposition of these three jewels  
 Is the object of those who see everything.

**It is fourfold and is inconceivable  
For four reasons in due order I.24**

Here, suchness with stains is the basic element that is not liberated from the cocoon of the afflictions, which is called “the tathāgata heart.” Stainless suchness is this very same [basic element] as it is characterized by the fundamental change of becoming free from [all] obscurations on the buddhabhūmi, which is called “the dharmakāya of a tathāgata.” The stainless buddha qualities refer to the buddha attributes such as the ten powers, which exist within that very dharmakāya, having become manifest by virtue of this dharmakāya’s having become free from obscurations. The deeds of the victors consist of the distinct enlightened activities of these buddha attributes, such as the ten enlightened activities of the ten powers, continuing to give prophesying speeches about bodhisattvas [in an] uninterrupted [manner]. {151} Since these four points entail four points of inconceivability, they are difficult to realize. What are these four? They are as follows:

**Since it is pure and yet associated with afflictions,  
Since it is not afflicted and yet becomes pure,  
Since its qualities are inseparable,  
And since [its activity] is effortless and nonconceptual. I.25**

Here, since suchness with stains is completely pure by nature and yet also coupled with the stains of afflictiveness, this point is inconceivable. Since stainless suchness is not afflicted by stains before and yet becomes pure later, this point is inconceivable. Since the buddha qualities, such as the powers, are inseparable from the nature of phenomena—suchness—even during the phase of ordinary beings, [thus] existing without difference in terms of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa or before and later, this point is inconceivable. Since the deeds of the victors engage at all times [in accordance] with the thinking of those to be guided in an effortless and nonconceptual manner, this point is inconceivable.

**2.2.1.2.2. Specific explanation of the nature of the basic element**

This has four parts:

1. Brief introduction of the meaning of the basic element
2. Detailed explanation of the intended meaning

3. Teaching through examples that the stains are purified despite its nature being changeless {152}
4. The purpose of teaching the basic element

#### 2.2.1.2.2.1. Brief introduction of the meaning of the basic element

This has two parts:

1. Summarized meaning of the [last] four vajra points
2. Formulating the reasons for all sentient beings' having the sugata heart

##### 2.2.1.2.2.1.1. Summarized meaning of the [last] four vajra points

Because of what is to be realized, realization,  
 Its branches, and what causes realization,  
 In due order, one point is the cause for purity,  
 And three are the conditions. I.26

What is to be realized is the tathāgata heart. Realization is awakening. The branches of realization are the buddha qualities. The method that causes realization is enlightened activity. Among these four aspects, the first point—the sugata heart—is the cause to be purified, while the latter three points are the conditions that purify it.

##### 2.2.1.2.2.1.2. Formulating the reasons for all sentient beings' having the sugata heart

Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates,  
 Since suchness is undifferentiable,  
 And since the disposition exists,  
 All beings always possess the buddha heart. I.28<sup>2377</sup>

Since the dharmakāya of a perfect buddha radiates in all sentient beings (that is, the dharmakāya becomes manifest [in them] through their having familiarized with uncontrived mind as such), since the suchness of sentient beings and the suchness of buddhas is undifferentiable, and since the disposition (the seed of uncontaminated mind) exists in all sentient beings, all of these [beings] possess the sugata heart.



### 2.2.1.2.2.2. Detailed explanation of the intended meaning

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction {153}
2. Detailed explanation

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.1. Brief introduction

Nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, engagement, Phases, and likewise the topic of all-pervasiveness, Ever-changelessness, and the inseparability of the qualities Are to be understood as representing the ultimate expanse, the topic in mind. I.29

The presentation of the tathāgata element, the object of the ultimate wisdom of true reality, as being completely pure should be understood by having in mind ten kinds of topics. Which are these ten topics? They are as follows: (1) the topic of the nature, (2) the topic of the cause, (3) the topic of the fruition, (4) the topic of the function, (5) the topic of endowment, (6) the topic of engagement, (7) the topic of the distinction through phases, (8) the topic of all-pervasiveness, (9) the topic of changelessness, and (10) the topic of inseparability.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2. Detailed explanation

This has eight parts:

1. Detailed explanation of the nature and the cause
2. Detailed explanation of the fruition and the function
3. Explanation of endowment
4. Explanation of engagement
5. Explanation of the phases
6. Explanation of all-pervasiveness
7. Explanation of changelessness
8. Explanation of the topic of inseparable qualities

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1. Detailed explanation of the nature and the cause

This has two parts:

1. General instruction
2. Individual explanation

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.1.1. General instruction

It is always unafflicted by nature,  
 Just as a pure jewel, space, and water.  
 It arises from having faith in the dharma,  
 Supreme prajñā, samādhi, and compassion. I.30

By virtue of its essential nature of power,  
 Being unchanging, and being moist,  
 It resembles the qualities  
 Of a wish-fulfilling jewel,<sup>2378</sup> space, and water. I.31

{154} The tathāgata element should be understood to resemble the qualities of the purity of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water. It resembles a wish-fulfilling jewel because, by virtue of realizing it and familiarizing with it, it is endowed with the consummate powerful capacity to fulfill what one wishes for and so on. Its own essence resembles space because it is not changing through [any] condition [that could change it]. It resembles water<sup>2379</sup> because it possesses [the quality of] moistening sentient beings [through its] compassion. In terms of the general characteristic of these [three], since it is always unstained by afflictions by nature, it should be understood as resembling the [natural] stainlessness of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water.

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2. Individual explanation

This has [three parts:]

1. Instruction on the sentient beings who possess the four factors to be relinquished
2. Matching these with the four remedies of [saṃsāric] existence and peace
3. The manner of becoming children of the victors

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1. Instruction on the sentient beings who possess the four factors to be relinquished

Aversion toward the dharma, views about a self,  
 Fear of saṃsāra's suffering,  
 And indifference about the welfare of sentient beings—  
 These are the four obscurations of those with great desire, I.32

## Tīrthikas, śrāvakas, and self-arisen [buddhas]. I.33a

In brief, there are these three kinds of sentient beings within the host of sentient beings: (1) those who crave for [saṃsāric] existence, (2) those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence, and (3) those who do not crave for either. Here, (1) those who crave for [saṃsāric] existence {155} are to be known as twofold.<sup>2380</sup> (1a) Those sentient beings who dislike the path to liberation and have the disposition of not passing into parinirvāṇa only desire saṃsāra but do not desire nirvāṇa. (1b) [Some] who, despite following this dharma of ours and being included in those who are Buddhists, dislike the dharma of the mahāyāna, such as the Sendhapa śrāvakas.

(2) Those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence are [also] twofold: (a) those who have entered what is not the means [for liberation] and (b) those who have entered these means. Here, (2a) those who have entered what is not the means [for liberation] are again threefold. (2aa) Those who are outside of this [dharma] of ours are the many different kinds of tīrthikas, such as the Carakas, Parivrājakas, and Nirgranthas. (2ab) As for those who follow this dharma of ours [but] whose conduct accords with these [tīrthikas], though they have confidence [in the dharma], they cling to [views that are difficult to] grasp. Who are these [people]? They are those who have views about the person [as being a self] and do not have faith in the ultimate. (2ac) [The third kind] are those who have views that [entail] clinging to mentally fabricated characteristics with regard to emptiness and who are full of pride [about that].

(2b) Those who have entered the means [for liberation] are again twofold: (a) those who entered in accordance with the śrāvakayāna and (b) those who entered in accordance with the pratyekabuddhayāna.

(3) As for those who do not crave for either [saṃsāric existence or freedom from it], they are those sentient beings with supremely sharp faculties who are perfectly grounded in the mahāyāna. They neither desire saṃsāra (like those with great desire), nor do they fall into what is not the means [for liberation] (like the tīrthikas and so on), {156} nor do they enter [any] limited means [for liberation] (like śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas). Rather, those who have entered the path to realize the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa possess the motivation that is based on the nonabiding nirvāṇa, possess the activities that are based on saṃsāra without [however] being afflicted [by it], and their fundamental purity lies in being firmly grounded in compassion and the superior intention.

Here, (1) the two [kinds of] sentient beings who crave for [saṃsāric] existence (those with great desire and those who follow this dharma of ours [but] have fallen into the ways of those [with great desire]) are called “the group of sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is mistaken.”<sup>2381</sup> (2a) Those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence but have entered what is not the means [for liberation] are called “the group of sentient beings [whose disposition] is uncertain.” (2b) Those who crave to be free from [saṃsāric] existence and engage in the means [for liberation] as well as (3) those who crave for neither [saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa] and have entered the path to attain the equality [of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa] are called “the group of sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is correct.”

[All] others than these [latter ones consist of] those with great desire, tīrthikas, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas. In these [four], there exist these four [kinds of] obscurations with regard to not realizing and not perceiving the tathāgata element. They are as follows: [aversion toward the mahāyāna dharma,]<sup>2382</sup> views about a permanent, single, and independent self, fear of saṃsāra’s suffering and thus {157} not assuming rebirths in [saṃsāric] existence for the sake of sentient beings, and indifference about the welfare of sentient beings, thus turning their backs [on them]. In due order, these are the four obscurations that exist in those with great desire, tīrthikas, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2. Matching [these] with the four remedies of [saṃsāric] existence and peace

The causes of purity are the four dharmas  
Of having faith and so forth. I.33bc

The remedy of the first obscuration is the cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna dharma. The remedy of the second one is the cultivation of prajñāpāramitā. The remedy of the third one is the cultivation of samādhis such as the Sky Treasure. The remedy of the fourth one is the cultivation of great compassion.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3. The manner of becoming children of the victors

Those whose seed is the faith in the supreme yāna,  
Whose mother is the prajñā that gives birth to the buddha attributes,

**Whose womb is the bliss of samādhi, and whose nanny is compassion  
Are the children who take after the sages. I.34**

Faith in the mahāyāna is similar to a seed in a womb. The prajñā of realizing identitylessness is similar to a mother who gives birth. The bliss of samādhi is similar to the womb of a mother. Great compassion is similar to a nanny who makes [a baby] grow.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2. Detailed explanation of the fruition and the function

This has two parts:

1. General instruction
2. Specific explanation

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1. General instruction {158}

**The fruition consists of the pāramitās that are  
The qualities of purity, self, bliss, and permanence.  
It has the function of being weary of suffering  
As well as striving and aspiring to attain peace. I.35**

The fruition of purity after having purified the obscurations consists of the four pāramitās that are the qualities of supreme purity, supreme self, supreme bliss, and supreme permanence. The function of the existence of the disposition or element of the sugatas is being sick and weary of saṃsāric suffering as well as the wishful striving to attain peace—nirvāṇa—and aspiring to attain it.

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2. Specific explanation

This has [two parts:]

1. Explanation of the fruition
2. Explanation of the function

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1. Explanation of the fruition

This has [three parts:]

1. Teaching that it is endowed with four characteristics
2. Explanation of their [respective] two reasons<sup>2383</sup>
3. The manner of relinquishing the two extremes

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.1. Teaching that it is endowed with four characteristics

In brief, the fruition of those [causes]  
 Is characterized by being the remedies  
 That are the opposites of the four kinds of  
 Mistakenness about the dharmakāya. I.36

The four dharmas such as having faith [in the mahāyāna dharma] were explained as the causes of the purity of the tathāgata element. In brief, the fruition of those [four causes] should be regarded, in due order and in their being the remedies that are the opposites of the four kinds of mistakenness, as the four kinds of pāramitās that are the qualities in the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata.

The four kinds of mistakenness here {159} consist of regarding the pure dharmakāya as impure, regarding its supreme self as the lack of a self, regarding its bliss as suffering, and regarding its permanence as impermanence. The four [kinds of] unmistakenness—the remedies that are the opposites of these four—consist of the notion that the dharmakāya is permanent, the notion that it is blissful, the notion that it is a self, and the notion that it is pure. Therefore, it should be understood that the direct seeing of the pāramitās of purity, self, bliss, and permanence of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata is the fruition of the four causes of purity, such as faith,<sup>2384</sup> that were explained above. To regard saṃsāra, which consists of the adventitious appearances of delusion, as permanent, blissful, a self, and pure should be known as mistakenness.

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2. Explanation of their [respective] two reasons

Because the [dharmakāya] is naturally pure  
 And because it is free from latent tendencies, it is pure.  
 It is the supreme self because the reference points  
 Of self and no-self are at peace. I.37

It is bliss because the skandha of a mental nature  
 And its causes have come to an end.  
 It is permanent because it is realized  
 As the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. I.38

In brief, the pāramitā of purity in terms of the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata should be understood through two reasons—by virtue of the natural purity that is its general characteristic and by virtue of the purity of being stainless that is its particular characteristic. {160} [Its] pāramitā of self should [also] be understood through two reasons—because of being free from the reference points of a self due to being free from the extreme of the tīrthikas and because of being free from the reference points of no-self due to having abandoned the extreme of the śrāvakas. [Its] pāramitā of bliss should [likewise] be understood through two reasons—because of having relinquished [all] linking [to saṃsāra] through latent tendencies due to having relinquished all aspects of the origin of suffering and because of perceiving the cessation of the body of a mental nature due to perceiving all aspects of the cessation of suffering. [Its] pāramitā of permanence should [also] be understood through two reasons—because of not falling into the extreme of extinction due to not reducing impermanent saṃsāra and because of not falling into the extreme of permanence due to not augmenting permanent nirvāṇa.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.3. The manner of relinquishing the two extremes

With prajñā, they cut through all craving for a self without exception. Because they have a passion for sentient beings, those endowed with loving-kindness do not attain peace.

Relying in this way on intelligence and loving-kindness, the means for awakening,

The noble ones neither circle [in saṃsāra] nor pass into nirvāṇa. I.39

The noble ones of the mahāyāna neither circle in the three [saṃsāric] existences under the influence of karma and afflictions because they cut through all craving for a self without exception with the prajñā of realizing identitylessness, nor do they pass into the one-sided nirvāṇa that is peace because they are endowed with the passion of wishing to benefit all sentient beings. {161}

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2. Teaching the function

If the buddha element did not exist,  
There would be no weariness of suffering,

Nor would there be the wish, striving,  
And aspiration for nirvāṇa. I.40

If the buddha element—the mahāyāna disposition—did not exist in all sentient beings, there would be no weariness [in them], even when they see saṃsāric suffering, nor would there arise a mental state of striving and aspiring for nirvāṇa [in them], even when they see its benefit. Therefore, one should understand that the function of the basic element—the tathāgata heart—is that weariness of saṃsāra and the wish for liberation arises even in those sentient beings [whose disposition] is certain in terms of what is mistaken. Hence, [the text] says:

This seeing of the flaws of suffering and the qualities of happiness  
In [saṃsāric] existence and nirvāṇa  
Occurs [only] due to the existence of the disposition  
Because it does not [occur] in those without the disposition. I.41

The statement “Those with wrong craving have the nature of not passing into parinirvāṇa” was made with the intention of another time for the sake of counteracting aversion toward the mahāyāna dharma because aversion toward the mahāyāna dharma is the cause of having wrong craving. It is because of the existence of the naturally pure disposition that it is not feasible for any [sentient being] to absolutely never become pure. {162}

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.3. Explanation of endowment

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.3.1. Brief introduction

Just like the great ocean, [the disposition of the victors] is an  
inexhaustible source  
Of immeasurable jewels [in the form of its] qualities.  
Because it has the nature of being endowed  
With inseparable qualities, it is like a lamp. I.42



### 2.2.1.2.2.2.3.2. Detailed explanation

Since the basic element consists of the dharmakāya,  
 As well as the wisdom and the compassion of the victor,  
 It is taught to be like the ocean  
 In terms of a vessel, jewels, and water. I.43

In the stainless foundation, the supernatural knowledges,  
 Wisdom, and stainlessness are inseparable from true reality.  
 Therefore, they are similar, respectively, to  
 The light, heat, and color of a lamp. I.44

The topic called “endowment” is twofold (1) in terms of the basic element, the tathāgata heart, being associated with [certain] causes and (2) in terms of its being associated with [certain] results. (1) First, its being associated with [certain] causes is briefly introduced by the [first] two lines “Just like the great ocean . . .” [in verse I.42] and then explained in detail by the four lines “Since the basic element consists of the dharmakāya . . .” [of verse I.43]. In the due order of [the following] three points, [the basic element] resembles the great ocean in three ways. By virtue of that, it is in terms of the tathāgata element’s being associated with [certain] causes that it is to be understood as the topic of endowment. Which are these three points? They consist of [the tathāgata heart’s being associated with] (a) the cause of the purity of the dharmakāya, (b) the cause of the accomplishment of buddha wisdom, {163} and (c) the cause of a tathāgata’s great compassion’s engaging [all beings]. (a) Here, the cause of the purity of the dharmakāya is to be regarded as the cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna [dharma]. (b) The cause of the attainment of buddha wisdom is to cultivate the doors of prajñā and samādhi. (c) The cause of a tathāgata’s great compassion’s engaging [all beings] is a bodhisattva’s cultivation of compassion. Here, the cultivation of faith in the mahāyāna dharma resembles [the ocean’s] being a [big] vessel because the jewels of prajñā and samādhi as well as the water of compassion, [all of which] are immeasurable and inexhaustible, are assembled in it. The cultivation of the doors of prajñā and samādhi resembles the jewels [in this ocean] because it is nonconceptual and because it is endowed with qualities of inconceivable power. A bodhisattva’s cultivation of compassion resembles the water [in this ocean] because it possesses the single taste that is its nature of supremely moistening [the mind streams of] all beings. [Here, the fact of] these three dharmas<sup>2385</sup>

being endowed with a connection to the three causes [mentioned above] is called “endowment.”

(2) Second, [the tathāgata heart’s] being associated with [certain] results is briefly introduced by [lines I.42cd]:

Because it has the nature of being endowed  
With inseparable qualities it is like a lamp

and then explained in detail by [verse I.44] “In the stainless foundation, the supernatural knowledges . . .” In the due order of [the following] three points, [the basic element] resembles a lamp {164} in three ways. By virtue of that, it is in terms of the tathāgata element’s being associated with [certain] results that it is to be understood as the topic of endowment. Which are these three points? They consist of [being endowed with] (a) the supernatural knowledges, (b) the wisdom of the termination of contaminations, and (c) the termination of contaminations. Here, (a) the five supernatural knowledges resemble the light [of the flame of a lamp] because they have the characteristic of providing the approach to overcome the darkness of the antagonistic factors of experiencing [true] actuality. (b) The wisdom of the termination of contaminations resembles the heat<sup>2386</sup> [of the flame of a lamp] because it has the characteristic of providing the approach to consume the entire fuel of karma and afflictions without exception. (c) The termination of contaminations that is the change of the foundation resembles the color [of the flame of a lamp] because it has the characteristic of utterly stainless and pure luminosity. Here, it is stainless because the afflictive obscurations have been relinquished. It is pure because the cognitive obscurations have been relinquished. It is luminous because both these [obscurations] have the nature of being adventitious and thus have been relinquished. {167}<sup>2387</sup> Thus, these seven dharmas in the mind streams of nonlearners (which consist of the uncontaminated supernatural knowledges, wisdom, and relinquishment) [that exist] in the uncontaminated basic element are inseparable from each other, not distinct [from each other], and associated with the dharmadhātu in terms of [both] being equal.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.4. Explanation of engagement

This has two parts:

1. The actual topic
2. Explanation of the reasons for that {168}

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.4.1. The actual topic

Ordinary beings, noble ones, and perfect buddhas  
 Engage distinctly in suchness. Due to that,  
 This disposition of the victors is taught  
 To sentient beings by those who see true reality. I.45

Here, ordinary beings begin with those who have not entered [any of] the paths of the three yānas and [further include everyone] up through those on the paths of accumulation and the paths of preparation [of the three yānas]. The noble ones are those on the path of seeing, the path of familiarization, and so on. Perfect buddhas are those who, after having dwelled on the ten bhūmis, relinquished the two obscurations including their latent tendencies and manifested omniscient wisdom. The threefold distinction of the ways of these three engaging in the disposition of the victors—suchness—are taught by those who see true reality to [all] sentient beings to be guided.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.4.2. Explanation of the reasons

Ordinary beings are mistaken,  
 Those who see reality are the opposite,  
 And tathāgatas are most exactly unmistaken  
 And free from reference points. I.46

What are the three ways of engaging in suchness? In due order, they are thus—mistaken, unmistaken, and perfectly unmistaken and free from reference points. Here, “mistaken” refers to [the way of engaging] of naive beings because they are mistaken in terms of discrimination, mind, and view. The opposite, “unmistaken,” refers to the untainted [way of engaging] of the noble ones. {164} “Perfectly unmistaken and free from reference points” refers to [the way of engaging] of completely perfect buddhas because they have overcome [all] afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.5. Explanation of the phases

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.5.1. Brief introduction {165}

Its being impure, its being both impure and pure,  
 And its being completely pure, in due order,  
 Are expressed as “sentient being,”  
 “Bodhisattva,” and “tathāgata.” I.47

[The phases] consist of the phase of sentient beings’ being impure [by virtue of] the afflictive obscurations, the phase of bodhisattvas’ being pure of the afflictive obscurations but impure [by virtue of] the cognitive obscurations, and the phase of tathāgatas’ being completely pure [due to] having relinquished the two obscurations including their latent tendencies.

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.5.2. Detailed explanation

The basic element that consists of these  
 Six topics, such as [its] nature,  
 Is taught through three names  
 In its three phases. I.48

The uncontaminated basic element that is explained by way of the six topics of its nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment with qualities, and manner of mental engagement is taught through three names in its three phases. That is, in its phase of being impure, it is expressed as “the basic element of sentient beings”; in its phase of being both pure and impure, “the basic element of bodhisattvas”; and in its phase of being completely pure, “the basic element of tathāgatas.”

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.6. Explanation of all-pervasiveness

This has two parts:

1. Nature
2. Division

## 2.2.1.2.2.2.6.1. Nature

Just as space with its character  
 Of nonconceptuality is present everywhere,  
 The stainless basic element that is the nature of the mind  
 Is likewise omnipresent. I.49

Just as {166} space is present in every good, bad, and intermediate vessel (such as golden, copper, and earthen ones), this stainless basic element that is the nature of the mind pervades all three [kinds of] persons—supreme, inferior, and intermediate.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.6.2. Division

Its general characteristic is that it pervades  
 Flaws, qualities, and perfection,  
 Just as space [pervades] inferior, middling,  
 And supreme kinds of form. I.50

The nonconceptual nature of the mind of ordinary beings, noble ones, and completely perfect buddhas is their general characteristic. Therefore, it penetrates, enters, is the same as, and is always without difference in all three phases of flaws, qualities, and the perfection of the purity of these qualities, just as space [pervades] earthen, copper, and golden vessels, respectively. Therefore, immediately after the instruction on the [three] phases, [the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* says]:

Therefore, Śāriputra, the basic element of sentient beings is not other and the dharmakāya is not other. Nothing but the basic element of sentient beings is the dharmakāya, and nothing but the dharmakāya is the basic element of sentient beings. In terms of their meaning, they are not two. They are different in letter only.<sup>2388</sup>

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.7. [Explanation of] the topic of changelessness

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation {167}

##### 2.2.1.2.2.2.7.1. Brief introduction

Since it is adventitiously associated with flaws  
 And is naturally associated with qualities,  
 Its true nature of being changeless  
 Is the same before as after. I.51

The flaws such as attachment are adventitious (being just like dreams and illusions), and the qualities (such as the powers) are primordially associated [with the basic element] as mind's nature. Therefore, mind's expanse is changeless, being the same before and after as well.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2. Detailed explanation

This has three parts:

1. [The manner of being changeless during] the phase of being impure
2. [The manner of being changeless during] the phase of being both impure and pure
3. [The manner of being changeless during] the phase of being completely pure

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.1. [The manner of being changeless during] the phase of being impure

This has four parts:

1. Not being tainted by stains
2. The appearance of arising and perishing
3. Not being harmed by destruction
4. Detailed explanation of dependent origination

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.1.1. Not being tainted by stains

Just as all-pervasive space  
Is untainted due to its subtlety,  
So this [basic element] that abides in all  
Sentient beings is untainted. I.52 {169}

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.1.2. The appearance of arising and perishing

Just as the worlds everywhere  
Are born and perish in space,  
So the faculties arise and perish  
In the unconditioned basic element. I.53

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.1.3. Not being harmed by destruction

Just as space was never  
Burned before by any fires,

So this [basic element] is not consumed  
By the fires of death, sickness, and aging. I.54

Fires are threefold—the fire of destroying an eon at the end of its time, the fire of the Avīci hell, and the ordinary fire that arises from fuel. This expanse of the mind is not destroyed by the triad of aging, sickness, and death and is changeless.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.1.4. Detailed explanation of dependent origination

This has seven parts: (1) teaching an example (I.55), (2) teaching the meaning (I.56–57) {170}, (3) explanation by matching example and meaning (I.58–59), (4) teaching the manner of arising (I.60–61), (5) explanation of the nature's being without arising and ceasing (I.62), (6) explanation of its being pure of stains (I.63), and [the following:]

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.1.4.7. Summarizing the manner of being free from arising and perishing {171}

The mass of water[-like] karma  
And afflictions does not generate this,  
Nor do the unbearable fires of death,  
Sickness, and aging consume it. I.64

The three fires—the one at the end of time,  
The one in hell, and ordinary [fire]—  
Should be understood, in due order, as being like  
The three fires of death, sickness, and aging. I.65

Karma and afflictions, which are like a mass of water, do not generate this nature of the mind that is natural luminosity—it is not produced by [any] cause in the beginning. Nor do the unbearable fires of death, sickness, and aging consume it—it is not destroyed by [any] condition in the end. Death, sickness, and aging should be known, in due order, as being like the three fires for three reasons<sup>2389</sup> because [death causes] the six [inner] āyatanas to no [longer be] what is “mine,”<sup>2390</sup> [sickness] causes one to experience various sufferings, and [aging] causes the formations to ripen. [However,] even in its phase of being impure, the tathāgata element is not changed through these three fires of death, sickness, and aging. With regard to this, [the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*] says:

Bhagavan, “being dead” or “being born” are [merely] worldly conventions. Bhagavan, “being dead” refers to the cessation of the sense faculties. Bhagavan, “being born” refers to the manifestation of new faculties.<sup>2391</sup> However, Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is not born, does not age,<sup>2392</sup> does not die, does not transit, and does not [re]arise. For what reason is that? {172} Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is beyond being an object that has the characteristic of being conditioned. [Rather,] it is permanent, everlasting, peaceful, and eternal.<sup>2393</sup>

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2. [The manner of being changeless during] the phase of bodhisattvas’ being both impure and pure

This has four parts:

1. The manner of realizing what is to be adopted and to be rejected
2. The meaning of lacking birth and death [under the influence] of afflictions
3. Showing their display by virtue of realization
4. Explanation of an auxiliary topic of that

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2.1. The manner of realizing what is to be adopted and to be rejected

Having realized the nature of this [basic element] just as it is,  
 Free from birth, death, sickness, and aging,  
 The intelligent, despite lacking the predicaments of birth and so on,  
 Rely on their causes due to having given rise to compassion for  
 beings. I.66

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2.2. The meaning of lacking birth and death under the influence of afflictions

The root of the sufferings of death, sickness,  
 And aging is removed by the noble ones.  
 As for birth under the influence of karma and afflictions,  
 They lack this because they lack that. I.67

The fuel-like substantial [cause] of these fires of death, sickness, and aging during the phase of [the tathāgata element’s] being impure is the birth that is preceded by improper<sup>2394</sup> mental engagement, karma, and afflictions. Bodhisattvas who are endowed with both purity and impurity, abide on the



pure bhūmis, and have obtained a body of a mental nature, lack [any] birth, aging, sickness, and death under the influence of karma and afflictions. Because those bodhisattvas lack the [causes that consist of] contaminated karma {173} and afflictions, they lack this birth, aging, sickness, and death [under the influence] of karma and afflictions. Though this is indeed the case, by relying on the cause that is their great compassion, they display birth, aging, sickness, and death for beings [in accordance with] whatever guides whichever sentient beings.

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2.3. Showing their display by virtue of realization

Because they see [the basic element] as it really is,  
 They are beyond birth and so on, but  
 Their character of compassion displays  
 As birth, death, aging, and sickness. I.68

Bodhisattvas who are united with roots of virtue, by relying on their mastery over [taking] birth as they wish, connect with [saṃsāra] in its three realms due to<sup>2395</sup> their compassion. They display birth and they also display aging, sickness, and death. [However, actual] specifically characterized [phenomena of] birth, aging, and so on, do not exist in them because they see the lack of arising of the uncontaminated basic element, the sugata heart, as it really is.

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.2.4. Explanation of an auxiliary topic of that

The two [points] of (1) what is amazing and (2) engagement in the welfare of others explain the first bhūmi. The two [points] of (3) [engaging in] conduct in the world and (4) matching an example with its meaning explain the [following] six bhūmis.<sup>2396</sup> (5) The blending of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment explains the eighth bhūmi. The two [points] of (6) being free from effort and (7) attaining the [four] discriminating awarenesses explain the ninth bhūmi. The three [points] of (8) the immeasurable welfare of others, (9) the ultimate qualities, and (10) the manner of the distinction from buddhas {174} explain the tenth bhūmi.

(1) What is amazing

Having realized that this true nature  
 Is changeless, the children of the victors

Are [still] seen as [being subject to] birth and so on  
By those blinded by ignorance—this is amazing! I.69

Here, the four [kinds of] bodhisattvas are those who have given rise to [bodhi]citta for the first time, those who engage in the conduct [of bodhisattvas], those who are irreversible, and those who are prevented [from becoming a buddha] by [only] a single birth. Those who have given rise to [bodhi]citta for the first time [are referred to as such] by having the ultimate bodhicitta in mind. That is, those who have given rise to [bodhi]citta for the first time [are referred to as such] because on the first bhūmi, “Supreme Joy,” they see the supramundane true nature that they had not seen before since beginningless time.

(2) The manner of engaging in the welfare of others

Those who have attained the sphere of the noble ones  
Show themselves in the sphere of naive beings.  
Therefore, the means and the compassion  
Of the friends of beings are supreme. I.70

(3) Engaging [in conduct] in the world

Those who engage in the conduct [of bodhisattvas] are referred to in that way because starting from the second bhūmi, “The Stainless One,” up through the [seventh] bhūmi, “Gone Afar,” they engage in the conduct that is without being tainted by the afflictions. Having this in mind, [the text says]:

Though being beyond all worlds,  
They do not move away from the world,  
Conducting themselves in the world for the sake of the world  
Without being tainted by worldly stains. I.71

(4) Matching an example with its meaning {175}

Just as a lotus is born in the water  
But is not tainted by the water,  
So they are born in the world  
But are untainted by worldly dharmas. I.72

## (5) The blending of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment

Their mind always [set] on accomplishing [beneficial] activity  
 Is blazing like fire,  
 While always being immersed in  
 The absorption of the dhyāna of peace. I.73

This teaches the characteristics of the purity of the qualities of irreversible bodhisattvas because on the eighth bhūmi, “The Immovable One,” they are firmly and uninterruptedly grounded in the samādhis that are the practices for attaining great awakening. This is the blending of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment since their efforts in accomplishing the welfare of others through various means and their being immersed in the pure dhyāna in which the afflictions are at utter peace are not mutually exclusive.

## (6) Being free from effort

[Because of] the power of the continuing force of previous [actions]  
 And because of being free from all conceptions,  
 They do not [need to] make any effort  
 For the sake of maturing living beings. I.74

Though [the bodhisattvas] who dwell on the ninth bhūmi, “The Excellent One,” are free from all conceptions, they mature those to be guided without effort through the power of the continuing force of [their] previous [actions].

## (7) Attaining the [four] discriminating awarenesses

Through teaching, the rūpakāyas,  
 [Various forms of] conduct, and [daily] behaviors,  
 Knowing who is to be guided in which way by what,  
 They [guide] those [beings] in just that way. I.75 {176}

Here, teaching means to teach whatever dharma that guides whomever. The rūpakāyas refer to the display of whatever kāyas that guide whomever. Conduct means to display the conduct of desire for those to be guided with great attachment and so on. [Daily] behaviors refer to the arising of the welfare of beings through whichever of the four kinds of [daily] behavior.

## (8) The immeasurable welfare of others

In that way, without any effort  
 Those with unobscured intelligence  
 Always engage in the welfare of sentient beings  
 For beings whose [number] reaches to the limits of space. I.76

This is the manner in which the immeasurable welfare of others [arises].

## (9) The ultimate qualities

The attainment of this status  
 Of bodhisattvas is equal for the world  
 To tathāgatas in terms of  
 Delivering sentient beings. I.77

## (10) The manner of being distinct from buddhas

Though this is the case, [actually] the difference  
 Between bodhisattvas and a buddha  
 Is the difference between a particle and the earth  
 Or between [the water in] the hoofprint of an ox and the ocean. I.78

It is explained that bodhisattvas who dwell on the tenth bhūmi are like a buddha in terms of the manner in which they promote the welfare of others [during] subsequent attainment. However, since they do not possess the millions of sixty-four qualities [of a buddha] (such as the powers) [during] meditative equipoise, [their difference] is like the difference between a minute particle and the great earth or between the water in the hoofprint of an ox and the great ocean. {177}

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3. [The manner of being changeless during] the phase of being completely pure

This has six parts:

1. Teaching the reasons for being pure
2. The thesis of being without birth, sickness, aging, and death
3. Stating the reasons for that
4. Its detailed explanation

5. Its summary

6. Stating the means of proof in detail

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.1. Teaching the reasons for being pure

[The tathāgata element's] character does not change into anything other because it has the nature of being inexhaustible.

It is the refuge of beings because it has no end in time.

It is always nondual because it is nonconceptual.

It also has the nature of indestructibility because its nature is to be uncreated. I.79

The detailed explanation of the meaning of these [reasons begins with]

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.2. The thesis of being without birth, sickness, aging, and death

It is not born, nor does it die.

It is not impaired, nor does it age I.80ab

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.3. Stating the reasons for that

Because it is permanent and everlasting,

Because it is peaceful, and because it is eternal. I.80cd

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.4. Its detailed explanation

It is not [even] born [in the form] of a body

Of a mental nature because it is permanent.

It does not [even] die [by way of] the death and transition

That are an inconceivable transformation because it is everlasting. I.81

It is not [even] impaired by the sicknesses

Of subtle latent tendencies because it is peaceful.

It does not [even] age through uncontaminated

Formations because it is eternal. I.82

The basic element that abides on the buddhabhūmi, is naturally luminous, and is free from all adventitious stains is not [even] born in the form of

a body of a mental nature because it is permanent. It does not [even] undergo the death and transition that are an inconceivable transformation {178} because it is everlasting. It is not [even] impaired by the sickness of the subtle latent tendencies of ignorance because it is peaceful. It does not even age as a matured result of uncontaminated karma because it has attained eternal life, which is unshakable by other conditions.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.5. Its summary

Here, through two phrases, again two,  
Two, and two, in due order, one should understand  
The meanings of permanent and so on  
With regard to the unconditioned expanse. I.83

This is exactly what was explained above.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.2.7.2.3.6. Stating the means of proof in detail

The meaning of being permanent is its character of not changing  
into anything other  
Because it has the quality of being inexhaustible.  
The meaning of being everlasting is its character of being a refuge  
Because it is equal to the final end. I.84

The meaning of being peaceful is its true nature of nonduality  
Because it has the nature of being nonconceptual.  
Being eternal has the meaning of being indestructible  
Because it has the quality of being unfabricated. I.85

Unlike a butter lamp's having died, it does not pass into [the nirvāṇa] without any remainder of the skandhas because it has the quality of being inexhaustible. It does not change into anything other by assuming other births—this is the meaning of being permanent. It is everlasting because it is forever free from all perishing until the end and finish. It is peaceful because all conceptions of clinging to duality have been relinquished. It is indestructibly eternal because its primordially and spontaneously present qualities, which are not newly fabricated by [certain] causes and conditions, {179} have become manifest.

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8. Explanation of the inseparable qualities

This has [six parts:]

1. The four synonyms of the uncontaminated [basic element]
2. Teaching the four specifications of their meanings
3. Explanation of the quality of being nondual
4. Teaching the meaning of liberation
5. Teaching the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects
6. Teaching that buddhahood is one with nirvāṇa

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8.1. The four synonyms<sup>2397</sup> of the uncontaminated [basic element]

Since it is the dharmakāya, the Tathāgata,  
 The reality of the noble ones, and ultimate nirvāṇa,  
 There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood  
 Due to its qualities being inseparable, just like the sun and its rays. I.86

Since the buddha element is also the dharmakāya, also the Tathāgata, also the reality of the noble ones, also the ultimate, and also nirvāṇa,<sup>2398</sup> there is no buddhahood (which resembles light rays) other than the nirvāṇa that is primordial peace (which resembles the sun).

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8.2. Teaching the four specifications of their meanings

In brief, one should know the four  
 Synonyms such as the dharmakāya  
 For the uncontaminated expanse  
 Since it is classified as fourfold in meaning. I.87

[They] are the inseparability of the buddha attributes,  
 The disposition for that's having been obtained just as it is,  
 Its true nature's being without falsity and without deception,  
 And its being natural primordial peace. I.88

{180} As for the reason for calling the basic element (the sugata heart) “the dharmakāya,” it exists inseparably from the buddha attributes that are beyond counting, just as one refers to a buddha statue that exists inseparably from the precious substance gold as a “gold statue.” As for its being called “Tathāgata,” this has the meaning of the dharmakāya—the

buddha disposition—having been realized and obtained just as it is. [As for its being called “the reality of the noble ones,”] it is the true nature that is real, without falsity, and without deception, just as it is seen by the [noble] ones. As for the meaning of its being *nirvāṇa*,<sup>2399</sup> [it is natural peace] because the appearances of mistakenness (the adventitious stains), which are **primordially not established**, are like clouds and dreams. As the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra* says:

The tathāgata heart is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable [from it], [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it], and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>2400</sup>

As it is [also] said:

The buddha disposition is the distinctive feature of the six āyatanas that has been obtained through [the nature of] phenomena since beginningless [time] and is continuing [as such up through the present].<sup>2401</sup>

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8.3. Explanation of the quality of being nondual

I.89 {181}

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8.4. Teaching the meaning of liberation

I.90

### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8.5. Teaching the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects

[Suppose there were] some painters,  
[Each] an expert in another [body part],  
So that whatever part is known by one of them  
Would not be determined by any other one. I.91

Then a mighty king would hand  
Them a canvas and order,  
“All of you, on this [canvas]  
Paint my form!” I.92



Then, having heard this [order],  
 They would apply themselves to the painting work,  
 [But] if one or the other among these dedicated workers  
 Would leave for another country, I.93

With him gone to another country,  
 Due to the [painters'] being incomplete, the painting  
 Would not be completed in all its parts—  
 Such is the example that is given. I.94

The painters of these [body parts]  
 Are said to be generosity, discipline, patience, and so on,  
 While the emptiness endowed with  
 All supreme aspects is the form [of the king]. I.95

As for “being endowed with all supreme aspects” here, each one [among] these [aspects] of generosity and so on is differentiated into infinite distinctions in terms of being the experiential sphere of a buddha.<sup>2402</sup> Therefore, they should be understood to be immeasurable, that is, being inconceivable in terms of their numbers and powers. {182} This is the meaning of “all aspects.” [These pāramitās] are supremely pure because the latent tendencies of their antagonistic factors (such as miserliness) are eliminated.

Here, the true nature of nonarising is attained through cultivating the door of the samādhi of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects. Therefore, on the bodhisattvabhūmi “The Immovable,” based on [the wisdom of] the path that is nonconceptual, flawless, uninterrupted, and operates on its own accord, all qualities of the tathāgatas in the uncontaminated expanse are fully accomplished. On the bodhisattvabhūmi “The Excellent One,” based on the wisdom of seizing the immeasurable buddha attributes through innumerable oceans of doors of samādhis and dhāraṇīs, the immeasurability of these qualities is fully accomplished. On the bodhisattvabhūmi “Dharma Cloud,” based on the wisdom of revealing the secret state of all tathāgatas, the inconceivability of these qualities is fully accomplished. Immediately after that, based on the wisdom of being liberated from all afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies in order to attain the buddhabhūmi, the supreme purity of these qualities is fully accomplished. Since {183} arhats and pratyekabuddhas do not see these four supports of wisdom on [those four] bhūmis, they are said

to be far from the dhātu of nirvāṇa<sup>2403</sup> that is characterized by being inseparable from the accomplishment of these four kinds of qualities.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.2.8.6. Teaching that buddhahood is one with nirvāṇa

Since prajñā, wisdom, and liberation  
Are illuminating, radiating, and pure,  
And since they are not different, they resemble  
The light, the rays, and the orb of the sun. I.96

Therefore, without attaining buddhahood,  
Nirvāṇa is not attained,  
Just as it is impossible to view the sun  
After its light and its light rays are removed. I.97

The dhātu of nirvāṇa that is characterized by being inseparable from the accomplishment of these four kinds of qualities is illustrated by what is prajñā, what is wisdom, and what is liberation. In due order, these are taught to be similar to the sun in four ways—[due to] three [aspects in terms of prajñā and so on] and due to one aspect [in general]. Here, since the supramundane nonconceptual prajñā in the mind stream of a buddha engages in the elimination of the darkness of being ignorant about the true reality of [all] knowable objects, it is similar to the illuminating light [of the sun]. The wisdom of all knowable objects that is attained subsequent to this [prajñā], by virtue of engaging in all aspects of knowable entities without exception, is akin to the radiating web of the light rays [of the sun]. {184} The liberation of the nature of the mind that is the basis of these two, by virtue of being utterly stainless and luminous, is akin to the complete purity of the orb of the sun. By virtue of all three having the nature of not being different from the dharmadhātu, they resemble [the fact that] those three [qualities of the sun] are inseparable [from it].

This is the true nature of the inseparable qualities of the tathāgatas in this basic element that is endowed with the virtuous attributes whose nature it is to be associated with it [since time] without beginning. Therefore, without attaining the tathāgatahood that is endowed with the vision of the wisdom that is without attachment and without obstruction, the realization of the dhātu of nirvāṇa, which is characterized by being the liberation from all obscurations, is not tenable to manifest, just as it is not [possible] to see the orb of the sun without seeing its light and its light rays.

### 2.2.1.2.2.3. Teaching through examples that the stains are purified despite its nature's being changeless

This has five parts:

1. Connecting the preceding and the following [passages]
2. Teaching the heart of the victors that is associated with stains through<sup>2404</sup> nine examples
3. The manner of purifying the stains
4. The progression of how [the basic element] is realized
5. Teaching the [tathāgata] heart itself

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.1. Connecting the preceding and the following [passages]

The presentation of the heart of the victors

Has been discussed in this way in ten aspects.

[Now,] its dwelling in the cocoons of the afflictions

Should be understood through examples. I.98

{185} Thus, it was in terms of understanding the true nature that is as permanent as the end of time that the presentation of this tathāgata heart has been explained through ten topical aspects. [Now,] it is in terms of the cocoons of the afflictions (which have the nature of being associated with it [but] not being connected with it since time without beginning) and the pure true nature (which has the nature of being associated with it as well as being connected with it since [time] without beginning) that the tathāgata heart's being concealed by infinite millions of cocoons of afflictions should be realized through nine examples according to the sūtras.<sup>2405</sup>

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.2. Explaining the heart of the victors associated with stains

This has [three parts:]

1. Brief introduction of the combined [presentation] of the examples and their meaning as well as their individual descriptions
2. Their detailed explanation
3. Summarized meaning

##### 2.2.1.2.2.3.2.1. [Brief introduction of the combined presentation of the examples and their meaning as well as their individual descriptions]

[This has two parts]: (1) combined [presentation] of the examples and their meaning (I.99–100) and (2) the individual descriptions (I.101). {186}

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2. Detailed explanation of the nine examples

The example and the meaning of (1) the lotus and the buddha and likewise of (2) the bees and the honey, (3) the husks and the grains, (4) the filth and the gold, (5) the earth and the treasure, (6) the peel and the sprout, (7) the rotten garment and the statue, (8) the poor woman and the cakravartin, and (9) the clay and the golden statue—[for each one of] all these, there is a brief introduction and a detailed explanation [in terms of] the triad of the [respective] example, its meaning, and its function.

(1) The teaching that just as a buddha statue exists in the sheath of a lotus, the [buddha] heart (the dharmakāya of realization) exists in the cocoon of the latencies of the affliction of desire has two parts—brief introduction (I.102–3) and detailed explanation {187} (I.104).

(2) The teaching that just as honey exists in a beehive, the dharmakāya of the teaching [that consists of] the profound definitive meaning exists in the cocoon of the latencies of the affliction of hatred has two parts—brief introduction (I.105–6) and detailed explanation (I.107).

(3) The teaching that just as kernels such as rice exist in the sheath of their husks, the dharmakāya of the teachings [that consists of] the variety of expedient meanings exists in the cocoon of the latencies of the affliction of dullness {188} has two parts—brief introduction (I.108–9) and detailed explanation (I.110).

(4) The teaching that just as gold exists in filth, the [tathāgata] heart—suchness—exists in the cocoon of the intense outbursts of the afflictions also has two parts—brief introduction {189} (I.111–13) and detailed explanation (I.114).

(5) The teaching that just as a treasure of jewels exists beneath the earth, the [tathāgata] heart—the naturally abiding disposition—exists in the cocoon of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance has two parts—brief introduction (I.115–16) {190} and detailed explanation (I.117).

(6) The teaching that just as a sprout of a tree exists in the peel [of a fruit], the unfolding disposition exists in the sheath of the afflictions to be relinquished through seeing has two parts—brief introduction (I.118–19) and detailed explanation (I.120). {191}

(7) The teaching that just as a statue of precious substance exists in a rotten garment, the [tathāgata] heart—the svābhāvikakāya—exists in the cocoon of the afflictions to be relinquished through familiarization has two parts—brief introduction (I.121–22) and detailed explanation (I.123).

(8) The teaching that just as a cakravartin king<sup>2406</sup> exists in the belly of a woman, the sambhogakāya<sup>2407</sup> exists in the cocoon of the stains pertaining

to the seven impure bhūmis has two parts—brief introduction {192} (I.124–25) and detailed explanation (I.126).

(9) The teaching that just as a statue of molten gold exists in mud, the [tathāgata] heart—the nirmāṇakāya—exists in the cocoon of the stains pertaining to the three pure bhūmis has two parts—brief introduction (I.127–28) and detailed explanation (I.129). {193}

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.2.3. Summarized meaning of the nine examples

I.130–31

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.3. The manner of purifying the stains

This has five parts:

1. General instruction
2. Individual explanation
3. Summarized meaning
4. In the mind streams of which persons they exist
5. Explanation of the nine stains by matching the examples and their meaning

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.3.1. General instruction

The beginningless stainlessness of the nature  
 Of the mind within the beginningless cocoons  
 Of the afflictions that are not connected to  
 The basic element of sentient beings is declared to be. I.132

The afflictions that exist in the mind streams of sentient beings and the basic element—the sugata heart—do not have any connection in terms of identical nature or causality because the adventitious stains appear while not existing (being just like clouds and dreams) while the basic element—{194} the sugata heart—primordially abides as having the character of being permanent, eternal, peaceful, and everlasting.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.3.2. Individual explanation

[The nine kinds of stains are] (1)–(3) the three latencies [of desire, hatred, and ignorance], (4) [their] intense outbursts, (5) the latent tendencies of ignorance, (6) the factors of the common yānas to be relinquished through seeing, (7) the factors [of the common yānas] to be relinquished

through familiarization, (8) the stains of the seven impure bhūmis, and (9) the stains of the three pure bhūmis that are the factors to be overcome by the vajra-like samādhi.

Desire, hatred, dullness,  
 Their intense outbursts, latent tendencies,  
 The stains to be relinquished through the paths of seeing and  
 familiarization,  
 As well as those pertaining to the impure and the pure bhūmis I.133

Are taught by the nine kinds of examples  
 Of the sheath of a lotus and so on,  
 But the cocoons of the proximate afflictions  
 In all their variety are infinite millions. I.134

In brief, these nine afflictions exist in an adventitious manner as the factors that obscure the naturally pure tathāgata element, just as the sheath of a lotus obscures the image of a buddha and so on. Which are these nine? They are as follows. (1) The afflictions that are characterized as the latencies of desire, (2) the afflictions that are characterized as the latencies of hatred, (3) the afflictions that are characterized as the latencies of mental darkness, (4) those that are characterized as the outbursts of intense desire, hatred, and ignorance, {195} (5) those that consist of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, (6) those to be relinquished through seeing, (7) those to be relinquished through familiarization, (8) those pertaining to the impure bhūmis, and (9) those pertaining to the pure bhūmis.

(1)–(3) Here, the afflictions that exist in the mind streams of those free from mundane desire, which are the causes for the accumulation of immovable [karmic] formations and so on, accomplish [rebirths in] the form [realm] and the formless realm, and are to be overcome by supramundane wisdom, are called “those that are characterized as the latencies of desire, hatred, and ignorance.” (4) The [afflictions] that exist in the mind streams of sentient beings who engage in desire and so on, which are the causes for the accumulation of meritorious and nonmeritorious [karmic] formations and so on, accomplish only [rebirths in] the desire realm, and are to be overcome by the wisdom of familiarizing with the repulsiveness [of the body and so on], are called “those that are characterized as the outbursts of intense desire, hatred, and ignorance.” (5) The [afflictions] that exist in the mind streams of arhats, which are the causes for engaging<sup>2408</sup>

in uncontaminated karma,<sup>2409</sup> accomplish a stainless mental body, and are to be overcome by the wisdom of the awakening of a tathāgata, are called “those that consist of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance.” As for learners, they are twofold—ordinary beings and noble ones. Here, (6) the [afflictions] that exist in the mind streams of the learners who are ordinary beings, {196} which are to be overcome by the wisdom of first seeing the supramundane dharma, are called “those to be relinquished through seeing.” (7) The [afflictions] that exist in the mind streams of the learners who are noble persons, which are to be overcome by the wisdom of familiarizing with the supramundane dharma as it was seen [on the path of seeing], are called “those to be relinquished through familiarization.” (8) The [afflictions] that exist in the mind streams of bodhisattvas who dwell on the seven impure bhūmis, which are to be overcome by the wisdom of familiarizing with the three pure bhūmis (the eighth bhūmi and so on), are called “those that pertain to the impure bhūmis.” (9) The [afflictions] that exist in the mind streams of bodhisattvas who have reached perfection, which are the antagonistic factors of the wisdom of familiarizing with the three bhūmis such as the eighth one and are to be overcome by the wisdom of the vajra-like samādhi, are called “those that pertain to the pure bhūmis.”

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.3.3. Summarized meaning

I.135

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.3.4. In the mind streams of which persons they exist

Through these stains, naive beings,  
 Arhats, learners, and the intelligent  
 Are [explained] to be impure in due order  
 Through four, one, two, and two, respectively. I.136

Naive ordinary beings {197} are impure because they have four [stains]—the three latencies of the three poisons and their intense outbursts. Śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats are impure because they are endowed with the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. Those on the paths of learning are impure because they possess two [stains]—the factors to be relinquished through seeing and the factors to be relinquished through familiarization. The intelligent bodhisattvas are impure because they

possess the obscurations that pertain to the seven impure bhūmis and the obscurations that pertain to the three pure bhūmis.

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.3.5. Explanation of the nine stains by matching the examples and their meaning

I.137–46ab {198}

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4. The progression of how [the basic element] is realized

This has four parts:

1. Brief introduction of the cause of realization
2. Detailed explanation of that
3. Teaching that [the basic element] is realized through confidence [alone]
4. Teaching about the persons who lack realization

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.1. Brief introduction of the cause of realization

Due to consisting of three natures, the basic element  
Is similar to a buddha and so on. I.146cd

Its nature is the dharmakāya,  
Suchness, and also the disposition,  
Which are to be understood through  
Three examples, one, and five, respectively. I.147

Through the three examples of a buddha image, honey, and the kernel of a fruit, the basic element is to be understood as having the nature of the dharmakāya. Through the one example of gold, [it is to be understood] as having the nature of suchness. Through the five examples of a treasure, a tree, a precious statue, a cakravartin, {199} and a golden image, [it is to be understood] as having the nature of the disposition that gives rise to the three buddhakāyas.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2. Detailed explanation of that

This has [four parts:]

1. The twofold dharmakāya
2. Suchness



3. [Explanation of] the two that produce
4. Explanation of the three to be produced

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2.1. Explanation of the twofold dharmakāya

This has [two parts:]

1. The actual [explanation of] the twofold dharmakāya
2. Matching this with the examples and their meanings

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2.1.1. The actual [explanation of] the twofold dharmakāya

The dharmakāya is to be known as twofold—  
 The utterly stainless dharmadhātu  
 And its natural outflow (teaching  
 The principles of profundity and diversity). I.148

The dharmakāya of buddhas is to be understood as twofold. Which are these? [They are] the dharmakāya of realization and the dharmakāya of the teaching. (1) The utterly pure dharmadhātu is the sphere of nonconceptual [wisdom]. This is to be understood in terms of being the dharma that is to be personally experienced by the tathāgatas. (2) The cause for attaining this [pure dharmadhātu], the natural outflow of the utterly pure dharmadhātu, consists of [various forms of] cognizance in other sentient beings in accordance with how they are to be guided. This is to be understood in terms of being the dharma that is the teaching. The dharmakāya of the teaching is also twofold due to the division of the principles of presenting the dharma that is subtle and vast. That is, it consists of the teaching of the principle of presenting the dharma of the profound piṭaka of bodhisattvas in terms of ultimate reality {200} and the teaching of the principle of presenting the dharma of diversity in its many aspects, such as sūtras, proclamations in song, prophecies, proclamations in verse, aphorisms, and counsels in terms of seeming reality.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2.1.2. Matching the examples and their meanings

Since it is beyond the world, no example  
 For this can be observed in the world.  
 Therefore, the basic element is taught  
 To resemble the Tathāgata. I.149

The teaching of the principle of subtle profundity  
 Is like the single taste of honey.  
 The teaching of the principle of diverse aspects  
 Should be understood to resemble a kernel in its various husks. I.150

Thus, these three examples of a buddha image, honey, and a kernel teach that [all] these sentient beings possess the heart of a *tathāgata* in the sense of the *tathāgata-dharmakāya*'s pervading the realm<sup>2410</sup> of all sentient beings without exception. There is no sentient being whatsoever in the realm of sentient beings that is outside of the *tathāgata-dharmakāya*, just as there is no form that is outside of the element of space.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2.2. Teaching suchness

Because of being changeless by nature,  
 Excellent, and pure,  
 This suchness is described {201}  
 As resembling a piece of gold. I.151

Though the mind is associated with infinite afflictions and suffering, by virtue of its natural luminosity, it shows<sup>2411</sup> no change. [Therefore,] it is called “suchness” in the sense of being unchangeable like good gold. Though this [suchness] is without any difference in its nature even in all sentient beings whose mind streams<sup>2412</sup> are certain in terms of what is mistaken, it receives the designation “*tathāgata*” [upon] having become pure of all adventitious afflictions. Therefore, here, in the sense of suchness's being undifferentiable, this one example of gold teaches that the suchness of the *tathāgatas* is the heart of all these sentient beings.<sup>2413</sup>

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2.3. [Explanation of] the two that produce

The disposition is to be known as twofold,  
 Being like a treasure and a fruit tree—  
 The naturally abiding one without beginning  
 And the supreme accomplished one. I.152

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.2.4. Explanation of the three to be produced

It is held that the three buddhakāyas  
 Are obtained from these two dispositions—  
 The first kāya, by virtue of the first one,  
 And the latter two, by virtue of the second one. I.153

The beauty of the svābhāvikakāya  
 Should be known to be like a precious statue  
 Because it is unproduced by nature  
 And is a treasure of precious qualities. I.154

Since it possesses the kingdom of the great dharma, {202}  
 The sambhoga[kāya] is like a cakravartin.  
 Because it has the nature of a reflection,  
 The nirmāṇa[kāya] is like a golden image. I.155

Thus, these remaining five examples (a treasure, a tree, a precious statue, a cakravartin, and a golden image) teach that the tathāgata element is the heart of all these sentient beings in terms of the disposition for the production of the three kinds of buddhakāyas existing [in all beings]. Tathāgatahood is what is characterized by the three kinds of buddhakāyas. Therefore, since the tathāgata element is the cause for attaining [these buddhakāyas], the meaning of “basic element” (*dhātu*) here is the meaning of “cause.” For the tathāgata element, which serves as the heart of accomplishment, indeed exists in all sentient beings, but those sentient beings do not know that.

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.3. Teaching that [the basic element] is realized through confidence [alone]

The ultimate of the self-arisen ones  
 Is to be realized through confidence alone. I.156ab

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.4.4. The persons who lack realization

Those without eyes do not see  
 The disk of the sun with its blazing light. I.156cd

In brief, this is a presentation that these four persons **do not** possess the eyes for seeing that they have the tathāgata heart. Who are these four? They are (1) ordinary beings, (2) śrāvakas, {203} (3) pratyekabuddhas, and (4) bodhisattvas who have newly entered the [mahā]yāna.

#### 2.2.1.2.2.3.5. Teaching the [tathāgata] heart itself

This has two parts:

1. Teaching its nature
2. Teaching the manner of its being empty and not being empty

##### 2.2.1.2.2.3.5.1. Teaching its nature

There is nothing to be removed in this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated. I.157

Here, a number of divergent positions on asserting the identification of what the nature of the tathāgata heart is have arisen in this [land of] Tibet. The gurus from Ganden say, “The tathāgata heart is the emptiness of mind’s being empty of real existence, which is a nonimplicative negation.” The gurus from Sakya assert that the tathāgata heart is mind’s union of being lucid and empty. In the words of the precious dharma lord Rangjung Dorje:

Just this ordinary mind  
 Is called “dharmadhātu” and “heart of the victors.”  
 Neither is it to be improved by the noble ones  
 Nor made worse by sentient beings.  
 Without doubt, it may be expressed through many conventional terms,  
 But its actual reality is not understood through expressions.<sup>2414</sup>

There are no afflicted phenomena to be removed from this tathāgata element that is completely pure by nature because it is its nature to be free from adventitious stains. Nor is even the slightest purified phenomenon to be added to it {204} because the inseparable and inconceivable buddha attributes are its true nature and essence.

### 2.2.1.2.2.3.5.2. Teaching the manner of its being empty and not being empty

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
 Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
 It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
 Which have the characteristic of being inseparable. I.158

This tathāgata heart is empty of all cocoons of the afflictions that are separable and [can] be realized as being divisible [from it], whereas it is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable, [can] not be realized as being divisible [from it], and surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].

### 2.2.1.2.2.4. Explanation of the purpose of teaching the basic element

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction through a question and its answer
2. The detailed explanation of that

#### 2.2.1.2.2.4.1. Brief introduction through a question and its answer

Having said here and there that just like clouds, dreams, and illusions,  
 All knowable objects are empty in every respect,  
 Why then did the victors say here  
 That the buddha heart exists in sentient beings? I.159

They taught this so that those in whom they exist  
 May relinquish the five flaws of faintheartedness,  
 Contempt for inferior sentient beings, clinging to what is unreal,  
 Deprecating the real dharma, and excessive attachment to oneself.  
 I.160

#### 2.2.1.2.2.4.2. Detailed explanation

This has three parts:

1. The manner in which [the Buddha] taught in the middle [cycle of his] words
2. The reasons for teaching the basic element in the last [cycle] {205}
3. The detailed explanation of that

2.2.1.2.2.4.2.1. The manner in which [the Buddha] taught in the middle [cycle of his] words

It has been stated that the true end is void  
Of conditioned phenomena in all aspects,  
With the entities of afflictions, karma,  
And [their] maturations resembling clouds and so on. I.161

The afflictions are referred to as resembling clouds,  
Karma is like the experiences in a dream,  
And the skandhas—the maturations of afflictions and karma—  
Are like the magical manifestations in an illusion. I.162

It was presented in this way before I.163a

2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2. The reasons for teaching the basic element in the last [cycle]

But later in this ultimate continuum here  
It is taught that the basic element exists  
In order to relinquish the five flaws. I.163bd

2.2.1.2.2.4.2.3. Detailed explanation

This has six parts: (1) the flaw of faintheartedness (I.164), (2) the flaw of not knowing that oneself and others are equal (I.165), (3) the flaw of wrong clinging by virtue of not knowing the basic element {206} (I.166), (4) the flaw of deprecating what is to be relinquished and its remedies (I.167), (5) the flaw of not realizing equality (I.168), and (6) the qualities of being free from the five flaws (I.169–70).

Some scholars such as guru Sakya Pañchen say, “The statement that sentient beings possess the sugata heart is not of definitive meaning, to be taken literally, [but] it is of expedient meaning, entailing an intention. If you wonder what its basis of intention is, it is emptiness. Its purpose is that it is [said] in order to relinquish the five flaws such as self-contempt. The invalidation of the explicit [statement] is that if one asserts the existence of such a sugata heart in the mind streams of sentient beings, {207} it would be the same as the tīrthikas asserting the existence of a permanent, single, and independent self.” [However,] this is not the same. The tīrthikas entertain the reference points of clinging to a self, [but] here this text says that the sugata heart

Is the supreme self because the reference points  
Of self and no-self are at peace.<sup>2415</sup>

Accordingly, it neither [entails] any clinging to a self as [found in] the tīrthikas nor any clinging to the lack of a self as [found in] the śrāvakas. Therefore, it is said in Asaṅga's commentary [on I.37cd] that it is free from the reference points imputed by these two [types of persons]. If the existence of the sugata heart in sentient beings is not asserted, the five flaws [as stated in I.161–65]

Thus, not having heard about this,  
Due to the flaw of self-contempt,  
In some who are fainthearted,  
Bodhicitta will not arise . . .

will just remain as before.

Also, the gurus from Ganden give the following explanation: “One may think that after it has been explained in the middle [cycle] of the Buddha's words that phenomena are empty like dreams and illusions, it constitutes the flaw of [a useless and contradictory] repetition to again explain here in this *Uttaratantra* that the sugata heart exists because it is [nothing but] the emptiness of the mind that is the sugata heart. This is indeed the case, but [Maitreya only] taught the existence of the sugata heart in all sentient beings in order to relinquish the flaws of faintheartedness and so forth.” {208} [Thus,] they do not assert that the emptiness of mind's being empty of real existence in the mind streams of sentient beings exists inseparably from the qualities such as the [ten] powers. They also say, “The sugata heart is nothing but the emptiness of mind's being empty of real existence, which is a nonimplicative negation.” [However,] since there are no aspects of qualities whatsoever in that [nonimplicative negation], it contradicts the explanation that the sugata heart and the dharmakāya are equivalent. For [*Uttaratantra* I.86a] says about the meaning of the dharmakāya that it is

the inseparability of the buddha attributes.

You may wonder, “But what is it that is called ‘sugata heart’?” It is just as [*Uttaratantra* I.63] says:

The luminous nature of the mind  
 Is unchanging, just like space.  
 It is not afflicted by adventitious stains,  
 Such as desire, born from false imagination.

This completes the section on the tathāgata heart in *An Analysis of the Jewel Disposition, A Treatise on the “Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna,”* [with] the exposition of the summarized meaning of the verses of the first [chapter].

### 2.2.2. Teaching the second general topic, the awakening that is the realization

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

#### 2.2.2.1. Brief introduction

This has two parts:

1. Teaching its nature
2. A synoptical verse

##### 2.2.2.1.1. Teaching its nature

[Buddhahood] is purity, attainment, freedom,  
 One’s own welfare and that of others, the foundation of this,  
 And profundity, vastness, and magnanimity  
 For as long as time lasts and in accordance [with beings]. II.1

{209} In due order, this verse teaches [buddhahood through] these eight topics. They are (1) the topic of [its] nature, (2) the topic of [its] cause, (3) the topic of [its] fruition, (4) the topic of [its] function, (5) the topic of [its] endowment [with qualities], (6) the topic of [its] manifestation, (7) the topic of [its] permanence, and (8) the topic of [its] inconceivability. Here, the basic element that is not liberated from the cocoon of the afflictions is called “the tathāgata heart.” Its purity is to be understood as the nature of the awakening that is the fundamental change.



**2.2.2.1.2. A synoptical verse**

II.2

**2.2.2.2. Detailed explanation**

This has seven parts:

1. [Detailed] explanation of nature and cause
2. [Detailed explanation of] the fruition
- [3. Detailed explanation of the function]
4. [Detailed explanation of] endowment
5. [Detailed explanation of] manifestation
6. [Detailed explanation of] permanence
7. Detailed explanation of inconceivability

**2.2.2.2.1. Explanation of nature and cause**

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction of nature and cause
2. Their detailed explanation

**2.2.2.2.1.1. Brief introduction**

II.3

**2.2.2.2.1.2. Detailed explanation**

This has four parts: (1) nature {210} (II.4), (2) the manner of being endowed with qualities (II.5), (3) the meaning of being obscured (II.6), and (4) the cause of becoming free (II.7).

**2.2.2.2.2. [Detailed explanation of] the fruition**

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

**2.2.2.2.2.1. Brief introduction**

II.8–9 {211}

**2.2.2.2.2. Detailed explanation**

This has three parts: (1) the fruitions of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment (II.10–11), (2) the fruition of the three poisons' being pure (II.12–14), and (3) matching that with the nine examples and their meaning (II.15–17). {212}

The nature of the fundamental change, which entails the cause that consists of the supramundane nonconceptual [wisdom] and the wisdom attained subsequent to it, bears the name “result of freedom.”<sup>2416</sup> Its function is the fulfillment of one's own welfare and that of others. What is the fulfillment of one's own welfare and that of others here? The attainment of the unobscured dharmakāya because of being liberated from [all] afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies is stated to be the fulfillment of one's own welfare. What is based on that [fulfillment of one's own welfare] and consists of [a buddha's] engagement by way of the twofold mastery over displaying and teaching through the two [rūpa]kāyas in an effortless manner for as long as the world lasts is stated to be the fulfillment of the welfare of others.

**2.2.2.2.3. Explanation of the function**

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

**2.2.2.2.3.1. Brief introduction**

II.18–20 {213}

**2.2.2.2.3.2. Detailed explanation**

This has [two parts]: (1) the function connected with the svābhāvikakāya (II.21–26ab) {214} and (2) the function connected with the two rūpakāyas (II.26cd–28).

**2.2.2.2.4. Explanation of endowment**

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

#### 2.2.2.2.4.1. Brief introduction

II.29

#### 2.2.2.2.4.2. Detailed explanation

This has [four parts]: (1) teaching the endowment with the two welfares to be inseparable (II.30), (2) explanation of this being inconceivable (II.31–33) {215}, (3) teaching the meaning of permanent, everlasting, quiescent, and eternal (II.34), and (4) detailed explanation of the distinctive features of the dharmakāya (II.35–37).

#### 2.2.2.2.5. Explanation of manifestation

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation

#### 2.2.2.2.5.1. Brief introduction

This has [four parts]: (1) the nature that is realized {216} (II.38), (2) the dharmakāya (II.39), (3) the sambhogakāya (II.40), and (4) the uninterrupted nirmāṇakāya (II.41).

#### 2.2.2.2.5.2. Detailed explanation

This has [eight parts]: {217} (1) the basis of the division (II.42), (2) its being divided into the three kāyas (II.43), (3) explanation of the svābhāvikakāya that is endowed with five characteristics and five qualities (II.44–48), (4) explanation of the sambhogakāya that is endowed with five qualities, such as natural effortless compassion {218} (II.49–52), (5) explanation of the nirmāṇakāya by way of the twelve deeds (II.53–56) {219}, (6) particular explanation of the enlightened activity of speech including its progression (II.57–59), (7) the meaning of being profound and vast (II.60–61ab), and (8) teaching the support and the supported (II.61cd).

#### 2.2.2.2.6. Explanation of the topic of permanence

This has [four parts]: (1) brief introduction (II.62) {220}, (2) [detailed explanation of] the seven reasons for the rūpakāyas' being permanent (II.63–66ab), (3) detailed explanation of the three reasons for the dharmakāya's being permanent (II.66cd–67), and (4) summarized meaning (II.68).

### 2.2.2.2.7. Detailed explanation of inconceivability

This has four parts: {221} (1) stating the meaning of being inconceivable (II.69), (2) progressive explanation of eight arguments (II.70–71), (3) summarizing the meaning through six reasons (II.72), and (4) this [buddha-hood] being difficult to realize (II.73).

[This concludes] the second chapter, the one that teaches the awakening that is the realization.

### 2.2.3. Teaching the qualities that are its branches

This has three parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation
3. Summarized meaning

#### 2.2.3.1. Brief introduction

This has three parts: {222} (1) the ultimate and the seeming [qualities] (III.1), (2) the two [qualities] of purity and attainment (III.2–3), and (3) teaching a summarizing verse (III.4).

#### 2.2.3.2. Detailed explanation

This has six parts:

1. Explanation of the ten powers through the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and matching them with an example
2. [Explanation of] the four fearlessnesses through the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and matching them with an example
3. [Explanation of] the eighteen unique attributes through the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and matching them with an example
4. Explanation of the major marks through the pair of [detailed] explanation and matching them with an example
5. Matching these [qualities] with the sūtras
6. Detailed explanation through matching the examples and their meanings

#### 2.2.3.2.1. Explanation of the ten powers through the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and matching them with an example

This has [three parts]:

1. [Brief] introduction of the ten powers
2. [Detailed] explanation {223}
3. Matching them with an example

#### 2.2.3.2.1.1. [Brief] introduction of the ten powers

What is the case and what is not the case,  
 Maturation of karmas, faculties,  
 Constitutions, inclinations,  
 The path that leads everywhere, III.5

Afflicted and stainless dhyānas and so on,  
 Recollection of [former birth]places,  
 The divine eye, and peace  
 Represent the tenfold power of knowledge. III.6

Here, the power of knowing what is the case and what is not the case is the direct knowledge that it is the case that the result of possessions originates from the cause of generosity, [that it is not the case that poverty comes from that cause], that it is the case that the result of pleasant existences and higher realms arises from the cause of maintaining [proper] discipline, that it is not the case that miserable existences arise from that cause, and so on. The following [among the] ten powers should be understood in the same way.

#### 2.2.3.2.1.2. [Detailed] explanation

[In knowing] what is the case and what is not the case, maturation,  
 constitutions, the various inclinations of beings,  
 What is afflicted and purified, the collection of faculties, recollection  
 of former [birth]places,  
 The divine eye, and the mode of the termination of contamination,  
 III.7ac

#### 2.2.3.2.1.3. Matching them with an example

the powers are like a vajra  
 Because they pierce the armor, break the firm wall, and cut down the  
 tree of ignorance. III.7cd

#### 2.2.3.2.2. [Explanation of] the four fearlessnesses through the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and matching them with an example

This has [three parts]: (1) [brief] introduction of the four fearlessnesses {224} (III.8), (2) [detailed] explanation (III.9), and (3) matching them with an example (III.10).

#### 2.2.3.2.3. Explanation of the eighteen unique attributes through the triad of [brief] introduction, [detailed] explanation, and matching them with an example

This has [three parts]: (1) [brief] introduction of the eighteen unique buddha attributes (III.11–13) {225}, (2) [detailed] explanation (III.14–15), and (3) matching an example with its meaning (III.16).

These eighteen [qualities] such as the physical conduct [of a buddha's] lacking mistakenness, his speech's lacking chatter, and his mind's lacking mistakenness are the distinctive features of a buddha bhagavān alone, whereas they do not exist in anybody else, such as śrāvakas or pratyekabuddhas. {226} Therefore, they are called “the attributes that are unique compared to them.”

#### 2.2.3.2.4. Explanation of the major marks through the pair of [their detailed explanation and] matching them with an example

This has two parts: (1) explanation of the major marks (III.17–25) {227} and (2) matching them with an example (III.26).

#### 2.2.3.2.5. Matching [these qualities] with the sūtras

III.27

#### 2.2.3.2.6. Detailed explanation through matching the examples and their meanings

This has five parts:

1. Explanation through matching the examples for the qualities and their meanings in general
2. Distinct explanation of matching the ten powers [with their example]
3. [Distinct] explanation of matching the four fearlessnesses [with their example]
4. The point of presenting the example [for the unique qualities]
5. Explanation of matching the unique [qualities with their example]

### 2.2.3.2.6.1. Explanation through matching the examples for the qualities and their meanings in general

III.28

### 2.2.3.2.6.2. Distinct explanation of matching the ten powers [with their example]

Among the powers and so on, {228} through six powers  
 Three, and one, in due order,  
 All [stains of] what is to be cognized, meditative absorption,  
 And [the afflictions] including their latent tendencies are eliminated.

III.29

Therefore, since these [three stains] are pierced, broken, and cut down  
 Like an armor, a wall, and a tree, respectively,  
 The powers of the seer are like a vajra  
 Due to being steady, firm, strong, and unbreakable. III.30

Why are they steady? Because they are firm.  
 Why are they firm? Because they are strong.  
 Why are they strong? Because they are unbreakable.  
 Since they are unbreakable, they are like a vajra. III.31

Here, since the ten powers of knowledge of the buddha bhagavāns cannot be broken and stopped by their antagonistic factors, they are similar to a diamond. They are steady since they are changeless. They are firm because they are just what abides primordially becoming manifest. Since they are unbreakable by other conditions, they are strong. Here, the antagonistic factors are threefold—the armor-like cognitive obscurations, the wall-like obscurations of meditative absorption, and the treelike afflictive obscurations. Here, the first six powers pierce the armor-like cognitive obscurations. The three powers that are the seventh and so on break the wall-like obscurations of meditative absorption. The tenth power cuts down the treelike afflictive obscurations at their root.

### 2.2.3.2.6.3. [Distinct] explanation of matching the four fearlessnesses [with their example] {229}

Because of being unafraid, because of being indifferent,  
 Because of being firm, and because of being supremely powerful,  
 The lion of sages resembles a lion,  
 Being fearless amid the assemblies of his retinue. III.32

By virtue of knowing everything, he abides  
 Without being afraid of anything.  
 He is indifferent because he sees that he is not equal  
 Even to pure sentient beings. III.33

He is firm because his mind is one-pointed  
 With regard to all phenomena.  
 He is powerful because he has supremely transcended  
 The ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance. III.34

The buddha bhagavāns are endowed with the four fearlessnesses. When they speak of the dharma amid their retinues, they say, “I directly see all phenomena of the three times (past, future, and present) because I have found omniscient wisdom” and are unafraid of [others] objecting to that [by saying], “You do not know such.”<sup>2417</sup> [The buddhas also] say, “I have relinquished all afflictions such as attachment including their latent tendencies” and are unafraid of [others] objecting to that [by saying], “You have not relinquished such.” [The buddhas] say, “Through having practiced this path, I have become freed from saṃsāra with its three realms and attained liberation” and are unafraid of [others] objecting to that [by saying], “You are not able to be delivered from saṃsāra through this path.” [The buddhas] say, “This is the attainment of the liberation [that serves] as the support for being free from all bondage” {230} and are unafraid of [others] objecting to that in accord with the dharma [by saying], “This is still not freedom.” Through this, they utter the lion’s roar amid their retinues.

2.2.3.2.6.4. The point of presenting the example [for the unique qualities]

III.35



### 2.2.3.2.6.5. Explanation of matching the unique [qualities with their example]

III.36

### 2.2.3.3. Summarized meaning

This has three parts:

1. Summarizing the thirty-two qualities of the dharmakāya
2. Summarizing the thirty-two qualities of the rūpakāyas
3. The manner of seeing the objects that are the [rūpakāyas]

#### 2.2.3.3.1. Summarizing the thirty-two qualities of the dharmakāya

III.37

#### 2.2.3.3.2. Summarizing the thirty-two qualities of the rūpakāyas

III.38

#### 2.2.3.3.3. The manner of seeing the [rūpakāyas]

For those far from and close to purity,  
 In the world and in the maṇḍala of the victor,  
 The seeing of these [kāyas occurs] in two ways,  
 Just as [does] the form of the moon in pure water and in the sky. III.39

{231} As for ordinary beings, who are far from realizing the completely pure sugata heart (the stainless dharmakāya), seeing the kāya of the victors that is adorned with the major and minor marks in the world, this refers to the nirmāṇakāya of a buddha and resembles seeing the form of the moon within water. The kāya that is seen in the maṇḍala of the victor by bodhisattvas who are close to seeing the [sugata] heart (the completely pure dharmakāya free from stains) and who dwell on the bhūmis is called “sambhoga[kāya]” and resembles the form of the moon seen in the sky.

[This concludes] the third chapter, the one that teaches the sixty-four qualities.

### 2.2.4. The manner in which the enlightened activity that is the condition that causes realization operates

This has three parts:

1. Brief introduction
2. Detailed explanation
3. Very detailed explanation by matching it with examples

#### 2.2.4.1. Brief introduction

This has two parts: (1) effortless enlightened activity (IV.1) and (2) the supreme [interaction between] the factors to be relinquished and their remedies (IV.2). {232}

#### 2.2.4.2. Detailed explanation

This has two parts:

1. [Brief] introduction of [enlightened activity's] being nonconceptual and yet engaging objects without contradiction
2. [Detailed] explanation of that

##### 2.2.4.2.1. [Brief] introduction of [enlightened activity's] being nonconceptual and yet engaging objects without contradiction

IV.3–4

##### 2.2.4.2.2. [Detailed] explanation of that

This has five parts:

1. [Brief] introduction
2. [Detailed] explanation
3. Examples
4. Explanation of matching them [with enlightened activity]
5. Being uninterrupted for three reasons

##### 2.2.4.2.2.1. [Brief] introduction

IV.5

##### 2.2.4.2.2.2. [Detailed] explanation

“Deliverance” refers to the ten bhūmis;  
 “The cause of that,” to the two accumulations;  
 “The result of that,” to supreme awakening;  
 “Taking hold,” to the beings of awakening; IV.6

“The obscurations of that,” to the infinite afflictions,  
 Secondary afflictions, {233} and their latent tendencies;  
 And “the condition for overcoming them  
 That is [present] at all times,” to compassion. IV.7

The subject matter of these [verses] consists of six topics—deliverance, the cause, the result, taking hold of sentient beings, the obscurations of that, and the condition for overcoming the obscurations.

#### 2.2.4.2.2.3. Examples

IV.8

#### 2.2.4.2.2.4. Explanation of matching them [with enlightened activity]

IV.9–11

Here, as for the ten bhūmis, the *Madhyāntavibhāga* composed by venerable Maitreya says:

The actuality of omnipresence, the actuality that is supreme,  
 The natural outflow that is the supreme purpose,  
 The actuality of nonclinging,  
 The actuality of the mind streams’ not being different,

The actuality of neither affliction nor purity,  
 The actuality of no difference,  
 The actuality of neither decrease nor increase,  
 And {234} the matrix of fourfold mastery—

Ignorance about the dharmadhātu  
 (These ten nonafflictive obscurations)  
 Are the antagonistic factors of the ten bhūmis,  
 And their remedies are the bhūmis.<sup>2418</sup>

Vasubandhu’s commentary on this states:

This is as follows. As for the actuality of omnipresence, on the first bhūmi, [bodhisattvas] realize the actuality of the omnipresence of the

dharmadhātu, through which they attain [the realization of] the equality of themselves and others. On the second one, they realize [the dharmadhātu] as the actuality that is supreme, through which they think, “Therefore, we shall make efforts in the very same practice, which is the practice to purify<sup>2419</sup> it in all aspects.” On the third one, they realize its natural outflow as the supreme purpose. Through this, they recognize study<sup>2420</sup>—the natural outflow of the dharmadhātu—to be supreme and therefore, for this purpose,<sup>2421</sup> [are willing to] even plunge themselves into a fire pit that has the size of the greatest chiliocosm in a trichiliocosm. On the fourth one, they realize [the dharmadhātu] as the actuality of nonclinging. Thus, they even put an end to craving for the dharma. On the fifth one, they realize the actuality of [all] mind streams, not being different—they realize the equality of completely pure mind and intention in ten aspects. On the sixth one, they realize the actuality of neither affliction nor purity because they realize that, in the actuality of<sup>2422</sup> dependent origination, there is no phenomenon that is either afflicted or pure. On the seventh one, they realize [the dharmadhātu] as the actuality of no difference. {235} For, by virtue of the lack of characteristics, different characteristics of phenomena (such as the sūtras) do not transpire. On the eighth one, they realize [the dharmadhātu] as the actuality of neither decrease nor increase. For, by virtue of having attained the poised readiness for the dharma of nonarising, they do not see any decrease or increase with regard to afflicted or purified phenomena. Fourfold mastery consists of mastery over nonconceptuality, mastery over pure realms, mastery over wisdom, and mastery over enlightened activity. Among these [four], on the eighth [bhūmi], [bodhisattvas] realize the dharmadhātu as being the matrix of the first and the second masteries. On the ninth one, [it is realized as being the matrix of the mastery over wisdom because [bodhisattvas] attain [the four kinds of] discriminating awareness. On the tenth one, they realize it as being the matrix of the mastery over enlightened activity because they promote the welfare of sentient beings through emanations just as they please.<sup>2423</sup>

The noble ones who have attained the bhūmis, while not moving away from the state of directly seeing the dharmadhātu, realize it as the actuality of omnipresence and so on. To think that due to the occurrence of [directly seeing the dharmadhātu and realizing it as different actualities] these two

are contradictory [only] represents the narrative of those who do not realize the definitive meaning.

The ten bhūmis are similar to the ocean since they possess water-like<sup>2424</sup> wisdom and many qualities (such as the twelve times one hundred [qualities]) that are like precious jewels. The two accumulations of merit and wisdom (the causes) {236} resemble the sun since they are the basis of sustaining all sentient beings by way of infinite [forms of] benefit and happiness. The great awakening that has the character of the three kāyas (the result) resembles space since it is vast and is without middle and end by virtue of being equal to the dharmadhātu. The basic element of sentient beings—the sugata heart—resembles a treasure of jewels since it possesses the nature of the buddha attributes that equal the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā in number. The afflictions and secondary afflictions that obscure the basic element—the sugata heart—resemble clouds since they arise again and again in an adventitious manner, since they pervade the streams of consciousness that are endowed with ignorance, and since they are not established ultimately, just like illusions and dreams. The nonreferential great compassion of buddha bhagavāns resembles a forceful wind since it disperses and overcomes [all] afflictions and secondary afflictions that are like thick cloud banks.

#### 2.2.4.2.2.5. Being uninterrupted for three reasons

Because of [accomplishing] deliverance under the influence of others,  
Regarding oneself and sentient beings as equal,  
And activity's not being fully completed,  
[Buddha] activity is uninterrupted as long as saṃsāra lasts. IV.12

{237} It is impossible for the deeds of the buddha bhagavāns—enlightened activity—to be interrupted.<sup>2425</sup> They see that all sentient beings circle in the three realms under the influence of afflictions and ignorance since beginningless time, continually pass through [assuming the forms of] the six types [of beings], and experience all kinds of suffering. Upon that, the power of their mahāyāna disposition unfolds, unbearable and indestructible compassion arises [in them], and they are endowed with the great mental power to accomplish the benefit and happiness [of these beings]. By virtue of that, they give rise to the mind-set for supreme awakening (the motivation [of bodhicitta]), don the armor of leading all sentient beings out of saṃsāra without leaving even a single sentient being behind, and for the

sake of that accomplish the buddhahood that is endowed with inconceivable knowledge, loving-kindness, and power.<sup>2426</sup> This is their accomplishment. They regard themselves and all sentient beings as equal in terms of having the true nature of a tathāgata. The activity of liberating all sentient beings is still not fully completed. Because of [all that], enlightened activity—the deeds [of buddhas]—is uninterrupted until saṃsāra has become empty.

In this context, as for the question here whether saṃsāra does or does not have an end, some tīrthikas assert that there is a beginning point of saṃsāra. Among Buddhists, the factions of the śrāvakas and also the systems of certain mahāyānists assert that saṃsāra does not have a beginning point. As for a final end [of saṃsāra], saṃsāra in general is without end because {238} there is no time at which saṃsāra becomes empty. Individually, [saṃsāra] has an end because each sentient being's attainment of liberation is nothing but the end of their [individual] saṃsāra. Some say, "Since it is impossible for even a single sentient being not to become a buddha and to always remain in saṃsāra, all sentient beings will become buddhas and thus there is also an end of saṃsāra in general."

#### 2.2.4.3. Very detailed explanation by matching it with examples

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction of the examples and their meaning
2. Their detailed explanation

##### 2.2.4.3.1. Brief introduction of the examples and their meaning

Like Śakra, a drum, clouds, Brahmā,  
The sun, and a precious jewel,  
Like an echo, like space and the earth,  
Thus is the Tathāgata. IV.13

##### 2.2.4.3.2. Their detailed explanation

This has [three parts]:

1. Explanation of matching [enlightened activity] with nine examples
2. Their summarized meaning
3. Teaching them by way of eliminating dissimilarities

##### 2.2.4.3.2.1. Explanation of matching [enlightened activity] with nine examples

This has seven parts:

1. Body
2. Speech
3. Its all-pervasiveness
4. Projecting emanations
5. The mode of engagement of wisdom
6. The secrets of body, speech, and mind
7. The mode of engagement of great compassion

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.1. Body

This has four parts:

1. Teaching [the enlightened activity of the body] through the example that consists of the triad of the manner of appearance, the function, and the manner in which this becomes the welfare of others
2. Explanation of the meaning that consists of the triad of the manner of appearance, [the manner in which this] becomes the welfare [of others], and performing<sup>2427</sup> functions despite being nonconceptual
3. Detailed explanation of the example and its meaning
4. Teaching the reason for its manner of appearance

2.2.4.3.2.1.1.1. Teaching [the enlightened activity of the body] through the example that consists of the triad of the manner of appearance, the function, and the manner in which this becomes the welfare of others {239} [This has three parts]: (1) the manner of appearance (IV.14–15), (2) the function (IV.16–17), and (3) [the manner in which this] becomes the welfare [of others] (IV.18–19).

2.2.4.3.2.1.1.2. [Explanation of] the meaning [that consists of the triad of the manner of appearance, the manner in which this becomes the welfare of others, and the manner of performing functions despite being nonconceptual]

[This has three parts]: (1) the manner of appearance (IV.20–22) {240}, (2) [the manner in which this] becomes the welfare of others (IV.23), and (3) performing functions despite being nonconceptual (IV.24–26).

2.2.4.3.2.1.1.3. Detailed explanation of the example<sup>2428</sup> and its meaning

IV.27–28 {241}

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.1.4. The reason for its manner of appearance

IV.29–30

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.2. Speech

This has six parts: (1) presenting the example (IV.31–32), (2) teaching its meaning (IV.33–34) {242}, (3) brief introduction of the function through the meaning of the example (IV.35), (4) detailed explanation (IV.36), (5) describing the difference [between the example and buddha speech] (IV.37–41) {243}, and (6) teaching that the manner in which [the Buddha's] speech engages is noncontradictory (IV.42–43).

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.3. The all-pervasiveness of the example of speech

This has five parts:

1. Teaching the example of clouds
2. Stating its meaning
3. The manner of becoming a [suitable] vessel
4. Effortless engagement
5. Elimination of suffering

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.3.1. Teaching the example of clouds

IV.44

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.3.2. Stating its meaning

IV.45–47 {244}

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.3.3. The manner of becoming a [suitable] vessel

IV.48–49

[Buddha activity] manifesting indifferently:

IV.50–51

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.3.4. Effortless engagement

IV.52 {245}



#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.3.5. Elimination of suffering

This has three parts: (1) suffering (IV.53), (2) realizing that [it can be] changed (IV.54), and (3) seeing the mode of being of the four realities (IV.55).

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.4. Projecting emanations

This has four parts: {246} (1) brief introduction of the example and its meaning (IV.56–57), (2) the explanation of that (IV.58), (3) teaching the cause of seeing (IV.59), (4) explanation of the twelve deeds of a *nirmāṇakāya* (IV.60).

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.5. The mode of engagement of wisdom

This has six parts: {247} (1) brief introduction (IV.61), (2) engaging activity (IV.62–63), (3) the manner of wisdom's radiating (IV.64), (4) teaching the manner of engaging many [beings] (IV.65), (5) explanation of the progression of that engagement (IV.66–67) {248}, (6) the manner of being eminent (IV.68–69).

#### 2.2.4.3.2.1.6. The secrets of body, speech, and mind

This has three parts:

1. [Teaching] through a brief introduction, a detailed explanation, and the manner of being hard to find that [everything] needed and desired arises [from a buddha's] mind
2. An example and its meaning [in terms of] the inconceivable secret of speech
3. An example and its meaning [in terms of] the inconceivable secret of the body

##### 2.2.4.3.2.1.6.1. [Brief] introduction of the secret of mind

[This has three parts: (1) brief introduction] (IV.70–71) {249}, (2) [detailed] explanation (IV.72), and (3) being hard to find (IV.73)

##### 2.2.4.3.2.1.6.2. The secret of speech

[This has two parts]: (1) its example (IV.74) and (2) the meaning (IV.75).

##### 2.2.4.3.2.1.6.3. The secret of the body

[This has two parts]: (1) its example (IV.76–77ab) and (2) the meaning (IV.77cd).

**2.2.4.3.2.1.7. The mode of engagement of great compassion {250}**

This has two parts: (1) an example (IV.78) and (2) the meaning (IV.79).

**2.2.4.3.2.2. Summary [of the nine examples]**

This has [seven parts]: (1) the meaning of effortlessness (IV.80), (2) teaching the purpose (IV.81–82), (3) the actual summary (IV.83–84) {251}, (4) formulating the argument (IV.85–86), (5) stating the meaning at hand (IV.87), (6) teaching the nine examples (IV.88), and (7) explanation of the nine examples (IV.89–91) {252}.

**2.2.4.3.2.3. Explaining them by way of eliminating dissimilarities**

This has [three parts]: (1) the manner in which arising and ceasing appear (IV.92–94), (2) stating the examples in terms of their dissimilarities (IV.95–100) {253}, and (3) teaching the meaning of the fruition arising from compassion (IV.101).

[This concludes] the fourth chapter of enlightened activity.

**2.3. Concluding tasks of the treatise**

This has three parts:

1. [Stating its] benefit
2. How it was composed
3. Dedication and summary

**2.3.1. [Stating] the benefit**

This has [seven parts]: (1) stating the point of inconceivability (V.1) {254}, (2) brief introduction of the qualities (V.2), (3) being more eminent than generosity (V.3), (4) being more eminent than discipline (V.4), (5) being more eminent than dhyāna (V.5) {255}, (6) stating the reasons for that (V.6), and [the following:]

**2.3.1.7. Very detailed explanation of the benefit**

This has five parts:

1. Swiftly attaining awakening
2. Serving as the support for bodhicitta
3. Completing the two accumulations
4. An ancillary teaching on the definitiveness of the two accumulations
5. Relinquishing the two obscurations

### 2.3.1.7.1. Swiftly attaining awakening

With regard to the foundation, its change,  
 Its qualities, and the accomplishment of welfare,  
 These four aspects of the object of the knowledge  
 Of the victors as they were described, V.7

The intelligent have faith in [the foundation's] existing,  
 [Its change] being possible, and its being endowed with qualities.  
 Therefore, they swiftly become suitable  
 To attain the state of a tathāgata. V.8

Here, “the foundation” refers to the sugata heart, which is taught in the first chapter. “Its change” refers to the awakening of this [sugata heart] having become free from obscurations, which is taught in the second chapter. “Its qualities” refers to the sixty-four qualities of awakening and so on, which are taught in the third chapter. Its “accomplishment of welfare”<sup>2429</sup> refers to the enlightened activity of the victors, which is taught in the fourth chapter. Any intelligent bodhisattvas {256} have confident faith in the sugata heart's existing in all sentient beings. They also have faith in its being possible to attain the awakening of this [sugata heart] having become free from obscurations, [have faith in] its being endowed with the sixty-four qualities and so on of having attained this [awakening], and have confident faith in the mode of effortless enlightened activity. Based on that, they swiftly attain awakening.

### 2.3.1.7.2. Serving as the support for bodhicitta

V.9–10

### 2.3.1.7.3. Completing the two accumulations<sup>2430</sup>

V.11ab

### 2.3.1.7.4. An ancillary teaching on the definitiveness of the two accumulations

V.11cd–V.13

### 2.3.1.7.5. Relinquishing the two obscurations {257}

V.14–15

#### 2.3.2. How [this treatise] was composed

This has [five parts]: (1) the basis of its composition (V.16–17), (2) identifying the words of the victors (V.18), (3) teaching that everything that accords with them {258} is to be adopted (V.19), (4) since the words of the victors are supreme one should not act in contradiction with them (V.20), and [the following:]

#### 2.3.2.5. Teaching the flaws of such contradiction

This has three parts: (1) identifying the causes for rejecting the dharma (V.21–22) {259}, (2) the certainty of not rejecting the profound dharma (V.23), and (3) teaching that to reject the dharma is more grave than the [actions of] immediate consequence (V.24).

#### 2.3.3. Dedication and summary

This has two parts: (1) dedication and aspiration (V.25) {260} and (2) summary through a brief introduction and a detailed explanation (V.26–28).

[This concludes] the chapter of the benefit, which is the fifth one. [By virtue of ending with a dedication,] it is certain that this [treatise] was composed as the conclusion of all five treatises of the great being Maitreya.<sup>2431</sup>

Clearly teaching the unsurpassable supreme yāna,  
This treatise directly shows the unsurpassable buddhakāya,  
And therefore all children of the victors rely [on it],  
So I too [rely] on this [treatise] at all times.

The analyses of this [treatise], which clearly teaches  
The wisdom of the victors abiding in ourselves,  
Made by Loden Sherab, Chaba, Dsang, and Tenpa,<sup>2432</sup>  
Who came before [me], accord with the general yāna.

Here, in order to [fully] understand unsurpassable buddhahood,  
There is some slight disagreement [with them in my] topical outline.  
However, it is by taking the victor's sūtras themselves as arbiter  
That I composed this topical outline that represents an unsurpassable  
ornament.

Through [its] virtue, may [all] sentient beings, who pervade the limits  
of space,  
Manifest the seven vajra points without obscuration  
And, through overcoming the three obscurations of wisdom,  
Which is the vajra of self-arisen prajñā, become like the protector  
Maitreya.<sup>2433</sup> {261}

This explanation of the topical outline of the *Uttaratantra*, which teaches the unsurpassable yāna, was authored by the [bodhi]sattva Rangjung Dorje.

The *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* authored by the noble protector Maitreya together with the commentary composed by master Asaṅga was translated by the great scholar paṇḍita Sajjana (the grandson of the great scholar Brahman Ratnavajra of glorious great Anupamapura) and the translator and Śākya bhikṣu Loden Sherab in that very [city] Anupamapura.

The Buddha Bhagavān with [all] the branches [of awakening] complete,  
The victor Śākyamuni himself,  
Turned the wheel<sup>2434</sup> of dharma in three stages, among which  
The third wheel [consists of] the sūtras of definitive meaning.

The commentary on their intention is this text composed by the  
protector Ajita,  
This *Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna*.  
The son of the victor who dwells on the third bhūmi (The  
Illuminating One),  
The master Asaṅga, composed a commentary on it.

Most of those to be guided who are not suitable  
To see the heart of the matter do not have faith in it  
And oppose it through all kinds of means. Seeing this,  
The sixth buddha by the name Lion, who has not yet arrived  
And is renowned as the Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje,  
Has explained the intended meaning of this [text] in detail.

Having seen [his] manner [of doing so], self-confidence arose in me too.  
May [these teachings] spread and flourish in all countries  
Of vast Jambudvīpa and remain for a long time.

{262} Based on the kindness of Karmapa Chötra Gyatso, who is free from all rivals on this earth, the Lama called Dashi Öser, who has attained the self-confidence of being unafraid of [all] those who propound the ocean-like philosophical systems of ourselves and others and has appeared in this northern land, matched the text [of the *Uttaratantra*] (“the translation of the root [text]”) with the topical outline authored by Rangjung Dorje and also composed just a little bit of commentary on the difficult points.

The scribe for this composition at Ladsa Dorje Den<sup>2435</sup> during the excellent date of the waxing moon of the first autumn month of the female earth pig year<sup>2436</sup> was Öser Sangpo.<sup>2437</sup> May [this text] become an ornament of Jambudvīpa, blazing with auspiciousness. Through handing over and entrusting this treatise to the guardians who protect the dharma, such as the glorious wisdom protector Pernagpochen,<sup>2438</sup> Pal[den] Lhamo,<sup>2439</sup> and Tamchen Dorje Legpa,<sup>2440</sup> may they guard it so that it does not deteriorate until the very end of time.

Maṅgala bhavantu. Śubhaṃ.

This [commentary on the] *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* was composed by the unequalled great Tulku, the great crown ornament of [all] learned ones in Jambudvīpa, called Dashi Öser.

Through the power of the ocean of the mass of virtue of having  
accomplished that,

May I and others, all beings without exception [whose number] equals  
space,

Be born in the abode of Tuṣita, see Ajita’s face,

Engage in the dharma of the supreme yāna, and become buddhas.

Virtue!

## Instructions on “The Ultimate Continuum of the Mahāyāna” by Mönlam Tsültrim

I pay homage to the protector Ajita,  
Who teaches the actuality of the luminous heart  
And overcomes all latent tendencies of thoughts.

When the paṇḍita by the name of Maitreyaṅgāthā practiced the mahāyāna dharma and lived in the middle region of India, he was full of great pride, thinking, “In this world of Jambudvīpa, there is no one more learned than me.” At that time, compassion welled up in the Bhagavān, the venerable victor Maitreya, and he thought, “I shall break the pride of this [paṇḍita].” In a dream [of Maitreyaṅgāthā, Maitreya appeared on] a high throne that was set up [there as] a man with an opened white parasol, surrounded by a retinue of many devaputras. [That man] asked him, “If you are learned in the dharma, do you know the understanding of killing?” Answering, “I know it,” [he gave an explanation but] became confused through coming up with a lot of classifications. [Maitreya] said, “You do not even know a speck of the true dharma,” which made him lose his pride. [Maitreyaṅgāthā said,] “Well, I request some dharma [from you then].” [Maitreya] replied, “Since there is the explanation of [my] five dharmas in Jambudvīpa, I give you an instruction [on them].” Then, he said, “In general, the instruction of the *Uttaratantra*, which makes the basic nature a living experience, combines the triad of the cause, the conditions, and the results.<sup>2441</sup> In particular, [this text] points out to trust [in this basic nature] through the four inconceivable [points (1)–(4)].”<sup>2442</sup> He said, “Since this is a dream, jump into water and an abyss, and recognize that all phenomena are like a dream!” Through having jumped into water, [Maitreyaṅgāthā] recognized [his dream] as a dream. Then, [Maitreya] pointed out all the [following] instructions within that [dream] by invoking [Maitreyaṅgāthā’s] mindfulness of [recognizing] his dream. Thus, the realization of the skandhas being illusion-like dawned [in Maitreyaṅgāthā].

(1) Then, [Maitreya] asked, “In [the state of] not dreaming [anymore], do you know what these [objects that] appear in such a way are?” [Maitreya-nātha] replied, “I do not know.” [Maitreya] pointed out that it is inconceivable that the saṃsāra of thoughts arises in the mind that is naturally pure. He continued, “Cut through fear and clinging, and jump into the fire!” {148} [Upon doing so, Maitreya-nātha felt that his] body [with which he had] jumped dissolved into space, and he thus experienced the sheer awareness of great bliss, in which nothing whatsoever is observable. In the space of this [awareness], a sound arose, proclaiming, “Consider<sup>2443</sup> now whose man and fear went where!” Since this was [only] a dream of his, the insight of thinking, “In what is without basis, there is no coming and going” arose in him. At that point, [Maitreya said,] “You are naturally pure,” and [Maitreya-nātha re]appeared in space as the man he was before. Then, his own body [re]appeared, and all appearances [too re]emerged in that [space]. [Maitreya asked,] “What [do you think] this was?” [Maitreya-nātha] replied, “All this happened in a dream.” [Maitreya] asked, “From what did it arise?” [Maitreya-nātha] said, “It was a dream [caused] by thinking. It did not arise from anything else but arose from space.” [Maitreya] said, “You should understand that, just like that, all phenomena arise from the mind that is naturally pure.” At that point, [Maitreya] pointed out that it is inconceivable that adventitious afflictions arise in the mind that is naturally pure.

(2) [Next, Maitreya] pointed out, “It is inconceivable to have become a buddha once the adventitious afflictions have become pure, just as it was uncertain where your body went when you had jumped into fire [in your dream].” (3) [Then, Maitreya] pointed out, “Your body dissolved into space, and at first you were afraid, [but then] you recognized that it was a dream, and you recognized that [everything] is of one nature without any difference. This represents the inconceivability of the qualities of buddhas and sentient beings being inseparable.” (4) [Finally, Maitreya] said, “The nonconceptual wisdom that I generated in you [in your dream] represents the inconceivability of the activity of the victors that is nonconceptual and yet effortlessly [accomplishes] the welfare of sentient beings.” [Thus,] trust<sup>2444</sup> in the four inconceivable [points] arose in him. This completes<sup>2445</sup> [the pointing-out of] the inconceivable continuum.

I pay homage to the gurus

Through not realizing the nature of the mind, adventitious thoughts arise. From that, the afflictions arise. From that, karma arises. From that, birth



arises. From that, sickness, aging, and death {149} arise. If the nature of the mind is realized as it is, all suffering is put to an end at its root. The clinging to the objects of the six doors of the operating [consciousnesses],<sup>2446</sup> which are preceded by the cause of not realizing [the nature of the mind]—the wind of improper mental engagement<sup>2447</sup>—obstructs the nature of phenomena. Through not realizing the root-mind<sup>2448</sup> by virtue of [its] latencies, they are taken to be different, which obstructs wisdom. Through clinging to mind's essence—the true end—as being conditioned, based on mentation,<sup>2449</sup> it is taken to be a self. This obstructs the realization of supportless prajñā. Through the meeting of mind and object, the latent tendencies [in the ālaya-consciousness] are awakened. Consciousness is tainted by the afflictions of attachment and aversion, which obstructs mind's liberation.

As for pointing out that the root of [all] this—the nonabiding root—is [the root of] the wind of thoughts,<sup>2450</sup> through mentally engaging through prajñā in [the fact that] the nature of the mind does not abide as karma (the cause) and the afflictions (the result), the wisdom of realizing suchness is pointed out. Through mentally engaging through compassion in [the fact that] other<sup>2451</sup> sentient beings do not realize the nature of their minds, the wisdom of realizing variety is pointed out. As for pointing out the wind of thoughts as this pure root, through mentally engaging through prajñā in [the fact that] your own mind is fourfold luminosity,<sup>2452</sup> the realization of suchness is pointed out. Through mentally engaging through compassion in [the fact that] others do not realize this, the realization of variety is pointed out. As for pointing out the root of what lacks arising, ceasing, and any pith as luminosity, one should give the twofold pointing-out of the nature of the mind's being presented as being without support and, just like space, without basis, being presented as being without thoughts and free from focus, and being presented as unconditioned and effortless. In the *Lesser Pointing-Out Instructions*, the following statement has come [to us]:

Being skilled in temporary attachment is profound.  
Cut through any string of clinging that may arise.

It is also said:

Appearances are beautiful ornaments entering the path. The motivation is compassion and the application is action.

{150} Through the superior intention of bodhicitta, striving becomes light. Through relinquishing nonvirtue, vigor becomes light. Through attaining compassion, the mind becomes light. Through attaining the wisdom of being skilled in means, conduct becomes light. Through accomplishing awakening through the four limbs of miraculous powers, the four empowerments of life span, body, dharma, and blessings are obtained. Understand these jewellike instructions in a completely perfect manner, and give [them to others. However,] keep them secret according to the samaya of the guru. *i thī*

I bow at the lotus feet of the guru,  
The chief of all buddhas in the three times.  
This luminous nature of the mind  
Is equal<sup>2453</sup> to all buddhas in the three times.

The element of space<sup>2454</sup> lacks arising and ceasing.  
Your own mind, this buddha heart,<sup>2455</sup>  
Lacks even the names of birth and death in saṃsāra.

Throughout the time of beginningless saṃsāra,  
This stainless nature of the mind<sup>2456</sup>  
Is not connected to the cocoon of the afflictions,  
Which is taught through the nine examples for the heart.

Just as space pervades [all] forms,<sup>2457</sup>  
The dharmakāya pervades all sentient beings.  
Being uninterrupted in the three times,  
Its nature does not change through thoughts.

It is the true nature of the mind, suchness,  
And all beings possess it as their heart.<sup>2458</sup>  
It is called self-arisen wisdom,<sup>2459</sup>  
Which is the nature of phenomena, lucid and yet beyond  
identification.

When free from clinging to discriminating notions,  
You are the same as the buddhas in the three times.  
This luminous nature of the mind  
Is like a gem stuck into mud.

This essence, the buddha heart,  
Primordially abides as self-arisen wisdom.<sup>2460</sup>

This is the first embellishing guiding instruction, on identifying your own mind as a buddha.

Self-arisen wisdom abides in all sentient beings  
Of the three realms as their nature.<sup>2461</sup>  
[But] in their connate ignorance,<sup>2462</sup>  
They do not recognize their own true face.

The<sup>2463</sup> flux as the conceptual mind  
And the arising of clinging to appearances as being real<sup>2464</sup>  
Are imaginary ignorance,<sup>2465</sup> through which attachment<sup>2466</sup> and  
aversion arise.  
Through accumulating actions of both virtue and wrongdoing,<sup>2467</sup>  
{151}

Even though [their true nature] is the dharmakāya,  
Without interruption, they experience birth and death  
In the realms of saṃsāra with its six classes [of beings].<sup>2468</sup>

[This] is labeled with the names “sentient being” and “saṃsāra.”  
It emerges as the appearances of both the container and the  
contents,<sup>2469</sup>  
And the mind stream is fettered through clinging [to them as being]  
real or delusive.<sup>2470</sup>

This is the second embellishing guiding instruction, on being mistaken as a sentient being through thoughts.<sup>2471</sup>

Through these thoughts of adventitious mistakeness,<sup>2472</sup>  
Natural luminosity is not realized—  
By virtue of [beings’] possessing adventitious flaws,  
They imagine that they experience countless sufferings.

This luminous nature of the mind  
Is like a jewel stuck into mud.  
This essence, the buddha heart,  
Primordially abides as self-arisen wisdom.

However,<sup>2473</sup> even if that precious gem  
 Were to remain in mud for a thousand years,  
 It is not tainted by [any] flaws—  
 Your own luminous mind is just like that.

Just as earthen, copper, and golden vessels  
 Are pervaded by space without difference,  
 Sentient beings, noble ones, and buddhas  
 Being pervaded by the dharmakāya is without difference.<sup>2474</sup>

This is the third embellishing guiding instruction, on there being no difference in terms of the benefit of natural luminosity [during its] three phases.<sup>2475</sup>

Though this heart, natural<sup>2476</sup> wisdom,  
 Exists, its own true face is not recognized.

The chiefs of all buddhas in the three times,  
 The gurus who explain the texts and pith instructions,  
 Are the lords of all buddhas—  
 Pray to them continuously during the three times.  
 You should please them through the offering of practice.  
 Through the view, serve the yidam and pay honor<sup>2477</sup> to it.

Those who always cling to the real existence  
 Of the illusory appearances of saṃsāra,<sup>2478</sup>  
 Those who cling to a self through cherishing  
 The skandhas, which are the root of suffering,

Those who do not realize this saṃsāra,  
 Which they relinquish for their own welfare, as great bliss,<sup>2479</sup>  
 And those who lack compassion, the supreme path,  
 And [instead] relinquish the altruistic mind, the welfare of others<sup>2480</sup>—

These four are not suitable for pointing out luminosity to them—  
 The mighty lord of the tenth bhūmi, Maitreya, {152} said.

This is the first<sup>2481</sup> embellishing guiding instruction, on trusting that the guru who points out luminous self-arisen wisdom is a buddha.

When the stains of thoughts are at peace  
 Through having realized your own mind's luminosity,<sup>2482</sup>  
 The dawning of self-arisen wisdom  
 Is called "buddha," which entails compassion.

The realization<sup>2483</sup> of the actuality of luminosity is liberated from  
 mind.

[All] thoughts of karma and afflictions are at peace.  
 Through afflictions' having cleared up and become pure on their own,  
 The remedy—self-arisen wisdom—is manifesting.  
 This actuality is cessation and the path.

I bow at the feet of the mighty lords who attained the ten bhūmis  
 And are irreversible through prajñā and compassion.

Through this seeming taking of refuge in terms of symbols,  
 Temporary hindrances on the path are dispelled.  
 Ultimately,<sup>2484</sup> without clinging to your own mind's  
 Being a buddha, pray to it as being the kāya of the dharma.

Also the saṃghas of the three yānas  
 Are included in the pure dharmakāya as one.  
 Through severing thoughts at their root,  
 They definitely protect from saṃsāric suffering.

This is the second embellishing guiding instruction, on the scriptural  
 passages on the three vajra points that are the results.<sup>2485</sup>

The dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition,  
 Whose nature is the luminous nature of phenomena,<sup>2486</sup>  
 Are one as nothing but self-arisen wisdom.  
 During the triad of pointing-out, main part, and conclusion,  
 Look at thoughts without there being anything to be identified.

It is very crucial that this is embraced by the signs.<sup>2487</sup>  
 Just as snow on a wound [caused by] having been burned by fire,  
 Rather than being happiness, your body as well as your possessions  
 Are impermanent and changing, thus [in fact] being suffering.  
 Therefore, there is no happiness for gods and humans.

Though you [thus] experience being without clinging,  
Compassion<sup>2488</sup> for those in saṃsāra dawns.

At the time of luminosity's being free from stains,<sup>2489</sup>  
Self-arisen wisdom is the dharmakāya.  
In<sup>2490</sup> the waters of the ocean, [there are] beautiful jewels,  
And in the true nature of the mind of the ten bhūmis,  
The luminosity of your own mind is free from thoughts.  
Self-arisen wisdom emerges as buddhahood.

Afflictions and suffering<sup>2491</sup>  
Do not taint luminous mind.<sup>2492</sup>  
Through mistaken thoughts imagined by yourself,  
You experience nothing but suffering.  
I bow to my own luminous mind, the dharma that protects from  
suffering.

Since the nature of the mind is luminous,<sup>2493</sup>  
The essence of thoughts is nonexistent from the ground up.<sup>2494</sup>  
The mind streams of all sentient beings  
Are realized as being the stainless buddha heart.<sup>2495</sup> {153}

When this is realized,  
There is not even the name "saṃsāric suffering."  
You should examine the mind in which afflictions arise  
And understand it to be adventitious and without basis.

The mental bodies of noble persons  
Are completely free from saṃsāric suffering.  
Those who are uncontaminated and pure  
Develop compassion for sentient beings.

Afflictions are imagined by thoughts—  
How could attachment and aversion for yourself arise?<sup>2496</sup>  
Look at them with the eye of prajñā—  
They are nonentities, self-lucid, and without base or root.

The fundamental heat of blending the path of the noble ones  
And your mind stream is without clinging.

This is the third embellishing guiding instruction, on the naturally pure basic element that is the luminous dharmadhātu.

When luminosity with its nature of space<sup>2497</sup>  
 Has become free from the clouds of the obscurations,  
 The sun of self-arisen wisdom shines  
 And compassion dispels the obscurations of others.

Through the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition's  
 Having seized the three kāyas' own ground,  
 They constitute perfect buddhahood in being the essence of  
 The three of expanse, wisdom, and relinquishment's being inseparable.  
 [This buddhahood] liberates the mind streams of all to be guided  
 And bears the characteristic of space free from thoughts.

Through having reached the end of the profound dharmakāya,  
 All the qualities of the sambhogakāya are complete  
 And the nirmāṇakāya promotes the welfare of beings through  
 compassion.  
 Thus it always engages in the benefit and happiness of beings,  
 Which is not an object of thoughts and beyond the mind.

When this wish-fulfilling jewel of mind as such<sup>2498</sup>  
 Has become free from the stains of thoughts,  
 It overcomes ignorance through the light of the ten powers.  
 This ultimate lion of fearlessness  
 Has the shape of the space[-like] unique qualities.

With one's own welfare, the dharmakāya, complete,  
 For those to be guided whose own mind streams are pure,  
 The self-appearances of great wisdom—  
 The rūpakāyas, which appear but lack a nature of their own—  
 Appear like a wish-fulfilling jewel.

Self-arisen<sup>2499</sup> wisdom, mind as such,  
 Which is the spontaneous presence of the three kāyas,  
 Arises as all kinds of buddha activity  
 For beings whose own minds are stainless {154}  
 And gives rise to the five paths in their mind streams.

However, the enlightened activity that promotes the welfare of beings  
Operates [like] a jewel free from thoughts.

This is the fourth embellishing guiding instruction, on being free from the  
stains of adventitious thoughts.

The triad of karma,<sup>2500</sup> afflictions, and suffering  
Is declared to be without basis and empty in nature.  
Due to the intention of the victor's having said  
That the buddha heart—the basic element—exists,  
If<sup>2501</sup> your own [luminous] mind were not the cause of buddhahood,  
You would not be liberated through your efforts on the path and thus  
be fainthearted.<sup>2502</sup>

[But] the realization that your own mind—self-arisen wisdom—  
Is the cause of [all] buddhas in the three times  
Gives rise to the enthusiasm about making efforts  
On the path to attaining awakening.

Due<sup>2503</sup> to possessing the bodhicitta [on the level of] the seeming,  
You [may still] have a mind full of contempt for others.  
[But]<sup>2504</sup> all sentient beings in the three realms  
Have always remained as nothing but buddhas  
In the form of uncontrived self-arisen wisdom,  
Similar to the qualities of a wish-fulfilling jewel.

Sickness,<sup>2505</sup> poverty, degenerated conduct—  
The flaws of sentient beings are beyond counting,  
[But] thoughts<sup>2506</sup> are nonentities, just like space.  
Rather than entertaining any clinging to them as being real,  
Look at mind as such, self-arisen wisdom,  
Free from any thoughts to be identified!

Through clinging to thoughts<sup>2507</sup> as [real] entities,  
Great self-arisen wisdom is abandoned.  
The luminous<sup>2508</sup> nature of your own mind, the dharmakāya,  
This wisdom whose nature is to be free from thoughts,<sup>2509</sup>  
Is not contrived by the mind. Look at your  
Buddha heart, the true actuality of mind!



This<sup>2510</sup> very wisdom of [all] buddhas  
 Is wiped out through your own mind.  
 Due<sup>2511</sup> to your own and other's [mind] streams'  
 Being free from being one or many,  
 [But] with self-arisen wisdom's abiding as [everyone's] ground,  
 Compassion arises for those who do not realize this actuality.

This completes the fifth guiding instruction,<sup>2512</sup> on great nonconceptual wisdom. *i thi*<sup>2513</sup>

As for the history of this dharma, when the great paṇḍita called Maitreyaṅātha<sup>2514</sup> was staying at a monastery in Magadha,<sup>2515</sup> in a dream {155}<sup>2516</sup> he placed two instructions on the *Uttaratantra* and the [*dharmā dharmatā*][*vibhāga*] inside a four-storied sandalwood stūpa, upon which Maitreya in person gave him pointing-out instructions. He gave him pointing-out instructions in a general way by combining the two [points] of the cause and the conditions with the third [point], the results. In particular, he gave pointing-out instructions on the cause as being the changeless nature of phenomena<sup>2517</sup> and gave pointing-out instructions on the four inconceivable [points]. Later, when [Maitreyaṅātha] awoke, though some dharmas [of those that had been pointed out by Maitreya] arose in his mind, he was not satisfied [with remembering only that much].<sup>2518</sup> Therefore, he thought, "Even though I was cared for by the compassion of noble [Maitreya] in person, I do not have the power to retain the dharma." Thereafter, [he went] to a stūpa he had circumambulated earlier, from which a light that had not been there before came forth. Then, wondering whether there might be instructions [in that stūpa], he opened it and [these instructions] emerged.

[He passed them on to] the paṇḍita Ānandakīrti,<sup>2519</sup> who [later] thought, "I will entrust [these instructions] in detail to my disciple [Ratn]ākaraśānti."<sup>2520</sup> Then he went to Kashmir and [there] was served and honored by guru Sajjana<sup>2521</sup> in many ways. Therefore, he asked, "What do you expect from a beggar like me?" [Sajjana] requested the instructions on the *Uttaratantra* and the instructions on the *Dharmadharmatā* [*vibhāga*] that were in the possession [of Ānandakīrti]. [Ānandakīrti said,] "Because you so-called paṇḍita are of such great pride, your mind as such cannot be pointed out as luminosity." [Sajjana] asked, "But how [can] this pride be broken?" [Ānandakīrti] said, "You think you know the five Maitreya dharmas, but you do not even understand a single point." Through talking about the dharma [in such a way], he broke [Sajjana's] pride. Then he bestowed

[the instructions upon him]. [Sajjana] explained them to Su Gawé Dorje,<sup>2522</sup> who requested them by saying, “Please consider me before the śrāmaṇera Trimé Sherab from Serkang in Burang Toling.”<sup>2523</sup> [After having received them as the second person,] that śrāmaṇera gave them to someone from southern Ladö,<sup>2524</sup> who passed them on to Dopa Nyen.<sup>2525</sup> The latter gave them to guru Nar[tang]pa,<sup>2526</sup> {156} who passed them on to the monk Chökyi Gyaltzen.<sup>2527</sup> *i thī*

*This was copied from the [original] text. Virtue!<sup>2528</sup> It was received, written down, and then edited at the solitary place of Nartang.*

## The Repository of Wisdom by *Mönlam Tsültrim*

I pay homage to the genuine gurus.

The texts of the Bhagavān, venerable Maitreya, are the ones into which to put the trust of making them your “death dharma.” There is the danger of being deceived by not putting your trust in as few dharmas as possible. Therefore, the [single best] instruction on true actuality is the *Mahāyānottaratantra*. [That instruction] is contained in this [text] as the seven vajra points. What is called “the Buddha” refers to the self-arisen wisdom in which thoughts are terminated through realizing the actuality of the luminosity of your own mind.<sup>2529</sup> What is called “the dharma” is twofold—the ultimate dharma is the reality of cessation, and the wisdom of realizing it is the reality of the path. Cessation and the luminosity of your own mind are inconceivable—they refer to what is free from thoughts and afflictions. In the path, three features must be complete, which refer to the following. Through realizing the luminosity of your own mind, the afflictions accumulated before become pure. The nature of knowable objects is clearly realized as luminosity. [The dharma] serves as the remedy for the subsequent operation of the superimposing mind.<sup>2530</sup> The saṃgha refers to the simultaneous arising of the prajñā of realizing your own mind as luminosity and the compassion of realizing the minds of others as luminosity.<sup>2531</sup>

These three are asserted as being the objects of refuge until you realize the true nature of your own mind as such. This refers to the temporary going for refuge [on the level of] seeming [reality]. {294} [The guru] says that when [this going for refuge] has arisen in the mind stream, the certainty that the three jewels possess blessings arises.<sup>2532</sup> The ultimate lasting object of refuge refers to the realization of your own mind as the dharmakāya. If your thoughts are not terminated, you are not able to protect [yourself and others] from suffering. In order to terminate your own thoughts, you need to familiarize with the dharmakāya. If this nature of your own mind is buddhahood [in the first place], it cannot be [newly] brought about.<sup>2533</sup>

That the nature of the mind is buddhahood is called “the basic element.” The continuum of thoughts of not realizing that [nature] is called “a sentient being.” That “sentient beings possess the buddha heart”<sup>2534</sup> refers to their own minds’ being obscured by thoughts. [The guru] says that since what is called “the luminosity of one’s own mind” does not serve as an object of thoughts, it is pure without [needing to] be restored by remedies. “[What] is the cause for not realizing it?” It is obscured through the nonarising of trust in the mahāyāna. “The mahāyāna” refers to the simultaneous arising of compassion and the prajñā of realizing your own mind as luminosity. Though the dharmakāya is naturally pure, the seed of [its] being free from adventitious stains<sup>2535</sup> is taught to be the faith in the dharma of the mahāyāna. Since people whose minds are not altered by philosophical systems and who cling to saṃsāra do not have this seed of becoming a buddha, {295} they do not realize [the dharmakāya]. You may say, “[But it] is taught [in *Uttaratantra* I.28] that the mahāyāna disposition pervades [all] sentient beings.” There is not a single sentient being who is not pervaded by the naturally abiding disposition—the unconditioned dharmakāya that is the nature of all sentient beings. From that point of view, the disposition is indeed not cut-off [in any sentient being]. The accomplished disposition refers to the seed of realizing luminosity—the arising of the power of being weary of saṃsāra. Those in whom the weariness of saṃsāra through the condition of hearing the mahāyāna dharma does not arise are those with the cut-off disposition.<sup>2536</sup>

What is called “dharmakāya” refers to mind’s natural purity, through realizing [this purity], having become pure of the stains of thoughts including their latent tendencies. What is called “buddha wisdom” refers to the realization of the actuality that cannot be expressed by terms or be conceived by the stains of thoughts. You may wonder, “Do buddhas know or not know the appearances of mistakenness of sentient beings?” When they know them, they know them [through seeing] that the natural luminosity of sentient beings is pure in a way that is not different from the buddhas themselves. This is called “the welfare of others in terms of [all-]knowing wisdom.” That [buddhas] know that the adventitious thoughts of sentient beings are terminated right from the beginning is called “the welfare of others in terms of loving compassion.”<sup>2537</sup>

You may wonder, “If [buddhas] know that the thoughts [of sentient beings] are terminated, bound by what are sentient beings circling [in saṃsāra] right now?” {296} They are bound by clinging through their afflictions to the appearances of thoughts. “What is the difference between

ordinary beings and the realizations of bodhisattvas who have attained their individual bhūmis?” Ordinary beings take the unfolding of the conceptual appearances of the thoughts of not at all realizing the luminosity of their own minds as being actual reality. Bodhisattvas, through realizing the luminosity of their own wisdom, realize that all saṃsāric appearances are mere thoughts.

After they have attained the bhūmis, all bodhisattvas exist as [having] a mental body. “[But] it is taught that they have the bodies of cakravartins and so on.” [The guru] says that if [bodhisattvas] are born through the power of aspiration prayers, they lack any bodies of flesh and blood. You may wonder, “Must then the [physical] support in which they first generated the path<sup>2538</sup> circle as such a body of flesh and blood?” In the abhidharma texts, one finds [explanations on bodhisattvas’] casting off their bodies [of flesh and blood] upon seeing reality on the first bhūmi.

You may ask, “What is the difference between the realizations of the wisdoms of the ten bhūmis?” There is the difference of terminating the individual stains of thoughts [of each bhūmi] by virtue of meditating through the efforts of realizing the luminosity of their own minds. This is taught through the example of the ten phenomena [needed] to [progressively] cleanse a gem.

“What does what is called ‘nirvāṇa’ refer to?” It refers to the stream of saṃsāric suffering’s having been severed. You may say, “Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are [also] explained to [have] mental bodies.” {297} With the inconceivable dharmadhātu’s functioning as the cause of uncontaminated karma and the latent tendencies of ignorance’s functioning as the conditions, they possess the arising of the skandhas of mental bodies and [also] their inconceivable deaths. Upon being exhorted by the compassion of the buddhas, [śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] are made to gather the accumulations through emanation bodies and thus eventually become buddhas [too]. In the end, [everybody] proceeds in the single yāna. The teacher [said] that the three yānas and having [three] dispositions exist in the body.

“If it is taught that maturational wisdom exists on the three fruitional bhūmis, what is the difference from buddha wisdom?” In terms of the essence of wisdom, [these wisdoms] are equal in that they do not require any effort. The intention behind the explanation of these three bhūmis lies in the three [different sets of] qualities that benefit [sentient beings]. This is explained through the example of a grown-up prince who has not yet been empowered [as king].<sup>2539</sup> [However, the guru] says that there is a difference [between the wisdom of the last three bhūmis and the one of a buddha]

because the wisdom [of a buddha] is perfect by virtue of having terminated [all] latent tendencies of thoughts.

“What does the certainty that arises in the continuum of the path refer to?” Through realizing mind’s luminosity, thoughts and afflictions become smaller. When compassion for sentient beings arises, the dharma has become the path. “How does one gain certainty based on luminosity?” [It is through] knowing the nature of your own mind through the lack of arising and ceasing or through the stopping of [all] expression. In general, when meditating [according to] venerable Maitreya, {298} there are two ways of thoughts’ disintegrating when meditating—there is the disintegration of thoughts through analyzing by thinking<sup>2540</sup> about how so-called characteristics of nature appear and how their nature is or the disintegration [of thoughts] without depending on meditating on an image that appears in the thinking mind. These two [ways of the disintegration of thoughts] do not come to be mixed.

“What does what is called ‘adventitious flaws’ refer to?” It refers to the mistaken appearances of thoughts. “Are they a mistakenness that has a basis or a mistakenness that lacks [a basis]?” Though they are the mistakenness that has the nature of phenomena as its basis, the essence of thoughts is both mistakenness that has [a basis] and mistakenness that lacks [a basis]—they are mistakenness through taking the self-arisen wisdom that is beyond thought and expression as the object of thoughts.

“What is the difference between the sambhogakāya and the nirmāṇa-  
[kāya]?” [They appear] as if adorned with the major and minor marks, being the appearances of images of samādhi and wisdom in those to be guided. Through gaining certainty that they are appearances of one’s own mind, after attaining the bhūmis, they become the sambhogakāya. [When] apprehended as actual [independently existing] buddhas outside of one’s mind, they become nirmāṇakāyas. [However,] they are not different in essence. In general, there are two [explanations] of the two kinds of rūpakāyas—being explained as maturational results and being explained as [results] that are concordant with their cause. {299}

“Are all these [phenomena] such as mountains and houses an appearance of thoughts or are they something that exists on the outside?” They are an appearance of thoughts and do not exist on the outside, similar to mountains, houses, [and so on,] appearing in a dream.

“Do our [ordinary] appearances appear or not appear for those on the bhūmis?” Since our appearances appear like dreams, they do not turn into compassion for the welfare of others. [For those on the bhūmis,] through

recognizing thoughts—the root of clinging to real existence—as luminosity, [their realizations] do not become realizations [just] for their own welfare [as in the case of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas].<sup>2541</sup> All sambhogakāya buddhas and those who dwell on the bhūmis abide in exactly that. Once the sky of your own mind has become pure, Sukhāvati has arrived right here. “How do you answer [the question of why] the face of [Amitābha and Sukhāvati] are not seen [now]?” [The guru] says that they are obscured by the thoughts of the five degenerations.

“What do karmic obscurations refer to?” They refer to the five [actions] of immediate consequence or rejecting the dharma. “What do maturational obscurations refer to?” They refer to those that arise from clinging to a self and obstruct liberation. “What do cognitive obscurations refer to?” They refer to those that arise from the empty dharmakāya and obstruct the attainment of buddhahood.

“[Among] the two [options] of turning one’s mind away from desire and the arising of weariness of saṃsāra, which one is better?” Turning one’s mind away from desire exists in tīrthikas too. {300} The arising of weariness of saṃsāra is the first step on the [Buddhist] path. What is called “saṃsāra” consist of your own five skandhas. If you become repulsed after having realized them to be the root of suffering, weariness arises. Here, when the clinging to a self is understood as mistakenness, this is the first step on the path of śrāvakas. In my opinion, aren’t there many who are deceived through limited [forms of] meditation due to not knowing how to examine and analyze<sup>2542</sup> their own skandhas?

“How are the three kāyas of a buddha attained?” The dharmakāya refers to the actuality of the unconditioned luminosity of your own mind, in which all thoughts have been terminated. The sambhogakāya is the appearance of self-arisen wisdom as the thirty-two major marks, which is simultaneous with the termination of thoughts. The nirmāṇakāya is what appears [of that self-arisen wisdom] to those with pure mind streams.<sup>2543</sup> If there is an explanation of the nirmāṇakāya in terms of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment, it is not asserted here.

“Is the continuum of wisdom severed or not severed on the buddhabhūmi?” If buddha wisdom existed as something conditioned, its continuum would not be severed, but then there is the danger of its following that it is not different from [the wisdom of] bodhisattvas. [The guru] says that [to say that] the continuum of [buddha] wisdom is not severed is just one [possible] position. It is because self-arisen wisdom does not form a continuum [in the first place] that there is not really anything about whom

it could be said that its continuum is not severed. Thus, it abides without arising and ceasing because thoughts have been terminated. “So how is that different from the continuum of wisdom’s being severed?” {301} The severing of a continuum is asserted [here] as being nothing but the nature of phenomena [remaining], just as space [alone remains] due to what is conditioned having been terminated. Here, [buddha] wisdom, which is not formed through the conceptual mind, exists in a manner that is beyond expression. Therefore, there is no difference [between saying that its continuum is severed or not severed].

“How are the five [kinds of] beings mistaken?” The essence of thoughts is self-arisen wisdom—the dharmadhātu.<sup>2544</sup> This life is nothing but seeing that basic nature [of the dharmadhātu as] the appearances of mistakenness. Through not having recognized and not having experienced the appearances of mistakenness as being appearances of mistakenness before, the continuum of saṃsāra remains uninterrupted. “How is mistakenness put to an end?” It is put to an end through putting an end to clinging to mistakenness as being real and thus stopping the wind of improper mental engagement.<sup>2545</sup> Venerable Maitreya said that he has protection wherever he is, whereas beings with a mind without protection are immersed in suffering due to their minds’ not being at peace under the influence of afflictions.

“Isn’t the existence of self-arisen buddhahood canceled out through the realization of Madhyamaka?” [The realization of Madhyamaka] cancels out what is conditioned, which consists of the adventitious stains.<sup>2546</sup> To stop the clinging to the real existence<sup>2547</sup> of the objects of thoughts is in accord with Madhyamaka. Since self-arisen wisdom is taken [here] to exist without an object, there is a difference [between it and what is conditioned] in that [wisdom] exists.

“If self-arisen {302} wisdom exists, what difference is there to the self-awareness of Mere Mentalism?” To assert that all these appearances are appearances of thoughts is in accord with Mere Mentalism. However, there is a difference by virtue of asserting that at the time of realizing their luminosity, thoughts are self-arisen wisdom—the dharmakāya.

In general, the guru teaches that the pair of the ultimate and buddhahood has the same essence. Also, the pair of the seeming and sentient beings has the same essence. He holds that there are two [kinds] of the seeming. He says that the impure seeming consists of those who wander around in saṃsāra by virtue of the dharmakāya’s being obscured [through] their minds [being full] of afflictions and karma. The pure seeming consists



of the noble ones because they, through having realized the dharmakāya, realize all appearances of thoughts as being like dreams and illusions.

“But is one able or not able to become a buddha without performing conditioned virtue?” [The guru] says that one is not able [to become a buddha without performing conditioned virtue]. “How is it that one is not able?” For example, though a precious gem [always] exists in an unaltered way [even when surrounded by dross], its qualities<sup>2548</sup> do not visibly manifest if it is not cleansed. Likewise, though the buddha who is the luminosity of your own mind exists, it does not perform the activity of a buddha if it is not liberated from the afflictions. Therefore, he says, it is very important to purify the obscurations of sentient beings and to gather the accumulations—the causes of the wisdoms of the ten<sup>2549</sup> bhūmis. However, it is not that [buddha] wisdom is produced by conditioned virtue due to buddha wisdom’s arising [from] conditioned virtue {303} and [thus] something previously [nonexistent] being brought forth or made. “If it were produced, what flaw is there?” [The guru] says that since [buddha wisdom] would be conditioned, its continuum would be severed, once its causes become terminated, and then the welfare of sentient beings would not come about. “So what is gathering the accumulations good for?” He says that the wisdoms of the ten bhūmis must arise in the mind stream through dispelling the present coarse stains of mistakenness, and for that the accumulations need to be gathered. “[So does that mean that] one speaks of ‘the causes of the wisdoms of the ten bhūmis that actually fulfill the definitions [of such causes]’ [but] that these do not exist in such a way on the buddhabhūmi?” He says that they do not. He says that what is called a “continuum” refers to conditioned conceptions, [but] conditioned conceptions are terminated on the buddhabhūmi.

“When the thoughts of clinging to the real existence of what is conditioned first arise in the mind stream, they do not exist, but since wisdom exists in them, is it not that a continuum comes about?” He says that it is [only] from our own perspective that the wisdoms of the ten bhūmis [seem to] *become* wisdoms, [but] from the perspective of a buddha [even] a single subtle thought in itself *is* [wisdom]. If that were not the case,<sup>2550</sup> he says, one would not be able to be born in a mental body since that is impure by virtue of four transitions.

“But how could it be tenable to become liberated through thoughts?” He says that the actual thoughts of ordinary beings are liberated through the thoughts<sup>2551</sup> of śrāvakas. The thoughts of śrāvakas are liberated through the thoughts of bodhisattvas. {304} All thoughts of bodhisattvas vanish

through being liberated as uncreated and effortless buddha wisdom, the basic nature just as it is.

“How are treatises composed by ordinary beings and those composed by noble ones distinguished?” [The guru] says that if something is a dharma composed by noble ones, scriptural quotations, refutations, and proud words of deprecation are absent in it. He says that those are [only] present in the dharmas composed by ordinary beings. “How could it be tenable for scriptural quotations to be absent in [the compositions of] noble ones?” He says that scriptural quotations are needed for blind people to walk on the path, but what good would scriptural quotations do for people with eyesight walking on the path? In presentations of philosophical systems by following words, there are refutations, [but] there is nothing to be refuted in the realization of true actuality. [Nevertheless,] he says, there are many [cases of] turning compassion into texts as equivalents of refutations.

*This concludes “The Repository of Wisdom,” my notes of having requested [some] words about what the essential point of happiness is. It was given by the eighth in the line of the gurus at Nartang to the monk Chökyi Gyaltsen, who was the one to write it down.*

## The Heart of the Matter of Luminosity by Mönlam Tsültrim

I pay homage to the genuine gurus.

The ascertainment of your own mind as luminosity consists of (1) the luminous nature of the mind abiding as buddhahood, (2) the purification of its adventitious stains of thoughts, and (3) the manner in which the [tathāgata] heart dawns as wisdom.

(1) Your own mind, which is naturally luminous, [is presented through] (a) its meaning, (b) its examples, and (c) its nature. (1a) It has three meanings—in all sentient beings, there exists the stainless nature of the dharmakāya, the suchness that is undifferentiable from buddhas, and the buddha disposition.<sup>2552</sup>

(1b) The examples are nine—sentient beings, whose nature abides as the buddha element, are obscured by the adventitious stains of the afflictions, which resembles a buddha statue abiding in the sheath of a lotus, honey [amid] bees, grains in their husks, gold in filth, a treasure in the earth, a tree in a fruit, a statue of the victor in a rotten garment, a cakravartin in [the womb of] a woman, and a precious metal image in clay.<sup>2553</sup>

The dharmakāya has three [examples]. The nature of your own mind—the stainless nature of phenomena—is like a buddha [statue]. The profound dharma of realizing it, which is of one taste, resembles honey. The principle of various yānas is similar to kernels in their husks. [In due order, the latter two] refer to means and prajñā being nondual and the guiding instructions of the path of prajñā and means. Changeless suchness, just as gold, is not tainted by stains and is undifferentiable. The disposition has five [examples]. The natural disposition in sentient beings is like a jewel treasure. The disposition of supremely accomplished realization resembles a fruit tree. The disposition of the dharmakāya is similar to a precious statue. The disposition of the sambhogakāya is like a cakravartin. The disposition of the nirmāṇakāya resembles a golden image.<sup>2554</sup>

The latencies of desire are like a lotus; [those of] hatred, [like] bees; [those of] ignorance, [like] husks; the outbursts of the three poisons, [like] filth; the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance, [like a treasure]; [the factors to be relinquished] through seeing, [like] the husks of a seed; [the factors to be relinquished] through familiarization, [like] a rotten garment; [the stains pertaining to] the seven impure bhūmis, [like] a womb; and [the stains pertaining to] the three fruitional bhūmis, like clay.<sup>2555</sup> The ordinary beings of the three realms, arhats, learning [bodhisattvas], and the bodhisattvas who attained the bhūmis possess, respectively, stains through the impurities of four, one, two, and two [among these obscurations].<sup>2556</sup>

(1c) The nature [of luminous mind] is threefold. Those who do not realize the actuality of the luminous nature of their own minds are ordinary beings. Those who see a portion of luminosity are the noble ones. Those who realize the actuality of luminosity in its entirety and thereby are free from all discursiveness of thoughts are buddhas. [In due order,] they are like the space in earthen, silver, and golden vessels.<sup>2557</sup> The space-like luminous nature of the mind of ordinary beings, whose root is to be without a root, is not seen as any focal object whatsoever through searching. The obstacle for realizing the actuality of this [luminosity] consists of the thoughts of clinging to entities—improper mental engagement—whose root is to be like wind. Through being preceded by this [improper mental engagement], there arise water-like afflictions and karma, whose root is the root of not abiding and that rise from the latencies of the three kinds of poison. Due to that, one enters [earth]like births in the three realms, whose root is to be without a core, and consequently experiences saṃsāric suffering.<sup>2558</sup>

As for the luminous mind of the noble ones, [noble ones] are free from being born and so on in saṃsāra by virtue of having realized a portion of the luminous basic element. However, through the condition of the latent tendencies of ignorance and from the sickness of the afflictions, the cause that is the aging of uncontaminated formations and all its results arise, and the birth of a mental body abides in the uncontaminated expanse. Through thinking that this mental body, which is characterized by perishing, is established, [mind's luminosity] is impure through the suffering of the passing into nirvāṇa that is the inconceivable death and transition.<sup>2559</sup>

As for the luminous mind of buddhas, through having realized the actuality of luminous mind, it is free from all thoughts. This is the attainment of the permanent, everlasting, peaceful, and eternal dharmakāya.<sup>2560</sup>

(2) The purification of the adventitious stains of thoughts of sentient beings, who abide as possessing the buddha heart, consists of (a) taking

refuge in the dharmakāya (the result), (b) familiarizing with the naturally pure basic element (the cause), and (c) dwelling on the path (the condition).<sup>2561</sup> (2a) It is the nature of your own mind that is called “taking refuge in the dharmakāya.” The space-like nature of the mind is the luminosity that is not established as anything whatsoever through searching, while the thoughts that arise [in it] are adventitious. To realize these two [facts] represents the three jewels. (2b) The cause—natural purity—consists of familiarizing with your own mind as being the dharmakāya, familiarizing with your own mind as being suchness, and familiarizing with your own mind as being the buddha disposition. The first one is threefold. Since the nature of your own mind—the stainless dharmadhātu—is beyond mind, it is the inexpressible and inconceivable profound actuality. [This inexpressible actuality] is expressed as various yānas. Therefore, in terms of the definitive meaning, [these two] are one. As for familiarizing with your own mind as being suchness, it is inconceivable that there are stains in natural purity at the time<sup>2562</sup> of sentient beings. [It is inconceivable that] purity [occurs] in this [already] stainless nature at the time of the noble ones . . .<sup>2563</sup>



## Pith Instructions on the Wisdom at the Point of Passing when about to Die by *Mönlam Tsültrim*

This brief text contains the instructions on attaining Mahāmudrā in the intermediate state for those of supreme faculties, the instructions on not falling into saṃsāra for those of medium faculties, and the instructions on not falling into the lower realms for those of lesser faculties.

The first, which are based on the *Atyantajñānasūtra*, are as follows.<sup>2564</sup> Do not engage in thoughts focusing on nonvirtue but focus on virtue. Think that you shall never be separated from the dharmas that you practice until you attain buddhahood and that you shall promote the welfare of all pitiable sentient beings in saṃsāra throughout all your lifetimes. The means for that are as follows. Think that the nature of all appearances is emptiness free from reference points. These nonexistent delusive appearances resemble appearances in a dream—at the very time of their appearing, they are not established. The mind is not real either—the past mind does not exist after it has ceased, and the present mind is not established as any essence, color, shape, and so on. No matter where you may search for it (inside, outside, and so on), you do not find it. Thus, having understood the mind too to be unborn and free from reference points, settle it in the state of nonconceptuality. Through meditating like that, at the point of dying, the nonconceptuality that abides as the natural state and the nonconceptuality of meditation meet like mother and child. Thus, a very excellent state of nonconceptuality arises. For example, if you drain water onto an already moist field, it becomes thoroughly soaked. If your breath stops within that state of nonconceptuality, you will attain Mahāmudrā in the intermediate state—it is taught that there is a great chance in that for not being reborn.

The source for this is that noble Akaśagarbha asked the Buddha, “How should bodhisattvas look when they are at the point of dying?” “They should cultivate the mind like this: those of supreme faculties should not think about nonvirtue, cultivate compassion for sentient beings, familiarize with appearances and awareness as being empty, and settle within being

free from reference points. In due order, they should familiarize with not being attached to anything since everything conditioned is impermanent. They should familiarize with the notion of great compassion since all phenomena are included in bodhicitta. They should familiarize with the notion of the lack of entity since all phenomena are empty and identityless. They should familiarize with the notion of nonreferentiality since all phenomena are naturally luminous.”<sup>2565</sup> This is the source that gives rise to trust. That was the instruction of Geshé Jelungpa Chenpo.

Being empty has a lamp as its heart.

This lamp has a heart of awareness.

This awareness has a mansion of light.

Boundless light is the subject that is wisdom.



# The Lamp That Excellently Elucidates the System of the Proponents of Shentong Madhyamaka *by the Eighth Karmapa*

The explanation of *The Lamp That Excellently Elucidates the System of the Proponents of Shentong Madhyamaka* composed by the mighty victor, the glorious Karmapa Mikyö Dorje, has three parts:<sup>2566</sup>

1. Engaging in composing the treatise (the virtue in the beginning)
2. The actual text (the virtue in the middle)
3. The conclusion (the virtue in the end)

## **1. Engaging in composing the treatise (the virtue in the beginning)**

This has three parts:

1. Paying homage to a genuine object in order to eliminate obstacles
2. Explaining the history of where [these teachings] come from in order to give rise to trust
3. Commitment to compose [the text] in order to complete it

### **1.1. Paying homage to a genuine object in order to eliminate obstacles**

I have the greatest confidence in the teachers  
Who, through their awareness of true reality, see the very expanse  
That arises from the vajra of yogic wisdom,  
The secret of the secret unmixed with any general or specific  
characteristics,  
Which is never realized by the adventitious mind.<sup>2567</sup>

### **1.2. Explaining the history of where [these teachings] come from in order to give rise to trust**

There is no doubt about the flourishing of the white light of the  
teachings

Of the mighty sage, who produces its cooling rays.  
 But who other than Ajita [would represent]  
 The [fine] lines in the one who is marked by an antelope,  
 Illuminating the intended meaning, just as it is?

When the reflection of the dharmas of Ajita  
 Appears in the moon-ocean Asaṅga,  
 The teachings of the mahāyāna  
 Flourish in many amazing manifestations.<sup>2568</sup>

### 1.3. Commitment to compose [the text] in order to complete it

Having offered with these words a perfectly arranged garland of wonderful melodies of praise to the victor and the children of the victor,<sup>2569</sup> {14} I shall discuss a little bit the meaning of the two realities [according to] the dharma principles that derive from the levels of yogic pursuit.<sup>2570</sup>

## 2. The actual treatise (the virtue in the middle)

This has five parts:

1. Teaching the reasonings that establish the sugata heart
2. Teaching the nature of the sugata heart
3. The manner of making efforts in the path of purifying its stains
4. Teaching the manner in which the stains obscure this heart through examples
5. Explaining the purpose [of teaching the sugata heart]

### 2.1. Teaching the reasonings that establish the sugata heart

This has three parts:

1. Establishing it through the reasoning of the perfect buddhakāya's radiating
2. Establishing it through the reasoning of suchness' being undifferentiable
3. Establishing it through the reasoning of [sentient beings'] having the disposition<sup>2571</sup>

#### 2.1.1. Establishing it through the reasoning of the perfect buddhakāya's radiating

This has three parts:

1. The manner in which the perfect buddhakāya radiates or buddhas come about

2. Identifying the wisdom of realization
3. Teaching the manner in which wisdom exists primordially (the cause for [buddhas'] coming about)

#### 2.1.1.1. The manner in which the perfect buddhakāya radiates or buddhas come about

At the point when the wisdom of realization—the awareness that exists primordially as not being different from the sugata heart as the expanse—rises from the expanse that is the profound matrix of the sugata heart, all seeds of obscuration are relinquished. The self-awareness of this wisdom<sup>2572</sup> of realization is accomplished through the wisdom of the fundamental change of [having gathered] immeasurable accumulations [of merit and wisdom]. You may wonder, “How is it accomplished?” The cognition that frees from stains [and exists] in the cognizance of sentient beings that is associated with obscurations {15} is blessed by the inconceivable power of the wisdom [of a buddha]. In addition, there [also] exists the element of wisdom in the element that is the cognition [of sentient beings] free from stains. It is by virtue of the power of both [the cognition that frees from stains and is blessed by buddha wisdom and the intrinsic wisdom of sentient beings] that their cognizance fundamentally changes into being without stains, and thus the wisdom of realization becomes of one taste with the dharmakāya. Then, with [this wisdom dharmakāya's] not being different from the buddha qualities that are the primordially abiding buddha attributes, it performs a tathāgata's activity of accomplishing one's own consummate welfare and that of others.<sup>2573</sup>

#### 2.1.1.2. Identifying the wisdom of realization

You may wonder, “What is to be realized in such a way by this wisdom of realization?” It directly ascertains the expanse of all tathāgatas. The type of realization that ascertains this consists of the type of realization [that occurs] during the duration of the actual vajra-like samādhi and the ten [realizations] from the first to the tenth bhūmi, which are conducive to final deliverance and accord with the [vajra-like samādhi].

#### 2.1.1.3. Teaching the manner in which wisdom exists primordially (the cause for [buddhas'] coming about)

For, by virtue of this type of realization's existing primordially, it is not that the entirety of what is accomplished through the paths that depend on the [primary] minds and mental factors of ordinary beings becomes a

pointless [effort of] tiring oneself out, and [this primordial wisdom] serves as the basis or foundation for meaningfully aspiring [for it] in a correct and proper manner.

Therefore, the means to generate the actual type of realization of the vajra-like samādhi are as follows. In the beginning, the minds and mental factors of ordinary beings are rendered pure through the power of the triad of study, reflection, and meditation. Thereafter, without having to rely on the power of any [element] among the triad of study, reflection, and meditation, {16} but in a self-arisen manner, the wisdom that is vajra-like realization is able to overcome the legions of ignorance right upon their being met by the illumination of wisdom for a single moment at the same time, just as the orb of the sun, in a single instant of its shining, completely eradicates the darkness of the latent tendencies of ignorance. This is the meaning of “vajra,” and therefore it is [also] the meaning of “the seven vajra points” in the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>2574</sup>

### 2.1.2. Establishing it through the reasoning of suchness’ being undifferentiable

This has two parts:

1. Brief introduction to [suchness’] being the nature of the three jewels through its manner of being changeless throughout the three states<sup>2575</sup>
2. Detailed explanation of the meaning of this

#### 2.1.2.1. Brief introduction to [suchness’] being the nature of the three jewels through its manner of being changeless throughout the three states

Furthermore, in this system, except for “sugata heart,” “dharmakāya,” “the expanse of nirvāṇa,” and “completely perfect awakening” merely being different names, they have the same meaning. Sugatahood’s being manifested is called “dharmakāya.” Though what is called “dharmakāya” abides throughout all three states, when it is specified through [all] the hosts of the obscurations having been relinquished, it is all-pervading in that it is what pervades all phenomena (dharmas) and is able to display an inexhaustible [number of] kāyas that engage [in the welfare of all sentient beings in many different forms]. Therefore, it is [called] “dharmakāya.”

Likewise, completely perfect buddhahood is primordial awakening and, throughout the three states, this awakening is changeless. {17} This very [awakening] is primordially untainted by any stains and naturally pure.

This teaches that within the tathāgata heart, there is neither any being tainted by stains in the beginning nor any having relinquished the hosts of stains thereafter. Thus, the tathāgata heart *is* the very three jewels because it is able to grant, on a temporary level, the accumulations of merit and, ultimately, the excellent virtues of self-arisen wisdom.<sup>2576</sup>

### 2.1.2.2. Detailed explanation of the meaning of this

This has three parts:

1. [Teaching the manner in which suchness is undifferentiable during the state of] the jewel of the buddha
2. [Teaching the manner in which suchness is undifferentiable during the state of] the jewel of the dharma
3. Teaching the manner in which [suchness] is undifferentiable during the state of the jewel of the saṃgha

#### 2.1.2.2.1. [Teaching the manner in which suchness is undifferentiable during the state of] the jewel of the buddha

This has five parts:

1. [Detailed explanation of] the manner in which the suchness of all buddhas is undifferentiable
2. [Detailed explanation of] this very [fact's] being dependent on the sugata heart
3. [Detailed explanation of] the manner in which other Madhyamaka systems do not realize this
4. [Detailed explanation of] the manner in which three qualities manifest upon the manifestation of the sugata heart
5. Detailed explanation of the manner in which [the sugata heart] is not realized through any conditions that are other features

#### 2.1.2.2.1.1. [Detailed explanation of] the manner in which the suchness of all buddhas is undifferentiable

Therefore, the dharmakāya is undifferentiable from all tathāgatas who abide in the ten directions and three times. This undifferentiable wisdom together with its qualities, just as it is, is also present in those who are not free from the cocoon of the afflictions. Hence, all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa abide as equality. {18} You may wonder here, “What is equality?” It is an expression for ultimate reality—the tathāgata heart, but it is the actualization of the state of personally experienced wisdom within the unsurpassable expanse of the tathāgata heart that represents the meaning

of [saying,] “Unsurpassable completely perfect buddhas have gone to the heart of awakening in worldly realms.”<sup>2577</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.1.2. [Detailed explanation of] this very [fact’s] being dependent on the sugata heart

Therefore, since the tathāgata heart has the essential character of all qualities, right after the linkage [to saṃsāra] through the latent tendencies of the afflictions [that exist] in all sentient beings has been overcome, the spontaneous and uninterrupted deeds of a tathāgata are displayed as the sphere of this very tathāgata. Through the power of the tathāgatas’ having gained mastery over all phenomena at that point, they are able to [teach] the wheel of dharma of definitive meaning and demonstrate the inconceivable [points to] the disciples who dwell on the great [bodhisattva]bhūmis in a single instant. This is the true nature of the tathāgatas.<sup>2578</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.1.3. [Detailed explanation of] the manner in which other Madhyamaka systems do not realize this

Here, some who flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas of the mahāyāna [but] do not understand the discourses of the dharma wheel of irreversibility,<sup>2579</sup> under the sway of [misconceiving] tathāgatahood as consisting of nothing but emptiness, cling to the point that ultimate reality cannot be demonstrated as anything whatsoever. Thus, they do not reach the basic nature, the ultimate definitive meaning, in the mahāyāna. {19} You may wonder why that is. This [kind of tathāgatahood that is nothing but emptiness] would be equal to the emptiness of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats [in the sense of] a continuum’s becoming extinct. However, unsurpassable completely perfect buddhahood represents the accomplishment of one’s own welfare and that of others. That is, since tathāgatas are endowed with the display of many amazing, overwhelming, and inexhaustible miracles that never come to an end, the qualities and activities of buddhas have the nature of being permanent and enduring. That this is ultimate reality is the position of the great Mādhyamika Asaṅga.<sup>2580</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.1.4. [Detailed explanation of] the manner in which three qualities manifest upon the manifestation of the sugata heart

Therefore, you may wonder, “What is the reason for labeling the tathāgata heart on the buddhabhūmi with the name ‘dharmakāya?’” The bodies of ordinary beings and [bodhisattvas] on the level of engagement through aspiration are contaminated collections of the five appropriating skandhas.

The bodies of arhats and bodhisattvas who dwell on the bhūmis are uncontaminated [and seemingly physical] emanations of a mental nature. The kāya of a perfect buddha is the dharmadhātu as being embodied in a single all-pervading lord and displaying as many aspects. This dharmakāya—the kāya that is liberated from everything contaminated and uncontaminated—is primordially free from birth, death, transition, and change. Therefore, it represents the relinquishment of [all] conditioned factors and, within it, [all] the hosts of reference points are primordially at peace and the ocean of buddha qualities is spontaneously present. The [cognizing] subject that is the type of realization that realizes this very [dharmakāya] {20} does not depend on any other hosts of reference points but is self-awareness by nature. Therefore, by virtue of this self-awareness's being pure through its very [own] purity, it is not dependent on anything else. This is the unsurpassable system.<sup>2581</sup> By virtue of the qualities of this [self-awareness, tathāgatas] know their own welfare and that of others, and, through their loving-kindness, they purify the stains of other sentient beings.<sup>2582</sup>

**2.1.2.2.1.5. Detailed explanation of the manner in which [the sugata heart] is not realized through any conditions that are other features** Therefore, venerable Asaṅga said that the wisdom of instantaneously realizing tathāgatahood in a completely perfect manner refers to [buddhahood's] “being completely and perfectly realized as being inexpressible in nature . . . through the self-arisen wisdom without a master.”<sup>2583</sup> In accordance with this meaning, the Sthavira Vasubandhu says in his *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāsyā*:

The wisdom of pratyekabuddhas, just as it is, is not different from what is to be [mentally] formed first by a perfect buddha.<sup>2584</sup>

Others say, “Thus, right upon perfect buddhas' becoming buddhas, all tathāgatas, through bestowing the empowerment of great light rays, become their masters. In the mantra tradition, right upon perfect buddhas' becoming buddhas, they dwell in the meditation of the extraordinary ultimate mind of tathāgatas, the vajra of luminosity.” These are nothing more than mere means, whereas a buddha's own wisdom arises from itself, because its own mastering itself {21} does not depend on the mind streams of other tathāgatas. [It depends] solely on the specifically characterized [mind stream] that will become a buddha. After having become a buddha, it is undifferentiable from all buddhas.<sup>2585</sup>

Therefore, the great Mādhyamika, venerable Asaṅga, holds that [during the vajra-like samādhi] at the end of the path of familiarization, in this very mind stream that will become a buddha and in which tathāgatahood abides, remedial self-awareness dawns and thus everything to be relinquished [at this point] is relinquished without exception. However, as far as [all] the other factors to be relinquished through seeing and familiarization [before this last moment of the path of familiarization] go, the coarse and subtle afflictions in a mind stream that will [eventually] become a buddha are eliminated through the vajra-like and swordlike powers of the compassion and wisdom of other tathāgatas.<sup>2586</sup> This system must be transmitted from the very quintessence of the pith instructions of Lord Maitreya—others lack the good fortune of [grasping] this profound meaning.<sup>2587</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.2. Teaching the manner in which the essence is undifferentiable during the state of the jewel of the dharma

This has five parts:

1. The manner in which the qualities of being inconceivable and nondual are inseparable from the dharmadhātu
2. The manner in which it is not suitable if this is linked to emptiness alone
3. The manner of being liberated from attachment and obstruction
4. The manner in which mere nonseeing is not true reality
5. Teaching that the primordially established sugata heart is also the nature of this jewel of the dharma

##### 2.1.2.2.2.1. The manner in which the qualities of being inconceivable and nondual<sup>2588</sup> are inseparable from the dharmadhātu

The miracles of the buddhas who have manifested the tathāgata heart have the essential character of stainless wisdom. {22} Being neither existent, nor nonexistent, [nor both] existent and nonexistent, nor anything other than both, tathāgatahood is awareness in the manner of being aware of itself and abides as the nature of [utter mental] peace. Since ordinary beings who are endowed with the sugata heart are not able to examine, with their cognitions of an ordinary being, the dharma that dwells in the expanse of this sugata heart and [since it] lacks any etymology, they [can]not infer the basic nature of the ultimate dharma. When the cognitions of ordinary beings examine the dharma, their not finding it as either nonexistent, existent, [both] existent and nonexistent, or anything other than existent and nonexistent is not the true seeing of the basic nature of the dharma. You may



wonder why that is. Through the assessing cognitions of ordinary beings, which are not [ultimate] valid cognitions, the basic nature of the dharma—the [only] true valid cognition—is not seen. This is what master Asaṅga and his brother say.<sup>2589</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.2.2. The manner in which it is not suitable if this is linked to emptiness alone

However, Candrakīrti, Haribhadra, and others assert that the ultimate basic nature is the nonfinding of the dharma element through cognitions of ordinary beings examining it by way of the reasoning of refuting any arising of existents and nonexistents [and so on]. Here, noble Asaṅga and his brother hold the following.<sup>2590</sup> The basic nature that is inferred by way of terms, articulations, speech, etymologies, conventions, or designations is not the factor that is the ultimate. [No matter] how much effort one makes through the capacity of the dialectical mind and {23} no matter whether [the ultimate basic nature] is analyzed as existent, nonexistent, [both] existent and nonexistent, or neither, [all of this] is trifling. It is through the power of yoga that, without thinking and without conceptions and expressions, the hosts of improper conceptions—the origin [of suffering that consists of] karma and afflictions—are put to an end. By virtue of their having been put to an end, at that point, there arises the self-arisen wisdom that is the prajñā without attachment and obstruction,<sup>2591</sup> which discriminates [the way] phenomena and the nature of phenomena truly are and [the way] in which they appear.<sup>2592</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.2.3. The manner of being liberated from attachment and obstruction

This arising as the prajñā without attachment and obstruction is tathāgatahood itself. If you wonder why, this is because what arises through the power of the yoga of proper mental engagement is not motivated by ignorance and, by virtue of this essential point, is not connected with the ālaya-mind, the afflicted mind, and the cognitions that conceive of objects.<sup>2593</sup> That which is proper mental engagement is without arising and without ceasing—this profound actuality is not the object of ordinary beings.<sup>2594</sup> Therefore, since [all] adventitious elements are, from the beginning, not arisen, not originated, and without termination, these adventitious elements are also free from ceasing, being terminated, and being put to an end. Hence, in this system, it is asserted that through self-arisen wisdom's looking at the factors that are the adventitious stains of its own continuum,

{24} no attributes or bearers of attributes, which make up the adventitious stains, are to be seen. At that point, through [this wisdom's] being free from all stains, it manifests the true actuality.<sup>2595</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.2.4. The manner in which mere nonseeing is not true reality

Candrakīrti and others identify the [fact that] the nature of phenomena is not seen by the ultimate nature of phenomena as “seeing ultimate reality.” However, let alone speaking of this as the ultimate, they would have to accept many contradictions in their own systems even in terms of words [on the level] of seeming [reality]. Therefore, in order to eliminate this flaw, they say, “We Mādhyamikas have no assertion whatsoever.”<sup>2596</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.2.5. Teaching that the primordially established sugata heart is also the nature of this jewel of the dharma

In this system, the ultimate is the object that is seen by the tathāgatas—that which [truly] exists in just the way it is in actual reality. The completely pure seeing of the tathāgatas is the realization of the wisdom of equality that there is nothing to be removed since, in its nature, ultimate reality is not tainted by obscuring stains and that there is no wisdom that is other [than] this very [ultimate reality] to be added to it. After having become lastingly free from the adventitious stains,<sup>2597</sup> in the dharma wheel of the tathāgatas, [which serves as] the remedy for clinging to true reality as being a nonexistent, they instruct on the need to accomplish nonconceptual wisdom—the cause that accomplishes the state of the dharmakāya—through making efforts on the paths of seeing and familiarization.<sup>2598</sup> As for [speaking of] “the need to accomplish [this wisdom as] the cause of the dharmakāya,” {25} this is not an explanation on needing to clearly manifest a previously nonexistent cause, but it means to make efforts in the means for a previously existing cause clearly appearing later.

Here, some who flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas have many assertions about being free from reference points by virtue of dialectical reasonings about whether the result exists or does not exist at the time of the cause. However, in this [system of] definitive meaning here, it is asserted that, no matter during which state, in the perfect sugata heart, cause and result do not exist as two. Just as with the element of water, gold, and space, cause and result abide inseparably at all times.<sup>2599</sup>

### 2.1.2.2.3. Teaching the manner in which the essence is undifferentiable during the state of the jewel of the saṃgha

This has four parts:

1. Teaching that the qualities of awareness and liberation are inseparable from the sugata heart
2. Refuting the system of clinging to the ultimate as being sheer nonexistence
3. Teaching that, therefore, the qualities of the saṃgha exist primordially
4. Identifying the wisdoms of suchness and variety in this system

#### 2.1.2.2.3.1. Teaching that the qualities of awareness and liberation<sup>2600</sup> are inseparable from the sugata heart

Therefore, [what actually happens is that] what represents the naturally luminous mind of ordinary beings will touch the tathāgata heart. The meaning of mind's being naturally luminous is that [dualistic] mind disappears in the natural expanse [of mind's nature]—seeming phenomena are empty of a nature of their own, while luminosity is inseparable from the tathāgata heart. The nature of this inseparability is the svābhāvikakāya (“nature kāya”). If it did not exist, {26} nothing in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa would be possible.

Mind, mentation, consciousness, karma, afflictions, and suffering are adventitious. Since the afflictions are not established by virtue of [really existing] causes and conditions, they have no nature. If there were [such] causes that produce the adventitious afflictions, they would have a nature, but there are no [such] causes that produce them. Thus, since what is adventitious lacks causes, it is not feasible for it to have a nature.<sup>2601</sup>

#### 2.1.2.2.3.2. Refuting the system of clinging to the ultimate as being sheer nonexistence

Others who flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas assert that, just as the adventitious stains have no nature, ultimate reality has no nature [either]. Though it appears that they assert this as the ultimate definitive meaning, the great Mādhyamikas Asaṅga and his brother say that since [these people] speak about the ultimate definitive meaning as being a nonexistent, what could be [a greater] extreme of extinction than that?<sup>2602</sup>

### 2.1.2.2.3.3. Teaching that, therefore, the qualities of the saṃgha exist primordially

Therefore, the tathāgata heart, just as it is, exists in all beings. This tathāgata heart is labeled<sup>2603</sup> with the name “the selfless self.” This does not refer to [there being] two kinds of self (or identity) in the beginning and their being destroyed later because [the tathāgata heart] is the completely pure nature of their being at peace primordially.<sup>2604</sup>

Hence, it is feasible for natural luminosity and adventitious stains to co-exist within the uncontaminated expanse. At the same time, it is not feasible for the adventitious stains to [ever] touch natural luminosity, {27} nor is it feasible for natural luminosity to touch the afflictions. Natural luminosity does not need anything other that illuminates it, while afflicted cognitions are afflicted through these very afflictions themselves—natural luminosity does not conceive of, or cling to, afflictions.<sup>2605</sup>

### 2.1.2.2.3.4. Identifying the wisdoms of suchness and variety in this system

Therefore, in this system, [the wisdom of] realizing suchness refers to the noble ones’ realization of the tathāgata heart in their own mind streams. [The wisdom of realizing] variety is the realization that other beings are [also] endowed with the sugata heart in their mind streams, which is called “omniscience.” [However, this omniscience] does not refer to knowing the mistakenness of seeming [reality]. For, the mistakenness of seeming [reality] does not exist in any respect among knowable objects. Therefore, it is not suitable as an object of the knowing and seeing of the noble ones because it does not exist as an object [in the first place].

Others may say, “But then [this knowledge] is not omniscience because the entirety of seeming [reality] is not known [by it].” If there is no [seeming reality] to be assessed that represents an object of this knowledge, how could the very knowledge [of it] be feasible? To apprehend a nonexistent object is a conceptual wrong cognition, but omniscience is held to be without such conceptions. The knowledge of all aspects pervades, and is unobstructed with regard to, all phenomena. It [also] lacks attachment because it is without clinging and characteristics.<sup>2606</sup>

### 2.1.3. Establishing the sugata heart based on the existence of the disposition [in sentient beings]

{28} This has four parts:

1. Teaching the disposition that serves as the foundation of the path, its nature, and its fruition
2. The difference between its phases of being with stains and without stains
3. The manner in which the stains do not come back again once one has become a buddha
4. The manner in which the fruition is attained by virtue of two [factors]—the blessings of the buddhas after they have become buddhas and the power of the sugata heart

#### 2.1.3.1. Teaching the disposition that serves as the foundation of the path, its nature, and its fruition

Therefore, in this system, the final refuge exists ultimately. If it did not exist, the (1) foundation of the path, (2) the nature of the path, and (3) the fruition of the path would not exist either, the entire dharma of the Buddha would be unnecessary, and his words about the extraordinary definitive meaning would represent the wheel of the genuine dharma that is of expedient meaning and deceiving. Hence, also [the tathāgata heart's] finally being without stains—the Tathāgata—exists. (1) When the foundation of the path is finely discriminated, it is the tathāgata heart with stains that is the disposition that is undifferentiable from the expanse of all phenomena. The meaning of this is explained through the [*Avatamsakasūtra's*] example of a huge silken cloth [as big as] a trichiliocosm.<sup>2607</sup> The [psychophysical] supports for accomplishing this [disposition] are the persons who engage it through the three yānas, but those who engage in the principles of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are very distant from this tathāgata disposition. (2) The nature of the path too is this tathāgata disposition. If it did not exist, despite tathāgatas coming to the world, there would be no foundation for the increase of roots of virtue and no basis for their arising. {29} (3) Consequently, perfect awakening would not be reached.

Therefore, the permanent, enduring, and immutable refuge is that the disposition of the [three] jewels definitely exists within the ultimate dharmakāya. Hence, those who realize the dharmakāya (their own welfare) bring together, within their own mind streams and those of others, the dharmas that are inseparable from the dharmakāya and, within their own mind streams and those of others, curb those [factors] that are contradictory to

the dharmakāya. What is to be adopted by them is the tathāgata disposition and what is to be rejected are the adventitious stains—the imaginary and dependent [natures]. To know the particular instances of these [factors to be adopted and to be rejected] oneself and then speak about them to others is the sphere of omniscient wisdom alone.<sup>2608</sup>

### 2.1.3.2. The difference between its phases of being with stains and without stains

Therefore, noble Asaṅga and his brother express the sugatahood that exists within the cocoon of the adventitious stains as “the sugata heart” and “the basic element that is the sugata heart.” They express the factor of its being suitable to become free from this [cocoon] as “the unfolding disposition” and “the dharmakāya that is in the process of fundamentally changing.” Its being free from the adventitious stains is expressed as “the Tathāgata Bhagavān, the perfect Buddha.”<sup>2609</sup>

### 2.1.3.3. The manner in which the stains do not come back again once one has become a buddha

As for this sugata heart, which is included in the single same name throughout all three phases, after all clinging to real existence, clinging to the lack of real existence, and clinging to the freedom from reference points have become pure, {30} even the sugata heart itself will not be observed. Therefore, you may wonder whether this actuality is difficult to realize. It is not. It is certain that there is no fluctuation within the sugata heart, which has the nature of nothing’s being able to destroy it, because the sugata heart does not conceive of the element of the proximate afflictions. After it has become free from the obscurations once, how could there be any connection of nature [between them]? Since there is no connection of dependence either, it will remain on the level of irreversibility.<sup>2610</sup>

### 2.1.3.4. The manner in which the fruition is attained by virtue of two [factors]—the blessings of the buddhas after they have become buddhas and the power of the sugata heart

Therefore, through having generated the power of the prajñā of the noble ones with regard to the tathāgata heart that is ultimate reality, the knots of discriminating [thinking] are undone. Thus, [these noble ones] recognize the tathāgata wisdom and become tathāgatas. At that point, through their teaching the path [to others], they put an end to all fetters of the discriminating [thinking] of ordinary beings.<sup>2611</sup>

Though the body, speech, and mind of buddhas are beyond the adventitious stains, the profound miracles of the body, speech, and mind of buddhas are displayed for sentient beings, whose mind streams possess these adventitious stains. That certain [beings] to be guided see these miracles of the body, speech, and mind of the [buddhas] is by virtue of the power of both the tathāgatas' compassion of blessing, emanating, and transforming the adventitious seeming [reality of sentient beings] through their having gained mastery over powerful ultimate reality and the tathāgata hearts of those to be guided, whose mind streams are endowed with the tathāgata heart. {31} [Through this,] even ordinary beings are able to realize the miracles of the bhagavāns, the indestructible vajra points.

Therefore, the tathāgata heart's being pure of stains, which is its own specific nature or specific characteristic, [is expressed as] "the tathāgata heart free from adventitious stains." Its general nature or characteristic of being equal in its profundity and vastness to the dharmadhātu is expressed as "the natural tathāgata heart."<sup>2612</sup>

## 2.2. Teaching the nature of the sugata heart

This has two parts:

1. Teaching it as having the nature of purity, permanence, bliss, and so on
2. Teaching it as being the nature of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa's being inseparable

### 2.2.1. Teaching it as having the nature of purity, permanence, bliss, and so on

This has four parts:

1. Brief introduction to this nature
2. The manner in which it is not reasonable if it is not accepted as anything whatsoever
3. Teaching the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self
4. The manner of exactly this being the definitive meaning that is the intention of [all] sūtras and tantras

#### 2.2.1.1. Brief introduction to this nature

In brief, ordinary beings are fettered by the shackles of clinging to their appropriating bodies and minds of seeming [reality] as being permanent, blissful, a self, and pure. Śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats are fettered by the

shackles of clinging to the ultimate state as being impermanent, suffering, and without self as well as [clinging] to the [saṃsāric] existence of attachment as being impure. However, unsurpassable completely perfect buddhas, through knowing the entirety of how all phenomena without exception actually are and how they appear, clearly realize the basic nature, ultimate reality, {32} as being the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self.<sup>2613</sup> On the other hand, they clearly realize the ways in which [phenomena] appear—the adventitious elements of seeming sentient beings—as being impermanent, suffering, without self, and impure. Through these two modes [of realization], they eliminate the extremes of permanence and extinction. This is because tathāgatas [on the level] of seeming [reality] are primordially nonexistent, while ultimate reality—the tathāgata heart that does not fall into any extremes or confines of seeming [reality]—exists.<sup>2614</sup>

#### 2.2.1.2. The manner in which it is not reasonable if it is not accepted as anything whatsoever

Without understanding this meaning, some who flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas do not accept [the sugata heart] as being either existent or nonexistent even on [the level of] the mere seeming during the phase of accomplishing the accumulation of merit through the illusion-like cognitions of the subsequent [attainment that follows] having risen from resting in meditative equipoise in the ultimate, the sugata heart. This is a dishonest view. The great Mādhyamika, venerable Asaṅga, holds that it is a view mixed with dialectics [as opposed to being grounded in personally and directly experienced wisdom].<sup>2615</sup>

#### 2.2.1.3. Teaching the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self

Furthermore, the meaning of the ultimate, the sugata heart, being the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self is as follows. As for the meaning of [these four] being called “pāramitā,” in order to counteract trifling and partial [notions] of referring to the tathāgata heart as being nothing but supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self, it is referred to as “the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self.” This is asserted as its having the character of the all-pervasiveness that is beyond all partiality. {33}

In brief, [the meaning of supreme purity is that] the pure ultimate is completely pure by nature (its general [characteristic]) and [completely pure] by virtue of being without stains (its specific [characteristic]). Since it



is liberated from [all reference points of] a self and the lack of a self, it bears the meaning of the supreme self. The meaning of its being supreme bliss is that it is free from all factors that represent the agitating fluxes of body and mind and exist from [the state of] an ordinary being up through the end of the continuum of the tenth bhūmi. The meaning of [its being supreme] permanence is to neither cling to the impermanent deceiving world nor solely conceive of permanent nirvāṇa.<sup>2616</sup>

#### 2.2.1.4. The manner of exactly this being the definitive meaning that is the intention of [all] sūtras and tantras

Those who do not understand this meaning and yet flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas say, “That which is emptiness is beyond being an object of the present minds of ordinary beings.”<sup>2617</sup> However, through making [unwarranted] assumptions about that [statement] as having a meaning that comes down to mere words, they arrive at [an emptiness that is] a nonexistent phenomenon that is in contradiction to all presentations of seeming [reality]. Through taking [this kind of emptiness] as their mental object, they say, “This is the supreme Madhyamaka view.” Thus, it indeed appears that masters of Indian and Tibetan origin who are ordinary beings [commented on] the very vast sūtras of definitive meaning, which the Tathāgata himself [taught] to his eldest [bodhisattva] children, as entailing an intention. Also, with regard to the dharma principles that represent the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self (which are not [to be taken] literally [but are of] definitive meaning), they comment on the meanings of the ultimate as being of expedient meaning. However, this is not good. For, as far as the meanings of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self go, {34} when the bodhisattvas (such as noble Avalokiteśvara) who are the protectors of the three families<sup>2618</sup> summarized the meaning of the tantras, they clarified it through these meanings. Also noble Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga explained these meanings not just once.<sup>2619</sup>

#### 2.2.2. Teaching it as being the nature of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa’s being inseparable

This has three parts:

1. Teaching it as being the nature of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa in general
2. The manner of seeing the flaws of suffering and the qualities of happiness, when the sugata heart exists
3. Teaching that this is the system of all Mādhyamikas

2.2.2.1. Teaching it as being the nature of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* in general  
Therefore, the great Mādhyamika, venerable Asaṅga, says that, in terms of the definitive meaning, *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are inseparable. He teaches that the objects of engagement of ordinary beings are “knowable objects” and [the subjects] that engage them are “cognitions.” The special object of engagement of the noble ones is the *dharmadhātu*, and [the subject] that engages it is the nature of phenomena. This meaning represents the same essential point as [speaking of] *dharmadhātu* wisdom. The *dharmadhātu* is what pervades the knowable objects and cognitions of ordinary beings. However, despite its pervading them, it has absolutely no connection to them.

You may wonder, “But then, what is the meaning of the regent Maîtresya’s ‘distinguishing between phenomena and their true nature’ within the mind streams of ordinary beings?” After having explained phenomena just in general as being the adventitious stains that consist of cognitions and knowable objects, he explains their true nature as the *sugata* heart. {35} However, he explains that this *dharmadhātu*, without conceiving of, or forming, anything among all phenomena<sup>2620</sup> but operating as the nature of all of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* in the manner of nonabiding, is not empty of the very *dharmadhātu*. Therefore, he asserts that once this is understood, *saṃsāra* itself is *nirvāṇa*.

In this way, the noble ones are neither close to nor distant from sentient beings. They have absolutely no bond of being close to them since they have cut through the craving for a self, with which the basic elements<sup>2621</sup> of all sentient beings are equally associated. Since they are not distant, through great compassion, they do not give up [any sentient being]. Therefore, through abiding neither closely nor distantly, the noble ones are the ones with the experiential sphere of equally not conceiving both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, without any *nirvāṇa* to be adopted or any *saṃsāra* to be rejected. Therefore, it was already explained that “*saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are inseparable” and that “*saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are equality.”<sup>2622</sup>

2.2.2.2. The manner of seeing the flaws of suffering and the qualities of happiness when the *sugata* heart exists

You may wonder, “Are the *sugata* heart and the adventitious stains thus different?” The Bhagavān said that if the *sugata* heart did not exist, ordinary beings would neither be weary of suffering nor wish and strive for *nirvāṇa*.<sup>2623</sup> You may wonder, “Is it then the case that the *sugata* heart becomes weary of the adventitious stains or {36} do the adventitious stains themselves become weary of these adventitious stains?” Through the reality and

the blessing of the unconditioned tathāgata heart and of the natural purity of the dharmadhātu, despite there being no causes and conditions since beginningless time, it is [initially and seemingly] the conditioned adventitious stains themselves that, while [actually always] nonexistent, become weary of suffering and turn toward and aspire for nirvāṇa. Later, it is through the light of wisdom arising from the tathāgata heart that these adventitious stains are [actually] overcome. Therefore, this is [said] in the sense of what is adventitious, conditioned, and lacks causes and conditions being mutually impermanent.<sup>2624</sup>

### 2.2.2.3. Teaching that this is the system of all Mādhyamikas

On this, others who flatter themselves as being Mādhyamikas say, “Conditioned phenomena that lack causes and conditions are not even justified on [the level of] seeming [reality].” In this case, [my reply is as follows]. While you Mādhyamikas accept a clearly manifest sprout that has arisen [from a seed] as being conditioned, when you apply analysis, you assert that it is established in mere dependence without there being any [really existent] causes or conditions. So, if [you assert that, it is not different from what is said] here. For, though all seeming phenomena lack causes and conditions, they still appear in a dreamlike manner. [Some] may wonder here, “Dream appearances do have causes and conditions—it is one’s own latent tendencies that serve as the conditions for [mind’s] operating while being asleep.” With the entirety of these latent tendencies themselves and the ālaya-consciousness as the support into which they are planted lacking causes and conditions, they [simply] represent the appearance of all kinds of vortexes of being mistaken about naturally impure appearances, {37} just as none of the causes and conditions for [a rope’s mistakenly appearing as] a snake are complete within the rope. This is what noble Asaṅga asserts.<sup>2625</sup>

### 2.3. The manner of making efforts in the path of purifying its stains

This has four parts:

1. The need to rely on the path on a temporary level in order to be free from stains
2. The basic nature of ground and fruition’s being ultimately inseparable in their nature
3. The manner in which mistakenness arises based on improper mental engagement during the phase of the ground
4. Explaining the three kāyas by way of awakening into the nature of the sugata heart when passing into nirvāṇa

### 2.3.1. The need to rely on the path on a temporary level in order to be free from stains

Though the adventitious stains lack causes and conditions, for as long as [the tathāgata heart exists within the stains that represent] a sentient being, as the means for the tathāgata heart's becoming free from these stains, the causes and conditions for purifying these stains must exist [too]. Without such causes and conditions' being complete, [sentient beings] will not become perfect buddhas. It is on [the level of] this principle that they need to bring together an excellent accumulation of dependently originating [causes and conditions].

Here, others may think, "If all appearances and imputations of ordinary beings are without causes and conditions, based on this [situation], even if they bring together the temporary dependent originations of causes and conditions, it is without purpose." This is not the case. For, with the tathāgata heart's being the cause that is concordant with the essential character of all causes and all conditions for the increase of the pure dharmas, it does not change into any other state [through beings'] bringing together the dependent originations of causes and conditions.<sup>2626</sup> {38}

Furthermore, [beings] need to make efforts in the continuum of the perfect path that, at the point when tathāgatahood becomes manifest, clearly manifests the dharmakāya, wisdom, and great compassion in their respective distinct ways. Since the dharmakāya, wisdom, and great compassion are each fettered by their respective obscuring factors, these [distinct] obstructions need to be eliminated. The cause<sup>2627</sup> that is the path that clearly manifests [the dharmakāya and so on] is concordant with the tathāgata heart and the dharmakāya—ultimately, they are inseparable. Therefore, all the qualities of relinquishment and realization of a tathāgata's having manifested [the path of] nonlearning are also inseparable from the tathāgata heart.<sup>2628</sup>

In addition, the nature of the kāya of a perfect buddha is the dharmatākāya. Here, the meaning of what is called "dharmakāya" is that which is able to demonstrate the empowering of all sentient beings to view perfect buddhahood, the genuine dharma, and the mother of the victors and that which, through joining this with all knowable objects in a nondual manner, represents almighty mastery over all phenomena. This is the meaning of the dharmakāya.<sup>2629</sup> {39}

### 2.3.2. The basic nature of ground and fruition's being ultimately inseparable in their nature

A [psychophysical] support that is specified through the relinquishment [of all obscurations] is called “completely perfect buddha” and a [psycho-physical] support with the obscurations, “sentient being.” However, in the mind streams of both of these, tathāgatahood is neither better nor worse, nor does it increase or decrease. Furthermore, the Bhagavān said:

Therefore, Śāriputra, the basic element of sentient beings is not other and the dharmakāya is not other. Nothing but the basic element of sentient beings is the dharmakāya, and nothing but the dharmakāya is the basic element of sentient beings. In terms of their meaning, they are not two. They are different in letter only.<sup>2630</sup>

Here, it appears that some explain that the element that consists of the adventitious stains of sentient beings is one with the dharmakāya of the tathāgata heart, but this is not the case.<sup>2631</sup> [With regard to the above quote,] it is explained that “the basic element” in “the basic element of sentient beings” represents the basic element in the mind streams of sentient beings that is equivalent to the disposition and the sugata heart at the time of the ground. It is explained to be the same as the dharmakāya at the time of the fruition. This meaning refers to the essential character of the [buddha] qualities' being sugatahood, about which venerable Maitreya said:

Its true nature of being changeless  
Is the same before as after.<sup>2632</sup>

Here, also noble and venerable Asaṅga explains that, in this system, what is the purity of sentient beings {40} and the mind of proper [mental engagement] are inseparable. He says that the mind that faces the nature of phenomena and is not different from it is not different from the natural nature of phenomena, the sugata heart, which does not abide in any phenomenon whatsoever.

### 2.3.3. The manner in which mistakenness arises based on improper mental engagement during the phase of the ground

[Asaṅga] also holds that, under the sway of not relying on what purifies the mind, the impure skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, karmas, and afflictions are gradually established. However, from the very beginning, the factors to be

relinquished and their remedies dwell in the mind stream of each person as opposites.

The explanation of the natural sugata heart's being without causes and conditions is given through the example of space.<sup>2633</sup> As for the meaning of this, it is explained [as being space-like] because [the sugata heart] is not established as a collection, an assembly, or an aggregation, due to which there is no clinging to its arising or ceasing whatsoever. However, in its own nature, it exists as a cause. Just as space exists as the support that provides room [for everything else], the tathāgata heart, by virtue of existing as the basic nature of all phenomena, is held [by Aśaṅga] to be established as not being different from a cause.<sup>2634</sup>

Furthermore, ordinary beings making efforts in the means to see the sugata heart that they have not seen before and [noble bodhisattvas] resting in meditative equipoise in the aspects [of the sugata heart] that they have seen before are both not erroneous. However, once [bodhisattvas] have attained the fifth bhūmi, both [making efforts in seeing what has not been seen before and resting in what has been seen before] are controlled by the power of the mind. Therefore, by virtue of this point, bodhisattvas from this stage onward {41} gain mastery over its not being contradictory for them to simultaneously enter and rise from many inconceivable gates of displaying samādhi and prajñā with regard to both afflicted and purified phenomena. This is an ancillary point.<sup>2635</sup>

#### 2.3.4. Explaining the three kāyas by way of awakening into the nature of the sugata heart when passing into nirvāṇa

Furthermore, that [the sugata heart] resides in the fundamental nature of all sentient beings means that, [in actual fact,] they have primordially passed into nirvāṇa, thus not needing to pass into nirvāṇa later. However, [the expression] “sentient beings’ having passed into nirvāṇa” is held [to mean] that what makes up the mental states or the mind of a sentient being have passed into said primordial nirvāṇa in the manner of naturally not abiding [in it].<sup>2636</sup>

[In this vein,] the body and the mind of an ordinary being that have passed into nirvāṇa [are asserted to] represent the nirmāṇakāya. Through the impurities of the [body and the mind of an ordinary being’s] having fundamentally changed, this is the kāya that appears to all higher and lower ordinary beings. Ultimate reality, the svābhāvikakāya, and tathāgatahood blend into each other as one taste, so what is the kāya of one victor is the kāya of all [victors]. Therefore, this is [asserted as] the sambhogakāya. Since

this is the basic nature of everything in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the tathāgata heart, it is asserted as the dharmakāya.

As for what liberation is, liberation [means] to have attained the mastery of self-aware wisdom over the sugata heart of one's own mind stream. However, the clinging to a self becoming the lack of a self does not represent liberation—to be liberated merely through a nonexistent {42} would be similar to [being liberated through] the horns of a rabbit and so on.<sup>2637</sup>

## 2.4. Teaching the manner in which the stains obscure this heart through examples

This has three parts:

1. Explaining this through linking it with the nine examples as described in the *Uttaratantra*
2. Explaining it through linking it with master Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* and the *Kālacakra[tantra]*
3. Teaching that the basic nature is not realized and ignorance cannot be relinquished solely through emptiness [in the sense of] the lack of real existence

### 2.4.1. Explaining this through linking it with the nine examples as described in the *Uttaratantra*

The definitive meaning of the mahāyāna that is described in this way in the final wheel [of dharma] is summarized by venerable Ajita [in his *Uttaratantra* through] nine examples and their nine meanings.<sup>2638</sup> As for the meaning of these, ordinary beings with great desire who have not met tathāgatas before, through all their afflictive obscurations, do not manifest even a fraction of the tathāgata heart that is their share in their mind streams, but it abides in the cocoon of these afflictions. However, through their having accumulated a little bit of roots of virtue and thus giving rise to the aspiration for awakening, just a partial fraction [of their tathāgata hearts] becomes free from the obscuring [afflictions]. Therefore, this point is described as the tathāgata heart's becoming manifest in a part of the mind stream of an ordinary being.

### 2.4.2. Explaining it through linking it with master Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* and the *Kālacakra[tantra]*

In his *Dharmadhātustava*, the noble master [Nāgārjuna] speaks about this point in detail through the example of a lamp inside a vase, and he also discusses it through the example of the waxing moon.<sup>2639</sup> In the

*Kālacakra*[*tantra*], {43} it is explained that [certain] aspects of wisdom in the triad of body, speech, and mind and the triad of nāḍīs, vāyus, and tilakas appear in [certain] coarse parts of the mind streams of ordinary beings.<sup>2640</sup> Thus, this profound point is not [found] in other [sources] without the instructions transmitted from noble Aśaṅga.

Therefore, what liberates from the cocoon of the afflictions depends on the state of mind of having faith in the sugata heart through striving for it. This state of mind arises in a self-arisen manner, and its arising is the object of those with supreme fortune.<sup>2641</sup> This principle is confirmed by what I say in my *Statement of Realization*:

Even if you exert yourself for eons of years,  
If you do not realize the self-lucidity that is the essential point,  
A time of nirvāṇa is impossible.

### 2.4.3. Teaching that the basic nature is not realized and ignorance cannot be relinquished solely through emptiness [in the sense of] the lack of real existence

Therefore, some who have induced certainty about the ultimate's being mere nonconceptuality explain emptiness as the lack of real existence. However, this is not correct. [For,] in that case, one would not be able to clearly realize the expanse of tathāgata wisdom. If you wonder why, the mere nonconceptuality about the aspects of seeming [reality] and the mere emptiness of a real existence that is other in substance is also seen by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas,<sup>2642</sup> but it is difficult in any case for śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas to realize even a mere fraction of the sugata heart.

In order to avoid the flaws of this point, others assert that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas possess the realization of phenomenal identitylessness and say, "There is no difference between śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas and the mahāyāna with regard to the Madhyamaka view of the freedom from reference points. {44} However, in dependence on the extensiveness or conciseness, respectively, of the reasonings for ascertaining this freedom from reference points, the extent to which the nature of the freedom from reference points [is realized differs], but there is no difference in terms of its being profound and not profound, respectively." In this way, there were many in India and Tibet who were putting down the fully complete teaching of the Buddha through giving [undue] importance to [just] a [certain] part of it.<sup>2643</sup>



The reason why the meaning of what has been said is difficult to realize is that the tathāgata heart is the very heart of the dharmakāya. Therefore, the heart of the mundane is the supramundane, the heart of the supramundane is the heart of the [supramundane] dharmas, and the heart of the [supramundane dharmas] is the tathāgata heart.<sup>2644</sup> Thus, noble Aśaṅga, [our] refuge, holds that this is difficult to be realized by others. Hence, this [tathāgata heart] is seen a little bit by bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi. If you wonder what their manner of seeing [the tathāgata heart] is, [they see it] in the manner of seeing that the entirety of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is not different from tathāgata wisdom. As for this seeing of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa's not being different, in this system, they are asserted as not being different [from the perspective of] the tathāgata heart.<sup>2645</sup> However, others present this as seeing [saṃsāra and nirvāṇa] as not being different from the perspective of the mere aspect of [their] emptiness. But [Aśaṅga and so on] hold that, through seeing that [saṃsāra and nirvāṇa] are merely not different [in terms of both being] emptiness, one is not able to eradicate the latent tendencies of ignorance. Why is that? Because even śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas possess the seeing that, just as their own lack of a self is empty, the [imaginary] self of other beings is emptiness too.<sup>2646</sup>

## 2.5. Explaining the purpose of teaching the sugata heart

{45} This has two parts:

1. The actual teaching on the purpose
2. Answering the statement of others that it is of expedient meaning

### 2.5.1. The actual teaching on the purpose

You may think, “By virtue of this point [made above], if [the sugata heart] is not [even] an object of the great bodhisattvas who have attained the bhūmis, it is absolutely not the sphere of ordinary beings.”<sup>2647</sup> There is no flaw here—[the sugata heart] is taught in order to awaken the disposition and in order to relinquish the five flaws of ordinary beings.<sup>2648</sup> After it was mainly explained [in the second turning of the wheel of dharma] that all phenomena of seeming [reality] are empty (just like illusions, dreams, and clouds), it is taught [here] that the remainder—the tathāgata heart, which is not empty of the heart of the unsurpassable dharmas—exists.<sup>2649</sup>

### 2.5.2. Answering the statement of others that it is of expedient meaning

This has two parts:

1. Teaching an answer by way of [the absurd consequence of] not needing to relinquish the five flaws if [the sugata heart] were of expedient meaning
2. [Teaching] the answer of the [absurd] consequence of Aśaṅga's not being a person who is a source of valid cognition if [the sugata heart] were of expedient meaning

#### 2.5.2.1. Teaching an answer by way of [the absurd consequence of] not needing to relinquish the five flaws if [the sugata heart] were of expedient meaning

Here, some scholars of the Land of Snows assert that the statement in the *Uttaratantra* about the tathāgata heart's existence in all sentient beings is of expedient meaning. [If you wonder] why, [they say that this statement] was made for a [certain] purpose, that is, in order to relinquish the five flaws. However, in this case, [beings] would not have to relinquish these five flaws. It would not be a flaw when one has contempt for inferior beings. That is, the tathāgata heart would not exist in sentient beings and, in actual fact, there would be no purpose in taking up the dharma of the tathāgata heart, [since] it is of expedient meaning. Nor would it be a flaw to deny the dharma-kāya (the sugata heart). For, [through denying] something that does not exist in the first place, {46} one would not fall in the extreme of denial and thus would [properly] express the actual mode of being. It would also be appropriate to be fainthearted. For the sugata heart does not exist in one's own mind stream, and therefore any appearance of the cognitive mode of not being fainthearted [with regard to attaining buddhahood] would be a cognitive [mode] that is not grounded in what the facts are.<sup>2650</sup>

#### 2.5.2.2. [Teaching] the answer of the [absurd] consequence of Aśaṅga's not being a person who is a source of valid cognition if [the sugata heart] were of expedient meaning

Furthermore, if one speaks like this, [masters] such as Aśaṅga would not be authentic persons. For, in this system [of Aśaṅga] here, the dharmas that were taught by the Bhagavān Maitreya and so on, [which according to those scholars entail certain] purposes and invalidations of [what they teach] explicitly, are commented on as not entailing an intention. Therefore, since we cannot follow those who are able to trample over noble Aśaṅga, [our] refuge, we shall [rather] follow this noble one himself.

### 3. The conclusion (the virtue in the end)

This has three parts:

1. The manner in which emptiness is taught in the middle [cycle of the] Buddha's words
2. The manner in which the sugata heart is taught in the final [cycle]
3. The author's colophon including words of aspiration

#### 3.1. The manner in which emptiness is taught in the middle [cycle of the] Buddha's words

My concluding verses are as follows:

The seeming is primordially not really established  
 And merely appears temporarily. In terms of its mere appearance,  
 If it is examined, its arising is not established and it is unborn.  
 Through this, it is taught to be supreme emptiness.

#### 3.2. The manner in which the sugata heart is taught in the final [cycle]

Since the ultimate is primordially really existent, it is not empty.<sup>2651</sup>  
 Free from arising and ceasing, this actuality that does not abide  
 In any of the three times {47} is taught as the abiding sugata,  
 The supreme heart of all buddhas.

#### 3.3. The author's colophon including words of aspiration

Faced with some purposeful people who aspire for this actuality  
 And who urged me, [saying,] "It will be meaningful, if you present  
 [this topic],"  
 I gave such a presentation after having thought about it well.  
 Through this virtue, may the tathāgata heart of beings be free from its  
 coverings.

Faced with being urged again and again by Sangyé Baltrub,<sup>2652</sup> this was  
 composed by glorious Mikyö Gawé Yang,<sup>2653</sup> one who attained the [good]  
 fortune of relying on the uninterrupted stream of the words of the  
 Yogācāra Mādhyamikas that had come down to him, in the grove [called]  
 "Suru Dong" in Trayul.<sup>2654</sup>

*[Editor's Colophon by Thrangu Rinpoche]*

*This teaching of the mighty victor Mikyö Dorje contains very profound words and is [very] difficult to understand. Also, at times, many [of the words in the original text] were erased, a little bit unclear, and so on, so that it was indeed difficult to differentiate them. However, the supreme mighty victor who possesses the three kindnesses<sup>2655</sup> [gave me] the clear order that I must explain the dharma at the monastic college [Śrī Nālandā Institute] and that I need to do so through mainly bringing out the intentions of our own unique tradition. With the focus of completely fulfilling his wishes, which had descended again and again on the crown of my head, and while praying at the precious stūpa with his physical remains, I took [my table of contents]<sup>2656</sup> as the notes [that served as] the basis for analyzing [this text]. {48} Therefore, I request everybody to be so kind as to examine and analyze [this edition] in a profound and serious manner. Also, at times when something like the dawning of a new understanding arose in me, I deemed it appropriate to add some words [here and there]. This was written by the one from Thrangu, who was born in the last row of those who propound Shentong.<sup>2657</sup>*

*May virtue and excellence increase!<sup>2658</sup>*

# Guiding Instructions on the View of Great Shentong Madhyamaka—Light Rays of the Stainless Vajra Moon

*by Jamgön Kongtrul*

The ultimate dharma of irreversibility<sup>2659</sup>

Was set forth as the heart essence [of the dharma]

By the teacher and those who uphold the teachings.

Here, I write a brief summary of guiding instructions on the  
Madhyamaka view.

This has four parts:

1. The source from which it originates
2. The actual guiding instructions on the view
3. Explanation of the benefit
4. The lineage

## 1. The source from which it originates

This has two parts:

1. General [source]
2. Specific [source]

### 1.1. General [source]

In general, it is not that expedient and definitive [meanings] are presented in terms of there being anything deceiving or untrue in the words of the victor but [in terms of] the difference of the minds of [certain] persons being able or not being able to engage the inconceivable object [of all buddhas]. Based on [this difference], in the manner of spoon-feeding children, the first wheel of the words of the Buddha [causes] renunciation of saṃsāra, the middle one puts an end to clinging to characteristics, and the last one distinguishes well the actuality of the basic nature [in terms of] existing, nonexisting, being, nonbeing, and so on. Therefore, the first one is of expedient meaning, the second one is a mix of expedient and

definitive meanings, and the final one is the unsurpassable definitive meaning. [This is how] it is established through the scriptural [source] that is the *Samādhirnirmocanasūtra*.<sup>2660</sup> For not only are we unable to step over this and other such presentations by the victor and his children, but this is also established through the direct perception of profound actuality's becoming progressively clearer and perfectly complete. Nevertheless, the second [wheel] teaches the way in which the seeming appears [by identifying] what does not exist as being [in fact] nonexistent {180} and the final [wheel] teaches the way in which the ultimate is empty [by identifying] what exists as being [in fact] existent. Therefore, [Ratnākara]śānti and others assert that both the middle and the final [wheels] as well as the two great charioteers [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga] who were the founders of the systems that are [based on] these two [wheels] have the same platform of intention.

[The system] that is based on the twenty sūtras of the heart of the definitive meaning in the last wheel, the five dharmas of Maitreya, and the texts of Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, and their successors is known in this land of Tibet as Shentong Madhyamaka since [the time of] the pair that consisted of the translator Su [Gawé Dorje] and Dsen [Kawoché] up to the present. Among its various traditions of explaining and listening that arose, the three great system-founding charioteers are the All-Knowing Rangjung Dorje, the Omniscient Dölpopa, and the Omniscient Trimé Öser.<sup>2661</sup> Also, the seventh lord,<sup>2662</sup> Silung Paṅchen,<sup>2663</sup> Tāranātha, Denpé Nyinjé,<sup>2664</sup> and others, who definitely dwelled on the bhūmis of the noble ones and were endowed with the dharma eyes of the impartial spiritual friends of the fully perfect teaching, determined [this system] through the triad of study, explanation, and meditation, and all their discourses became supports of this [system]. Moreover, the final intention of [all] noble beings who unmistakably see the basic nature through the union of study, reflection, and meditation must come down to nothing but this.

## 1.2. Specific [source]

As for the specific profound guiding instructions on the view, there are two [systems]: (1) the system of the common guiding instructions on the view in which lord Maitrīpa emphasized the intended meaning of the *Uttaratantra* and that was transmitted through the great pillar of Central [India], Ratnavajra, the Kashmiri Sajjana, and so on, and (2) the Kagyü [system] bestowed upon venerable [Marpa] from Lhotra through the path of giving the empowerment of transferring blessings—the uncommon Mahāmudrā

of the union of sūtra and mantra that is known to everyone. Among these, it is the former that is to be explained here. {181}

## 2. The actual guiding instructions on the view

This has two parts:

1. The sūtra system as it stands on its own feet
2. The manner in which this is connected to the profound system of mantra

### 2.1. The sūtra system as it stands on its own feet

This has two parts:

1. What is to be understood
2. The manner in which this is made a living experience

#### 2.1.1. What is to be understood

Trust in causes and results being undeceiving is taught to be the correct view of worldly people, which is taken as the basis [here]. On top of that, one needs to rely on an unmistakable profound view that makes one go beyond the three realms. In that regard, śrāvakas familiarize with personal identitylessness; pratyekabuddhas, with the lack of real existence of the apprehended; Yogācāras, with wisdom empty of the duality [of apprehender and apprehended]; and common Mādhyamikas, with the meaning of having determined all phenomena to be empty of any essence of their own. Through that, they [all] make [their individual] experiences. However, due to being ensnared by the triad of mistaken minds, discriminations, and views, they do not determine nondual wisdom and thus find themselves in places far away from buddhahood.

You may wonder, “So who does experience nondual wisdom?” The [nondual wisdom] that actually fulfills this definition is seen by the wisdom of the noble ones and the one that is concordant, by those ordinary beings who have purified their mind streams through uncommon study, reflection, and meditation. The latter are twofold.

(1) The Niḥsvabhāvavādins [first] resolve through the five great Madhyamaka reasonings that all phenomena from form up through the knowledge of all aspects, just like the horns of a rabbit and the son of a barren woman, are emptiness in that they are neither observable as anything nor established as anything in terms of the basic nature, with [this emptiness] appearing as dependent origination and dawning in an unimpeded manner.

[During] the main practice, just as both a rubbing stick and the [wooden] support to rub it against are consumed by the fire [they produced] and the fire itself also disappears on its own in the end, after clinging thoughts have been evaluated by discriminating [thoughts], discriminating prajñā itself settles into being unobservable. When [these Niḥsvabhāvavādins], without thinking of it as anything or mentally engaging in it as anything, {182} meditate within the state of the space-like realization of identitylessness in the manner of not meditating, many samādhi doors of the union of calm abiding and superior insight (such as the Jewel Lamp)<sup>2665</sup> arise. At that time, if they recognize [this state] well through pure scriptures and pith instructions, after their mistaken modes of apprehending have become pure, their prajñā takes a leap, so that they will realize the view of the uncommon Great Madhyamaka. However, the *Samādhisambhāraparivarta* says:

One's samādhi may be stable  
 [But] if one entertains clinging to it,  
 It is called "the behavior of children"  
 And nirvāṇa will not be attained.<sup>2666</sup>

Therefore, some who flatter themselves by taking their experiences of emptiness [at which they arrive through conceptual] examination and analysis to be the true nature of phenomena [and say] "The Great Madhyamaka is like ours alone but all others are wrong" deviate [from emptiness and mistake it as] the path. Some do not become liberated in [mind's] own essence that is beyond mind but simply count the arising and ceasing [of mind's moments]. Mistaking that for being Mahāmudrā, they deviate from [emptiness as] the fundamental ground of stable experience. Apart from the greater or lesser degrees to which they [merely] analyze names, both are equal in not being able to transcend the three realms. Hence, to enter the door to omniscient wisdom, through rock meeting bone<sup>2667</sup> [in the sense of] unmistakably understanding, experiencing, and realizing scriptures, reasonings, and pith instructions, one needs to strike the essential points of the view, meditation, and conduct that are not contradictory to anything and yet are more eminent than anything.

(2) As for the Yogācāras, who rely on the [five] dharmas of Maitreya, it is best if they engage in the preliminaries of cutting through the reference points of the adventitious appearances of mistakenness (the bearers of the nature of phenomena) through the scriptural system of the middle wheel of the words of the Buddha together with the commentaries on its



intention. {183} If they are not able [to deal with] that much elaboration, they must definitely train in the five dharmas of Maitreya or at least the *Uttaratantra*. If they are not even able to do that, [they should contemplate what the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*] says:

The mind is aware that nothing other than mind exists.

Then it is realized that mind does not exist either.

The intelligent ones are aware that both do not exist

And abide in the dharmadhātu, in which these are absent.<sup>2668</sup>

Accordingly, since beginningless [time], based on the adventitious stains that are the factor of being ignorant about one's own mind and from the perspective of no examination and no analysis, [one's own mind] appears as all kinds of [delusive subjects and objects], just like the mistaken [appearances] in a dream. However, if analyzed, since they are not established as anything whatsoever but are empty of any essence of their own, all appearances are the magical creations of mind alone. Therefore, that the apprehended, emerging as if it were outer referents, appears and yet is without any nature of its own (like [a reflection of] the moon in water) is the basic nature of seeming reality. Also the mind that is the apprehender does not abide anywhere on the outside or the inside, nor is it established as any entity of shape or color. The eight collections [of consciousness] together with their [various] elements that arise from the continuum of clinging to an identity—being mistaken about what does not exist [through treating it] as if it existed—are primordially empty, just like a flower in the sky. However, to correctly realize the wisdom empty of the duality of apprehender and apprehended—the nature of phenomena that pervades everybody from buddhas to sentient beings, the sugata heart, the natural luminosity that is primordially never tainted by adventitious stains, the basic nature of ultimate reality—and then to rest in meditative equipoise within it is the intention of the [five] dharmas of Maitreya.

One must engage in [at least] that much analysis as a preliminary, and it is thus that the freedom from [all] extremes is determined. Thereafter, what is called “making union a living experience” refers to dwelling in the natural state of the basic nature, self-arising wisdom. {184} The manner of being empty [is called] “being empty of thoughts of clinging to any extremes of reference points.” The manner of realization is called “realization through personally experienced wisdom.”

### 2.1.2. The actual [manner in which this is] made a living experience

This has three parts:

1. Preliminaries
2. Main part
3. Subsequent attainment<sup>2669</sup>

#### 2.1.2.1. Preliminaries

According to the progression of purifying the coarse, subtle, and very subtle stains of the sugata heart, which is like a wish-fulfilling jewel, in agreement with the first wheel [of dharma], you need to reflect and meditate as [described] in the [four] synopses of the dharma.<sup>2670</sup> Thus, reflect as follows. (1) The end of being born is death. The end of coming together is separation. The end of accumulating is the exhaustion [of what was accumulated]. The end of rising is falling. [Thus,] all these conditioned phenomena are even more impermanent than bubbles and lightning. (2) Based on being appropriated through karma and afflictions, the five skandhas such as form circle in, and fall into, the three realms, just like flies caught in a jar. This [circling] has the nature of suffering, is moved through suffering, and is trapped in suffering. (3) Since all seeming phenomena from form up through the knowledge of all aspects are not really established, they are empty. (4) The great perfect [nature] that represents the identitylessness of the duality of apprehender and apprehended is the basis that is empty of all phenomena and is beyond the misery<sup>2671</sup> of adventitious mistakenness—is the supreme permanence, eternity, and peace. [While reflecting like this,] verbally recite the following again and again:

Everything conditioned is impermanent.

What is contaminated is suffering.

All phenomena are empty and identityless.

Nirvāṇa is peace.

You should gain certainty [about this] in detail [through] blending the common preliminaries that appear in [the texts on] the stages of the path<sup>2672</sup> with your mind stream.

#### 2.1.2.2. Main part

This has three parts:

**2.1.2.2.1. Taking refuge [and generating bodhicitta] so that this becomes the path of the uncommon mahāyāna {185}**

[Taking refuge:]

Naturally luminous mind  
Is the pure tathāgata heart,  
But this appropriation of sentient beings  
Is free from limit and nonlimit.

The color of gold and the pure gold  
In gravel become visible  
Through cleansing it—so it is with the ālaya  
Of the skandhas in a sentient being.

Buddha is neither a person  
Nor the skandhas but uncontaminated wisdom.  
Having familiarized with it, it is always peacefulness—  
In it, I take my refuge.<sup>2673</sup>

Generating [bodhi]citta:

That mind's natural luminosity  
Is associated with mentation and so on,  
Afflictions, and a self  
Is what the supreme speaker has taught.<sup>2674</sup>  
In order to dispel these, I shall cultivate the supreme path.

Say these [verses] while remembering their meanings. {186}

**2.1.2.2.2. Resting in meditative equipoise in nonconceptual freedom from reference points in accordance with the middle wheel and thus coming to a final resolve<sup>2675</sup> about the profound nature of phenomena**  
On a comfortable seat, assume the essential points of the body [posture] in accordance with the usual [approach]. Cultivate longing devotion. If you have determined the view previously through study and reflection, recollect that view and then rest in meditative equipoise. If you lack proper study and reflection, give rise to the understanding of personal identitylessness through determining that this mind of yours is not established as any essence whatsoever, [the understanding of] phenomenal identitylessness

through resolving that all appearances of objects are not established as anything other than your own mind's aspect of appearance, and [the understanding that] the inseparability of mind and appearances is the equal taste of apprehender and apprehended, just as waves are not other than water. Then, be neither distracted to the outside, nor tightened up on the inside, nor hold on [to anything] in between. Without losing yourself in neutral and indifferent states, rest spaciously, like the sky. If [your mind] does not stay put through that but moves, since any appearances of the six collections [of consciousness] that emerge are emptiness, when you sustain [mind's] own peacefulness and self-liberation without engaging in adopting or rejecting, hope or fear, and accomplishing or blocking, the signs of mind's being still will gradually occur.

Then, through searching for the mind<sup>2676</sup> as found in the guiding manuals, the resolve that its nature is primordially free from reference points arises. Since there is nothing to meditate on apart from solely recognizing this basic nature free from reference points, rely on the mindfulness of [simply] not being separate [from this recognition]. This is also taught as being uncontrived, being fresh, and whatever is emerging being the natural state. Therefore, no matter how your own lucid and empty mind without grasping may appear, be it still, moving, joyful, or sad, sustain just that in an uncontrived manner. Other than that, without becoming fettered by any efforts in terms of factors to be relinquished and their remedies, let the basic awareness (*rig pa*) that is without foundation and on which one cannot meditate rest.<sup>2677</sup> Through that, the ultimate [union] of calm abiding and superior insight of the mahāyāna takes place. No matter how [certain] avenues of experiences and [certain] qualities of the path may arise during the phases of these [steps of calm abiding and superior insight], you should recognize their own essence without being attached or clinging [to them]. This is the profound essential point. {187}

Verbally, you should recite the following and remember its meaning: "The basis is emptiness. The path is signlessness. The fruition is wishlessness."

**2.1.2.2.3. Upon the arising of any suitable samādhi of calm abiding and superior insight, distinguishing well between existence, nonexistence, and so on, and pointing them out in accordance with the final wheel and the vajrayāna**

If you have a rough overview of understanding the discourses of the Buddha and the commentaries on the [major] scriptures, just that will suffice

[here]. But if you do not have that, at least the reading transmission of [Dölpopa's] *Mountain Dharma—The Ocean of the Definitive Meaning* should be given [to you], and [based on that text] you should realize the view as well as you can. Through that, you will comprehend that though mind's essence is taught through many synonyms (such as “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects,” “natural luminosity,” “the tathāgata heart,” “suchness,” “emptiness,” “Mahāmudrā,” and “AHAM”), [doing so] is untouched by any flaw of contradiction. Thus, you will be free from flaws as expressed [by the following words]:

Emptiness and identitylessness are taught in all the discourses of the Buddha. Foolish people who do not understand the meaning of emptiness and identitylessness will be ruined.

Then, through relying on the two realities and the four reliances,<sup>2678</sup> the ultimate definitive meanings of the discourses of the victor and the wisdom to be experienced by you will communicate and thereby your cultivation of the path will become meaningful.

Thus, all phenomena that consist of the imaginary adventitious mind are empty, just like a gathering of clouds. However, the nature of phenomena (the sugata heart that is an uninterrupted stream of lucid awareness) is to be made a living experience through recognizing it as self-arising wisdom. [To do so, start by taking] refuge and [generating bodhi]citta as above. As found in the discourses of Jetsün Tāranātha, cultivate the recollection of the guru's being a buddha for one session, and at the end [recite]:

The Tathāgata is indemonstrable. He cannot be seen with the eyes. The dharma is inexpressible. {188} It cannot be heard with the ears. The saṃgha is unconditioned. It cannot be worshipped with body, speech, or mind.<sup>2679</sup>

And:

Since the nature of the Buddha is unconditioned, it is called “permanent.” What is called “space” is the nature of the Buddha. The nature of the Buddha is the Tathāgata. The Tathāgata is unconditioned. What is unconditioned is permanent. Permanent is the dharma. The dharma is the saṃgha. The saṃgha is unconditioned. What is unconditioned is permanent.

Reciting this again and again, always recollect the ultimate three jewels. Then, [contemplate the following verses] from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*:

By relying on mere mind,  
One does not imagine outer objects.  
By relying on nonappearance,  
One should go beyond mere mind.

By relying on the focal object of actual reality,  
One must go beyond nonappearance.  
If yogins rest in nonappearance,  
They do not see the mahāyāna.<sup>2680</sup>

[Thus,] the realization that the mistakenness of the seeming is mere mind is scrutinized by the Madhyamaka without appearances. Going beyond even that, you must engage in the unmistakable way of being of true reality through the Madhyamaka with appearances. Here, you may wonder, “What is the focal object of actual reality?” Just as there are no four elements that are not pervaded by space, there are no knowable objects that are not pervaded by the dharmakāya of buddhas. {189} Also, in the suchness of buddhas, oneself, and all sentient beings, there are no distinctions of good and bad, big and small, high and low, and so on. Furthermore, the naturally abiding disposition or the basic element that is able to produce the buddha attributes and has been obtained through the nature of phenomena since beginningless time<sup>2681</sup> exists in all living beings who consist of the life-force breath. Therefore, all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart. In order to bring that to mind clearly, recite [*Uttaratantra* I.28]:

Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates,  
Since suchness is undifferentiable,  
And since the disposition exists,  
All beings always possess the buddha heart.

The dharmakāya of those who are pure, the suchness of those who are [both] impure and pure, and the disposition of those who are impure exist in the following manner:

A buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amid bees,  
Kernels in their husks, gold in filth,

A treasure in the earth, a sprout and so on [from] a small fruit,  
A statue of the victor in a rotten garment,

The lord of humans in the belly of a lowly woman,  
And a precious image in clay—just as these exist,  
This basic element dwells in sentient beings,  
Obscured by the adventitious stains of the afflictions.<sup>2682</sup>

{190} Recite this and reflect on its meaning.

Everything that is separable, such as karma, causes and results, [kar-mic] maturations, afflictions, skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, and dependent origination, has not only never existed ultimately but even on the level of the seeming, [the tathāgata heart] abides such that it is [merely] associated [with these phenomena] but is never tainted [by any of them]. [By contrast,] the inseparable buddha attributes that exceed the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā in number, such as the self-arisen major and minor marks, the powers, the fearlessnesses, the threefold foundation of mindfulness,<sup>2683</sup> great love and compassion, and immeasurable samādhis (such as the vajra-like one) and wisdoms (such as dharmadhātu [wisdom]), are present in an intrinsic and primordial manner. Therefore, [the tathāgata heart] is not empty [of them]. With trust in the ground that is suitable to be freed from the stains and is suitable for the qualities to arise, bring the following clearly to mind:

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

It possesses all the buddha attributes,  
Which are luminous, unproduced,  
Manifesting in an inseparable manner,  
And beyond the sands of the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>2684</sup>

Furthermore, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and others view bliss as suffering; what is permanent, as impermanent; what is a self, as the lack of a self; and what is pure, as impure. They do not understand the meaning to be understood from the words spoken by the victor. {191} The meaning of this as follows. What lacks a self is called “saṃsāra.” What is called

“self” is the Tathāgata. What is impermanent refers to the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. What is permanent is the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata. Suffering refers to all tīrthikas. Bliss refers to parinirvāṇa. Impurity refers to conditioned dharmas. Purity refers to the perfect dharmas of buddhas and bodhisattvas. Your own mind as such—the sugata heart—is endowed with these four perfect dharmas that are beyond mistakenness. Thinking this, bring the following clearly to mind:

Because the [dharmakāya] is naturally pure  
 And because it is free from latent tendencies, it is pure.  
 It is the supreme self because the reference points  
 Of self and no-self are at peace.

It is bliss because the skandha of a mental nature  
 And its causes have come to an end.  
 It is permanent because it is realized  
 As the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.<sup>2685</sup>

At present, the sugata heart (the basis of such distinctive features) that is endowed with the many qualities of freedom of a buddha (the distinctive features) is the self-aware wisdom that is lucid and unceasing, is the innate natural state, and is experienced through the triad of studying, reflecting, and meditating. Precisely this is what abides as the basis of purification. After what is to be purified—the adventitious stains—has become pure, the result of purification—nothing but this basic nature that abides within you—becomes manifest.<sup>2686</sup> This {192} is labeled as “the dharmakāya free from stains.” Though it arises as all aspects of the entirety of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, from the very moment of the arising [of these aspects], they do not move away from that ground, just as various kinds of reflections appear in a stainless crystal ball, but from the very moment of their appearing, the crystal and the reflections [in it] do not blend. Likewise, no matter how the appearances of the triad of saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, and the path may dawn within the lucid and empty self-awareness that is stripped bare, they are self-arising and self-liberated, never tainting the essence [of this awareness]. Therefore, with there being no latent tendencies of views and flaws to be removed and there being no need to newly add any distinctive features that did not exist before, the wisdom of the noble ones rests in meditative equipoise in emptiness. Making this your main practice, cultivate it during as many



sessions as is suitable, and sometimes bring it clearly to mind through the following vajra words:

There is nothing to be removed in this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is viewed as it really is—  
 If actual reality is seen, one is liberated.<sup>2687</sup>

Recite this or reflect on its meaning. These [words] are also what venerable Jetsün Tāranātha has given as an instruction on the profound essential point:

If the pair of familiarizing with the sugata heart (the nature)  
 And reflecting on the qualities of a victor (its distinctive features)  
 Are brought together by a mind free from thoughts,  
 This is the supreme path of the sugata—the definitive meaning.

{193} Having rested in meditative equipoise in this way, at the end [contemplate] the following statement:

Its true nature of being changeless  
 Is the same before as after.<sup>2688</sup>

Accordingly, when this naturally luminous sugata heart's own face that abides in you primordially and intrinsically has become manifest after the adventitious stains have been overcome through the correct view and meditation, it is labeled with the name of the result—"fully perfect awakening." Thus, develop the certainty of trusting in the cause that is the path endowed with that [result]:

Spoken of as luminous by nature [but] having been obscured by the  
 thick cloud banks  
 Of adventitious afflictive and cognitive [obscurations], just as the sun  
 and the sky,  
 Buddhahood is endowed with all the stainless buddha qualities and is  
 permanent, everlasting, and eternal.  
 It is attained based on the two wisdoms that are nonconceptual about  
 [all] phenomena and discriminate them.

Without beginning, middle, and end, undifferentiable,  
 Nondual, freed [in] three [ways], stainless, and nonconceptual—  
 This is the nature of the dharmadhātu, which is seen  
 By yogins in the meditative equipoise of realizing it.<sup>2689</sup>

Having developed such certainty, rise from your meditative equipoise.

### 2.1.2.3. Subsequent attainment

When you engage in the activities of the periods between sessions, have dharmakāya devotion to the guru,<sup>2690</sup> who excellently teaches the pith instructions on the heart of the matter. Also, have the universal pure outlook of knowing that since all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart, apart from temporarily not recognizing or recognizing their own essence, {194} they ultimately have the character of the sixty-four qualities [of freedom and maturation]. Have unbearable compassion for all those sentient beings who do not realize this—there is not even one who has not been your father and mother, and they keep circling only in the [vicious] cycle of suffering due to wandering around in an endless loop of appearances of mistakenness. Thus, in order that all sentient beings attain the dharmakāya (the result of freedom that abides in their own ground), through being endowed with the generation of the mahāyāna [bodhi]citta of aspiration and application, relinquish your nonvirtues and those of others in [all] their parts through realizing that they are emptiness from the very start. Through being free from pride and a pretentious mind, accomplish as much virtue included in the pāramitās (such as generosity) as you can. Through not clinging to yourself and sentient beings, practice benefiting sentient beings directly and indirectly as much as you can. Understand that all inner and outer dependently originating phenomena, which consist of the imaginary [nature], appear but are empty of any real essence, just like dreams and illusions.

In particular, it is taught that, in those who have not gathered merit, many shortcomings such as wrong views arise, while one needs to gather the accumulations in order to realize the correct view. Therefore, dedicate the general virtuous actions that are free from wrongdoing and embraced by the generation of the mahāyāna [bodhi]citta up through [all particular virtues such as] prostrating, circumambulating, and offering clay images and butter lamps as the causes for seeing the tathāgata heart. Through having trust in the permanent three jewels, generally accomplish what pleases them (such as making their representations, venerating them, and praising

them) and, in particular, offer the seven-branch [prayer] without counting it but as much as you can.

Sometimes, the reading transmission of the twenty sūtras of the heart of the definitive meaning should be given to you. Also, recite them, reflect on their meaning, and explain them to others. {195} Think about authentic commentaries on the intention [of the final wheel of dharma], such as the *Uttaratantra* and *Mountain Dharma—The Ocean of the Definitive Meaning*. Without letting study and reflection take away your meditation and without letting meditation overwhelm your study and reflection, you should unify the accumulation of wisdom during meditative equipoise in order to manifest the naturally abiding disposition and the accumulation of merit during subsequent attainment in order to make the unfolding disposition flourish further. Even if a little bit of the prajñā of unmistakably realizing the profound basic nature has arisen, since it covers so much more ground than inconceivable [amounts of] conditioned virtues, prioritize meditative equipoise. [On the other hand,] the greatness of the ultimate welfare of others if there is the study and reflection on the pure discourses of the victor exceeds the arising of some semblance of samādhi hundreds or thousands of times. Therefore, you should not block the one by the other. In all your conduct, without being separated from mindfulness and alertness, you should be embraced by the two kinds of bodhicitta.

When you die, you need to practice the manner of consciousness's entering into ground luminosity according to the Omniscient Dölpopa's very special pith instructions on the transference [of consciousness]. Therefore, you should [already] familiarize yourself with this from now on. In that way, through the awareness of the yogin's becoming absorbed into the luminous emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, the primordially present dharmakāya is liberated from the cocoon of the adventitious stains. Its character of very amazing, wonderful, consummate, immeasurable, and unfathomable kāyas, wisdoms, and activities is as vast as space, and it serves as the source of [fulfilling] all desires of sentient beings, just like a wish-fulfilling tree of jewels. Thus, its permanent, all-pervasive, and effortless activity will arise in an uninterrupted manner for as long as saṃsāra lasts. In order to accomplish such swiftly, during the breaks of your sessions, [make] the general mahāyāna dedications and aspirations, such as the [*Aspiration Prayer of Excellent Conduct*], and also make this following [aspiration prayer]: {196}

From the Buddha [comes] the dharma and from the dharma, the noble saṃgha.

From the saṃgha, the [tathāgata] heart—the basic element of wisdom—is attained.

Finally, the attainment of that wisdom is the attainment<sup>2691</sup> of supreme awakening and so on

That is endowed with the attributes that promote the welfare of all sentient beings—may [I attain this].

One's own welfare and the welfare of others consist of the ultimate kāya

And the seeming kāya that is based on it, respectively.

May I swiftly attain the sixty-four qualities

That are the results of freedom and maturation.

May I always engage without effort in an all-pervasive manner

In the constitutions of those to be guided, the means to guide them,

The activities of guidance that [suit] the constitutions of those to be guided,

And in arriving at the [proper] place and time for this [activity].

Through the virtue I obtained from having properly studied, reflected, and meditated on the seven topical points

(The [three] jewels, the pure basic element, stainless awakening, the qualities, and activity),

May [all] these beings behold the seer Amitāyus endowed with infinite light

And, having seen him, attain supreme awakening by virtue of the stainless eye of dharma arising [in them].<sup>2692</sup>

Thus, you should seal [your practice] through aspiration prayers without hope and fear, as well as dedications without thinking of the three spheres.

## 2.2. The manner in which this is connected to the profound system of mantra

At the time of making this very view a living experience through connecting it to the mantra [system], there are also two parts:

1. What is to be understood
2. Main practice

### 2.2.1. What is to be understood

These appearances of the three existences (the container that is the outer world and the [inner] content [of sentient beings]), {197} just as a face's being transferred [as a reflection] into a mirror, appear as the magical display of inner nāḍīs, vāyus, and tilakas, and these three abide as the aspects of “the other”—the circle of the supreme maṇḍala with its support and supported.<sup>2693</sup> All of these are true reality's—the sugata heart's—own light and own radiance, the dharmakāya itself appearing as all aspects, and utterly changeless wisdom. This ultimate dharmadhātu, the union of bliss and emptiness, is unchanging in nature yet uninterrupted. Therefore, it is taught as having the meaning of “tantra.” Being the stained suchness during the phase of the ground, it is [called] “the causal tantra.” Since this actuality of the nature of phenomena appears gradually during the time of the path, it is [also called] “the path [or] method tantra.” When it has manifested as being endowed with twofold purity, it is called “the tantra of the completely pure fruition.” Let alone that those who cling to the manner of the seeming's being empty as being supreme do not even see a fraction of this uncommon view, it takes a long time [to realize this view] even through the above-mentioned path of the sūtra system as it stands on its own feet. Therefore, when you rest in meditative equipoise in the six-branch vajra yoga that is more eminent than all [other] paths of mantra specified by empowerments and samayas, [this view] will be realized conveniently in a short time and with little hardships.

### 2.2.2. Main practice—making this a living experience

The great commentary<sup>2694</sup> says:

Just as fire is always present in wood  
 But is not seen through the methods of cutting and splitting it,  
 Through one's hands rubbing a rubbing stick and a [wooden] support  
 to rub it against,  
 What is present in it will be seen,

So mind's luminosity is not seen {198}  
 Through conceptual methods of meditation.  
 It will be seen as such through joining  
 The Lalanā and Rasanā as one.

Accordingly, this naturally luminous and utterly changeless wisdom is present in terms of its essence as the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects and [in terms of its] nature as utterly changeless great bliss. You do not see it through all kinds of meditations that entail thoughts. Rather, through the special methods of nonconceptual samādhi and control through [particular] activities, you will see it like a reflection in [mirror] divination. Therefore, in the beginning, through the [two] yogas of striving that are based on withdrawal and dhyāna, [through the nocturnal yoga,] you will see the signs of smoke, mirages, fireflies, and lamps. Through the daytime yoga with a cloud-free sky, you will see [the signs] of a blazing [flame], the moon, the sun, Vajrarāhu, and the highest elements [among these signs]—lightning up through the [great blue] sphere. Through resting in meditative equipoise day and night by taking the empty forms that are these fully complete ten signs as objects, there is an experience of the emptiness of all aspects appearing as entailing all aspects of the three realms. Then, based on the branches of prāṇa dexterity (*prāṇayama*) and retention, the bliss of melting is induced. Through [the branches of] recollection and samādhi, the ultimate utterly changeless bliss is accomplished. Through stopping the breath of the latent tendencies of transference, the mistaken appearances of the seeming are forcefully brought to an end, and thus unassailable pure appearances unfold without any limit or end. That is, this very dharmakāya free from stains, which is [endowed with] the pāramitās of purity, self, bliss, and permanence, pervades [all of] space, and is the primal buddha present in oneself since the very start, {199} becomes manifest.<sup>2695</sup> During these stages, the aids of samaya and pure conduct are necessary. Having understood the way of [practicing] this according to the discourses of the dharma lord and his successors as well as the pith instructions of the guru, you should familiarize with it in a one-pointed fashion.

### 3. The benefit

At the end of [the age of] strife, since the five degenerations are rampant, the twenty-eight degenerations of the view arise. Since sentient beings have little merit, they have no respect for the sūtra collection of the heart of the definitive meaning. Not only do they remain idle without familiarizing themselves with the meanings discussed in these [sūtras], but some have wrong views due to lacking trust in the sūtra collection of the heart [of the definitive meaning], which causes them to fall into the great abyss of the lower realms, which is taught as “the life-line of liberation being severed.”

The opposite of [all] this is the benefit [of these teachings]. The *Uttaratantra* says that, compared to practicing eminent [forms of] generosity, discipline, and dhyāna for many eons, the benefit of hearing this profound dharma is greater.<sup>2696</sup> In general, the sūtras say the following on the benefit of having faith in the mahāyāna:

Whoever will give rise to faith in the mahāyāna will not wander into the lower realms for one thousand eons. For five thousand eons, they will not be born as animals and hungry ghosts. For twenty-five eons, they will be born in the worlds of the gods and the worlds of Brahmā.<sup>2697</sup>

[The sūtras of] Mother [Prajñāpāramitā] say that whoever has heard the prajñāpāramitā [teachings], upon dying and transiting, will go to the buddha realms and, for as long as living [there], will serve and honor all sentient beings with all [kinds of] pleasant items. Also, compared to hearing [the prajñāpāramitā teachings] for eons, to meditate on prajñāpāramitā even for the mere duration of a finger snap is of greater merit.<sup>2698</sup>

In particular, the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*<sup>2699</sup> says that if [the number of] particles on a finger nail and [the amount of] water in the hoofprint of an ox were proclaimed, [in comparison with the number of] particles on the great earth and {200} [the amount of] water in all four oceans, they would not even stand up to a hundredth, a thousandth, or a hundred thousandth part [of the latter], or to [any descriptions of] examples or causes [for them]. Likewise, as for what are explained as the aspects of the merit that [results from] having faith in the sūtra collection of expedient meaning up through applying oneself to their forms of meditation, they do not even come close to a fraction of the merit that [results from] having faith in, and meditating on, the sūtra collection of definitive meaning, nor do they stand up to [any descriptions of] examples or causes [for them]. Furthermore, the sūtras say:

After I have passed into nirvāṇa,  
 If some among the human beings  
 Are able to give rise to pure faith  
 That the sugata heart exists  
 In all kinds of sentient beings,  
 They are representatives of the Buddha's kindness.

The *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* says:

Those who teach the tathāgata heart are called “perfect buddhas,” no matter who they are, whether they have afflictions, or whether they are without afflictions.<sup>2700</sup>

And:

By virtue of the cause that consists of understanding that the permanent tathāgata heart exists in all sentient beings, one will find all the many supreme forms of bliss and all excellencies that there are in the world. Through having heard about the permanent tathāgata heart, one will always obtain all excellencies in the three times (past, present, and future) and all the bliss in the higher realms and on earth.<sup>2701</sup>

And:

By virtue of the cause that is the merit of having heard about the tathāgata heart, one will be without illness, be without harm, live long, and delight all beings. {201} The Tathāgata is permanent,<sup>2702</sup> eternal, and enduring. Through having heard that even his parinirvāṇa is without death, one will obtain everything and will be firm and stable for a long time.<sup>2703</sup>

The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* says:

They teach, “The tathāgata heart exists in all sentient beings.” . . . These sentient beings who are endowed with immeasurable qualities . . . These sons of good family who wish for the genuine dharma will be purified of the countless evil actions they committed, brain diseases, being struck by contagious [diseases], pain, and denigration.<sup>2704</sup>

And:

If someone trusts in the Tathāgata’s having the property of being permanent, that person is very rare, just like an uḍumbara flower. After I have passed into nirvāṇa, if some hear this very profound sūtra collection of the mahāyāna and thus give rise to a mind full of confidence, you should know that they will not fall into the lower realms in future times for one hundred thousand eons.<sup>2705</sup>



And:

Sons of good family or daughters of good family should make efforts in understanding the sūtra in this way, thinking, “The Tathāgata is permanent. The genuine dharma will not vanish. The saṃgha will not become nonexistent.” Having done so, just like me, they too will arrive at the abode of a buddha.<sup>2706</sup>

And:

For example, just as there will be no sounds of hustle and bustle in the south when the sun shines,<sup>2707</sup> when this great *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* arises, merely through hearing it, the hosts of evil deeds that consist of the defeating offenses<sup>2708</sup> and the actions of immediate consequence will swiftly become nonexistent. . . . Upon having heard this *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, even if a son of good family or a daughter of good family were to think, “I do not need awakening” or did not wish to generate [bodhi]citta, no matter whether they did so due to competing [with others], were made to do so by others, were dependent on others, or did so for the sake of gain, service, and verses [of praise], the cause of awakening will enter all the pores of the bodies of such persons, just like the spring sun.<sup>2709</sup> {202}

And:

Those who generate bodhicitta with buddhas as many as the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā will at a later time not give rise to a mind of abandoning what is without equal but will have faith in it and make all beings understand it in detail through their words. . . . Those who generate bodhicitta with buddhas as many as the sand grains in eight [times] the river Gaṅgā will at a later time not give rise to a mind of abandoning what is without equal but will request this scripture, listen to it, write it down, retain it after having written it down, uphold it, read it, teach it, conceal it, protect it, explain it, venerate and pay homage to its volumes out of loving-kindness for the whole world, make others do so too, regard them with the same respect as for the guru, and also completely realize its meaning.<sup>2710</sup>

Through these and other [passages, the benefit of these teachings] is taught in detail. In brief, the Omniscient Dölpopa instructed:

If one will attain buddhahood merely through having heard the name “sugata heart,” what need is there to mention confidence in and respect for it, as well as familiarizing with it after having manifested it? Therefore, the learned ones who are endowed with compassion should teach it even at the cost of giving up their own lives and so on, and those who strive for liberation should search for it and listen to it even at the cost of crossing a large pit of fire.

This should be held as the heart essence.

#### 4. The lineage

Up through the Omniscient Tāranātha, [the lineage] is as in [his] *Supplication to the Shentong Lineage*.<sup>2711</sup> After the Jetsün, [the lineage went through] Gyaltsab Nartangpa Lodrö Namgyal, Ngawang Trinlé, Künsang Wangpo, Tsewang Norbu, Denpé Nyinjé,<sup>2712</sup> [Karmapa] Dödül Dorje, and the protector Maitreya, the perfect buddha Pema Nyinjé Wangpo.<sup>2713</sup> [When I went] before him, based on a manual with guiding instructions on the view by the Thirteenth Lord [Karmapa], an excellent stream of blessings as well as the maturing [empowerments] and the liberating [instructions] of Kālacakra were bestowed upon me, and [in that way] there is another pure mode of this lineage.<sup>2714</sup>

Though the profound view is the definitive meaning  
Of the Buddha’s discourses, those who realize it are few. {203}  
Since the regent Maitreya is without mistakeness,  
Please explain and listen to the *Mahāyānottaratantra*.

Though the vajra yoga is the ultimate [way to] make this  
A living experience, those who use it in meditation are few.  
Through having trust in the king of tantras,  
Please do not salivate over what is inferior.

Though ever-excellent conduct has little obstacles  
While covering a lot of ground, it is difficult [to perform] properly.

Please keep the prātimokṣa and bodhisattva [vows] well through  
training in them

By taking the life examples of the former [masters] as witnesses.

If view, meditation, and conduct are pure,

The two welfares, one's own and that of others, will be accomplished  
swiftly.

This [teaching] is asserted by the learned and is not something  
self-styled—

It is the quintessence of the words of the Buddha and the treatises.

Through this virtue, may I and all sentient beings,

Through relinquishing the five great flaws

And attaining the five great qualities,

Manifest the ultimate dharmadhātu.

*This was written at the great dharma seat of glorious Dzamtang by the  
idle monk Yönten Gyatso,<sup>2715</sup> who attained confidence through under-  
standing the basis of emptiness—the sugata heart—according to the po-  
sition of the holder of the teachings of the glorious Jonang with the name  
Kedrub Ngawang [Chöpel Gyatso].<sup>2716</sup> {204} In all my lives, may I have  
the good fortune of studying, reflecting, and meditating on the teachings  
that are the heart of the definitive meaning.*



## Appendix 1: Selected Indian and Tibetan Comments on Uttaratantra I.27–28

### Indian Commentaries

As mentioned above, RGVV does not comment directly on I.27–28 but provides an explanation in the context of its matching the nine examples for buddha nature with its threefold nature of dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition (I.143–152).

While Vairocanarakṣita's *Mahāyānottaratantraṭippanī* does not comment at all on these verses, verse 8 of Sajjana's *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstropadeśa* offers an interesting reformulation/gloss of the first two reasons. Line 8b "since the welfare of sentient beings depends on the victor" corresponds to the first reason ("since buddha wisdom enters into the multitudes of beings" in I.27a and "because the perfect buddhakāya radiates" in I.28a). It highlights the intrinsic affinity between the buddha natures of buddhas and sentient beings, which enables the former to benefit and awaken the latter. In this vein, an interlinear gloss on verse 11 explicitly relates the twofold dharmakāya—"the utterly stainless dharmadhātu and its natural outflow (teaching the principles of profundity and diversity)" in *Uttaratantra* I.145 (explained by RGVV as "consisting of the arising of [individually] corresponding [forms of] cognizance in other sentient beings to be guided") to "the perfect buddhakāya radiates . . ." Line 8c "because suchness operates in accordance with the welfare [of beings]" corresponds to the second reason ("since its stainlessness is nondual by nature" in I.27b and "because suchness is undifferentiable" in I.28b). This line emphasizes the active nature of suchness when it is understood as buddha nature, which always engages in the welfare of sentient beings, be it in the form of external buddha activity or as the internal driving force for the path of ordinary beings and bodhisattvas to attain buddhahood.

The second chapter of Ratnākaraśānti's *Sūtrasamuccayabhāṣya* establishes that the teaching of there being only a single yāna ultimately is of

definitive meaning. In this context, he says that the tathāgata heart is only temporarily obscured by adventitious stains and quotes a verse by the Buddha also found in RGVV, Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava*, and *Uttaratantra* I.28. Ratnākaraśānti concludes that the tathāgata heart is the single disposition that serves as the basis for there being just a single yāna.

Since the dharmadhātu has the meaning of *gotra*, they are inseparable. Therefore, since all [beings] possess *tathāgatagarbha*, its fruition is just a single yāna. However, since it was taught as various yānas in the form of progressive means of realization and [since] this *gotra* does not appear due to [being obscured by] afflictions and so on, temporarily, [the Buddha] spoke of five *gotras*. For, he said:

Just as within stony debris  
Pure gold does not appear,  
And then appears through being purified,  
The sugata is said [to appear] in the world.<sup>2717</sup>

Also noble Nāgārjuna says [in his *Dharmadhātustava*]:

In a pregnant woman's womb,  
A child exists but is not seen.  
Just so, dharmadhātu is not seen,  
When it's covered by afflictions.<sup>2718</sup>

Likewise, noble Maitreya states [in his *Uttaratantra*]:

Because the illuminating dharmadhātu radiates,  
There is no difference in suchness,  
And the actuality of the disposition appears,  
All [sentient beings] possess the sugata heart.<sup>2719</sup>

Therefore, just as [described in] the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, though [*tathāgatagarbha*] is ensnared by afflictions, when the conditions for [its] awakening have formed, all [yānas] are simply a single yāna.<sup>2720</sup>

Note that Ratnākaraśānti's version of *Uttaratantra* I.28 contains interesting variant readings, especially in lines a and c. Either Ratnākaraśānti

paraphrased I.28 in this way himself (or quoted it so from memory) or he used a different manuscript of the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>2721</sup>

### *Tibetan Commentaries*

The following presents a selection of Tibetan commentaries on *Uttaratantra* I.27–28 that shows the wide range of explaining and justifying the three “proofs” in these verses.

#### Ngog Lotsāwa

Ngog Lotsāwa’s *Synopsis of the “Uttaratantra”*<sup>2722</sup> first elaborates on the example of the huge scroll the size of an entire trichilocosm that is encapsulated in a single minute particle. Here, the buddha wisdom that exists in the mind streams of sentient beings is the dharmadhātu. This dharmadhātu is wisdom in the sense that the prajñā of buddhas knows, in a single moment, all phenomena to lack characteristics. Therefore, this prajñā is inseparable from what it knows. Thus, the ultimate, this very dharmadhātu, is the wisdom that is aware of this dharmadhātu. Since said dharmadhātu abides in all sentient beings in a complete manner, the example and its meaning are very much justified. When the obscurations have subsided, no characteristics whatsoever are seen, and this very nonseeing is the seeing of true reality. The wisdom of nothing to be seen is nothing but suchness itself. Therefore, it is in this sense justified (that dharmadhātu and wisdom are one).

As for the intention of lines I.28ac, Ngog says that sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart because they (a) possess the fruitional, (b) the natural, and (c) the causal tathāgata heart. (a) The perfect buddhakāya is pure suchness, and its radiating refers to sentient beings’ being pervaded by it. It pervades them because it is suitable to be attained by all sentient beings. From this perspective, the “tathāgata” (in “tathāgata heart”) refers to the actual tathāgata, while it is only in a nominal sense that sentient beings possess the heart of this tathāgata. For those who have the fortune to attain this tathāgatahood are labeled as being pervaded by it. (b) In terms of suchness, both “tathāgata” and sentient beings who possess the tathāgata heart are taken to be the actual suchness. For even when suchness, which is naturally devoid of stains, is associated with adventitious obscurations, it is the nature of a buddha and it definitely abides in the mind streams of sentient beings. (c) In terms of the disposition, “tathāgata” is understood in a nominal sense because the causes for attaining the state of pure suchness—the latent tendencies of virtue that consist of the seeds of prajñā

and compassion—are the causes of a tathāgata, whereas it is precisely the disposition that is “the heart of sentient beings.”

### Marpa Dopa and Parahitabhadra (as represented in CMW)

CMW’s<sup>2723</sup> explanation of I.28 starts by saying that the *Uttaratantra* is the treatise that determines the meaning of the sūtras of definitive meaning. Therefore, in order to determine the intended meaning of the statement in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* that “All sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart,” first, the comments on the intention of the scriptures of the Tathāgata about the basic element are explained in I.28. Next, CMW indicates that its comments on this verse are based on the purport of verses I.144/147–52/155, which match the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition with the nine examples. This is followed by the explanation of the actual words of I.28:

The basic element has three phases—the phase of its being pure, the phase of its being both pure and impure, and the phase of its being impure. The phrase “Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates” refers to the phase of its being pure. [In it,] “kāya” [means] the dharmakāya, which [actually] refers to all three kāyas. “Through what does one know that?” Maitreya himself says [below]:

The dharmakāya is to be known as twofold—  
The utterly stainless dharmadhātu  
And its natural outflow (teaching  
The principles of profundity and diversity).<sup>2724</sup>

“Radiates” [means] that these three kāyas pervade all sentient beings. “How do they pervade them?” In order to purify the basic element of sentient beings for as long as saṃsāra is not empty, with the dharmakāya’s functioning as the support, the sambhogakāya promotes the welfare [of sentient beings] through pervading the pure retinues who dwell on the bhūmis, and the three [kinds of] nirmāṇakāya perform the welfare [of sentient beings] through pervading the impure retinues. Therefore, the basis to be purified—the [tathāgata] heart or basic element—exists in [all] sentient beings. “Why?” If the basis to be purified—the basic element—did not exist [in sentient beings], their being pervaded by the three kāyas would be pointless. Having that in mind, [Maitreya] says, “All beings always possess the buddha



heart.”<sup>2725</sup> Such is not only explained in the *Uttarantra* alone, but the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* states:

Just as space is asserted to be always omnipresent,  
This is held to be always omnipresent.  
Just as space is omnipresent in the hosts of forms,  
It is omnipresent in the hosts of sentient beings.<sup>2726</sup>

The phrase, “since suchness is undifferentiable” refers to the phase of the basic element’s being both pure and impure—the naturally pure suchness of buddhas and sentient beings is without any difference. This is declared in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* [as follows]:

Though it is without difference in everything,  
Suchness having become pure  
Is the Tathāgata. Therefore,  
All beings possess its heart.<sup>2727</sup>

[The phrase] “since the disposition exists” refers to the phase of the basic element’s being impure—since the disposition of a tathāgata exists in all sentient beings, it abides as what is suitable to give rise to the dharmakāya. Exactly this is explained [in the *Uttarantra*] below:

It is held that the three buddhakāyas  
Are obtained from these two dispositions—  
The first kāya, by virtue of the first one,  
And the latter two, by virtue of the second one.<sup>2728</sup>

The following paragraph represents CMW’s comments on the nature of the basic element as explained in *Uttarantra* I.30–31. However, since this paragraph again takes up the three reasons in I.28 and further elaborates on them through connecting them with I.30–31, it is presented here too.

In terms of the particular [characteristics of the nature of the basic element], during the phase of the basic element’s being pure, the dharmakāya radiates into all sentient beings, thus possessing the power to accomplish the goals that sentient beings think about. Therefore, it is similar to a precious gem. During the phase of the basic element’s being both pure and impure, the suchness of buddhas and sentient beings is

undifferentiable. Therefore, it is similar to space. During the phase of the basic element's being impure, the mahāyāna disposition exists in all sentient beings. Therefore, it is similar to water since it moistens the mind streams [of beings] by way of compassion. In terms of its general characteristic, in analogy with these three examples [of a jewel, space, and water] being pure by nature, their meaning refers to the basic element's being pure by nature.<sup>2729</sup>

Later,<sup>2730</sup> CMW's comments on I.144/147–52/155 explicitly correlate verses I.145/148–147/150 with line I.28a; verse I.148/151, with I.28b; and verses I.149/152–152/155, with I.28c. In particular, the dharmakāya consists of the actual stainless dharmakāya (suchness endowed with twofold purity) and its natural outflow—the two rūpakāyas. Due to explaining the mahāyāna dharma, the rūpakāyas serve as the concordant cause for others attaining the dharmakāya through studying, reflecting, and meditating on this dharma. Furthermore, since the rūpakāyas represent the result that is concordant with the cause that is the dharmakāya, the dharmakāya itself is also their concordant cause. In terms of ultimate reality, the rūpakāyas teach the profundity of emptiness to bodhisattvas (ultimately, this represents the sambhogakāya). In terms of seeming reality, they explain the diversity of the three yānas (ultimately, this represents the nirmāṇakāya).

Suchness is compared to three attributes of gold—its being pure by nature, its color being changeless, and its being suitable to be made into ornaments (suggesting that, though suchness is undifferentiable in buddhas and sentient beings, it can eventually manifest as all kinds of precious qualities of realization and relinquishment).

As for the disposition, verse I.149/152 is said to describe its essence in terms of the naturally abiding and the unfolding disposition. Just as a treasure exists since the beginning of the world and is not created by humans, the naturally abiding disposition exists since beginningless time and is not created by the efforts of people. Just as a tree grows through water, manure, and so on, the unfolding disposition represents the arising of proper mental engagement such as studying. Verses I.150/153–152/155 present the power or capacity of the disposition. Just as a precious statue is not produced now and all kinds of desired things arise if it is supplicated, the dharmakāya is unproduced by causes and conditions and is a treasure of qualities such as the powers. Just like a prince, the sambhogakāya enjoys the mahāyāna dharma like a kingdom. Just as a golden statue is not an actual body but an image of a body, the nirmāṇakāya arises as an image in samādhi.

This is followed by a discussion of the ālaya and its relation to the disposition,<sup>2731</sup> which is primarily based on the first chapter of the *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha* and its commentary *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā*. Being phrased throughout in classical Yogācāra diction, this section is a clear example of an early Tibetan commentary that based on the position of the Indian master Parahitabhadra, explicitly combines the Yogācāra teachings with those on buddha nature, which is exactly what later Tibetans such as the Third Karmapa and virtually all Shentongpas did in great detail. In particular, CMW quotes Parahitabhadra as saying that the ālaya and the disposition are the same—the naturally abiding ālaya’s being the same as the naturally abiding disposition and the adventitious ālaya’s being the same as the unfolding disposition. The ālaya is the foundation of both contaminated seeds and the uncontaminated seeds of the supramundane mind, which coexist like a mix of water and milk. However, the uncontaminated seeds do not exist substantially, are not able to produce manifest uncontaminated results yet, and are not the primary seeds in the ālaya, while the seeds of afflicted phenomena have the opposite characteristics. Therefore, the *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha* refers to the ālaya as the support of afflicted phenomena alone. As for the coexistence of both uncontaminated and contaminated seeds in the naturally abiding disposition or ālaya, until one focuses on this ālaya through the remedial path, the seeds of afflicted phenomena exist in it as adventitious stains. However, once one focuses on this ālaya through the path, the adventitious stains become purified.

Furthermore, CMW’s introduction<sup>2732</sup> elaborates on “the three natures” that are used in the three reasons in I.28: (1) the stainless dharmakāya, (2) changeless suchness, and (3) the disposition endowed with qualities. The text also provides instructions on how to work with these three in meditation. First, CMW describes the stainless dharmakāya as follows:

The stainless dharmadhātu of one’s own mind, by its very essence beyond [ordinary states of] mind and inconceivable by thoughts, is the instruction beyond expression on the definitive meaning, that is, the profound that is of one taste. Though this mind—the nature of phenomena free from speech, thought, and expression—is expressed by all kinds of yānas [in different ways], regard it as the definitive meaning of the heart of the matter, luminous mind as such. There are three guiding instructions about this dharmakāya. First, the mind appearing as all kinds of thoughts is the means. This being free from identification is prajñā. Mind’s appearing but being without nature, lucid yet without

clinging, is the nondual path. This is [how to] rest in the dharmakāya first. In between, if thoughts arise, their being examined by prajñā is the indication of profundity. In the end, letting them be as lucid wisdom in an uncontrived manner is the indication of guidance through means.

Next, the text explains suchness's not changing through thoughts in three parts:

(a) With regard to guidance through examples, as the example for [suchness's] being changeless, consider the sky—no matter how much dust and smoke may arise [in it], the sky is not tainted. Thoughts are like this example. As the example for [suchness's] being untainted, consider gold—gold is not tainted by a film and stains [on it], which are like thoughts. As the example for [suchness's] being pure, consider water—if water is not muddied, [this resembles suchness's] not being muddied by thoughts.

(b) Guidance through the meaning is sixfold. (1) At the time of being a sentient being, the true nature of the mind—suchness—does not change into the stains in its essence, no matter which afflictions and thoughts may arise. If suchness became the stains of thoughts, one would not become a buddha. (2) At the time of being a buddha, [suchness] does not change into qualities—there is no enhancement in the essence of the dharmakāya, which is self-arisen wisdom. If there were, one would not become a buddha through the path. (3)–(4) The stainless true nature of the mind is not tainted by flaws at the time of being a sentient being, nor is it tainted by qualities at the time of being a buddha. [As the *Uttaratantra* says:]

There is nothing to be removed in this  
And not the slightest to be added.<sup>2733</sup>

[And:]

Similarly, with the treasure of jewels lodged within the mind,  
Whose true nature is stainless and without anything to be added  
or to be removed,  
Not being realized, all these beings continuously experience  
The suffering of being destitute in many ways.<sup>2734</sup>

(5) Sentient beings are the adventitious flaws of thoughts. Therefore, one familiarizes with them as being nonentities. (6) Buddhahood is one's own mind's being stainless of these adventitious stains of thoughts. [Thus,] one familiarizes with this luminosity of one's own mind.

(c) You may wonder, "How does one familiarize [with this]?" [One does so through] the three inconceivable [ways of] taking these very [guiding instructions] as the path. (1) At the time of being a sentient being, suchness is naturally pure and the essence of the mind is real as self-arisen wisdom. Through [mind's] not recognizing its own face, the stains of thoughts arise, which is inconceivable. What one makes a living experience is thoughts being pointed out to be unidentifiable. (2) At the time of being a buddha, naturally stainless mind is real as self-arisen wisdom. Through [mind's] recognizing its own face, it is free from the adventitious stains of thoughts, which is inconceivable purity. One makes this certainty about natural luminosity a living experience. (3) The [tathāgata] heart—the dharmakāya, self-arisen wisdom—is without distinction in buddhas and sentient beings. Its essence—alpha-pure ultimate luminosity—is the inconceivable nature. The temporary lack of realizing the true nature of the mind is its inconceivable appearance as all kinds of thoughts and flaws for sentient beings. The realization of the true nature of the mind is its inconceivable appearance as the kāyas and wisdoms for buddhas. [Thus,] natural luminosity is to be resolved through the view, temporarily to be made a living experience through familiarization, and thereafter one should train in compassion and bodhicitta.

Finally, the disposition endowed with qualities is discussed in five parts:

(a) The luminosity of one's own mind is the disposition for the dharmakāya. Since it abides primordially and by nature as buddhahood, it is not that something nonexistent is accomplished. There is not the slightest buddhahood to be added apart from the realization of one's own mind. (b) To realize thoughts as being adventitious is the sambhogakāya. (c) The arising of compassion for those who do not realize this is the nirmāṇakāya. (d) By virtue of the wisdom of realizing the two rūpakāyas, which is the supreme accomplished disposition, [luminosity] is free from the stains of thoughts—the buddhahood that is the dawn of realization is unceasing. Through realizing one's own mind,

there is not the slightest to be removed because there is no sentient being to be relinquished apart from [mind's] playing as thoughts without a basis. (e) [The *Uttaratantra* says]:

It is held that the three kāyas are attained  
By virtue of these two dispositions—<sup>2735</sup>

Therefore, through that, at the time of recognizing one's own mind as the inseparability of the expanse and wisdom, the following kind of experience arises. Since one's own mind's being unidentifiable (the expanse) and its being lucid and unceasing (wisdom) are inseparable, the characteristics [of mind's nature] are beyond [ordinary states of] mind. Therefore, without thoughts and clinging, [all] that appears and exists dawns as the essence of the three kāyas. This has three parts. (1) The nature of the mind is the dharmakāya—the essence of the minds of all sentient beings in the three realms is real as luminosity. (2) The arising of one's own realization of this actuality through instructions and familiarization is the sambhogakāya. Through that, though [this luminosity] itself may arise as all kinds of thoughts, one realizes that their essence lacks a root. (3) The arising of compassion without deliberately familiarizing with apprehending the conceptual cognitions of mind to be independent real entities is the nirmāṇakāya. Through various means, this is what arises in the mind stream [as] the bodhi-citta that is associated with the thoughts of sentient beings. Those are [the ways of] bringing the naturally luminous [tathāgata] heart onto the path to buddhahood.

### Gampopa

In its section on buddha nature as the fundamental cause for the entire path and its fruition, Gampopa's *Ornament of Precious Liberation*<sup>2736</sup> quotes *Uttaratantra* I.28 to support its explanation about the three reasons why all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart. (1) The first reason is that the dharmakāya—emptiness—pervades all sentient beings, which means that buddhahood is the dharmakāya, the dharmakāya is emptiness, and emptiness pervades all sentient beings. (2) The second reason is that the nature of phenomena—suchness—is undifferentiable, that is, the suchness of buddhas and the suchness of sentient beings cannot be differentiated in terms of being better and worse, bigger and smaller, or higher and lower,

respectively. (3) The third reason is that the disposition exists in all sentient beings, that is, beings have five kinds of buddha disposition: (a) the cut-off disposition, (b) the uncertain disposition, (c) the śrāvaka disposition, (d) the pratyekabuddha disposition, and (e) the mahāyāna disposition.

(a) According to Asaṅga, those with the cut-off disposition are those who have the six characteristics of not feeling the slightest weariness even when seeing the flaws of saṃsāra, not feeling the slightest faith even when hearing about the qualities of the Buddha, not feeling the slightest regret about excessively engaging in wrongdoings, and not having the slightest shame, embarrassment, and compassion. *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* III.11 says:

Some are solely devoted to wrongdoing,  
Some have completely destroyed the immaculate dharmas,  
Some lack the virtue conducive to liberation,  
Some have inferior immaculate [dharmas], and [some] lack the  
cause.<sup>2737</sup>

When the Buddha spoke about beings with the “cut-off disposition,” he had in mind that they remain in saṃsāra for a very long time but not that they will absolutely never attain buddhahood—if they make efforts, they too will attain it. Thus, the *Mahākaruṇāpūṇḍarikasūtra* says:

Ānanda, even if a sentient being who has no karmic fortune to pass into nirvāṇa does as little as tossing up a flower into space by focusing on the Buddha, the result of this root of virtue will be the result that is nirvāṇa. I say that [this being] will reach the culmination of nirvāṇa and the end of nirvāṇa.<sup>2738</sup>

(b) The uncertain disposition depends on conditions. For example, it turns into the śrāvaka disposition upon relying on a spiritual friend who is a śrāvaka, associating with companions who are śrāvakas, or seeing the scriptures of the śrāvakas. The same goes for the conditions that make the uncertain disposition turn into the pratyekabuddha disposition or the mahāyāna disposition.

(c) The characteristics of the śrāvaka disposition consist of being afraid of saṃsāra after having seen its flaws, having confidence in nirvāṇa, and possessing little compassion (that is, not being very interested in the welfare of beings).

(d) The characteristics of the pratyekabuddha disposition consist of the three of the śrāvaka disposition as well as being very proud, keeping one's master secret, and liking to be in solitude.

(e) The mahāyāna disposition is classified as twofold—the naturally abiding disposition and the accomplished disposition. The nature of the naturally abiding disposition is the capacity of generating the buddha qualities that is of beginningless time and obtained by virtue of the nature of phenomena. The nature of the accomplished disposition is the capacity of generating the buddha qualities that is obtained by having familiarized with roots of virtue before. The synonyms for the mahāyāna disposition are “seed,” “basic element,” and “nature.” It is superior to the dispositions of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas because the latter reach their level of complete purity through having purified just the afflictive obscurations, whereas the mahāyāna disposition reaches its level of complete purity through having purified both obscurations.

The mahāyāna disposition can be either awakened (that is, its signs being observable) or unawakened. The four adverse conditions for its awakening are being born in states lacking leisure (such as in the lower realms or as long-living gods), being heedless, engaging in wrong ways, and possessing the flaws of the obscurations. The favorable conditions for its awakening are the outer condition of being taught the genuine dharma by others and the inner condition that consists of proper mental engagement, striving for roots of virtue, and so on. According to the *Daśadharmakasūtra*, the signs of the bodhisattva disposition are that, without relying on a remedy, one's body and speech are naturally gentle, one's mind has little deceit and hypocrisy, and one is loving and open toward all sentient beings. According to *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* III.5, the signs are that whatever bodhisattvas do is preceded by their compassion for sentient beings, they have faith in the mahāyāna dharma, they endure all hardships without second thought, and they engage in the roots of virtue that have the nature of the pāramitās.

Among these five dispositions, the existence of the mahāyāna disposition is the proximate cause of buddhahood. Since the dispositions of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas also lead to the attainment of buddhahood in the end, they are the distant causes of buddhahood. Within the uncertain disposition, there are some that are a proximate cause and some that are a distant cause. Since the cut-off disposition only refers to a long time before attaining buddhahood but not to absolutely never attaining buddhahood, it is the very distant cause of buddhahood.



The examples for the existence of the disposition for buddhahood in all sentient beings include being like silver in silver ore, sesame oil in sesame seeds, and butter in milk. Thus, just as silver can be manifested in silver ore, oil in seeds, and butter in milk, buddhahood can be manifested in sentient beings.

### Rinchen Yeshé

Rinchen Yeshé's commentary on the *Uttarantra*<sup>2739</sup> begins by repeating what RGVV says on I.28 and then elaborates on the meaning of the first three lines of this verse. As for the meaning of the dharmakāya of a tathāgata pervading all sentient beings, the naturally pure dharmakāya pervades all sentient beings. The dharmakāya that is also pure of all adventitious stains pervades all sentient beings as being suitable to be attained. Or, the phrase, “the perfect buddhakāya” refers to being pervaded by all three kāyas. To support this, Rinchen Yeshé first quotes *Uttarantra* I.144 and RGVV on I.146–47. As for the manner of the three kāyas' pervading sentient beings, he says that they exist in beings as being suitable to be attained as the manifest three kāyas. Or, in order to purify the basic element of sentient beings for as long as saṃsāra is not empty, the dharmakāya functions as the support for that, while the sambhogakāya promotes the welfare of pure retinues by pervading them, and the nirmāṇakāya promotes the welfare of impure retinues by pervading them. Therefore, the basis to be purified by these three kāyas—the basic element that is the tathāgata heart—exists in sentient beings. If this basis to be purified did not exist in beings, the promotion of their welfare through the three kāyas would be pointless.<sup>2740</sup>

As for the meaning of suchness's being undifferentiable, since its nature never changes into anything else, it is suchness. It exists in all sentient beings and buddhas in an undifferentiable manner. As *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.37 says:

Though it is without difference in everything,  
Suchness's having become pure  
Is the Tathāgata. Therefore,  
All beings possess its heart.

Also the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras say:

The suchness of the world, the suchness of arhats,  
The suchness of pratyekabuddhas, and the suchness of the victors—

As just a single suchness, free from being and never other,  
Has prajñāpāramitā been realized by the Tathāgata.<sup>2741</sup>

And:

The element of space in the eastern direction, in the southern  
direction,  
Likewise in the western direction and the northern direction is  
boundless.  
Existing above, below, in the ten directions, and in as many as  
there are,  
There is no difference and there is no distinction.

The suchness of the past, the suchness of the future,  
Likewise the suchness of the present, the suchness of arhats,  
The suchness of all phenomena, and the suchness of the victors—  
All this is the suchness of dharma, and there is no distinction.<sup>2742</sup>

As for the meaning of the disposition's existing in sentient beings, the disposition of the manifest three kāyas' being suitable to be attained, if this disposition is purified, exists in all sentient beings. Therefore, one should understand that all beings possess the buddha heart.<sup>2743</sup>

### Butön Rinchen Drub

In his *Ornament That Illuminates and Beautifies the Tathāgata Heart*,<sup>2744</sup> Butön says that the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* are of expedient meaning. He supports this by lengthy quotes from the *Ghanavyūhasūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, and the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*. Butön also adduces the typical three criteria that are considered to determine a teaching as being of expedient meaning: (1) its basis of intention (*dgongs gzhi*), (2) its purpose (*dgos pa*), and (3) the logical invalidation of the explicit statement (*dnogs la gnod byed*).

(1) The general basis of intention of the teachings on buddha nature is the ālaya-consciousness, which refers to the sheer cause of buddhahood. In particular, Maitreya in his *Uttaratantra* had a threefold basis of intention in mind: (a) the dharmakāya, (b) suchness, and (c) the disposition.

(2) The purpose of teaching *tathāgatagarbha* lies in the indirect intention (*ldem por dgongs pa*) of its being the remedy that eliminates the five flaws described in *Uttaratantra* I.157–67.<sup>2745</sup> In addition, Butön adduces *Uttaratantra*

I.28, showing that the statement “all beings contain the buddha heart” was taught for three reasons. Following RGVV, Butön matches these three reasons with the nine examples in *Uttaratantra* I.144–52. However, his explanation of these three consists mainly of extensive quotes from the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Avataṃsakasūtra*, and the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*.

(a) As for the dharmakāya, Butön cites the *Avataṃsakasūtra* as saying that the dharmakāya pervades all sentient beings, all phenomena, and all realms, just as formless space does. According to Butön, this was said with the intention that the dharmakāya is not attained right now, but will be attained later. Citing the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, he also refutes the notion that buddhahood dwells within due to the dharmakāya’s pervading everything and thus dwelling within sentient beings.

(b) As for suchness’s being undifferentiable, Butön says that the basic nature of all sentient beings—natural luminosity, which does not change into anything else—is the suchness of mind. It exists in buddhas and sentient beings without difference. Once that suchness—natural luminosity—has become pure of all adventitious stains without exception, it is buddhahood. Since this suchness also exists in sentient beings without difference, its complete purification of all stains will be attained later if they have cultivated the path. Therefore, the statement that suchness is undifferentiable is also made with the intention of referring to another time.

(c) As for all sentient beings’ possessing the disposition, the disposition is what gives rise to the three kāyas of a buddha. Since the tathāgatadhātu exists in all sentient beings, it is taught that they possess the tathāgata heart. Quoting *Uttaratantra* I.27, Butön says that since the teaching on the disposition is a case of labeling the cause with the name of the result, it likewise bears the intention of referring to another time. Also the example of the big scroll in the *Avataṃsakasūtra* was given with such an intention. Butön quotes that sūtra as saying that, due to being uninterrupted from the birth of all buddhas up through their entering parinirvāṇa, the buddhas fill up the entire dharmadhātu, and the seeing of all the diverse births of buddhas represents the eighth expertise in explanations with an intention. According to Butön, this passage refers again to the above threefold basis of intention (dharmakāya, suchness, and disposition), because it bears the intention of the seeds of all dharmas (*chos*) that are the buddha qualities existing in a complete manner and their true nature (*chos nyid*)—suchness—existing without difference before and after. According to the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the nature of a buddha exists in all sentient beings because the seeds of buddhahood exist in them.

(3) Finally, Butön says that all this also establishes the invalidation of what the teachings on buddha nature say explicitly. In addition, he quotes the well-known passage from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*:

The tathāgata heart is empty of all cocoons of afflictions that are separable [from it] and [can] be known to be divisible [from it]. It is not empty of the inconceivable buddha qualities that are inseparable [from it], [can]not be known to be divisible [from it], and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>2746</sup>

However, Butön gives a very peculiar interpretation of the phrase “empty of . . . [can] be known” (*shes pa rnam kyis stong pa*), taking it to mean “empty of knowing” (*shes pas stong pa*) and concluding that this phrase explains the tathāgata heart as lacking wisdom. Therefore, he says, it also lacks all the qualities that are contained in this wisdom, because these two (wisdom and qualities) must be produced by the two immeasurable accumulations of wisdom and merit, respectively.

### Dölpopa Sherab Gyaltzen

Dölpopa’s commentary on the *Uttaratantra*<sup>2747</sup> explains I.28 as the manner in which the dharmadhātu pervades everything. Since the dharmakāya of the perfect buddhas radiates toward and pervades all phenomena, since suchness—the nature of all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa—is undifferentiable, and because the disposition of the tathāgatas—the naturally pure dharmadhātu—exists in all sentient beings as being suitable to be purified from its obscurations, all beings always possess the ultimate buddha heart since the very beginning in an uninterrupted manner.<sup>2748</sup>

### Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen

In his commentary on the *Uttaratantra*,<sup>2749</sup> the Gelugpa scholar Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen says that the tathāgata heart is explained by way of the result that is a tathāgata, the nature of a tathāgata, and the cause of a tathāgata. However, it is not that mere suchness and the dharmakāya of perfect buddhas are taken as instances of the tathāgata heart because the *Uttaratantra* and Asaṅga’s commentary explain the latter as pertaining solely to the phase of sentient beings and the phase of the cause. As for identifying the three instances of the tathāgata heart in *Uttaratantra* I.28, the result of having cultivated the path that purifies the basic element—the enlightened activity of the dharmakāya of perfect buddhas—radiates

toward and pervades all sentient beings.<sup>2750</sup> Beings are explained to possess the tathāgata heart because they have this very factor of being suitable for enlightened activity to engage them, which is associated with them as the special phenomenon that exists solely in the mind streams of sentient beings. This is similar to *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* VIII.11ab:

By virtue of the vastness of activity like that,  
Buddhahood is described as “all-pervading.”

Though suchness naturally devoid of stains is the nature of both sentient beings and buddhas, by taking its being the nature of buddhas as a reason, it refers to the tathāgata heart at the time when it is associated with the stains of the mind streams of sentient beings. It is said that all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart with the intention that suchness with stains—the very suchness that is naturally devoid of the stains of the mind streams of sentient beings—exists in all beings. The same is also said with the intention that all beings possess the buddha disposition during the phase of the cause that makes them attain the three kāyas. Though there is also the naturally abiding disposition, when it is explained that beings possess the tathāgata heart through taking the existence of the disposition as a reason, this must be explained from the perspective of the cause of a tathāgata. When the same is explained through taking the existence of suchness as a reason, it must be explained from the perspective of the nature of a tathāgata.

Therefore, one should understand that the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Uttarantra*, and Asaṅga’s commentary (RGVV) excellently determine the tathāgata heart as being all of the following three—the capacity in sentient beings’ mind streams of their being suitable for enlightened activity to engage them, the suchness with stains in the mind streams of sentient beings, and the buddha disposition in the mind streams of beings that is suitable to change state into the three kāyas. Without realizing these meanings, to assert even the ultimate dharmakāya as the tathāgata heart through dividing the latter into the triad of the resultant, the natural, and the causal tathāgata heart is a presentation that may amaze the ignorant, but it is not the meaning of the *Uttarantra* and Asaṅga’s commentary.

### Rongtön Shéja Günsi

According to Rongtön Shéja Günsi’s commentary on the *Uttarantra*,<sup>2751</sup> all sentient beings are said to possess the tathāgata heart because the

dharmakāya of perfect buddhas radiates, because they possess the suchness that is undifferentiable from the aspect of the natural purity of the suchness of the dharmakāya, and because they have the disposition for the dharmakāya—the capacity of the basic element.

After briefly reporting Ngog Lotsāwa's above explanation of I.28 and quoting I.27, Rongtön presents the manner in which *Uttaratantra* I.144–52 and RGVV match the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition with the nine examples for buddha nature. He says that the meaning of the tathāgata-dharmakāya's radiating in all sentient beings is that the dharmakāya of realization pervades all sentient beings, quoting RGVV:

These three examples of a buddha image, honey, and a kernel explain that all sentient beings possess the heart of a tathāgata in the sense of the tathāgata-dharmakāya's pervading the entire realm of sentient beings without exception.<sup>2752</sup>

The citation of *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* IX.15 in RGVV is taken as being the reason for this. According to Rongtön, this means that the factor of natural purity—the cause for attaining the fundamental change of both the dharmakāya of realization and the dharmakāya of the teachings—pervades all sentient beings.

As for the meaning of suchness's being undifferentiable, it is explained as “undifferentiable” because its being empty of any real nature pervades everything in terms of the ground and the fruition and everything internal and external. As for being pervaded by the disposition, this refers to the capacity of the mind that is to be awakened by conditions—the substantial cause of buddha wisdom. As *Uttaratantra* I.104c says:

So the uncontaminated wisdom in beings is like honey . . .

This explains the basic element to be purified, whose function is the function of the disposition—seeing the qualities of happiness and the flaws of suffering. Here, the assertion that the meaning of “the dharmakāya's radiating” as being pervaded by enlightened activity is not justified because this contradicts the meaning of *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* IX.15, which is adduced as the reason for this. Therefore, there is no flaw of repetition either since natural purity is used in terms of its being contained within the mind stream, while suchness pervades everything internal and external.

Suchness and natural purity exist in the manner of a quality and the bearer of this quality, respectively. As *Uttarantra* I.164c says:

. . . the qualities, whose nature is pure.

The meaning of the suchness of a tathāgata's being undifferentiable from all sentient beings is that the suchness of buddhas exists in all sentient beings in an undifferentiable manner. For RGVV says:

Thus, in the sense of suchness's being undifferentiable, this one example of gold explains that the tathāgata—suchness—is the heart of all these sentient beings.<sup>2753</sup>

The citation of *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.37 is taken as being the reason for this. Thus, the nature of phenomena—being empty of a nature—is without difference.

The meaning of the tathāgata disposition's existing in all beings is that the disposition for giving rise to the three buddhakāyas exists in sentient beings. For RGVV says:

The remaining five examples of a treasure, a tree, a precious statue, a cakravartin, and a golden image explain that the tathāgata element is the heart of all these sentient beings in the sense that the disposition for the arising of the three kinds of buddhakāyas exists [in all beings].<sup>2754</sup>

The citation from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* is taken as being the reason for this.

### Gö Lotsāwa

Gö Lotsāwa's commentary<sup>2755</sup> says that the explanation of the three points of the buddhakāya's radiating and so on is based on the passage from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* that is quoted at the beginning of RGVV as the source of the fourth vajra point. GC's actual comments on I.27–28 state that the buddha wisdom that enters all sentient beings is expressed as “the tathāgata heart.”<sup>2756</sup> Though this buddha wisdom is the actual tathāgata, it is only the nominal heart of sentient beings because it is not contained in the mind streams of sentient beings. Also, the nature of the mind (suchness without adventitious stains) that exists in both buddhas and sentient beings without any difference is called “tathāgata heart.” The

suchness that exists in buddhas is the actual suchness and the suchness of sentient beings is buddhahood in a nominal sense. As for the buddha disposition, it is the factor in all sentient beings that represents the manner in which their skandhas and so on are similar to buddhahood. This disposition is also called “tathāgata heart” by metaphorically referring to it as its fruition, tathāgatahood. Among the Sanskrit synonyms of *garbha*, *sāra* represents a basis from which many dharmas radiate or emanate, thus referring to the dharmakāya. *Hṛdaya* has the sense of being crucial or something to be cherished, like the heart of a person. Thus, it refers to suchness because those who wish for liberation need to regard it as crucial or cherish it. *Garbha* itself means “seed” or “womb.” Since it stands for something that is present in an enclosing sheath, it refers to the disposition. *Maṇḍa* means “something very firm” or “quintessence,” as in calling the vajra seat in Bodhgāya *bodhimaṇḍa* or speaking of “the essence of butter.”

Thus, sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart because they are pervaded by the perfect buddhakāya, because their suchness exists as being undifferentiable from buddhas, and because they have the buddha disposition. This can be proven by either one of these three reasons—that there are three is only for the sake of guiding different sentient beings. However, all they prove is only a convention (and not a fact), that is, they just explain the meaning of the statement, “All beings possess the tathāgata heart” in different words, but they do not prove the fact that all sentient beings possess it.

Furthermore, GC describes Ngog’s above division into resultant, natural, and causal tathāgata heart as being “very excellent” and further divides each one of these into their seeming and ultimate aspects.<sup>2757</sup> The dharmakāya is twofold in terms of its qualities of freedom and maturation. The disposition is twofold as the naturally abiding and the accomplished dispositions. Suchness is not said to be divided in the *Uttaratantra*, but the teachings of the Buddha in general speak of the suchness of the ultimate and the suchness of the seeming. The division into three (dharmakāya, suchness, and disposition) is nothing but a division of the nature of the single suchness that is unchanging throughout all three phases. Thus, the three consist of nothing but suchness.

At the end of its comments on the fourth vajra point, GC says that the entire chapter on the basic element is an explanation of nothing but the meaning of *Uttaratantra* I.28.<sup>2758</sup> This meaning is comprehensively summarized in the ten points (such as nature and cause) through which the



basic element is presented, while the verses on the nine examples are simply an elaboration on it.

### Śākya Chogden

Śākya Chogden's explanation of the *Uttarantra*<sup>2759</sup> criticizes Ngog Lotsāwa's position on buddha nature, saying that it is not good that Ngog takes the emptiness of the mind with stains as the tathāgata heart because this tathāgata heart must be identified from the point of view of its qualities whereas its identification as sheer emptiness is not suitable. The identification of the tathāgata heart by later Tibetans as the naturally abiding disposition is not tenable either because the disposition has to be identified from the point of view of its being associated with stains, whereas the tathāgata heart needs to be identified from the point of view of there being no stains to be eliminated any more. Therefore, the actual tathāgata heart that is to be identified as what is taught by the *Uttarantra* is the suchness that is naturally pure of all flaws and in which all the many qualities such as the ten powers are naturally and spontaneously present. Thus, the lines "since suchness is undifferentiable . . . all beings always contain the buddha heart" in *Uttarantra* I.28 including their commentary and related sūtras are to be taken literally. However, the lines "since the perfect buddhakāya radiates . . . all beings always contain the buddha heart" are not to be taken literally. The line "because of the disposition" teaches the basis of intention; I.157 on the five flaws such as faintheartedness, the purpose; and I.84c "There is no nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood," the invalidation of the explicit statement. One may think then that it is strange that one and the same treatise gives the two contradictory explanations of the tathāgata heart's pervading and not pervading sentient beings. However, Maitreya, by differentiating the identification of the tathāgata heart in terms of the two realities, has excellently explained the intention of the two ways in which the Buddha stated in distinct teachings that the tathāgata heart pervades and does not pervade all beings.

Thus, Śākya Chogden explicitly distinguishes the *tathāgatagarbha* as the resultant suchness free from all obscurations and endowed with all qualities from the disposition, which refers to obscured suchness as the cause. This is also what Tāranātha's outline of twenty-one differences between Śākya Chogden and Dölpopa says about Śākya Chogden's position:

The tathāgata heart does not exist in the mind streams of sentient beings. The natural luminosity of the minds of sentient beings is merely

the cause and the basic element of the tathāgata heart. Therefore, though the causal tathāgata heart or the tathāgata heart that is the basic element exists in all sentient beings, this is not like the [actual tathāgata heart] that fulfills this definition. [Rather,] the tathāgata heart is buddha wisdom. . . . [Śākya Chogden] holds that [statements about] the [tathāgata] heart's having the nature of its essence and its qualities being inseparable refer to the phase of the fruition alone. During the phase of the cause, there exists only the seed that is the capacity for the qualities being suitable to arise. . . . He holds that only a seed of the fruition exists inherently in the natural luminosity of the mind. Through cultivating the path, the increase [of this seed] is attained. Finally, the fruition arises in its manifest form.<sup>2760</sup>

Later in his text,<sup>2761</sup> Śākya Chogden says that the tathāgata heart does not pervade all sentient beings. For Asaṅga explains that “inseparable qualities” belong only to the last phase among the three phases of impure sentient beings, partly pure bodhisattvas, and utterly pure buddhas. Also, the *Uttaratantra*'s example of a king's portrait (I.88–92) clearly says that the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects does not exist in śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and so on. The example of the sun and its rays (I.93–94) states how the tathāgata heart inseparable from all its qualities does not exist until perfect buddhahood is made manifest. Let alone the tathāgata heart's being realized by those with great desire, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas, they are not even explained as supports for this tathāgata heart.

When the *Uttaratantra* explains the intention behind the statement that all sentient beings possess the buddha heart, it first distinguishes three bases of intention—the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition. The first one is the pure dharmadhātu without any adventitious stains, which is classified as twofold in terms of its natural outflow—the profound and vast teachings. Suchness is said to be nothing but the presentation of its nature. The disposition is twofold, being classified as the naturally abiding disposition and the unfolding disposition, with the latter consisting of the threefold capacity of giving rise to the three kāyas. Among these three bases of intention, the dharmakāya is the actual tathāgata heart, suchness is twofold in being and not being the tathāgata heart, and the disposition is a case of labeling the cause with the name of the result. The dharmakāya of perfect buddhahood entails pervading or radiating toward all sentient beings. Suchness pertains to all phenomena, but the disposition is a phenomena solely in sentient beings. Suchness is threefold in terms of existing in the

four kinds of persons—buddhas, noble bodhisattvas, those of great desire, and tīrthikas. In buddhas, it is the perfect dharmakāya; in noble bodhisattvas, a mere fraction of the dharmakāya; and in the others, not even a fraction of the dharmakāya. Therefore, it is not suitable as the disposition. In other words, all noble ones of the mahāyāna (buddhas and bodhisattvas) possess the tathāgata heart, but all sentient beings other than those are only labeled as possessing the tathāgata heart because suchness and the disposition exist in them.

This means that the statement “all beings possess the buddha heart” is made in terms of a basis of intention, a purpose, and an invalidation of the explicit statement. The basis of intention is suchness with stains; the purpose, to relinquish the five flaws; and the invalidation of the explicit statement according to the *Uttarantra* itself is as follows. The dharmadhātu of those of great desire, tīrthikas, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas is not the tathāgata heart because they fall into the views about a real personality and because their minds are distracted from emptiness. Also, the four obscurations that obscure the tathāgata heart (hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma, views about a self, fear of saṃsāra’s suffering, and indifference about the welfare of sentient beings) are relinquished by their four remedies (confidence in the mahāyāna dharma and cultivation of prajñāpāramitā, samādhis, and great compassion). Therefore, it is once the four remedies have arisen that the persons who are the supports of these remedies are said to possess the tathāgata heart.

Furthermore, the dharmadhātu of those four persons is not the tathāgata heart because it lacks the five points of nature, cause, fruition, function, and endowment explained in *Uttarantra* I.30–44. The dharmadhātu of those persons lacks the point of being the nature of the tathāgata heart because it is not moistened by power and compassion. Also, the point of its being the cause of the tathāgata heart is incomplete because it lacks the four causes that purify the above four obscurations. It lacks the point of fruition because it lacks the remedies that are the opposites of the four kinds of mistakenness. The point of function is also incomplete because it is uncertain that the dharmadhātu of those persons possesses the functions that arise from the awakening of the power of the disposition through the conditions of the four wheels (relying on wise persons and so on). Otherwise, these functions (weariness of suffering and striving for nirvāṇa) would arise even in those with wrong craving. Likewise, the point of endowment is incomplete because the dharmadhātu of those persons is not endowed with the triad of the dharmakāya, the cause of buddha wisdom, and great

compassion. Also, let alone the dharmadhātu of those four persons being inseparable from the qualities that consist of the five supernatural knowledges, wisdom, and the termination of contamination, not even a fraction of these qualities exists in that dharmadhātu. In brief, let alone saying that the tathāgata heart that is adorned with all the major and minor marks exists in all sentient beings, the *Uttaratantra* does not even state that the mere tathāgata heart exists in them because the basis of intention, the purpose, and the invalidation of the explicit statement “all sentient beings possess the buddha heart” are contained in the words of the *Uttaratantra* itself.

Though some Tibetans say that the *Uttaratantra* is a commentary in terms of the expedient meaning, there are no earlier commentaries that explain this treatise to be of expedient meaning. Among the two great system founders of the mahāyāna, Nāgārjuna says in his *Dharmadhātustava* that suchness exists in all sentient beings. He also explains through the example of the waxing moon’s gradually increasing that the dharmakāya exists and increases from the first bhūmi up through buddhahood.

In Asaṅga’s tradition, there is his actual system and the one that entails an intention. As for the first one, in his commentary on the *Uttaratantra*, he describes the manner of seeing the boundary lines of the tathāgata heart from the first bhūmi up through buddhahood through the example of the sun’s shining in a clouded and a cloud-free sky.<sup>2762</sup> If suchness with stains were the actual tathāgata heart, this would contradict *Uttaratantra* I.154–55 (“There is nothing to be removed from this . . .”) because these two verses teach the tathāgata heart that is the dharmakāya pure of all adventitious stains. When one sees a part of one’s own true nature pure of stains, one sees that all sentient beings are like that too. This seeing is called “seeing that all sentient beings possess the buddha heart,” “realizing that the dharmadhātu is omnipresent,” and “realizing variety” (*ji snyed rtogs pa*).

In the explanation of the system that entails an intended meaning, the sugata heart refers to sugatahood, which has the two aspects of (1) relinquishment and (2) realization. (1) Relinquishment is of two kinds—actual and concordant. The latter is twofold—the purification of the stains of the basic element through the four causes such as confidence in the mahāyāna dharma and the relinquishment of the afflictive stains through the prajñā of the lower yānas. The first one of these is the actual tathāgata heart while the latter is not even explained as the basis of intention of the tathāgata heart. Suchness with stains is said to be the basis of intention of the tathāgata heart from the point of view of its being suitable to become free from adventitious stains, but there is no clear explanation that it is the actual

tathāgata heart. Once the power of the disposition is awakened through the four conditions' having come together and certain parts of the stains of the basic element are eliminated through the four causes such as confidence in the mahāyāna dharma, this is presented as the actual tathāgata heart. (2) Realization is also of two kinds—actual and concordant. The latter is divided into being and not being specified through the four causes such as confidence in the mahāyāna dharma. The first one of these is further classified as being pure of stains as appropriate on the different levels of the path and not being pure of stains at all. Among these two, it is only the former that is explained as representing the dharmakāya and the sugata heart. Therefore, the buddha heart is divided into two aspects—conditioned and unconditioned—which are the seeming and the ultimate, respectively. It is its unconditioned aspect alone that is held to be what exists in all sentient beings. To say that the buddha heart is solely ultimate reality is the system of others but not the scriptural tradition of Maitreya.

### Dümo Dashi Öser

Dümo Dashi Öser (fifteenth/sixteenth century) omits *Uttaratantra* I.27. On I.28, he comments that all beings possess the tathāgata heart since the dharmakāya of a perfect buddha radiates in all sentient beings (that is, the dharmakāya becomes manifest in them through their having familiarized with uncontrived mind as such), since the suchness of sentient beings and the suchness of buddhas is undifferentiable, and since the disposition (the seed of uncontaminated mind) exists in all sentient beings.

### Mikyö Dorje

In his *Lamp That Excellently Elucidates the System of the Proponents of Shentong Madhyamaka*, the Eighth Karmapa provides lengthy explanations of the three reasons in *Uttaratantra* I.28.<sup>2763</sup> However, in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, the Karmapa also presents a detailed refutation of these very reasons' being able to prove the existence of buddha nature in sentient beings.<sup>2764</sup>

### Padma Karpo

Padma Karpo<sup>2765</sup> explains that “Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates” refers to the dharmakāya of the tathāgatas pervading the nonphysical basic elements of sentient beings because *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.15cd says:

Just as space is omnipresent in the hosts of form,  
It is omnipresent in the hosts of sentient beings.

“Since suchness is undifferentiable” indicates that, in all, suchness is not different, with tathāgatas having its pure nature too. “Because of the disposition” refers to the existence of the disposition that produces the three buddhakāyas. As for the disposition, it is a seed or a cause. As the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* says:

The dhātu of beginningless time  
Is the foundation of all phenomena.  
Since it exists, all beings  
And also nirvāṇa are obtained.

To speak about the definite disposition here is done with the intention that all sentient beings are suitable to eventually become buddhas.

The dharmakāya is the power to accomplish what one wishes for, suchness never changes into anything else, and the disposition means to be moistened through compassion. In this order, these three specific characteristics of the nature of the tathāgata heart accord with the examples of a jewel, gold, and water.

### Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé

Lodrö Tayé’s commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (which is basically a copy of Dölpopa’s commentary) briefly explains I.28 as follows:

Because the dharmakāya of perfect buddhas radiates toward and pervades all phenomena, because suchness—the true nature of the entirety of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa—is undifferentiable, and because the tathāgata disposition—the naturally pure dharmadhātu—exists in all sentient beings as being suitable to be purified from the obscurations, all beings possess the ultimate buddha heart in an uninterrupted manner at all times since beginningless [time]. As the Bhagavān said in the [*Tathāgatagarbha*]sūtra:

Sentient beings always have the tathāgata heart.<sup>2766</sup>

Here, in due order, the great Ngog Lotsāwa explains [the first three lines of I.28] as the fruitional, the natural, and the causal sugata heart. The

first one—the dharmakāya—is the actual Tathāgata but the nominal heart of sentient beings. It pervades sentient beings because it is suitable to be attained by them.<sup>2767</sup>

The same author's *Guiding Instructions on the View of Great Shentong Madhyamaka* comments on this verse in a very similar way under the heading of distinguishing well between existence, nonexistence, and so on, and pointing them out in accordance with the third turning of the wheel of dharma and the vajrayāna, once any suitable samādhi of calm abiding and superior insight has arisen. In this context, the verse is explained in connection with two famous stanzas from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as follows:

By relying on mere mind,  
One does not imagine outer objects.  
By relying on nonappearance,  
One should go beyond mere mind too.

By relying on the focal object of actual reality,  
One must go beyond nonappearance.  
If yogins rest in nonappearance,  
They do not see the mahāyāna.<sup>2768</sup>

[Thus,] the realization that the mistakeness of the seeming is mere mind is scrutinized by the Madhyamaka without appearances. Going beyond even that, through the Madhyamaka with appearances, one must engage in the unmistakable way of being of true reality.

Here, you may wonder, “What is the focal object of actual reality?” Just as there are no four elements that are not pervaded by space, there are no knowable objects that are not pervaded by the dharmakāya of buddhas. Also, in the suchness of buddhas, oneself, and all sentient beings, there are no distinctions of good and bad, big and small, high and low, and so on. Furthermore, the naturally abiding disposition or the basic element that is able to produce the buddha attributes and has been obtained through the nature of phenomena since beginningless time exists in all living beings who consist of the life-force breath. Therefore, all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart. In order to bring that to mind clearly, recite [*Uttaratantra* I.28]:

Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates,  
 Since suchness is undifferentiable,  
 And since the disposition exists,  
 All beings always possess the buddha heart.<sup>2769</sup>

### Mipham Rinpoche

Mipham Rinpoche's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* and *Synopsis of the Sugata Heart* were both compiled by Shechen Gyaltsab, Gyurmé Pema Namgyal, based on the notes of Mipham Rinpoche's teachings (these notes were later edited by Mipham himself). The commentary's explanation of *Uttaratantra* I.28 consists exclusively of excerpts from the *Synopsis*,<sup>2770</sup> which is by far the most detailed explanation of this verse in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist literature.

The *Synopsis* starts by saying that buddha nature is the quintessence and the most profound intent of all the Buddha's teachings of sūtra and tantra.<sup>2771</sup> Some of these teachings elucidate the essence (*ngo bo*) of the dharma-dhātu that is the tathāgata heart by way of teaching emptiness, while some others elucidate the nature (*rang bzhin*) of this tathāgata heart by way of teaching it as being primordially endowed with qualities such as the ten powers. This essence and nature must be a unity without contradiction. However, under the sway of lacking trust in the very profound essential point of the inseparability of the two realities, some assert that the tathāgata heart is something permanent and really established that is not empty of a nature, while others hold that it is nothing but bare emptiness that cannot be posited as being primordially endowed with the inseparable qualities of kāyas and wisdoms, thus getting stuck on the side of denial and views about extinction. Though these people make all kinds of noises of refutation and affirmation in the hope of establishing their respective claims, the fortunate ones who are embraced by the pith instructions of a guru rest in the state of trusting the actuality of the noncontradictory unity of the empty expanse and luminous wisdom through having destroyed any biased clinging to either of the extremes of appearance and emptiness.

According to them, in general, the valid words of the Tathāgata are the undeceiving and correct scriptures. However, to ascertain their validity, these scriptures are analyzed in a general way in terms of their being pure through the three kinds of analysis.<sup>2772</sup> In particular, it is by way of the lack of invalidation through reasoning and the existence of correct means of proof that the literal meaning of certain scriptures must be taken to be their definitive meaning. It is not sufficient to throw out reasoning as the



means of assessing the purity of a scripture and simply believe whatever is said. For it is undeniable that there are both fake and authentic scriptures and that the latter entail the distinction between expedient and definitive meanings. Therefore, irreversible trust arises in those ordinary beings who, having cut through doubts by study and reflection, are able to ascertain the points to be engaged by means of the three kinds of valid cognition.<sup>2773</sup> Conversely, if one is neither able to ascertain something through one's own valid cognition nor able to establish it for some other opponents, through just claiming certain things without any proof, one is not able to give rise to trust in oneself or others.

When the proofs for the ways in which buddha nature is taught are assessed by casting away biased clinging and with an honest mind through pure reasonings, both the assertion that the tathāgata heart is something permanent and really established that is not empty of a nature as well as the claim that it is a bare emptiness that lacks any qualities can be seen to lack any proof but entail logical invalidations. On the other hand, for the actual tathāgata heart, whose essence is empty, whose nature consists of being primordially endowed with qualities, and which exists in the basic element of beings, no invalidations but the existence of correct proofs can be seen. These proofs consist of the three reasons in *Uttaratantra* I.28. In order to determine these through reasoning, Mipham Rinpoche (A) reports first what others say and then (B) presents the Nyingma School's authentic own way of explanation.

(A) According to Mipham Rinpoche, the usual brief glosses on the three reasons in *Uttaratantra* I.28 by other commentators do not penetrate the essential point of this text's explanation of buddha nature. A common interpretation by others is that the dharmakāya (whether it is regarded as emptiness or wisdom) pervades all objects, that the suchness of buddhas and sentient beings is of the same type in being nothing but emptiness, and that the existence of the disposition refers to nothing but the suitability or potential to become a buddha.

However, as for the first reason, the disposition that actually fulfills this definition is not established merely through the dharmakāya's pervading all objects. That buddha wisdom, which appears to be contained in someone else's mind stream, pervades objects goes for all entities. However, the mere fact that this buddha wisdom pervades all entities is not a sufficient reason for all of these entities' becoming buddhas. On the other hand, since the dharmakāya in one's own mind stream has not become manifest at present, the reason "because the buddhakāya radiates" is doubtful.

As for the second reason, a mere nominal emptiness lacks any meaning of “the disposition.” If those who claim such assert that this disposition represents the suitability or potential to newly become a buddha when conjoined with the conditions of the path despite not having any buddha qualities whatsoever at present (just like a seed’s being transformed into a sprout), such a feature of potential transformation is not tenable in the emptiness of real existence (an aspect that is an isolate consisting of a nonimplicative negation), which is an unconditioned phenomenon that is empty of the ability to perform a function. This is similar to the aspect of a conditioned seed’s conventionally being suitable to transform into a sprout, but it is impossible for the aspect of a seed’s lack of real existence to ever transform into a sprout. Furthermore, it is nonsense to claim that the suitability or potential to become a buddha is established through the point of being empty of real existence. It is true that if the mind were really established, it would lack the suitability or potential to become a buddha, but the mere fact of being something that is not really established cannot produce certainty about its becoming a buddha. Though all phenomena such as earth and rocks also lack real existence, who is able to establish that everything that lacks real existence has the suitability or potential to become a buddha? Likewise, to posit the disposition solely due to the ability to relinquish the obscurations by focusing on the lack of real existence is nonsense. According to those who claim such, merely focusing on emptiness is not a sufficient cause to relinquish the cognitive obscurations, but this focusing must be further adorned by infinite accumulations of merit (see Gyalsab Darma Rinchen below on *Uttaratantra* I.154). Thus, to assert that such a nonimplicative negation is “the sugata heart” is meaningless. It would at most just represent a disposition that is in common with śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but this nonimplicative negation does not establish the suitability or potential to become a buddha for the following reasons. One cannot justify the occurrence of omniscient wisdom in this mere nonimplicative negation after the cognitive obscurations have been relinquished. Since a nonimplicative negation’s own nature lacks any cognitive capacity, it is impossible for it to cognize anything whatsoever even at the time of supposedly being a buddha.

Therefore, if one is fond of the disposition’s having the character of transforming and being conditioned, rather than asserting a nonimplicative negation as the disposition, it is better to assert it to be a seed of knowledge, loving-kindness, and power that exists in the mind streams of all beings since beginningless time (even wild beasts and so on possess love for their

offspring, and recognize benefit and harm, and so on) and represents the mere suitability or potential to become a buddha endowed with immeasurable knowledge, loving-kindness, and power, when it is further developed through being conjoined with the path and thus is freed from obstacles. Once the disposition needs to be a cause that actually produces a result, to disregard its being a productive cause that is a momentary entity and assert an unconditioned and unproductive nonentity as a cause is indeed amazing.

Some people think, “Everything that lacks real existence is not the disposition but only the lack of real existence that is the nature of the mind is tenable as the disposition.” Even if the disposition were the lack of real existence of the mind, it would still not be able to perform the slightest activity of producing. Since only moments of mind are suitable to produce later such moments, an unconditioned disposition is obviously not needed by these people, so they should get rid of it.

Some may think, “The disposition is not posited through distinguishing the two realities. Rather, the disposition is asserted as the basic nature that is the inseparability of mind’s lucidity (the bearer of the true nature; *chos can*) and emptiness (the true nature, *chos nyid*).” If this is also asserted as the unconditioned and unchanging wisdom in the dichotomy of consciousness and wisdom, it is indeed correct because it is established as such through scriptures and reasoning. However, to have in mind that the bearer of the true nature of emptiness, which is to be in union with emptiness, is the aspect that is momentary consciousness and then to think that this consciousness gradually transforms into buddhahood is meaningless because it would follow that the disposition has both a conditioned and an unconditioned aspect. If that were the case, something unconditioned that has no purpose or capacity would just be the nominal disposition and something conditioned would be the disposition that actually fulfills this definition in that it is capable of producing its result. Consequently, this amounts to nothing but casting out the true intention of all mahāyāna sūtras that assert the unconditioned naturally abiding disposition to be the dharmadhātu. Therefore, without being able to mentally let go of a disposition that is posited by way of a producing cause and produced result, though one may speak of the pure dharmadhātu as being the naturally abiding disposition, this is simply blatant evidence of one’s own actual opinion and one’s words being contradictory.

Hence, once one asserts that the unchanging dharmadhātu is the buddha disposition, one must first identify the essence of the basis that is designated as “dharmadhātu,” which is the nonnominal ultimate—the great union of

the two realities that is the actuality of the utterly nonabiding Madhyamaka. Without identifying this essence, if one asserts just the nominal ultimate as the disposition, one takes what is not the dharmadhātu as being the dharmadhātu, just as when confusing a group of monkeys in the forest for the gods in a divine realm. Thus, all presentations that assert this nominal ultimate as being the buddha disposition, assert a familiarization with prajñāpāramitā through focusing on this kind of ultimate, assert this ultimate to be the cause of the svābhāvīkākāya, and so on, are established as being the path of fake mahāyāna, which is also stated in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras and others.

Therefore, what is called “the naturally pure dharmadhātu” and “emptiness” is the actuality of the expanse of the inseparability of the two realities that is free from the entire web of reference points and is to be personally experienced. All mahāyāna sūtras and all commentaries on their true intention say that this is what represents the buddha disposition that actually fulfills this definition and will become the svābhāvīkākāya endowed with twofold purity. Consequently, this naturally abiding disposition can only be asserted as being unconditioned. Once it is something unconditioned, it is not tenable that it, by virtue of its very own nature, performs the activity of producing a result that is other than it and then ceases. Hence, the qualities of the dharmakāya cannot be asserted as anything but a result of freedom or separation (from adventitious stains). That this is the case is declared by the great tenth-bhūmi bodhisattva Maitreya in his *Uttaratantra*, and it is also clearly stated by the glorious protector Nāgārjuna in his *Dharmadhātustava*. Thus, by following these texts, our own system is to assert the unconditioned dharmadhātu as the disposition. Though this dharmadhātu is the basic nature of all phenomena, its essence is that it lacks arising and ceasing and it has the character of the inseparability of appearance and emptiness but is without any bias. Since all conditioned phenomena, which appear to be arising and ceasing, are not established in the way they appear, they never affect the fundamental ground of the dharmadhātu. Consequently, the causes and results of saṃsāra are primordially pure and are beyond meeting with, or parting from, the appearances of uncontaminated spontaneously present luminosity. It is through this essential point that the mode of being of the tathāgata heart must be identified in an unmistakable manner.

(B) As for presenting our own system, (1) the meaning of *Uttaratantra* I.28a (“because the perfect buddhakāya radiates”) is that the ultimate kāya of a completely perfect buddha—the dharmakāya—whose qualities are equal to the extent of space becomes clearly manifest (*gsal*), radiates (*phro*), or is revealed (*mngon du gyur*) at a later point from the mind stream

of an ordinary person who previously possessed all fetters. Therefore, it is established that the tathāgata heart exists in the mind streams of sentient beings at present.

This is justified in two ways—common and uncommon. As for the first one, if there is a sentient being who manifests the wisdom dharmakāya, the disposition of being suitable to become a buddha necessarily exists in the mind of this being because such is untenable in anything that absolutely lacks this disposition. As verse 11 of the *Dharmadhātustava* says:

If this element exists, through our work,  
 We will see the purest of all gold.  
 Without this element, despite our toil,  
 Nothing but misery we will produce.

As for the uncommon justification, one may think, “The above justification establishes that the mind of such a being is the mere cause of being suitable to become a buddha, just as it is suitable for a harvest to arise in a field. However, how does one establish the special disposition that is primordially endowed with the buddha qualities?” This is established as follows. The buddhas possess the wisdom kāya that has the character of being unconditioned because it is established through scriptures and reasonings that they do not have the nature of being conditioned and impermanent. As for the scriptures, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* says:

O monk Excellent Discipline, it is better to become a tīrthika and die than saying that the unconditioned Tathāgata is the conditioned Tathāgata.<sup>2774</sup>

And:

O son of good family, now see the Tathāgata as the permanent kāya, the indestructible kāya, the vajrakāya, not a body of flesh, and the dharmakāya.<sup>2775</sup>

And:

It is better to touch this blazing pile of wood with your tongue and die than say that the Tathāgata is impermanent. You should not listen to these words.<sup>2776</sup>

As for the mere aspect of a nonimplicative negation's not being suitable as *nirvāṇa*, this scripture also says:

Even when searching for what is called “emptiness,” “emptiness,” there is nothing to be found. Even the *Nirgrantha* have a “nothing whatsoever,” but liberation is not like that.<sup>2777</sup>

And:

That which is liberation is the uncontrived basic element. This is the *Tathāgata*.<sup>2778</sup>

The *Vajracchedikā* also states:

Those who see me by way of form  
And those who follow me by way of sound  
Have engaged in the wrong approach—  
Such persons do not see me.

The buddhas are seen by way of the dharma—  
The guides are dharmakāya indeed.  
Since the nature of phenomena is not cognizable,  
One is not able to cognize it.<sup>2779</sup>

As illustrated by these and other passages, this is taught extensively in all sūtras of definitive meaning.

As for the reasonings that the wisdom dharmakāya is unconditioned, if omniscient wisdom—the ultimate fruition that is of equal taste and not dual with the primordial dharmadhātu—were something impermanent that is newly formed by causes and conditions, this would entail many flaws such as the absurd consequences that it is not self-arisen wisdom, has not relinquished the problem of change, entails the aspects of repeated ceasing and repeated arising, is deceiving due to disintegrating by its own nature, is not the absolute refuge because of ceasing as soon as it arises and because of abiding only as something limited where the collection of its causes is complete, is not of equal taste in all phenomena, has not transcended all extremes, does not lack phenomena such as the birth that is of a mental nature, and is a formational dependent phenomenon due to

lacking independence. Thus, such a claim would entail the enormous flaw of regarding the vajrakāya as being impermanent.

Therefore, casting away this bad path, the kāya of nondual wisdom is to be regarded as unconditioned and genuinely permanent. Nevertheless, through evaluating this merely by reasonings that rely on the perspective of ordinary beings, some think, “Unconditioned wisdom is impossible because a common locus of cognition and what is permanent is impossible.” Though the limited cognitions that cognize objects are necessarily impermanent, the wisdom in which what cognizes and what is cognized are of equal taste—“the vajra of space’s pervading space”—is not like that. For it is established through a reasoning consciousness that analyzes for the ultimate that there is primordially no arising or ceasing in the essence of that wisdom because all phenomena of nirvāṇa and saṃsāra are contained within the state of the unchanging luminosity that is the self-radiance (*rang gdangs*) of the unconditioned. Consequently, this kind of wisdom is the great unconditioned that does not abide in either of the extremes of being conditioned and unconditioned. It is absolutely not like a sheer nonentity. Since both entities and nonentities are bearers of the nature of phenomena and arise in mutual dependence or are labeled in mutual dependence, if analyzed correctly, they are conditioned, hollow, fake, delusive, and deceptive. On the other hand, the tathāgata heart is the great unconditioned true nature of all phenomena that consist of entities and nonentities, which is perfectly undeceiving. As the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* says:

A nature is not artificial  
And does not depend on anything else.<sup>2780</sup>

And:

Entities and nonentities are conditioned.  
Nirvāṇa is unconditioned.<sup>2781</sup>

Hence, once the ultimate wisdom of the dharmakāya is established through the scriptures that are the sūtras of definitive meaning and the reasonings that analyze for the ultimate as pervading all of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, equality, the unconditioned, and the unchanging nature of the ultimate, the nature of this wisdom dharmakāya abides at present in all mind streams that are suitable for its becoming manifest at some time, and it does so without decrease or increase and in the manner of being the true

nature of these mind streams. From the perspective of the way in which it appears to be free or not to be free from the adventitious stains, it appears to be manifest or not manifest. However, from the perspective of the way things are, there is not even the slightest difference in terms of before and after or better and worse because it has the nature of being unchanging and unconditioned. The *Uttaratantra* states:

Its true nature of being changeless  
Is the same before as after.<sup>2782</sup>

And:

The luminous nature of the mind  
Is completely unchanging, just like space.  
It is not afflicted by adventitious stains,  
Such as desire, born from false imagination.<sup>2783</sup>

Thus, all saṃsāric phenomena are changing and not stable. Though they all appear as if transforming within the state of the nature of phenomena, it should be understood that, as is said again and again, that the purity of the mind—the tathāgata heart—is without any transformation, just like space. In this way, the unconditioned expanse of luminosity is never tainted by mistakenness but is naturally pure. The spontaneously present fruitional qualities such as the powers abide within this unmistakable self-radiant basic nature without being separable from it, just like the sun and its rays. The *Uttaratantra* says:

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
It is not empty of the unsurpassable dharmas,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.<sup>2784</sup>

All flaws of saṃsāra arise from the mistaken mind that clings to a personal self and an identity of phenomena. Since this mistaken mind from the beginning neither taints nor mixes with the luminosity that is the primordial ground, but is adventitious like clouds in the sky, these flaws can be distinguished from the basic element and are suitable to be removed from it. Therefore, the essence of the basic element is empty of these flaws, that is, it is untainted by them. However, this basic element is not empty



of the ultimate qualities that cannot be separated from the self-arising wisdom that does not depend on being affected by mistakenness but, all on its own, is luminous and operates as the true reality of all phenomena. In its own essence, it is the fundamental ground from which these qualities are inseparable, just like the sun and its rays.

If the naturally abiding disposition is established as the unconditioned essence of the dharmakāya that is primordially endowed with the qualities, since this is suitable to be buddhahood, the wisdom dharmakāya must reside in the mind streams of all sentient beings without decrease or increase. It is established by the power of entities (*dingos stobs*) that it is suitable to become a buddha if one has cultivated the path. Since the dharmakāya at the time of buddhahood is unconditioned, it is impossible for it to be newly conditioned by causes and conditions. Therefore, it is established that it abides as buddha nature at present.

Regarding this, some people think, “If the dharmakāya abides at present as buddha nature, why does that omniscient wisdom not dispel the obscurations of the sentient beings in which it abides?” Also, clinging to the theories of the common yāna, they think, “Since a buddha is the result and a sentient being is the cause, if the result is present in the cause, this is invalidated by reasonings such as eating food absurdly entailing eating excrement.” Having been guided by merely an understanding of the common scriptures, it is no wonder that such qualms arise in those who have not trained in the meaning of the extremely profound sūtras of definitive meaning. Still, what they say is not the case. Though the nature of phenomena that is luminous wisdom exists in everything without distinction, when the adventitious mistakenness of one’s own mind arises, the basis of designation of saṃsāra is only this mistaken mind together with its objects, but this mistakenness does not know the nature of phenomena that exists in oneself as it is. For example, when sleeping, it is due to the power of consciousness alone that infinite appearances such as a body, objects, and an eye-consciousness arise. At that time, the mental consciousness apprehends and observes subject and object separately, but this mental consciousness itself is not able to know its own actual mode of being of apprehender and apprehended’s not being established as different. However, even though it does not know its actual mode of being, there is nothing in it that is other than this actual mode of being. Likewise, though all phenomena abide as emptiness, merely being emptiness does not entail that everyone realizes this because there is the possibility of the mistakenness in which the way things appear and the way they are do not accord. Consequently, since the

wisdom of buddha nature and mind are the true nature and what bears this nature, respectively, buddhas and sentient beings are taught in terms of the way things are and the way they appear, respectively. Hence, to bring forth invalidations by reasoning such as the result's already existing in the cause simply means not to understand the thesis here.

Thus, this first reasoning here in *Uttaratantra* I.28 establishes through the reason of the clear manifestation of the dharmakāya at the time of the result that the disposition that is primordially endowed with the qualities exists at the time of the cause. From the perspective of how things actually are, there is no earlier cause or later result as far as buddha nature is concerned, but from the perspective of how things (mistakenly) appear, one needs to present this process in terms of cause and result. Therefore, the result of the future manifestation of the dharmakāya in a being proves the prior existence of the cause that is the disposition in that being, which is called “the principle of dependence.”<sup>2785</sup>

(2) As for the second reason in *Uttaratantra* I.28b (“because suchness is undifferentiable”), since all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are undifferentiable and of one taste within emptiness or suchness—great primordial luminosity—buddhas and sentient beings too are ultimately undifferentiable, which is the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Therefore, it is established through “the principle of the nature of phenomena” that even what is projected by adventitious mistakenness and looks like a sentient being does not move even an inch from the ultimate nature of phenomena. Therefore, it is certain that these sentient beings possess the buddha heart. Having in mind all phenomena, the sūtras also speak of their primordially being luminosity, nirvāṇa, and the nature of completely perfect buddhahood.

One may think, “But as was explained to others above, if the existence of the disposition is established merely by everything's being undifferentiable as suchness, it follows that the disposition also exists in earth, rocks, and so on.” If what is called “the disposition” must be presented as the infallible cause of buddhahood, which is the complete relinquishment of the two obscurations under the sway of a mistaken mind and thus the unfolding of mind's being unmistaken about the nature of what is to be known, any practice of the path to accomplish the result of buddhahood is absent in what is not mind, that is, matter such as earth and rocks. Therefore, even though conventionally matter is undifferentiable from mind as suchness, there is no need to posit that the disposition exists in matter. Also, stones and such equally appear through the power of the mind—it is not that

mind arises through the power of external stones and such. This is to be understood through the example of the relationship between appearances in a dream and the consciousness during that dream.

Through understanding that the nature of phenomena—the sugata heart, which has the nature of ultimate uncontaminated virtue—resides in this mind that is the creator of the three realms, just as wetness is inherent in water, the appearances of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are merely the play of consciousness and wisdom and therefore do not need to be different. We emphatically assert that, in actual reality, all appearances, which do not stray from the natural state of the nature of phenomena that is primordial buddhahood, do not go beyond the mode of being of a tathāgata. The *Prajñāpāramitāsaṃcayagāthā* says:

The purity of form should be known as the purity of the fruition.

The purity of form and the fruition represents the purity of omniscience.

The purity of omniscience and the fruition as well as the purity of form, Similar to the element of space, are inseparable and indivisible.<sup>2786</sup>

Accordingly, the purity of the subject liberated from the obscurations is the purity or the nature of objects, such as form, because apart from the mere manner of seeing the process of progressively becoming free from the obscurations that are one's own appearances, their actual nature abides as being primordially free from obscurations. Therefore, when one has become a buddha through the stains of the basic element that is the disposition (the subject) having been exhausted, no impure entities that are objects remain as leftovers, just as blurred vision is automatically cleared when an eye disorder is cured.

Someone may think, “But this means that when one person becomes a buddha, all impure appearances cease.” This is not the case because the seeing of the way things are and the way they appear being contradictory is due to the obscurations that are each person's own individual appearances obscuring these persons themselves (and no one else). One may think, “On the buddhabhūmi, on which the way things are and the way they appear accord in all respects, do buddhas then have or not have impure appearances? If they have, all phenomena have not become fully perfect buddhahood. If they do not have impure appearances, it is impossible for buddhas to know the paths that lead everywhere in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa<sup>2787</sup> and so forth.” It is from within the state of these phenomena's being of equal taste with omniscient wisdom that this omniscient wisdom effortlessly and spontaneously

knows all possible phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. While it, from its own perspective, does not go beyond seeing everything as great purity, it also sees the appearances of the six classes of beings in accordance with the ways in which they individually appear. Due to the power of all obscurations of the dualistic appearances of subject and object having been exhausted, all the many bearers of the nature of phenomena are encompassed in an unmixed and complete way within the expanse of the nature of phenomena. Through this essential point, they are simultaneously seen by the wisdom of equal taste that is free from arising and ceasing. Let alone ordinary beings with their limited perception, this is difficult to fathom even for those who dwell on the bhūmis. This principle is explained in the *Bodhisattvapiṭaka*:

The equality of all phenomena is realized  
 To be equal by self-arisen [wisdom].  
 Therefore, the seeing of the tathāgatas,  
 The fully perfect buddhas, is equal.

And:

By virtue of knowing the natural luminosity of mind as it is, therefore, this is called “fully and completely awakening into unsurpassable truly perfect awakening through the prajñā that is a single instant of mind.”

Accordingly, master Candrakīrti says:

Just as there are no divisions in space by virtue of the divisions of vessels,  
 There are no divisions of entities whatsoever in true reality.  
 Therefore, if you fully comprehend their being of equal taste,  
 You with excellent knowledge understand [all] knowable objects in an  
 instant.<sup>2788</sup>

Thus, the great wisdom that is nondual with the expanse pervades all phenomena, and its effortless seeing pervades them in the manner of the moon and stars’ appearing in the ocean. This seeing from within the state of all conceptions’ being at utter peace is so due to the power of self-arisen luminous wisdom—the nature of phenomena that resides in the ground—having become manifest as it is after all obscurations have become exhausted. Therefore, if one relies on the correct principle of the nature

of phenomena in the context of analyzing for the ultimate, irreversible trust is found. Otherwise, when this is evaluated with a narrow mind, we witness the rise of a lot of contradictions and impurities of imagination, such as assertions that wisdom does not exist on the buddhabhūmi, or, even if it does, it is established as being just like an ordinary mind that entails change; assertions that buddhas do not see the realms of sentient beings or that buddhahood entails impure appearances; and the inability to establish the natures of the wisdom that knows suchness and the wisdom that knows variety as being of equal taste.

(3) As for the third reason in *Uttarantra* I.28c (“because of the disposition”), all sentient beings have the disposition of being suitable to become buddhas since the adventitious stains are established to be relinquishable, while the dharmakāya that is primordially endowed with the qualities is established to exist without any difference in all beings. If sentient beings have such a disposition of being suitable to become buddhas, it is certain that they possess the buddha heart because there is a situation of actually becoming buddhas for them and the dharmakāya of a buddha is unconditioned in nature, therefore lacking any differences in its nature in terms of being worse before or better after.

Through this third reasoning, one understands that a result is produced from a cause, which is “the principle of performing activity.” Here, this is not just inferring that a result comes forth through the mere existence of the cause, which is due to the following essential points: the disposition that is suchness (the nature of phenomena) is changeless; at the time of the fruition, its nature is still without being better or worse; since the adventitious stains are always separable from it, no matter how long they have been associated with it, it is impossible for this disposition to ever lose its capacity or power to become buddhahood.

Thus, to briefly summarize these three reasons in *Uttarantra* I.28, (1) the existence of the cause—the disposition—is not distinct in nature from the dharmakāya at the time of the fruition. (2) If the dharmakāya at the time of the fruition exists, it must also exist without increase or decrease at the time of sentient beings. (3) Although there are the imputations of cause and result as well as before and after, in actuality, the dharmadhātu is of one taste as the unchanging essence. Through these three reasons, it is established that all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart, which is the outcome of the path of correct reasoning that operates through the power of entities.

In this way, through these reasonings that establish that a tathāgata exists in all sentient beings, ultimate liberation, the state of a tathāgata, and the ultimate basic nature of all phenomena are established as not being different. If one understands that this liberation and buddhahood have arisen through the power of the tathāgata heart, it is also established that there is only a single yāna ultimately. Otherwise, in the systems of those who turn their back on the mahāyāna (such as those who say that the tathāgata heart does not exist in the basic element of sentient beings, that it does not exist at the time of buddhahood, and that it lacks any qualities at the time of the cause, while it newly possesses the qualities at the time of the result), the reasonings to establish a single yāna ultimately are just empty verbiage. Hence, those who aspire for the topics of the supreme yāna should greatly train their intelligence in this topic.

Thus, since the presentation that the basic element that is primordially endowed with the qualities exists at the time of sentient beings is a profound and inconceivable topic, even the Buddha spoke about it to his audiences in a manner so that they should trust what he says and said that though it is undeceiving, it is difficult to understand through one's own power. Therefore, since it is taught as the ultimate of what is profound, small-minded dialecticians continuously dispute it, but no matter how many qualms that rely on conventions they may bring up, such as the consequence that there would be a mind that is a common locus of the mind of a buddha and a sentient being, they are all nonsense. The *Samādhinirmocanasūtra* states:

The defining characteristic of the conditioned realms and the ultimate  
 Is their defining characteristic of being free from being one and different.  
 Those who think of them in terms of oneness and difference  
 Have engaged them in an improper manner.<sup>2789</sup>

Accordingly, there is no need to claim that mind's true nature—the basic element that is the tathāgata heart—and the mind that is the bearer of this nature are either the same or different. Not only is it not contradictory that this mind does not go beyond its true nature (the way things are) and that mistakeness (the way things appear) is still possible, but otherwise there would be flaws such as there being no liberation and it being impossible for any being to be mistaken. Because there is the discordance between the way things are and the way they appear, the possibility of mistaken sentient beings as well as the existence of buddhas after these beings

have relinquished their mistakenness through having entered the path is established.

Though all phenomena are established as emptiness through the reasonings that analyze for the ultimate, they do not negate the qualities of the tathāgata heart because those who follow the teachings on buddha nature also accept that, though these unsurpassable qualities exist, their nature is empty. Therefore, the meaning taught by the middle wheel of dharma that all afflicted and purified phenomena are empty is established in that way because the tathāgata heart too is the nature of emptiness. However, the teaching on the tathāgata heart that is specified by being inseparable from the appearances of the kāyas and wisdoms whose nature is empty is the true intention of the sūtras of definitive meaning of the final wheel of dharma. Therefore, it is merely by virtue of this principle that this teaching is superior to the middle wheel of dharma. Consequently, the *Samḍhi-nirmocanasūtra*'s praise of the meaning of the final wheel of dharma does not refer to everything that is included in the final wheel of dharma, but this praise is pronounced in the way it is from the perspective of the definitive meaning of the teachings on the tathāgata heart. One is able to ascertain this in such a way through other sūtra passages, such as those that teach the basic element through the example of cleansing a jewel. Therefore, the emptiness taught in the middle wheel of dharma and the kāyas and wisdoms taught in the last wheel of dharma need to be integrated as the unity of appearance and emptiness. Consequently, without dividing or excluding the sections of definitive meaning in the middle and last wheels of dharma, both should be taken as being of definitive meaning, just as this is asserted by the omniscient Longchen Rabjam. If one takes both of them to be of definitive meaning, there is not only no contradiction that one of them must be taken as being of expedient meaning, but, through having unified them as the tathāgata heart and thus taking this tathāgata heart to have the meaning of the causal tantra, it also comes forth as the essential point of the pith instructions of the vajrayāna.

Therefore, one should understand that the teachings of the Buddha come down to this single essential point. The noble ones such as Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga are of a single mind with regard to this final meaning because such can be clearly realized through Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava*, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, and so on, as well as Asaṅga's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* and so forth. As master Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* states:

The sūtras that teach emptiness,  
 However many spoken by the victors,  
 They all remove afflictions,  
 But never ruin this dhātu.<sup>2790</sup>

Accordingly, the outcome of analyzing for the ultimate—the vajra-like point of indivisible ultimate reality—is the expanse that cannot be split by dialectic cognition. Therefore, there are no grounds for engaging in qualms that are based on the ultimate.

### Dongag Tenpé Nyima

Dongag Tenpé Nyima's notes on Mipham Rinpoche's *Synopsis* follow the latter's matching of the first three lines of *Uttaratantra* I.28 with the principles of dependence, the nature of phenomena, and performing activity, respectively, and refers to them as result, nature, and cause, respectively.<sup>2791</sup> He adds that the first reason is a result reason (*'bras bu'i rtags*), while the latter two are nature reasons (*rang bzhin gyi rtags*). Also, when it is said that "sentient beings are buddhas," this refers only to buddhahood in the sense of natural purity (but not in the sense of being endowed with twofold purity). Therefore, it speaks about the true nature of the mind but not its result. Hence, there is no flaw of the result's already abiding in the cause (as in the Sāṃkhya system).

### Surmang Padma Namgyal

The Kagyü scholar Surmang Padma Namgyal's (twentieth century) *Full Moon of Questions and Answers* explains *Uttaratantra* I.28 through linking it with all four principles and even adding the nine examples for buddha nature in the *Uttaratantra*.<sup>2792</sup> He says that the first line proves the cause by way of the result, applying the principle of performing activity and examples 1–3. As for the second line, the true nature of buddhas and sentient beings is the same and without any distinction of purity and impurity, referring to the principle of the nature of phenomena and example 4. The third line shows that the result of the three kāyas depends on both the naturally abiding and the unfolding dispositions, thus applying the principle of dependence and examples 5–9 (the principle of demonstrating evidence is said to be contained implicitly in all three lines).



### Ngawang Kunga Wangchug

The contemporary Sakya scholar Ngawang Kunga Wangchug's commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* says that the Mādhyamikas explain the nature of the disposition in many ways, such as being the dharmakāya, the dharmadhātu, or mind.<sup>2793</sup> However, its own fully complete nature is stated in *Uttaratantra* I.28. Among the first three lines of this verse, "Since the perfect buddhakāya radiates" refers to what is suitable for the condition of the Buddha's enlightened activity engaging it. "Since suchness is undifferentiable" indicates what is suitable for relinquishing the adverse conditions of the obscurations. "And because of the disposition" teaches what is suitable for the arising of all buddha qualities as the fruition. Thus, these three points are complete in both the sugata heart and the buddha disposition. However, in order to present it as the sugata heart, all three must be complete, while they need not be complete in order to present it as the disposition because the disposition itself represents one of these three points.

In brief, the definition of the sugata heart at the time of its being a cause is "the dharmadhātu that is suitable for (a) the condition of the Buddha's enlightened activity engaging it, (b) relinquishing the adverse conditions of the obscurations, and (c) all buddha qualities arising as its fruition. The definition of the buddha disposition is "the dhātu that is not liberated from the stains and whose own nature is suitable to become any one of the three kāyas, or the causal factor that consists of any roots of virtue at the time of the disposition's being awoken."



## Appendix 2: Selected Indian and Tibetan Comments on Uttaratantra I.154–55

Note that some of the works below explicitly refer to these two verses as being from the *Uttaratantra*, while others do not attribute them to a particular text. The two works attributed to Nāgārjuna consider the first verse as part of his *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdaya* and Līlāvajra’s text also explicitly attributes it to Nāgārjuna.

### *Indian Commentaries*

#### Nāgārjuna’s *Kāyatrayastotranāmasyavivaraṇa* and *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayavyākhyā*

On the phrase in the first line of Nāgārjuna’s *Kāyatrayastotra* that the dharmakāya “serves as the basis of one’s own consummate great benefit and that of others,” his *Kāyatrayastotranāmasyavivaraṇa*<sup>2794</sup> comments as follows.

You may wonder, “If the beginningless and endless dharmadhātu, whose nature is free from being one or many, is explained as emptiness, how can it serve as the basis of one’s own consummate great benefit and that of others?” There is no flaw. Through the power of the latent tendencies of ignorance, [the dharmadhātu] manifests in the form of the container and its content [the outer world and the beings therein]. Likewise, it [can very well] serve as the basis for one’s own welfare and that of others, just as our consciousness in dreams [can manifest in different ways]. As for [the relationship of] the latent tendencies of ignorance and the nature of the dharmadhātu without beginning and end, the latent tendencies of ignorance are like being impregnated with [some scent,] such as musk. This is what the true nature of entities is like. Therefore, it serves as the basis of one’s own consummate great benefit and that of others.

Furthermore, through meeting spiritual friends and finding the excellent path, the adventitious latent tendencies of ignorance are distanced and [the dharmadhātu] becomes completely pure. Just as gold or copper's becoming free from its stains, this entails the appropriation of qualities and the relinquishment of flaws. Why? Because it is nothing but the very realization of what is actual reality (*yang dag pa'i don*). Therefore, it is said:

There is nothing to be removed from it . . .

[Otherwise] it would follow that [the dharmadhātu] associated with conditions in this way becomes [actually] afflicted. However, what is unarisen is never seen as arising. Nor is there the slightest [phenomenon's] arising from the cessation of arisen [phenomena]—nirvāṇa is like an oil lamp's having become extinct.

Furthermore, the commentary on the words “untainted,” “changeless,” and “to be personally experienced” in the second and third lines of the first verse explains:

It is untainted, being free from the stains of the flaws such as desire. Therefore, it is changeless—there is no shift in its own nature. . . . It is to be personally experienced by sentient beings, just as [it is pointless] to ask a young woman about her bliss [of making love for the first time].<sup>2795</sup>

In the same author's *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayavyākhyā*, what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 is found at the very end but no direct comments are offered.<sup>2796</sup> Judging from what the text says prior to this verse, it refers to the liberation that comes about when one does not accumulate the causes that result in suffering and that consist of ignorance, desire, hatred, karma, craving, becoming, and birth. In this liberation, all views about extremes (such as permanence and extinction) have been removed.

### Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāṅgāṭikā*

On *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.7,<sup>2797</sup> Sthiramati (c. 510–570) comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154 in the context of the well-known four *prayogas* of Yogācāra.

Thus, observation is established  
As the nature of nonobservation.

. . . There is no difference between the nonobservation of referents and the observation as mere cognizance in that [both] do not exist. Thus, they are to be understood as equal. . . . [The latter] is just called “observation,” since an unreal object appears [for it]. However since there is no [actual] referent, nothing is observed by this [“observation”]. Therefore, ultimately, its nature is nonobservation. . . . Hence, it is said that it does not exist as the nature of observation. In such observation, neither is the nature of observation to be eliminated nor is the nature of nonobservation to be established. They are the same in that they are undifferentiable.

Some consider that [lines I.7cd]

Therefore, observation and nonobservation  
Are to be understood as equal

are spoken as a remedy for superimposition and denial. Since there is no referent, observation does not exist as having the nature of observation. Therefore, it is said that it does not exist by a nature of its own. As for observation, no nature of observation is to be removed [from it] nor is there a nature of nonobservation to be added. What is it then? Both [observation and nonobservation] are equal by virtue of the non-conceptuality [mere cognizance]. Therefore, it should be understood that without taking resort to superimposition and denial, nonobservation and observation are each in itself equal. It is said:

There is nothing to be removed from it  
And not the slightest to be added.  
Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

“So why is [mere] cognizance called ‘observation’ then?” In its nature, it is nonobservation, but [it is designated] in this way since an unreal object appears [for it], as this is the convention in the world and the treatises.

### Lilāvajra’s *Nāmasaṃgīṭīkā*

In his comments on *Nāmasaṃgīṭī* VI.5,<sup>2798</sup> Lilāvajra (c. 550–650) glosses the meaning of “reality” as “profound dependent origination” and, in support of that, refers to Nāgārjuna as the author of what corresponds to *Uttarantra* I.154, obviously referring to his *Pratītyasamutpādahr̥daya*.

Jñānacandra's *Kāyatrayavṛtti*

In its comments on verse 106 of Nāgamitra's *Kāyatrayāvātāramukha*,<sup>2799</sup> which is in itself a paraphrase of our verse, Jñānacandra (eighth century) also directly quotes *Uttaratantra* I.154.

Apart from mistakenness, there is not even the minutest phenomenon. Therefore, all there is to do is to merely relinquish mistakenness. This is established by [lines 106ab]:

No entity whatsoever is to be added  
Or to be removed. Therefore . . .

As it is said:

There is nothing to be removed from it  
And not the slightest to be added.  
Actual reality is to be seen as it really is.  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

Therefore, [lines 106cd] say:

One is liberated through seeing merely suchness,  
Which is phenomena's own nature.

This is the meaning of [some] old scriptures saying, "If mistakenness is not samādhi, how could it abide?" This very meaning at hand is established by [the following] example:

If those who wish for gold  
Make great efforts in purifying well  
Some earth in which gold exists,  
They will find gold.

Likewise, those who wish for emptiness  
And make efforts in deconstructing well  
Phenomena, whose character is empty,  
Will come in contact with emptiness.<sup>2800</sup>

Thus, the imaginary, dependent, and perfect natures are taught by this example as what are to be understood, to be relinquished, and to be directly perceived, respectively.

### Jñānaśrīmitra's *Sākārasiddhi*

At the beginning of the sixth chapter of his *Sākārasiddhi*,<sup>2801</sup> which is a treatise that defends the existence of real aspects (*sadākāra*), Jñānaśrīmitra (c. 980–1040) says that one can neither superimpose the tiniest thing that does not manifest lucidly (*aprakāśa*) nor deny even the slightest trace of what manifests lucidly (*prakāśa*). In order to support this statement, he quotes four works by Maitreya—*Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1–2 and I.8ab (as well as paraphrasing I.13), *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* XI.15–23 together with its *Bhāṣya*, *Abhisamayālamkāra* V.20–21, as well as *Uttarantra* I.154 and RGVV. Jñānaśrīmitra also provides his own comments on *Abhisamayālamkāra* V.21 and *Uttarantra* I.154.

In particular, Jñānaśrīmitra comments on *Abhisamayālamkāra* V.21<sup>2802</sup> that “from this” in the first line means “from various [appearances] that are manifesting lucidly.” At the time of being afflicted, this is expressed by the term “false imagination.” Therefore, there is nothing to be removed in terms of what is to be realized by self-awareness (*svasaṃvedyatayā*). Since there is nothing in the first place, what could be taken away by us? Since what is unreal is removed, what else called “obscuration” is seen? Nor is there anything to be added, which refers to anything that is not manifesting lucidly, such as the mental aspects of apprehender and apprehended or a self. The refutation of denial is that actual reality is to be apprehended as this actual reality and not as what is not actual reality. The refutation of superimposition is that one should have confidence in actual reality as being this actual reality and not in what is not actual reality as being actual reality. The perfect distinction between what is actual reality and what is not actual reality is stated in *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.13, which says that, following the characteristics of what exists and what does not exist, one realizes that duality is not actual reality, while what bears the property of the emptiness of duality (*dvayaśūnyatādharmīn*) is true actuality because it is the sole agent. Or, “from it” refers to what is directly perceived, which is actual reality because it is worthy of nothing’s being added to it. Everything else is not actual reality because it is merely imaginary (*kalpitamātra*). Therefore, the emptiness of that is said to be actual reality. Consequently, whoever directly perceives or apprehends actual reality is liberated. This means that one is liberated through progressive and repeated study and

reflection. What is free from superimposition and denial is the principle of the middle (*madhyamā sthitiḥ*). There is no actual difference in saying that precisely this is also the view of Yogācāra.

Next, after identifying the wrong positions of superimposition and denial, Jñānaśrīmitra cites *Uttaratantra* I.154 and RGVV and explains that real aspects are mental forms that have the nature of being appearances of lucidity (*prakāśarūpa*),<sup>2803</sup> which he equates with buddha nature (the tathāgatadhātu). Just as this tathāgatadhātu, those lucid forms are free from all superimposition and denial.

However, some superimpose here [onto the existence of real aspects] a perception without aspects in terms of persons and so on as well as that [this real aspect] is an [actual] apprehended [referent] and so on even while [that real aspect] is lucidly manifest [as such an aspect]. Some [others] deny [a real aspect] either entirely or partly even while [this real aspect] is not lucidly manifest. The basis of these two [kinds of] persons is contradictory. The cause of their mutual contentions [amounts] to meaninglessness. Therefore, the [correct position] is the very principle of emptiness. As the *Uttaratantra* says:

Those who are called “those whose minds are distracted from emptiness” refer to the bodhisattvas who have newly entered the [mahā]yāna and deviate from the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart. [Among them, there are] those who [wrongly] assert the door to liberation that is emptiness in order to destroy [really existing] entities, [thinking] that parinirvāṇa refers to the extinction and destruction of really existing phenomena at a later time. Or, [there are] also those who resort to emptiness through focusing on emptiness [as some real entity, thinking] that what is called “emptiness” exists, by way of being distinct from form and so on, as some entity that is to be realized and with which one should familiarize.

What is it that is called “the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart” here?

There is nothing to be removed from this  
And not the slightest to be added.



Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.<sup>2804</sup>

With regard to the meaning of emptiness here, the first disagreement [of denying the existence of a real aspect] is not [tenable] because the extinction of a real aspect at a later time based on its being [considered as] false [in the first place] is not agreeable. Nor is the second [disagreement of superimposing anything onto a real aspect tenable] because it would follow that there was [something else that is] different from [and superimposed onto this real aspect], just as in the case of an [assumed] perception without aspects and so on.

“However, [RGVV] explains that there is no characteristic of affliction to be removed from the tathāgatadhātu, nor is the slightest characteristic of purified phenomena to be added to it.” This is true. Nevertheless, since [the word] “property” (*dharma*) indicates a “bearer of that property” (*dharmin*), the term “tathāgatadhātu” [(which is the *dharma* here) indicates phenomena] that bear the property that is emptiness. The apprehended is nothing but what is apprehended by the transformed mind (*cittavivarta*) [alone] since there is no doubt that something is projected and so on onto the mere emptiness that is confined within the sphere of conception. Therefore, [stating] the pair of the nonexistence of [any characteristic of] afflicted phenomena and the existence of the characteristic of purified phenomena means the negation of the above-mentioned denial and superimposition since the cessation and arising [of a real aspect] are refuted. For [RGVV] says immediately after that:

Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with true reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent. These [two verses] elucidate the unmistakable defining characteristic of emptiness since it [thus] is free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.<sup>2805</sup>

Therefore, this is not a negation of lucid form (*prakāśarūpa*). Indeed, this is the meaning of the middle (*madhyamārtha*). Thus, [*Madhyāntavibhāga* I.2 says]:

Therefore, everything is explained  
 To be neither empty nor nonempty  
 Because of existence, nonexistence, and existence.  
 This is the middle path.<sup>2806</sup>

Near the end of the sixth chapter,<sup>2807</sup> Jñānaśrīmitra adds that the beings to be guided are twofold—those who engage in superimposition and those who engage in denial. For the former, the Buddha taught the emptiness of all phenomena and spoke of the principle of the middle by way of negation. For the latter, he established the principle of consciousness (*vijñānanaya*) by way of delineating the existence of mere manifold appearances (*citrpratibhāsamātra*).

### Maitrīpa's *Dohākośapañjikā*

Maitrīpa's comment on the definition of the innate nature of the mind in line 20d of Saraha's *Dohākośagīti* ("People Dohā") quotes *Uttaratantra* I.154 and explains that that in which there is nothing to be removed or to be added is innate bliss.

The nature of the innate is neither existent nor nonexistent.

Here, "existent" refers to any entity as it appears to the eye and so on and as it is imagined mentally. In that case, why [is the innate not existent]? For everything has arisen as the variety of entities, having the innate as its nature, [but] one is not<sup>2808</sup> liberated through imagining [entities] to be real<sup>2809</sup> in such a way [as they appear]. Therefore, since it is to be experienced personally, [the innate] is not nonexistent [either].<sup>2810</sup> As it is said:

There is nothing to be removed from this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

How is this [quotation related to the above explanation]? The reason is stated [as follows]. Humans and so on are born by virtue of bliss. Desiring bliss, they are born from the union of their father and mother.<sup>2811</sup> Why is not realizing [innate bliss] a flaw?<sup>2812</sup> Since [innate bliss] is to be experienced personally, it is not nonexistent. Why is that? It is because

it is inexpressible due to being completely absorbed in it.<sup>2813</sup> It is taught that precisely this is the bliss that ends at death.<sup>2814</sup>

### Yamāri's *Pramāṇavārttikālaṃkāraṭīkāsuparīśuddhā*

The beginning of this commentary on Prajñākaragupta's *Pramāṇavārttikālaṃkāra*<sup>2815</sup> by Yamāri (c. 1000–1060; possibly a student of Jñānaśrīmitra) seems to follow the structure of the above-mentioned initial passage in the sixth chapter of Jñānaśrīmitra's *Sākārasiddhi*, also quoting *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1, I.8ab, and I.14; *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XI.15–16 (and implying the following verses); *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21; and *Uttarantra* I.154.

In particular, based on *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1 and I.8ab, Yamāri presents his own explanation of real aspects. As for the term “false imagination,” what is false or unreal consists of the duality of apprehender and apprehended. One speaks of “false imagination” because imaginations about or due to this duality are entertained by subsequently arisen conceptions. In the sūtras, this false imagination is explained to be the dependent nature. The word “existence” in *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1a refutes the denial of this dependent nature and also indicates the seed for the future arising of the sambhogakāya. The term “false imagination” illustrates the consciousness at the time of being afflicted that appears as various appearances. Anything that does not appear in these appearances that are called “dependent nature” and is superimposed by tīrthikas and some Buddhists is referred to as the imaginary nature. Such superimpositions basically consist of the characteristics of apprehender and apprehended. Thus, “duality” in *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1b indicates the imaginary nature. As for I.1c, the emptiness of everything imaginary in terms of this duality exists in said false imagination, which indicates the seed of the abiding of the dharmakāya. This is also explained in detail in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XI.15ff. In the sūtras, the emptiness of duality is explained to be the perfect nature. As for *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1d (“In it, this also exists”), it is stated in order to prevent concerns that the effort called “false imagination” (which is the bearer of the property of emptiness) is completely unreal by virtue of its being invalidated by valid cognition.

According to Yamāri, the same is expressed in *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 for the sake of showing that imaginary phenomena are by all means identityless, while *Uttarantra* I.154 presents the meaning of emptiness through excluding what is other than it. Therefore, all this eliminates the position

of those who assert that aspects are unreal in part or in their entirety. It also eliminates the positions of those who say that everything is unreal and those who claim that consciousness is without aspects. Likewise, it excludes the character of consciousness that is asserted by those who follow the Vedānta. In general, texts that establish consciousness as possessing aspects explain the dependent nature.

### Sahajavajra's *Tattvadaśakaṭīkā*

Sahajavajra comments on Maitrīpa's *Tattvadaśaka* 3cd by quoting *Uttaratantra* I.154, which he attributes directly to the Buddha.

[Line 3c of the *Tattvadaśaka* says:]

Attachment is born from mistakenness.

Mistakenness refers to one's own superimpositions. Attachment is fixation. Mistakenness means what is superimposed as the nature of entities, such as existence or nonexistence. Through such [superimpositions], one fixates again and again, which here means attachment, aversion, and ignorance. "Based on what should this mistakenness be relinquished?" In order to [answer that question, line 3d] says:

And mistakenness is held to be without basis.

The meaning of this is that since here even the slightest arising has been negated, [removing mistakenness] is not just like extracting a thorn. Rather, it means to fully understand the nature [of mistakenness], and this nature is again nothing but its being unarisen. As it is [indicated] through the following words of the Bhagavān:

Mañjuśrī, ignorance has the meaning of nonexistence.

And:

There is nothing to be removed from it  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Who sees actual reality is released.<sup>2816</sup>

### Rāmapāla's *Sekanirdeśapañjikā*

Rāmapāla (eleventh century) was another student of Maitrīpa. His commentary<sup>2817</sup> cites *Uttarantra* I.154 in the context of explaining lines 32cd–33ab of Maitrīpa's *Sekanirdeśa*:

The actuality of the middle lacks superimposition,  
So where could there be any eliminating or accomplishing in it?

Superimpositions by the mind in terms of knowing  
And what is to be known are not otherwise here.

The actuality of the middle lacks superimposition, Rāmapāla says, since it is free from any reference points. According to the Vijñānavādins, the entity of consciousness exists, which demonstrates just a temporary form of nonconceptuality, being the nonconceptual mind that corresponds to the existence of appearances under the sway of ignorance. They cling to this nonconceptual mind as being self-awareness. But in *Madhyamaka* there is no eliminating or accomplishing. Even if one thinks that what has the nature of being empty of the superimpositions in terms of knowing and what is to be known is the world, conceptuality is not other than nonconceptuality. Just as this goes for not knowing all appearances as they are, it also goes for knowing true reality. This explanation is followed by quoting *Uttarantra* I.154 as well as *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 6cd:

Thoroughly understanding [saṃsāric] existence  
Is expressed as “nirvāṇa.”

### Vibhūticandra's *Bodhicaryāvatāratātparyapañjikāvīśeṣadyotanī*

Vibhūticandra's (late twelfth–early thirteenth century) commentary interestingly quotes *Uttarantra* I.154 in support of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* I.2, explaining that Śāntideva means to say that he is neither able to state anything beyond the Buddha's words nor skilled in verse composition.<sup>2818</sup> Therefore, he composed his treatise not for the welfare of others but only for the sake of remembering and familiarizing with the teachings of his guru. This means that if one were to engage on the path to liberation in anything beyond the Buddha's words, one would stray from that path, because it is said:

There is nothing to be removed from it  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Who sees actual reality is released.

### *Bodhisattvabhūmi*

In the context of explaining the correct understanding of emptiness, the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* contains a prose passage that is similar to *Uttaratantra* I.154 (in italics below).

Emptiness is reasonable by virtue of that which is empty being really existent and by virtue of that of which it is empty not being really existent. By virtue of everything's being nonexistent, where would what be empty of what? Therefore, the emptiness [in the sense] of such [nonexistence] is not reasonable.<sup>2819</sup> Hence, such represents a bad grasp of emptiness. So how is emptiness grasped well? Since one sees that something's not existing somewhere [means that] the latter is empty of the former, one understands, in accordance with true reality, that what remains there really exists there. This is called “engaging emptiness unmistakably as it accords with true reality. . . .” Therefore, the entities about which one has notions such as form are empty of the character of the designational terms “form” and so on.

What is the remainder here in these entities about which one has notions such as form? It is said to be the bases of the designational terms “form” and so on. As for these two, it is said that one understands, in accordance with true reality, the existence of mere entities and the mere designations as mere entities. One does not superimpose what is not truly real, nor does one deny what is truly real. One does not create any redundancy, nor does one create any deficiency. *One does not set up [anything], nor does one reject [anything]. One realizes, in accordance with true reality, what is in accordance with true reality—suchness, whose nature is inexpressible.*<sup>2820</sup> This is said to be a good grasp of emptiness—its being well realized through perfect prajñā. This [description] is the one that accords with “the principle of demonstrating evidence” through which the inexpressible nature of all phenomena is to be known in an exact manner.<sup>2821</sup>

Later, the text also says that those who cling to superimposing what is not truly real (the specific characteristics of designations) and those who

deny what is ultimately truly real by virtue of being inexpressible (the mere entities that are the bases of designations) have fallen away from the dharma.<sup>2822</sup> Also, those who deny both designations and true reality are the chief nihilists, with whom those of pure conduct should not associate and who only bring misery upon themselves and others.<sup>2823</sup>

### *Tibetan Commentaries*

#### Ngog Lotsāwa

Ngog's *Synopsis of the "Uttarantra"* explains I.154 in terms of the inseparability of the two realities, without superimposing any ultimate existence of afflicted phenomena or denying the existence of purified phenomena on the level of seeming reality.

As for teaching the defining characteristic of the unmistakable meaning of being empty, [RGVV] says, "What is it that is called 'the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart' here?" Since one neither superimposes that the focal objects of afflicted phenomena exist ultimately nor denies that the focal objects of purified minds and mental factors exist on [the level of] seeming [reality], the two realities abide just as they are. This is said to be the unmistakable meaning of emptiness.

As for "there is nothing to be removed in this," in this true reality there is nothing to be removed that is a focal object of afflicted phenomena because [such focal objects] are not established right from the beginning. In this true reality there is not the slightest to be added that is a purified characteristic (such as the powers and supernatural knowledges) because the existence of the focal objects of purified phenomena (such as the [ten] powers) on [the level of] seeming [reality] abides since beginningless [time]. By way of not superimposing ultimate existence and not denying seeming existence in this way, unmistakable actual reality—the nature of the two realities in union—is taught.

You may wonder, "But if one neither eliminates afflicted phenomena nor accomplishes purified phenomena, what is the point of entering the path?" It is said that [the path], through the elimination of superimposition and denial, merely makes one realize the true reality that is incompatible with such [superimposition and denial]. Thus, [line I.154d] says, "[whoever sees actual reality] is liberated."<sup>2824</sup>

**Marpa Dopa and Parahitabhadra (as represented in CMW)**

CMW<sup>2825</sup> considers I.154ab and I.155 as representing the theses and the reasons, respectively, of two reasonings about the tathāgata heart's being free from superimposition and denial.<sup>2826</sup> I.154cd represent the elimination of a qualm. Furthermore, the tathāgata heart is said not to be an object of four groups of persons: (1) bodhisattvas who have views about emptiness and are full of pride about that, (2) Sautrāntikas, (3) Mere Mentalists, and (4) śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings.

You may wonder, "Who is it that superimposes [something] onto the basic element or denies [something about it]?" It is the śrāvakas who superimpose by saying, "The afflictions exist in the dharmadhātu since the beginning" and deny by saying, "The qualities of the dharmakāya do not exist from the beginning [but] arise later."

You may wonder, "How do these two verses teach that [the basic element] is free from the pair of superimposition and denial?" This [is explained through] the subject, the thesis, and the reason [of two reasonings], as well as the elimination of a disputational flaw. As for "in this," the subject is "in this basic element that exists at all times, exists in all sentient beings (the objects), and exists in a manner that is without difference." The thesis is "there is nothing to be removed." "Why?" The reason is "because the basic element is empty of what is adventitious, which has the characteristic of being separable." [As for the second reasoning,] the subject applies again in the same way, and the thesis is "there is not the slightest to be added." "Why?" The reason is "[because] it is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes, which have the characteristic of being inseparable." It may be asked, "In that case, how is it posited that the fruition of liberation is attained through relinquishing the afflictions and attaining the qualities of the dharmakāya? If there are no afflictions to be relinquished and no qualities of the dharmakāya to be attained at present, it follows that there is no fruition of liberation [later either]." There is no such flaw—this disputational flaw is eliminated by [the lines] "Actual reality is viewed as it really is—if actual reality is seen, one is liberated."

The commentary has three points. (1) The instruction on the defining characteristics or the essence of the basic element that is free from the two extremes consists of [RGVV's passage] "What is taught by this? . . . free from the extremes of superimposition and denial."



(2) The second point is to establish that this basic element is not an object of the thinking of four [kinds of] persons, which is [first] established through reasoning. (2a) As for establishing it through reasoning, it is [first] established that [the basic element] is not an object of persons whose minds are distracted from emptiness, which consists of [RGVV's] passage "Here, those whose minds are distracted from and stray outside of . . ." [In it, the phrase] "those whose minds are distracted outside" teaches that [the basic element] is not an object of those persons who have views about emptiness and are full of pride [about that]. [The phrase] "those who stray" teaches that [the basic element] is not an object of the Sautrāntikas, who assert that the five appropriating skandhas exist from the beginning and become totally nonexistent later, thus denying [something about] the fruition. [The phrase] "those who do not cultivate it in samādhī" teaches that it is not an object of the Mere Mentalists who assert a self-awareness empty of apprehender and apprehended as the ultimate and contrast it to "the wisdom of ultimate emptiness" below. The summary of these three [persons] consists of [the phrase] "those who are not one-pointed [with regard to it]." The instruction that [the basic element] is not an object of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings consists of [the sentence] "Without being introduced to the wisdom of ultimate emptiness . . ."

(2b) Establishing [that the basic element is not an object of the thinking of four kinds of persons] through scripture consist of [the passage] "With this in mind, it is said . . ." Here, it is said that [this passage from] the *[Śrīmālādevī]sūtra* explicitly teaches that [the basic element] is not an object of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, with [the word] "any" [in it implicitly] teaching that it is not an object of ordinary beings and [bodhisattvas] whose minds are distracted from emptiness [either] because this appears in [RGVV's] explanation of this sūtra [passage].

(3) The third point is the explanation of the instruction that the dharmakāya is [only] a bit of an object for bodhisattvas dwelling on the ten bhūmis, which is connected [to the previous passage] as follows. You may wonder, "If this basic element that possesses such defining characteristics is not an object of these four [kinds of] persons, the object of which persons is it?" [In response] to that, in order to teach that bodhisattvas on the ten bhūmis do not see it in a complete manner,

while buddhas see it in a pure manner, [RGVV says,] “Here, to have realized the introduction to the wisdom . . .”

In addition, CMW’s introduction comments on I.154ab that the line “there is nothing to be removed in this” refers to thoughts’ not needing to be relinquished and being pure, while the line, “not the slightest to be added” means that self-arisen wisdom dawns without needing to be accomplished.<sup>2827</sup> Quoting I.155, the introduction explains that the three phases of the tathāgata heart’s being impure, both impure and pure, and completely pure have the same single nature. All three of them are nothing but space-like luminosity, which is essentially disconnected from the adventitious stains of thoughts.

First, through the ninefold matching of the [tathāgata] heart [with its adventitious stains through the nine examples in the *Uttaratantra*], sentient beings (the cause) and buddhas (the fruition) are joined, that is, the three phases [of the tathāgata heart’s being impure, impure and pure, and completely pure] are blended as having a single nature. The three phases are the luminosity of the dharmakāya of sentient beings (which is like the space in a clay vessel), the luminosity of the noble ones (which is like the space in a copper vessel), and the luminosity of buddhas (which is like the space in a golden vessel). As for these three [phases, the *Uttaratantra* says]:

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
Which has the characteristic of being separable.

The conditioned element that can be disconnected consists of the stains of thoughts, which are like a vessel. As for what is naturally inseparable, just as space is without difference [in different vessels], the luminous essence of the mind is without difference in both sentient beings and buddhas. [The *Uttaratantra* continues:]

It is not empty of the unsurpassable attributes,  
Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

The unconditioned basic element that cannot be disconnected consists of the stainless nature of the mind, which is like space.

## Rangjung Dorje

The Third Karmapa's commentary on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*'s concluding examples for the nature of the fundamental change explains the following.

Examples for the fundamental change are space, gold, water, and so on.

For example, space is nothing but pure by nature. Therefore, by virtue of certain conditions (such as fog or mist), in the world, one can observe the statements “The sky is not pure” and “It is pure,” [when] it is clear and free [from these conditions]. However, it is not suitable to claim such because of a change of the nature of space. With its own nature's being pure, empty, and unconditioned, it is indeed not in order for it to either become pure by virtue of itself or become pure by virtue of something else. Nevertheless, mistaken minds that connect mere conventional terms to it cling to space as being pure and impure, [but] this is nothing but an error. Likewise, though it may appear as if the naturally pure nature of phenomena—the perfect [nature]—has become free from the fog and mist of conceptions, it is not asserted that this perfect [nature] changes [in any way]—it is absolutely without any arising or ceasing in terms of itself, others, both, or neither.

In the same way, the fact of gold's remaining in its state of being immaculate is not changed by any stains, and the fact of water's remaining clear and moist is not changed in its nature, even if it becomes associated with sullyng factors, [such as] silt. Likewise, all that happens to the unmistakable path and the pure dharmas is that they just become associated with stains and sullyng factors through the conceptions of ignorance, but it is not asserted that these uncontaminated dharmas [the path and the pure dharmas entailed by cessation] change. Consequently, naturally luminous stainlessness is unconditioned and changeless. Therefore, though the nature of phenomena is referred to by the conventional term “fundamental change,” it is also called “permanent.”

The words “and so on” refer to its being like a buddha [statue's] existing in the shroud of a [decaying] lotus, honey's existing amid bees, a grain in its husks, gold in filth, a treasure in the earth, a tree's [sprouting] from a fruit, a precious statue in tattered rags, a cakravartin in the belly of a destitute woman, and a golden statue in clay.

[In due order, the respective obscuring factors in these nine examples correspond to the following mental obscurations.] The four that consist of the three latencies of desire, hatred, and ignorance, as well as the intense rising of all [three] are the factors to be relinquished through cultivating the mundane paths. The ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance is the factor to be relinquished through the cognition of realizing the foundation of knowable objects. The [afflictive] factors to be relinquished through seeing are relinquished through the path of seeing. The [afflictive] factors to be relinquished through familiarization are relinquished through [the path of] familiarization. The cognitive obscurations of the impure bhūmis are relinquished through the two wisdoms of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. The cognitive obscurations of the pure [bhūmis] are relinquished through the vajra-like [samādhi].

Thus, [the corresponding obscured factors in the nine examples correspond to] the buddha heart, the [single] taste of the [profound] dharma, the essence of its meaning, natural luminosity, changelessness, the unfolding of wisdom, the dharmakāya, the sām̄bhogikakāya, and the nairmāṇikakāya, [all of which] represent the pure unchanging and spontaneously present nature. These [examples and their meanings] are found in the *Uttaratantra* and the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. [The *Uttaratantra* also says]:

There is nothing to be removed from it  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
 Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
 It is not empty of the unsurpassable dharmas,  
 Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

This teaches the defining characteristics of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.<sup>2828</sup>

The same author's commentary on verse 17 of Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* also quotes our verse in question, but interestingly uses Nāgārjuna's *Pratītyasamutpādaḥṛdaya* as its source.

Therefore, in order to teach the conventional terms of cause and result with regard to this dharmadhātu, [lines 17ab] say:

This basic element, which is the seed,  
Is held to be the basis of all dharmas.

The basis of all uncontaminated qualities is the naturally pure dharmadhātu. This is also the seed and the basic element [for awakening]. As [Asaṅga's] commentary on the *Uttarantra* says:

Here, the meaning of “dhātu” is the meaning of “cause.”<sup>2829</sup>

The *Uttarantra*'s chapter on awakening states:

Just as space, which is not a cause,  
Is the cause for forms, sounds, smells,  
Tastes, tangible objects, and phenomena  
To be seen, heard, and so on,

Likewise, on account of being unobscured,  
The two kāyas are the cause  
For the arising of uncontaminated qualities  
Within the objects of the faculties of the wise.<sup>2830</sup>

For this reason, due to the obscurations of mind, mentation, and consciousness gradually becoming pure, [the dharmadhātu's] own stainless qualities appear. Hence, this is taught as “attaining great awakening.” In order to demonstrate that, [lines 17cd say]:

Through its purification step by step,  
The state of buddhahood we will attain.

However, there is nothing to be newly attained from something extrinsic [to the dharmadhātu], nor are there any obscurations other than being caught up in our own discriminating notions to be relinquished.

Therefore, these discriminating notions' own essence is that they, just like a mirage, lack any nature of their own. To directly realize this lack for what it is and to realize and reveal the basic nature of the naturally luminous dharmakāya—the perfect [nature]—as just this perfect [nature] means to have gone to the other shore, since it cannot be gauged by the mind of any naive being. This is stated in master [Nāgārjuna]'s text on dependent origination:

There is nothing to be removed from it  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Who sees actual reality is liberated.<sup>2831</sup>

### Dölpopa Sherab Gyaltzen

Dölpopa's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* explains I.154 as describing the principle of emptiness free from the two extremes.<sup>2832</sup> In this naturally pure basic element of the tathāgata, which is ultimate reality and suchness, there are no previously existing flaws of afflicted phenomena to be removed because the nature of this basic element is to be primordially free from all adventitious stains. Likewise, there are not the slightest previously nonexistent qualities of purified phenomena to be added because the nature of this basic element is the true nature of the ultimate qualities (such as the powers) being primordially present in a spontaneous manner and being inseparable from it. The actual (or perfect) prajñā of knowing the ultimate (the subject) directly sees and rests in meditative equipoise in this suchness—the dharmadhātu that is the actual reality free from the two extremes (the object). This results in supreme familiarity with it and, through the gradual arising of the wisdom of directly seeing the actual reality of the nature of phenomena just as it is, one will attain the liberation from the adventitious stains to be relinquished. On the path of seeing, one is liberated from the stains to be relinquished through seeing; on the path of familiarization, from those to be relinquished through familiarization; and on the final path of nonlearning, from the entirety of the two obscurations including their latent tendencies.<sup>2833</sup>

### Yeshé Dorje

Yeshé Dorje's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* explains I.154 as the teaching on the actual way of being of the basic element by identifying its essence:

In general, among all phenomena, there is no entity whatsoever that withstands analysis. Therefore, just like illusions and dreams, they are without any nature. Consequently, there is not the slightest established phenomenon to be removed or to be added in any phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. As the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* says:

When phenomena are empty in this way,  
What is there to gain and what to lose?<sup>2834</sup>

In particular, there is no characteristic of afflicted phenomena to be removed from the basic element that is completely pure by nature because being naturally free from adventitious stains is its nature. Nor is there the slightest need for any characteristic of purified phenomena to be newly added (that is, to be set up) because the inseparable attributes are its nature. To see this actual reality as it really is, that is, in an unmistakable manner, is the path. Based on that, through directly seeing this actual reality (the object to familiarize with), the fruition is to be liberated temporarily from the factors to be relinquished through seeing and ultimately from all stains without exception.<sup>2835</sup>

*Uttarantra* I.155 is said to determine the basic element as being free from extremes through eliminating disputes:

It may be said, “Isn’t the basic element merely empty [in the sense] of being nothing whatsoever? How is it suitable as something in which there is nothing [to be removed and] to be added?” The basic element (the subject) is not such [an emptiness] because it is empty of the seeming adventitious stains, which have the characteristic of being separable (that is, being suitable to be disconnected), but it is not empty of the attributes that are the unsurpassable qualities, which have the characteristic (that is, the nature) of being inseparable (that is, not being suitable to be disconnected). The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* says:

The tathāgata heart is empty of all cocoons of afflictions that are separable [from it] and [can] be realized as being divisible [from it]. It is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable [from it], [can]not be realized as being divisible [from it], and far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā [in number].<sup>2836</sup>

One should analyze through one's own ability<sup>2837</sup> how this applies to eliminating disputes. This teaches the defining characteristic of emptiness in an unmistakable way since it teaches what its manner of being free from the extremes of superimposition and denial is like. As the commentary says:

Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent.<sup>2838</sup>

The *Bodhisattvabhūmi* states:

Some śramaṇas or Brahmans neither assert that of which something is empty nor do they assert what is empty of what. Such is called "a bad grasp of emptiness." For what reason? Emptiness is reasonable by virtue of that which is empty being really existent and by virtue of that of which it is empty not being really existent. By virtue of everything's being nonexistent, where would what be empty of what? Therefore, the emptiness [in the sense] of such [nonexistence] is not reasonable. Hence, such represents a bad grasp of emptiness. So how is emptiness grasped well? Since one sees that something's not existing somewhere [means that] the latter is empty of the former, one understands, in accordance with true reality, that what remains there really exists there. This is called "engaging emptiness unmistakably as it accords with true reality."<sup>2839</sup>

This kind of realization of the mode of being of the profound nature of phenomena is called "the wisdom of the tathāgata heart" or "the wisdom of emptiness." Without it, the expanse cannot be realized, and those who are distracted to [anything] outside of it are those whose minds are distracted from emptiness. Therefore, the tathāgata heart is not the object of those who have fallen into the views about a real personality because it is the heart of the dharmakāya. [The predicate] entails [the reason] because [the tathāgata heart] is the remedy for [all] views. It is also not the object of those who delight in mistakenness because it is the heart of the supramundane [dharmas]. [The predicate] entails [the reason] because it is taught as the remedy for mundane



dharmas, such as impermanence and suffering. Nor is it the object of those whose minds are distracted from emptiness because it is the heart of the pure dharmas. [The predicate] entails [the reason] because it has the nature of being empty of adventitious stains. This and so on is the meaning of the commentary.<sup>2840</sup>

### Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen

Gyaltsab's commentary on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55 says that (1) the first verse represents the identification of the nature of the basic element, while (2) the second verse provides the proof for that.<sup>2841</sup> (1) The explanation of the nature of the basic element is threefold: (a) the ground that is the basic nature of all entities, (b) the view of realizing that, and (c) the fruition of having become familiar with that view.

(1a) Gyaltsab's actual glosses of I.154 are quite similar to Rongtön's (see below), explaining that in this naturally pure basic element there are no previously existing referent objects of the clinging to a personal and phenomenal identity nor any afflictions established by a nature of their own that are to be newly removed because the referent objects of the twofold clinging to identity and afflictions established by a nature of their own never existed in the first place. This indicates that no matter to which phenomenon one may cling as being really existent, this is a superimposition that strays from the actuality of the basic nature and that the referent objects of such clinging are not established in the first place. The clinging to the afflictions as being established by a nature of their own also is a form of clinging to an identity of phenomena, while this clinging to the afflictions' being explained separately from the clinging to an identity of phenomena entails an intention. Nor are there the slightest previously nonexistent two kinds of identitylessness to be added to this basic element because to be devoid of any personal and phenomenal identity is its nature. This indicates that the statement "The two kinds of identitylessness do not exist" is a form of denial in terms of wrongly engaging the actuality of the basic nature and that the negation of the referent objects of such wrong engagement is nothing to be newly added. To explain in general that the stains are not to be removed and that their remedies are not to be generated without specifying what is to be negated is a denial of the factors to be relinquished and their remedies.

Also, I.154b is adduced for the sake of establishing what I.154a explains—when it is established that any assumed previously existing real establishment of the afflictions is not to be newly removed, it is established

that any previously nonexistent emptiness of a real existence of the afflictions is not to be newly added either. This is the explanation in terms of what is taught explicitly here.

In terms of connecting this to its instances (*mtshan gzhi*), in the person or the skandhas, there is nothing really established that is previously existent to be newly removed. Therefore, when the emptiness of real existence—ultimate reality—is established, it is established that there is not the slightest previously nonexistent phenomenon empty of real existence, which is delusive and illusion-like, to be newly added either. Consequently, this also represents the establishment of the seeming reality of all agents and their objects being tenable within the actuality of their being empty of being established by a nature of their own.

In brief, I.154ab teaches the union of the two realities, for which it suffices to accept in one's own system (a) the ultimate reality that is the emptiness of real existence in that there is not the slightest object to which the clinging to real existence could be directed and (b) the seeming reality that consists of all the presentations of agents and their objects.

(1b) As for the view of realizing this union of the two realities, the *prañā* that realizes the lack of nature and sees actual reality—the emptiness of a person and the skandhas being established by a nature of their own—as it really is the view of fully realizing the actuality of the basic nature.

(1c) As for the fruition of having become familiar with that view, if one has embraced it with the vast means that represent the aspect of *mahāyāna* conduct, thus having seen actual reality directly, and then familiarizes oneself with it again and again, one will attain liberation—the state of completely perfect buddhahood.

(2) *Uttaratantra* I.155 provides the proof for this. In this basic element there are no previously existing afflictions established by a nature of their own that are to be removed because the basic element is empty of adventitious stains established by a nature of their own, which have the characteristic of being separable and divisible from it by virtue of having cultivated their remedies. That is, the basic element is empty of these afflictions in the first place. This teaches the basic nature of both realities—the afflictions' being divisible from the basic element through familiarizing with their remedies and any afflictions established by a nature of their own never having existed in the first place. Nor is there any previously nonexistent emptiness of afflictions established by a nature of their own to be newly added because what exists primordially is the basic element's not being empty of the emptiness of afflictions established by a nature of their own, with this

emptiness being the focal object due to which it is suitable for the unsurpassable buddhadharmas such as the powers, which have the characteristic of being inseparable from it, to arise. This teaches that the cause for the arising of the buddhadharmas—ultimate reality, which is the focal object of the *prajñā* of directly realizing identitylessness—exists primordially.

Thus, these two verses teach the ground (ultimate and seeming reality), the path (the *prajñā* of directly realizing identitylessness), and the fruition (being able to attain completely perfect buddhahood). To assert that the seeming, such as a vase's being empty of a vase, is self-empty and that ultimate reality is a really existent ultimate that is other-empty means to be outside of what Maitreya holds and represents the extremes of denial and superimposition, respectively.

In further commenting on RGVV on I.154–155, Gyaltsab says that in this naturally pure basic element of the *tathāgatas*, there are no previously existing characteristics or focal objects of afflicted phenomena and the clinging to a personal and phenomenal identity that are to be newly removed because it is the nature of this basic element to be free from adventitious stains that are established by a nature of their own. This indicates that being empty of being established by a nature of its own, being empty of being established through its own specific characteristics, and being empty of being established by its own essence are ultimate reality. One should understand that this teaches the presentation of the two realities as being equivalent to Nāgārjuna's position. Nor is there the slightest previously nonexistent characteristic of purified phenomena (identitylessness as the focal object of the *prajñā* of directly realizing identitylessness) to be newly added to this basic element because the emptiness of a nature—the true nature of the pure phenomena that are inseparable from it through anything (such as remedies)—is the nature of this basic element. Thus, one clearly sees through the *prajñā* of directly realizing identitylessness that when some phenomenon established by a nature of its own does not exist in some basis, the latter is empty of the former. During the phase of subsequent attainment, in accordance with true reality, one understands that what remains there—being empty of a nature of its own—always exists there.

### Rongtön Shéja Günsi

Rongtön's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* explains I.154–55 together as presenting the defining characteristics of the basic element that is to be realized.<sup>2842</sup> He takes the adventitious stains to be nothing but the mistaken notions about the two kinds of identity in terms of persons and phenomena,

while the unsurpassable dharmas are nothing but the pure nature of phenomena that consists of the two kinds of identitylessness.

Beginning by referring to Ngog Lotsāwa's explanation, Rongtön says that in this basic element, there are no previously existing two kinds of identity, the focal objects of the stains, to be removed because it is primordially empty of these two kinds of identity, the focal objects of the adventitious stains, that have the characteristic of being separable from it. This teaches that the basic element is free from superimposition. In this basic element, there are also not the slightest two kinds of identitylessness, the focal objects of purified phenomena, to be newly added because it is not empty of these two kinds of identitylessness, the focal objects of the unsurpassable dharmas, that have the characteristic of being inseparable from it. This teaches that the basic element is free from denial.

Having stated the characteristics of the basic element free from superimposition and denial in this way, its perceiving subject—the viewing of actual reality—is taught. That is, actual reality (the two kinds of identitylessness) should be viewed as it really is. Through viewing it in this way, if the actual reality that is personal identitylessness is seen, one is liberated from the afflictive obscurations, and if the actual reality that is phenomenal identitylessness is seen, one is liberated from the cognitive obscurations.<sup>2843</sup>

Rongtön declares that the word “characteristic” in “the characteristics of afflicted phenomena and purified phenomena” in RGVV here refers to “focal object” because RGVV explains the following on the jewel of the dharma:

[However,] this [afflictiveness] should be seen in the same manner as a thorough investigator does who does not see any characteristics or focal objects of this [afflictiveness]. When neither characteristics nor focal objects are seen, true reality is seen. Thus, these phenomena are completely and perfectly realized by the Tathāgata as being equal by virtue of their equality. In this way, [the Tathāgata] does not see characteristics and focal objects, which are nonexistent, and sees ultimate reality, which is existent, in just the way it is in true reality. By virtue of [this seeing and nonseeing, the Tathāgata] completely and perfectly realizes the equality of all phenomena through the wisdom of equality, in which neither of these two [nonexistent characteristics and the existent ultimate reality] is to be removed or to be added.<sup>2844</sup>

In other words, in this basic element, there are no characteristics of afflicted phenomena—the stains—that exist by a nature of their own to be removed because adventitious stains are empty of any existence by a nature of their own. These stains are separable from the sugata heart because they have the characteristic of being divisible from it. Nor are there the slightest characteristics of purified phenomena—the factor of its natural purity—to be newly added to the basic element because it is not empty of the natural purity that consists of the unsurpassable dharmas. For these have the characteristic of being inseparable from the naturally pure basic element. RGVV says:

because the pure nature of phenomena is its nature.<sup>2845</sup>

The unsurpassable dharmas are the naturally pure nature of phenomena, such as the powers, because the intention here is that this nature of phenomena exists in all sentient beings in a pervasive manner. As the *Uttarantra* says:

Since it has the true nature of completely perfect buddhahood,  
The basic element of sentient beings is like a treasure.<sup>2846</sup>

And:

Awakening takes hold of sentient beings.<sup>2847</sup>

The naturally pure nature of phenomena is referred to as “unsurpassable dharmas” because the qualities such as the powers arise through having familiarized with the true nature of phenomena by focusing on it. The reason for the basic element’s not being empty of the unsurpassable qualities is “because the pure nature of phenomena is its nature.”

Gö Lotsāwa

Like Jñānaśrīmitra and the Eighth Karmapa (see below), Gö Lotsāwa’s commentary on the *Uttarantra* also comments on both *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 and *Uttarantra* I.154, taking them to have different meanings in their respective contexts. According to Gö Lotsāwa,<sup>2848</sup> *Uttarantra* I.153 indicates that the tathāgata heart is not realized merely through devotion, while I.154 teaches that it is realized through prajñā alone. The comments on I.154 begin with a question: “It is explained that since naive beings

superimpose a self onto the tathāgata heart and śrāvakas superimpose phenomena onto it, they do not see it. Therefore, this states implicitly that the tathāgata heart is seen through viewing persons and phenomena as identityless. Still, it is taught that even if one wishes to view emptiness, through the mind being's distracted elsewhere from emptiness, one does not realize the tathāgata heart. Hence, if the tathāgata heart is described through the principle or the word 'emptiness,' what is this tathāgata heart that represents emptiness?" The answer is given in I.154–55:

There is nothing to be removed from this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

The basic element is empty of what is adventitious,  
 Which has the characteristic of being separable.  
 It is not empty of the unsurpassable dharmas,  
 Which have the characteristic of being inseparable.

Since the first verse is in common with the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, one should first understand the manner in which master Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṅkāralokā*<sup>2849</sup> and *Abhisamayālaṅkāravivṛti*<sup>2850</sup> explain it in the context of the second wheel of dharma:

Since it is not tenable to become liberated from clinging to [real] entities [otherwise], without removing or adding anything from any phenomenon through what has the nature of denial or superimposition, the very nature of dependently originated form and so on that actually exists on [the level of] the seeming should be examined as [ultimately] having the nature that is the lack of nature and so on. Thus, just as an illusory elephant's defeating another illusory elephant, if true reality is seen through putting an end to mistakenness, one will be liberated.

The verse in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* that immediately precedes V.21 says:

That phenomena exist and, at the same time,  
 The cognitive obscurations of the teacher  
 Are terminated—this claim by others  
 I consider as amazing.

This states that if an actual nature of entities did exist, it would not be tenable for the buddha to be liberated from the cognitive obscurations. With this in mind, Haribhadra formulates the reason “Since it is not tenable to become liberated from clinging to [real] entities [otherwise]” at the beginning of his above explanation, which comments on the words “from this” in V.21.<sup>2851</sup> So through what is one liberated then? One is liberated through seeing that phenomena lack a nature of their own. However, V.21 and its comments teach that this viewing of phenomena as lacking a nature of their own does not eliminate the seeming reality of phenomena nor does it add the ultimate. “Any phenomenon” in Haribhadra’s comments refers to any phenomena such as form or consciousness being suitable to be taken as the bearers of the nature of phenomena. When one looks at these bearers of the nature of phenomena as being phenomena that lack a nature of their own, one should look in a straightforward manner, without removing their mere existence through statements that have the nature of denial (saying that phenomena do not even exist seemingly or conventionally) or adding anything that does not exist through statements that have the nature of superimposition (saying that phenomena exist ultimately). The bearers of the nature of phenomena, such as form, are not eliminated by saying that they do not exist at all—their actual existence on the level of what seems to be is said to be seeming reality because their causal arising in the manner of dependent origination is established through valid cognition. Though the bearers of the nature of phenomena are not apprehended as possessing certain distinct features, what is apprehended as these bearers is what represents seeming reality. Therefore, Haribhadra comments on “actual reality” in V.21c as being “the very nature that actually exists on [the level of] the seeming.”

The phrase “should be examined as [ultimately] having the nature that is the lack of nature and so on” comments on “is to be seen as it really is” in V.21c. As for “the nature that is the lack of nature,” since the lack of nature is not fabricated, it is said to be the essence, the nature, the ultimate, and the actual reality. Thus, the predicate to be proven is “the lack of nature.” The phrase “should be examined” is a synonym for “is to be seen,” which means to be seen through inferential valid cognition. “Thus,” with what is dependently arisen’s lacking a nature, both the factors to be relinquished (clinging to real entities) and their remedy (wisdom) are the seeming. Consequently, since both the factors to be relinquished and their remedy do not actually exist, “just as an illusory elephant’s defeating another illusory elephant,” through the elephant of seeing true reality putting an end to the elephant of mistakenness, one will attain liberation. Though it is stated

here that seeing the ultimate is the cause of liberation, it is not said that one is liberated merely through seeing the ultimate and that there is no need for becoming fully familiar with it.

As for the manner in which this verse is understood in the context of the final wheel of dharma, “from this” (Skt. *ataḥ*, Tib. *’di las*) means “because of this”—because of this natural purity of the basic element, it is referred to as “emptiness.” It is referred to as “empty” because there is no characteristic of afflicted phenomena that serves as their nature and is to be removed. It is referred to as “-ness” because there are not the slightest qualities that are nonexistent and to be produced or newly added—the basic element primordially has the nature of these qualities. Therefore, the nature of the basic element is empty of the adventitious stains, which have the characteristic of being suitable to be relinquished through separating them from the basic element. However, the basic element is not empty of the subtle elements that are the unsurpassable dharmas such as the powers, which have the characteristic of being inseparable from it and being unfabricated. This is what “-ness” means.

When the Mādhyamikas say that all entities are emptiness, there are two ways in which this is to be understood. To understand it as entities’ being emptiness without there being anything that is not emptiness is an exclusion of possession by others. To understand it as entities’ being empty of a nature of their own but existing as mere entities is an exclusion of non-possession and therefore an implicative negation.<sup>2852</sup> When the inferential valid cognition of realizing that a vase lacks a nature of its own arises, what is assessed explicitly is a nonimplicative negation but what this also makes understood implicitly is that this vase is an entity empty of real existence. Therefore, there is no need to search for a second valid cognition to realize that it is like an illusion. In the final wheel of dharma, when examining the nature of adventitious attachment and so on, one does not see any nature of an object to be attached to or its subject—attachment itself. However, the basic ground of attachment is present as sheer naturally pure awareness, and its being present in this way means that its qualities (such as the supernatural knowledges) appear without deliberation too. As *Uttaratantra* I.94ab says:

Therefore, without attaining buddhahood,  
Nirvāṇa is not attained.



It should be understood that this reasoning that is explained as pertaining to the phase of the fruition is also to be adduced during the phase of the path.

As for “actual reality is to be seen as it really is,” “actual reality” is the emptiness that is the single mode of being, and “to be seen as it really is” refers to seeing and familiarizing with it on the ten bhūmis as it really is. As for “whoever sees actual reality is liberated,” by virtue of the cause that consists of the cognitions of seeing actual reality up through the tenth bhūmi, the consummate liberation of buddhahood will be attained.

This is followed by Gö Lotsāwa’s quoting RGVV’s entire comments on I.154–55,<sup>2853</sup> on which he then elaborates as follows. I.155 teaches the meaning of I.154 in summarized form. Because the basic element is naturally pure,<sup>2854</sup> it is the subject in question. That there is no cause<sup>2855</sup> of afflicted phenomena to be removed from it is the predicate. Since it is explained in the context of teaching this basic element through the nine examples that the tathāgata heart is delivered from the cocoons of its stains, one may assume that one needs to remove some stains that have a nature of their own, but such a concern is put to rest here. That the tathāgata heart is to be delivered by removing its stains is merely how things seem to be. Ultimately, the (false) imagination that is the cause that produces afflicted phenomena is not something to be removed because it is completely pure in terms of its own nature. For the reason that entails the above predicate is that, by its own nature, the basic element is free from adventitious stains—whatever is a nature of its own is unfabricated and therefore is not adventitious, just as the appearance of clouds in the sky does not change in the slightest any part of the sky into anything else. The outcome of this explanation is that since the stains of (false) imagination lack a nature, they can be removed—if they had a nature, they could not be removed, just like the tathāgata heart.

Also, to this<sup>2856</sup> basic element (the subject) there is not the slightest cause of purified phenomena to be added (predicate) because the true nature of the inseparable pure dharmas is its nature (reason). Purified phenomena consist of cessation and the path, and their cause consists of proper mental engagement. When having familiarized with this mental engagement, the unsurpassable qualities are not to be added as something previously non-existent that is newly observed. Since these qualities and the basic element are primordially inseparable, proper mental engagement simply means to focus on the basic element just as it is. Since it is the true nature of the basic element to be primordially pure of stains, this is its unfabricated nature. One should understand that this teaches that there is no need for two separate kinds of familiarization—familiarizing with the basic element’s natural

lack of stains as well as familiarizing with its being the cause for the arising of qualities.

In other words, in terms of the nature of the mind, there is no need to remove flaws or to newly add qualities. Therefore, the tathāgata heart is empty of the cocoons of the stains, which possess the two features of being separable and being known to be divisible from it, since they do not touch its nature. But it is not empty of the inconceivable buddhadharmas that far surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā in number, which have the two features of being inseparable from the basic element (having the same nature) and not being known to be divisible from it. Therefore, this is called “-ness.” You may wonder, “But if these qualities are said to surpass the number of sand grains in the Gaṅgā, do they have the same nature or a different one?” They are definitely of the same nature—the ten powers are only presented as ten by virtue of being divided in terms of their objects, but they are not ten different qualities by virtue of their own nature (the same goes for the other qualities). Therefore, in terms of the dharmakāya, though the aspects of infinite knowable objects are distinct and not mixed, said qualities are of the same nature. Hence, they are free from the flaw of being many. This nature is free from all reference points, and thus they cannot be characterized by any characteristics whatsoever. Hence, they are also free from being one. Thus, “inconceivable” means that their own nature cannot be demonstrated. Still, their “surpassing the number of sand grains in the Gaṅgā” indicates that, in terms of enumeration, they are different. This is the meaning stated in I.155.

Thus, no matter in which teachings of the Buddha the word “emptiness” is mentioned, the meaning of all these cases is as follows. One clearly sees through valid cognition that when some phenomenon to be negated does not exist in some basis of negation, this basis is empty of that phenomenon. At that point it is said that what has been negated does not exist in this basis. In accordance with true reality, one understands through this single valid cognition that the remainder (both this basis and its attributes) of what has been negated there always (that is, definitely) exists in this basis.

This means that no matter what kind of negating reason it may be, there is none whatsoever that does not implicitly indicate an affirmed phenomenon. If it were possible not to indicate such an affirmed phenomenon, it would be possible that there are persons who, after having rejected merely what is to be rejected, do not wish for anything to be adopted instead. In that case, one would not see any persons anywhere who do not accomplish all their desired objectives. Here, if one realizes the tathāgata heart to be

pure of adventitious stains, one will definitely and in any case direct one's mind toward its qualities, just as when one hears that the blurred vision of one's old father has been cured and thus immediately understands that he can see forms clearly now.

If emptiness is realized in an unmistakable manner, this will also demonstrate the qualities of implicitly having put an end to the three kinds of obscurations (such as the views about a real personality) that obscure the tathāgata heart. Here, RGVV first teaches the general negation of the extremes of superimposition and denial, saying that the two verses I.154–55 elucidate the unmistakable defining characteristic of emptiness since it thus is free from the extremes of superimposition and denial. The explanation of the meaning of “empty” eliminates the aspect of superimposition within being mistaken about emptiness, and the meaning of “-ness” eliminates the extreme of denial within being mistaken about emptiness. Therefore, “unmistaken” also refers to the defining characteristics that make one understand of which features emptiness is empty.

This twofold mode of being of the distinctive features of emptiness—being empty of adventitious stains and not being empty of qualities—is the true actuality of emptiness. Those bodhisattvas whose minds stray from this understanding of emptiness and who mentally engage in many ways in what is not it (regarding it as a kind of extinction or as being the same as, or different from, form and so on) are said to be distracted from it. During the phase of the view, those who hold such wrong views about emptiness do not rest in meditative equipoise in this true actuality and thus do not attain superior insight, nor will they attain one-pointed calm abiding. Therefore, it is said that their minds are distracted from emptiness during the phases of both view and meditation. If one understands the emptiness explained here, one will neither think that the extinction of desire is emptiness, nor that this very desire is emptiness, nor that emptiness exists somewhere else than in that desire. Therefore, through resting free from negation and affirmation right within however this very desire may appear, one will see its natural luminosity through superior insight. At the same time, no matter which thoughts may arise, they function as aids for samādhi, and thus this resting will also be one-pointed.

Here, it is ultimate emptiness that is explained as emptiness, which is the tathāgata heart that is also explained to be the ultimate reality that is called “the reality of the noble ones.” Without the samādhi during the level of engagement through aspiration that familiarizes with this tathāgata heart, one is not able to realize the path of seeing the expanse that is without

adventitious conceptions and, through the continuity of that, perceive it directly as the buddhabhūmi. On the other hand, it is taught that one is not distracted toward anything else, if one realizes emptiness, just as it is, in the way described.

With this perception of emptiness by the buddhas in mind, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* says that once the tathāgata heart has become free from its stains, the wisdom of those who dwell on the buddhabhūmi is also the tathāgatas' wisdom of realizing emptiness. There is no need to search for any other wisdom of realizing emptiness that is not the tathāgata heart. Having understood that the tathāgata heart's being primordially empty of what is adventitious is the path, it is exactly by virtue of becoming familiar with this that the unsurpassable qualities that exist in this very tathāgata heart unfold and thus become the wisdom of realizing emptiness.

This tathāgata heart is not seen directly by any śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, nor is it realized through any certainty that arises from familiarization because it is the extinction of afflictions that is seen as nirvāṇa. Without there being any other means of realizing this tathāgata heart, inasmuch as it is the dharmakāya heart—the dharmakāya's being the wisdom of liberation and therefore being the remedy for the views about a real personality—it is therefore said not to be the sphere of those who fall into the views about a real personality. For, though it is the dharmadhātu that gives rise to the view at first, its later purity is the remedy for all views. Inasmuch as the tathāgata heart is the dharmakāya, the ultimate heart of all dharmas beyond the mundane seeming, it is said not to be the sphere of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, who delight in being mistaken about the dharmakāya in terms of its impermanence and so on. For the supramundane ultimate dharmakāya is endowed with qualities such as being permanent and therefore is taught to be the remedy for mundane dharmas (the four kinds of mistakenness in terms of impermanence and so on). Inasmuch as the tathāgata heart is the heart of the naturally pure qualities (such as the powers), it is therefore said not to be the sphere of the above two kinds of bodhisattvas whose minds are distracted from emptiness. For the meaning of the phrase “the dharmas that are the pure qualities of the tathāgata heart, which are inseparable from the supramundane ultimate dharmakāya, are more powerful<sup>2857</sup> than other dharmas” is also the meaning of the phrase “they are empty because they have the nature of being empty of adventitious stains.”

Having taught the meaning of *Uttaratantra* I.154ab and I.155, there follows the meaning of I.154cd:

Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

The gate that serves as the cause of the principle of empty and –ness—the wisdom that is not different from the dharmadhātu in that both are a singularity as the dharmakāya—is the level of engagement through aspiration. Having realized that, by virtue of the above three distinct features of the dharmakāya (its being the wisdom of liberation and therefore being the remedy for the views about a real personality, its being the ultimate heart of all dharmas beyond the mundane seeming, and its being the heart of the naturally pure qualities), the natural purity of the supramundane ultimate dharmakāya serves as the remedy for those who entertain views about a real personality, those who delight in being mistaken, and those whose minds are distracted from emptiness. Here, to see this natural purity is to see actual reality. It is said that the bodhisattvas who dwell on the ten bhūmis do not behold the entire vast tathāgata heart through that seeing, but they see it a little bit. To see it a little bit is asserted to be the seeing of actual reality, just as it is, through the vision of wisdom. This means that “actual reality” is the tathāgata heart endowed with the above three distinct features. “Seeing” is asserted as the wisdom of seeing this tathāgata heart a little bit on the ten bhūmis. Having seen this actual reality, just as it is, on the first bhūmi, this seeing increases further and further up through the tenth bhūmi. For *Dharmadhātustava* 75–76 says:

Just as when the waxing moon  
Is seen more in every moment,  
Those who’ve entered on the bhūmis,  
See its increase step by step.

On the fifteenth day of waxing,  
Eventually, the moon is full.  
Just so, when the bhūmis’ end is reached,  
The dharmakāya’s full and clear.

What proves this, Gö Lotsawa says, is the verse that concludes RGVV’s comments on I.154–55:

Just as the sun [seen] in the sky through a gap in the clouds [is not seen in its entirety], you are not seen in your entirety here

Even by the noble ones who have the pure eye of insight but whose insight is limited.

Bhagavan, [only] those whose perceptiveness is infinite see your dharmakāya

In its entirety, which pervades the infinite firmament of knowable objects.

This means that, through the eye of the mind's being washed by the samādhi of emptiness, the eye of the mind of the noble ones on the ten bhūmis is pure of the stains of saṃsāra. But even they, when looking at the sky of the dharmakāya of the Bhagavan have only limited and partial insight. They are similar to a person wishing to look at the vast sky and seeing only a little bit of the orb of the sun through a gap in the clouds that mostly obscure it. Thus, they do not see all aspects of the qualities of the dharmakāya, nor do they see the dharmakāya itself completely. Since the buddhas alone possess infinite perceptiveness, they always see that the dharmakāya pervades all beings and that the light of its qualities pervades the expanse of the firmament of the dharmadhātu of infinite knowable objects.

The meaning of “whoever sees actual reality” in I.154d is that the buddhas see actual reality fully, and “is liberated” refers to being free from all obscurations.

It may be said, “But master Haribhadra says in his *Abhisamayālaṃkāra-lokā*:

Through having familiarized themselves with all phenomena's being identityless, by virtue of the dharmadhātu's being without parts, bodhisattvas realize it in its entire nature. However, in terms of giving rise to [particular aspects of] certainty [about it], it is discriminated as the actuality of omnipresence [on the first bhūmi and so on]. Through this, a very lucid cognition of directly perceiving all phenomena to be without nature arises. At that time, bodhisattvas have correctly engaged what is flawless and therefore attain the path of seeing.<sup>2858</sup>

Thus, he explains that when the path of seeing is attained, the dharmadhātu is realized in its entire nature because it does not have any parts. Here, however, it is explained that even those on the tenth bhūmi see the dharmakāya only a little bit. Isn't that very much contradictory?”

Since Haribhadra explains the dharmadhātu as phenomenal identitylessness, which has the characteristic of a negative phenomenon (or negation), it

is suitable to say that it is seen in its entirety on the path of seeing. However, the case here is different because the dharmakāya of the buddhas has the nature of a positive (or affirmative) phenomenon. Thus, these two explanations merely agree in that both use the name “dharmadhātu.” “That is true, but if it is explained here too that even bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi see that the dharmadhātu, which is established as naturally luminous mind and pervades all sentient beings, how can it be said that bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi see it only a little bit?” Just as the dharmadhātu of bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi is directly seen by them as their own tathāgata heart, they see many instances of the dharmadhātu pervading others and also gain certainty that this is the case for all sentient beings. However, it is not that they see such directly with regard to all sentient beings because they do not see all sentient beings in a direct manner. For when the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* explains the distinction between appearing and nonappearing sentient beings, it asserts that those below the earth do not appear while those above do appear to bodhisattvas. Here, the meaning of “seeing a little bit” is that when bodhisattvas first see their tathāgata heart, its qualities have not unfolded yet. Therefore, they only see these qualities as being small, but they see them increase further on the higher bhūmis. However, compared to those of a buddha, even in bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi, the qualities of the tathāgata heart are small.

### Dümo Dashi Öser

Dashi Öser first presents a number of divergent ways that Tibetans identify the nature of the tathāgata heart. According to the Geluggpas, the tathāgata heart is the emptiness of mind’s being empty of real existence, which is a non-implicative negation. The Sakyapas assert that the tathāgata heart is mind’s union of being lucid and empty. The Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, says:

Just this ordinary mind  
 Is called “dharmadhātu” and “heart of the victors.”  
 Neither is it to be improved by the noble ones  
 Nor made worse by sentient beings.  
 Without doubt, it may be expressed through many conventional terms,  
 But its actual reality is not understood through expressions.<sup>2859</sup>

In his actual comments on *Uttarantra* I.154–55, Dashi Öser closely follows RGVV and the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, saying that there are no afflicted phenomena to be removed from this tathāgata element that is completely pure by nature because it is its nature to be free from adventitious stains.

Nor is even the slightest purified phenomenon to be added to it because the inseparable and inconceivable buddha attributes are its true nature and essence. This tathāgata heart is empty of all cocoons of the afflictions that are separable and can be realized as being divisible from it, whereas it is not empty of the inconceivable buddha attributes that are inseparable, cannot be realized as being divisible from it, and surpass the sand grains in the river Gaṅgā in number.

### The Eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje

The Eighth Karmapa's *Lamp* does not explicitly comment on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55, but the following passage includes all the elements of the first verse:

In this system, the ultimate is the object that is seen by the tathāgatas—what truly exists, just as it is. The completely pure seeing of the tathāgatas is the realization of the wisdom of equality that there is nothing to be removed, since, in its nature, ultimate reality is not tainted by obscuring stains, and that there is no wisdom that is other [than] this very [ultimate reality] to be added to it. After having become lastingly free from the adventitious stains . . .<sup>2860</sup>

The correspondences to lines I.154ab in terms of there being nothing to be removed nor anything to be added are obvious. The phrase “the ultimate is the object that is seen by the tathāgatas—what truly exists, just as it is” corresponds to line I.154c. The phrases “the completely pure seeing of the tathāgatas” and “having become lastingly free from the adventitious stains” correspond to line I.154d.

A later passage in the *Lamp* combines the contents of I.155–56 and I.160 as well as RGVV's passage “Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent”:

After it was mainly explained [in the second turning of the wheel of dharma] that all phenomena of seeming [reality] are empty (just as illusions, dreams, and clouds), it is taught [here] that the remainder—the tathāgata heart, which is not empty of the heart of the unsurpassable dharmas—exists.<sup>2861</sup>



For the discussion of *Uttاراتantra* I.154 in the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, see appendix 3.

### Lochen Dharmaśrī

Lochen Dharmaśrī relates *Uttاراتantra* I.154 to the three natures, saying that there are two models in the Madhyamaka systems that assert Shentong due to the difference of asserting that all knowable objects are contained in the three natures versus condensing them into the imaginary nature and the perfect nature.<sup>2862</sup> In Yogācāra texts, the basis of emptiness is the dependent nature, the object of negation is the imaginary nature, and the dependent nature's being empty of the imaginary nature is the perfect nature. In texts such as the *Uttاراتantra*, suchness—the perfect nature—is empty of the imaginary nature. Therefore, in the essence of the perfect nature—the ultimate expanse and the suchness of mind—there are no afflictions to be removed nor any previously nonexistent qualities to be newly added because it is primordially pure by nature and possesses qualities that are spontaneously present.

### Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé

Jamgön Kongtrul's commentary on the *Uttاراتantra* explains I.154 as teaching the essence of emptiness and I.155 as describing the manner of being empty and not being empty.<sup>2863</sup>

In the basic element that is completely pure by nature, the sugata heart, there are no previously existent stains that are established as the nature of this basic element (the flaws of afflicted phenomena) to be removed because it is the nature of this [basic element] to be primordially free from all adventitious stains. Likewise, there are not the slightest previously nonexistent qualities of purified phenomena to be added because the nature of this [basic element] is its true nature of the ultimate qualities (such as the powers) being spontaneously present [in it] and being inseparable [from it] since the very beginning. Thus, the perfect prajñā of knowing the ultimate (the subject) directly views and rests in meditative equipoise in the actually real dharmadhātu free from the two extremes (the object), due to which there is consummate familiarity [with this dharmadhātu]. Also, through the gradual arising of the wisdom of directly seeing the actuality of the pure nature of phenomena, just as it is, liberation from the adventitious stains to be relinquished is attained. On the path of seeing, one will be liberated from the stains to

be relinquished through seeing. On the path of familiarization, one will be liberated from the stains to be relinquished through familiarization. On the final path, one will be liberated from the entirety of the two obscurations including their latent tendencies.

Mind's basic nature free from anything to be removed or added is free from extremes. Since the basic element is empty of the adventitious stains that have the characteristic of being separable, that is, divisible, from this basic element, it is free from the extreme of superimposing [undue] existence [onto it]. Since that basic element is not empty of the attributes that are the unsurpassable qualities (such as the powers) and have the characteristic of not being divisible from the basic element through being separable [from it], it is free from the extreme of denying it [by saying that] it does not exist. It is also liberated from the extreme of being both existent and nonexistent because [existence and nonexistence] are mutually exclusive. Precisely because of that, it is liberated from the extreme of being neither (the negation of the [third extreme]) too. Therefore, this alone is the principle of unmistakable emptiness liberated from the two extremes or the four possibilities.

For the same author's TOK that quotes and explains these two verses in the context of the view and meditation of *sūtra Mahāmudrā*,<sup>2864</sup> see the introduction. Elsewhere, TOK also briefly explains the contents of these verses without directly referring to them:

It is taught that this heart is empty of all adventitious flaws or stains. [However,] it is not empty of the attributes of unsurpassable qualities, but possesses them in a spontaneously present way. Therefore, with regard to its essence, there are no stains to be removed and no qualities to be added. This is not realized through mere one-sided study and reflection, but it is gradually realized through the stainless personally experienced or self-arisen awareness that comes from meditation.<sup>2865</sup>

The same author's *Guiding Instructions on the View of Great Shentong Madhyamaka* describes the essential parts of the main practice of distinguishing well existence, nonexistence, and so on, in accordance with the third turning of the wheel of dharma and the vajrayāna, once any suitable samādhi of calm abiding and superior insight has arisen, as follows.<sup>2866</sup> The tathāgata heart (the basis of distinctive features) that is endowed with the many qualities of freedom of a buddha (the distinctive features) is at

present the self-aware wisdom that is lucid and unceasing, is the innate natural state, and is experienced through study, reflection, and meditation. Exactly this is what abides as the basis of purification. After the adventitious stains (what is to be purified) have become pure, nothing but this basic nature that abides in oneself (the result of purification) becomes manifest, which is labeled as “the dharmakāya free from stains.” Though it arises as all aspects of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, from the very moment of their arising, these aspects do not move away from that ground, just as all kinds of reflections may appear in a stainless crystal ball, but from the very moment of their appearing do not mix with that crystal. In the same way, no matter how the appearances of saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, and the path may appear within this lucid and empty self-awareness that is stripped bare, they are self-arising and self-liberating, without ever tainting the essence of this awareness. Therefore, without there being any latent tendencies of views and flaws to be removed and without there being any need to newly add any distinctive qualities that did not exist before, the wisdom of the noble ones rests in meditative equipoise in emptiness. In order to bring this clearly to mind, the text has one recite and contemplate *Uttarantra* I.154.

Likewise, out of one’s trust in the ground that is suitable to be freed from the stains and is suitable for the qualities to arise, one contemplates *Uttarantra* I.155 as follows. Everything that is separable, such as karma, causes and results, karmic maturations, afflictions, skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, and dependent origination, has not only never existed ultimately, but even on the level of seeming reality, the tathāgata heart is merely associated with all these phenomena but is never tainted by any of them. By contrast, the inseparable buddha attributes that outnumber the sand grains in the Gaṅgā, such as the self-arisen major and minor marks, the powers, the fearlessnesses, the threefold foundation of mindfulness, great love and compassion, and immeasurable samādhis (such as the vajra-like samādhi) and wisdoms (such as dharmadhātu wisdom), are present in an intrinsic and primordial manner. Therefore, the tathāgata heart is not empty of them.

Furthermore, lines 91–94 in the Third Karmapa’s *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* are literally *Uttarantra* I.154, on which Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé’s commentary says the following:

In this mind as such, the sugata heart, there are no separate stains to be removed that are established as any real entities other than [just] our being fettered through our own discriminating notions of mistaken appearances. Since [this sugata heart] is naturally endowed with its

qualities, there is not the slightest to be newly added or produced that did not exist before. Therefore, actual reality—mind as such free from something to be removed or added—is to be seen as it really is, that is, in the manner of its being unable to look at itself. Through looking in this way [of not looking], it is seen that mind as such—the inseparability of dhātu and wisdom—actually *is* [this inseparability]. Hence, the adventitious stains are [nothing but our] discriminating notions, and these lack any nature of their own, just like mirages. If this lack [of any nature] is actually seen for what it is, one is liberated from being fettered by these discriminating notions.<sup>2867</sup>

### Mipham Rinpoche

Mipham Rinpoche's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* explains that I.154 identifies the emptiness that is to be realized.<sup>2868</sup> In this naturally pure basic element, there are no previously existing flaws of afflictions to be removed and not the slightest fraction of qualities to be newly added. The ultimate prajñā that is the perceiving subject that accords with actual reality sees and rests in meditative equipoise in actual reality—the basic nature free from superimposition and denial in this way—as it really is. Upon this prajñā's being utterly familiar with that, when actual reality is seen as it is, one is liberated from the two obscurations. What is the reason that the basic element is without anything to be removed or added? The basic element is empty of the adventitious stains, which have the characteristic of being separable (that is, divisible) from it in that they are different from the dharmadhātu's own nature, because its nature is primordially without stains. The basic element is not empty of the unsurpassable qualities such as the powers, which have the characteristic of being inseparable (that is, indivisible) from it by their very own nature. Since it is primordially endowed with them, they do not need to be newly added. Therefore, it is like the sun and its rays.

The same author's *Synopsis of the Sugata Heart* says that the tathāgata heart is free from all reference points such as permanence and extinction and is the inseparability of the two realities, the single sphere (*thig le nyag gcig*), and equality.<sup>2869</sup> Within this basic nature, all possible appearing phenomena are of one taste and are true reality. To see that as it is is the seeing of the actual reality that is without anything to be removed or added. Therefore, to be free of all clinging is the excellent view of realizing the ultimate.<sup>2870</sup>

## Appendix 3: Indian and Tibetan Comments on Abhisamayālaṃkāra V.21

### Indian Commentaries

There is nothing to be removed in this  
And not the slightest to be added.  
Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

The earliest Indian commentators, Āryavimuktisena and Bhadanta Vimuktisena (sixth/seventh century), as well as most of the shorter summarizing commentaries do not provide any explanations of this verse. In the other commentaries, the verse is usually presented in the context of how the path of seeing is concordant to its ultimate fruition—buddhahood.

Haribhadra's (eighth century) *Abhisamayālaṃkāralokā*<sup>2871</sup> and *Abhisamayālaṃkāravivṛti*<sup>2872</sup> comment that since it is not tenable to become liberated from clinging to real entities in any other way, without removing or adding anything from any phenomenon through what has the nature of denial or superimposition, the very nature of dependently originated form and so on that actually exists on the level of the seeming should be examined as ultimately having the nature that is the lack of nature and so on. Thus, just as an illusory elephant's defeating another illusory elephant, if true reality is seen through putting an end to mistakenness, one will be liberated. The *Vivṛti* adds that after the position of (real) existence has been refuted, the position of the lack of nature is the sole one to be accepted by those who wish for liberation.

Among the six subcommentaries on Haribhadra's *Vivṛti*, the *Abhisamayālaṃkāravṛttipiṇḍārtha* by Prajñākaramati (late tenth century) says that the sole function of the path of seeing is to put an end to any additions and removals with regard to form and so on by virtue of the emptiness of

a nature of their own.<sup>2873</sup> This characteristic of putting an end to all superimpositions due to all phenomena's being without activity is the meaning of "great awakening."

According to the *Durbhodālokā* by the Yogācāra master Dharmakīrtiśrī (tenth/eleventh century) from Sumatra (a teacher of Atiśa), Haribhadra's phrase "the position of (real) existence's having been refuted" teaches that all philosophical systems about the apprehended and so on are false philosophical systems.<sup>2874</sup> Having stabilized and ascertained the position of the lack of nature (the philosophical system of all-pervasive identitylessness), this position of all entities being identityless is the sole one to be accepted by those who wish for liberation (perfect awakening) because it is the only reasonable one. As for "there is nothing to be removed in this," since it is not tenable to become liberated while entertaining them, the views about true reality by Buddhist tīrthikas that superimpose ultimate existence and so on are to be removed. As for "not the slightest to be added," the superimpositions of a self and so on by non-Buddhist tīrthikas are not to be added. This refers to the modes of the views about the seeming and the ultimate in terms of existence. The removal of views about nonexistence is expressed by the last two lines of V.21. "Actual reality" is actually real as, or by virtue of, dependent origination, that is, one should see and understand form and so on just as they are according to common consensus. What happens through that is that "whoever sees actual reality is liberated." That is, one becomes a buddha through familiarizing with their own nature, which represents the relinquishment of all afflictions including their latent tendencies.

In other words, denial consists of thinking that it is not tenable to become liberated from clinging to (real) entities and that awakening is impossible. Claims of any kind of ultimate existence and so on that invalidate identitylessness have the nature of superimpositions. These are removed if concerns about existing by nature are removed and one thus sees true reality by virtue of the valid cognitions of phenomena's lacking the nature of either being single or multiple and so on. When one realizes this without damaging any phenomena through any notions of a self and so on either on the level of the seeming or the ultimate, one is delivered from the twelve links of dependent origination (ignorance and so on). Therefore, the nature of the skandhas of form and so on being dependently originated and actually existing on the level of the seeming conventionally is void and lacks a nature, thus having the nature of being like an illusion. This is what one should examine and familiarize with. What happens through that is

that “just as one illusory elephant’s defeating another illusory elephant,” the unreal mistakenness that arises from the afflictions, which in turn arise from the views about a self, is relinquished by the unreal path. When true reality is seen by virtue of that, the seeing of, and the confidence in, all-pervasive identitylessness is liberation, which is the attainment of perfect wisdom. Since according to our own position all phenomena are illusion-like, the illusions of afflictions and so on are put to an end through the illusion of the path. Therefore, in the true reality of entities, there are neither antagonistic factors nor remedies. As it is said:

Non-nirvāṇa and nirvāṇa  
 Taught by the protector of the world  
 Are [like] knots made by space  
 Being untied by that very space.

According to the *Prajñāpradīpāvalī* by Buddhaśrījñāna (twelfth/thirteenth century), by virtue of the nature of true reality, from the very start, there is no aspect of previously existing antagonistic factors to be removed in these phenomena that have the character of consisting of the path of seeing and so on, nor is there the slightest remedial factor that is to be newly added to them.<sup>2875</sup> However, just as on the path of seeing and so on, the true end (*bhūtakoti*), which has the characteristic of being of a single taste and is the actuality in which no negations or affirmations whatsoever are established, is seen by those with unmistakable insight in accordance with this actuality as it really is. Therefore, just as an illusory king’s being defeated by another illusory king, through having put an end to mistakenness, when they finally see in the manner of not even seeing the true end, they will be liberated from all clinging. Thus, by virtue of the emptiness of arising and ceasing, they cognize the lack of a self. By virtue of external referents’ not being established, they cognize them as being mere mind. By virtue of the fact that there is no apprehender if there is nothing apprehended, they realize the nature of nonduality. By virtue of the fact that there is nothing to be observed in true reality, they practice the yoga of signlessness.<sup>2876</sup> Through the power of that, they perceive all phenomena, which, just like space, have the characteristic of nonconceptuality and are to be personally experienced, just as they are. By virtue of that, they will attain the fruition of realizing the nature of termination and nonarising, which is primordially without arising and nonarising.

The *Prasphuṭapadā* by Dharmamitra (eighth/ninth century) follows Haribhadra's comments but then relates V.21 to the notion of buddha nature.<sup>2877</sup> According to this text, Haribhadra's above phrase "the very nature of dependently originated form and so on actually existing on the level of the seeming" teaches that appearances are not removed. As it is said:

Therefore, this is not in order to remove

The appearances of those who propound the lack of nature.

One may wonder how such a variety of appearance will not fall into the extreme of being (real) entities. Haribhadra answers, "the very nature . . . should be examined as [actually] having the nature that is the lack of nature and so on." This is taught in the sūtras by the example of a *vīṇā*—if there is no effort of plucking the strings of the *vīṇā* and so on, there will be no sound, but one will not find any entity of sound even if one dismantles the body and so on of the *vīṇā*—it simply ceases. Likewise, this very profound tathāgata heart that does not fall into either *samsāra* or *nirvāṇa* is not just this very form and so on, but also their disappearance by being relinquished is simply a relinquishment by virtue of their being this sheer *dhātu* of peace. Therefore, one should understand that its nature simply cannot be expressed as being other than or being identical to them. Thus, Haribhadra says, "just as an illusory elephant's defeating another illusory elephant, if true reality is seen through unmistakableness, one will be liberated." This point is also stated by the Bhagavān Maitreya in his *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*:

Just as an illusory king's being defeated

By another illusory king,

The children of the victors who see

All phenomena are without pride.<sup>2878</sup>

The *Kīrtikalā* by Ratnakīrti (eleventh century), a student of Dharmakīrtiśrī, seems to lean more toward a Yogācāra explanation, saying that "in this" refers to the emptiness of apprehender and apprehended, which are imaginary by virtue of all phenomena's, which have the character of simply being the continuum of nondual lucid mind, being (mistakenly) divided by way of isolates.<sup>2879</sup> Therefore, there is nothing to be removed in this emptiness. Otherwise, it would follow that emptiness too is removed in this or from this nature of the mind that represents the foundation of that emptiness. "Not the slightest to be added in this" refers to a nature of matter and so



on. Actual reality is true reality, which has the character of emptiness. So how is this to be understood? To be seen means to be perceived by self-awareness, and as it really is means through valid cognition. Whoever sees actual reality will be liberated from the bondage of saṃsāra.

The *Śuddhamatī* by Ratnākaraśānti (early eleventh century) says that since they have the characteristic of emptiness, the variety of phenomena is nothing but the nature of phenomena.<sup>2880</sup> For that reason, there is nothing that represents antagonistic factors that are to be eliminated and removed. Nor is there the slightest that represents remedial factors that are to be added because they are without arising. So how is this to be understood? Actual reality is to be seen as it really is, that is, the variety of phenomena is to be seen in this way as being nothing but the dharmadhātu. Whoever sees in this way will also be liberated from the cognitive obscurations.

According to the same author's *Sārottamā*, there is nothing to be removed because neither persons nor phenomena exist.<sup>2881</sup> Nor is there the slightest to be added because personal and phenomenal identitylessness are without beginning and end. However, these two kinds of identitylessness are to be seen as actual reality as it really is because if the actual reality of personal identitylessness is seen, one is liberated from the afflictive obscurations, and, if the actual reality of phenomenal identitylessness is seen, one is liberated from the cognitive obscurations.

The *Marmakaumudī* by Abhayākaragupta (eleventh/twelfth century) comments that there is not the slightest to be added because all phenomena do not exist by a nature of their own.<sup>2882</sup> There is nothing to be removed because this nature of theirs is without beginning and end. Actual reality, just as it is by virtue of this nature of theirs, is to be seen as it really is. Whoever sees actual reality will be liberated from afflictive and cognitive obscurations. Therefore, the seeing of unreal phenomena is the antagonistic factor. To see them as lacking a nature is the remedy. Thus, just as an illusory elephant's being victorious over another illusory elephant, one is endowed with the seeing of true reality through having put an end to mistakenness.

In addition, Maitrīpa's *Dohakoṣapañjikā* quotes *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 in the context of lines 82–83 of Saraha's *Dohakoṣagīti* ("The People's Doha"):

The nature of connateness  
Is not an entity nor a nonentity.

Here, “entity” refers to the entities that appear to the eyes and so on as well as the entities that are conceived by the mind. Therefore, if one thinks that all these are the nature of connateness arising as variety, one will not be liberated. Consequently, since [this nature] is to be personally experienced, it is not a nonentity. Thus, it is said:

There is nothing to be removed from this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.<sup>2883</sup>

Maitrīpa’s *Caturmudrānīścaya* says that among the four mudrās, the dharmamudrā has the nature of the dharmadhātu—it is free from reference points, nonconceptual, uncontrived, free from arising, has the nature of compassion, and serves as the means that is beautified by supreme bliss.<sup>2884</sup> By virtue of being permanent in terms of an unbroken continuity, it has the nature of connateness. By virtue of prajñā arising from connateness, it is not different from it. It is also the inseparability of emptiness and compassion. Through being skilled in this, the path is to be understood as the proximate cause that is the aspect of suchness. Due to having familiarized repeatedly with that path, one will directly perceive the cessation that has the nature of connateness. As *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.21 says:

There is nothing to be removed from this  
 And not the slightest to be added.  
 Actual reality is to be seen as it really is—  
 Whoever sees actual reality is liberated.

The dharmamudrā represents the cause of mahāmudrā due to not being different from it.<sup>2885</sup>

### *Tibetan Commentaries*

Among the Tibetan commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, almost all of them agree that V.21 presents the Madhyamaka view, and they closely follow Haribhadra’s above explanation of all phenomena’s being free from complete nonexistence (by virtue of dependent origination) and real existence (by virtue of lacking any nature).

In particular, Ngog Lotsāwa's commentary says that verses V.18–21 discuss the nature of the fruition of the path of seeing, with V.21 teaching that liberation is justified for those with the view of emptiness.<sup>2886</sup>

Mipham's (1846–1912) commentary elaborates on V.21 that in the true nature of entities, there are no previously existing two types of obscurations that are to be removed and no previously nonexistent qualities (such as being empty) that are to be newly added because the nature of entities, which cannot be produced, cannot be contrived through removal or addition. Therefore, if one rests in meditative equipoise in the actual reality or nature free from superimposition and denial (equality without anything to be removed or added) by way of seeing it as it really is through a state of mind that accords with it in being free from denying and affirming, through the power of having familiarized with that, actual true reality—the basic nature of not abiding in any extreme whatsoever—is seen. Through this, one's mind stream is liberated from the bondage through conceptions about characteristics. This presents the ultimate essential point of the profound yoga of prajñāpāramitā. Thus, it is only in terms of the sheer way of how things appear that putting an end to the conceptions in one's mind stream that are mistaken about the nature of phenomena free from anything to be removed or added is called “relinquishing the factors to be relinquished,” while the arising of a state of mind that accords with the nature of phenomena is referred to as “the arising of realization.” However, in the basic nature, neither relinquishment nor arising are established.<sup>2887</sup>

Commenting on Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṃkāravivṛti*, the commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* by the Eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje, starts by saying that V.21 ascertains the position of the “lack of nature,” which is the system of Madhyamaka, as the sole position to be accepted by those who wish for liberation.<sup>2888</sup> Next, the Karmapa has someone ask why it is not tenable for the nondual wisdom whose nature is dependent origination to exist. If it existed in the manner of being established as an entity through a nature of its own, it is not tenable to become liberated from clinging to it as being such an entity. Therefore, not removing anything from phenomena (mere appearances) by denying that they exist in accordance with dependent origination and not adding anything to them by superimposing that they exist as being established through a nature of their own, all these merely appearing phenomena have the conventional nature of existing on the level of seeming reality as correct common worldly consensus that only satisfies as long as it is unexamined. This is to be examined as having the actual nature of being without any nature, nonarising, primordial voidness,

and so on. It may be argued that if all phenomena had the illusion-like nature of mere dependent origination empty of any nature, all presentations of factors to be relinquished and their remedies would be untenable. They are not untenable—just as an illusory elephant may defeat another illusory elephant, through producing dependently originating remedies that are empty of a nature of their own, dependently originating factors to be relinquished that are empty of a nature of their own are put to an end. Once true reality is seen by virtue of that, one will be liberated from bondage.

Furthermore, the Karmapa contrasts his own comments on V.21 with his comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154 in terms of the notion of nondual wisdom.<sup>2889</sup> As for the former, he says that, in this dependent origination that is the basic nature of emptiness free from all reference points, the aspect of the ultimate (nonmistakenness) is not to be removed and not the slightest aspect of the seeming (mistakenness) is to be added. Therefore, through the prajñā of realizing phenomenal identitylessness in accordance with the actual way of being of objects, the basic nature of suchness (actual reality) is to be seen as it really is. Then, to actually see, realize, or penetrate the lack of any nature (such as some identity's being established by a nature of its own) is what liberates from the clinging to phenomenal identity. As for the words “in this” in V.21a, the Karmapa says that according to Āryavimuktisena and Haribhadra, in the context of Madhyamaka, there are two kinds of nondual wisdom—nominal and nonnominal. Through their putting forth the first one of these wisdoms as not being really established because it is of the nature of dependent origination, all phenomena are nothing but emptiness. There is a purpose for saying it like that because the reason that the appearing aspect of all phenomena is dependent origination is what ascertains the aspect of their actual way of being to be emptiness. To ascertain this also has an outcome. If one relies on the activity of purifying one's mind stream through the reasonings in the context of studying and reflecting that explain in this way that all phenomena are empty of phenomenal identity, finally the power of meditation reaches perfection because this activity is the supreme means to manifest the path of seeing that phenomena are empty of identity.

On *Uttaratantra* I.154, the Karmapa comments that this verse identifies the emptiness beyond dependent origination, which is the nonnominal nondual wisdom to be seen during the path of seeing. Here, the words “from this” in I.154a identify the nonnominal nondual wisdom that is not suitable as a counterpart connected to the appearing aspect of the seeming or any phenomena that depend on it or are supported by it. As for the meaning of “there being nothing to be removed or added,” in the nature of this nondual

wisdom, no obscurations are to be removed and no wisdom is to be added. Rather, it is the object to be seen by personally experienced wisdom, but there is no chance ever of its being viewed by something else, that is, consciousness. Also, the nondual wisdom that is the object to be viewed is an entity. In sentient beings or adventitious stains (which are like darkness), the nondual all-accomplishing tathāgata wisdom in its entirety (which is like light) exists primordially. Within each one of all kinds or realms of sentient beings, there is no being whatsoever into which this wisdom has not always entered in its entirety because this all-accomplishing wisdom, through entering all sentient beings, eliminates the adventitious stains (these very sentient beings), just as light eliminates darkness. That this wisdom is able to eliminate sentient beings in this way is said in terms of not analyzing it through reasoning. But if one analyzes through reasoning, sentient beings or adventitious stains are not eliminated by buddhahood or nondual wisdom because what is to be eliminated (sentient beings or adventitious consciousness) does not exist from the very beginning. Thus, it is already eliminated in the first place and need not to be eliminated again. Also, buddhahood or nondual wisdom does not enter beings again in order to eliminate stains because it has the nature of always having entered them as that which eliminates the stains right from the start. However, as for ordinary mistaken beings, due to not realizing that sentient beings (or adventitious stains) do not exist from the very start, they think that what existed before is eliminated later. Due to not realizing that any factors to be eliminated have already ceased through the power of how entities are (that is, the factors to be eliminated being phenomena that are unarisen), beings think that these factors have been put to an end through the power of remedies. Due to not realizing that nondual wisdom exists primordially, beings think that this wisdom newly eliminated the adventitious stains through the power of its sudden arising.<sup>2890</sup>

The commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* by the Fifth Shamarpa, Göncho Yenla (1525–1583),<sup>2891</sup> explains V.21 in terms of mind's true nature—the stainless *tathāgatagarbha* with its natural qualities: “Since there are no stains in this [buddha] heart—the pure dependent [nature], the ālaya-wisdom—there is nothing to be removed and since it is of beginningless time, not the slightest wisdom to be newly added. ‘But how does one familiarize with it then?’ One familiarizes in the manner of actual reality—one’s own mind as such—seeing itself as it really is. At that point, with all dualistic clinging having vanished if actual reality, without the duality of what is looked at and what looks at it, is seen, the path of seeing is attained and one is liberated.”<sup>2892</sup>



## *Appendix 4: The Emptiness Endowed with All Supreme Aspects*

In the sūtra system, the meaning of the term “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects”<sup>2893</sup> is that genuine emptiness is not just some blank state of nothingness, but entails many supreme qualities. “All aspects” is usually explained as the six pāramitās and further pure qualities that represent the means on the path and reach their “supreme” culmination on the level of buddhahood. As the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra* describes this emptiness in detail:

These [bodhisattvas] don the armor of great love and dwell in the blessing of great compassion, thus turning them into the samādhi of accomplishing them in the form of the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects. You may wonder, “What is the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects?” It lacks incompleteness of generosity, lacks incompleteness of discipline, lacks incompleteness of patience, lacks incompleteness of vigor, lacks incompleteness of dhyāna, and lacks incompleteness of means. It lacks incompleteness of great love and lacks incompleteness of compassion, joy, and equanimity. It lacks incompleteness of the engagement in understanding reality, lacks incompleteness of bodhicitta’s considering sentient beings, and lacks incompleteness of the application of intention and superior intention. It lacks incompleteness of generosity, pleasant words, promoting the welfare [of others], and consistency in words and deeds. It lacks incompleteness of mindfulness and alertness. It lacks incompleteness of the foundations of mindfulness, the correct efforts, the limbs of miraculous powers, the faculties, the powers, the branches of awakening, and the eightfold path of the noble ones. It lacks incompleteness of calm abiding and superior insight. It lacks incompleteness of generosity, discipline, self-control, and being pleasing. It lacks incompleteness of embarrassment and shame. It is not endowed with any nonvirtuous

phenomena and is endowed with all virtuous phenomena. It is blessed by the uninterrupted mode of being of the Buddha, is engulfed in the blaze of the mode of being of the dharma, and is surrounded by the mode of being of the saṃgha. It is blessed by looking upon all sentient beings. It is exquisitely embellished by the full accomplishment of the buddhakāya, has the fully evolved buddha voice, and is endowed with the equality of buddha samādhi. It is endowed with the miraculous powers and the discriminating awarenesses of a buddha, is perfectly seized by the force of the ten powers, dwells in the four fearlessnesses, and accords with the eighteen unique buddha attributes. It is not mixed with the yānas of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, has eliminated [all] afflictions connected with latent tendencies, is not separated from the wisdom of the supernatural knowledges, is the teacher of all sentient beings, has attained the four reliances, and has attained the equality of mundane and supramundane phenomena. It is without blame by virtue of maturing all sentient beings, guides them, is skilled, and eliminates the suffering of all sentient beings. It is [the state in which] all afflictions have been purified, has crossed the stream [of saṃsāra], has severed all clinging, is utter natural peace, is the peace of all karma and afflictions, is equanimity by virtue of the nature of phenomena, and beholds all buddha attributes. It is inanimate through its own characteristics, is not released in order to grant blessings, is neutral on its own accord, always makes efforts in buddha activity, is composed by virtue of being utterly peaceful, and always blazes in order to mature sentient beings. This is called “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects.” . . . [Here follows the example of the painters] If it does not exhibit one single aspect among these aspects that perfectly accomplish the buddha attributes . . . it is not the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects. When the aspects of all buddha attributes have been brought together and when it does not coexist with any discursiveness in terms of any stirring of views and afflictions and any focusing on characteristics, this is the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects of bodhisattvas.<sup>2894</sup>

As for mahāyāna treatises, interestingly, the term does not appear in any Indian Yogācāra texts. In agreement with the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*, Kamalaśīla’s second *Bhavanākrama* emphasizes the need for cultivating this emptiness in meditation, since—unlike a bare emptiness without compassion (the aspect of skill in means)—this is the only path that leads to buddhahood.<sup>2895</sup> He says that one should make efforts in meditatively



accomplishing the emptiness that has a heart of great compassion, that is, all the accumulations of merit (such as generosity) and wisdom. If that happens, such a samādhi accomplishes the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects (this is followed by the above quote from the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*). Therefore, bodhisattvas must rely on generosity and so on as the means to accomplish all excellent buddha qualities. Otherwise, of what would these qualities be the results? Hence, the omniscient wisdom that is endowed with all supreme aspects is perfected through the means such as generosity. In his third *Bhavanākrama*, Kamalaśīla again refers to the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra*, saying that one should familiarize with the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects through being endowed with all virtues such as generosity, which thus does not refer to nothing but sheer emptiness.<sup>2896</sup> He provides another quote from the *Ratnakūṭa*, stating that, just as a king who is supported by his ministers performs everything that is necessary, the prajñā of bodhisattvas that is embraced or supported by skill in means performs all buddha activities. Therefore, the Buddha said that bodhisattvas will enter into the nirvāṇa of arhats if they rely on nothing but emptiness.

Sahajavajra’s commentary on Maitrīpa’s *Tattvadaśaka* 6 uses the term “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects” in its explanation of the union of calm abiding and superior insight in Maitrīpa’s pāramitā-based Mahāmudrā approach:

That [engaging bodhicitta] of the [pāramitā system alone], due to [its approach of] analysis [described above], is not completely pure. But here, [the engaging mind of bodhicitta] is to be cultivated through a nonanalytical mind right from the start. When the center of union is realized through the pith instructions of pāramitā that are adorned with the words of the guru, just this spontaneously and continuously engaging prajñā of the ultimate—the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects—is calm abiding and nothing else. . . . Therefore, this kind of union of calm abiding and superior insight is the path. What is not intended here is an engaging mind [of bodhicitta] that aspires for a fruition different [from that union]. As it is said:

What is called “the realization of emptiness”  
 In the thousands of collections of the dharma,  
 This realization is due to analysis.  
 The [realization] of the guru lacks analysis.

In order to clarify these [quotes], [Maitrīpa] instructs, “Since true reality dawns ceaselessly for those who are aware of its ground.” The ground of this engaging mind [of bodhicitta] is what has the nature of the suchness of the union [of appearance and emptiness, or the two realities, or of calm abiding and superior insight]. For those who are aware of [this] through the pith instructions of the genuine guru, true reality—the inseparability of emptiness and compassion, which is the defining characteristic of the ultimate bodhicitta—dawns ceaselessly in each and every moment.<sup>2897</sup>

In that vein, lines VI.24–27 of the Third Karmapa’s *Profound Inner Reality* say:

To do that, familiarize with day- and nighttime luminosity,  
Which is lucid yet nonconceptual.  
Enjoy mahāmudrā—  
The emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects.

Karma Trinlépa’s commentary on this explains:

Here, my guru, the mighty victor [the Seventh Karmapa] holds the following. Since the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects and the sugata heart are equivalent, “being endowed with all supreme aspects” refers to the sugata heart’s being actually endowed with the sixty-four qualities of freedom and maturation, and the meaning of “emptiness” is that this is not established as anything identifiable or as any characteristics. Therefore, he asserts that making it a living experience—cultivating this lucid yet nonconceptual [state]—is Mahāmudrā meditation.<sup>2898</sup>

The Third Karmapa’s commentary on verse 101 of Nāgārjuna’s *Dharmadhātustava* explains “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects” as follows:

The fundamental change in dependence on the stainless dharmakāya does not refer to having become nothing whatsoever. Rather, the oceans of the hordes of thoughts have come to rest in the sea of wisdom, which is the final consummation of the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects. As for “all aspects” in this [expression], they are all the above-mentioned dharmas, such as generosity, that make the

basic element unfold. Through “the supreme” of these [aspects, their] unsurpassable consummation [is expressed]. [These aspects are] “emptiness,” since they, in terms of their own essence, are nothing but purity itself and thus inseparable [from emptiness]. This is described in detail in the *Uttaratantra* through the example of the portrait [of a king].<sup>2899</sup>

The same author’s commentary on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* says that *Uttaratantra* I.154–55 “teaches the defining characteristics of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.”<sup>2900</sup>

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* quotes a verse that he attributes to Mañjuśrī<sup>2901</sup> and explains it as follows:

The emptiness of analyzing all aspects  
Is without a core, just like a banana tree.  
The emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects  
Will never be like that.

When the nature of all imaginary and dependent phenomena (such as the skandhas) is analyzed, their own nature is emptiness, just as in the example of a banana tree without pith. As for the perfect nature (the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects), in general, it cannot be analyzed and no matter how it may be analyzed, it does not become like that—empty of a nature of its own. For it never changes into anything else than this supreme kind of wisdom [of the perfect nature].

Pawo Rinpoche’s commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* also quotes this verse, saying that it comes from the tantras.<sup>2902</sup> The emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects is the emptiness that is endowed with all the supreme aspects that are remedies (such as generosity). Thus, it is both emptiness and what makes one attain unsurpassable awakening. This emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects is nothing but the emptiness that is taught in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* and commented on by Nāgārjuna. The reason is that this emptiness puts an end to all reference points and thus joins one with all the qualities of the paths, the bhūmis, and the final fruition. Therefore, to deprecate the Madhyamaka view through clinging to subtle “empty forms” and so on as being this emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects is not good.

In his introduction to the Seventh Karmapa's commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika* and other texts on valid cognition, the contemporary Karma Kagyü master Thrangü Rinpoche extensively quotes the Seventh Karmapa's student Karma Trinlépa as confirming the Karmapa's position that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas or "Great Mādhyamikas" (which are equivalent for the Karmapa). Thrangü Rinpoche adds that "this kind of middle path also accords with the texts of Nāgārjuna and his successors, and it is clear that it is not different from the intended meaning of the Madhyamaka that was transmitted from venerable Maitreya via Asaṅga and his brother." He concludes:

As for the meaning taught here, Madhyamaka is not the self-emptiness whose nature is a nonimplicative negation (an emptiness in the sense of extinction), but the ultimate reality that is the other-emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects. This is not [just] labeling the view of Mere Mentalism with the name *Shentong*. It is clearly nothing but what the sūtra collections of definitive meaning teach, what the great chariots comment on, and what the yogins who found siddhis familiarize with—the heart of the teachings, the path of the great Madhyamaka free from extremes.<sup>2903</sup>

In the vajrayāna teachings and in accordance with the four empowerments, the term "the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects" is explained as indicating the inseparability of appearance and emptiness, luminosity and emptiness, bliss and emptiness, and awareness and emptiness. In particular, the union of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects and great bliss is explained as representing the secret caṇḍālī and the meaning of EVAM. With regard to the Kālacakratantra, the term *Śrīkālacakra* is explained as follows: *kāla* (time) refers to changeless great bliss; *cakra* (wheel), to the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects; and *śrī* (glorious), to this bliss and emptiness being nondual. This "wheel of time" appears as "the outer" (worldly realms), "the inner" (the vajra body), and "the other" (the phenomena of the maṇḍala circle). A song on view, meditation, conduct, and fruition by the Thirteenth Karmapa says:

In the system of Kālacakra, it is said that the emptiness  
Endowed with all supreme aspects is superior to [the one in] the  
sūtras.

This is asserted to be the same essential point as the [above], the unity of the two realities.

By using the example of mirror divination for what appears  
Due to the difference in the profound essential point of means,  
It also speaks of “the seeming that has the form of emptiness”  
Or “emptiness that has the form of the seeming.”<sup>2904</sup>

This means that when practicing the first branch called “withdrawal”<sup>2905</sup> of the six-branch yoga<sup>2906</sup> of the Kālacakrantra, there appear ten signs of accomplishment. These are called “empty forms”<sup>2907</sup> and are regarded as actual manifestations of mind’s true nature—naturally luminous and changeless wisdom. The essence of this wisdom is the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects, and its nature is changeless great bliss. This wisdom appears as those ten signs through special methods that are embraced by nonconceptual samādhi. Here, “all aspects” refers to these illusion-like “empty forms,” which are inseparable from emptiness. “Supreme” means that this emptiness does not merely consist of the negation of the real existence of physical matter. These “empty forms” are also often compared to images that appear in mirror divinations. On this, YDC (320 and 273) quotes two passages from the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakrantra*:

This is the phase of being perfected as inner awareness, prajñāpāramitā, natural luminosity, Mahāmudrā, and the natural outflow of the dharma-dhātu’s having the form of innate joy. Vajrasattva and the mother of the buddhas are not the sphere of dependently arisen faculties but the sphere of the supreme faculty. They have the nature of utterly changeless bliss, are beyond phenomena [made] of subtle particles, and resemble [images in] mirror divinations and dreams. These are said to be the innate kāya (*sahajakāya*) of the victors because their nature is utterly changeless.<sup>2908</sup>

And:

Mahāmudrā is the one characterized by all dharmas that lack a nature of their own, is the one endowed with all supreme aspects, is prajñāpāramitā, and the one that gives rise to [all] buddhas. It is also expressed by the term “dharma source” (*dharmodaya*)—it is the dharma source from which all dharmas that lack a nature of their own will

arise. The dharmas that lack a nature of their own are the eighty-four thousand collections of dharmas such as the ten powers and the four fearlessnesses.<sup>2909</sup>

In the introduction to his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvātāra*, the Eighth Karmapa says that in the vajrayāna, the wisdom without any dualistic appearances of the latent tendencies of mistakenness entails many aspects (such as joy, “great attachment,” and the prajñā that realizes emptiness and compassion) and thus cannot be said to be without any aspects.<sup>2910</sup> Also, in the vajrayāna, a wisdom without aspects is not reasonable as the definitive meaning because the wisdom that is endowed with all supreme aspects is presented as the definitive meaning through greatly praising it. The phrase “being endowed with all aspects” in *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti* X.3a means that this wisdom has the function of seeing through unmistaken and nonconceptual direct (yogic) perception. The phrase “being without aspects” in the same line of text refers to this wisdom’s being beyond minute particles and being free from any conceptions. Thus, “being endowed with all aspects and being without aspects” refers to great prajñāpāramitā—the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme aspects. Also, it is refuted in the vajrayāna that wisdom’s own unique object is without aspect, while it is taught that the fruition of omniscience is attained by virtue of familiarizing with the wisdom of realizing the emptiness that is endowed with all aspects. If no aspects appeared for nondual wisdom, the explanations of it as being omniscience or “all-knowing” would not be feasible because it is not suitable to apply a plural if wisdom is presented as having nothing but itself as its object. Thus, it is through the power of the cognitive obscurations of nondual wisdom having been relinquished that it is the knowledge of all the aspects that can be known. In its knowing all aspects of all phenomena, unmistaken nondual wisdom (as well as its samādhis) is established as self-awareness and not some blank inanimate emptiness or a state without any mental activity at all.

In the Mahāmudrā tradition, we find a similar use of the term. For example, a short Mahāmudrā text by Mipham Rinpoche on stillness, movement, and awareness says:

Through directly looking at the nature of that mind that is still or moves, you will realize that it is empty in that any possible essence of whatever appears in whatever ways is not established. You will further realize that this “being empty” is not being empty in the sense of

extinction, as in [empty] space, but that it is the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects: while its aspect of luminosity that knows everything and is aware of everything is unimpeded, it is not established as any nature whatsoever. When you realize this secret pith of the mind, despite there being no looker that is different from something to be looked at, the fundamental state of naturally luminous mind as such is experienced. This is called “recognizing awareness.”<sup>2911</sup>

TOK says that in the context of tantra Mahāmudrā, *mudrā* (“seal”) refers to the notion of “union.”<sup>2912</sup> Since the nature of this union pervades all phenomena, it is “great” (*mahā*), that is, there are no phenomena that go beyond it. Such union is threefold. All outer appearances are the union of appearance and emptiness, while all forms of inner awareness that perceive these appearances are the union of awareness and emptiness. These two kinds of union are called “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects.” All feelings of those appearances and awareness meeting are the union of bliss and emptiness, which is called “utterly changeless great bliss.” Through taking the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects as the object that is to be perceived and through taking the realization of the entirety of this emptiness as being changeless great bliss as the perceiving subject, subject and object fuse into one. The empty forms that appear while practicing in that way are merely signs on the path of means, whereas the actual ultimate object to be realized is that just these ordinary present appearances are empty forms in every respect.





## *Appendix 5: The General Explanation of Tathāgatagarbha in Yeshé Dorje’s Commentary on the Uttaratantra*

This has three parts:<sup>2913</sup>

1. The presentations that contradict the scriptures
2. The presentation of what is established through scripture and reasoning
3. Rebutting objections to that

### **1. The presentations that contradict the scriptures**

This has three parts:

1. Refuting that the disposition is mere awareness
2. Through reasoning, refuting that it is a nonimplicative negation
3. Through scripture, refuting that it consists of the skandhas

#### **1.1. Refuting that the disposition is mere awareness**

Some say, “The nature of phenomena with stains and the factor that consists of the bearers of this nature are sheer primordially abiding awareness, and both are the naturally abiding disposition. Otherwise, buddha wisdom would lack a substantial cause.” Since mere awareness is a factor that is a bearer of the nature of phenomena, it is not reasonable that it is naturally luminous mind—self-arisen wisdom. Since it is primordially abiding, it is not a newly accomplished clear realization either. Therefore, if analyzed, it does not go beyond being the generality or the particular instances of the eight collections of impure consciousness. In that case, it is not tenable as the naturally abiding disposition because it is an obscuration. “But this mere awareness is luminous mind.” This is not tenable because it contradicts what *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* XIII.19cd says:

Apart from the mind that is the nature of phenomena, no other mind is proclaimed to be luminous in nature.

The *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* too says the same. Also, the consequence that buddha wisdom lacks a substantial cause is uncertain because the expanse itself is wisdom and because this is said more than once in the *Uttaratantra*. The *Mahāmudrātilakatantra* states:

Remember the understanding that the expanse is mind.<sup>2914</sup>

The sūtras say in detail:

Now, in order to dispel the mistakenness of those who cling to names, one should comprehend some synonyms of the ultimate. First, it is luminosity, all-empty, buddha wisdom, vajra wisdom, unsurpassable wisdom . . .

**1.2. Through reasoning, refuting that it is a nonimplicative negation**  
Some explain the mere lack of arising of the mind and the mere lack of real existence of all phenomena as the disposition. The isolate that is the mere negation of arising and real existence is a nonimplicative negation. This is not tenable as the disposition because then it follows that the horn of a rabbit too would be the disposition. If it is said that the basis of negation is the disposition, the question is what is claimed to be the basis of negation—the nature of phenomena or the bearers of this nature. In the first case, our own assertion is established, and it is a good phrasing of the meaning of the text. In the second case, it would very absurdly follow that all seeming phenomena are the disposition. Furthermore, it is taught that it is a mistake to claim the nature of phenomena to be a nonimplicative negation. Here, YDC quotes the *Kālacakratantra* and says that this means that connate wisdom is taught as the mantrayāna and is asserted as the ultimate definitive meaning. This is followed by three passages from the *Mahābherīsūtra*<sup>2915</sup> that, in brief, say that in the future some who are afraid of the mere words “self” and “what is mine” will propound the lack of a self and great emptiness and thus will not have faith in sūtras like this one that speak of the tathāgata heart as being permanent and the Buddha’s having a permanent self but will doubt them and be mistaken about them. People who are lazy, have corrupt discipline, and do not control their body, speech, and mind will discard such sūtras and instead train in those that speak about emptiness. Though emptiness and the lack of self are taught in all discourses of the Buddha, fools who do not understand the meaning of emptiness and

the lack of a self will be ruined. YDC adds that there are more passages to that effect in other sūtras and tantras.

### 1.3. Through scripture, refuting that it consists of the skandhas

By taking certain passages in the tantras literally, some say, “These five skandhas of sentient beings are a buddha or the buddha disposition.” This is not tenable. The *Hevajratantra* says:

“O Bhagavan, what is impure?” The Bhagavān said, “[All phenomena] such as form. Why? Because they are the entities of apprehender and apprehended.”<sup>2916</sup>

The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra* states:

That from which blood, urine, and semen arise is not the dharma source.<sup>2917</sup>

And:

Sentient beings are not buddhas because they lack the qualities of buddhas and dwell in saṃsāra.<sup>2918</sup>

The *Hevajrapañḍārthaṭīkā* says:

The outer skandhas with stains such as feces are not deities here. The faces and hands of deities are not perfect buddhas—they are deliberately imagined by thoughts.<sup>2919</sup>

Thus, the tathāgata heart is the sphere of those trained in “the three bodhisattva commentaries.”<sup>2920</sup>

## 2. The presentation of what is established through scripture and reasoning

This has two parts:

1. The naturally abiding disposition
2. The unfolding disposition

### 2.1. The naturally abiding disposition

It is the naturally luminous true nature of the mind that is primordially present in a self-arisen manner free from reference points. This true nature's own essence is without different phases such as being pure or impure and is of single taste in everything, just like space. However, in dependence on individual sentient beings, it is labeled in many ways, such as pure and impure. By virtue of that, it is presented as the naturally abiding disposition by primarily referring to its phase of being impure.

### 2.2. The unfolding disposition

The precious omniscient dharma lord of the degenerate time (Dölpopa) and his successors assert that it, just as the naturally abiding disposition, is primordially abiding. It is obvious that the intention behind this is that the unfolding disposition is the factor of awareness and that the expanse and awareness are inseparable. Here, it is difficult to assert that the awareness that is the factor of the bearers of the nature of phenomena is the primordially abiding unfolding disposition since this was already refuted above. If it is identified as the disposition that is the factor of the true nature of phenomena, it would simply be equivalent to the naturally abiding disposition. Most masters explain it as all the virtues that are newly accomplished and serve as the causes of liberation, which is obvious as the intention of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and so on. As explained above and below, the basic nature of these two dispositions, just as it is, is the sphere of buddhas alone. Therefore, how could it be an object of analysis by someone like me?

Nevertheless, if it is explained by following the scriptures, this dharmadhātu is wisdom, is endowed with all kinds of qualities without exception in a self-arisen manner, is naturally liberated from all obscurations, and abides such that it pervades all knowable objects like space. That it is not seen despite its existence is due to the influence of the individual karmas of sentient beings. Since it is explained in that way, that is all one is able to understand.

### 3. Rebutting objections to that

It may be said, "If the dharmadhātu were wisdom, it would arise and cease." This is not certain for the following reasons. It is the wisdom that is beyond moments because the *Kālacakrantra* says that the wisdom that is free from one or many moments is the true reality of the victors. It also says that this wisdom is without coming and going—even if one puts water in a vase, it is

not that space goes away. Just like that is the all-pervading vajra of space in the middle of the body, free from objects. The *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā* says:

Just as space does not perish  
Through a vase's perishing,  
So wisdom will not perish  
Through the body's perishing.<sup>2921</sup>

Furthermore, invalidating statements about what was said above, such as its following that sentient beings have relinquished the two obscurations, that they have completed the two accumulations, that they perform buddha activity, and that cultivating the path is pointless, are nothing but criticisms without having examined this properly. The first two should be answered by distinguishing existing (*yod pa*) and being something (*yin pa*). As for the third one, the regent Maitreya himself has rebutted it in the *Uttaratantra*:

So the lord of dharma in sentient beings, whose body is not released  
from the husks of the afflictions,  
Will not grant the pleasant flavor of the dharma to the people pained  
by the hunger of the afflictions.<sup>2922</sup>

The fourth one is not certain either because, despite its existence, the stainless tathāgata heart is not attained without practicing the path.

Later, YDC<sup>2923</sup> also disagrees with the assertion that the fully qualified sugata heart exists only during the phase of being completely pure (buddhahood), while it is only nominal at the time of sentient beings.<sup>2924</sup> YDC presents the response of others to this assertion, saying that it would then follow that all passages in the *Uttaratantra* that teach the tathāgata heart as dwelling within the cocoons of the afflictions (such as the nine examples) are not proper explanations of the actuality of the tathāgata heart, just as it is. If that is accepted, it very absurdly follows that Maitreya was lying when he said in the *Uttaratantra*

Having properly expounded the seven topical points . . .<sup>2925</sup>

YDC says that this response by others hits the point like lightning's striking one's head.



## *Appendix 6: The Presentation of the Purpose of Teaching Tathāgatagarbha in Yeshé Dorje's Commentary on the Uttaratantra*

The following are YDC's comments (329–37) on *Uttaratantra* I.158–61/161–63. Note that, except for the quotes, this appendix is not a literal translation but a (sometimes abbreviated) paraphrase.

### **1. The general topic**

This has two parts:

1. General presentation of the three wheels of dharma
2. Specific identification of the purpose of teaching the basic element

#### **1.1. The three wheels of dharma**

This has three parts:

1. Their individual distinctive features
2. Identifying the expedient and the definitive meanings
3. The order in which they were taught

##### **1.1.1. Their individual distinctive features**

YDC covers this point by simply quoting the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*'s example of the threefold purification of a beryl for the Buddha's three cycles of teaching the dharma.

##### **1.1.2. Identifying the expedient and the definitive meanings**

YDC first quotes the well-known passage from the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* about the first dharma wheel on the four realities of the noble ones and the second one on emptiness being of expedient meaning, while the third one of excellent distinction is of definitive meaning.<sup>2926</sup> Then, YDC comments on the passage that the first wheel was taught as an expedient meaning in order to introduce those to be guided into the teachings, while both the second and third wheels contain passages of both expedient and definitive

meanings. The second wheel is predominantly of expedient meaning because it teaches primarily the aspect of everything being nonexistent in order to put an end to clinging to real entities. The third wheel is predominantly of definitive meaning because it really gets to the bottom of things by excellently distinguishing what is existent and what is nonexistent, what is empty and what is not empty, what is the true nature and what is adventitious, and so on. Some say that this passage in the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* is of expedient meaning, but this is not tenable because the Buddha says shortly after it:

This is the teaching of the definitive meaning. Hold on to it as the teaching of the definitive meaning.<sup>2927</sup>

It may be said, “This is the system of the Mere Mentalists, and since the Mere Mentalists assert this as the definitive meaning there is no contradiction.” This is not tenable either because it would very absurdly follow that the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, and others are texts of the Mere Mentalists because the same is taught in them too. The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* says that the sūtra collection arises from the twelve branches of the Buddha’s speech; the extensive collection (which includes the bodhisattva sūtras), from the sūtra collection; the prajñāpāramitā sūtras, from the extensive collection; and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, from the prajñāpāramitā sūtras, just as the pure essence of butter gradually arises from milk.<sup>2928</sup> This sūtra also says about itself that it is a great collection of merit because it teaches that the tathāgata heart is permanent.<sup>2929</sup> The *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā* states:

Thus, it is in terms of those to be guided that teachings are inferior or superior. For example, [the Buddha] taught something inferior for the sake of the two merchants Trapuṣa and Bhallika<sup>2930</sup> because they were ordinary beings. [He taught] something intermediate for “the group of five”<sup>2931</sup> because they were in the state of noble beings. For bodhisattvas, he taught the eight kinds of prajñāpāramitā, which are superior by virtue of negating [all] aspects of imputation. . . .<sup>2932</sup> Teachings such as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka[sūtra]* are very superior—through a single yāna’s being taught in them, they guide even those of uncertain disposition into this [yāna]. Teachings such as the *Mahāparinirvāṇa[sūtra]* are very supreme—in them it is taught that the tathāgatas remain in saṃsāra for as long as it lasts and promote the welfare of sentient



beings. The teaching of the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* is the most superior of what is very supreme—the Tathāgata taught this sūtra not long after he had become a fully perfect buddha a single time to the mighty lords of the ten bodhisattvabhūmis who dwell in the ten directions.<sup>2933</sup>

Also, the *Uttaratantra* says:

Through his teachings about the true reality of phenomena,  
Such as in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka[sūtra]* . . .<sup>2934</sup>

It may be said, “Since these are also texts of the Mere Mentalists, they are of expedient meaning,” but then one must teach the scriptures and reasonings for such a claim. However, master Vasubandhu states in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*:

With the teacher’s having passed into parinirvāṇa, there was no leader of this teaching. Based on many different forms [of canons, people] still deal with words and meanings as they please. Now, what is there to do? For the time being, for those for whom this scripture is a valid one, the intermediate state is established through the scriptures.<sup>2935</sup>

Accordingly, if one takes the scriptures of the victor and his children to be valid, the final dharma wheel is established as being of definitive meaning. In particular, it is not feasible to explain the *Uttaratantra* as Mere Mentalism because it teaches that all sentient beings possess the buddha heart and it mainly teaches positions that contradict Mere Mentalism, such as the manner in which those who dwell in the nirvāṇa without remainder of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas enter the mahāyāna.

### 1.1.3. The order in which the three dharma wheels were taught

Some say that the three dharma wheels were taught in a progressive order, while Dharmamitra holds that the Buddha taught all of them simultaneously, with the division into a second, a third, and so on, being just the way it appears for those to be guided. However, it is not tenable that they were given in a strict progressive order because the Buddha taught the first wheel too from after his awakening up through being about to pass into parinirvāṇa, that is, he started with teaching “the group of five” and ended with the Parivrājika Subhadra. Nor is there any certainty that the three wheels were taught simultaneously because ultimately the Buddha did not utter

any dharma at all, but what appears that way on the level of seeming reality for those to be guided must be presented as being spoken by the Buddha. Also, *Uttaratantra* I.160/163 speaks of what was taught “before” and what is taught “later.”

## 1.2. Specific identification of the purpose of teaching the basic element

This has three parts:

1. Refuting wrong explanations about it
2. Explaining what the purpose is
3. Rebutting disputes

### 1.2.1. Refuting wrong explanations about it

Some say, “It is taught with many examples in the root texts and commentaries of the final dharma wheel that the sugata heart, in which the qualities are intrinsically complete, pervades all sentient beings. This is a teaching that bears an intention. Its basis of intention is the dharmadhātu<sup>2936</sup> or the ālaya.<sup>2937</sup> Its purpose is to relinquish the five flaws. What invalidates the explicit statement is that it would otherwise not be different from the view of the Sāṃkhyas and that there would be a real entity.” Sherab Sengé says that the teaching on the sugata heart bears an intention because something like a sugata heart is not observable. The refutation of these claims has three parts:

1. The bases of intention are not tenable]
2. The purpose is not established
3. There is no invalidation of the teaching on the tathāgata heart

#### 1.2.1.1. The bases of intention are not tenable

The dharmadhātu is not suitable as the basis of intention of the sugata heart because these two are not different. It may be said, “The reason does not apply because only buddhas possess the fully qualified sugata heart.” There is no proof for that but there are numerous invalidations because the many above-mentioned sūtras and treatises, as well as Nāgārjuna’s *Sūtrasamuccaya* declare that the dharmadhātu and the sugata heart are synonyms.

Nor is the ālaya tenable as the basis of intention because the sole present ornament of Jambudvīpa, the precious dharma lord, said that there is no purpose in taking it as the basis of intention. “The reason does not apply because it was taught for the sake of gradually introducing the tīrthikas into the teachings.” I think that this purpose is already accomplished by the teaching on the ālaya itself. “But since the ālaya is labeled with the name

‘sugata heart’ in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the *Ghanavyūhasūtra*, and others, it is the basis of intention of the sugata heart.” Indian scholars explain that this is a case of labeling what obscures with the name of what is obscured. Since this explanation is excellent, it is taught that the ālaya is not the basis of intention.

#### 1.2.1.2. The purpose is not established

The above-mentioned purpose of relinquishing the five flaws is not established as one of the criteria for the teaching on the sugata heart’s bearing an intention. For, if it were, it would follow that the clinging to the sugata heart’s being nonexistent in sentient beings is not a deprecation because the sugata heart does in fact not exist in them.<sup>2938</sup> If that is accepted, it follows that the purpose of eliminating the deprecation of clinging to its nonexistence is not accomplished through teaching that it exists (because it does not in fact exist).

#### 1.2.1.3. There is no invalidation of the teaching on the sugata heart

This has three parts:

1. The sugata heart does not accord with bad views
2. It does not represent a real entity
3. Its nonexistence is not established through not being observable

##### 1.2.1.3.1. The sugata heart does not accord with bad views

It may be said, “If the sugata heart in which all qualities are complete existed at the time of the ground, it would not be different from the Sāṃkhya assertion of the result’s existing at the time of the cause.” This is not the case. For the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* says:

Mahāmāti, my teaching on the tathāgata heart is not comparable to the tīrthikas speaking of a self. Mahāmāti, the tathāgata arhats, the completely perfect buddhas, taught that the meaning of words such as emptiness, true end, nirvāṇa, nonarising, signlessness, and wishlessness is “tathāgata heart.” Thus, they taught the door of the tathāgata heart in order to relinquish the object of naive beings’ fear of the lack of a self. Through this, they taught the matrix of nonconceptuality, the sphere of nonappearance. Mahāmāti, the great bodhisattvas of the future and the present should not cling to this as a self.<sup>2939</sup>

And:

Like a potter [making different vessels out of a single lump of clay], they taught this through all kinds of words and phrases. Therefore, Mahāmati, the teaching on the tathāgata heart is not like the teaching of the tīrthikas' proclaiming a self.<sup>2940</sup>

Also, one should understand this to be like the difference between saying that gold exists in a treasure versus saying that a sprout exists in a seed. Some say, "The tathāgata heart is of expedient meaning because this very sūtra explains that it is taught in order to guide naive beings." The omniscient dharma lord has explained the purpose of labeling the expanse with the name "tathāgata heart" and, in terms of the meaning of this, my omniscient gurus also think alike.

#### 1.2.1.3.2. It does not represent a real entity

It may be said, "If such a tathāgata heart existed ultimately, it would be a real entity." This is not the case because it is not an entity. Also, at the time of all entities' being the same, there is no flaw even if it were an entity. "It is not tenable for this tathāgata heart to exist ultimately—ultimately, the nature of phenomena is like the horns of a rabbit." It is not like that—it is explained to be "ultimate reality" because it is real as the object of ultimate wisdom.<sup>2941</sup> As it is declared to be indestructible within being self-liberated:

Since ultimate reality is what is unmistakably realized by the noble ones, it is the seeing of the nature of phenomena being the lack of arising. Since this is the ultimate reality for those [noble ones], it is ultimate reality.

#### 1.2.1.3.3. Its nonexistence is not established through not being observable

It is not established that nobody can observe the tathāgata heart because it is seen by the buddhas. Thus, it is not established as nonexistent through not being observable by those who just see this life. Therefore, this accords with the *Pramāṇavārttika*:

It was already explained that nonexistence  
Is not established through nonobservability in all [subjects].<sup>2942</sup>

### 1.2.2. Explaining what the purpose is

Therefore, *Uttaratantra* I.158–61 represents the explanation of the purpose of teaching the sugata heart, but it is not an explanation of the purpose of this teaching's being one with an intention behind it.

### 1.2.3. Rebutting disputes

This should be understood as in the above section 1.2.1.3. on there being no invalidation of the teaching on the tathāgata heart.

## 2. The meaning of the text<sup>2943</sup>

This has two parts:

1. The intention of all phenomena's being said to be nonexistent in the middle dharma wheel
2. The purpose of teaching in the final dharma wheel that the basic element pervades everybody

### 2.1. The intention of all phenomena's being said to be nonexistent in the middle dharma wheel

In terms of the unmistakable meaning, the true end—the basic element—is void or empty of conditioned phenomena in all aspects. What it is void of are afflictions, contaminated karma, and the maturation of these two, which resemble clouds, dreams, illusions, and so on. The afflictions resemble clouds because they are temporary, pervasive, and do not blend with the true nature. The actions of body and speech are like appearances experienced in a dream because they are produced by mistakenness and are the focal objects of mistaken states of mind. The maturation of the afflictions (the causes) and karma (the conditions) are adventitious results like the magical manifestations in an illusion because they, in dependence on these causes and conditions, appear and yet do not actually exist. These are the reasons for such a presentation in the second dharma wheel earlier.

### 2.2. The purpose of teaching in the final dharma wheel that the basic element pervades everybody

Later, in this ultimate or later continuum (the final dharma wheel) here, it is taught that the basic element exists in all sentient beings. The purpose of this is, in brief, to relinquish the five flaws. Therefore, the second dharma wheel teaches primarily the way in which the phenomena of which the basis of emptiness is empty do not exist, while the third wheel teaches mainly the basis of emptiness, which is for the sake of that fivefold purpose. Therefore,

there is no inner contradiction between these two dharma wheels. This way of being is also stated in the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra*:

Empty phenomena are other and nonempty phenomena are also other. Just like hailstones, the millions of afflictions are empty. Just like hailstones, the phenomena that are nonvirtuous factors perish swiftly. Just like a beryl gem, the Buddha is permanent, and the end of liberation is like a beryl gem too. . . . Mañjuśrī, an empty house built in a town is empty because it is without people. A vase is empty because it is without water. A river is empty because no water flows in it. Is that town's space where there are no houses called "empty"? Is the house empty in all respects? It is not empty in all respects, but it is called "empty" because it is without people. Is the vase empty in all respects? It is not empty in all respects, but it is called "empty" because it is without water. Is the river empty in all respects? It is not empty in all respects, but it is called "empty" because no water flows in it. Likewise, liberation is not empty in all respects, but liberation is called "empty" because it is free from all flaws. The Buddha Bhagavān is not empty—he is called empty because he is free from all flaws and is without [the mind streams of] humans and gods with their millions of afflictions.<sup>2944</sup>

What is intended here by saying "is not empty" is not being empty in the sense of being nothing whatsoever. As Mañjuśrīkīrti says:

The emptiness of analyzing all aspects  
Is without a core, just like a banana tree.  
The emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects  
Will never be like that.<sup>2945</sup>

"The emptiness of analyzing all aspects" refers to the sheer emptiness of not finding anything at all if one analyzes through reasons such as the freedom from being a unity or a multiplicity.<sup>2946</sup>

It may be said, "Isn't this kind of emptiness (as described in the *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra*) taught to be the worst kind?" The gurus say that among the seven emptinesses listed in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it is the sixth one—the emptiness of one being empty of something other—that is taught to be the worst one, which corresponds to the emptiness of the entities presented above as examples being mutually empty of each other. However, the actual emptiness that is explained above is also taught in the

*Laṅkāvatārasūtra* because it accords with the seventh emptiness that is taught in the latter:

Mahāmati, you may wonder what the great ultimate emptiness of the wisdom of the noble ones is. It is the realization of the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones and is empty of all latent tendencies of views and flaws. Therefore, it is called “the great ultimate emptiness of the wisdom of the noble ones.”<sup>2947</sup>





*Appendix 7: Comparison of the First Six Topics of the Fourth and Fifth Vajra Points in the Uttaratantra with the Same Six Topics in the Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra and the Mahāyānasamgraha*

*Uttaratantra*

basic element (cause)

awakening (fruition)

**nature**

**nature**

*specific characteristics:*

1. dharmakāya's power of fulfilling all wishes (wish-fulfilling jewel)
2. suchness's being unchanging (space)
3. disposition's moistening beings through its compassion (water)

purity as the nature of fundamental change: endowed with all inseparable and stainless buddha qualities (wisdom + relinquishment), being permanent, everlasting, and eternal

*general characteristic:*

natural purity of always being unafflicted

**cause**

faith in mahāyāna, prajñā, samādhi, compassion

**cause**

nonconceptual wisdom and the wisdom of subsequent attainment

**fruition**

four paramitas of purity, self, bliss, permanence

**function**

weariness of suffering and striving for nirvāṇa

**endowment**

*inseparable qualities in terms of three causes:*

1. the cause of the dharmakāya's purity (faith in the mahāyāna)
2. the cause of attaining buddha wisdom (prajñā and samādhi)
3. the cause of a buddha's great compassion engaging all beings (great compassion)

*inseparable qualities in terms of three results:*

1. supernatural knowledges
2. wisdom of the termination of contaminations
3. termination of contaminations

**manifestation**

suchness's manifesting in three different ways as

1. ordinary beings (being mistaken)
2. bodhisattvas (being unmistaken)
3. buddhas (being most exactly unmistaken)

**fruition**

endowed with stainless qualities and the freedom from all afflictive and cognitive obscurations

**function**

fulfilling one's own welfare and that of others through the dharmakāya and the rūpakāyas

**endowment**

*ultimate characteristics of buddhahood:*

inconceivable, permanent, everlasting, quiescent, eternal, peaceful, all-pervasive, free from conception, without attachment and obstruction, free from harsh sensations, invisible, ungraspable, splendid, stainless

**manifestation**

all qualities of the three kāyas

*Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra IX.56–59*

**nature**

suchness free from afflictive and cognitive obscurations, inexhaustible mastery over twofold wisdom

**cause**

cultivation of the knowledge of suchness

**fruition**

inexhaustibility of the two provisions of benefit and happiness for all sentient beings

**function**

activity of the means for employing emanations of body, speech, and mind

**endowment**

endowed with the doors of samādhi and dhāraṇī and the immeasurable accumulations of merit and wisdom

**manifestation**

the manifestations of svābhāvīkākāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmāṇakāya

*Mahāyānasamgraha X.27*

**nature**

having accomplished ultimate reality

**cause**

having gone through all the bhūmis

**fruition**

having found pre-eminence among all sentient beings (omniscience)

**function**

being the liberator of all sentient beings

**endowment**

endowed with inexhaustible and unequalled qualities

**manifestation**

being visible amid the worlds and retains by way of nirmāṇakāya and sambhogakāya but being invisible as the dharmakāya



## *Appendix 8: A Letter from Stainless Expanse and Awareness—a Casual Summary of the “Uttaratantra”*

Unconditioned, effortless, and not to be realized through something  
other,

Omniscience, love, and power are a buddha’s perfection of the two  
benefits.

This is the ultimate refuge without granting and taking—

Do not look for something other than the present luminous expanse  
of your mind!

Inconceivable, free from the dual, and without any thoughts,

Purity, clarity, and remedy—these are contained in the two realities of  
cessation and the path.

Genuine dharma of scriptures and realization, vastness free from the  
extremes of existence and nonexistence—

The self-radiance of the dharmakāya is displayed as what is to be  
practiced and realized.

Suchness, extent, and vision of inner primordial awareness,

Free from attachment, unimpeded, and unsurpassable—

These are the qualities of awareness and liberation.

The awareness that the basic way of being of our own mind

Is the remedy for dualistic appearances

Is the freedom of the saṃgha, in which the ways things appear and  
actually are are one.

Three reasons, a tenfold presentation, and nine examples show the  
disposition—

Those who have confidence in it will recognize their own face.

Our buddha heart, empty of what is adventitious, yet not empty of  
qualities,

Is nothing but the ultimate definitive meaning, so that we let go of the five flaws.

Endowed with twofold purity, the cause of awareness in equipoise and thereafter,  
 The result free from the two obscurations, the two benefits, possessing the qualities,  
 Three kāyas, permanence as long as space and beings exist, and inconceivability—  
 Ground, path, and result are not to be seen, and awakening is right here.

Ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and the unique qualities are explained as freedom,  
 And the major and minor marks as maturation—  
 They are not conditioned, previously nonexistent, or attained through effort  
 But are primordial qualities of our own, just like fire and its heat.

Spontaneously present and uninterrupted activity is marvelous:  
 Nine examples illustrate the accomplishment of nonconceptual effortless deeds.  
 Even in the expanse without remainder the welfare of beings is always displayed in an all-encompassing way—  
 Only those who lack confidence in their own heart have doubts about this!

The benefit: bodhisattvas become the vessels of buddha qualities, And even mere faith is more supreme than the accumulations of generosity and such.  
 To take the definitive heart of the matter as merely expedient Represents the karma of rejecting the dharma—  
 But even that is freed on the spot within the vastness of our own heart's awareness's being brought to light.

## Notes

1. Note that, throughout, I speak of Rangtong and Shentong (Tib. *rang stong/gzhan stong*) if these terms refer to a philosophical system, a school, or the followers of that school. Otherwise, I use *rangtong* and *shentong* or, in particular when these refer to the manner of being empty, “self-empty” and “other-empty.”
2. Tib. Mar pa do pa chos kyi dbang phyug.
3. Tib. (B)dud mo bkra shis 'od zer.
4. Tib. Skyo ston smon lam tshul khirms.
5. Tib. Mi bskyod rdo rje.
6. Tib. 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas.
7. I am greatly indebted to Sean Price for drawing my attention to CMW and providing me with a copy of it.
8. I am also grateful to Klaus-Dieter Mathes for referring me to IM and kindly providing me with a prepublication copy of his article titled “The *Gzhan stong* Model of Reality—Some More Material on its Origin, Transmission, and Interpretation” (Mathes 2011b), which discusses parts of IM.
9. Taishō 125, 550c. This source was pointed out by Katsumata Shunkyō (translation as in Diana M. Paul 1980, 54). Note however that parts of the *Ekottarikāgama* contain mahāyāna elements and thus seem to have been added later. Modern scholars have suggested that the mahāyāna evolved from within the Mahāsaṃghika School and that even *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* are mahāyāna outgrowths of the later Mahāsaṃghika tradition.
10. See Takasaki 1974, 67n24 (*ayaṃ sa tathāgatagarbha āgacchati*). This sūtra as well as the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* also use the terms “tathāgata family” (*tathāgatakula*) and “buddha family” (*buddhakula*), though not in the sense of buddha nature.
11. Skt. *sarvasattvās tathāgatagarbhāḥ samantabhadramahābodhisattvasarvātmatayā*. There is a new Sanskrit edition by T. Tomabechi (Vienna 2009), a Tibetan translation (D17, 10 folios), and a Chinese translation (Taishō 220 [10]). For an English translation, see Conze 2002, 221–36; the above phrase is on 230.
12. It is generally held that Nāgārjuna did not know the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras. However, several of the nine examples for buddha nature’s being obscured by adventitious stains in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* as well as the example of a lamp in a vase in the *Mahābherīsūtra* and *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra* appear in his *Dharmadhātustava*. While this is not ultimately conclusive evidence, it is hard to find any other sources from which Nāgārjuna could have culled these examples unless he came up with them himself (which appears to be too much of a coincidence).
13. See the section on the *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra*.
14. For the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*’s ambiguous position on the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* in all sentient beings, see the section on the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*.
15. Dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan 1992a, 344–45. See also Stearns 2010, 316nn28–29.

16. More literal translations of this term ( *snying po'i mdo*) would be “essence sūtras,” “essential sūtras,” or “heart sūtras,” but it is obvious that the main topic of such sūtras is commonly regarded as the tathāgata heart (*de gshegs snying po*).
17. This corresponds to the Pāli *Cūlasuññatasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 121).
18. The *Kangyur* does not contain a *Parinirvāṇasūtra* but two versions of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* of different length, which are obviously the ones Dölpopa refers to here. For details on the versions of this sūtra, see the discussion of its contents in the section on the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*.
19. It is curious that the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* is absent from Dölpopa’s list of *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras. He obviously knew it since he quotes it in his main work *Mountain Dharma* (see Hopkins 2006, 95).
20. What the Tibetan tradition commonly calls “The Chapter Requested by Maitreya” in the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras exists in one Sanskrit and three Tibetan recensions. The Sanskrit is found in the revised *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*. This is a different version of the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, into which the corresponding names of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*’s chapters, its seventy points, and their subpoints are inserted as headings (without any additional comments). The unrevised and revised sūtras are close in content, but there are several passages in the latter that were added, omitted, or transposed so as to better conform to the outline of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. The Tibetan versions of this chapter are contained in the translations of said revised sūtra (D3790), the eighty-third chapter of the *Aṣṭadāśāsāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (D10), and the seventy-second chapter of the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (D9). The versions in D10 and D3790 correspond closely to the Sanskrit, while the version in D9 often differs in its use of technical terms and seems to have been based on a different Sanskrit manuscript. The Sanskrit edition has no title, while its versions in D9 and D10 are titled “The Chapter of the Distinctions in a Bodhisattva’s Training (*byang chub sems dpa’i bslab pa la rab tu phye ba’i le’u*).” Note that the “Maitreya Chapter” is missing in the *Satasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, in the Gilgit manuscript of the *Aṣṭadāśāsāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, and in all Chinese translations of the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras. Certain parts of this chapter differ in their diction from the rest of these sūtras (and the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras in general) in that all phenomena from form up through the qualities of a buddha are divided into three aspects, such as “imaginary form (*parikalpitaṃ rūpaṃ*),” “conceived form (*vikalpitaṃ rūpaṃ*),” and “dharma-tā-form (*dharmatā-rūpaṃ*).” Due to all this, most modern and even some traditional Tibetan scholars regard this chapter as a later addition to the *Aṣṭadāśāsāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*. In any case, most commentators agree that the three types of phenomena in this chapter and their descriptions correspond to the imaginary nature, the dependent nature, and the perfect nature, respectively. Some later Indian *prajñāpāramitā* commentaries (such as the *Satasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā-brhaṭṭikā*, the *Satasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāṣṭadāśāsāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā-brhaṭṭikā*, and the *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusāriṇī*) adopted the three types of phenomena in the “Maitreya Chapter” as their basic exegetical template and explained the relationship between them according to the Shentong model of the relationship between the three natures (that is, the perfect nature’s being empty of both the imaginary and dependent natures). This is obviously the reason why Dölpopa and his followers included the “Maitreya Chapter” under the sūtras of definitive meaning (in the sense of Shentong). In any case, this chapter does not contain any *tathāgatagarbha*-related discussions. For more details, see under the section “Indian Forerunners of Shentong, Early



- Tibetan Shentongpas, and Their Connection to the *Uttaratantra*,” Conze and Shotaro 1968, and Brunnhölzl 2011a.
21. Anonymous 2010, zhu don snang ba, 1–2. There is also a similar but not completely available collection of sūtras of definitive meaning in several volumes (beginning with the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, and *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra*) that was published for use at the Jonang monastic college at Tsangwa Monastery in Dzamtang (*Nges don gyi mdo'i chos skor*; see TBRC W1KG4241).
  22. Tib. Mkhas grub rje dge legs dpal bzang.
  23. Tib. Gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me. See Hakamaya 1992, 71.
  24. Dge legs dpal bzang 1980–82, 463.
  25. Tib. Thu'u bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma.
  26. See Ruegg 1963, 83.
  27. Tib. Rig 'dzin tshe dbang nor bu.
  28. Tshe dbang nor bu 1976–77.
  29. This is a slightly more elaborate version of the Pāli *Mahāsūññatasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 122).
  30. Note also that the title of Tsewang Norbu's text speaks of sūtras of the final teaching cycle of the Buddha, while (11) the *Śūnyatānāmamahāsūtra* and (12) the *Mahāśūnyatānāmamahāsūtra* clearly belong to the first cycle and at least (13) the *Pañcaśatikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, (14) the “Maitreya Chapter,” and (21) the *Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra* are commonly considered as belonging to the second cycle.
  31. Thub bstan legs bshad bzang po 2000.
  32. It is not clear what exactly “the complete elaborations on the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*” means, but it probably refers to the parts in the longer version of this sūtra that are not found in the shorter one plus the very brief addition that consists of D121. In any case, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and its “elaborations” in this list cover D119–21. Tubten Legshé Sangpo's collection contains seven more texts: the *Bhagavān-āmitābhadhāraṇīmantra*, *Sarvakarmāvaraṇāviśodhanīnāmādhāraṇī*, *Amitābhavyūhasūtra*, *Avalokiteśvaraikaśaśamukhanāmādhāraṇī*, *'Phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug yid bzhih nor bu'i rtog pa las smon lam 'byung ba* (no Sanskrit title), *Dpang skong phyag brgya pa* (no Sanskrit title), and *Mahābalasūtra*. The colophon of this collection says that though these seven texts are not included in the sūtras of definitive meaning, they are of great benefit and are therefore presented as dharma gifts in this collection.
  33. Tib. *Gzhan stong snying po* (Tāranātha 1982–87, 4:501).
  34. As for the relationships between Dölpopa's and Tāranātha's differing lists of sūtras of definitive meaning, from the perspective of the usual Tibetan doxographical ranking, Tāranātha's differentiation between the four sūtras of the definitive meaning of Mere Mentalism and those of the final definitive meaning suggests that he takes the former to be inferior to the latter. By contrast, Dölpopa includes the former four sūtras in his general list of the ten sūtras of definitive meaning. Among Tāranātha's seven explicitly mentioned sūtras of the final definitive meaning, the first five also appear in Dölpopa's list of ten *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras, while the last two are found in his list of ten sūtras of definitive meaning. Just as in Dölpopa's lists, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* is conspicuously absent in Tāranātha's lists.
  35. 5.
  36. 180.
  37. Tib. Ngag dbang blo gros grags pa.
  38. Tib. *Gzhan stong chen mo* (Sheehy 2007, 114–15).
  39. Ngawang Lodrö Trappa adds that most tantras include sections on tantric Shentong.

40. 2.
41. This sūtra is often also called *Mahāyānābhīdharmasūtra* in modern literature, but the *Mahāyānasamgraha* as well as its commentaries *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapīṇḍavyākhyā* and *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* explicitly speak of it as the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* and explain its name accordingly.
42. Go bo rab 'byams pa bsod nams seng ge 1979b, 12.
43. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984c.
44. Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 1–2.
45. Tib. Sangs rgyas mnyan pa.
46. This is the name of the early and shorter version of the *Samādhirājasūtra*.
47. Later, Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (n.d., 39 and 51) also mentions “twenty sūtras of definitive meaning” but does not elaborate which sūtras these are.
48. Needless to say, the topic of buddha nature is quite ubiquitous in the Buddhist tantras (for examples, see *Hevajratantra*, part 2, IV.69, as well as Hopkins 2006, 121–24 and 195). However, the treatment of *tathāgatagarbha* and related notions in the tantras is not the topic of this study.
49. The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is preserved in one Tibetan (D258, fifteen folios) and two Chinese translations (Taishō 666 and 667). For a detailed study and translation of this sūtra, see Zimmermann 2002 (see also Takasaki 1974, Diana M. Paul 1980, Grosnick 1995, and Zimmermann 1998). Note that, due to the largely general nature of the sketches of the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* in this and the following sūtras, I do not always provide page references.
50. In the Chinese version, this is found in the section called \**Tathāgatopattisambhavanirdeśa*.
51. J22–24.
52. Taishō 668 (two pages). For a detailed study and translation of this sūtra, see Shiu 2006.
53. Sanskrit fragments of this sūtra (three folios of the final section and two folios related to other sections) were recently discovered as part of a Buddhist manuscript collection in Afghanistan, somewhat ironically in a cave where Taliban forces had sought shelter. This collection was bought by the Norwegian collector Martin Schøyen, and the fragments of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* were edited by M. Kazunobu in *Buddhist Manuscripts I* (Oslo: Hermes Publishing, 2000), 65–76. The sūtra also exists in one Tibetan (D45.48, twenty-three folios) and two Chinese translations (Taishō 310 and 353). For English translations and studies, see Wayman and Wayman 1974 as well as Diana M. Paul 1979 and 1980.
54. Note that, in Tibetan texts, this term is often understood as, or equated with, “those whose disposition is cut-off” (*rigs chad*), in the sense of people who do not possess any disposition for nirvāṇa or buddhahood (*agotraka*) and thus will never attain it. However, if “disposition” (*gotra*) is understood as an equivalent of buddha nature, many sūtras, RGVV, and other texts explain that there is nobody who does not possess it. On the other hand, if “disposition” is understood as roots of virtue (as in some other sūtras and Yogācāra texts such as the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*), one speaks of beings who have no disposition for nirvāṇa because they lack any roots of virtue. Still, there are different opinions as to whether this means that these beings will never attain nirvāṇa or are eventually able to attain it through accumulating virtue at some point in the future. For details on this issue, see the note on the potential verse from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* in the translation of RGVV (J37).

55. As elaborated in a note on RGVV's explanation of this term (J75), it entails some ambiguity because it can be understood as being distracted by or from emptiness. To be distracted by emptiness refers to being distracted by a wrong understanding of emptiness (such as taking it to be nihilism or clinging to emptiness as an entity). To be distracted from emptiness means to be distracted from the correct understanding of emptiness, which RGVV identifies as the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart.
56. According to K. Takao (see Shiu 2006, 79), based on his research on the development of the four characteristics of the dharmakāya as being permanent, blissful, pure, and a self, the *Bodhisattvagocaropāyaviṣayavikurvāṇanirdeśasūtra* was the third-earliest sūtra on tathāgatagarbha. However, I could not even find any mention of the dharmakāya, let alone its having these four characteristics, in the Tibetan version of this sūtra (D146).
57. This sūtra is available in one Tibetan (D147, 101 folios) and two Chinese translations (Taishō 398 and part of Taishō 397). Anne Burchardi informed me that she is currently working on an English translation from the Tibetan (available in 2016 in the Reading Room of the 84,000 Project).
58. D147, fol. 174b.1–2 and passim.
59. J25.
60. See Ruegg 1969, 113.
61. Still, the description of these thirty-two qualities is by no means uncommon since they are found in several other sūtras as well. Note also that the sūtra does not mention the thirty-two qualities of the rūpakāyas listed in the *Uttaratantra* (in the latter, these qualities are explained according to the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*).
62. Usually, this means to be free from the three notions of agent, object, and action. However, the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* itself explains this purity of the three spheres as the state in which mind does not engage in the three times. It says that due to the non-abiding of mind, mentation, and consciousness, there is no conceiving of the past, no thinking about the future, and no discursiveness about what occurs at present. In effect, this means that all eight consciousnesses do not operate in this state (in the triad of “mind, mentation, and consciousness,” “mind” refers to the ālaya-consciousness; “mentation,” to the afflicted mind; and “consciousness,” to the six remaining consciousnesses). Also, mind's not engaging in the three times as described is reminiscent of similar instructions in the Mahāmudrā tradition.
63. For details on all these passages in the sūtra, see RGVV (J3–6) and CMW (435–52).
64. *Dīgha Nikāya* 16.
65. There are several Sanskrit fragments of this sūtra, three that were found earlier (see Takasaki 1971, 1024–23) and several others that were edited by M. Allon and R. Salomon in *Buddhist Manuscripts I* (Oslo: Hermes Publishing, 2000), 243–73. Otherwise, this sūtra is preserved in two Tibetan (D119, 339 folios; D120, 151 folios) and four Chinese translations (Taishō 374–377; 377 is an addition to the actual sūtra). Note that the longer Tibetan version D119 is a combination of Taishō 374 and 377, while the shorter version D120 is a direct translation of the Indian source and corresponds in its contents to Taishō 376. As already mentioned, Dōlpopa appears to refer to D119 and D120 as the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and the *Parinirvāṇasūtra*, respectively. The *Kangyur* also contains a third very short text called *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (D121, two folios), which however consists only of a number of prophecies of the Buddha about what will happen to his teachings after certain numbers of years after his death have passed. There are two English translations of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* from the Chinese by Koshō Yamamoto (3 vols., Karinbunko, 1973–75 and 12 vols., London 1999–2000) as well

as an unpublished translation from the Tibetan by Stephen Hodge. For details on the treatment of *tathāgatagarbha* in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, see Takasaki 1971, Ming-Wood 1982 and 1984, and Page 2003.

66. Note that the assertion that buddha nature and ultimate reality are free from, or beyond, dependent origination is one of Dölpopa's key positions.
67. Lit. "the five without interval" (often translated as the "five heinous crimes"). They consist of killing one's father, one's mother, or an arhat, creating a schism in the saṃgha, and intentionally causing blood to flow from the body of a buddha. They are called "with immediate consequence" or "without interval" because their result is rebirth in a hell realm immediately after death, without the interval of an intermediate state (bardo) before this next rebirth.
68. This contrast is even more striking in the longer version of the sūtra (D119 and Taishō 374), in which chapters 1 to 5 deny that those with great desire possess buddha nature and attain buddhahood. Chapters 6 to 9 are somewhat ambiguous on this issue, continuing to utterly despise those with great desire but also saying that there are two types of them—those who possess roots of virtue at present and those who will have roots of virtue in the future. Finally, chapters 10 to 13 are very emphatic about those with great desire possessing buddha nature and having the definite capacity for future buddhahood once they abandon their evil ways and accumulate the roots of virtue that they lack only temporarily. This section also says that buddha nature cannot be cut off because it is neither past, present, or future.
69. D213 (eighty-one folios) and Taishō 527.
70. *Majjhima Nikāya* 86.
71. D213, fols. 159a.7–160b.2.
72. This term ("the Naked Ones") refers to the ascetic branch of the Jainas.
73. This is an abbreviated paraphrase of Aṅgulimāla's answer.
74. D213, fols. 157b.5–158a.4.
75. As already mentioned, the example of a lamp in a vase for buddha nature's being obscured by adventitious stains is also found in the *Mahābherisūtra* (D222, fol. 110b.1) and Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava* (verses 5–7).
76. D222 (forty-three folios) and Taishō 270. There exists an anonymous English translation from the Chinese (<http://www.sūtrasmantras.info/sūtra19.html>). The Nālandā Translation Committee is currently working on an English translation from the Tibetan and Chinese (available in 2016 in the Reading Room of the 84,000 Project).
77. The *Jñānamudrāsamādhisūtra* also says that there will be some people in the future who do not seek the dharma but material gain, do not control their body and mind, claim to train in awakening, like to talk, and say that everything is empty. They do not understand emptiness as it is. Those who, by focusing on emptiness as being unarisen, not being created by anyone, being invisible, and being without coming and going say that they are training well in emptiness are thieves of the dharma. However, this sūtra does not link these statements to what the *Mahābherisūtra* says here otherwise, but they seem to refer to people for whom emptiness is just lip service or who fixate on emptiness as being such and such (Mipham Rinpoche's *Synopsis of the Sugata Heart* quotes the *Jñānamudrāsamādhisūtra* in support of not misunderstanding buddha nature as emptiness in a nihilistic sense or as a nonimplicative negation).
78. Compare the example in the *Samyuktāgama* (Taishō 1246, 341b–42a) of a goldsmith's washing away layers of gravel, sand, and dirt to reveal gold in gold ore, just as it is, in its perfect color and luster.
79. D222, fols. 110a.7–111a.4.

80. There are two Sanskrit editions by B. Nanjio (Kyoto: Otani University Press, 1923) and P. L. Vaidya (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1963). The sūtra is also preserved in two Tibetan (D107, 136 folios and D108, ninety-three folios) and three Chinese translations (Taishō 670–72). D107 corresponds closely to Nanjio's Sanskrit edition, while D108 is a Tibetan translation of the Chinese one by Guṇabhadra (Taishō 670). This translation lacks the first and the last two of the longer version's ten chapters, which were obviously added later (as was probably the eighth one). The first, eighth, and ninth chapters are not at all related to the other chapters. Though the tenth chapter (entirely in verse) repeats over two hundred verses from the preceding chapters, about 680 verses are new. Many of them appear to be quite random, while some show significant differences in contents from the other chapters. Generally, except for the last chapter, most parts of the sūtra are taught in both a prose and a verse portion. As Shiu (2006, 171) reports, according to Fazang, when he assisted Śikṣānanda with the translation of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, he was faced with a total of five different versions of the work, and they had to carefully collate these different versions while also comparing their collation with the two earlier Chinese translations. The style of a collation or compilation of different sources is likewise obvious in the extant Sanskrit version and the Tibetan translation (naturally, it is very hard to tell what is to be considered "original" and what has been added later). For English translations and studies of this sūtra, see Suzuki 1930 and 1979, Sutton 1991, and Red Pine 2012. For a comparison of the Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit versions, see Suzuki 1979, 14–37.
81. Unless one follows CMW's equation of the Prakrit verse about tathāgatas' becoming visible like gold in stony debris being purified in RGVV (J6) with the similar verse X.751 in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.
82. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Nanjio ed., 67.15–17; D107, fol. 81b.6–7. Throughout, my translations from this sūtra follow the Sanskrit.
83. D107 ends with "so it is with sentient beings in the skandhas."
84. X.745–46, 748–53, and 755–56.
85. X.763 and 765–66.
86. Nanjio ed., p. 242.4–6; D107, fol. 152a.1–2. Note that D107 renders the compound *śūnyatāvīkṣipta* as *stong pa nyid kyis g.yengs pa*.
87. A more literal (and more correct) translation of the classical Yogācāra term "false imagination" (Skt. *abhūtaparikalpa*, Tib. *yang dag ma yin pa'i kun rtoḡ*), also found in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, is "imagination of what is unreal." That is, what is meant is not that the imagination (*parikalpa*; which is equivalent to the dependent nature) itself is false or unreal (though it is ultimately so) but what it imagines (*parikalpita*; the imaginary nature) is unreal. Nevertheless, I chose "false imagination" since "imagination of what is unreal" appears to be too long and unwieldy a term and because "false" in "false imagination" (instead of "unreal imagination") can be understood as referring to the essentially mistaken mode of operation of imagination, which implies that what is imagined is false or unreal too. In Yogācāra in particular, the terms "imagination" (*parikalpa*) and "conception" (*kalpana*, *vikalpa*, and their cognates) refer to all the levels of the continuous, constructive yet deluded activity of the mind that never tires of producing all kinds of dualistic appearances and experiences, thus literally building its own saṃsāric world.D
88. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Nanjio ed., 77.13–78.1; D107, fols. 85.b.7–86a.3.
89. The five dharmas, which are taught in many mahāyāna scriptures, are names, causal features, imagination, perfect wisdom, and suchness. (1) "Names" are mere designations, such as "book." (2) "Causal features" (Skt. *nimitta* can mean both "cause" and

- “characteristic” and is to be understood in this double sense here) refers to the bases for such designations, that is, dualistically appearing entities that on the level of seeming reality, perform functions and have certain characteristics. (3) Here, “imagination” is a collective term for the eight kinds of consciousness. (4) “Perfect wisdom” bears this name because it is the perceiving subject of suchness. (5) “Suchness” is the ultimate object to be focused on through the path—the dharmadhātu. Among these, (1) corresponds to the imaginary nature, (2)–(3) represent the dependent nature, and (4)–(5) are the perfect nature in terms of subject and object (or the unmistaken and unchanging perfect nature), respectively.
90. X.417–418 and 420–421.
91. Note that this echoes RGVV’s (J3–4) explanation of the essences of the three jewels being attained on the eighth, ninth, and tenth bhūmis, respectively.
92. Nanjio ed., 77.3–4; D107, fol. 85b.4–5.
93. See Brunnhölzl 2004, 530–32.
94. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Nanjio ed., 78.1–4; D107, fol. 86a.3–4.
95. A later parallel passage includes suchness, the nature of phenomena, the dharmakāya, the lack of nature, and being primordially void and peaceful in this list of equivalents of the tathāgata heart.
96. That is, the fruitions of the three Buddhist yānas.
97. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Nanjio ed., 78.5–79.11; D107, fol. 86a.4–86b.5.
98. “Active consciousnesses” refers to the mental consciousness and the five sense consciousnesses.
99. Note that this paragraph bears some resemblance with Aṅgulimāla’s response to Mañjuśrī about properly distinguishing what is empty and what is not empty. This is further highlighted by the version of the first sentence in this paragraph that is mentioned in Shiu (2006, 171) and is found only in Bodhiruci’s Chinese translation of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (Taishō 671, 559c; maybe a lost version of the sūtra), while it is absent in all other Chinese and Tibetan translations as well as the extant Sanskrit version: “Mahāmāti, the notion of momentariness is known as ‘empty.’ The ālaya-consciousness, which is known as the tathāgata heart, without the latent tendencies of the common active consciousnesses is known as ‘empty.’ Being replete with the latent tendencies of uncontaminated phenomena, it is known as ‘nonempty.’”
100. These four are as follows. (1) The latent tendencies of expression are such as those that have power over an eye consciousness’s apprehending blue appearing as the basis of the conceptual clinging of apprehending blue in such a way that this basis appears to be established through its own specific characteristics. (2) The latent tendencies of views about a self are those that have power over giving rise to views of clinging to a self through making a split between oneself and others. (3) The latent tendencies of the branches of existence are those of virtuous and nonvirtuous karmas, which have the power to accomplish all kinds of births and deaths in saṃsāric existence. (4) The latent tendencies of similar class are such as those that have the power over blue’s appearing as blue for an eye consciousness’s apprehending blue.
101. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Nanjio ed., 235.15–236.8; D107, fol. 149b.2–5. Note that this resembles the presentation of the ālaya-consciousness in contrast with the uncontaminated latent tendencies of listening in the first chapter of the *Mahāyānasamgraha*. These latent tendencies of listening coexist with the ālaya-consciousness like a mix of milk and water, but they are the seeds of the dharmakāya and the remedy for the ālaya-consciousness. Since they are the natural outflow of the supramundane utterly pure dharmadhātu, they are the seeds of the supramundane mind.

102. Nanjio ed., 220.9–10; D107, fol. 142b.2–3.
103. Nanjio ed., 236.9–15; D107, fol. 149b.5–7.
104. Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (in general, in the notes, the name of the author of a text will be mentioned only with the first citation of that text) (D4049, fols. 99b.7–100a.3) lists twenty-four kinds of impregnations of negative tendencies in terms of (1) expressions (which are omnipresent), (2) feelings, (3) afflictions, (4) karma, (5) maturation, (6) afflictive obscurations, (7) karmic obscurations, (8) maturational obscurations, (9) obscurations, (10) examination, (11) food, (12) sexual union, (13) dreams, (14) illnesses, (15) aging, (16) death, (17) fatigue, (18) being solid, (19) being great, (20) being medium, (21) being small, (22) afflictive obscurations, (23) obscurations of meditative absorption, and (24) cognitive obscurations. Sthiramati's *Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* (D4054, fol. 230a.4–230b.7) explains that all of these refer to certain latent tendencies in the ālaya-consciousness. (1) refers to the latent tendencies of the omnipresent clinging to the names of all phenomena, which have followed one since beginningless time. They are also called "the latent tendencies of proliferating reference points" because the aspects of such clinging to names arise again and again. (2)–(4) refer to the latent tendencies of contaminated feelings, afflictions, and karma, respectively. (5) are the latencies of dysfunctional karmic maturations, (6) the nonexhaustion and the long continuum of the afflictions, (7) obstacles to the path, such as the five actions without interval, (8) the antagonistic factors to the clear realization of reality—obtaining the bodies of hell beings and so on, (9) the obstacles to engaging in virtue—being overpowered by striving for sense pleasures and so on, (10) the obstacles to being ordained—being overwhelmed by examining sense pleasures and so on, (11) not eating moderately (either very little or too much), (12) the physical and mental harm due to intercourse, (13) the seemingly physical body that is experienced by virtue of being asleep, (14) the experiences of unease due to the elements in the body being unbalanced, (15) being powerless in terms of the change of these elements, (16) all faculties being disturbed when dying, (17) physical exhaustion due to long walks and so on, (18) being joined to all the preceding latent tendencies in their respectively concordant ways and thus not passing into nirvāṇa, (19)–(21) being engaged in the realms of desire, form, and formlessness, respectively, (22) the antagonistic factors to the awakenings of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, (23) the antagonistic factors to accomplishing the nine meditative absorptions of progressive abiding, and (24) the antagonistic factors to omniscience. All of these are fully relinquished on the path of nonlearning, when the liberations of mind and prajñā are accomplished. Sthiramati's *Sūtrālamkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, fols. 120b.6–121a.1) explains that those two liberations refer to the freedom from the afflictions (nirvāṇa) and the freedom from ignorance (omniscient wisdom), respectively. The first one means to be liberated from the afflictions to be relinquished through the paths of seeing and familiarization, which arises from the lack of attachment. The liberation of prajñā means realizing, just as it is, that the liberation of mind actually is liberation, which arises from the lack of ignorance.
105. Nanjio ed., 220.9–222.19; D107, fols. 142b.3–143b.5.
106. X.236–39.
107. X.253 and X.302.
108. X.59.
109. X.253.
110. Nanjio ed., 235.7–9; D107, fol. 149a.6–7.
111. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, X.13.

112. Obviously, this verse could have been a source for Paramārtha's teachings on a ninth consciousness, the \**amalavijñāna* (see the chapter "The *Uttaratantra* and Its Relationship to Yogācāra").
113. Similar to the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (Nanjio ed., 45.1–9; D107, fol. 72b.3–6) also states that the ālaya-consciousness is so subtle that it is very difficult to be realized by anybody (such as śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and tīrthikas) but buddhas and bodhisattvas on the bhūmis.
114. Nanjio ed., 222.20–224.1; D107, fols. 143b.6–144a.6. Note that passages like this in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* seem to have served as the basis for Gö Lotsāwa's statement that the ālaya-consciousness represents a mere reflection of *tathāgatagarbha* (for details, see "Gö Lotsāwa's Unique Mahāmudrā Interpretation of the *Uttaratantra*").
115. D110 (fifty-five folios) and Taishō 681 and 682.
116. Ibid., fol. 36b.3–5. Here, the second line could mean either "the realms of sentient beings" or "the basic elements of sentient beings" in the sense of *tathāgatagarbha*. With the latter meaning, this verse would be an even clearer parallel to *Uttaratantra* I.52–63, which describes the arising and ceasing of the skandhas and so on within the space-like purity of the mind, without the latter's ever being affected by this arising and ceasing.
117. D110, fol. 36b.3–6.
118. Ibid., fols. 36b.6–37b.5.
119. Ibid., fols. 43a.1–4 and 43b.4–5.
120. Ibid., fol. 23a.4–7.
121. The Tibetan has "virtuous" (*dge ba*), but this is a rather stereotypical way of rendering the Sanskrit *śubham*, which can also mean "beautiful," "good," "pleasant," "eminent," "bright," and "pure."
122. *Ghanavyūhasūtra*, D110, fol. 55b.1–7.
123. Ibid., fol. 15b.2.
124. J5.
125. The corresponding passage (*Daśabhūmikasūtra*, edited by Johannes Rahder [Leuven: J.B. Ista, 1926], 20.14–18) says: "O sons of the victors, it is as follows. For example, to whichever extent pure gold is heated in a fire by a skilled goldsmith, to that extent it becomes refined, pure, and pliable as he pleases. O sons of the victors, likewise, to the extent that bodhisattvas make offerings to the buddha bhagavāns, make efforts in maturing sentient beings, and are in a state of adopting these kinds of dharmas that purify the bhūmis, to that extent their roots of virtue that they dedicate to omniscience will become refined, pure, and pliable as they please."
126. D44 (four vols.) and Taishō 278. For an English translation from the Chinese, see Cleary 1993.
127. Narthang *Kangyur*, vol. ca, fol. 312a.5–6.
128. D45 (six volumes) and Taishō 397.
129. D45.47 (forty-five folios) and Taishō 310.
130. *Kāśyapaparivarta—A Mahāyānasūtra of the Ratnakūta Class in the Original Sanskrit, in Tibetan, and in Chinese*, edited by A. von Staël-Holstein (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1926), secs. 102–4.
131. Ibid., sec. 83.
132. Compare RGVV (J16–17 and the phrase "not interrupting the lineage of the three jewels" in the second quote from the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* on J25).
133. D169 (forty-eight folios) as well as Taishō 397 (3) and 399.
134. These passages are also quoted in RYC as being from the *Mahāyānopadeśasūtra*.
135. D169, fols. 301b.1–303a.1.



136. D290 (four folios)/Taishō 26 (190) and D291 (eight folios)/Taishō 26 (191). The Pāli versions of these two sūtras are translated by Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 965–70 and 971–78.
137. D45.48, fol. 272a.7–272b.1.
138. With minor variations, this passage is also found in several other Yogācāra texts (see “The *Uttaratantra* and Its Relationship with Yogācāra”). For more details on the original context as well as the vast range of interpretations of this quote in later Buddhist texts, see Dargyay 1990; Nagao 1991, 51–60; and the note on this passage in the translation of RGVV in this volume.
139. In sum, these sūtras use the notion of emptiness not in a mahāyāna sense but exactly as it is typically understood in the Pāli canon: “Emptiness as a quality of dharmas, in the early canons, means simply that one cannot identify them as one’s own self or having anything pertaining to one’s own self. . . . Emptiness as a mental state, in the early canons, means a mode of perception in which one neither adds anything to nor takes anything away from what is present, noting simply, ‘There is this.’ This mode is achieved through a process of intense concentration, coupled with the insight that notes more and more subtle levels of the presence and absence of disturbance” (Robinson, Johnson, and Thanissaro Bhikku 2004, 96).
140. There are six quotes or references in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (which, according to its colophon in the three Chinese translations, is a chapter of the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*), two in Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāṅgāṭikā*, one in the same author’s *Triṃśikābhāṣya*, one in his *Pañcaskandhaprakaraṇavaibhāṣya*, one in Guṇaprabha’s *Pañcaskandhavivaraṇa*, one in Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, one (or possibly two) in RGVV, three in the \**Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* (*Ch’eng wei-shih lun*; Taishō 1585), and one in K’uei-ki’s *Wei-shih erh-shih lun shu-chi* (Taishō 1834). Except for the quote in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, all those in the other texts are among the six in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (see Lamotte 1973). For translations, references, and a discussion of all these fragments from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, see my forthcoming translation of the *Mahāyānasamgraha* and its Indian commentaries. See also R. Yūki, *Shinshikiron yori mitaru yuishiki sishōshi* (Tokyo: Tokyo Bunko, 1935), 234–35 and 240–50 and Keenan 1980, 142–47.
141. J72–73.
142. Skt. *gati*, Tib. *’gro ba*.
143. J37.
144. The Third Karmapa’s *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* opens with this verse, followed by the well-known verse from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* that is cited in RGVV (J72) and that is also frequently found in other Indian and Tibetan texts. According to Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé’s commentary on the Karmapa’s text (Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 1990, 133), both verses are from that same sūtra. CMW (423) mistakenly attributes this verse to the *Lankāvatārasūtra*, in which it is not found.
145. D185 (thirty-eight folios) and Taishō 302–4.
146. D100 (thirty folios) and Taishō 357–359.
147. J9–10. Note however that “dhātu” (Tib. *kham*s) in this quote could just as well be read as “realm.”
148. D232, D235, D657, D1063 (all thirteen folios) and Taishō 387–88, 989 (990), and 993.
149. D148 (eighty-eight folios) as well as Taishō 397 (8) and 404.
150. J44–45.
151. D152 (115 folios) as well as Taishō 397 (5) and 400.

152. J47–50.
153. D224 (ten folios); the passage is found on fol. 172b.2–3. This sūtra is not found in the Chinese Buddhist canon.
154. This sūtra exists in three versions in twenty-one, twenty-nine, and thirty-one chapters: D555 (133 folios), D556 (123 folios), and D557 (sixty-two folios) as well as Taishō 663–65. For an English translation of the shortest version by the Sugatagarbha Translation Group, see [fpmt.org/education/teachings/sūtras/golden-light-sūtra/download](http://fpmt.org/education/teachings/sūtras/golden-light-sūtra/download).
155. An edition of a Sanskrit manuscript of this sūtra is found in Matsuda 1996. It is also available in a Tibetan (D142, six folios) and a Chinese translation (Taishō 654). For an English translation from the Sanskrit and Tibetan, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 329–35.
156. D106 (fifty-five folios) and Taishō 675–677. For an English translation and a summary of its contents, see Powers 1995.
157. D129 (thirty-five folios) and Taishō 648.
158. There are three Sanskrit editions (Dutt 1941–1954, Vaidya 1961, and Skilton 2002) and several fragments. We have one Tibetan (D127, 170 folios) as well as one complete (Taishō 639) and two incomplete (Taishō 640 and 641) Chinese translations. Only a few of the forty chapters of the *Samādhirājasūtra* have been translated into English: chapters 1 through 4 in Gomez and Silk 1989 (11–88); chapters 4, 6, 7, and 9 in John Rockwell, Jr., “Samādhi And Patient Acceptance: Four Chapters of the *Samādhirājasūtra*,” M.A. Thesis, Naropa Institute, Boulder, Colorado, 1980; chapters 8, 19, and 22 in Konstanty Regamey, *Philosophy of the Samādhirājasūtra*, New Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1990; chapter 9 in Christoph Cüppers, *The IXth Chapter of the Samādhirājasūtra*, Stuttgart, 1990; and chapter 11 in Mark Tatz, “Revelation in Madhyamika Buddhism,” MA thesis, University of Washington, 1972.
159. There are several Sanskrit editions (the most recent one by Toda in 2002) and many fragments of this sūtra as well as a Tibetan (D113; 180 folios) and several Chinese translations (Taishō 262–65). There is an old English translation from the Sanskrit by H. Kern (Oxford 1884) and several from the different Chinese versions (for details, see Potter 1995 under *Saddharmapūṇḍarikasūtra*).
160. D231 (112 folios) as well as Taishō 489, 657, and 660.
161. D238 (ninety-nine folios) and Taishō 761.
162. As for sūtras of definitive meaning in general, the Gelug and Sakya schools assert the second wheel of dharma to be of definitive meaning. In addition, the Gelugpas hold the third wheel to be of expedient meaning, while the Sakyapas, as exemplified by Gorampa, assert at least some *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras too to be of definitive meaning (though not in the same manner in which others regard them as being of definitive meaning). However, when speaking of sūtras that teach the ultimate definitive meaning as understood from the point of view of taking the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* (or the Shentong view in general) as that ultimate definitive meaning, the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras are clearly not of definitive meaning.
163. Note that the Chinese tradition chose the meaning “womb” or “enclosure” of *garbha* to render *tathāgatagarbha* and developed the notion that buddha nature pervades all phenomena, both animate and inanimate. The first occurrence of the position that inanimate things such as grasses and trees also have buddha nature is found in Chi-tsang’s (549–623) *Ta-ch’eng hsiian-lun* (Taishō 45, 40b; see Koseki 1980).
164. For details, see Zimmermann 2002, 41. Zimmermann says that the *Muktāvalī* has not been published, but it was published as *Hevajratantram with Muktāvalī Pañjikā of Mahāpaṇḍitācārya Ratnākaraśānti*, ed. Ram Shankar Tripathi and Thakur Sain Negi,

- Bibliotheca Indo-Tibetica Series, vol. 18 (Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2001).
165. Tib. 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal.
166. GC, 262.24–263.4.
167. 14.
168. Sutton (1991, 53) refers to the *Fo xing lun* (\**Buddhadhātuśāstra*; Taishō 1610), which is attributed to Vasubandhu, as saying that *garbha* has three meanings: (1) the *garbha* that is enveloped, (2) the *garbha* that is hidden, and (3) the *garbha* that is enveloping. Therefore, all beings are said to have or to be *tathāgatagarbha* because (1) they are included in suchness (the nature of buddhas), (2) a *tathāgata* is not manifest in beings but is concealed in them, and (3) all buddha qualities are present in all sentient beings in a potential form. In the *Fo xing lun*, *tathāgatagarbha* is explained to be of five kinds (following the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*): (1) having the meaning of the nature (*svabhāva*) that includes all phenomena (*tathāgatadhātu*), (2) the *saddharmagarbha* as the cause of all virtuous dharmas, corresponding to the nature of all *tathāgatas*, (3) the *dharmakāyagarbha*, which has the sense of attainment or mastery, (4) the supramundane *garbha* (*lokottaragarbha*), in which *garbha* means true reality (*tattva*), and (5) the naturally pure *garbha* (*prakṛtiśuddhagarbha*), which implies that the naturally pure true nature of all phenomena is concealed as the inner nature of all *tathāgatas*.
169. For a detailed analysis of the term *tathāgatagarbha*, see Zimmermann 2002, 39–46.
170. 5.1–7.24.
171. The introduction of JKC (12–13) includes an abbreviated version of the discussion of these eight meanings of the *tathāgata* heart in GC and adds a few points. Here, JKC says that these eight ways of explaining the *tathāgata* heart represent different ways of describing it in terms of its three phases of being impure, impure and pure, and completely pure and also in terms of having the expedient meaning or the definitive meaning in mind.
172. Skt. *antarvyāpārapuruṣa*, Tib. *nang gi byed pa'i skyes bu rtag pa thams cad du khyab pa*.
173. D3856, fol. 169a.1–3. Bhāviveka obviously refers in this context to the passages already mentioned from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* about *tathāgatagarbha* and emptiness. Note that the *Tarkajvālā* (ibid., fol. 50b.3–4) also speaks of *tathāgatagarbha* in its function of encouraging sentient beings—*bodhisattvas* having respect even for beings with no qualities since they think that these beings will come to possess all qualities in the future due to being endowed with the *tathāgata* heart.
174. D3862, fol. 261b.7.
175. Since the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* explicitly refers to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in the context of saying that the *ālaya*-consciousness has the meaning of emptiness, one may well assume that Candrakīrti also knew about that sūtra's equation of the *tathāgata* heart with the *ālaya*-consciousness and thus implicitly also asserted the *tathāgata* heart as emptiness.
176. D3862, fols. 281a.6–282a.4. This passage consists primarily of Candrakīrti's quotes of the passages from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* about the teachings on the *tathāgata* heart being a means to prevent fear of emptiness and to attract non-Buddhists, concluding that these sūtra passages make it clear that all sūtras (such as the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*) that are taken to be of definitive meaning by the Vijñānavādins are of expedient meaning.
177. Note that, just as Bhāviveka and Candrakīrti, Āryavimuktisena and Haribhadra do not explicitly identify the *tathāgata* heart as a nonimplicative negation but speak only of the disposition—the foundation of practice—in Maitreya's *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*

I.37–39 as being the nature of phenomena, suchness, or the dharmadhātu (which they elsewhere do equate with emptiness, to be realized through Madhyamaka reasoning). Āryavimuktisena's *Abhisamayālaṃkāravṛtti* first quotes the *Ratnakūṭa* as saying that the disposition of the noble ones is the space-like, unconditioned, and permanent suchness that is the single taste of all phenomena. Then it explains that the disposition is the nature of phenomena (*dharmatā*), which may be called "disposition" in the sense of its serving as the cause of the qualities of the noble ones through focusing on it on the path. Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṃkāṛālokā* says that the notion of disposition only pertains to the level of seeming reality but that there is no disposition ultimately. The actual foundation of practice is nothing but the dharmadhātu, which may only conventionally be said to serve as the cause or bearer of the qualities of the noble ones by virtue of being taken as the object of their progressive practice. There is no realization for bodhisattvas unless they train in realizing the buddhadharmas like illusory persons by not clinging to anything as being real. On the level of seeming reality, the dharmadhātu is glossed as this illusory bodhisattva who is the foundation of the buddhadharmas' being realized on the various stages of the path. Also, all distinctions of the disposition, such as naturally abiding, unfolding, certain, and uncertain dispositions, or the dispositions of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, are not tenable ultimately. For it is nothing but the dharmadhātu's being taken as the focal object by all practitioners in the three yānas that serves as the cause or foundation for realizing and manifesting the distinct qualities of the noble ones, all of which are expressions of this single ultimate dharmadhātu. For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 284 and 790n823.

178. Jñānagarbha's *Satyadvayavibhāgavṛtti* (D3882, fol. 14b.4) explains the dharmakāya (which is equated with emptiness in the sense of cognition, what is cognized, a self, and characteristics being unobservable in verse 39 and its autocommentary) as the body of all dharmas because all beings do not go beyond having the nature of a tathāgata. Eckel (1987, 147) also says about this passage that "the terminology suggests the element of Buddhahood (*gotra*) that pervades all living beings." JKC adds here that it is taught that the emptiness that is arrived at through inferential valid cognition is the great disease of bodhisattvas because it represents a great conceptual bondage. Therefore, the third dharma wheel is also more eminent in the sense of entering into nonconceptuality.
179. JKC adds that most Indian \*Prāsaṅgikas and \*Svātantrikas as well as all Tibetan Rangtongpas assert emptiness as the nonimplicative negation that is explained in Nāgārjuna's "collection of reasoning" and is arrived at through reasoning.
180. D3887, fol. 242b.4–7. This text is the first one to incorporate the teaching on *tathāgata* into the Madhyamaka tradition with a more positive meaning. Later, the same is done in Dharmamitra's (eighth/ninth century) commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (quoting the phrase that all beings possess the tathāgata heart from the *Adhyardhaśatikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*).
181. Nanjio ed., 79.11; D107, fol. 86b.5.
182. D3870, fols. 211b.5, 212b.2–3, 213a.4–5, and 352b.1–2. Jayānanda several times equates the tathāgata heart with emptiness and considers the tathāgata heart to be of expedient meaning. Still, he quotes the *Uttaratantra* as authoritative in establishing that there is only a single yāna. For details, see Kano 2006, 75–79.
183. For example, D3903, fol. 150a.6–7. For details, see Kano 2006, 61–71.
184. D3887, fol. 162b.3–7.
185. For more details, see the chapter "The *Uttaratantra* and Its Relationship with Yogācāra."

186. For more details, see the chapter “The *Uttaratantra* and Its Relationship with Yogācāra.”
187. GC only quotes the last two lines.
188. For details, see Brunnhölzl 2007b.
189. JKC says that this is taught in both the second and third dharma wheels as well as the vajrayāna.
190. Jñānaśrīmitra, *Jñānaśrīmitranibandhāvali*, 483.12–13.
191. For details, see appendix 2.
192. *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa*, D4079, fol. 149a.6–149b.1.
193. *Ibid.*, fols. 143b.7–144a.1.
194. *Ibid.*, fols. 153b.2–154b.1.
195. See his *Madhyamakāvātāra* XI.17 and *Madhyamakāvātārabhāṣya* (D3862, fols. 255a.4 and 332a.1–3).
196. *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa*, D4079, fol. 141a.7–141b.7.
197. *Ibid.*, fol. 240a.2–3.
198. The same verse appears in Prakrit in RGVV (J6), which adds that the Buddha uttered it while having the pure disposition and the tathāgata element in mind.
199. Verse 27. Note that this corresponds to the eighth of the nine examples for buddha nature in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* (D258, fols. 253b.1–254a.5) and the *Uttaratantra* (I.121–23).
200. I.28. I retained Ratnākaraśānti’s version of this verse, since it contains interesting variant readings compared to J, RGVV (D and P; hereafter, to indicate both D and P, I abbreviate as DP), and Ut (DP), especially in lines 1 and 3. Either he had a different manuscript, quoted his version from memory, or deliberately paraphrased this verse.
201. *Sūtrasamuccayabhāṣyaratnālokālaṃkāra*, D3935, fols. 296b.5–297a.2.
202. I.96–97.
203. *Sūtrasamuccayabhāṣyaratnālokālaṃkāra*, D3935, fol. 325a.5–325b.1.
204. *Ibid.*, fol. 320b.3–6.
205. *Abhisamayālaṃkārikārikāvṛttisuddhamatī*, D3801, fol. 141b.3–4.
206. *Ibid.*, fol. 102b.2–3.
207. *Ibid.*, fol. 168b.4–5.
208. *Ibid.*, fol. 193b.1–3.
209. *Ibid.*, fol. 194a.2–3. The same author’s *Aṣṭāsāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāpañjikāsārottamā* also contains similar statements about natural luminosity and adventitious stains.
210. For further details, see Brunnhölzl 2011a, 133–58.
211. He was the son of Sajjana, the most influential Indian paṇḍita in the transmission of the *Uttaratantra* to Tibet (for details, see the chapter “The History and Transmission of ‘The Five Dharmas of Maitreya’ from India to Tibet.”)
212. *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdayārthaparījñāna*, D3822, fols. 308b.5–309a.3.
213. *Ibid.*, fols. 307b.7–308a.1.
214. *Ibid.*, fol. 312a.1–2.
215. Also, when matching the five paths with the words of the mantra, Mahājana (*ibid.*, fol. 312a.4) quotes *Uttaratantra* I.68 as the scriptural support for the relinquishment of being reborn and so forth on the path of seeing. For further details, see Brunnhölzl 2011a, 126–31.
216. D3821, fols. 300b.3–301a.1.
217. *Ibid.*, fol. 302a.5–302b.2. For further details, see Brunnhölzl 2011a, 122–25. For YDC’s presentation of the tathāgata heart as mind’s luminous nature and its refutation of being mere awareness, a nonimplicative negation, or the skandhas, see appendix 5.

218. This sūtra does not mention the term “ālaya-consciousness,” but its meaning is conveyed by using the term “the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance.”
219. JKC adds that the teachings that identify the tathāgata heart with the ālaya-consciousness are taken literally by the Mere Mentalists.
220. Taishō 31, 157a.
221. Taishō 1666.
222. Tib. Ye shes sde.
223. *Lta ba'i khyad par*, D4360, fol. 218b.
224. The *Tengyur* contains four texts by this name—a commentary on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* ascribed to Candrakīrti (D1785) and three more commentaries on the same text by Bhāviveka (D1792), Bhavyakīrti (D1793), and Āryadeva (D1794). However, the quote is not found in any of them. Note also that it may be that Tib. *de gshegs snying po yin* in this sentence is simply a case of rendering Skt. *tathāgatagarbhāh* in the sense of a *bahuvrīhi* compound instead of using the more common *de gshegs snying po can*, thus meaning, “All sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart.” However, it is unlikely that Gö Lotsāwa, as a Sanskrit expert, would have missed that. Also, as YDC (see appendix 5) attests, there obviously were some people who due to an overly literal reading of certain passages in the tantras, held the five skandhas of sentient beings to be a buddha or the buddha disposition.
225. I.48. *Uttaratantra* I.47 is even more explicit:  
 Its being impure, its being both impure and pure,  
 And its being completely pure, in due order,  
 Are expressed as “sentient being,”  
 “Bodhisattva,” and “tathāgata.”
226. Part 2, IV.69.
227. This refers to GC’s (33.21–25) saying that in the teaching on the factors that unfold the basic element (the ten pāramitās) in *Dharmadhātustava* 66–68, the disposition is the similarity of a given person’s skandhas, faculties, and so on, being made similar to the Buddha himself. Therefore, at that time, those skandhas and so on are the causes of this disposition. When, by virtue of this similarity, that person naturally or automatically engages in virtue, this is the sign of that disposition. Thus, the cause is illustrated by the result. This is said, among others, in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (D4037, fol. 3b1–2): “The sign of the disposition for a bodhisattva’s pāramitā of generosity is that that bodhisattva naturally delights in generosity.”
228. 349. My translations from, or references to, BA follow the Tibetan text, but for the reader’s convenience, the page numbers refer to the English version.
229. Vol. 2, 460–61.
230. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fol. 4a.2–6.
231. Ibid., fol. 42a.3–6.
232. 348–49.
233. For details on Ngog’s and Chaba’s views on *tathāgatagarbha*, see Kano 2006 and 2009.
234. 172.
235. Dge legs dpal bzang 1980–82, 465.3–466.3.
236. Tib. Rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen.
237. For more details on the Gelugpa presentation of *tathāgatagarbha* and the *Uttaratantra*, see the excerpts from Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen’s commentary in appendices 1 and 2, as well as Ruegg 1968, 1969, 1976, and 1989; Schmithausen 1973; Hookham 1991a (particularly 289–90 and 319–23); and Brunnhölzl 2010, 463–73.
238. Bu ston rin chen grub 1965–71, fols. 12a.5–19a.3.

239. The triad of “basis of intention,” “purpose,” and “invalidation of the explicit statement” represents the typical three criteria that the Madhyamaka tradition considers as determining a teaching as being of expedient meaning. See Ruegg 1985, 309–11 and Ruegg 1988.
240. Sgra tshad pa rin chen rnam rgyal 1971, fol. 23b.2–3.
241. For details, see appendix 1 and Brunnhölzl 2010, 454–57. Even in China there is an example of someone’s saying that emptiness is the definitive meaning and that the tathāgata heart is of expedient meaning since the tathāgata heart ultimately is a synonym of “emptiness.” The contemporary master Yin Shun (1906–2005) “continually asserts the doctrine of emptiness as the definitive expression of Buddhist truth and relegates the *tathāgatagarbha* to the category of expedient means. . . . For Yinshun, to regard the *tathāgatagarbha* as the ultimate truth rather than as an expedient means can only result in misguided practice and confusion about how to attain enlightenment” (Hurley 2001, 11). Otherwise, in China, and in fact in all of East Asia, at least since the eighth century the reverse position is generally held (Madhyamaka was eventually subsumed under, and reinterpreted by means of, the notion of *tathāgatagarbha*).
242. For details, see Hookham 1991a, especially 135ff.; Hopkins 2006 and 2007; Sheehy 2007; Mathes 2008a, 75–91; and Stearns 2010.
243. For significant distinctions between the Shentong views of Dölpopa and the Third Karmapa as well as between Dölpopa and the Eighth Karmapa, as well as differences on understanding *tathāgatagarbha*, see Brunnhölzl 2009, 114–17 and Brunnhölzl 2010, 196–99.
244. GC, 14.22–16.17.
245. GC supports this by quoting *Uttaratantra* I.106b in its Ut (DP) version: “Having seen this honey-like basic element of awareness . . .” (*rig khams sbrang rtsi dang ’dra ’di gzigs nas*). However, this corresponds neither to the version of this line in RGVV (DP) nor to the Sanskrit of I.103. Karma Trinlépa’s commentary on *The Profound Inner Reality* also quotes this line as a support for there being a connection between awareness and the basic element, furthermore adding *Uttaratantra* I.107c “So the uncontaminated wisdom in living beings is like honey” (see Brunnhölzl 2009, 320).
246. D3853, fols. 258b.7–259a.2.
247. Verse 57.
248. “Skeletons” refers to the final object in the meditation on the repulsiveness of the body. Among the “ten totalities,” by virtue of the power of mastering samādhi, the whole universe eventually appears as earth through mentally focusing on the characteristics of earth. The same goes for water, fire, wind, blue, yellow, red, white, infinite space, and infinite consciousness.
249. Verses 43–46.
250. I.14–15.
251. See Maitripa’s *Tattvadaśaka* and its commentary by Sahajavajra under “The *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā” and in Brunnhölzl 2007a, 148–49 and 159–65.
252. Padma dkar po 1991, fols. 174b.2–177b.3.
253. For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 473–76.
254. Rang byung rdo rje 2006c, fol. 22a.3–4.
255. Karma phrin las pa phyogs las rnam rgyal 2006, 35–37 (for more details, see Brunnhölzl 2009, 313–23).
256. For details of the Third and Eighth Karmapa’s views on buddha nature, as well as Karma Trinlépa’s and Tsugla Trengwa’s (Tib. Gtsug lag phreng ba; 1504–1566)

- positions, see the extensive discussions in Brunnhölzl 2007b, 2009, and 2010, 129–99 and 428–54. See also the translation of the Eighth Karmapa's *Lamp* in this volume.
257. The following brief survey is largely based on D. Wangchuk 2005 as well as Duckworth 2005 and 2011. For further details, see those works as well as Pettit 1999, in particular, 114–24 and 415–27.
258. Tib. Rong zom chos kyi bzang po.
259. Tib. Rog shes rab 'od.
260. Tib. Klong chen rab 'byams pa.
261. Bod sprul mdo sngags bstan pa'i nyi ma 2004, 92.
262. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b. For Mipham's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.28 and I.154–55, see appendices 1 and 2.
263. Tib. *Nges shes sgron me* (translated with a commentary in Pettit 1999, 194–413).
264. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho c. 1990b (translated in Pettit 1999, 415–27).
265. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984c (translated in Duckworth 2005, 221–60; see also the lengthy excerpts in appendices 1 and 2).
266. Bod sprul mdo sngags bstan pa'i nyi ma 2004, 122–23.
267. For example, *ibid.*, 125. For more details on Pötrül's view in this regard, see Duckworth 2011, particularly 13–16, 98, 106–9, 131–33, and 211. Note that the position that both the *Madhyamakāvatāra* and the *Uttaratantra* are Madhyamaka texts goes back at least to the twelfth century to Maja Jangchub Dsöndrū (died 1185; Rma bya ba byang chub brtson 'grus 1975, fol. 4b.6). The contemporary Nyingma and Kagyü master Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (born 1965) explains (oral communication, July 24, 2013) that Mipham Rinpoche speaks of two ways in which the two realities are presented: (1) in terms of appearance and emptiness and (2) in terms of the mode of appearance (*snang tshul*) and the actual mode of being (*gnas tshul*). In approach (2), seeming reality is defined as “all subjects and objects in which the mode of appearance and the actual mode of being are not in accord” and ultimate reality as “all subjects and objects in which the mode of appearance and the actual mode of being are in accord.” According to the Nyingma tradition, this corresponds to the way in which the two realities are distinguished in the third turning of the wheel of dharma and in the Shentong approach. Specifically, the definition above of ultimate reality refers to the minds of bodhisattvas on the bhūmis while being in meditative equipoise and to the minds of buddhas. This means that the qualities of the tathāgata heart (such as the four pāramitās of supreme purity, bliss, self, and permanence) exist only when the mode of appearance and the actual mode of being are in accord. Therefore, they are established only through “the valid cognition of the pure vision of the noble ones” (*'phags pa dag gzigs gi tshad ma*) but never through “the valid cognition of seeing just this life” (*tshur mthong tshad ma*). For more details, see Duckworth 2005 and Kapstein 1988.
268. Sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan 1992b, 14–16.
269. 349.
270. Tib. Red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros.
271. This seems to be in line with a passage in Rendawa's latest and most substantial work on the *Kālacakratantra* that Stearns (2010, 59) points out. After having severely criticized the Jonang position on the *Kālacakratantra*, the *Uttaratantra*, and the *Dharmadhātustava* repeatedly and in detail, Rendawa's text (Red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros 2007, 340–41) describes the difference between self-empty and other-empty as follows: “The presentation of the two realities by the system of this tantra is as follows. All the many phenomena that are the adventitious stains and arise from the condition of mistakeness due to ignorance represent seeming reality because they obscure the seeing



- of true reality and are the focal objects of what is afflicted. Since they are not established as objects of perfect wisdom they are *self-empty*, are empty in the sense of extinction, and represent a dead emptiness (*bem stong*). All the many phenomena of native mind's luminous nature are ultimate reality. This is not the case by virtue of their being established as something that withstands analysis through reasoning. . . . They are the ultimate because they are the sphere of nonconceptuality. They are *other-empty* because they are devoid of adventitious stains. They are not empty in the sense of extinction, nor do they represent a dead emptiness because they are experienced in the manner of being experienced personally. . . . Here, since what is *self-empty* falls into the extreme of extinction, its realization is not the correct path to liberation. Rather, what is asserted as the correct path is solely the changeless inner awareness that is experienced in the manner of being personally experienced through the power of familiarizing with the *other-empty*—the luminous true nature of the mind.” For details, see Stearns 2010, 55–60.
272. Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1997, 75–76.
273. For more details on Rongtön's position, see the excerpts from his commentaries in appendices 1 and 2 and Brunnhölzl 2010, 457–63, as well as Hookham 1991, particularly 290–91, 317–23.
274. This paragraph is based on Jordan 2003, 126–27 (for more details, see there).
275. Ngag dbang kun dga' dbang phyug 1987, 199–200.
276. For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 476–78.
277. Tib. Śākya mchog ldan.
278. The following summary is largely based on Komarovski 2006 and 2010.
279. For example, Śākya Chogden says that the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*'s presentation of *tathāgatagarbha* is not of definitive meaning but of expedient meaning. That the *Uttaratantra* explains the teaching of the tathāgata heart's pervading all sentient beings as being interpretive and as having a veiled intent (mind's natural luminosity) is regarded by him as an authoritative view of Alikākāravāda (“False Aspectarian”). At least in his later works after 1477, Śākya Chogden classifies Alikākāra Yogācāra as a subcategory of Madhyamaka, while he treats Satyākāra (“Real Aspectarian”) Yogācāra as Mere Mentalism. Therefore, it seems safe to argue that whenever a sūtra states that *tathāgatagarbha* pervades all beings, that sūtra (or at least that passage in it) should be taken as interpretive or expedient according to Śākya Chogden's interpretation of Alikākāravāda. Note though that his writings do not provide any lists of sūtras of definitive meaning and expedient meaning in general or within the third dharma wheel (personal communication from Yaroslav Komarovski, October 20, 2013).
280. For details on these complex issues, see Komarovski 2006, 534–38.
281. Śākya mchog ldan 1988c, 568.5–569.4.
282. Tib. Bo dong phyogs las nam rgyal.
283. For the position of YDC on the tathāgata heart, see appendices 5 and 6.
284. This text is now lost, but is quoted in some other preserved Yogācāra works, such as in Asaṅga, *Mahāyānasamgraha* III.17.
285. According to H. Shiu (Robertson 2008, 447), the earliest Chinese work to mention the term “the five texts of Maitreya” and to identify them with these five works seems to be Dunlun's *Yujia lunji* (*Compendium of the Yogācāra Treatises*; Taishō vol. 42, 311b). As for the *Vajracchedikāvākyā*, the Chinese canon contains two commentaries on the *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (Taishō 1510 and 1511). However, neither of them is ascribed to Maitreya, but they are attributed to Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, respectively.
286. For details on \*Sāramati, see “The *Mahāyānottaratantra* (*Ratnagotravibhāga*) and the *Ratnagotravibhāgavākyā*.”

287. Tib. *byams chos sde lnga*.
288. Tib. *ldan dkar ma* and *'phang thang ma*.
289. As evidenced by the references to the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and the *Uttaratantra* in Jñānaśrimitra's and Ratnākaraśānti's works and Ngog Lotsāwa's synopsis of the *Uttaratantra* (see also Ruegg 1969, 35). JKC (7) claims that according to Haribhadra, all five Maitreya texts were composed for the sake of Asaṅga. However, no such statement can be found in Haribhadra's available works in the *Tengyur*.
290. Tib. Ka ba dpal brtsegs.
291. Tib. Ye shes sde.
292. Tib. (Zha ma) Seng ge rgyal mtshan.
293. Tib. Gzu dga' ba'i rdo rje.
294. For details, see "The *Mahāyānottaratantra* (*Ratnagotravibhāga*) and the *Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā*."
295. For details on the different opinions on the Maitreya texts, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 21–46.
296. The ones used here include IM (155–56), BA (347–50), GC (4), Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs (1998, 142), Śākya mchog ldan (1988b, 239–41), HLS (129–32), Kun dga' grol mchog (1981, 82–84), Tāranātha (1982–1987, 4:483–89 and 4:491–514), 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho (1984d, 5–6), JKC (4–10), TOK (1:460–61 and 2:543–44), Chos grags bstan 'phel (1990, 2–8), and Shes rab phun tshogs (2007, 2–9).
297. Tib. *Dkar po rnam par 'char ba*.
298. A similar statement about Dharmapāla is found in Śākya mchog ldan 1988b, 220, which is probably the source for TOK here. However, neither the *Tengyur* nor the Chinese canon contain such a text by Dharmapāla. In the Chinese canon, there is a commentary by him on Āryadeva's *Catuhśataka* (Taishō 1571) that explains that text from a Yogācāra perspective.
299. This probably means paṇḍitas other than Asaṅga (to whom the Tibetan tradition attributes RGVV as a separate text) and Vasubandhu (who wrote the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*). By extension, the unavailability of the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* in India for some time must have included RGVV and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*.
300. Maitrīpa's dates are quite unclear. BA (842–43) says that he was born in a sheep year or a dog year (identified as 1007 and 1010, respectively, by the translator Roerich) and passed away at seventy-eight (however, Tibetans count the time in the womb as one year, so Maitrīpa only lived seventy-seven years according to Western counting). The research in Tatz 1987 leads to the similar dating c. 1007–c. 1085, which has been generally repeated. However, based on the biographies of Maitrīpa's disciples, Roberts (2011, 11) suggests that he died before 1066 when Vajrapāṇi went to Nepal and chooses the dates 986–1063. Maitrīpa thus would have been born in the dog year that is two twelve-year cycles earlier than the dog year 1010. However, following BA, the sheep year 983–1060 would also be possible. For the implications of these dates for Maitrīpa's having met Atiśa and Marpa Lotsāwa Chökyi Lodrö, see the discussion of Atiśa's relationship to Maitrīpa in the chapter "The *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā." For detailed biographical information about Maitrīpa, see Tatz 1987 and 1988 as well as Brunnhölzl 2007, 125–31.
301. Jñānaśrimitra, *Jñānaśrimitranibandhāvali*, 432.10–13.
302. The following list of quotations is found in Kano 2006, 85—*Sākārasiddhiśāstra: Uttaratantra* IV.73–74 (431.22–25), III.37ab (434.15), I.9 (478.11), I.154 (487.16–17), I.145 (493.13–14), I.49–50 (496.9–14), II.53 (499.5–6), IV.53–54 (499.9–12), III.1

- (502.9–12), III.2–3 (502.18–21), RGVV 84.4–5 (434.22–23), 75.13–18 (487.11–14), and 76.9–11 (487.25–488.1); *Sākārasaṃgrahasūtra*: *Uttaratantra* I.154 = II.53, IV.73–74 = II.69–70, III.1 = II.89, I.151–52 = II.95cd–97ab, II.53 = II.98cd–99ab, IV.53–54 = II.100cd–102ab, I.49 = II.136, and I.145 = II.145. For details, see Kano 2006, 33–38 and 559–79 and appendix 2.
303. D3935, fols. 296b.6–297a.2, 325a.6–7, and 325b.3. For further quotes from the *Uttaratantra* in Indian texts, see the discussion of some texts by Maitrīpa and his students in the chapter “The *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā,” as well as Yamāri’s and Vibhūticandra’s comments on I.154 in appendix 2. For a more detailed list of quotations from the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV in Indian texts, see Kano 2006, 85–86.
304. The colophon of IM says that the *Uttaratantra* was transmitted from Maitrīpa’s student \*Ānandakīrti to both Ratnākaraśānti and Sajjana, and Tāranātha (1982–1987, 4:485) gives the Shentong lineage as going from \*Ānandakīrti to Ratnākaraśānti and then Sajjana. The colophon of Skyo ston smon lam tshul khriims 2007d presents the lineage of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* as coming from Maitreya to Ratnākaraśānti and then Sajjana. Another possibility would be that Maitrīpa received those two texts from his two teachers.
305. Maitreya-nātha is not necessarily a name but (as a *bahuvrīhi* compound) can also be an epithet, meaning “the one who has Maitreya as his protector.” Also, the concluding part of IM about the history of its instructions makes it clear that “Maitreya-nātha” refers to Maitrīpa. Obviously, this was not uncommon since, as Mathes (2011b, 203n57) points out, the *Sekanirdeśapañjikā* by Rāmapāla, one of Maitrīpa’s main students, also refers to Maitrīpa (the author of the *Sekanirdeśa*) as Maitreya-nātha. See two Sanskrit manuscripts of the text from Cambridge University Library (MS Or. 149, fol. 1b.3–4) and St. Petersburg, Gosvdarstvennaja Publicnaja Biblioteka im. M.E. Saltykova-Ščedrina (MS. 283, fol. 1b3–4), both saying: *ihāyaṃ mahāpaṇḍitāvadhūtaśrīmanmaitreya-nāthaḥ . . . sekanirdeśaṃ kartukāmaha*.
306. Among the fifteen *gsan yig*s in Kano 2006, 600–606, from the Gelug, Sakya, Kagyü, and Jonang schools, the eleven that treat the transmission of the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* separately from the other Maitreya texts (among them the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama) all agree on this.
307. Jñānaśrī is known to have been active in western Tibet as a teacher-translator, playing an important role in spreading the teachings on valid cognition (*pramāṇa*) and the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*. He also composed several texts preserved in the *Tengyur* (such as commentaries on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the *Heart Sūtra* as well as a *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā*).
308. ‘Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984d, 615, and Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (Dalai Lama V), *Zab pa dang rgya che ba’i dam pa’i chos kyi thob yig gang ga’i chu rgyun*, Collected Works (Gangtok, Sikkim: Research Institute of Tibetology, 1991–95), vol. 1, fol. 28a.2.
309. According to Tāranātha (1980, 302) and Dietz (1984, 61–63), Mahājana seems to be the name of both the father and one of the sons of Sajjana, while JKC (9) says that the name of Sajjana’s father was Sugata. BA (243) also mentions a Mahājana as one of the teachers of Atiśa. It is clear that the *Putralekha* (D4187) was addressed to Sajjana’s son Mahājāna (not to another son called Sūksmajana). As a letter to a son, *Putralekha* IV.18c addresses and admonishes Mahājana by name, advising him to abstain from alcohol. The colophon of the text says that it was translated by Mahājana and Marpa Chökyi Wangchug. For Mahājana’s commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* using the notions

- of *tathāgatagarbha* and its four pāramitās of supreme purity, self, bliss, and permanence, see the section “*Tathāgatagarbha* as Mind’s Luminous Nature.”
310. Later, a student of Ratnavajra, Ācārya \*Guhyaprajñā, spread tantras such as the *Mahāmudrātilakatantra* in Tibet.
311. Both Ratnavajra and Parahitabhadra are mentioned in Mikyö Dorje’s Madhyamaka lineage to Patsab Lotsāwa (Mi bskyod rdo rje 1996, 13).
312. Tib. Pha dam pa sangs rgyas.
313. Tāranātha 1980, 295 and 301–2.
314. Tib. Rin chen bzang po.
315. His *Rgyud bla ma’i ’grel pa* (172 fols.) is listed in Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib ’jug khang 2004, 1403.
316. Mi bskyod rdo rje 2003, 1:35.
317. These three stages are based on *Uttaratantra* II.57–59, which speaks of making saṃsāric beings enter the path to the peace of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, bringing śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas to maturation in the mahāyāna, and then, on the eighth bodhisattvabhūmi, granting them the prophecy of their supreme awakening.
318. D4187.
319. Available only as a two-folio Sanskrit manuscript found at Shalu (Tib. Zhva lu) Monastery in Tibet (contained in the Tucci collection and probably corresponding to no. 16 in Sen Wang’s catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts preserved in the Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing).
320. Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (Dalai Lama V), *Zab pa dang rgya che ba’i dam pa’i chos kyi thob yig gang ga’i chu rgyun*, Collected works (Sikkhim: 1991), vol. 1, fol. 28a.2.
321. Kun dga’ grol mchog 1981, 83.
322. Tib. Zha ma seng ge rgyal mtshan.
323. ’Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984d, 615. The same is also reported as Sajjana’s statement about both texts in Kun dga’ grol mchog 1981, 84; see the chapter “The Meditative Tradition of the *Uttaratantra* and Shentong.”
324. Tib. Grva pa mngon shes. He was a *tertön* and was also instrumental in the transmission of the four medicine tantras in Tibet.
325. To make a teaching one’s “death dharma” means that one takes it as the basis for one’s practice when dying in order to attain buddhahood, become liberated from saṃsāra, or at least obtain another favorable rebirth.
326. Interestingly, the biography of Ra Lotsāwa Dorje Tra (Tib. Rva lo tsā ba rdo rje grags; born 1016) states that Ngog Lotsāwa, together with Dsen Kawoché, Nyen Lotsāwa Tarmatra (Tib. Gnyan lo tsā ba dar ma grags), and others had already studied the treatises of Maitreya with paṇḍita Prajñāna, a teacher of Dsen, at the dharma council at Toling (Tib. Tho gling) organized by King Dsedé (Tib. Rtse lde) in 1076. Rva Ye shes seng ge, *Mthu stobs dbang phyug rje btsun rwa lo tsā ba’i rnam par thar pa kun khyab snyan pa’i rnga sgra* (Zi ling: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 206.2–8. According to this, the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* would have been known already at least in the Toling area in western Tibet before they were transmitted to Dsen and Ngog by Sajjana.
327. See A khu Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Dpe rgyun dkon pa ’ga’ zhid gi tho yig*, in Chandra 1963, vol. 3, no. 11338, which lists “an exposition of the *Uttaratantra* composed by the translator Su Gawé Dorje as his notes on what paṇḍita Sajjana taught” (*paṇḍita sajjana’i gsung la lo tsā ba gzu dga’ rdor gyi zin bris byas pa’i rgyud bla ma’i rnam bshad*).
328. Tib. Tshul khriims rgyal ba.
329. Tib. Pad ma seng ge.

330. Tib. Lcang ra ba. He is most probably identical with Jangrawa Dumtön (Tib. Lcang ra ba ldum ston), who according to BA taught the Maitreya texts to one of the four secondary lineage holders of Gampopa, Layagpa Jangchub Ngödrub (Tib. La yag pa byang chub dngos grub).
331. Tib. 'Phyos mdo sde sbug dar ma brtson 'grus.
332. Tib. *Zab mo gzhan stong dbu ma'i brgyud 'debs* (Tāranātha 1982–1987, 4:483–89).
333. Tib. Ye shes 'byung gnas.
334. Tib. Byang chub skyabs.
335. Tib. Byang chub gzhon nu. These two are also known as 'Jad ston sku mched.
336. Tib. Bcom ldan rig pa'i ral gri.
337. Tib. Skyi ston 'jam pa'i dbyangs grags pa rgyal mtshan.
338. Tib. Nya dbon kun dga' dpal.
339. Tib. Chos dpal mgon po.
340. Tib. Blo gros bzang po rgya mtsho.
341. Tib. Don yod dpal.
342. Tib. Don yod grub pa.
343. Tib. Kun dga' grol mchog. He is considered as Tāranātha's previous incarnation.
344. Tib. Kun dga' rgyal mtshan.
345. Tib. Grags ldan grub pa.
346. Ngag dbang blo gros grags pa 1992. The text also says that Tāranātha received the five Maitreya works from Lhawang Tragpa (Tib. Lha dbang grags pa).
347. Tib. Rje btsun ma phrin las dbang mo. She was Tāranātha's principal consort and a great teacher in her own right.
348. Tib. Kun dga' dpal bzang. He is the first Jonang master from Amdo in this supplication. After Tāranātha's death, he went to Tsang, received the lineage from several of the former's disciples, and later established the monastery of Drogé (Tib. 'brog dge) in the Ngawa region in Amdo.
349. Tib. Kun dga' yon tan rgya mtsho. TBRC lists five main students of Kunga Balsang—Kunga Dargyé, Yönten Lhündrub, Jamyang Tendzin, Chökyong Lhüngrub, and Dashi Gyatso, but neither any of their students nor any teachers of Kunga Yönten Gyatso (who is considered to be the reincarnation of Kunga Balsang).
350. Tib. Dpal ldan rnam snang rdo rje (from Bswe Monastery).
351. Tib. Kun dga' 'od zer.
352. Tib. Tshogs gnyis rgya mtsho.
353. Tib. Kun dga' thugs rje dpal bzang.
354. Tib. Se'u chos kyi rgyal mtshan.
355. Tib. Rgyal tshab snar thang pa blo gros rnam rgyal. He received the lineage from both Tāranātha and his student Gyaltsab Kunga Rinchen Gyatso (Tib. Rgyal tshab kun dga' rin chen rgya mtsho) and then taught at Tsangwa (Tib. Gtsang ba) Monastery in Dzamtang (today's main seat of Jonang) for twelve years.
356. Tib. Ngag dbang phrin las. He was the nephew of Lodrö Namgyal, who was born in Central Tibet and traveled back and forth between there and East Tibet.
357. Tib. Kun bzang dbang po. He was a Jonang yogin in Tsang in Central Tibet (at the hermitage of Rulag Drepung).
358. Tib. Bdud 'dul rdo rje.
359. Tib. Pad ma nyin byed dbang po.
360. Tib. Ngag bdang chos 'phel rgya mtsho.
361. For details on these Jonang-based lineages as well as the crucial role of Tsewang Norbu and the Eighth Situpa in the revival of the Shentong teachings outside of the Jonang

- tradition proper, see Sheehy 2007, 86–92 and the chapter “The Meditative Tradition of the *Uttaratantra* and Shentong.”
362. Tib. Srin po ri.
363. Tib. Rgyal rtse.
364. This could have been a continuation of the Kashmirian transmission lineage of the Maitreya texts as per Sajjana, but it could also have been an independent approach to these texts.
365. 155.
366. Tib. La stod.
367. Tib. Do pa snyan.
368. Unfortunately, except for Mönlam Tsultrim, no further information about these Tibetan figures seems to be available at this point.
369. Tib. Zangs dkar lo tsā ba 'phags pa shes rab.
370. Tib. Shes rab rgyal mtshan.
371. Tib. Gzhon nu mchog.
372. See Kano 2006, 604.
373. 383–86.
374. Tib. Go rub lo tsā ba tshul khriims rgyal ba.
375. Tib. Pham mthing pa 'jigs med grags pa.
376. Tib. Gtsang mi mkhas pa rgya nam.
377. Tib. Do'i gze ba blo ldan.
378. Tib. Cog ro chos kyi rgyal mtshan.
379. Tib. Phag mo gru pa, one of the main disciples of Gampopa.
380. Tib. Rgya dmar stod lung.
381. Tib. Nying phug pa chos kyi grags pa.
382. Tib. Lcang ra ba; BA, 1009.
383. Note also that a comparison of the two congruent topical outlines of the *Uttaratantra* by Ngog Lotsāwa (see Kano 2006, 267–76 and 502–4 as well as Kano 2008a, 150–57) and the outlines in CMW and HLS shows that the latter two differ significantly from the former two as well as among each other. The outlines in CMW and HLS are both of similar length and much more detailed than those by Ngog. This is further indication of two different transmissions of the *Uttaratantra* that vary both from Ngog's interpretation and among each other.
384. TBRC considers him as an “important translator of the mother class of tantra belonging to the *bka' brgyud* tradition.”
385. Tib. Zhang tshe spong chos kyi bla ma. He was one of the four main students of Ngog Lotsāwa and the third abbot of Sangpu Nēutog (Tib. Gsang phu ne'u thog).
386. Tib. Gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas (another main student of Ngog).
387. Tib. Nyang bran pa chos kyi ye shes.
388. Tib. Phyva pa chos kyi seng ge. He was the main student of Trolungpa and the sixth abbot of Sangpu.
389. Tib. Dan bag pa smra ba'i seng ge.
390. Tib. Gtsang nag pa brtson 'grus seng ge. Interestingly, TOK, 1:461, includes a Gtsang nag pa in its list of upholders of the Shentong view. Chos grags bstan 'phel 1990, 7, has an unidentifiable Gtsang nag pa Rigs pa'i seng ge. In both cases, most probably Dsang-nagpa Dsöndrū Sengé is meant.
391. Tib. Phag gru rgyal mtshan bzang po.
392. There are sixteen texts on the *Uttaratantra* in the *Bka' gdams gsung 'bum phyogs sgrig* published by Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. Besides RYC and its table

- of contents (vol. 20, 5–447), these are the following: vol. 7: a topical outline and a commentary by Phyva pa chos kyi seng ge (145–57 and 163–347), vol. 17: a commentary by Gsang phu blo gros mtshungs med (9–609), vol. 20: a commentary by Dge 'dun 'od zer (455–568), vol. 27: a commentary by Dge slong sges rab grags (211–624), vol. 59: a combined commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, and *Uttaratantra* and a commentary on the latter alone by Dngul chu thogs med (177–259 and 333–462), vol. 62: a brief text by Bcom ldan rig pa'i ral gri (745–74), vol. 76: four brief texts by unknown authors (343–394, 395–422, 423–442, 507–8), vol. 78: a commentary by Lho brag dharma seng ge (213–308), and vol. 109: a commentary by Gha rung ba lha'i rgyal mtshan and one of unknown authorship (131–250 and 251–302).
393. Tib. Sa bzang ma ti paṅ chen.
394. Tib. Gsang phu pa blo gros mtshungs med.
395. Tib. 'Jam dbyangs shā kya gzhon nu. According to BA (329), he was the abbot of Sangpu monastery for twenty years, starting in 1326.
396. Tib. Karma dkon mchog gzhon nu. According to Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba (2003, 972) and Chos kyi 'byung gnas (Situpa VIII) and 'Be lo tshe dbang kun khyab (2005, 1:580), Karma Gönshön just met the Third Karmapa (without receiving teachings) and was primarily a disciple of the Fourth Karmapa, Rölpe Dorje (1340–1383). He studied the yāna of characteristics at Sangpu and became renowned as a great scholar. It was primarily with him that the Sakya scholars Yagtön (1350–1414) and Rongtön (1367–1449) studied the last two Maitreya works (*Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra*). Stearns (2010, 58) also mentions a debate between Karma Gönshön and Rendawa Shönnu Lodrö (1348–1412) on the question of internal contradictions in the *Kālacakratantra*.
397. The works by Karma Gönshön and Karma Trinlépa are not available at present, though Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (2004, 1404 and 1405) lists a *Rgyud bla ma'i 'grel pa rton pa bzhi ldan mkhas pa dga' byed* (87 fols.) and a *Rgyud bla ma'i bsdus don rton pa bzhi ldan mkhas pa dga' byed* (7 fols.) by Karma Gönshön. A khu Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Dpe rgyun dkon pa 'ga' zhib gi tho yig*, in Chandra 1963, vol. 3, no. 11337, has a *Rgyud bla ma'i 'tikka* by that author.
398. Tib. Zur mang lha lung pa ka rma bstan 'phel.
399. Tib. Chos kyi don grub.
400. For extensive lists of Tibetan commentaries on the *Uttaratantra*, see Kano 2006, 593–600, and Burchardi 2006. For more details on the still-available Kagyü commentaries, see the section “The Tibetan Commentaries.”
401. Note however that the Tibetan and Chinese versions of the verses differ considerably in both number and content (see Takasaki 1966a, 9–19; and Schmithausen 1971, 123–30).
402. The conclusions of chapters 1, 4, and 5 of RGVV contain the compound *ślokartha-saṃgrahavyākhyānataḥ* (the Chinese translation omits this). However, as Takasaki (1989, 389) points out, this compound simply refers to the basic verses of the *Uttaratantra*, its commentarial verses, and the prose explanation of all these verses (RGVV).
403. Despite all this, my discussion will retain the two separate titles *Uttaratantra* and RGVV and treat them as two separate texts, since the latter is the prose commentary on the verses of the former.
404. D3935, fol. 325b.3f.
405. J67.9–68.6.
406. D3903, fol. 150a.6 (J139.22–24).

407. VT (fols. 12v7, 13r2, 15r7) calls the basic verses *mūla* (III.4) and the commentarial verses *vyākhyāśloka* (I.64–65 and I.67–68). Jñānaśrimitra's (c. 980–1040) *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* (in Jñānaśrimitra, *Jñānaśrimitranibandhāvali*, 503.20–22) calls the basic verses “*mūla*” (III.1) and the commentarial verses *vivṛti* (III.2–3; see also 502.17, 503.15, 536.22, and Schmithausen 1971, 124). Ngog Lotsāwa (Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fol. 34b.4) calls the basic verses *rtsa ba lta bu'i tshigs su bcad pa*.
408. See Takasaki 1966a, 10–19 and 393–95, and the critique by Schmithausen (1971, 23–30).
409. \*Sāramati is also held to be the author of the *\*Dharmadhātvaṣeṣāśāstra* (Taishō 1627). In Fa-tsang's commentary on this work (Taishō 1838, 63c14–21), there is a brief account of \*Sāramati's life, which Fa-tsang heard from Devaprajñā, a monk from Khotan who was the reported translator of the *\*Dharmadhātvaṣeṣāśāstra*. This account says that \*Sāramati was a bodhisattva on the first bhūmi who was born in India seven hundred years after the passing of the Buddha. He mastered all the teachings of hīnayāna and mahāyāna, but concentrated on teaching the undifferentiated dharmadhātu. Therefore, he composed texts such as the *Ratnagotravibhāga* and the *\*Dharmadhātvaṣeṣāśāstra*. His works do not deal with provisional dharmas but clarify only the substantial ultimate dharmas (see also Takasaki 1966a, 6–9). Modern scholars consider \*Sāramati to be someone different than Maitreya or consider “\*Sāramati” to be one of his epithets.
410. For an overview, see Kano 2006, 21.
411. CH 0047 in the Stein collection at the India Office (edited in Bailey and Johnston 1935).
412. As Shiu (2006, 186) reports, the contemporary scholar Tam Shek-wing believes that the root verses of the *Uttaratantra* were composed by Maitreya, while additional verses were added by \*Sāramati. The commentary (RGVV), he says, was authored by Asaṅga, and a final thorough editing of the entire text was done by Maitrīpa after his rediscovery of the work.
413. For details, see Inui 1998 and 2000 as well as Matsunaga 1980, 187ff.
414. About 70 percent of the *\*Anuttarāśrayasūtra* consists of almost literal passages from the *Uttaratantra* and mostly RGVV (I am indebted to Fitri Junoes for this information).
415. 350.
416. Tib. Nag tsho lo tsā ba tshul khriims rgyal ba. He was sent to India by King Jangchub Ö (Tib. Byang chub 'od) to invite Atiśa to Tibet and also became one of his main students. He and Atiśa translated the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV at Yerpa at the request of Ngog Jangchub Jungné (Tib. Rngog byang chub 'byung gnas).
417. Tib. Pa tshab lo tsā ba nyi ma grags.
418. Tib. Yar klung lo tsā ba grags pa rgyal mtshan.
419. Tib. Jo nang lo tsā ba blo gros dpal.
420. 306.
421. Tib. Lho brag pa dharma seng ge. He was a Kadampa master who also wrote a commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (*Bka' gdams gsung 'bum phyogs sgrig thengs gsum pa*, Lhasa: Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, vol. 78, 213–308).
422. For example, in addition to using mainly Ngog's translation, GC sometimes quotes Nagtso's and Patsab's renderings. YDC also refers to the translations by these three. For a study of the textual qualities of these translations and a register of sources in which translations (1), (3), and (5) are quoted, see Kano 2005 and 2006, 89–111.
423. See also Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, Yamaguchi 1934, 188.
424. See Gampopa's explanation of these five in appendix 1.



425. *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, D4034, fols. 41b.6–43a.2.

426. As for the Sanskrit term *śrutavāsanā*, *śruta* can mean “heard,” “listened to,” “taught,” “orally transmitted (knowledge),” and “instruction.” Thus, the term can be understood as “the latent tendencies of or through hearing/listening/studying” or “the latent tendencies for hearing/listening/studying.” The Tibetan rendering *thos pa'i bag chags* and some of the glosses in the commentaries on the *Mahāyānasamgraha* seem to suggest the rendering “the latent tendencies of listening,” which can also be understood as covering both options. Therefore, the term may refer to the latent tendencies of having listened to the dharma (which have been planted through having listened) or the latent tendencies of being prone to listen to the dharma again at any time in the future. In that way, these latent tendencies are both a result of having listened to the dharma and a cause for further such listening. In addition, the latent tendencies for listening to the dharma in general can also be said to be an innate quality of the dharmadhātu in all sentient beings. Indeed, the *Mahāyānasamgraha* describes the latent tendencies of listening as having all these meanings. On the one hand, they are said to be a “remedy,” “mundane,” and to increase “by virtue of being associated with listening, reflection, and meditation that are performed many times.” On the other hand, the term refers to “the seeds of the supramundane mind,” “the natural outflow of the pure dharmadhātu,” “the seeds of the dharmakāya,” and they are said to be “included in the dharmakāya.” Therefore, the latent tendencies of listening spring from studying the teachings and make one study them again, thus serving as the causes for eventually attaining the dharmakāya (thus being acquired “latent tendencies of or through listening”). However, since those tendencies are also said to be primordial present in the mind stream through the nature of phenomena, they are the natural outflow of the dharmadhātu and are merely revived through listening but are not newly created (thus being inherent “latent tendencies for listening”). The Buddhist teachings are seen as the natural outflow or activity of the dharmadhātu upon its being fully realized by a buddha. When these teachings meet with the latent tendencies of listening in the minds of other beings, those tendencies are activated and thus are also called the natural outflow of the dharmadhātu—the nature of the mind—of those beings. The comments on these different ways of describing the latent tendencies of listening in the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 431–33) account for the latent tendencies of listening being said to be both mundane and supramundane, but clearly treat them primarily from an ultimate perspective. The Karmapa says that they are “not something that must be input newly under the influence of conditions” but are “what allows one to listen to all the twelve branches of a buddha’s speech,” “the capacity of uncontaminated cognition that is active through the power of the nature of phenomena,” and they allow “the enlightened activity of the dharmakāya to engage the mind streams of sentient beings.” Also, they do not really increase, but “it is only the power of the decline of the factors to be relinquished that appears as if the latent tendencies of listening, which are the natural outflow of the completely pure dharmadhātu, increase from small to medium and so on.” The meaning of their being “mundane” is explained as referring only to their being the remedy for what is mundane, but in being the natural outflow of the supramundane dharmadhātu, they are not contained in mundane mind streams. The gist of their being a “natural outflow of the dharmadhātu” is said to lie in this term’s addressing the need for some factor that is other than the completely pure dharmadhātu itself yet outside of all impure phenomena. Thus, from the perspective of this factor of the natural outflow’s being associated with a mind stream on the path, it is presented as a bodhisattva and yet also as being included in the dharmakāya. In this way, “in the

single body of a yogin that appears as the dependent nature, there are two modes of engagement—the mode of engagement of the continuum of consciousness, and the mode of engagement of the power of wisdom.” Thus, depending on whether the latent tendencies of listening are regarded from the perspective of seeming reality, the path, and ordinary consciousness or from the perspective of ultimate reality, the ground/fruition, and nonconceptual supramundane wisdom (both perspectives are found in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* and the Karmapa’s commentary), these tendencies can be described as either mundane, conditioned, and acquired (being a remedy, increasing, and associated with listening, reflection, and meditation) or as supramundane, unconditioned, and innate (being the capacity of uncontaminated cognition that is active through the power of the nature of phenomena, an outflow of the dharmadhātu, and belonging to the dharmakāya). According to the Eighth Karmapa, these tendencies are the spontaneous impulses and habits of listening to, and engaging in, the dharma that are the natural expression of one’s own buddha nature as the causal condition. Thus, the dharma, teachers, and texts’ appearing for oneself as well as one’s being attracted to and engaging them come about through the main cause that consists of the revival of these internal tendencies appearing as if external, with the compassion and the enlightened activities of buddhas and bodhisattvas aiding as the dominant or contributing conditions. Fundamentally, all of this happens nowhere else than in the minds of the disciples and as nothing other than appearances in their minds, which in these cases, are increasingly less stained by obscurations.

427. Bu ston rin chen grub 2001, 1:382–83.

428. D3903, fol. 169b.6–7. For more details of the understanding of the term *gotra* in different Yogācāra and Madhyamaka texts, see Ruegg 1968–69, 1969, 1976, and 1977 as well as Brunnhölzl 2010, 284–92 and 428–88 and 2012a, 124–30 and 651–59.

429. GC, 209.11–21.

430. The terms *tathāgatakula* and *buddhakula* are used, for example, in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, and the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*. *Buddhavaṃśa* is found in the *Kāśyapaparivarta* and *tathāgatavaṃśa*, in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and *Sthiramati’s Madhyāntavibhāṅgaṭīkā*.

431. One of the meanings of *kula* is the residence of a family, that is, as much ground as can be ploughed by two ploughs, each drawn by six bulls.

432. The original meaning of this term is bamboo or any other type of cane. Due to the resemblance to the succession of joints in a bamboo cane, the term came to be used in the sense of a pedigree or genealogy, dynasty, lineage race, and family.

433. Fol. 14r1–2.

434. Bu ston rin chen grub 1931, 1:54.

435. Bu ston rin chen grub 1965–71, fols. 1b.4–2b.5.

436. J6.

437. Dar ma rin chen 1982, 12.3.

438. Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1997, 53.

439. Rongtön’s entire passage up to here is also found verbatim in Mipham’s commentary (’Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 352).

440. GC, 9.4–13.

441. 12.11–13.1.

442. 2–3.

443. 121.

444. CMW, 424.

445. 238–39.

446. Compare also Tagpo Dashi Namgyal's *Jewel Light Rays* (Roberts 2011, 439) equating the causal tathāgata heart with the causal tantra and quoting *Uttaratantra* I.28 in support.
447. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 352.
448. As for the meanings of "continuum" that are relevant here, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* gives the following explanations (which accord quite well with some of the meanings of *tantra*): "1 : something that is absolutely continuous and selfsame: a : something of which no distinction of content can be affirmed except by reference to something else . . . something of which the only assertable variation is variation in time or space 2 a : something in which a fundamental common character is discernible amidst a series of insensible or indefinite variations < a sensation ~ > b : an identity of substance uniting discrete parts; broadly: CONTINUITY . . . 4 a : an ideal substance or medium containing no vacant spaces and devoid of discrete structure b : a continuous portion of a spectrum." Under "continuity," we find: "1 . . . b : the quality or state of continuing without essential change : uninterrupted persistence of a particular quality or essential with reference to conjoint changing qualities . . . c : continuousness in time . . . 2 : something that shows continuity . . . 3 : an individual feature, element, or unit of a connected series . . ."
449. According to GC (8.6–18), the meaning of "treatise" (Skt. *śāstra*, Tib. *bstan bcos*) should be understood as explained in Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 4.7–15; D4032, fol. 190a.4–190b.1): "A treatise consists of the cognizances that appear as the collections of names, words, and letters. Or a treatise consists of the cognizances that appear as the special sounds (or terms) that cause one to attain supramundane wisdom. How do cognizances guide one or express [something]? Since the cognizances of the listener arise due to the cognizance of the guide and explainer, there is no flaw. It is a treatise by virtue of correcting [*śās*] disciples. Since correcting them gives rise to distinct forms of discipline, samādhi, and prajñā, they turn away from inappropriate actions and engage in appropriate actions. Or, it is a treatise because it exhibits the characteristics of a treatise. The characteristics of a *śāstra* are that through which one will relinquish the afflictions including their latent tendencies through having familiarized with all received instructions and that protects [*trāya*] one from the lower realms and [saṃsāric] existence, which are frightening due to all kinds of intense, incessant, and long-lasting sufferings. Therefore, it possesses the characteristics of a treatise because it corrects the enemies that are the afflictions and protects one from the lower realms and [saṃsāric] existence" (for variant readings of this passage in D4032 and Pandeya 1999, see note 1875. This explanation of "treatise" through the two qualities of correcting (or mending) and protecting is the one that is generally adopted in Tibetan texts too.
450. For example, Maitreya, *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1a, I.4a, and I.8a.
451. For example, Maitreya, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* IX.12, IX.14, IX.43–48 and Maitreya, *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (lines 114–15, 288, and 299). Though the precise understanding of the term "fundamental change" (such as what the "foundation" [*āśraya*] in this term refers to) varies in Yogācāra texts, the outcome or result of the fundamental change is frequently identified as the perfect nature, the dharmakāya, buddhahood, or its equivalents being freed from the adventitious stains of dualistic appearances (for a survey, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 52–110). In particular, works such as the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and its commentary clearly take the "foundation" in "fundamental change" as nonconceptual wisdom, suchness, or the nature of phenomena, which is freed from adventitious stains. In *Uttaratantra* V.7, "the foundation" refers

to the obscured tathāgata heart and “its change” to awakening, which is nothing but the tathāgata heart’s having become unobscured. RGVV on I.23ab equates stainless suchness with the final fundamental change of buddhahood, that is, the dharmakāya. RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.44 comments that the termination of contaminations or adventitious stains has the characteristic of the completely stainless and pure luminosity of this fundamental change. RGVV’s introduction to the *Uttaratantra*’s second chapter and its comments on II.1 say that the nature of that fundamental change is the purity of the tathāgata heart, while the cause of the fundamental change consists of the two-fold wisdom of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. In addition, RGVV’s introduction to II.18ff. says that the fundamental change is called “a result of freedom” (from all adventitious stains).

452. For example, Asaṅga, *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara ed., 3.2ff; D4037, fol. 2b.3–5).
453. For example, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.22 and IX.56, Vasubandhu, *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* (D4027, fol. 12a.1), Vasubandhu, *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* (D4050, fol. 148a.6), and Asvabhāva, *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* (D4051, fols. 193a.3, 227b.7, and 265b.2).
454. For example, *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara ed., 37.1ff; D4037, fol. 20b.4–5).
455. For example, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XIII.4cd and XIV.28ab and *Mahāyānasamgraha* III.12 (D4048, fol. 25b.5).
456. For example, *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara ed., 38.4; D4037, fol. 21a.6), Vasubandhu, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (Lévi 1907, 139.15; and *Mahāyānasamgraha* III.12 (D4048, fol. 25b.5–6).
457. For example, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.60ff.
458. For example, *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* X, *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.48 (D4048, fol. 11a.3), and Vasubandhu, *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapīṇḍavyākhyā* (D4052, fols. 360b.6–361a.1).
459. Wogihara ed., 3.4–6; D4037, fol. 2b.4.
460. D290, fol. 275a.2–3. With minor variations, this passage is also found in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Dutt ed., 32.12–13; D4037, fol. 26b.5–6), the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (D4049, fol. 76b.3), Vasubandhu’s *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* on I.1, Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* on I.1, Vasubandhu’s *Śatasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāṣṭādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābhratīkā* (D3808, fol. 63a.2–3), and Jagaddalanivāsin’s *Bhagavatyaṃnāyānusārīṇīnāmavyākhyā* (D3811, fol. 293a.5).
461. Though the fourth vajra point is explained through four more topics, RGVV (J40) explains that these four are simply specific aspects of the sixth topic of manifestation. Likewise, both the seventh topic (permanence) and the eighth topic (inconceivability) of the fifth vajra point are explicitly said to pertain to the three kāyas (J88 and *Uttaratantra* II.72), which represent the contents of the sixth topic of manifestation. For a comparison of the contents of the first six topics of the fourth and fifth vajra points, see appendix 7.
462. D4026, fols. 158b.7–159a.1.
463. D4034, vol. mi, fols. 133b.7–134a.7.
464. In the discussion of the fifth vajra point (awakening) in the *Uttaratantra*, (1) the nature of awakening is said to consist of the purity that is the nature of the fundamental change, which is endowed with all inseparable and stainless buddha qualities and is permanent. The nonconceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise and the wisdom of subsequent attainment are presented as (2) the cause of awakening. The freedom from all afflictive and cognitive obscurations is discussed as a part of (3) fruition.
465. *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, vol. mi, fol. 134b.1–5).
466. *Ibid.*, fols. 134b.6–135b.2.

467. Through the samādhi called “Sky Treasure,” bodhisattvas are able to spontaneously manifest all desired and necessary things for all beings to be guided. Through the samādhi called “Heroic Stride,” they experience and master the entire range of mundane and supramundane samādhis.
468. In the discussion of the fifth vajra point, wisdom is also (2) the cause of awakening, while being endowed with infinite buddha qualities (such as samādhis) is presented as part of (1) nature and (3) fruition.
469. *Sūtrālaṃkārvṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, vol. mi, fols. 135b.2–4 136a.6).
470. In the discussion of the fifth vajra point, to engage in the welfare of all sentient beings through the three kāyas is presented as (4) function and the qualities of the three kāyas as (6) manifestation.
471. D4048, fol. 39b.7–40a.2.
472. For a detailed comparison of the six topics in the fourth and fifth vajra points in the *Uttaratantra*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, and the *Mahāyānasamgraha*, see appendix 7.
473. D4049, fol. 117a.7–117b.5.
474. D4054, fols. 117b.4–118b.2.
475. D4035, fol. 200a.5–6.
476. For further details on this, see Takasaki 1966a, 400–408.
477. See especially *Uttaratantra* I.13b, I.63, I.125ab, and II.3ab, as well as RGVV passim.
478. For a survey, see Brunnhölzl 2007b, 68–83.
479. *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 40.5–41.15; D4032, fols. 214a.6–215a.2.
480. *Ibid.*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 49.4–14; D4032, fol. 218b.4–7.
481. D4034, fol. 119a.1–3.
482. D4028, fol. 38a.3–38b.5.
483. D4026, fol. 168a.3–6.
484. D4034, vol. mi, fols. 75a.3–5 and 174a.1–174b.1.
485. D4038, vol. zi, fols. 14b.5–15a.1 and 123b.5–124a.1. For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 440n781.
486. D3808, fols. 98b.7–99a.2.
487. D3811, fols. 21b.6–22a.2, 25b.1–4 (also quoting *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XIII.18–19 with the example of water’s becoming clear for naturally luminous mind’s becoming free from adventitious stains), and 30a.6–30b.1.
488. 455.24–456.2.
489. Note that JKC (24), obviously following GC, says the same.
490. 470.15–16.
491. D4024, fol. 38a.3–38b.4.
492. *Sūtrālaṃkārvṛttibhāṣya*, D4034, fol. 119a.4–119b.6.
493. Furthermore, Grosnick 1979 (91–92) argues that the *Uttaratantra*’s understanding of *buddhadhātu* as the nonduality of subject and object can be traced back to the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*.
494. D4061, fol. 30b.3.
495. That I.3 teaches the connection between the seven vajra points is also stated by TOK, 1:461.
496. Of course, as RGVV on I.1 explains, there is also the more general purpose of the *Uttaratantra*’s seven vajra points, which is to elucidate the actuality of realization that is like a vajra because it is to be realized through personally experienced wisdom, has an inexpressible nature, and is difficult to penetrate by studying and reflecting. Having

elucidated this actuality of realization, the ultimate purpose is then to attain the direct realization of this actuality.

497. As already mentioned, Mādhyamikas adduce the basis of intention, the purpose, and the invalidation of the explicit statement as the three criteria for a statement's being of expedient meaning.
498. For example, to think of emptiness as referring to the utter nonexistence of everything can lead to depression and faintheartedness in terms of ever attaining buddhahood. Thinking that one has understood emptiness can lead to pride and contempt for those who are perceived as inferior. Due to such pride, true realization will not arise and one will thus continue to cling to what is unreal. To regard even the tathāgata heart as completely empty and unreal, just like the adventitious stains, means to misperceive ultimate reality, which is obviously not very conducive for one's path. Finally, merely through thinking of the tathāgata heart and everything else as being nothing but empty, compassion will not arise, which as its reverse only enhances self-cherishing.
499. The minor exceptions are the two quotes from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*.
500. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* I.37–39 speaks of “the disposition,” but no Indian commentary relates this to *tathāgatagarbha*. Rather, the disposition is usually taken to be the dhar-madhātu or the nature of phenomena in the sense of emptiness.
501. Limaye 1992, 122; D4026, fols. 156b.7–157a.1.
502. D4050, fol. 151a.1–2.
503. D4051, fols. 230b.7–231a.1.
504. *Ibid.*, fol. 246b.4.
505. *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, D4034, fol. 124a.5–124b.2. In its comments on *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.19a (“in order to purify the disposition”), Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 45.5–10; D4032, fol. 216a.7–216b.3) explains the meaning of “disposition” as “primordial nature” (*prakṛti*), which is always like that without beginning and does not arise suddenly, since I.19a refers to “the emptiness of the primordial nature” (one of the sixteen emptinesses). Then, Sthiramati lists some other positions as to what “disposition” means here without commenting on them. Some say that the six (inner) āyatanas are the buddha disposition, while others take them to be the disposition of śrāvakas and so on. Yet others state that “disposition” here means that all sentient beings have the tathāgata disposition.
506. Obviously, when RGVV quotes *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.37, it understands the terms “suchness” and *tathāgatagarbha* in it in a different way than do Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, that is, as the natural pure luminosity of mind that is only obscured by adventitious stains.
507. Keenan 2002, 48, 101, and 103.
508. For details on the meaning of “lacking the disposition,” see RGVV's discussion of the statement in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and others about “those who have the nature of absolutely not attaining parinirvāṇa” (J37).
509. D4034, fol. 196a.5–196b.1.
510. Taishō 31, 157a.
511. Taishō 1666.
512. Taishō 1610. The Chinese canon attributes the text to Vasubandhu (which is highly unlikely) and gives Paramārtha as the translator.
513. Further interpreting and expanding on Paramārtha's approach, the later Chinese schools of Sui and T'ang also greatly emphasized the fusion of Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha* teachings.
514. The following overview is based on Diana Y. Paul 1984 and Radich 2008.

515. Note that this is one of the earliest Indian precedents of how Tibetan Shentongpas usually describe the relationship between the three natures. Whereas classic Yogācāra always says that the perfect nature is the dependent nature empty of the imaginary nature, Shentongpas and several Indian authors state that the perfect nature is empty of both the imaginary and dependent natures. For details on these texts and how they exhibit typical traits of Shentong in terms of their discussions of the three natures and so on, see the section “Indian Forerunners of Shentong, Early Tibetan Shentongpas, and Their Connection to the *Uttaratantra*” and Brunnhölzl 2011a.
516. In contrast to Paramārtha, Hsüan-tsang’s (602–664) Yogācāra approach was primarily based on the teachings by Dharmapāla’s (530–561) student Śilabhadra (529–645) and the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* (attributed to Dharmapāla), which compiles the commentaries by ten Indian Yogācāras on Vasubandhu’s *Viṃśatikā* and *Triṃśikā*. This approach, which became the predominant Yogācāra school in China and eclipsed Paramārtha’s earlier translations and interpretations, does not refer to the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* at all. In China, unlike India, the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* eventually became a school of its own, distinct from both Yogācāra and Madhyamaka.
517. See the chapter “Different Ways of Explaining the Meaning of *Tathāgatagarbha*” and appendix 2.
518. There are some controversies about the authorship of the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābrhaṭṭikā* (D3807), the *Brhaṭṭikā* (D3808), and the *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusārīṇī* (D3811). Most Tibetan scholars agree that they are by Daṃṣṭrāsena (eighth century), Vasubandhu, and \*Jagaddalanivāsīn (twelfth century), respectively. However, D3807 and D3808 were often conflated or both considered to be authored by Daṃṣṭrāsena or other authors, or even to be of Tibetan origin (for details, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 692n99 and 2011a, 7–15). If D3807 and D3808 are indeed by Daṃṣṭrāsena and Vasubandhu, they would represent two exceptions before the eleventh century to Yogācāras usually not combining the teachings on *tathāgatagarbha* with mainstream Yogācāra topics and to their not explaining *tathāgatagarbha* in positive terms.
519. D3808, fol. 151a.6. The sentence “all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart” is also found on fol. 40a.1.
520. Ibid., fol. 63a.5–7.
521. Ibid., fol. 187b.4–5. An almost identical passage is found in the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābrhaṭṭikā* (D3807, vol. pa, fol. 4a.7–4b.1).
522. D3808, fols. 40a.1–4 and 52a.3–6.
523. *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusārīṇīnāmavyākhyā*, D3811, fols. 207b.6–209b.4.
524. D3811, fol. 208b.4.
525. J72.
526. Vasubandhu, D4061, fol. 110a.1–3.
527. *Bhagavatyāmnāyānusārīṇīnāmavyākhyā*, fols. 313a.1–2, 307b.5–6, and 313a.2–3, respectively.
528. For example, Tāranātha’s *Essence of Shentong* (Tāranātha 1982–87, 4:501–2) says that the one who elucidated the sūtras of the final definitive meaning was Maitreya in his five works, with the *Uttaratantra* in particular determining the subtle philosophical system of the extraordinary meaning of the sūtras on the tathāgata heart. Furthermore, Asaṅga commented on the intention of the *Uttaratantra*, clearly explaining this extraordinary system in detail. In general, Tāranātha says, Shentong Madhyamaka is described clearly in all treatises of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, but it is extremely lucid and detailed in Vasubandhu’s *Brhaṭṭikā* and *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*.

529. In Tibet, almost everybody criticized the Jonang presentation of buddha nature as being like the Hindu view of an *ātman*, and nowadays some Japanese scholars claim that the notion of *tathāgatagarbha* is altogether not Buddhist (for overviews, see S. King 1992, R. King 1995, and Swanson 1997).
530. These are *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* VI.4, IX.37, XI.12–13, and XIII.18–19, *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1, I.21–22, and III.3, two verses from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, and four passages from the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*.
531. This refers to the authors of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, *Madhyāntavibhāga*, *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, and *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*.
532. There is no monolithic Shentong School but a great variety of ways in which different Tibetan masters understand this term and how they formulate the associated view. A text by the twentieth-century Kagyü scholar Surmang Padma Namgyal (Zur mang pad ma rnam rgyal n.d., 60.3–61.6) lists seven different kinds of views held by various Jonang, Sakya, Kagyü, and Nyingma masters on the distinction between *rangtong* and *shentong* (I am indebted to Anne Burchardi for drawing my attention to this text and providing me with a copy of it). According to this text, (1) Dölpopa and his followers hold consciousness to be *rangtong* and wisdom to be *shentong*. (2) Śākya Chogden considers phenomena—appearances—as *rangtong* and the nature of phenomena—luminosity—as *shentong*. (3) Sabsang Mati Pañchen maintains subject and object to be *rangtong* and expanse (*abyings*) and wisdom to be *shentong*. (4) The Thirteenth Karmapa considers saṃsāra to be *rangtong* and nirvāṇa to be *shentong*. (5) The Eighth Karmapa and his followers take the pure kāyas and wisdom to be *rangtong* in terms of their actual mode of being and to be *shentong* in terms of the way they appear. (6) The Eighth Situpa considers the side of negation as *rangtong* and the side of affirmation as *shentong*. (7) The Nyingma master Gédsé Pañchen from Gaḥto Monastery (Tib. Kaḥ thog dge rtsé paṅ chen; 1761–1829) regards the phase of conclusive resolve during meditative equipoise to be *rangtong* and the phase of clearly distinguishing during subsequent attainment to be *shentong*. Among these seven views, Padma Namgyal explicitly considers views (4), (6), and (7) to be good positions. Summarizing the seven into three, Padma Namgyal says that Dölpopa asserts wisdom to be *shentong*, Śākya Chogden holds the expanse to be *shentong*, and all others take both wisdom and the expanse to be *shentong*. When summarized into two, the first five are said to present *rangtong* and *shentong* mainly by way of what is to be determined, while the latter two do so primarily by way of the means to determine that. Note though (and this complicates matters further) that these seven distinctions are obviously based on three very different categories of comparison in terms of what *rangtong* and *shentong* mean. The first—and most common—category takes *rangtong* and *shentong* to refer to phenomena as belonging to two different levels of reality (seeming and ultimate), which underlies views (1)–(5). The second category refers to *rangtong* and *shentong* as two approaches to conceptually determine the subject in question (6). The third category considers *rangtong* and *shentong* as distinct (nonconceptual) experiences or phases in the process of attaining realization (7).
533. 7.25–8.1
534. In this context, this expression could also mean “the actuality of the [tathāgata] heart.”
535. Śākya mchog ldan 1988b, 239–240.
536. 1:460–62.
537. Tib. Smin gling gter chen ’gyur med rdo rje.
538. For example, Lo chen Dharmasrī n.d. (373.5–374.5) says: “As for cutting through reference points, there are two [ways]—*rangtong* and *shentong*. *Rangtong* means to assert



the emptiness that is a nonimplicative negation as the ultimate since [all] subjects in question—no matter how they appear—are empty of a nature of their own right from the point of their mere appearance. As for the Mādhyamikas that determine *shentong*, due to the difference of asserting all knowable objects as the three characteristics [the imaginary, dependent, and perfect natures] or summarizing them into two—the imaginary and the perfect [natures]—there are two dissimilar ways of identifying the subject in question. In the Yogācāra scriptures, the perfect [nature] is explained as the dependent (the basis of emptiness) being empty of the imaginary (the object of negation). In the *Uttaratantra* and so on, it is said that the nature of phenomena—the perfect [nature]—is empty of the imaginary (the object of negation). Therefore, in the essence of this perfect [nature]—the true nature of mind, the ultimate basic element—there are no stains to be eliminated and no previously nonexistent qualities to be newly accomplished since it is primordially pure by nature and the qualities are spontaneously present.” For further details on Lo chen’s Shentong view and additional excerpts from his text, see Duckworth 2011, 211–12, 307–8, and 315–16.

539. GISM (180 and 202) adds the Seventh and Thirteenth Karmapas, the Ninth Situpa, Śākya Chogden, and Tāranātha (as well as several Jonang masters after the latter) as proponents of Shentong. Chos grags bstan ’phel (1990, 8) also adds the Ninth Jé Khenpo of Bhutan, Śākya Rinchen (1710–1759), who is considered to be a reincarnation of Śākya Chogden. Śākya Rinchen’s views are mainly presented in a three-volume biography of Śākya Chogden, his poems, and an encyclopedic work on the philosophical systems of Buddhists and non-Buddhists (*Rang dang gzhan gyi grub pa’i mtha’ rgya mtsho lta bu’i gnad bsdu pa legs par bshad pa’i sgo brgya pa* in 2:587–830 of his collected works; TBRC W8684).
540. 14–20.
541. These are the complete training in all aspects, the culminating training, the serial training, and the instantaneous training (for details, see Brunnhölzl 2011b and 2012a).
542. See *Uttaratantra* I.33cd–34.
543. See *Uttaratantra* II.45cd.
544. See *Uttaratantra* I.32–33ab. These four are the factors to be relinquished by the four means of purification.
545. Besides being attributed to Gampopa here in JKC, this statement is attributed to Gampopa in many texts of later Kagyü masters, such as BA (724), GC (5.10–11), the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Mi bskyod rdo rje 1996, 11), and TOK. However, it is not found in the presently available works of Gampopa.
546. Tib. ’Bri gung ’jig rten gsum mgon.
547. I.158ab/161ab.
548. II.38.
549. See GISM for the details of Jamgön Kongtrül’s approach of preliminary “Shentong reasoning” and the ensuing cultivation of meditative equipoise in accordance with both the second and third turnings of the wheel of dharma, with the latter’s being based on the essential verses of the *Uttaratantra*.
550. This probably refers to Sakya Paṇḍita. Obviously, JKC attempts here to harmonize the Shentong and Mahāmudrā approach (he explicitly equated the two in one passage) even with the essence of the correct view according to one of the most severe Tibetan critics of Shentong-like approaches and Kagyü Mahāmudrā.
551. Tib. Yu mo ba mi bskyod rdo rje.
552. Tib. *Gsal sgron skor bzhi*. There is little information about Yumowa, but the Jonang School considers him as its founder. Jonang histories of the *Kālacakratantra* say that

he was a student of a certain Candranātha and a paṇḍita from Kashmir. Yumowa was a master of the *Kālacakratantra* and his teachings were initially passed on through his family line and several other masters, with Dölpopa already being about the tenth lineage holder (this tradition only became known as Jonang after the founding of the monastery with that name by Künpang Tugjé Dsöndrū [Tib. Kun spang thugs rje brtson 'grus; 1243–1313]). Yumowa's only preserved works are his "Four Lucid Lamps"—"The Lucid Lamp of Union" (*Zung 'jug gsal sgron*), "The Lucid Lamp of Mahāmudrā" (*Phyag rgya chen po'i gsal sgron*), "The Lucid Lamp of Luminosity" (*'Od gsal gsal sgron*), and "The Lucid Lamp of Emptiness" (*Stong nyid gsal ba'i sgron me*). These texts deal with the correct practice of the six-branch yoga of the *Kālacakratantra* and treat some of the topics on which Dölpopa elaborated later (without, however, using his specific terminologies, such as *rangtong*, *shentong*, and ālaya-wisdom; for more details, see Stearns 2010, 43–45). Thus, Tāranātha's *History of the Kālacakratantra* says that Yumowa is "the founder of the philosophical system of mantric Shentong" (Tāranātha 1982–87, 2:16). It is obviously due to Jamgön Kongtrul's general great reliance on Tāranātha that he also mentions Yumowa here in connection with Shentong.

553. The term *dbyings* ("expanse") is one of the two Tibetan words for the Sanskrit term *dhātu* in the sense of dharmadhātu. It emphasizes the unlimited and all-pervasive space-like quality of the dharmadhātu (here not understood as mere emptiness but as the union of emptiness and clarity or nondual nonconceptual wisdom), while the word *kham*s ("basic element") emphasizes that this dharmadhātu is the innate true nature of the minds of all sentient beings.

554. Shes rab phun tshogs 2007, 9.

555. Note also that Rongtön's very brief and rather generic *Stages of Meditation on the "Uttaratantra"* (Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1999, 529) explicitly states that there is a meditative tradition of practicing the contents of the *Uttaratantra*, saying that he presents the manner of making the *Uttaratantra* a living experience by summarizing the meaning that is explained in Nāropa's pith instructions (though Rongtön's text contains no details on this).

556. When I refer to the Third Karmapa's view as "Shentong," I do so because of certain features of that view. The Karmapa's own texts never use the terms *shentong* or *rangtong* and labeling his view as Shentong by no means implies that it is the same as Dölpopa's (for the major differences between them, see Brunnhölzl 2009, 114–17).

557. See Brunnhölzl 2007b, 159–93, and 2009.

558. Karma phrin las pa phyogs las rnam rgyal 2006, 396–97.

559. Karma phrin las pa phyogs las rnam rgyal 1975, vol. cha, 90–92.

560. Karma phrin las pa phyogs las rnam rgyal (2006, 46–47) explains this further: "Others say, 'If this heart had the sixty-four qualities from the very beginning, the qualities of perfect buddhahood would exist in the mind streams of sentient beings, and in that case, does the buddha wisdom in the mind stream of a hell being experience the sufferings of hell?' Such is indeed said, but it is precisely for this reason that we speak about [wisdom or luminous mind] by making the distinction that it is stained during the phase of sentient beings and stainless in the state of a buddha. In other words, perfect buddhahood and its powers and so on do not exist in the mind streams of sentient beings. This is definitely how it is, but it will be understood through saying again and again, 'Stained buddhahood and its powers and so on exist [in their mind streams].'"

561. The three bodhisattva commentaries are Kulika Puṇḍarika's *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra* (he is commonly considered as an emanation of

- Avalokiteśvara), Vajragarbha's *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā*, and Vajrapāṇi's commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra* (*Lakṣābhīdanāduddhṛtalaghutantrapīṇḍārthavivarāṇa*).
562. Rang byung rdo rje 2006c, fol. 22a.3–4.
563. Chos kyi dbang phyug (Shamarpa VI). n.d., lines 132–35 (Brunnhölzl 2007a, 349).
564. *Ibid.*, lines 136–226 (Brunnhölzl 2007a, 349–52).
565. *Ibid.*, lines 246–78 (for a translation of this section, see the chapter “The *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā” and Brunnhölzl 2007a, 352–53). For a complete translation of this song, see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 344–57. In addition, the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* also frequently equates *shentong* and Mahāmudrā (see the introduction in Brunnhölzl 2010 as well as 2011b).
566. Bdud 'dul rdo rje 2002, lines 82–90. For a complete translation of this song, see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 430–40.
567. However, as mentioned before, Jamgön Kongtrul incorporated elements of the Jonang view into his presentation of Shentong, which is the most widely used one in the Karma Kagyü School at present.
568. For details on the views of Dölpopa, Tāranātha, and the Jonang School, see Hookham 1991a, Stearns 2010, Hopkins 2006 and 2007, and Sheehy 2007.
569. Tib. *Zab mo gzhan stong dbu ma'i brgyud 'debs* (Tāranātha 1982–1987, 4:483–89).
570. For details on some of the masters in this lineage, see the chapter “The History and Transmission of ‘The Five Dharmas of Maitreya’ from India to Tibet.”
571. *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i chos bskor gyi byung khungs nyer mkho*, see Sheehy 2007, 81–83.
572. Tib. 'Bro lo tsā wa shes rab grags.
573. Tib. Lha rje sgom pa.
574. Tib. Sgro ston gnam brtsegs.
575. Tib. Chos kyi dbang phyug.
576. Tib. Nam mkha' 'od zer.
577. Tib. Ma gcig sprul sku jo 'bum.
578. Tib. Se mo che ba nam mkha' rgyal mtshan.
579. Tib. 'Jam dbyangs gsar ma shes rab 'od zer.
580. Tib. Kun mkhyen chos sku 'od zer.
581. Tib. Kun spangs pa thugs rje brtson 'grus.
582. There were two lineage masters between Tugjé Dsöndrū and Dölpopa—Gyalwa Yeshé (Tib. Rgyal ba ye shes; 1257–1320) and Yönten Gyatso (Tib. Yon tan rgya mtsho; 1260–1327)—that are not explicitly mentioned by Tāranātha.
583. Such as the connections between early Kadampa and Kagyü masters and also the fact that Tāranātha was a student of the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchug Dorje (Tib. Dbang phyug rdo rje; 1556–1603).
584. Thus, this Nyingma master is the point where Jamgön Kongtrul's Shentong lineage branches off from the main Jonang lineage above.
585. Tib. Ngag bdang chos 'phel rgya mtsho.
586. For 250 years (mid-fifteenth to late seventeenth centuries) before the ban of the Jonang School in Central Tibet, the Jonang School had already flourished in Amdo and continues to do so to the present day—groups of monasteries in Dzamtang, Golog, Gyalrong, and Ngawa in far eastern Tibet are the only places where the Jonang tradition survived in Tibet to the present day. According to Ngawang Lodrö Tragpa, Ngawang Trinlé's disciple Ngawang Tendzin Namgyal (Tib. Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin rnam rgyal; 1691–1738) was the first native person from Amdo to be the throne holder of Tsangwa Monastery. Following him, there were six successors before Bamda Tubten Gele Gyatso (Tib. 'Bam da' thub bstan dge legs rgya mtsho; 1844–1904), the primary student of

- Ngawang Chöpel Gyatso (Tib. Ngag dbang chos 'phel rgya mtsho; c. 1788–1865; from whom Jamgön Kongtrul received Jonang teachings such as those in GISM) and Ngawang Chöpa Gyatso (Tib. Ngag dbang chos 'phags rgya mtsho; nineteenth century). Bamda was recognized as a rebirth of both Tāranātha and Kunga Drölcho. He also held the Dzogchen lineage of Dzogchen Monastery, studied closely with Jamgön Kongtrul and Patrul Rinpoche (Tib. Rdza dpal sprul rin po che; 1808–1887), and even had mutual teacher-student relationships with several Gelugpa teachers—the fourth Jamyang Shéba (Tib. 'Jam dbyang bzhed pa; 1856–1916), Kesang Goshri (Tib. Skal bzang go shri), and Tukwan (Tib. Thu'u bkwan thams cad mkhyen pa; 1839–1894). Bamda's main student was Tsognyi Gyatso, the primary mentor of Ngawang Lodrö Trappa.
587. According to Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1979–81, 1:506), Tsewang Norbu was also a major figure in the transmission lineage of Mahāmudrā coming from Barawa Gyaltzen Balsang (1310–1391).
588. Tib. 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen rtse dbang po.
589. For more details on Tsewang Norbu and the Eighth Situpa, see Stearns 2010, 77–80.
590. Tib. 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi blo gros.
591. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984c and c. 1990b.
592. *Dbu ma sogs gzhung spyi'i dka'gnad* in 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho c. 1990a, 22:450.3 and *Dam chos dogs sel* in 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1992, 521.
593. Tib. Zhe chen rgyal tshab pad ma rnam rgyal.
594. Tib. Ldil mgo mkhyen brtse.
595. Tib. Ka lu rang byung kun khyab phrin las.
596. Tib. Bdud 'joms 'jigs bral ye shes rdo rje.
597. For details on Dūjom Rinpoche's position on Rangtong and Shentong or coarse outer Madhyamaka and subtle inner Madhyamaka (or Great Madhyamaka), as well as buddha nature, see Bdud 'joms 'jigs bral ye shes rdo rje 1991, 162–216. Though he advocates the superiority of Great Madhyamaka to some degree, he also discusses the complementarity of Rangtong and Shentong as well as that of the second and third dharma wheels.
598. Tib. Lo chen dharma shri.
599. Tib. Dge rtse paṅ ḍi ta 'gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub; considered to be an incarnation of Dölpopa.
600. In that vein, it will prove to be very illuminating to compare the presentation in Jamgön Kongtrul's TOK with the *Dus gsum gyi rgyal ba sras dang bcas pa'i bstan pa mtha' dag dang khyad par rdo rje 'chang ka rma pa'i dgongs pa gsal bar byed pa'i bstan bcos thar pa'i lam chen bgrod pa'i shing rta* (two-volumes, published in 2012) by Balkang Lotsāwa Ngawang Chökyi Gyatso (Tib. Dpal khang lo tsā ba ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho—the Second Karma Trinlépa; born fifteenth/sixteenth century). As its title says, this text is an overview of all Buddhist teachings but in particular elucidates the intention of the Eighth Karmapa (the main teacher of Balkang Lotsāwa). It appears that TOK (not the root text but the commentary) incorporates almost this entire text in more or less literal form. It will be one of my future projects to translate this work and compare it with TOK. Given that it is already well known that TOK incorporates a substantial number of passages from Tāranātha's and Śākya Chogden's works, its comparison with Karma Trinlépa's text will shed even more light on the process through which TOK was compiled.
601. Note that the Shangpa Kagyü tradition, despite its name and certain similarities in its teachings, is an independent school and not a subschool of the Kagyü School. This is clear from the Shangpa School's having a completely different lineage and its own set of

transmitted teachings. Its status as a distinct tradition is also outlined in the presentation of “the eight great chariots of practice lineages” (Tib. *sgrub brgyud shing rta chen po brgyad*) in Tibet.

602. For more details, see the chapter “Different Ways of Explaining the Meaning of *Tathāgatagarbha*” and Brunnhölzl 2011a.
603. For these connections, see appendix 2 and the descriptions and translations of IM, RW, and HML in this volume.
604. Compare RGVV (J26.9) on *Uttaratantra* I.28.
605. Interestingly, *prasādhana* is glossed as “having the nature of direct perception” (*pratyakṣarūpam*), which accords with GC’s and JKC’s above-mentioned approach to the *Uttaratantra* through the path of direct perception.
606. This refers to the parts of the following syllogism: “The afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth (subject) is empty (predicate of the probandum) because it is conditioned (reason), just like clouds, dreams, and illusions (example).”
607. This refers to the following passage in RGVV (J33.10–11): “For as long as they do not perceive the tathāgata element, which becomes apparent due to the cessation of all afflictiveness in terms of afflictions, karma, and birth without exception . . .”
608. Tib. *Rta nag pa rin chen ye shes*.
609. Kun dga’ grol mchog 1981, 83–84.
610. Zhu chen tshul khriims rin chen 1970, vol. 2, fol. 72a3–4.
611. Bu ston rin chen grub 2000, 201.
612. Tāranātha 1982–87, 2:24.
613. 139–41.
614. Note that this last sentence distinguishes between *prajñā* and wisdom, obviously in the sense of the former’s referring to the analytical insight into the utter emptiness of the adventitious stains, while the latter means the direct and nonconceptual realization of the tathāgata heart with its inseparable qualities. Evidently, these two are complementary, but nonconceptual wisdom can arise only once the adventitious stains are seen through.
615. 81.
616. Kun dga’ grol mchog 1981, 170–71. This is followed by a concluding verse that includes the syllables of Kunga Drölcho’s name:  
 Through summarizing all (*kun*) phenomena into the three characteristics,  
 This guiding instruction on supreme (*mchog*) self-liberated (*grol*) joy (*dga*)  
 Untainted by the stains of dualistic appearances  
 Was clearly put into words here.
617. For example, *Mahāyānasamgraha* III.8 says that the imaginary nature corresponds to the snake; the dependent nature, to the rope; and the perfect nature, to just the characteristics of color, smell, taste, and what can be touched that make up a rope. By contrast, the Third Karmapa’s commentary on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (Rang byung rdo rje 2006b, 497) explains that the imaginary nature is like the snake for which the rope is mistaken, that is, a nonexistent that nevertheless seems to appear. Just as the rope, the dependent nature appears, but is not really existent in the way it appears as a rope, since all that appears is a mere collection of threads with a certain color and shape. The perfect nature is the snake’s and the rope’s very own nature of lacking any real existence as well as unmistakable self-awareness, since it is without being mistaken about what appears.
618. These are (1) natural purity (suchness, emptiness, dharmadhātu, the true end, signlessness, and the ultimate), (2) stainless purity (this natural purity’s not having any

obscurations), (3) the purity of the path to attain stainless purity (the dharmas concordant with awakening, the pāramitās, and so on), and (4) the pure object in order to generate this path (the dharma of the mahāyāna).

619. As already mentioned, in the “Maitreya Chapter” in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* in eighteen thousand and twenty-five thousand lines, all phenomena are divided into three kinds—“imaginary form,” “conceived form,” and “dharmatā-form” and so on—which correspond to the three natures.

620. 29.

621. 464.

622. 29.

623. 150–51.

624. 194.

625. 348.

626. Śākya mchog ldan 1988b, 240.

627. 349.

628. Vol. 2, 460–61.

629. 343.2.

630. Such as the Fifth Shamarpa’s biography of Gö Lotsāwa (see Mathes 2008a, 146).

631. 349–50.

632. 14.22–16.17.

633. These exact terms seem not to have been used before his time and probably were coined by him.

634. Tib. *don brgyud mthar thug pa*. Note that, beginning with this sentence, this passage incorporates most of what Gö Lotsāwa’s BA (724–25) says at the end of its presentation of the Kagyü lineage. In general, this section of TOK incorporates parts of BA, GC, and the Eighth Situpa’s commentary on the Third Karmapa’s *Aspiration Prayer of Mahāmudrā*.

635. Tib. *lhan cig skyes sbyor*. This expression seems not to be attested in Indian texts, while terms such as *sahajānanda*, *sahajasukha*, *sahajakāya*, *sahajacitta*, and *sahajajñāna* are frequently used, particularly in the dohās. The Sanskrit *sahaja* (lit. “born together”) means “innate,” “connate,” “original,” “natural” but also “always the same as at the very beginning.” It appears that the particular term “connate union” was coined by Gampopa. On its meaning, Jamgön Kongtrul (Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 1979–81, 18:431) quotes Gampopa as saying:

The three of mind, thoughts, and dharmakāya

Are [already] connate in the first place.

Since they are united into one through the instructions,

Isn’t that called connate union?

Gampopa’s *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors* (Tib. *Go cha gnyis kyi man ngag*; Mi pham chos kyi blo gros 1997, 4:509) explains, “As for connate union, what arises and is unified? It is awareness and emptiness that are connate. In themselves, they are not like something that is different. Since awareness, lucidity, and bliss are unified with emptiness they are connate union.” A virtually identical version of the above verse is attributed to Pamo Trupa in the Ninth Karmapa’s *Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (Wangchuk Dorje 2001, 278). The same author (*ibid.*, 273–77 and 279) quotes several explanations of the term “connate union.” Following Gampopa’s above explanation, the Second Shamarpa, Kachō Wangpo (Tib. Mkha’ spyod dbang po; 1350–1405) is reported to say that “con-” in “connate” refers to arising or occurring together, while “-nate” means that everything arises from what is unarisen and that it, from the very

moment of its arising, lacks any nature of its own. “Union” (*sbyor ba*) means yoga (Tib. *rnal ’byor*, lit. “being in union with the natural state”). Yoga is not just means or *prajñā* alone, but the Buddha taught that it is the union of means and *prajñā*. Barawa Gyaltsen Balsang (Tib. ’Ba’ ra ba rgyal mtshan dpal bzang; 1310–1391) is quoted as saying that “connate” does not mean that two things come together but that an entity with a single nature has three qualities or aspects that always exist or arise together. For example, the single nature of gold entails the three properties of having a golden color, being heavy, and not being affected by melting or cutting. In gold, each of these qualities is not something separate from the other two. As long as there is gold, those three are always present or arise together. Likewise (and similar to what Gampopa explained above), the triad of the essence of awareness, the nature of emptiness, and the characteristic of lucidity is connate with the ultimate *bodhicitta* of the ground (the true nature of the mind). There is no awareness and lucidity apart from emptiness, no emptiness and lucidity apart from awareness, and no emptiness and awareness apart from lucidity. The mind is of a single nature with three aspects or isolates: emptiness, awareness, and lucidity. Experientially, those three do arise, but they are inseparable. Thus, they are connate—emptiness arises as awareness and lucidity, awareness arises as emptiness and lucidity, and lucidity arises as emptiness and awareness. Within each one of them, all three arise or are present in a complete manner. Therefore, they are connate. To unite this connateness with one’s mind stream is called “connate union.” This connateness is present within buddhas down to the tiniest insects, without being better or worse, bigger or smaller. When its own face is recognized, it is called “connate wisdom.” When it is not recognized, it is called “*ālaya*-consciousness” or “connate ignorance.” There is no distinction between this wisdom and ignorance in terms of one’s coming first and the other later, nor in terms of being good or bad because both are of the same nature. As for the difference between *Mahāmudrā* and Connate Union, Wangchuk Dorje says that Gampopa told Pamo Trupa, “*Mahāmudrā* means that all phenomena of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are spontaneously present primordially. It is the space-like nature of phenomena, nondual wisdom present at all times. Connate union refers to unifying whatever thoughts that arise with the four *kāyas*. Therefore, it is not held to be present at all times, but its flow becomes interrupted sometimes.” Lama Shang says:

The wisdom of connate union

Breaks down thoughts and brings them back into the *dharmakāya*.

The pith instructions of *Mahāmudrā*

Relax thoughts and bring them back into the *dharmakāya*.

For Padma Karpo’s explanation of “connate union” by greatly relying on the *Uttaratantra*, see the section “Padma Karpo.” For Tagpo Dashi Namgyal’s explanation of “connateness,” see Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 220–25.

636. In accordance with the context and the same phrase in Jamgön Kongtrül’s introductory table of contents for his *Treasury of Precious Instructions* (Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 1979–81, 18: 430), TOK *ba* is emended to *dbang*.

637. 3:375.

638. This is an epithet of Gampopa.

639. I.154/157.

640. I.155/158.

641. *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart*, lines 48–51 (Rang byung rdo rje 2006d, 285; for Jamgön Kongtrül’s commentary on these lines, see Brunnhölzl 2009, 216–17). Note that lines 48–49 summarize verse 45 of the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā*.

642. Tib. Mkha' spyod dbang po; the Second Shamarpa (1350–1405), one of the main students of the Fourth Karmapa and a main teacher of the Fifth Karmapa.
643. TOK, 3:375–78. I could not locate this verse in the Third Karmapa's writings.
644. Sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan 1992b, 50ff.
645. P4532, fol. 46a.3. This text repeats several times that another name of prajñāpāramitā is Mahāmudrā (fols. 51a.8, 57b.3, 59b.4, and 65a.3).
646. Ibid., fol. 43b.5–6 (TOK's version of this passage varies slightly).
647. There is no known text by Atiśa called *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors of Connate Union Mahāmudrā* (TOK "second armor" [Tib. *go cha gnyis pa*] is emended in light of the Tibetan text names below), but it could have been lost. Also, it is not clear here whether this is the name of an actual text or just a subsequent name for certain pith instructions originating with Atiśa (such as on his *Bodhipathapradīpa*; see the next paragraph in TOK). The latter may be suggested by the fact that there are texts with similar names by Gampopa and Pamo Trupa. The collected works of the latter contain a work titled *The Two Armors of Connate Union Mahāmudrā* (Tib. *Lhan cig skyes sbyor go cha gnyis ma*; Phag mo gru pa rdo rje rgyal po 2003, 4:294–304). The text contains no reference to Atiśa but says that its instructions are about taking thoughts as the path (*rnam rtog lam khyer*) and realizing them to be without arising. These instructions are not tainted by the yāna of characteristics (sūtrayāna) and require no efforts in training in the stages of the paths of the three kinds of individuals (of lesser, intermediate, and supreme scopes). Thoughts are also said to be very kind, but there is no discussion of the four yogas of Mahāmudrā. Elsewhere, Pamo Trupa (ibid., 4:570f.) says that the two armors are the armor of prajñā and the armor of the view and that the practice of "taking thoughts as the path" is a part of the armor of prajñā since this practice enhances prajñā. Gampopa's *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors* (Tib. *Go cha gnyis kyi man ngag* in Mi pham chos kyi blo gros 1997, 4:502–67) is also a text on Mahāmudrā (for details, see the section on Gampopa in this volume). The same author's *The Two Armors of Mahāmudrā* (Tib. *Phyag rgya chen po'i go cha gnyis*; A mgon rin po che 2004, 11:95–98) does not discuss Mahāmudrā but is a general text on prerequisites for retreat.
648. Mi bskyod rdo rje 1976, fol. 279a.2–5. The text continues, "which are known as Geshé [Drom]tönpa's and Geshé Gönpapa's 'Connate Union.'"
649. TOK, 3:378–79. The primary reason why this Mahāmudrā approach accords with the mantra system lies in the role and significance of the guru, as it is reflected in the crucial importance of guru devotion and guru yoga, as well as in the necessity of direct pointing-out instructions of the nature of the mind by the guru (whose ultimate manifestation consists of the formless "empowerment of vajra wisdom" for the most suitable students).
650. Among these three features in due order, Sahajavajra mentions the first two at the beginning of his commentary and the third one later (P3099, fols. 176a.5, 189a.3, 190a.5, and 192b.1; see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 142, 174, 177, and 183). Thus, this passage is not an actual quote from Sahajavajra's commentary. The sentence here is almost literally found in the Tibetan of Gö Lotsāwa's BA ('Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 2003a, 2:847–48, which is followed by "Therefore, the prajñāpāramitā Mahāmudrā of lord Gampopa was explained by lord Götsangpa as being the position of the mighty lord Maitrīpa"). However, in the English translation of this text (BA, 725), this sentence is misrepresented as a direct quote in slightly different form. GC also repeats this sentence several times, relating it to both Sahajavajra (17.7–9, 137.15–23) and Padampa Sangye's *Pacification of Suffering* (5.18–9; 53.2–4).



651. This expression refers to the union of emptiness and wisdom, or, more specifically, to the wisdom of focusing on emptiness from the perspective of what is definitive while, from the perspective of what appears, the clear rainbow-like appearances of the deity and its maṇḍala dawn simultaneously.

652. TOK *gal* emended to *gol*.

653. These are two lines from a famous verse, which (according to TOK and Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 19) stems from *The Tantra of Inconceivable Connateness*:

Connate mind as such is the dharmakāya.

Connate thoughts are the display of the dharmakāya.

Connate appearances are the light of the dharmakāya.

The inseparability of appearances and mind is connateness.

More or less literal versions or lines of this verse are found in a number of Gampopa's own works and those by others. In the *Chos rje dvags po lha rje'i gsung snying po don gyi gdams pa phyag rgya chen po'i 'bum tig* in Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen 1982 (vol. ka, 212), the verse reads:

Connate mind is the actual dharmakāya.

Connate appearances are the light of the dharmakāya.

Connate thoughts are the waves of the dharmakāya.

Connate inseparability is what the dharmakāya is all about.

For yet another version of this verse, see its explanation by Padma Karpo in this volume. For a detailed commentary on connate mind, thoughts, and appearances, see Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 225–37.

654. TOK *bzhin sbyor* emended to *bzhi sbyor*.

655. In due order, these refer to the four common preliminaries of Mahāmudrā (reflecting on the precious human existence, impermanence, karma, and the shortcomings of saṃsāra) and the four uncommon preliminaries (refuge and bodhicitta, Vajrasattva meditation, maṇḍala offering, and guru yoga).

656. These are the first two of the four dharmas of Gampopa, with the other two (the path's dispelling delusion and delusion dawning as wisdom) following under (2).

657. To my knowledge, no tantra of this name is preserved in the *Kangyur* or otherwise.

658. I add this line as it appears in the quote from *The Tantra of Inconceivable Connateness* since TOK comments on this line under 2b.

659. In the context of explaining “the means of purification, the great vajra yoga of Mahāmudrā,” Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (n.d., 18–20) gives a similar (but more detailed) presentation, agreeing that the common and uncommon preliminaries of Mahāmudrā correspond to “the mind's turning into the dharma” and “the dharma's turning into the path,” respectively. The next two dharmas of “the path's dispelling delusion” and “delusion's dawning as wisdom” are then discussed through explaining the four lines from *The Tantra of Inconceivable Connateness* as follows. (a) The line “Connate mind as such is the dharmakāya” refers to the basic nature of mind as such, which is the union of being empty and lucid. To realize this just as it is, one needs to first train in calm abiding with support, without support, and so on, until one finally arrives at natural calm abiding. Having gone through the progressive training in calm abiding, one needs to train in superior insight, which has three parts—identifying, pointing out, and enhancement. Finally, one needs to practice calm abiding and superior insight simultaneously without separating them. Through practicing this progression well, the path is able to dispel delusion. (b) Thereafter, the distinctive feature of the path of not relinquishing delusion but its fundamentally changing into

wisdom through special methods is indicated by the line “connate thoughts are the display of the dharmakāya.” At present, all kinds of good and bad thoughts appear in our mind stream. Their essence is the union of being empty and lucid, and through realizing that, all these various thoughts are nothing but the display or play of the luminous dharmakāya or wisdom. Other than that, this display is not established as having any characteristics of being something to be adopted or something to be discarded by distinguishing its parts that are good and those that are bad. Through considering good thoughts within this basic nature as qualities, one wishes to adopt them. Through considering bad thoughts as flaws, one wishes to discard them. However, no matter which thoughts come up, they are all flaws. For all good and bad thoughts do not exist as something other than the mind of dharmatā and they do not go beyond the expanse of this mind. No matter how one wanders around in saṃsāric states under the extrinsic influence of karma and afflictions, if one realizes the way things are through the power of the path of yoga, thoughts will be self-liberated without needing to search for a remedy. Yogins who possess such supreme realization recognize all thoughts that appear as the display of dharmatā. Through that, all thoughts that appear dawn as the dharmakāya or serve as aids for the yogic path. Just as a small fire can be extinguished by even a little bit of wind, in ordinary persons who have not mastered the basic nature, even small thoughts obscure the path. When a powerful fire has broken out in a forest, the stronger the wind blows, the more it becomes a special aid for that forest fire. Likewise, in yogins who have mastered experience and realization or who have cut through doubts in their minds, the more thoughts there are, the more they become an enhancement of their practice. Therefore, if one knows the nature of thoughts without error, whatever appears becomes an embellishment of the path. For example, no matter how far a crow may circle away from a ship on the ocean, there is no place for it to land other than that ship. Likewise, no matter how much thoughts may proliferate, if one knows how they are the display and play of the nature of phenomena, those thoughts are recognized and thus liberated as the nature of phenomena. In the same way, though water may become ice due to outer conditions such as its being cold, once it becomes free from those conditions, it melts again into water because that very ice has primordially never gone beyond having the nature of water. Likewise, no matter how much one is deluded due to being distracted, by virtue of perfectly realizing the nature of thoughts, it is said that thoughts are liberated as the nature of phenomena because they have primordially never gone beyond the nature of phenomena. (c) As for the line “Connate appearances are the light of the dharmakāya,” no matter how the various appearances of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa may arise, the nature of what arises is being empty and lucid without meeting and parting. Therefore, the various appearances that arise as such are not established as something distinct from that nature of phenomena. When they arise, they arise from the expanse of the nature of phenomena, and when they dissolve, they dissolve into the expanse of the nature of phenomena. Therefore, they are the light of the dharmakāya. (d) As for the line “The inseparability of appearances and mind is the connate,” it needs to be understood that the inseparability of mind’s self-appearances and mind as such entails the key point of self-arising and self-liberating. This is explained as the quality of their being connate without meeting and parting from the very time of arising. This explains the manner of delusion’s dawning as, or fundamentally changing into, wisdom. Without relinquishing delusion but through determining its very way of being, it is recognized for what it is and one rests right within that. Thus, delusion’s not being relinquished is liberated as the nature of phenomena.

All this explains the meaning of the line “the means of purification, the great vajra yoga of Mahāmudrā.”

660. In other words, these four pitfalls to be avoided in Mahāmudrā meditation are as follows. (1) One can deviate from emptiness through grasping at it as being the fundamental nature of all knowable objects. Though all phenomena are naturally empty, when one fixates on the notion of everything’s being empty, one deviates from emptiness as the fundamental ground that is beyond all grasping and fixation. (2) One can deviate from emptiness through considering meditating on emptiness as the sole path that leads to the attainment of buddhahood. To familiarize with emptiness is a crucial part of the path, but this does not mean to discard the accumulation of merit and the purification of obscurations on the path. (3) One can deviate from emptiness through taking it as the remedy that annihilates the afflictions. Ultimately, to fixate on what is to be abandoned and to fixate on the remedy are equally mistaken. If one fixates on emptiness as a remedy, it is no better than fixating on whatever it is that one is trying to get rid of by applying that remedy of emptiness. For one then reifies emptiness into some kind of thing, for which one would need yet another remedy. (4) One can deviate from emptiness through conceptually labeling all things and experiences as being empty. This means to lack a full understanding of emptiness and merely think in a vague and general way, “All phenomena are empty.”
661. That is, through clinging to bliss, clarity, and nonthought, one will be reborn in the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, respectively.
662. This refers to the four joys in the practice of karmamudrā—joy, supreme joy, special joy (or joy beyond joy), and connate joy.
663. Compare to Maitripa’s student Rāmapāla, who writes in his *Sekanirdeśapañjikā* that Mahāmudrā is beyond the four joys.
664. “The three great ones” refers to the three primary afflictions—ignorance, desire, and hatred.
665. This text is contained in vol. 13 of Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 1979–81.
666. This samādhi is described in detail in *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.24–25 and its commentaries (see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 93, 246–65, and 298–302 and 2012a, 337–39 and 512–13).
667. This samādhi is described in the *Māyopamāsamādhisūtra* (D130).
668. This samādhi is described in the *Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra* (D132; translated as *Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra: The Concentration of Heroic Progress*, translated by S. Boin-Webb (London: Curzon Press, 1998).
669. This samādhi is described in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (particularly in chapter 7), its commentaries, and other sources (see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 105–8 and 272–76 and 2012a, 358–60 and 522–24).
670. According to the Ninth Karmapa (Wangchuk Dorje 2001, 226–45), there are many ways in which different masters correlate the four yogas of Mahāmudrā with the five paths and the ten bhūmis. However, the most common one is that in due order, the four yogas correspond to the paths of accumulation and preparation, the path of seeing (the first bhūmi), the path of familiarization (the remaining nine bhūmis), and the path of nonlearning (the buddhabhūmi).
671. See GC’s presentation of this below.
672. Tib. Spyan Inga chos kyi grags pa. This is the Fourth Shamarpa (1453–1524).
673. Pawo Rinpoche’s *History of the Dharma* (Dpa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba 2003, 1:790–91) says on this dream that Gampopa was beating a great drum in the sky and then a woman with a bowl of milk appeared, who said to him, “Beat the drum for these people, and give the milk to these deer.” Gampopa answered, “But the milk will not be enough

for that many deer.” The woman said, “First drink from it yourself, and then it will be enough for all sentient beings. I will go the west.” Later, Gampopa said, “The people listening to the sound of the drum are those to be nourished by the Kadampa dharma, while the deer are the great meditators of the Kagyü lineage [of Milarepa]. Thus, the Kadam [lineage] also has great kindness.”

674. These are the five degenerations in terms of (1) life span (the human life span's becoming increasingly shorter down to being only ten years), (2) afflictions (their increase in strength and number), (3) sentient beings (deterioration of their physical forms, minds, and health), (4) the time (being tormented by diseases, weapons, and famines), and (5) the view (clinging to views about extremes and falling away from the correct view). (2) is also explained as the decrease of virtuous states of mind in lay people, paired with a strong increase of their desire, hatred, jealousy, miserliness, and so on, while (4) refers to clinging to the extremes of permanence and extinction in renunciates, paired with a general decline of their proper views and virtues.
675. These are individuals of lesser scope who engage in the Buddhist teachings only for the sake of attaining a better rebirth within saṃsāra as humans or gods, individuals of intermediate scope who do so for the sake of attaining their own liberation from saṃsāra (śrāvaka or pratyekabuddha arhathood), and individuals of supreme scope who do so for the sake of attaining buddhahood for the welfare of others.
676. The Ninth Karmapa's *Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (Wangchuk Dorje 2001, 4–5) agrees with this, saying that dull faculties can change into sharp ones; low potentials, into supreme ones; and unworthy recipients, into worthy ones. Therefore, all of these types should engage in the preliminary practices for the gradual instructions, through which they will become fortunate persons in whose mind streams the actual practice will develop. The preliminaries are either long and indirect or short and direct. According to Atiśa, the Karmapa says, the former consists of the paths of individuals with lesser and intermediate scopes, while the latter is the path of individuals with supreme scope. In accordance with that, Gampopa taught his famous four dharmas, each of which must precede the following one.
677. This refers to Tāranātha.
678. TOK, 3:381–88. According to Khenpo Tsültrim Gyatso Rinpoche, the three appearances of the Sakya tradition of The Path with the Result (Tib. *lam 'bras*) refer to impure appearances (without any analysis, appearances are taken to be real), the appearances of yogic experience (due to some analysis of ultimate reality, appearances are experienced as illusory), and the pure appearances of a buddha (due to thorough analysis of ultimate reality, appearances are realized as having the nature of space). These teachings represent the connection between the sūtra system and the Hevajra system in the Sakya School.
679. Usually, the last of the four tantra classes is called “Anuttarayogatantra” in modern writings, but this term is not attested in any Sanskrit texts and is based on a (mistaken) back-translation of the Tibetan term *rnal 'byor bla med kyi rgyud*. In Sanskrit texts, only the corresponding terms *Yogānuttara* or *Yoganiruttara* (“higher than yoga[tantra]”) appear.
680. 3:388–89.
681. On these “empty forms,” see the note on the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects in the translation of RGVV on I.92 and GISM (198).
682. TOK has “view of” instead of “clinging to.”
683. Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* XV.10.

684. TOK, 3:380–81. With minor variations, the last four lines appear as verse 28 of the *Jñānasārasamuccaya* (ascribed to Āryadeva), as the first verse of Jetāri's *Sugatamatavibhāgakārikā* (D3899, fol. 7b.5), and in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra* (D1347, fol. 196b.3). The first two lines are also found in the *Śālistambasūtra*. See *Mahāyānasūtrasaṃgraha*, edited by P. L. Vaidya (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1961), 1:115.
685. TOK, 3:389–90.
686. Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (n.d., 21) says that in our uncommon tradition of Gampopa, what is known as “the empowerment of transferring blessings” is sufficient for those of very sharp faculties, even if they have not trained in the stages of the four empowerments, the two stages of creation and completion, and so on. It is said that the swift path is to meditate on the guru, which is more powerful than cultivating the creation stage of secret mantra. The completion stage means that through sustaining the luminous basic nature of the mind throughout the day and night, one is able to blend all coarse and subtle ordinary activities with that basic nature. “The empowerment of transferring blessings” is known as “the empowerment of the display of basic awareness (*rig pa*)” in the Dzogchen tradition and is equivalent to it. Based on the four empowerments in the Yogāntaratantra class, in due order, the inseparabilities of appearance and emptiness, lucidity and emptiness, bliss and emptiness, and awareness and emptiness are pointed out. This is identified as what is taught in terms of those whose faculties are of the gradualist kind. However, for the simultaneists on the path of Mahāmudrā, it is not necessarily the case that this path must be preceded by these progressive stages. To speak directly, when a guru with all the defining characteristics and a disciple who is a suitable vessel meet, the way of being of mind is introduced in an unerring manner just as it is. If it is recognized in the proper manner, the disciple does not need to train in a multitude of methods in this physical support but can be liberated right upon this very seat.
687. Tib. Dvags po bkra shis rnam rgyal.
688. Tib. Zla 'od gzhon nu.
689. See BA, 451–52.
690. Tib. Po to ba rin chen gsal.
691. Tib. 'Brom ston pa rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas.
692. 268–69 and 452.
693. Thrangu Rinpoche 1994, 19.
694. *Ibid.*, 12.
695. Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 97–98.
696. Padma dkar po 2005, 82–83.
697. Mönlam Tśültrim's PIW explicitly quotes this sūtra as the source for its Mahāmudrā instructions at the moment of death (see the translations in this volume).
698. Takpo Tashi Namgyal (1986, 101) also says that Maitrīpa received from Śavarīpa instructions on the quintessence of Mahāmudrā that are not based on the vajrayāna.
699. Tib. *yid la mi byed pa'i chos skor nyi shu rtsa lnga*. In the *Tengyur* these twenty-five texts are P3069 and P3073–3097 (P3082 and 3091 are virtually identical; 3086 is anonymous, but very much accords in style). The Sanskrit of twenty-two of these texts was published in 1927 as *Advayavajrasaṃgraha* by H. Shastri, and Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1988–1991 (see bibliography under Maitrīpa) published twenty-four. When comparing the *Tengyur* texts with those in these two publications, the *Tengyur* misses the *Mūlāpatti* and *Sthūlāpatti* (nos. 3 and 4) and instead has the *Samkṣiptasekaprakriyā* (P3089), *Dohātīnāmatattvopadeśa* (P3092), and *Upadeśaparama* (P3096). For a

detailed chart of the Tibetan and Sanskrit versions, see Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1988, 228. For a classification in terms of contents, see Padma dkar po 2005, 37–42; see also Broido 1987, 55–57. Most of these texts give Advayavajra as their author (a few have Metri), but it is well known from many sources that Maitrīpa was also called Advayavajra (pāda), Avadhūta, and Acinta (pāda), and Butōn explicitly ascribes all of these works to Maitrīpa. However, the topic of these works is not only “mental nonengagement,” but they also treat a great variety of subjects pertaining to the mahāyāna and vajrayāna, in particular Madhyamaka. However, in Tibet, that whole set of Maitrīpa’s works received the name “the cycle on mental nonengagement” since traditionally the notion of mental nonengagement is the one that is primarily associated with his teachings (for details on that term, see below in this section). For a biographical sketch of Maitrīpa, see Tatz 1987 and Brunnhölzl 2007a, 125–31.

700. This is why the later threefold Tibetan division of Mahāmudrā into sūtra Mahāmudrā, tantra Mahāmudrā, and essence Mahāmudrā classifies Maitrīpa’s system as sūtra Mahāmudrā. The same goes for Gampopa’s Mahāmudrā, whose similar approach is based on Maitrīpa’s.

701. These are his *Tattvaviṃśikā*, *Upadeśaparama*, *Sekanirdeśa* (verses 26, 27, 29, 36, 38, 39), *Samkṣiptasekaprakriyā* (P3089, fol. 142b.3), and *Caturmudrāniścaya* (Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1989, 253, 249, 243, 239), with the latter three treating specifically tantric topics. Verse 11 of the *Tattvaviṃśikā* says, “Again, yogins who see true reality merge with Mahāmudrā in an unmatched way. Through the nature of all entities, they abide as those with supreme faculties.” Verses 4–5 of the *Upadeśaparama* read, “Since cause and result are inseparable, I have no stages of meditation. Through experiencing the flavor of emptiness, meditation is realization. Through the cultivation of prajñā, everything is Mahāmudrā. Therefore, even in adverse factors, true reality is Mahāmudrā, the relaxed unthinkable nature.” *Sekanirdeśa* 29 and 38 state that not abiding anywhere is known as “Mahāmudrā” and that Mahāmudrā is freedom from characteristics. As for explanations on Mahāmudrā in the three commentaries on Saraha’s *Dohakoṣagīti* (“*People Dohā*”) that are ascribed to Advayavajra/Advaya Avadhūti (D2256, D2257, D2268), further detailed study is needed. At least D2268 largely follows Saraha’s presentation of Mahāmudrā in his *Kāyakośāmṛtavajragīti* (D2269) through the four key terms “mindfulness” (*dran pa*), “nonmindfulness” (*dran med*), “unborn” (*skye med*), and “beyond mind” (*blo ’das*). Unlike Maitrīpa, Saraha’s songs often bitingly reject all other views and practices—Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist—including Madhyamaka and elaborate vajrayāna practices (see the opening verses of his “*People Dohā*”). In that vein, Saraha’s *Kāyakośāmṛtavajragīti* (P3115, fol. 78a) says that the Vaibhāṣikas, the Sautrāntikas, the Yogācāras, and the Mādhyamikas just criticize and debate each other. Not knowing the space-like true reality of appearance and emptiness, they turn their back on connateness.

702. Maitrīpa’s *Amanasikārādhāra* (Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1989, 209) ascribes this quote to the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālamkārasūtra*, but it is not found there. However, the prajñāpāramitā sūtras repeatedly say that actual virtue is mental nonengagement, while nonvirtue is mental engagement.

703. D100, fol. 299b.6–7.

704. Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1989, 243 (D2225, fols. 78b.5–79a.1; the words in parentheses are only found in the Tibetan). The remaining four occurrences of the word “Mahāmudrā” in the text are just in passing, without adding anything substantial to the above.

705. D2259, fols. 305a.5–307a.3.

706. It seems noteworthy to point out that the term “mahāmudrā” in Buddhist tantric texts does not only refer to (1) the highest one among the four mudrās. In the Buddhist tantras, “mahāmudrā” is also found as (2) an equivalent of all terms that denote ultimate reality (such as emptiness, *tathāgatagarbha*, buddhahood, and dharmakāya), (3) a term for symbolic hand-gestures in tantric rituals, (4) the main female consort of the central male deity in a given maṇḍala of tantric deities, (5) a consort in sexual yoga practices, (6) a meditation approach of directly focusing on the nature of the mind, (7) the wisdom of realizing the union of bliss and emptiness, (8) the supreme siddhi that consists of perfect buddhahood as the final culmination of tantric practice, (9) a lineage of teachings through a series of Indian masters including Saraha, Nāgārjuna, Tilopa, Nārōpa, and Maitrīpa, and (10) even an alternate name for Madhyamaka. Also, in its meanings (3)–(5), the term “mahāmudrā” is not even unique to Buddhist texts. As Sanderson (2009, 133–34, n. 311) shows, it also appears, for example, in Śaivaite scriptures, such as the *Picumata*, a Vidyāpīṭha Śaiva text, in which the term “Mahāmudrā” refers to the primary female consort of the chief male deity (in this case Bhairava).
707. Compare Gampopa’s *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors* (Mi pham chos kyi blo gros 1997, 4:504) saying that mind’s being without arising is the dharmakāya. Its being without ceasing is the sambhogakāya. Its being without abiding is the nirmāṇakāya. In a mind that realizes the three kāyas, they are inexpressible as being diverse, their essence is free from identification, and they are beyond being objects of mind—this is the svābhāvīkākāya. Pamo Trupa’s *Two Armors of Connate Union* (Phag mo gru pa rdo rje rgyal po 2003, 4:301) literally says the same on the first two kāyas. It continues that mind’s being unidentifiable is the nirmāṇakāya and that the svābhāvīkākāya refers to the three kāyas’ being without difference.
708. Note that this explanation of Mahāmudrā as the basis of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa greatly resembles Gö Lotsāwa’s description of buddha nature (see the section “Gö Lotsāwa’s Unique Mahāmudrā Interpretation of the *Uttaratantra*”).
709. *Ibid.*, fols. 296a.5 and 297a.1–2.
710. The term rarely occurs in Saraha’s famous trilogy of dohās for the people, the queen, and the king but it is a central theme in his vajragīti quartet consisting of the *Kāya-kośāmr̥tavajragīti*, *Vākkośarucirasvarajagīti*, *Cittakośājavajragīti*, and *Kāyavāccittāmanasikāra*, as well as in his *Mahāmudropadeśa*. As for Tilopa, the term occurs in his *Dohākośa*, *Acintyamahāmudrā*, and *Mahāmudropadeśa*.
711. P3094, fols. 151b.7–153a.8.
712. Matsuda 1996, 95; D142, fol. 3a.6–7 (*Amanasikārādhāra*: “Once bodhisattva mahāsattvas have relinquished all characteristics of conceptions that consist of aspects through not mentally engaging [in them] . . .”).
713. I.5.1.
714. I.8.44ab.
715. Technically speaking, self-blessing (Skt. *svādhiṣṭhāna*, Tib. *bdag byin rlabs*), luminosity (Skt. *prabhāsvaratā*, Tib. *’od gsal*), and union (Skt. *yuganaddha*, Tib. *zung ’jug*) are the third, fourth, and fifth of the five levels of completion stage practice in the *Guhyasamājatantra*. This is a typical example of Maitrīpa’s freely using vajrayāna terms and notions even in nontantric contexts.
716. This is precisely what TOK, 3:375, says above about “sūtra Mahāmudrā”: “one rests in meditative equipoise through being instructed that the subject does not mentally engage in the object—luminosity free from reference points.”
717. The forty-three letters and their order (beginning with “A”) that the prajñāpāramitā sūtra in twenty-five thousand lines lists correspond to the early *Arapacana* alphabet of

the Karoṣṭhi language of the northwestern Indian region of Gāndhāra, which was later widely used as a mnemonic device to symbolize Buddhist key terms (with each letter's representing the first letter of a certain Sanskrit word). As in this case, these letters and the terms they stand for were often taken as the bases for contemplating their meanings. For example, with regard to all phenomena, the first five letters of the *Arapacana* alphabet symbolize the following: "A"—being unborn (*anutpannatva*); "RA"—being free from pollution (*rajas*, lit. "dust"); "PA"—the ultimate's (*paramārtha*) being empty; "CA"—dying (*cyavana*) being unobservable; and "NA"—being without name (*nāma*).

718. Compare GC's explanation in the section "Gö Lotsāwa's Unique Mahāmudrā Interpretation of the *Uttaratantra*" that all five levels of the completion stage of the *Guhyasamājatantra* are also found in a passage of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. Sahajavajra's *Tattvadaśakaṭikā* on 7cd (P3099, fols. 190b.1–191a.2) explains that mental nonengagement does not refer to a complete absence of mental engagement, such as closing one's eyes and then not seeing anything like a vase or a blanket at all. Rather, mental nonengagement refers to the very nonobservation of a nature of entities, be it through analysis or the guru's pith instructions. Therefore, mental nonengagement with regard to characteristics means nothing but fully penetrating the very lack of characteristics. To think, "This is unthinkable and nonconceptual," is just thinking, but mental nonengagement does not mean that there is absolutely no cognition of the lack of nature. Padma dkar po (2005, 38–42) gives three meanings of *amanasikāra*, supporting them with the *Samvarodayatantra*, the *Hevajatantra*, and the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, respectively. (1) The letter *i* in that term represents a locative case (referring to a place or a basis), with a location or basis being what is negated by the first letter *a*. Thus, the term refers to there being no location, basis, or support on which to focus. Hence, to hold one's mind firmly on its focal object through the mode of apprehension of the mental factor of mental engagement is necessary during the practice of ordinary forms of calm abiding, but here this is to be stopped. (2) Without considering the locative *i*, what is negated through the first letter *a* is mental engagement, that is, mental activity. This refers to eagerly engaging in the mode of apprehension of the mental factor, impulse, or intention (*cetanā*), which is the mental activity of mental formation—mind's engaging in virtue, nonvirtue, and what is neutral. The eight formations or applications are needed in order to remove the five flaws in ordinary calm abiding, but Mahāmudrā meditation is free from doing and does not arise from accumulating. All mental activities are presented here as entailing reference points or focal objects, so what is taught by this is the utter peace of all reference points or focal objects. Therefore, it is said:

To the one who does not think through imagination,  
Whose mind does not abide at all,  
Who is without mindfulness, is without mental engagement,  
And is without focus, I pay homage.

- (3) The initial *a* in *amanasikāra* stands for *prajñāpāramitā* and all expressions for nonduality, such as nonarising (*anutpanna*) and nonceasing (*anirodha*). Thus, the term means to mentally engage in a proper manner in this meaning of the letter *a*. In terms of the vajrayāna, nonduality refers to the union of *prajñā* and means, which has the nature of great bliss since this bliss arises from that union. In terms of the *pāramitāyāna*, duality refers to apprehender and apprehended, me and what is mine, or cognition and what is to be cognized, which will always be dual for as long as there is mental flux. The identitylessness of all phenomena that is free from all flux and without any reference points arises as the *kāya* whose character is the nature of phenomena, which is nondual in essence. This arising of nonduality is specified by the aspect of nonarising and therefore



is called “the dharma of nonarising.” Dpa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba (n.d., 325) explains mental nonengagement as follows: “Its meaning is to rest one-pointedly on the focal object [of meditation], without being distracted by other thoughts. If this [one-pointed resting] were stopped, all samādhis would stop. Therefore, in general, ‘mental nonengagement’ has the meaning of not mentally engaging in any object other than the very focus of the [respective] samādhi. In particular, when focusing on the ultimate, [mental nonengagement] has the meaning of letting [the mind] be without even apprehending this ‘ultimate.’ However, this should not be understood as being similar to having fallen asleep.” In brief, *amanasikāra* can be understood as either (1) no engagement in the mind, (2) no engagement of or by the mind, or (3) proper mental engagement in the meaning of prajñāpāramitā. In his *Ri chos kyi rnal ’byor bzhi pa phyag rgya chen po snying po’i don gyi gter mdzod* (Rgyal ba yang dgon pa 1984, 1:247–48), the early Drugpa Kagyü master, Gyalwa Yanggönpa (Tib. Rgyal ba yang dgon pa; 1213–1258), interprets mental nonengagement (Tib. *yid la mi byed pa*) as an absence of mental engagement in the sense of not dwelling in mentation (*yid*), being liberated from mentation, or transcending mentation. More specifically, he explains the term through its component “mentation,” which he, following classical Yogācāra teachings, presents as twofold—being afflicted and being what triggers the other six active consciousnesses. He says that with thoughts and imagination functioning as the cognizing subjects of bases of mistakenness, “mental nonengagement” means that these engagers do not engage in such a way. With this understanding of the term, even when there is mental nonengagement in this sense, there is still engagement in one’s own mind. This means that however the ālaya-consciousness and the five sense consciousnesses may arise, their being self-lucid in a nonconceptual state is Mahāmudrā’s very own basic ground. When the afflicted mind (*nyon yid*) looks inward at the ālaya-consciousness, it takes it to be a self. When the mental consciousness (*yid shes*) looks outward through the five sense gates, it breaks up the ālaya-consciousness into distinct objects. Thus, all the subjects and objects of this twofold mentation (*yid*) are the phenomena of saṃsāra, and all clinging to good and bad are just this mentation. To go beyond this and not dwell in it is Mahāmudrā in the sense of mental nonengagement. In other words, he says that “mental nonengagement” does not imply a complete stop of all mental activity but only of the dualistic mental engagements that appear as dealing with our assumed self and its separate objects. The same author’s *Ri chos yon tan kun ’byung gi lhan thabs chen mo* (ibid., 2:76) adds that if the term “mental nonengagement” had been translated as “not dwelling in mentation,” it would have been straightforward, but since it was translated as it is (lit. “not doing [anything] in mentation”), some people went a bit wrong. When they speak of “mental nonengagement in the past, present, and future,” they take “mentation” as the subject and the three times as the objects and then say that not engaging in them is “mental nonengagement.” However, the past, the future, the present, existence, nonexistence, saṃsāra, and nirvāṇa are all nothing but superimpositions by mentation anyway. Here, the point of mental nonengagement in the context of Mahāmudrā—be it understood as “not engaging in mentation” or “not dwelling in mentation”—is, in brief, not to dwell in either existence, nonexistence, past, future, saṃsāra, or nirvana. Thus, the terms “beyond mind” (*blo ’das*), “free from reference points,” “union” (*zung ’jug*), and “Mahāmudrā” are all equivalent. Compare also the two meanings of *amanasikāra* explained in the section on the Eighth Situpa, and see the discussion of mental nonengagement in Sahajavajra’s *Tattvadaśakaṭikā* (Brunnhölzl 2007a, 177–81 and Brunnhölzl 2004, 52–57 and 310–20) for the significance and scope of this often misinterpreted term and its relation to Mahāmudrā.

719. A mgon rin po che 2004, vol. ka, 407–8.
720. D2253, fol. 155a.1–6.
721. Compare Vajrapāṇi's *Guruparamparakramopadeśa* (D3716, fol. 179a.3–6), which also says that Mahāmudrā does not involve the moments of the four joys because it is the stainless fruition in which there is nothing to be established or to be blocked. Speaking of instantaneous perfect awakening, Vajrapāṇi says that when not realized, it is saṃsāra, and when it is realized, the very same is Mahāmudrā.
722. For example, the *Kāyavākcittāmanasikāra* (D2272, fol. 118b7) and *Doha-koṣanāmamahāmudropadeśa* (D2273, fol. 123a.7) attributed to Saraha, a quote attributed to Koṭāli (see the *Vajragītibhāvanopadeśatilakakanakamālā* [D2449, fol. 84a.3–4] and the *Caturaśītisiddhasambodhihr̥daya* [D2292, fol. 156a.4–5]), as well as three quotes from three siddhas in Rājaputranṛṣiṃha's *Sarvayogatattvālokanāmasakalāsiddhavajragīti* (D2453, fols. 100b.2, 111b.5, and 113b.6).
723. D2259, fol. 304a.5.
724. Though all these works exist only in Tibetan translations (a possible Sanskrit equivalent could have been \**prākṛtajñāna*), the term is clearly understood in them in the same sense as in later Tibetan Mahāmudrā texts that use it—the ultimate uncontrived nature of the mind. Gampopa's *Pith Instructions on the Two Armors* (Mi pham chos kyi blo gros 1997, 4:515) explains “ordinary mind” as “the first mind” that is unaltered by any philosophical systems or opinions.
725. 725.
726. 5, 137, and 190.
727. *Tattvadaśakaṭikā* (P3099, fol. 176a.5).
728. *Ibid.*, fol. 189a.2–4.
729. *Ibid.*, 186b.7–187a.2.
730. *Ibid.*, 178b.4–6.
731. Verse 36.
732. *Tattvadaśakaṭikā* (D3099, fol. 190a.4–190b.1).
733. *Ibid.*, fol. 192a.5–192b.2.
734. Sahajavajra also quotes Maitreya, Candrakīrti, Śāntarakṣita, Śāntideva, Kambala, Vasubandhu, and Dharmakīrti.
735. For a complete translation of Sahajavajra's commentary, see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 141–90.
736. The only difference between *Uttaratantra* I.154 and *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 is *upaneyam* in the former versus *prakṣeptavyam* in the latter (both meaning “to be added”).
737. In the *Pañcatathāgatamudrāvivarāṇa* (Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1988, 189), Maitrīpa equates the dharmakāya with “wisdom without appearances” and the rūpakāyas with “illusion that arises during subsequent attainment.” It is in order to clarify the relationship between these two kāyas that he quotes *Uttaratantra* II.61b. In his *Caturmudrāniścaya* (Mikkyō-seiten kenkyūkai 1989, 243), Maitrīpa quotes what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 to support his statement that cessation is the direct perception of the nature of connateness. I am indebted to Mr. Kazuo Kano for having drawn my attention to these two references.
738. D2256, fol. 187b.2–5.
739. Some Tibetan renderings of what corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.154 and *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21b (such as in Sahajavajra's *Tattvadaśakaṭikā*) read *bsnan par bya ba* versus *bzhag par bya ba*, but that is not consistent and therefore is, in itself, not sufficient evidence for such a quote's being from one of these two texts rather than the other. See also appendices 2 and 3 for Jñānaśrimitra's *Sākārasiddhi*'s, GC's, and the Eighth

Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* that shows a similar approach of commenting differently on *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 and *Uttaratantra* I.154 in their individual contexts.

740. D3716, fol. 169a.3–169b.4.  
 741. *Ibid.*, fols. 179a.6–182a.7.  
 742. Compare the similar presentation in *The Bright Torch* by Dselé Natso Rangdröl (Tib. Rtse le sna tshogs rang grol; born 1608) in the context of ground Mahāmudrā in the section “Other Kagyü Masters on Mahāmudrā and the *Uttaratantra*.”  
 743. D2253, fol. 156a.2–7.  
 744. *Ibid.*, fol. 145b.3.  
 745. D2259, fols. 303b.3–304a.2.  
 746. P3099, fol. 170a.3–4.  
 747. P4532, fols. 43b.5–6.  
 748. *Ibid.*, fols. 45b.8–46a.5. The text has further similar passages (for example, fol. 47b.5–6) and repeats several times that another name of Mother Prajñāpāramitā is Mahāmudrā (fols. 51a.8, 57b.3, 59b.4, and 65a.3). It also equates emptiness with Mahāmudrā.  
 749. *Ibid.*, fol. 47b.2–3.  
 750. *Ibid.*, fols. 47b.3–52a.1.  
 751. Note that the last four of the twenty emptinesses in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras are the emptinesses of entities, nonentities, self-entity, and other-entity, with the last two among these four terms just being different names for emptiness itself.  
 752. *Tattvāvatārākhyaśakalasugatavacastātparyavyākhyāprakaraṇa* (P4532, fols. 70b.1–72a.6).  
 753. For details on these four, especially their explanations in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and its commentaries, see Brunnhölzl 2012b.  
 754. D2226, fol. 82a.3–4.  
 755. D1350, 83a.6–7.  
 756. Cicuzza 2001, 124.  
 757. Karma phrin las pa phyogs las rnam rgyal 2009, 6.  
 758. 843–44.  
 759. On the other hand, some Tibetan authors such as Tāranātha (see Templeman 1983, 11) report that Atiśa expelled Maitrīpa from Vikramaśīla for having engaged in vajrayāna practices that involved women and alcohol. However, this account is not found in non-Tibetan sources, and it is unclear that the one who was expelled was indeed Maitrīpa, given that the name “Maitri” served as a rather common epithet for many persons. In any case, there are some chronological problems surrounding Maitrīpa's having taught Atiśa. The dates of Atiśa are well established as 982–1054, and it is clearly documented that he left India in 1040, arrived in Tibet in 1042, and stayed there until his death. As already mentioned, Maitrīpa's dates are more problematic (they range from 983–1060 to c. 1010–c. 1087). It is clear from Maitrīpa's biography that he only met Śavarīpa, from whom he received the dohā tradition of Mahāmudrā, when he was fifty-three (which would be 1039 according to Roberts' earlier dates of Maitrīpa) and thus only returned to the academic environment after 1040. Consequently, even with Roberts' earlier dates, it is quite unlikely for him to have met Atiśa before the latter went to Tibet. There is a little bit better chance, if one chooses 983 as Maitrīpa's birth year, but then there is a potential conflict with his having taught Marpa Chökyi Lodrö. BA and many other sources have Marpa's dates as 1012–1097 (though other sources have earlier dates). Chos kyi 'byung gnas (Situpa VIII) and 'Be lo tshe dbang kun khyab (2005, 1:73–75), giving Marpa's birth year as 1000, and BA agree that Marpa met Maitrīpa

during his last journey to India. According to BA, he returned from his second journey when he was forty-two, then married his wife and obviously stayed in Tibet for some years. Thus, his last journey to India could have begun only in his late forties or early fifties, that is, around 1060. Furthermore, if Maitrīpa's later dates as per BA and Tatz (c. 1010–c. 1087) are correct, it would be unlikely in the context of Indo-Tibetan teacher-student relationships for Maitrīpa as the far younger one to teach the older Atiśa. Still, if one accepts that Maitrīpa rediscovered the *Uttaratantra* and received teachings on it by Maitreya, Maitrīpa would have been in a position to teach it to others such as Atiśa despite his being their junior. The problem with Maitrīpa's teaching the dohās to Atiśa is more substantial though because Maitrīpa would have to have received them from someone else long before he received them from Śavaripa, of which there is no indication in Maitrīpa's biographies and that seems very unlikely. In any case, what is undisputed about Atiśa is that he translated the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV with Nagtso Lotsāwa and obviously also taught these texts.

760. 261 and 844.

761. 455.

762. *Bodhipathapradīpapañjikā* (D3948, fol. 285a.5).

763. For a translation of this short text, see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 90–91. Here, it is worthy to note that Atiśa's approach as found in his *Madhyamakopadeśa* corresponds to GISM's section on how the Niḥsvabhāvavadīns meditate and also to the section on resting in meditative equipoise in nonconceptual freedom from reference points in accordance with the middle wheel and thus coming to a final resolve about the profound nature of phenomena.

764. *Bodhipathapradīpapañjikā* (D3948, fols. 258b.6ff.).

765. *Ibid.*, fol. 284a.3–7.

766. For a translation of this text, see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 77–89.

767. Skyo ston smon lam tshul khriṃs 2007e (for details, see the excerpts from this text in the chapter "Overview of the Indian and Tibetan Texts Presented in This Book").

768. Tib. Bya yul ba gzhon nu 'od.

769. Tib. Sne'u zur pa ye shes 'bar.

770. Tib. Snyug rum pa brtson 'grus rgyal mtshan.

771. Tib. Rgya lcags ri ba. According to Sherpa 2004, 298, this is Lcags ri gong kha ba byang chub dpal (born eleventh century).

772. Tib. Rgya yon bdag.

773. Tib. Byang chub sems dpa' kun dga'.

774. Tib. Sha ba gling pa.

775. Tib. Dge bshes sgre pa. See the chart of Gampopa's teachers in Sherpa 2004, 298.

776. Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba 2003, 1:790.

777. Tib. Bla ma byang chub sems dpa'; seems to be identical with Byang chub sems dpa' kun dga' in Sherpa 2004, 298.

778. Tib. Mar yul blo ldan.

779. 454–56.

780. That is, it lacks male and female deities being in union.

781. For surveys of all of Gampopa's works and examination of some of his Mahāmudrā texts, see Kragh 1998 and Sherpa 2004.

782. Note here that, as already stated by Herbert Guenther, Peter Roberts, Cyrus Stearns, Elizabeth Callahan, and others (and against common usage in Western translations), the three terms *nāḍī*, *vāyu*, and *tilaka* (and not *nāḍī*, *prāṇa*, and *bindu*) are the Sanskrit equivalents for the Tibetan *rtsa* *rlung* *thig le* in the Buddhist tantras and their Indian

commentaries. This is also confirmed by the Sanskrit dictionary by Monier-Williams and the Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary by J. S. Negi.

783. *Tshogs chos yon tan phun sum tshogs* in Mi pham chos kyi blo gros 1997, 5:296–97. These three paths are reminiscent of Sahajavajra’s division into the regular pāramitāyāna, the mantrayāna, and the sūtra-based Mahāmudrā approach with pith instructions. However, differing from Gampopa, Sahajavajra says that this latter approach is inferior to the mantrayāna, though it is superior to the regular pāramitāyāna.
784. *Rnam rtog don dam gyi ngo sprod* in Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen 1975, 2:229–47. For a translation of this text, see Sherpa 2004, 195–293.
785. *Dus gsum mkhyen pa’i zhus lan* in Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen 1975, 1:411.
786. According to Padma dkar po (2005, 7–37), “the seven Siddhi works” (Tib. *grub pa sde bdun*) are (1) Padmavajra’s *Sakalatantrasambhavasamcodaniśrīguhyasiddhi*, (2) Anaṅgavajra’s *Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*, (3) Indrabhūti’s *Jñānasiddhināmasādhana*, (4) Lakṣmī’s *Advayasiddhisādhana*, (5) Dārika’s *Śrī uḍḍiyānavinirgataguhyamahāguhyatattvopadeśa* and Sahajayoginī Cintā’s *Vyaktabhāvānugatattvasiddhi* (Padma Karpo says that these two are counted as one due to their similar names), (6) Camari’s *Prajñopāyaviniścayasamudaya*, and (7) Lakṣmī Bhaṭṭārikā’s *Sahajasiddhipaddhati* (D2117–2222, D2381, and D2261, respectively). Mi pham chos kyi blo gros (1997, 1:31–216) omits Camari’s text and replaces Lakṣmī’s commentary by Ḍombi Heruka’s *Śrisahajasiddhi* (D2223). “The sixfold cycle of the essence” (Tib. *snying po skor drug*) consists of (1) Saraha’s *Dohakoṣa* (D2224), (2) the *Tattvopadeśasikharadohagīti* (D2276; attributed by Padma Karpo to Saraha), Āryadeva’s (3) *Cittāvaraṇavisodhananāmaprakaraṇa* (D1804) and (4) *Svādhiṣṭhānakramaprabheda* (D1805), (5) Nāgārjunagarbha’s *Caturmudrāniścaya* (D2225), and (6) Kuddāli’s *Acintyakramopadeśa* (D2228). Besides these six, Padma Karpo here also includes the remaining dohā works of Saraha (such as his “Dohā for the Queen,” “Dohā for the King,” and *Kakhasyadohā* with its autocommentary), as well as “the three bodhisattva commentaries” (Vajrapāṇi’s commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*, the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra* by Kalkin Puṇḍarīka, and Vajragarbha’s *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā*), Nāgārjuna’s *Cittavajrastava*, and so on. Mi pham chos kyi blo gros (1997, 1:284–392) omits (4) and (5) and replaces them by Devacandra’s *Prajñājñānaprakāśa* (D2226) and Sahajavajra’s *Sthitisamuccaya* (D2227). Padma Karpo also says that the four transmission lineages of all these works came together in Kuddāli and then were transmitted through Lavapa, Tīlopa, and Nāropa. Another lineage went from Kuddāli to Śavarīpa and then Maitrīpa.
787. Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen 1982, *Phag mo gru pa’i zhu lan*, vol. kha, 74.
788. Sometimes Gampopa even criticizes ordinary vajrayāna for descending to the level of conceptualization (see D. Jackson 1994, 34).
789. These lines are from Milarepa’s Mahāmudrā song called “The Three Nails” and describe the three nails in terms of the view (Rus pa’i rgyan can 1981, 259).
790. Note that almost literal versions of this verse are found in the *Vajragītibhāvanopadeśa-tilakakanakamālā* (D2449, fol. 84a.3–4) of the eighty-four Indian mahāsiddhas and in Vīraprabhāsvara’s *Caturaśītisiddhasambodhihṛdaya* (D2292, fol. 156a.4–5), in both of which it is attributed to Koṭāli. In all versions, the first two lines are identical, while the latter two show some minor variations.
791. Tib. *Go cha gnyis kyi man ngag* (Mi pham chos kyi blo gros 1997, 4:502–67).
792. *Ibid.*, 4:508–9.
793. *Ibid.*, 4:511.
794. Interlinear gloss: to know that whatever appears and whatever one thinks is mind.

795. Interlinear gloss: not tainted by thoughts.
796. *Mi pham chos kyi blo gros* 1997, 4:535–38.
797. *Ibid.*, 4:542–43.
798. 724.
799. As mentioned above, the Karmapa studied with Śākya Shönnu, the then abbot of the “lower” monastic seat at the famous Kadampa college of Sangpu, and Lodrö Tsungmé (mid-thirteenth to mid-fourteenth century).
800. These are the First Karmapa, Tüsum Kyenpa (Tib. *Dus gsum mkhyen pa*; 1110–1193), Pamo Trupa, and Saldo Shogom (Tib. *Gsal sto sho sgom*; 1116–1169).
801. 5.11–21.
802. Tib. *Rgod tshang pa mgon po rdo rje*.
803. 725.
804. 342.19–343.2.
805. 459–60.
806. D147, fol. 142a.4–5.
807. These qualities of monastics include owning only three robes made of used clothing, begging for alms, living in isolated places, and so on.
808. 475–76, 470–71, and 461–62.
809. *Rang byung rdo rje* 2006c, fol. 22a.3–4.
810. For details, see Thrangu Rinpoche 1990, 2–7 and Thrangu Rinpoche 2002, 20–51; both passages in abbreviated form are also found in Brunnhölzl 2009, 119–24.
811. Brunnhölzl 2009, 138.
812. *Ibid.*, 139–40.
813. The commentary by the Fifteenth Karmapa glosses this as the time of mind itself being ignorant about or unaware of itself. According to the commentary by the Fifth Shamarpa, “the end” refers to the point when mind recognizes its own face or essence.
814. Brunnhölzl 2009, 209.
815. *Ibid.*, 213–14.
816. *Ibid.*, 216.
817. *Ibid.*, 222–23.
818. *Ibid.*, 224.
819. *Ibid.*, 259. For more details on the view of the Third Karmapa on the tathāgata heart, see Brunnhölzl 2007b and 2009.
820. *Mi bskyod rdo rje* 1996, 7–14.
821. As my investigation of Maitrīpa’s Mahāmudrā approach has already shown, the Eight Karmapa’s label “Madhyamaka of mental nonengagement” for this approach is fully justified since it correctly identifies its two main elements.
822. Tib. *sems tsam rnam rdzun gyi dbu ma*.
823. BA’s chapter on the transmission of Mahāmudrā (841–86) consists of the transmission of the Indian dohā lineage (whose primary topic is of course Mahāmudrā). From Maitrīpa, this lineage went to his four main students Sahajavajra, Devākaracandra, Rāmapāla, and Vajrapāṇi, but it was only the latter who actually transmitted it to Tibet. In that regard, BA describes “the upper tradition of Mahāmudrā” (Vajrapāṇi) and “the lower tradition” (transmitted by the Nepalese master Asu, who spent most of his life in central Tibet). The followers of the first tradition speak of “the upper translation” transmitted by Vajrapāṇi; “the lower translation,” by Asu; and “the later translation,” by Nagpo Sherdé (Tib. *Nag po sher dad*), who studied with Vajrapāṇi in India when the latter was already very old. Marpa’s tradition of the Mahāmudrā dohās is referred to here as “additional translation” (*zur gyur*). Among many other students, Vajrapāṇi taught

Mahāmudrā also to Nagtso Lotsāwa. Vajrapāṇi's student, the Kashmiri Dharmasrī, who accompanied him, also taught Mahāmudrā. One of Asu's main disciples was Barpuwa Lodrö Sengé (Tib. Par phu ba blo gros seng ge; twelfth century), the author of eight commentaries on Saraha's dohās, which are to this day regarded as the primary early Tibetan commentaries on the dohā tradition. Among Barpuwa's many students, there was Rimibabpa Sönam Rinchen (Tib. Ri mi 'babs pa bsod nams rin chen; 1362–1453), who transmitted the dohās and Mahāmudrā to Gö Lotsāwa.

824. Tib. *dkar po gcig thub*. This term is found in the writings of Gampopa, Lama Shang, and some other early Kagyü masters. As a physician, Gampopa was of course familiar with this medical term for certain powerful remedies (plants and minerals) that are said to cure all diseases. However, the term occurs only three times in his preserved teachings. For example, in his *Answers to Pamo Truba* (*Phag gru'i zhus lan*; *Collected Works*, 1:472), he says that once the realization of the inconceivable nature of phenomena has arisen, it "becomes the single white panacea—knowing one, all is liberated" (*dkar po chig thub gcig shes kun grol song ba*). A more substantial source for this term's being linked specifically with Mahāmudrā is the twelfth chapter (*dkar po chig thub tu bstan pa'i le'u*) of Lama Shang's *Ultimate Profound Path of Mahāmudrā* (see Martin 1992, 290–92; the term is also mentioned at the end of chap. 9, p., 285). Just as the white panacea, Mahāmudrā is considered to be the single sufficient remedy for all diseases of mental affliction and obscurations, allowing mind to regain its own nature's fundamental sanity. The notion of any spiritual practice's being a single self-sufficient cause for awakening was criticized by Sakya Paṇḍita and others and even unjustly equated with the "view of Hwashang" (who, in one of his writings, also used the example of a single panacea). The latter view became a Tibetan stereotype for the exclusive cultivation of a thought-free mental state—as representing realization of the ultimate—along with a complete rejection of the aspect of means, such as the accumulation of merit and proper ethical conduct. However, the teachings on Mahāmudrā are far from merely advocating nonthinking or some type of mental blankness. This is also what Lama Shang explains, and the last verse of his above-mentioned chapter explicitly says that, as long as there is clinging to a self, karma and its maturation exist and it is essential to relinquish negative actions and accumulate merit. Later, Padma Karpo's *Treasure Vault of the Victors* (Padma dkar po 2005) gave a highly detailed account of all the main sources of the Mahāmudrā system and its relation to Madhyamaka, the sūtras, and the tantras, invalidating claims that Mahāmudrā is not found in the sūtras or that it is simply equivalent to the doctrine of Hwashang (for more details, see Broido 1987, D. Jackson 1990a, and Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 97–108). "The view of Hwashang" refers to the approach ascribed by Tibetans to the Chinese Ch'an master Hwashang Mahāyāna from Dunhuang, as it is reported to have been refuted in the debate at Samyé by Kamalaśīla. This led to Tibetans henceforth, by decree of the king, largely adopting the Indian approach of the gradual path versus what was perceived as the "Chinese" model of instantaneous awakening. From that time onward in Tibet, Hwashang's name and view became a pejorative cliché freely applied to what certain people considered flawed Buddhist approaches in the above sense. However, there are a number of different Tibetan versions of the debate at Samyé, with the more verifiable one giving a different account of what Hwashang actually said. In addition, the Tibetan and Chinese documents on the debate found at Dunhuang differ greatly from the "official" Tibetan story. For example, Tibetan fragments of Hwashang's own teachings and Wang Hsi's *Tun-wu ta-tch'eng cheng-li chüeh* (which presents Hwashang and not Kamalaśīla as the winner in the debate) show Hwashang's view and meditation instructions to be much more refined

and detailed than the usual indigenous Tibetan accounts. The Dunhuang documents also provide clear evidence that Ch'an teachings had been translated into Tibetan and continued to be transmitted in Tibet even after their supposed prohibition as one of the outcomes of the debate at Samyé. In any case, it was mostly due to subsequent intra-Tibetan disputes that this encounter and its issues gained such importance in Tibet. For the complexity of the events surrounding the debate at Samyé, see also Gomez 1983, Broido 1987, Karmay 1988, and D. Jackson 1990a.

825. BA, 724.

826. Tib. Khro phu lo tsā ba byams pa dpal. BA (709–11) describes Tropu Lotsāwa's studies in India and Nepal with Mitrayogin, then Buddhaśrī, and finally Śākyaśribhadra, as well as his invitations of these three (one after the other) to Tibet, where he further studied with them. He also received instructions on Mahāmudrā from his two uncles Gyaltsa Rinchen Gön (Tib. Rgyal tsha rin chen mgon; 1118–1195) and Künden Repa (both direct disciples of Pamo Truba), as well as from a direct student of Gampopa named Longdsewa (Tib. Klong rtse ba). He continued the Kagyü subschool called Tropu Kagyü, which was founded by Gyaltsa Rinchen Gön.

827. Mi pham chos kyi blo gros (1997, 2:88–96) contains a *Gdams ngag rin chen 'bru dgu* by Śākyaśribhadra (not found in the *Tengyur*), which contains Mahāmudrā-style instructions on meditation, though it does not use the term “Mahāmudrā” (for details, see Kragh 1998, 54–56).

828. Tib. Byams ba gling pa.

829. Tib. Khrimts khang lo tsā ba bsod nam rgyal mtshan.

830. Vanaratna visited Tibet for several years between 1433 and 1454.

831. In a recent edition of four Mahāmudrā texts written by Dzünba Chölé (Tib. Btsun pa chos legs, 1437–1521) from the Bodong (Tib. Bo dong) lineage in western Tibet, the author specifically mentions that his texts treat “Connate Union,” which is another name for Gampopa's Mahāmudrā system. On the transmission of the Mahāmudrā teachings that he received, Dzünba Chölé's autobiography reports that it was from the Sakya master Baljor Sangbo (Tib. Dpal 'byor bzang po) that he obtained both the Mahāmudrā teachings of Lama Shang and the cycle *Richö Korsum* (Tib. *Ri chos skor gsum*) by Gyalwa Yanggönpa (1213–1258), a disciple of Götsangpa Gönpo Dorje (see Btsun pa chos legs 2000).

832. Tib. Sha ra ba yon tan grags.

833. Mi bskiyod rdo rje 1976, fol. 279a.2–5.

834. Mi bskiyod rdo rje 1996, 38.

835. See Brunnhölzl 2010, 430.

836. See Brunnhölzl 2011b, 271.

837. *Gling drung pa 'dor ba'i dris lan* in Mi bskiyod rdo rje 2004, 3:314–15.

838. As mentioned before, “the three great ones” refers to the three primary afflictions—ignorance, desire, and hatred.

839. Lines 44–47.

840. A very similar remark is found in Mi bskiyod rdo rje 1996, 10.

841. *Mi bskiyod rdo rje'i spyad pa'i rabs* in Mi bskiyod rdo rje 2004, 1:367.

842. *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis* in Mi bskiyod rdo rje 2004, 3:220–21.

843. For details, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 159 and passim.

844. Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 110–15 and 123–24 (the page references are to the English translation, but my wording follows the Tibetan original as in Dvags po bkra skis rnam rgyal 2005).

845. As mentioned in TOK, these three are bliss, clarity, and nonthought.



846. These correspond to the four syllables of the Tibetan *yiḍ la mi byed* for “mental non-engagement.” In due order, these syllables are said to refer to cutting through a base or root of mind, showing the methods for settling the mind, preventing the mind from going astray, and taking mind as the path.
847. Padma dkar po 2005, 109–14.
848. Chos kyi 'byung gnas n.d., 18.
849. *Ibid.*, 57.
850. *Ibid.*, 24–31.
851. Compare Gampopa's statement that awareness and emptiness are connate and that “connate union” refers to awareness, lucidity, and bliss being unified with emptiness (Wangchuk Dorje 2001, 273–74).
852. The text has no negative here, but there needs to be one in order for it to make sense in the given context.
853. Sakya Paṇḍita's actual statement is found in Sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan 1992b, 59:
- If there were a view higher  
Than the freedom from reference points of the pāramitās,  
That view would entail reference points.
854. P4532, fol. 46a.3.
855. Chos kyi 'byung gnas n.d., 52–53.
856. *Ibid.*, 41–42.
857. Vasubandhu's *Bhāṣya* on this says that the nonexistence as the imaginary nature is the supreme existence as the perfect nature. The nonobservability of the imaginary nature is the supreme observation of the perfect nature.
858. This can also be considered as an alternative answer to the question in *Uttaratantra* I.156 as to why the existence of buddha nature was taught after having declared that everything is empty.
859. Chos kyi 'byung gnas, 74–75.
860. *Ibid.*, 66–67.
861. *Ibid.*, 69–71.
862. *Ibid.*, 93–97.
863. I could not locate this quote in that text by Nāgārjuna, but there is a nearly identical verse in Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka* (VIII.5).
864. Chos kyi 'byung gnas n.d., 97–98.
865. It is noteworthy that Situ Rinpoche includes Āryavimuktisena, Bhadanta Vimuktisena, Vairocanabhadra, and Haribhadra in this lineage, which is essentially Yogācāra, because those masters are usually considered as Mādhyamikas and represent the most prominent Indian figures in the exegetical tradition of the prajñāpāramitā sūtras as per the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. Though Tāranātha (1980, 196–97, 210–11, and 277) mentions Paramasena as a student of Āryavimuktisena and as a teacher of Vinitasena and says that Vairocanabhadra was the prajñāpāramitā teacher of Haribhadra, no further information about any of these masters is available. The same goes for the two Kusulipas. Dharmakīrti from Indonesia is better known as Atiśa's main Yogācāra teacher, from whom he also received the teachings on “mind training” (*lojong*) and a transmission of the bodhisattva vows.
866. Tib Spyan snga ba tshul khriṃs 'bar.
867. The Ninth Karmapa's *Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (Wangchuk Dorje 2001, 4) agrees that Gampopa taught his extraordinary students the path of means transmitted by Milarepa, while guiding the majority using the stages of the path of the Kadampa School.

Since the latter contains the three lineages of vast conduct and so on and since the third one among these was transmitted by Tilopa and Nāropa, all these approaches definitely come down to the same point.

868. Tib. Bla ma zhang g.yu brag pa brtson 'grus grags pa.  
 869. Zhang g.yu brag pa brtson 'grus grags pa 1978, 51–54 (this text is translated in its entirety in Martin 1992 and Roberts 2011, 83–134).  
 870. Tib. Khro phu bka' brgyud.  
 871. Tib. Lce sgom shes rab rdo rje.  
 872. See Sørensen 1999. BA (711) says that Sherab Dorje received Mahāmudrā teachings from Künden Repa (Tib. Kun ldan ras pa; 1148–1217), a direct disciple of Pamo Truba.  
 873. 'Bri gung skyob pa 'jig rten gsum mgon, 1998, 15.12–14.  
 874. *Ibid.*, 317.9–12.  
 875. 'Ba' ra ba rgyal mtshan dpal bzang 1970a, 501.1–502.2.  
 876. *Ibid.*, 532.4–6.  
 877. *Ibid.*, 533.2–5.  
 878. *Ibid.*, 550.4–5.  
 879. 'Ba' ra ba rgyal mtshan dpal bzang 1970b, 585.2–3.  
 880. *Ibid.*, 574.1–2.  
 881. Chos kyi dbang phyug n.d., lines 246–78 (see Brunnhölzl 2007a, 352–53).  
 882. Tib. Rtse le sna tshogs rang grol.  
 883. See Roberts 2011, 290–93.  
 884. Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 14–24.  
 885. For details, see note 659.  
 886. Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 41–43.  
 887. Compare this passage about the explanation of emptiness only making sense if there is a basis of emptiness to the section from the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Dutt ed., 32f.) in appendix 2.  
 888. Elsewhere (Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 59), the text says that the qualities of the ground exist intrinsically. If they did not exist in buddhahood, it would have to be explained that the nature of beings is not buddhahood and in that case one would have to accept that buddhahood is something newly arisen (thus being conditioned).  
 889. Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 52–55.  
 890. For these four characteristics as applied to the tathāgata heart, see most of the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras as well as *Uttaratantra* I.80cd–82, II.18–26, II.29, and II.33–34.  
 891. Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan n.d., 58.  
 892. GC, 574.8–13.  
 893. For example, GC, 43.2–44.15 and 47.12–51.19 (see Mathes 2008a, 239–42 and 247–59).  
 894. GC, 54.7–56.5.  
 895. GC, 54.7–59.22, 114.8–12, 137.23–138.6, and 460.17–464.17 (see also Mathes 2008a, 264–76, 390–94).  
 896. 61.19–67.3 (Mathes 2008a, 279–89; see also 381–97).  
 897. This could also be read as “Once the seal of the body has broken open . . .”  
 898. Zhang g.yu brag pa brtson 'grus grags pa 1978, 89–92.  
 899. Nanjio ed. 79.16–82.4; D107, fols. 86b.7–87b.7. Note that here Gö Lotsāwa sometimes quotes from D108 (fols. 217a.6–218b.2; the Tibetan translation of the sūtra from the Chinese translation Taishō 670) instead of D107 since he says that the detailed explanation of the individual yogas is in disorder in D107 while it is not in D108 (for details, see Mathes 2008a, 282–88).

900. In a general mahāyāna sense, the term “poised readiness” (Skt. *kṣānti*, Tib. *bzod pa*; lit. “patience,” “endurance”) means to be mentally open and ready for the direct realization of emptiness, aka “the dharma of nonarising” (Skt. *anutpattidharma*, Tib. *mi skye ba'i chos*). Thus, it does not mean passively enduring or bearing something, but rather indicates an active willingness and receptiveness to integrate the experience of emptiness into one’s mind stream and to be able to live within its utter groundlessness. In a more specific sense, “poised readiness” refers to the third of the four levels of the path of preparation, on which the practitioner newly attains some degree of openness and calm in the sense of not being afraid of profound emptiness. However, the actual poised readiness of directly realizing this emptiness is attained only on the path of seeing. For the most part, the path of familiarization then consists of increasing and stabilizing one’s familiarity with this realization in all situations. On the eighth bhūmi, “the poised readiness for the dharma of nonarising” reaches its culmination.
901. GC, 465.4–12.
902. Ibid., 465.12–16. See also Mathes 2008a, 381–86.
903. Though Gö Lotsāwa does not do so, in this context of connecting the four yogic practices with Mahāmudrā, one could very well point to Jñānakīrti’s *Tattvāvātāra* (P4532, fols. 70b.1–72a.6) as an Indian predecessor of linking these four with Mahāmudrā in a more general way through his explanation of *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* X.256–57.
904. 74.7–14 (Mathes 2008a, 302–3).
905. The commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* explain that among the three stages of the levels of heat, the focal object of the greater stage consists of the conventional phenomena that are imputed as designations—the phenomena that are specified by the mere names of form up through the knowledge of all aspects. The cognitive aspect of this stage is that, ultimately, said phenomena are inexpressible as being either virtuous, nonvirtuous, or neutral.
906. The focal object of great peak consists of form and so on being free from characteristics—ultimately, the characteristics of form and so on (such as blue or yellow) are not seen. Its cognitive aspect is the realization that when all phenomena are investigated by the prajñā of realizing the nature of phenomena, all entities are unobservable as being real.
907. The focal object of lesser poised readiness consists of form and so on being without a real nature. Its cognitive aspect is the realization that from the perspective of those who possess clinging, the very nonbeing of a nature in true reality appears as a real nature.
908. The focal object of great poised readiness consists of form and so on being without difference, that is, having the common nature of the three that consist of samādhi (the familiarization), bodhisattvas (the ones who familiarize), and the actuality of prajñāpāramitā (the object of familiarization). Its cognitive aspect is the realization that the path of seeing—the supreme means for accomplishing buddhahood—is the path of nonconceptuality even within the samādhi that is the cognizing subject of realizing that all phenomena to be examined in it as focal objects do not exist ultimately.
909. For details, see the introduction in Brunnhölzl 2010.
910. 271.15–272.10.
911. XIII.18. This is followed by:  
 It is held that mind, which is always naturally luminous,  
 Is [only] blemished by adventitious flaws.  
 Apart from the mind that is the nature of phenomena, no other mind  
 Is proclaimed to be luminous in nature.
912. 430.24–431.13 and 433.6–12.

913. 59.1–11 (Mathes 2008a, 274–75).
914. The common Yogācāra term “mental discourse” (Skt. *manojalpa*, Tib. *yiḍ kyi brjod pa*) is usually employed in two ways. It is either an expression for all appearances in terms of apprehender and apprehended being nothing but expressions of mind’s continuous discursive play (or, put less politely, being just our incessant mental chatter). Or it refers to a bodhisattva’s analytical meditation as a form of systematical inner dialogue with oneself. Here, it means the latter.
915. XIV.7. According to Sthiramati’s *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, fols. 265b.5–266a.3), “investigate” refers to meditations that entail both coarse examination and subtle analysis, thus corresponding to the effective preparatory stage of the first dhyāna and the first dhyāna itself. “Discriminate” refers to meditations that entail only subtle analysis, thus corresponding to the intermediate dhyāna and the second dhyāna. “Without [mental] discourse and of one taste” refers to meditations through the mental engagement that entails neither examination nor analysis, thus corresponding to the third and fourth dhyānas. For, at that time, one meditates solely internally, free from any mental discourse of examination or analysis. Thus, one continuously engages in the nonconceptual one taste that is free from examination and analysis.
916. 16.17–17.23 and 141.23–24.
917. D45.48, fol. 271a.4–5.
918. J14–15.
919. 142.23–24.
920. 144.13–22.
921. On this section on the first two Mahāmudrā yogas, see also Mathes 2008a, 386–89.
922. 149.16–20.
923. IV.99cd.
924. 166.13–19.
925. GC matches these five steps with a passage from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (saying that he follows Āryadeva’s statement that this sūtra teaches those five steps) and also with *Uttaratantra* IV.3–4 (59.24–61.18; Mathes 2008a, 276–79).
926. 113.6–114.8
927. Lines 216–20. These five are that (1) nonconceptual wisdom is not the total absence of mental engagement. Though the cognitions of small children or someone who is just spaced out do not engage in the reference points of worldly conventions, these beings are not liberated through that. In nonconceptual wisdom’s direct seeing of the nature of phenomena, all reference points have vanished. Without any reference point on the object side to engage in anymore, on the subject side any mental engagement in such reference points naturally subsides. However, this does not mean that this wisdom lacks wakefulness and one-pointed sharp mindfulness. It is also not without any cognitive capacity and clarity since it directly realizes the nature of phenomena without any dualistic split into apprehender and apprehended. (2) Nonconceptual wisdom is also not a mere transcendence of conceptions in the sense of lacking any coarse or subtle conceptual analysis. Therefore, though all mundane meditative states from the second dhyāna of the form realm onward are without such analysis, they lack the qualities of nonconceptual wisdom. (3) Nonconceptual wisdom is not the complete subsiding of conceptions either. Otherwise, being asleep, intoxicated, having fainted, and the meditative absorption of cessation would also qualify as nonconceptual wisdom. (4) Nor is nonconceptual wisdom something like inert and unconscious matter, which simply lacks conceptions by its very nature. (5) Nonconceptual wisdom is also not the picturing of nonconceptuality. This means that the actual defining characteristic of nonconceptual

wisdom is that which observes true reality. Unlike in a visual consciousness and so on, the nature of that realization does not involve any variety or multiplicity. Thus, non-conceptuality means completely letting go of all discursiveness and reference points, in particular with regard to true reality, such as trying to pinpoint a certain meditative experience, thinking, “This is nonconceptuality.” Naturally, nonconceptual wisdom does not just mean a state of trying not to think or imagine anything either, or just trying to think, “I shall not think.” For all such cases are simply subtle thoughts or grasping.

928. 114.8–12.

929. This expression can refer to both the paths of accumulation and preparation or the latter alone.

930. 114.12–15.

931. “The principle of the nature of phenomena” (Skt. *dharmatāyuktiḥ*, Tib. *chos nyid kyi rigs pa*) is the last one of “the four principles” (Skt. *yukti*, Tib. *rigs pa*), with the other three being the principles of (1) dependence (Skt. *apekṣāyuktiḥ*, Tib. *ltoṣ pa'i rigs pa*), (2) performing activity (Skt. *kāryakāraṇayuktiḥ*, Tib. *bya ba byed pa'i rigs pa*), and (3) demonstrating evidence (Skt. *upapattisādhanayuktiḥ*, Tib. *'thad pas grub pa'i rigs pa*). Though these four principles are often rendered as “the four reason(ing)s” (particularly in translations from Tibetan), as RGVV and the discussions of these four in the Śrāvakabhūmi, the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, and the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* clarify, *yukti* is equivalent to *yoga* and *upāya*, any of which can mean “application,” “means,” and “expedient.” For details on these four principles, see the note in Mipham Rinpoche’s discussion of *Uttaratantra* I.28 in appendix 1.

932. D258, fol. 248b.6.

933. J73.

934. GC, 56.5–25.

935. 431.13–16 and 432.15–433.6.

936. *Bodhicittavivarāṇa* 51.

937. 137.23–138.6.

938. 460.17–464.17 (for a translation of this passage, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 310–18).

939. 54.7–66.5 (Mathes 2008a, 264–87).

940. 59.11–22 (Mathes 2008a, 275–76).

941. For details on this topic in these texts, see Brunnhölzl (2004, 304–5 and 312–15) and Brunnhölzl (2012b, 454n871).

942. See *Uttaratantra* II.33 and RGVV on I.153 and I.156.

943. GC, 73.3–74.25 (Mathes 2008a, 300–304).

944. 446.5–21.

945. 73.19–74.6 (Mathes 2008a, 302).

946. 290.2–291.9.

947. *Pramāṇavārttika* II.253cd.

948. Compare BA (839–41), which says that Mahāmudrā is what seals all practices of the Buddha’s teachings, from the prātimokṣa up through the glorious *Guhyasamājatantra*. There is no liberation without realizing identitylessness, which is twofold—personal identitylessness and phenomenal identitylessness. In particular, in order to relinquish the cognitive obscurations, the view about any phenomenal identity must be relinquished. BA continues: “Through the view of realizing emptiness, the view about [real] phenomena is relinquished—it is relinquished by way of [these two views] being contradictory in their modes of apprehension. In order to give rise to the view of emptiness, one enters the ocean of scriptures and reasonings. [However,] if the wisdom of Mahāmudrā were a remedy for what is to be relinquished by virtue of their modes of

apprehension's being contradictory, that is, an inferential valid cognition that is found through the power of reasoning, [the following flaw accrues]. Inferential [valid cognition] is nothing but conception and glorious Dharmakīrti asserts that everything that is conception is ignorance. For relinquishing that [inferential valid cognition], there is no remedy whose mode of apprehension is contradictory to it because if something is contradictory to inferential valid cognition in its mode of apprehension, it would be nothing but mistakenness. Therefore, the remedy for [the obscurations] that are not a view is the wisdom of Mahāmudrā, which arises from the blessings of a genuine guru."

949. 292.17–19.

950. GC, 241.6–14.

951. *Ibid.*, 131. 5–21.

952. *Ibid.*, 178.2–4.

953. *Ibid.*, 444.2–22.

954. For GC's remaining comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154–55/157–58, see appendix 2.

955. GC, 267.15–21.

956. 222.12–14.

957. 165.21–166.10.

958. For a detailed refutation of Mahāmudrā's being the view of Hwashang, see Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 105–9. See also Broido 1987, D. Jackson 1990a, and Martin 1992.

959. 339.8–13.

960. 456.18–20.

961. In ancient Indian cosmology, solar and lunar eclipses are regarded as the sun or moon being swallowed by the demon Rāhu, since he envies them for their light. However, he is not able to retain them in his body and thus has to release them very quickly.

962. Interestingly, the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (I.253–54 and I.275; III.16) also speaks about mind's needing to be freed from the same five obscuring stains in order to regain its natural state. Also, Vasubandhu's *Madhyāntavibhāgaśāstra* (Nagao ed., 18.43–44) says that mind is similar to the sky by virtue of its luminosity, since all manifold phenomena are as adventitious with regard to the mind as are dust, smoke, clouds, and mist with regard to the sky.

963. 47.18–48.10.

964. 215.22–216.2.

965. 46.17–47.3.

966. The last three lines of this verse in the *Tengyur* read:

Pure consciousness [comes forth],  
All three dharmadhātu without signs.  
Linked with thought, this will be hearing.

967. In the *Tengyur*, this verse reads:

Smelling in dependence upon nose and smell  
Is an example for the lack of form.  
Likewise, it's the nose's consciousness  
That conceptualizes dharmadhātu.

968. In the *Tengyur*, this verse reads:

From the nature of a body pure  
And the characteristics of the tangible conditions,  
What is free from such conditions  
Is to be expressed as "dharmadhātu."

969. The last two lines of this verse in the *Tengyur* read:

It's the very lack of nature of phenomena  
That you should cultivate as dharmadhātu.

970. Compare the Third Karmapa's commentary on these verses (Rang byung rdo rje 2006c, 51–53, 55–56, and 59), which explicitly links them to Mahāmudrā meditation and further explains how the nature of the mind is found within dualistic consciousness. The Karmapa says that those who understand the dharmadhātu, which is naturally luminous, and the teaching of the unsurpassable yāna immerse themselves in meditation by beginning with the preliminaries according to the common yāna. Thereafter, they manifest the samādhi whose nature is superior insight and that focuses on suchness, the characteristic of the dharmadhātu that is expressed by the terms “prajñāpāramitā” and “Mahāmudrā.” At the point of resting in meditative equipoise in this way, they should meditate in a way of withdrawing all thoughts. During the time of subsequent realization, they should meditate with mindfulness by examining phenomena as follows. The eye sense faculty serves as the dominant condition of the eye-consciousness. Mind's appearing as the aspects of color and shape, which appear as if external, serves as the object condition. The momentary stirring of mentation that dwells in the mind serves as the immediate condition. Thus, an eye-consciousness appears to arise. From these three conditions, appearances without a stain occur, which means that unmistakable perception free from thoughts takes place. What appears as form unaffected by superimposing conceptions is, in its own essence, both appearing and empty, unborn and unceasing, and mere cognizance. This is also called “perceptual valid cognition based on the eye sense faculty.” This actuality appears for ordinary beings, but since they do not realize it, mentation immediately makes them superimpose something and has them conceive of, and cling to, shapes, colors, the internal, and the external, such as, “This is a pillar” or “This is white.” This leads to grasping, which in turn causes arising and ceasing. Based on that, the production of the conventionalities of causes, the conventionalities of results, and the conventionalities of the three times and so on is taken up since beginningless time and then serves as the basis for what follows. Through causing these mirage-like processes and more, mentation renders us mistaken. The noble ones who possess the eye of prajñā see just what is unmistakable and do not raise the web of thoughts. Therefore, theirs is a perception that is based on the sense faculties of yogins. As for those who are not noble ones but emulate their kind of perception, their unmistakable cognizance that observes what appears as if external is valid cognition because it is similar to yogic perception. Exactly that which resembles the true actuality of the nature of phenomena is the valid cognition of this true actuality. Here, “true actuality” refers to the factor of self-lucid consciousness. Apart from consciousness merely appearing as if it were something external, there are no other external referents that are real as minute particles and so on. Therefore, one will realize that self-lucid appearances lack arising and ceasing and become certain that they are just the dharmadhātu. In general, the actual causal condition of the three conditions for each sense consciousness is the ultimate mind as such. However, in terms of seeming reality, through the power of dependent origination, objects, sense faculties, and the immediate mind (Tib. *de ma thag yid*) appear as if they were causes and conditions. Ultimately, however, there is no arising or ceasing caused by anybody in all of this. It may appear that a magician causes many illusory beings to be born, some to die, some to go, and some to come. But there is no real being born, ceasing, coming, or going in this way, since these very beings are not established in the first place. Just like other causes, such as mantras for producing illusory beings, the conditions of mere thoughts that do not realize their nature indeed appear. But through realizing their luminous nature as being without arising

and ceasing, they become what they truly are—the dharmadhātu. Mind is also the principal of all phenomena because, in its nature, it is just dependent origination without conception. Hence, having realized it in this way, conceptions and what they conceptualize due to characteristics—all conceptions about the external and the internal—are relinquished and mind is found not to exist by a nature of its own. Therefore, it is to be realized as the dharmadhātu, which means that all phenomena lack a nature. On the paths of accumulation and preparation, one should cultivate this through aspiring for it. In terms of direct perception from the path of seeing onward, this is the samādhi of the appearance of nonconceptual wisdom, which is prajñāpāramitā. As for cultivating ultimate reality on the path of preparation, the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhözl 2010, 418–19) says that the point when the freedom from all characteristics of apprehender and apprehended is directly realized is the path of seeing, which has the character of yogic direct valid cognition. These meditative equipoises of the path of preparation are unmistakable, self-aware, direct, valid cognitions that are concordant with the unmistakable wisdom that lacks the duality of apprehender and apprehended. During the path of preparation, these meditative equipoises are not something other than self-aware, direct, valid cognitions because both what is aware and what it is aware of arise as the nature of a single clear and aware experience. The Third Karmapa's autocommentary on his *Profound Inner Reality* (Rang byung rdo rje n.d., fol. 163b) states that when embraced by the correct yoga, sense perception, mental direct perception, and self-aware direct perception are all yogic direct perception, connate wisdom's own nature (for further details, see Brunnhözl 2007b, 245–51).

971. 121.14–122.5.

972. Note that this example is also found in the *Mahābherisūtra* (D222, fols. 111a.2–4) and the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra* (D213, fols. 157b.7–158a.2).

973. For GC's relating the *Uttaratantra* to Mahāmudrā, see also “Zhönu Pal's Mahāmudrā Interpretation” in Mathes 2008a, 367–410.

974. 471.24–472.2. Elsewhere, GC (208.6–209.2) elaborates further on the notion of “fundamental change.” As for why awakening and its qualities (the fifth and sixth vajra points in the *Uttaratantra*) are called “fundamental change,” GC says that “the foundation” in this term is like a guesthouse, while “change” refers to the guests' having left and thus not being benefited anymore by that guesthouse. Then, GC quotes Jñānacandra's *Kāyatrayavṛtti*, Vinītadeva's *Triṃśikāṭikā*, and Ratnākaraśānti's *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa* as examples of the learned explaining the term “fundamental change” as having the meaning of “ceasing” or “coming to an end.” Therefore, RGVV's quote from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* “The dhātu of beginningless time is the foundation of all phenomena” refers to this notion of “fundamental change” in that the tathāgata heart has ceased, or changed from, being what functions as the basis, support, and foundation of all saṃsāric phenomena before and later functions as the support of purified phenomena. Furthermore, GC (453.11–18) explains that stainless suchness is presented as the fundamental change of buddhas. Here, “the foundation” is the uncontaminated dhātu and the meaning of “change” is “coming to an end” because all stains or obscurations in this dhātu have become separated from it and come to an end. Referring to the same lines from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, GC says that because suchness has functioned as the foundation or support of afflicted phenomena since beginningless time, it is also to be described as “host” (*gnas po*) and quotes line 80a of Nāgamitra's *Kāyatrayāvātāramukha* (“The host's having changed into something else”) in support. Accordingly, suchness is called “fundamental change” because having changed into another nature later, it functions as the support of the pure qualities. Also, as Mathes



(2008a, 420) reports, Gö Lotsāwa's biographer (the Fourth Shamarpa) says that Gö criticized Dölpopa's stance that karmic appearances and the appearances of wisdom are two separate entities that have been mixed (Dölpopa is well known for his strict separation of the two realities or the tathāgata heart and its adventitious stains). Rather, Gö Lotsāwa is said to prefer the description of the relationship between these two using the example of water and ice as being only different states of the same substance).

975. This section is largely based on R. Jackson 2001.

976. Tib. Lding kaṃ pa. This is most probably Deṅgipa.

977. Tib. Chos kyi rgyal po.

978. Tib. Dbu ma pa dpa' bo rdo rje.

979. Tib. Khyung po lhas pa.

980. Tib. Chos kyi dpal pa.

981. Tib. Chos rje don grub rin chen.

982. These five are Dogden Jampel Gyatso (Tib. Rtogs ldan 'jam dpal rgya mtsho; 1356–1428), Paso Chökyi Gyaltsen (Tib. Ba so chos kyi rgyal mtshan; 1402–1473), Drubchog Chökyi Dorje (Tib. Grub mchog chos kyi rdo rje, aka Dben sa myon pa—"The Crazy One from Wensa"; born fifteenth century), Wensapa Lobsang Tönyö Trubpa (Tib. Dben sa pa blo bzang don yod grub pa; 1504/1505–1565/1566), and Sangyé Yeshé (Tib. Sangs rgyas ye shes; 1525–1591). This transmission is called "Ganden ear-whispered lineage" or "Wensa ear-whispered lineage." Note though that the Pañchen Lama's text does not mention Tsongkhapa as the origin of these Mahāmudrā teachings but says that they are the system of Chökyi Dorje. In fact, the members and contents of the short and long lineages of this transmission as presented here appear to have been established only at the time of Yeshé Gyaltsen (Tib. Ye shes rgyal mtshan; 1713–1797).

983. Tib. Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan.

984. The First Pañchen Lama passed on these teachings to two of his main disciples—Drubchen Gendün Gyaltsen (Tib. Grub chen dge 'dun rgyal mtshan) and Lobsang Dsöndrū Gyaltsen (Tib. Blo bzang brtson 'grus rgyal mtshan; 1567–1650). From them two lineages originated, which were eventually reunited in Papongka Rinpoche (Tib. Pha bong kha rin po che; 1871–1941).

985. Dalai Lama and Berzin 1997, 230: "When the First Panchen Lama discusses the Gelug/Kagyü tradition of mahamudra, he is referring to a tradition that takes as its basis the oral guidelines of the great Kagyü masters of the past and supplements it with the profound methods for gaining a decisive understanding of voidness that Tsongkhapa has uniquely presented in his great texts concerning the madhyamaka view. Thus this tradition seems, I believe, to be a synthesis of Kagyü and Gelug approaches. Although at various points in his autocommentary, the Panchen Lama quotes several texts from the Sakya tradition, he specifically mentions here a list of Kagyü masters of old, not Sakya ones, who have concurred on this anuttarayoga tantra level of mahamudra. Furthermore, the Sakya tradition asserts only a tantra level of mahamudra, whereas both the Kagyü and the Gelug-Kagyü traditions assert both sūtra and tantra levels. Therefore I think that the First Panchen Lama had something specific in mind when he used the term 'Gelug/Kagyü tradition of mahamudra.'"

986. Ibid., 256.

987. Takpo Tashi Namgyal 1986, 146–74.

988. See his *Lhan cig skyes sbyor khrid yig* (in Beyer 1974, 157–59) and *Phyag chen zin bris* (in Evans-Wentz 1958, 128–35).

989. Tib. *sems kyi gzhi rtsa chod pa*.

990. Dalai Lama and Berzin 1997, 256–58.

991. Ibid., 258.
992. Translation as found in Lopez 1988, 178–79.
993. Bdud 'joms 'jigs bral ye shes rdo rje 1991, 191–205.
994. See the chapter “The *Mahāyānottaratantra* (*Ratnagotravibhāga*) and the *Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā*.”
995. Note that my numbering of the verses of the *Uttaratantra* follows the widely accepted one in Johnston’s Sanskrit edition (though there are some unresolved issues with it; see Takasaki 1989 and Kano 2006, 18). The numbering according to the Tibetan versions differs at times. Thus, throughout this book, if a verse number of the *Uttaratantra* is followed by a “/” with a second number, the latter refers to the number in the Tibetan. The Tibetan versions of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV reverse I.27 and I.28 (the versions in some commentaries omit I.27). They also have two extra verses between I.83 and I.84 and count the verse in RGVV between I.87 and I.88 as a root verse. All other verses in the remaining four chapters are the same as in the Sanskrit except for some verses with long Sanskrit meters in chapter 4 being split into two in the Tibetan. The exact variations in chapters 1 and 4 are as follows: I.27/28, 28/27 . . . 83/83, –/84, –/85, 84/86 . . . 87/89, –/90, 88/91 . . . 167/170; IV.33/33, 34 (śārdūlavikrīḍita meter)/34+35, 35/36 . . . 40/41, 41 (śikhariṇī meter)/42+43, 42/44 . . . 45/47, 46 (*sragdharā* meter)/48+49, 47/50 . . . 98/101.
996. RGVV quotes about one third of this sūtra.
997. These two quotes are the only known word-for-word citations of this sūtra in any Indian text. As Zimmermann (2002, 86) remarks, though the contents of the verses of the *Uttaratantra* on the nine examples in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* differ quite significantly from it in some cases, many passages in these verses do use the sūtra’s vocabulary, faithfully render its basic themes, and show similar grammatical and syntactical structures. For further similarities between some passages in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and RGVV, see the translation of the latter in this volume.
998. CMW (453) says that the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* is the sole primary source of the *Uttaratantra*, while all other sūtras mentioned in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV are only secondary sources. For the sometimes differing identifications of the main sūtra sources of the *Uttaratantra* by other Tibetan commentaries, see the descriptions of these commentaries in this volume.
999. Also, many scholars hold that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (and probably the *Ghanavyūhasūtra*) appeared after the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, but the *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, and the *Mahābherisūtra* are all assumed to have been in existence before.
1000. 432–35.
1001. 423.
1002. 2.
1003. 236.
1004. GC, 12.26–13.1.
1005. 129 and 131.
1006. 2 and 5–6.
1007. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 350–51.
1008. J, vi: “Of the three MMS. mentioned, one proved on examination not to be of the *Ratnagotravibhāga*. As at present constituted, it consists of three folios in a script, which is substantially older than that of the other two MSS., VIII century perhaps or even earlier, and is hard to decipher in the photographs; it contains a brief summary of the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, as appears from the colophon *Mahāyānottaratantropadeśa kṛtiś*

*ŚrīSatyajñapādānām*. The author, *Satyajñāna*, is apparently not mentioned elsewhere, and I have not noted any passages which throw light on the text of the main work” (of course, both the reading “*Satyajña*” in the manuscript and “*Satyajñāna*” need to be emended to *Sajjana*).

1009. Tib. Zhva lu.
1010. Tucci 1986, xii: “The Ratnagotra-upadeśa of *Sajjanapāda* I sent for publication to my friend V. V. Gokhale who has devoted a great part of his time to the study of the *Ratnagotra*.”
1011. The photograph by Sāṅkṛtyāyana is preserved at the University of Göttingen, Germany, under the shelf-mark Xc14/1.
1012. See Takasaki 1974.
1013. Note that V.26–28 are clearly not dedicatory verses but summarize the preceding ten verses of chapter 5.
1014. See Kano 2006, 519–35. Kano does not explicitly correlate his topical headings with the verses of the *Uttaratantra* but the verses in parentheses are compiled here based on Kano’s general agreement with Takasaki’s outline, the verses of the *Uttaratantra* mentioned in the interlinear notes of SM (not considered by Takasaki), and Kano’s annotations to his translation of the text.
1015. According to *Uttaratantra* I.133–42, afflictions (1)–(4) are those of ordinary beings; (6)–(7), those of learners; and (8)–(9), those of bodhisattvas. Affliction (5)—the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance—is the obscuration of arhats. One reason for its not being mentioned here could be that the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance is also present in learners and in bodhisattvas on the bhūmis, thus being implicitly included in (or being the general ground of) afflictions (6)–(9).
1016. According to the correlations between the nine topics and the eight afflictions above, one would have to omit topic (6)—manifestation—as well as example (5)—a treasure below the earth (corresponding to the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance) here too. However, verse 24 speaks of “the familiarization that has the character of purification,” which is obviously the remedy for the nine kinds of afflictions in verses 20–22. Thus, the correlations between the ten topics and the nine examples only refer to the elements in the nine examples that illustrate buddha nature and its purification but not to the elements that illustrate the obscuring afflictions. Consequently, one may include topic (6) and example (5) here. For, “manifestation” is the unchanging suchness of ordinary beings, noble ones, and buddhas as it seems to manifest differently during the different phases of the path, which fits well with an unchanging treasure’s being unknown at first, being pointed out and unearthed gradually, and being enjoyed in all its splendor at the end (see *Uttaratantra* I.45–46 and I.112–14).
1017. RGVV (J26) says: “These three topical points [of the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition] will be taught [in detail] below [through nine examples] according to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. Prior to that, however, the topic [consisting of these three points] is pointed out in all its aspects in the sense in which it is invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha].” The latter sentence introduces the following presentation of the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition through the ten topics.
1018. Note that RGVV on I.31 explicitly relates all three natures—the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition—to the nature of the tathāgata heart in terms of both its specific and general characteristics. The specific characteristic of the dharmakāya is its power to fulfill what one wishes for, thus resembling a wish-fulfilling jewel. Suchness has the specific characteristic of being unchanging, thus resembling space. The disposition has the specific characteristic of moistening sentient beings through compassion,

thus resembling water. In terms of its general characteristic of being naturally pure and always free from afflictions, the tathāgata heart resembles the natural purity of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water.

1019. Again, “manifestation” is included here since it refers to the unchanging suchness of ordinary beings, noble ones, and buddhas and since it corresponds to the example of a treasure.
1020. In analogy with SM’s presentation of the nine topics except for “manifestation” (due to suchness’s not being a basis for afflictions) that make one understand eight kinds of affliction, affliction (5)—the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance—is omitted here too.
1021. Matching SM’s “disposition that is suchness” with the svābhāvikakāya is not found explicitly in SM, but it seems appropriate since, among the other three kāyas, the dharma-kāya is said in *Uttaratantra* I.150 to arise from the naturally abiding disposition and the two rūpakāyas from the accomplished disposition. Also, suchness appears to be the suitable cause for the svābhāvikakāya in terms of its primary feature of being endowed with twofold purity—its natural purity and its purity of adventitious stains correspond to the *Uttaratantra*’s speaking of the tathāgata heart and awakening as being suchness with stains and suchness free from stains, respectively.
1022. This is based on RGVV’s (J3–4) matching the last three bhūmis with a passage in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* that is associated with the three jewels (D147, fol. 142a.4–5).
1023. The *Uttaratantra* teaches two different models of the causal relationship between the seven vajra points. The first model in I.3 identifies the three jewels and the basic element as causes (or as three conditions and one cause, respectively) and the last three vajra points, as results. The second model in I.23 and I.26 as well as RGVV on I.2 describes the basic element as the cause, the last three vajra points as conditions, and the three jewels as results. Ngog Lotsāwa refers to these two models as “the cycle of the nonabiding nirvāṇa” and “the cycle of the three jewels,” which he describes extensively at the beginning of his commentary (Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 2a.2–6a.5). For details, see Kano 2006, 136–47 and 370–82, and CMW on *Uttaratantra* I.26.
1024. The information on VT and its two possible authors is based on BA (844–47), Dpa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba (2003, 1:513), Tshal pa kun dga’ rdo rje (1981, 127), Martin (1992, 254–55 and 304), Kano (2006, 56–57 and 519–21), and TBRC, [http://tbrc.org/#library\\_person\\_Object-P2CZ7929](http://tbrc.org/#library_person_Object-P2CZ7929).
1025. A set of photo prints of this manuscript is preserved at the University of Göttingen, Germany, under the shelf-mark Xc14/34a and another set at the University of Rome. I have used the critical edition of the text in Kano 2006, 534–57.
1026. Tib. A su skye med rdo rje.
1027. It is probably because of this statement that CMW is mistakenly included in a recent publication as a work of Marpa Chökyi Lodrö (Anonymous 2011). However, while BA reports that Marpa Chökyi Wangchug translated the *Uttaratantra*, there is no evidence that Marpa Chökyi Lodrö ever translated the *Uttaratantra* or wrote a commentary on it, nor is such asserted in the Kagyü tradition. CMW is not found in two other contemporary publications of Marpa Chökyi Lodrö’s works (*A mgon rin po che* 2004, vols. 5–6 and *Lho brag mar pa lo tsa’i gsung ’bum* [Beijing: Krung go’i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2011]). Another possible short text by a Marpa Lotsāwa on the *Uttaratantra* (*Rgyud bla’i bsdus don*, 31 folios) is listed in Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib ’jug khang 2004, 1411 (this entry adds *’di mar pa lo tsā ba’i yin nam brtag*).

1029. A comparison of the two congruent outlines of the *Uttaratantra* by Ngog Lotsāwa (see Kano 2006, 267–76 and 502–4 as well as 2008a, 150–57) and the outlines in CMW and HLS shows that the latter two differ significantly from the former two as well as between each other. The outlines in CMW and HLS are both of similar length and much more detailed than those by Ngog.
1030. Therefore, it is helpful to read CMW in close conjunction with RGVV, which enables one to easily match the abbreviated passages from RGVV that CMW refers to with their source (due to the consecutive order of these passages in CMW, my translation usually does not indicate the page numbers on which they are found in RGVV).
1031. Throughout, unless noted otherwise, “the three natures” refers to the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition, as listed in *Uttaratantra* I.143cd–144/146cd–147.
1032. That sentient beings are simply equated here with the adventitious obscurations and nonentities may sound unusual and somewhat shocking (the same is repeated later in CMW, saying, “through realizing one’s own mind, there is not the slightest to be removed because there is no sentient being to be relinquished apart from [mind’s] playing as thoughts without a basis”). However, similar remarks are likewise found in GC (12.25: “sentient beings are [just] a continuous flow of afflictions and suffering”), as well as in the Eighth Karmapa’s and the Fifth Shamarpa’s commentaries on the *Abhisamayālamkāra*. Referring to the Third Karmapa, the Eighth Karmapa (Brunnhölzl 2010, 439) says, “In his autocommentary on *The Profound Inner Reality*, he makes a twofold classification [of mind as such], saying, ‘what is pure is expressed as mind, and what is impure is [also] expressed as mind.’ By explaining that those who possess impure mental impulses are sentient beings, he elucidates that the dharmadhātu does not exist in such sentient beings. He presents these very sentient beings as *being* the adventitious stains that are produced by false imagination, which mistakenly strays from the dharmadhātu. By giving the pure mind names such as ‘ordinary mind,’ ‘original protector,’ and ‘original buddha,’ he says that it is exactly this [mind] that possesses the mode of being inseparable from the buddha qualities. This kind of [pure mind] is also the [buddha] heart that actually fulfills this function.” Based on *Uttaratantra* I.35–38, a similar distinction is found in the Eighth Karmapa’s *Lamp* (31–32): “Unsurpassable completely perfect buddhas, through knowing the entirety of how all phenomena without exception actually are and how they appear, clearly realize the basic nature, ultimate reality, as being the pāramitās of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self. On the other hand, they clearly realize the ways in which [phenomena] appear—the adventitious elements of seeming sentient beings—as being impermanent, suffering, without self, and impure.” Likewise, the *Lamp* (34) says: “‘What is the meaning of the regent Maitreya’s ‘distinguishing between phenomena and their true nature’ within the mind streams of ordinary beings?’ After having explained phenomena just in general as being the adventitious stains that consist of cognitions and knowable objects [of ordinary beings], he explains their true nature as the sugata heart.” Following the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2012, 274–75), the Fifth Shamarpa equates sentient beings with the ālaya-consciousness, the impure dependent nature, nonafflicted ignorance, false imagination, and the consciousness that entails the dualistic appearances of apprehender and apprehended. This accords with what both these authors say on the dharmadhātu as the disposition for buddhahood (the tathāgata heart). Again relying on the Karmapa, the Shamarpa (*ibid.*, 285) explains: “The statement ‘Sentient beings *have* the [buddha] heart that fully qualifies as such’ is not suitable ultimately, because sentient beings must be presented as the ālaya-consciousness, which is the aspect of being mistaken and has never been established right

from the start. You may wonder, ‘So *are* sentient beings buddhas then?’ That is not the case either because adventitious [stains] are certain to perish—it is impossible for them to be permanent. Nevertheless, from the perspective of convention, at the time of the ground, it is suitable to present merely the existence of one part of this Heart—its aspect of natural purity—in sentient beings, without it, however, being contained in, being mixed with, or being connected to the mind streams of these sentient beings. *Uttaratantra* [I.129] says:

... the beginningless cocoons

Of the afflictions that are not connected to

The basic element of sentient beings . . .

In this context, the following statement applies: ‘Sentient beings are not the cause of buddhahood, but it is buddhahood itself that has become buddhahood.’” Consequently, the Eighth Karmapa declares that it is impossible for sentient beings to become buddhas because they are the adventitious stains and thus have to disappear in order for the tathāgata heart to clearly manifest as buddhahood. The Shamarpa also states that “cloud-like adventitious stains obscure space-like suchness” (Brunnhölzl 2010, 275). This is in accord with *Uttaratantra* I.52–63 saying that all the factors that make up a sentient being—improper mental engagement, afflictions, karma, skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas (which resemble the material elements)—rest on the nature of the mind, which resembles space. Likewise, *Uttaratantra* II.4–6 describes buddhahood as being like the sunlit sky, while all obscurations are like clouds in that sky. In sum, despite the many more conventional statements and examples in the *Uttaratantra* and elsewhere that buddha nature exists within sentient beings or the obscurations, as the above explanations show, in actual fact the obscurations or sentient beings exist within buddha nature. This is only logical since buddha nature is not something with physical or spatial dimensions and is certainly not limited to some place within the five skandhas. In other words, in being equivalent to the adventitious stains, sentient beings are nothing but the insubstantial clouds that float in and obscure the infinite sky of the dharmadhātu. Clinging to a personal self and the resultant notion of a sentient being is just like being stuck on the claustrophobic and gloomy outlook of fixating on the configuration of one of these clouds (which moreover keeps changing all the time) from within that cloud, while being aware of the cloudless and sunlit expanse of the sky without any reference points resembles the nonconceptual wisdom of the dharmadhātu of a buddha. For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 284–85 and 428–46.

1033. Tib. *blo ’das*.

1034. “Separating the pure essence (Tib. *dvangs ma*) from the dross (Tib. *snvigs ma*)” is a typical vajrayāna presentation, referring to distinguishing between wisdom and ordinary dualistic consciousness. Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé’s commentary on the Third Karmapa’s *Profound Inner Reality* (Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 2005a, 34) reports the following explanation by Tagpo Rabjampa (1449–1524; Tib. *Dvags po rab ’byams pa*): “In each one of all phenomena (skandhas, āyatanas, and dhātus), there is the pure essence (the aspect of wisdom) and the dross (the aspect of [mistaken] consciousness). By taking the collection of both the pure essence and the dross as the basis for purification, with the dross as that which is to be purified, through the two means for purification (maturation and liberation) according with the progressive [purification] of the basis of purification, the result of purification (the three kāyas) is revealed.” The Second Pawo Rinpoche’s commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Dpa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba n.d., 887–88) warns that when misinterpreting this, one may falsely cling to the utter nonexistence of ordinary mistaken consciousness and the real existence of wisdom.

1035. Tib. *gzhan dbang gi sems*.
1036. CMW mentions the term “Mādhyamika” only once in the context of establishing cessation (as one of the two parts of the jewel of the dharma) as the Mādhyamika type of cessation rather than the one of the śrāvakas.
1037. In that sense, the distinction here between “the naturally abiding ālaya” and “the adventitious ālaya” can be seen as suggesting the later Shentong division between “ālaya wisdom” and “ālaya-consciousness.”
1038. See RGVV on I.26 (J25).
1039. Tib. 'Bri stod. At present, this is one of the six counties (*rdzong*) in the autonomous Tibetan prefecture of Yülshül (*yul shul*) in the Qinghai province of China.
1040. The sources of this biographical sketch are Chos kyi 'byung gnas (Situpa VIII) and 'Be lo tshe dbang kun khyab 2005, 2:261–62 and Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba 2003, 2:1167–68.
1041. Tib. Dpal 'byor don grub.
1042. Tib. *Bsdus grva*.
1043. Tib. Chos grub bzang po.
1044. Tib. Rnam thos kyi ri bo.
1045. Tib. Bkra shis dpal 'byor.
1046. Tib. Zur mang.
1047. Tib. Rong bo ban sgar.
1048. Tib. Grags pa dpal 'byor.
1049. That HLS preserves the Third Karmapa's outline is the reason why it was included in the present collection of the works of the Karmapa (Rang byung rdo rje 2006a). As for the term “topical outline” (Tib. *bsdus don*), though the Tibetan literally means “summarized meaning,” as already pointed out by D. Jackson (1993, 4–5) and Kano (2008a, 136–38), there was a tendency in the early and middle periods of the later spreading of Buddhism in Tibet (beginning in the eleventh century) to use this term to indicate the genre of topical outlines. Later, the use of *bsdus don* in this sense was commonly replaced by the term *sa bcad*. The technique of elaborate topical outlines is neither an Indian nor an indigenous Tibetan device but of Chinese origin.
1050. Tib. Dngul chu thogs med.
1051. Tib. Ye shes rdo rje dpal bzang po.
1052. Tib. Rma se ston pa rin chen bzang po.
1053. Tib. Gangs dkar.
1054. Tib. Dpang lo tsā ba blo gros brtan pa. He was a teacher of Longchenpa, Yagtön, and, according to Yeshé Dorje, a guru of his guru.
1055. He was a teacher of Drogmi Lotsāwa (Tib. 'Brog mi lo tsā ba; 992/993–1043?/1072?), transmitting Virūpa's teachings, which represent the foundation of the Sakya School.
1056. Tib. Zhang tshe spong chos kyi bla ma. He was a student of Ngog Lotsāwa and the third abbot of Sangpu.
1057. Tib. Nyang bran pa chos kyi ye shes.
1058. He was the sixth abbot of Sangpu.
1059. Tib. Smra ba'i seng ge. This must be Dan bag pa smra ba'i seng ge, a student of Chaba Chökyi Sengé.
1060. Tib. Shes rab brtson 'grus.
1061. Tib. Bla ma dben dge ba.
1062. Tib. Chos dpal rgyal mtshan. There was a teacher of Longchenpa by this name (it is also an alias of Longchenpa himself, but there is no evidence that he was part of this lineage).

1063. Tib. Bkra shis seng ge.

1064. In the *Lañkāvatārasūtra*, the Buddha lists seven kinds of emptiness, among which the last one is called “the emptiness of one being empty of something other” (*itaretarāsūnyatā*). This emptiness is described in terms very similar to those in the *Cūlasuññatasutta*. The Buddha says (Nanjio ed., 75.10–19; D107, fol. 85a.2–5) that something is empty of what does not exist in it. The place where he and his saṃgha are residing at present is only empty of elephants, cattle, goats, and so on, but is not empty of the assembly of monks. It is not the case that this place itself or the monks in it do not exist. Nor is it the case that elephants, cattle, goats, and so on, do not exist as entities in other places. Though the Buddha portrays this emptiness as the most inferior kind of emptiness that is to be abandoned, as Mathes (2011b, 195–96) points out, what is empty and what remains within emptiness in terms of this emptiness and the emptiness as described in texts such as the *Madhyāntavibhāga*, the *Uttaratantra*, and RGVV differ considerably. Though the wording may appear to be similar in both cases, Mathes says, “there is after all a difference between negating the existence of elephants in a certain place and categorically negating duality. Otherwise, one could also claim that the absence of an inherently existing vase in a dependently arisen vase is inferior emptiness. Moreover, it is unlikely that the *Lañkāvatārasūtra* which largely endorses Yogācāra philosophy intends to dismiss the emptiness of the three nature theory as *itaretarāsūnyatā*.” That is, the negation that elephants exist in a certain place is a very limited negation because it refers to only one particular phenomenon in one particular place, while the general existence of elephants in other places or the existence of other phenomena is not negated. By contrast, the categorical negation of any dualistic phenomena that appear anywhere as a subject or an object or the negation of the totality of adventitious stains in the tathāgata heart are as encompassing forms of negation as can be. The negation of an inherently existing or really established vase in a dependently arising vase is the typical Gelugpa presentation of what is and what is not to be negated, respectively, in *Madhyamaka*. However, as some Tibetan masters point out, this can also be considered as a case of the inferior emptiness of one being empty of something other or as an inferior form of *shentong* (“empty of other”), which only pertains to the level of seeming reality since the dependently arising vase is said to exist on that level while being empty of inherent existence. As for emptiness with regard to the three natures, it would be self-contradictory for the *Lañkāvatārasūtra*, as a Yogācāra text, to implicitly refer to the Yogācāra hallmark of the perfect nature’s being the dependent nature’s being empty of the imaginary nature as being the worst kind of emptiness that is to be discarded. It is also important in this context to note that the *Lañkāvatārasūtra*’s introductory passage to its list of seven emptinesses (Nanjio ed., 74.1–5; D107, fol. 84b.1–2) explicitly says that “emptiness” is a word for the imaginary nature, and that it is because people cling to the imaginary nature that there is a need to speak about emptiness, nonarising, the lack of existence, nonduality, and the lack of nature. By contrast, “the great ultimate emptiness of the wisdom of the noble ones” (*paramārthayājñānamahāsūnyatā*) in the *Lañkāvatārasūtra* (Nanjio ed., 75.7–9; D107, fol. 85a.1–2.) is said to be the realization of the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones and is empty of all latent tendencies of views and flaws. Taking all of this into account, it should be obvious that “the great ultimate emptiness of the wisdom of the noble ones” accords much better with emptiness as presented in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV than “the emptiness of one being empty of something other.” See also the conclusion of appendix 6.



1065. The discussion of Gö Lotsāwa's life and his GC (except for the part on GC's comments on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*) in this section is greatly indebted to the groundbreaking studies of this text in Mathes 2002; 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 2003b, ix–xv; and Mathes 2008a. In particular, for a detailed account of Gö Lotsāwa's life and his Mahāmudrā interpretation of the *Uttaratantra*, see Mathes 2008a, 131–47 and 367–410.
1066. Tib. De bzhin gshegs pa.
1067. Tib. Kun dga' dpal 'byor.
1068. See Mathes 2008a, 143.
1069. GC, 574.8–13.
1070. The Fourth Shamarpa's biography of Gö Lotsāwa also says that he taught, without contradiction, many teachings of former masters, such as those of the mahāsiddha Yumowa Mikyö Dorje, Gampopa and his disciples, Vanaratna, the trilogy of bodhisattva commentaries, and many Nyingma instructions (see Mathes 2008a, 146–47).
1071. For more details, see the chapter “The *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā” as well as Mathes 2008a.
1072. GC, 8.3–13.2, 13.2–80.11, and 80.11–576.17, respectively. Sections (1) and (2) are translated in Mathes 2008a, 157–314.
1073. GC, 12.26–13.1.
1074. *Ibid.*, 2.6–7, 5.10–21, and *passim*.
1075. *Ibid.*, 74.25–26. As Mathes (2008a, 372) points out, this accords exactly with a statement by Jigden Sumgön ('Bri gung skyob pa 'jig rten gsum mgon 1998, 338.12–17).
1076. GC, 453.5–470.25. For a translation of this commentary, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 301–28.
1077. Note that JKC (24) says the same.
1078. Note that the first two topics of the second chapter of the *Uttaratantra* (nature and cause) correspond to the first and sixth points of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*'s explanation of the fundamental change, with false imagination being what is to be relinquished and the nature of phenomena or nonconceptual wisdom being what is to be revealed. Directly or indirectly, the remaining six topics in the second chapter of the *Uttaratantra* are also discussed in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*'s section on the nature of phenomena.
1079. Dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan 1992b.
1080. The introduction of JKC is translated in Hookham 1991a, 263–88 and the remainder in Arya Maitreya, Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé, and Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche 2000.
1081. Tib. Rta nag.
1082. Tib. Mchims nam mkha' grags.
1083. Tib. Nyi ma rgyal mtshan.
1084. Tib. Grags pa brtson 'grus.
1085. Tib. Ze'u chos kyi rgyal mtshan.
1086. I am indebted to Professor Klaus-Dieter Mathes for referring me to IM and kindly providing me with a copy of his article (Mathes 2011b [2012]) “The *Gzhan stong* Model of Reality—Some More Material on its Origin, Transmission, and Interpretation” in the proceedings of the 2008 IABS Conference in Atlanta, which is an enlarged version of his paper read at that conference, bearing the title: “Was the Third Karmapa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339) a Proponent of *Gzhan stong*? Some More Material from rJe Bkra shis 'od zer's (15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> cent.) *Ratnagotravibhāga* Commentary.” Among other themes, this article translates and discusses the significance of selected passages from

- IM (147.7–148.7, 150.3–151.2, 151.5–152.1, 154.2–156.1), which has informed some parts of my discussion of this text.
1087. It is not clear whether “instructions” (Tib. *gdams ngag*) refers to the actual texts of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and the *Uttaratantra* or to separate instructions on them in the style of IM. Nor is it clear whether Maitrīpa retrieved separate instructions on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* from that stūpa, and if so, whether they have survived somewhere. In any case, what is clear is that IM represents the record of Maitrīpa’s pointing-out instructions based on the *Uttaratantra* in Maitrīpa’s dream.
1088. Skyo ston smon lam tshul khriims 2007d. This work is not translated below but only briefly summarized here.
1089. The text sometimes also uses terms such as “beyond mind” (*blo ’das*) and “pointing out” (*ngo sprod*).
1090. An interlinear gloss says that this means that thoughts have become without basis.
1091. Tib. Phu rangs pa chen po.
1092. Tib. Dol pa. This is probably Dol pa shes rab rgya mtsho (1059–1131), a student of Potowa Rinchen Sal.
1093. Tib. Gre lhas pa. This is probably Geshé Drepa (Tib. Sgre pa), one of Gampopa’s teachers. If this is the case, there would be a direct connection between Gampopa and Mön-lam Tsültrim’s textual lineage of the Maitrīpa texts in general and the Mahāmudrā-style pith instructions on the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* in particular.
1094. Tib. Chas pa khu dbon.
1095. Tib. Shangs pa.
1096. Skyo ston smon lam tshul khriims 2007e. This work is not translated below but only the relevant parts (400–402) are briefly summarized here.
1097. Tib. Mgon ldan ’od.
1098. Tib. Yon tan ’od.
1099. The notes provide references to the relevant verses in the first chapter of the *Uttaratantra*, pertinent passages in RGVV, and some sūtra sources. The additional comments in the notes are mostly based on the explanations by Khenpo Tsültrim Gyatso Rinpoche.
1100. Tib. *dbyings gzhan stong*.
1101. Tib. *ye shes gzhan stong*.
1102. Tib. *gsal ba gzhan stong*.
1103. See Brunnhölzl 2010 and 2007a, 344–57 (particularly 348–51).
1104. Tib. Dvags po rab ’byams pa chos rgyal bstan pa.
1105. For a translation and discussion of the Third Karmapa’s commentary on the *Dharmadhātustava*, see Brunnhölzl 2007b. For translations of *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* with Jamgön Kongtrul’s commentary (plus excerpts from the brief commentaries by the Fifth Shamarpa and the Fifteenth Karmapa), the first chapter of *The Profound Inner Reality*, and excerpts from the comments on this chapter by Karma Trinlépa and others, see Brunnhölzl 2009. For a full translation and discussion of *The Profound Inner Reality* with excerpts from all available commentaries, see Callahan 2014.
1106. DP “I pay homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.” Throughout this translation of RGVV, numbers preceded by J, D, and P in “{ }” indicate the page numbers of Johnston’s Sanskrit edition and the folio numbers of the Tibetan versions in the Derge and Peking *Tengyur*, respectively. In my translation, I have relied on the corrections of the Sanskrit in Takasaki 1966a, 396–99; Kano 2006, 545; de Jong 1968; and Schmithausen 1971; as well as on most of the latter two’s corrections of Takasaki’s and Obermiller’s (1984) English renderings. In the notes on my translation, D and P *without any*

numbers refer to the Tibetan translation of RGVV in the Derge and Peking *Tengyur*, respectively, while C indicates its version in the Chinese canon.

1107. I generally render *vajrapada*—lit. “vajra foot(ing)”—as “vajra point.” Among the many meanings of *pada*, those that are relevant here are “footing” (or “basis”) and “word.”

1108. Compare the explanation of “vajra” in the Eighth Karmapa’s *Lamp* (15–16): “The means to generate the actual type of realization of the vajra-like samādhi are as follows. In the beginning, the minds and mental factors of ordinary beings are made pure through the power of the triad of study, reflection, and meditation. Thereafter, without having to rely on the power of any [element] among the triad of study, reflection, and meditation, but in a self-arisen manner, the vajra-like wisdom of realization is able to overcome the hosts of ignorance right upon the light of wisdom’s meeting them for a single moment at the same time. This is just as the orb of the sun, in a single instant of its shining, roots out completely the darkness of the latent tendencies of ignorance. This is the meaning of ‘vajra,’ and therefore it is [also] the meaning of ‘the seven vajra points’ in the *Uttaratantra*.” JKC (10–12) explains the following on what the *Uttaratantra* teaches and the meaning of “vajra.” The basis of explanation of the *Uttaratantra* is the heart of the matter taught by the Buddha, which is that “all sentient beings always possess the tathāgata heart.” Though there are infinite different approaches of explaining this by following distinct scriptures, reasonings, and meditations in both India and Tibet, the masters of the Madhyamaka of definitive meaning assert the following. The entirety of the definitive meanings of all three dharma wheels is included in the two kinds of identitylessness. The ultimate meaning of these is the emptiness of the duality of apprehender and apprehended in terms of persons and in terms of phenomena. However, the manner of being empty is not just a nonimplicative negation. *Madhyāntavibhāga* 1.20 says:

Emptiness here is the nonbeing  
Of persons and phenomena.  
The real being of this nonbeing  
In it is another emptiness.

Accordingly, it is the manner of being empty that is an implicative negation—the essence of self-lucid self-awareness—that is taught as the tathāgata heart in the context of the *Uttaratantra*. This is the vajra of the definitive meaning, which becomes threefold through being divided by its phases, as in *Uttaratantra* 1.47:

Its being impure, its being both impure and pure,  
And its being completely pure, in due order,  
Are expressed as “sentient being,”  
“Bodhisattva,” and “tathāgata.”

Its phase of not being pure of adventitious stains is described as “sentient being,” and this expanse is also called “disposition” or “the basic element that is the tathāgata heart.” Its phase of possessing both impurity and purity is described as the persons who have entered the path, and from the perspective of isolates, the expanse represents the dharma and the saṃgha. That is, from the perspective of the isolate that is the mere wisdom of the path of seeing, it is the saṃgha. From the perspective of the uninterrupted path, it is the path. From the perspective of the path of liberation and its distinctive features, it is cessation. Its phase of being completely pure is described as the Tathāgata and so on, and the expanse is called “dharmakāya.” If this is divided in terms of isolates, it is threefold—awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity. Therefore, through these internal subdivisions, that vajra is also taught as the seven

vajra points. It is easy to understand that the entire definitive meaning of the two latter dharma wheels is included in it, but you may wonder how the definitive meaning of the first wheel—personal identitylessness—is included in it. The basis of purification, the means of purification, and the result of purification of the inferior paths are all included in the suchness with stains. Therefore, the main topic of this treatise is the tathāgata heart, and one should understand that the entirety of the definitive meanings of all three dharma wheels is included in it.

1109. Skt. *artha* can also mean “topic” or “meaning,” as in a meaning and the words that express it. However, as made clear in the preceding sentence, here the term refers to the actual true nature of all phenomena, which is not a semantic, conceptual, or abstract meaning or topic, but something to be perceived directly. GC (20.25–21.6) also makes this very clear, saying that the seven vajra points are very difficult to be understood through study and reflection because these two are conceptual and the actuality of the vajra points cannot be made a direct object of conceptions. Rather, this actuality is the object of what has the nature of the personally experienced direct perception that arises from meditation. Since this actuality is to be personally experienced and thus is inexpressible, it cannot arise right away on the basis of words. However, it still serves as the subject matter of this treatise because this text teaches the cognitions of study and reflection that represent the causes that accord with, and are the path to, attaining what is to be personally experienced. This is similar to expressing the city Pātaliputra when saying, “This is the way leading to Pātaliputra.” The same is said in *Uttaratantra* V.16.
1110. *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*, D224, fol. 172b.2–3. VT (fol. 9v.2–3) glosses this passage as the Tathāgata’s being “un arisen and characterized by unconditioned wisdom.”
1111. The *Kangyur* has the title of this text as *Sthirādhyāśayaparivartasūtra*.
1112. VT (fol. 9v.3) glosses “this actuality” as “the actuality of the dhātu,” with “dhātu” referring to natural purity and “awakening,” to the purity of being free from stains.
1113. This is inserted in accordance with DP.
1114. Though Edgerton 1953 and Takasaki 1966a take the term *sattvadhātu* to mean “mass of beings,” this makes no sense in the context of RGVV. Rather, as clearly explained throughout RGVV (particularly on I.48), the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* (see the next sentence in this quote as well as other passages from that sūtra on J40 and J41), and the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* (J6), *sattvadhātu* is an equivalent of *tathāgatagarbha*.
1115. Taishō 668, 467a. YDC (243) comments on this quote as follows. “Object” and “sphere” refer to meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment, respectively. As for “known, seen, or discriminated,” according to Ngog Lotsāwa, this refers to the knowing during preparation, main practice, and conclusion or the knowing during the paths of preparation, seeing, and familiarization. According to Shang Chökyi Lama, this refers to the knowing through study, reflection, and meditation.
1116. D45.48, fol. 269a.1–2.
1117. J *dharmakāyaḥ so 'yam avinirbhāgadharmaṁ 'vinirmuktajñānaguṇo*, DP *chos kyi sku gang yin pa de ni 'di lta ste . . . de bzhin gshegs pa'i chos dag dang / rnam par dbyer med pa'i chos dang ldan pa ma bral ba'i ye shes kyi yon tan can yin no*. Schmithausen 1971 suggests to understand the compound *avinirmuktajñāna*° as *vinirmuktatvena jñānam yeṣām na bhavati* (“with which knowing them to be divisible [from the dharmakāya] never happens”). The corresponding passage *grol bas shes pa* in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fol. 272b.1) seems to support that (though it should read *ma grol bas shes pa*, which is instead found for the afflictions, which are actually realized as being divisible). Schmithausen also suggests a second possibility of reading this compound as *vinirmuktaṁ jñānaṁ yeṣām na bhavati* (“whose realization is not divisible [from the realization

of the dharmakāya]). I follow Schmithausen 1971 and Mathes 2008a in translating “qualities that cannot be realized as being divisible” (which corresponds to how the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* uses this phrase). However, *guṇa* is here in the singular, which seems also how GC (24.15–17) understands it (though taking *avinīrmuktajñāna* to mean “inseparable wisdom”). GC comments that the dharmakāya is endowed with inseparable attributes because they are of the same nature as buddha wisdom. Even at the time of being obscured by the afflictions, it possesses the quality of inseparable wisdom (or the feature of wisdom’s being inseparable from it). In brief since the tathāgata heart and its qualities have a connection of identity, the term “kāya” refers to “nature.”

1118. Taishō 668, 467a.

1119. D185, fol. 187b.4–5.

1120. The actual title of this sūtra is *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśasasūtra*.

1121. The actual first chapter of this sūtra is called “Array of Ornaments” (*rgyan bkod pa zhes bya ba ’dus pa’i le’u*; D147, fols. 154a.1–179a.7). However, as we will see, what RGVV calls “introductory section” extends into the next section of the sūtra, which contains the discussion of the various attributes of bodhisattvas and buddhas, but is not marked as a separate chapter. According to GC (25.10–11) and RYC (6), the fourth vajra point (the basic element) is discussed in the section on the attributes of bodhisattvas, while the last three vajra points are found in the section on the attributes of a buddha.

1122. D147, fol. 142a.4–5. The last phrase is translated in accordance with the sūtra and RGVV (DP), while the Sanskrit of RGVV has the compound *anantaśiṣyagaṇasuvīnītaḥ*, which is to be read as a *bahuvrīhi* with the different meaning “[the Bhagavān by whom] limitless assemblies of disciples were superbly guided.” The same phrase is quoted again in RGVV and is adapted in accordance with the sūtra. However, right thereafter, RGVV clearly explains the above compound to mean “[the Buddha] is the one who has superbly guided [disciples] in a progressive manner to the awakening of śrāvakas and the awakening of buddhas.” Thus, the author of RGVV either had a different manuscript of the sūtra or interpreted this phrase differently.

1123. This phrase is missing in MA, MB, and GC, but J adds the compound *anuttara-dharmabhāṇakatvasaṃpannaḥ* in accordance with DP and C (which is further confirmed by the same phrase appearing in CMW, 437).

1124. As attributes of the Buddha, this list is also found in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 142a.5.

1125. As already mentioned, different from what the sūtra says, RGVV’s Sanskrit compound *anantaśiṣyagaṇasuvīnītatām* here is to be read as “the fact that limitless assemblies of disciples were superbly guided [by the Bhagavān].” This is also clear from RGVV’s explanation as to where the Buddha guided his disciples (“the awakening of śrāvakas and the awakening of buddhas”).

1126. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, fol. 142a.6–142b.2.

1127. *Ibid.*, fol. 143a.1.

1128. I follow °*maṇḍalamāda*° in MB and VT (fol. 9v5) against J °*maṇḍalavyūha*°.

1129. Lit. “bull-like samādhi.”

1130. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, fols. 143a.2–152a.2.

1131. *Ibid.*, fols. 152a.2–153b.6.

1132. *Ibid.*, fols. 153b.6–157a.6.

1133. The actual first chapter of the sūtra ends after the preceding section (that is, fol. 157a.6).

1134. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, fols. 157a.6–159a.6. For the identification of these passages in the sūtra, see also CMW and Kano 2006, 605–8.
1135. C, CMW (447–48), GC (30.9–14), and Ngog Lotsāwa’s commentary (Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fol. 16b.2) all confirm that this example comes from the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. The corresponding passage says: “O sons of the victors, it is as follows. For example, to whichever extent pure gold is heated in a fire by a skilled goldsmith, to that extent it becomes refined, pure, and pliable as he pleases. O sons of the victors, likewise, to the extent that bodhisattvas make offerings to the buddha bhagavāns, make efforts in maturing sentient beings, and are in a state of adopting these kinds of dharmas that purify the bhūmis, to that extent their roots of virtue that they dedicate to omniscience will become refined, pure, and pliable as they please” (for the Sanskrit, see Mathes 2008a, 505).
1136. Skt. *vaidūrya*. Though this term is often rendered as “lapis lazuli” in translations, this is wrong. The Western name “beryl,” chemical formula  $\text{Be}_3\text{Al}_2(\text{SiO}_3)_6$ , derives from Latin *beryllus* and Greek *beryllos*, which come from the Prakrit *veruliya* and the Sanskrit *vaidūrya*, which is of Dravidian origin and means “to become pale” (interestingly, the word “brilliance” also derives from *beryllus*). Originally, this term referred to “a precious blue-green color-of-sea-water stone” (usually some kind of aquamarine) but later became used for the mineral beryl in general. Pure beryl is colorless (which is very rare), but there are many varieties of different colors due to its being mixed with other minerals. Beryl crystals range from very small to several meters in size and many tons in weight. The main varieties are aquamarine (blue), emerald (green), golden beryl (pale yellow to brilliant gold), heliodor (green-yellow), Morganite (pink or rose-colored), and red beryl.
1137. VT (fol. 9v5–6) glosses this as *kāñjikādi* (*kāñjika* means “sour gruel” or “water of boiled rice in a state of spontaneous fermentation”).
1138. VT (fol. 9v6) reads *gaṇḍikā* (“piece of wood”), which fits with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and C saying “a piece of wood covered with a cloth.” However, VT gives *tikṣṇarajaḥ* (“acid dust”) as its synonym.
1139. Skt. *mahābhaisajyārāsa*, which here seems to refer to mercury (in itself, *rasa* can also mean mercury, which is used as one of the most potent ingredients in Āyurvedic and Tibetan medicine). As for the three cleansing liquids, *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and DP agree with J on the last one. As for the first two, *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* has “alkali” and “caustic mercury,” while DP say “caustic salty water” and “caustic food liquid” (D mistakenly has *zangs* instead of *zas*). YDC (330) says that according to Ngog Lotsāwa and Chaba Chökyi Sengé, the three are “rock salt,” “fish broth,” and “mercury,” while Patsab Lotsāwa speaks of “alkali,” “the three fruits (chebulic, beleric, and emblic myrobalans),” and “sulfur.” Glosses in RYC (17) say “alkali,” “fish broth,” and “mercury or a toxic liquid.” Thus, this cleansing process here begins with an alkaline solution, continues with an acidic one, and ends with quicksilver.
1140. These are the three doors to liberation taught extensively in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras*—the nature of phenomena is emptiness, causes lack any signs or defining characteristics, and the appearance of results is not bound to expectations or wishes.
1141. VT (fol. 9v6) glosses this as “the discourses of the mahāyāna.”
1142. Usually, this means to be free from the three notions of agent, object, and action. However, the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* (D147, fol. 177a.6–7) itself explains this purity of the three spheres as follows: “What is the termination of the three spheres? It is that [state] in which mind does not engage in the past, consciousness does not run after the future, and there is no mental engagement in what occurs at present. Since this is the

nonabiding of mind, mentation, and consciousness, there is no conceiving of the past, no thinking about the future, and no discursiveness about what occurs at present.” In effect, this means that all eight consciousnesses do not operate in this state (“mind” refers to the ālaya-consciousness, “mentation” to the afflicted mind, and “consciousness” to the six remaining consciousnesses). Naturally, mind’s not engaging in the three times as described is reminiscent of similar instructions in the Mahāmudrā tradition. GC (41.7–11) explains the purity of the three spheres according to *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* XII.11ab and its *Bhāṣya*, which comments that this purity is threefold in terms of that through which buddhas teach (speech and words), how they teach (in the form of instructions and so on), and those who are taught (those who understand through concise or through elaborate statements). Thus, GC says that this refers to the pure speech of those who explain the dharma (such as those who are renowned at Nālandā), the pure dharma to be explained, and the pure mind streams of the disciples.

1143. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 215b.1–7. GC (41.11–24) explains “the dharma wheel of irreversibility” as follows. Since wisdom is irreversible on the eighth bhūmi, it is called “the bhūmi of irreversibility.” This means that before that, some people become tired of sitting on a cushion and meditating, thus rising from their cushion as well as from their meditative equipoise. Thus, they do not have poised readiness for meditative equipoise. On the eighth bhūmi, bodhisattvas do not rise from their resting in meditative equipoise in the nature of nonarising. Therefore, it is referred to as “poised readiness for nonarising.” Since it also means being irreversible from unarisen wisdom, the teachings that are primarily given on this bhūmi are called “irreversible.” Since they are transferred into the mind streams of disciples, they are called a “wheel,” which consists of the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and the other sūtras belonging to this dharma wheel of irreversibility. Those to be guided directly by this dharma wheel are “sentient beings with various causal natures,” with “natures” referring to their dispositions. These sentient beings are the results arisen from different dispositions and thus possess them as their causes. This corresponds to the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* speaking of “those who have entered all yānas.” The fruition of this dharma wheel is “to enter the domain of the tathāgatas”—suchness or the nature of phenomena. Thus, such bodhisattvas realize the true nature of a tathāgata, such as knowing the minds of sentient beings in terms of the true nature of these minds, and, upon having become buddhas, attain the arhat-hood of the unsurpassable yāna. Therefore, they are called “unsurpassable venerable ones” (see also n. 1183 on “irreversible bodhisattvas”). As for the three dharma wheels with respect to the example of cleansing a beryl, GC (42.25–43.2) says that the first one washes away the afflictions that arise from views about a self. The second one purifies coarse and subtle thoughts of clinging to (real) entities. The third one purifies what are called “the appearances of objects in the mind” because these are obstructions to seeing the tathāgata heart well. Note that GC (44.20–74.26; Mathes 2008a, 243–304) goes into great detail in establishing the superiority of the third dharma wheel in all respects. The Eighth Situpa, in his introduction to the table of contents of the *Derge Kangyur* (Chos kyi ’byung gnas 1988, 52–53), says that the three wheels of turning the dharma as presented in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra* are the wheel that speaks of revulsion toward saṃsāra, the wheel about the three doors to liberation, and the irreversible wheel. As for the rationale behind this division, according to the *Uttaratantra* (II.41 and II.57–59), those to be guided enter the path of peace (of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas) through first being exhorted by way of the teaching on developing revulsion toward their attachment to saṃsāra. Then, through speaking about emptiness, they are matured in the mahāyāna. Finally, through the contents of the irreversible wheel, they

engage in the object of all tathāgatas and receive the great prophecy about their own awakening (on the eighth bhūmi). The Seventh Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Chos grags rgya mtsho n.d., 74–84) compares the three turnings in the *Samādhinirmocanasūtra* and the three stages in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra*, concluding that the first and second stages match perfectly in terms of both their topics and recipients, while the third ones are not the same. For the wheel of irreversibility in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra* corresponds to the teachings on the tathāgata heart in general and the third phase explained in the *Uttaratantra*. The Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Mi bskyod rdo rje 2003, 1:32–35) agrees with this and elaborates as follows. “The wheel of prophecy” in the *Uttaratantra* is the dharma wheel that teaches that all sentient beings are endowed with the tathāgata heart. It is obvious that Maitreya coined this conventional terminology as a comment on the presentation in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. As for Maitreya's third “wheel of prophecy” and Nāgārjuna's third “wheel that puts an end to all views,” Karmapa Rangjung Dorje said that these two come down to the same essential point in a general way, in the sense that whatever is the final wheel must necessarily be the wheel that teaches freedom from reference points. However, more specifically, Nāgārjuna's final “wheel that puts an end to all views” states nothing but sheer freedom from reference points, while Maitreya's final “wheel of prophecy” explains that wisdom free from reference points is the distinctive feature of what is to be experienced by personally experienced wisdom. This is the only difference in terms of these two wheels not representing the same essential point. As for what is of expedient and definitive meaning in the three wheels in the *Uttaratantra*, the Eighth Karmapa quotes the great Kashmiri paṇḍita Ratnavajra as follows: “The wheel that introduces to the path of peace is the expedient meaning. The wheel of maturation is the wheel that is predominantly of definitive meaning and contains some parts of expedient meaning. The wheel of prophecy is the wheel of nothing but the definitive meaning.” According to the Seventh Karmapa (Chos grags rgya mtsho n.d., 85), in themselves, the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra* and the *Uttaratantra* do not explicitly make a distinction in terms of expedient and definitive meaning. However, Asaṅga's RGVV (J76; D4025, fols. 113b.7–114a.4) states that *Uttaratantra* I.155, through saying that the buddha heart is empty of adventitious stains but not empty of being the buddha heart, teaches the unmistakable emptiness by virtue of its being free from the extremes of superimposition and denial. Thus, implicitly, these texts hold that statements about the buddha heart's being empty (of itself) are of expedient meaning. Ngog Lotsāwa's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 1b.2–2a.1) also connects the dharma wheel of irreversibility with the *Uttaratantra*, saying that the latter explains the true reality of the meaning of the mahāyāna—the intention of the sūtras of definitive meaning (the irreversible dharma wheel), which teach the dharmadhātu as the single principle. The other four Maitreya works, through explaining the meanings of the sūtras of expedient meaning, make beings into suitable vessels for this perfect dharma because they present seeming reality as well as the ultimate that is based on the thinking of others. For further details on the three turnings of the wheel of dharma, see Bu ston rin chen grub 1931, 2:45–56; Brunnhölzl 2004, 527–49; Brunnhölzl 2010, 23–28 and 213–15; and Brunnhölzl 2012a, 48–49).

1144. CMW (448) says that this verse is from the *Lankāvatārasūtra*. However, this sūtra contains only a partly similar verse (X.751; translated from the Sanskrit):

The color of gold and the pure gold  
In gravel become visible



Through cleansing it—so it is with the ālaya  
In the skandhas of sentient beings.

The Tibetan version ends with “so it is with sentient beings in the skandhas.” Note also that RGVV’s verse is in Prakrit, while there is no known Prakrit version of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. The *Ghanavyūhasūtra* (D110, fol. 7b.1–3) also contains a verse that corresponds closely to the first three lines of the verse in question:

In pulverized stone,  
Gold does not appear to exist.  
Through specific cleansing activities,  
The gold will appear.

GC (44.18–19) quotes this verse from the *Ghanavyūhasūtra* and identifies it as the basis of RGVV’s citation. The lines that follow this verse in that sūtra say that if one cleanses entities such as the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas, buddha does not exist as an entity. However, that does not mean that buddha is nonexistent—those endowed with yoga see the buddha possessing the thirty-two major marks. Another verse in the same sūtra (D110, fol. 13a.5) says:

The tathāgata heart  
Abides like gold in stone.  
Mentation arises from the ālaya,  
And so does the mental consciousness.

1145. These are discipline, samādhi, prajñā, and dhāraṇī (*Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 159a.6–167b.1). In due order, VT (fol. 9v6–7) glosses them as not harming sentient beings, loving-kindness, inquisitiveness, and not lacking recollection. According to GC (75.18–19), these four are called “ornaments” because, just as people delight in ornaments adorning the body, one’s retinue takes delight when one possesses these four factors.

1146. According to VT (fols. 9v7–10r2), these are the illuminations that consist of (1) mindfulness (not letting previously accomplished virtue be lost and striving for virtue not yet accomplished), (2) insight (into the meaning, not just letters), (3) realization (of all phenomena and the intentions of all sentient beings), (4) dharmas (mundane and supramundane dharmas), (5) wisdom (the characteristics of the wisdom of stream-enterers up through buddhas), (6) reality (through being in accordance with reality, being disciplined, and attaining all the fruitions such as stream-enterer), (7) the supernatural knowledges (the illumination of seeing due to beholding all forms through the divine eye and so on), and (8) practice (the illuminations of wisdom and prajñā through practice). The *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* (D147, fols. 167b.1–171a.1) explains the first seven of the eight illuminations as being eightfold and the eighth one as being ninefold. According to GC (76.10), they are called “illuminations” because the entire mahāyāna path is seen through them.

1147. These are the ways in which bodhisattvas aspire to teach the dharma in order to eliminate sixteen sets of flaws of sentient beings, beginning with thinking, (1) “I will teach the dharma to sentient beings who are bound by the views about a real personality and are mixed up with various views, in order that they relinquish all their views.” Furthermore, bodhisattvas aspire to teach the dharma to sentient beings who (2) entertain the fourfold mistakenness of taking what is impermanent to be permanent, suffering to be happiness, what is without a self to be a self, and what is repulsive to be beautiful, in order that these beings relinquish all these mistakennesses, (3) cling to “me” and what is mine and take nonentities to be entities, in order that these beings relinquish their clinging to “me” and what is mine, (4) are obscured by the five obscurations of

being tormented by desire, having a lot of anger, being attached to dullness and sleep, having regrets about what is not genuine, and not having gained certainty about the profound dharma, in order that these beings relinquish all these obscurations, (5) are attached by way of the six āyatanas, that is, cling to the characteristics of forms, sounds, scents, tastes, tangible objects, and phenomena that they perceive through their six consciousnesses, in order that these beings relinquish such attachment, (6) entertain pride (feeling superior to inferior beings), excessive pride (feeling superior to one's peers), overbearing pride (feeling superior to those who are superior to oneself), self-centered pride (claiming everything from form to consciousness as being the self—thinking, “I am all that makes up my existence”), showing-off pride (pride in qualities that one does not actually have), pride of thinking less of oneself (saying, “I am so insignificant compared to those great beings” with the implication that one can never reach the greatness of one's teachers but that one is quite important due to having such teachers), and perverted pride (pride about a wrong view's being the correct view or pride about having something that is actually not a positive quality), in order that these beings relinquish all aspects of pride, (7) have entered bad paths and lack the path of the noble ones, in order that these beings relinquish bad paths and make them attain the path of the noble ones, (8) are the slaves of their craving, cling to wives and children, and, due to lacking self-control, cannot judge themselves, in order that these beings have self-control, are able to judge themselves, and are enabled to go where they like to, (9) are in discord with each other and have a lot of anger, hatred, and malice for each other, in order that these beings relinquish their anger, hatred, and malice, (10) are under the sway of evil companions, lack spiritual friends, and commit evil actions, in order that these beings are taken care of by spiritual friends and abandon their evil companions, (11) are overwhelmed by attachment, are not content, and lack the *prajñā* of the noble ones, in order that these beings relinquish attachment and give rise to the *prajñā* of the noble ones, (12) regard any maturation of karma as nonexistent and dwell in views about permanence or extinction, in order to introduce these beings to profound dependent origination and the law of karma, (13) are blinded by ignorance and dullness and cling to a self, a sentient being, a life-force, a life-sustainer, an individual, and a person, in order that these beings purify the eye of the *prajñā* of the noble ones and relinquish all views, (14) delight in *saṃsāra* and are in the grip of the executioners of the five *skandhas*, in order to help them emerge from all three realms, (15) are bound by the fetters that are the nooses of the *māras* and who dwell in deceit and conceit, in order to liberate these beings from all these fetters and have them relinquish their deceit and conceit, and to (16) those for whom the door to *nirvāṇa* is closed while the door to the lower realms is open, in order to open the door to *nirvāṇa* and close the door to the lower realms. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 171a.1–172b.4. VT (fol. 10r2–6) agrees with these explanations, providing them in abbreviated form.

1148. On the basis of the sixteen kinds of great compassion, these thirty-two remedy thirty-two forms of improper states of mind or behaviors of beings. Both the *sūtra* and VT call them “the thirty-two unique activities of *bodhisattvas*.” (1) *Bodhisattvas* see that sentient beings are asleep in the sleep of ignorance, while they themselves have awoken through *prajñā*, thus awakening sentient beings through *prajñā*. (2) Seeing that sentient beings aspire for what is small or inferior, while they aspire for what is vast, they make sentient beings embrace the *mahāyāna*. (3) Seeing that sentient beings wish for what is not the *dharma*, while they abide in the *dharma*, they establish them in wishing for the *dharma*. (4) Seeing that sentient beings engage in impure livelihood, while they have pure livelihood, they establish them in pure livelihood. (5) Seeing that sentient beings

are drowning in wrong views, while they engage in the correct view, they establish them in the correct view of the noble ones. (6) Seeing that sentient beings are unaware and are immersed in improper mental engagement, while they dwell in proper mental engagement that accords with awareness, they establish them in such proper mental engagement. (7) Seeing that sentient beings abide in wrong dharmas, while they engage in the right dharma, they teach them the dharma in order to make them practice the right dharma. (8) Seeing that sentient beings are miserly and thus have a state of mind of clinging, while they give away all material things, they establish them in giving away all such things. (9) Seeing that sentient beings have bad discipline and do not abide by the vows, while they abide by correct discipline, they establish them in the vows of discipline. (10) Seeing that sentient beings have a lot of malice and anger, while they abide in the power of patience and in love, they establish them in the power of patience and in love. (11) Seeing that sentient beings are lazy and have little vigor, while they lack laziness and apply vigor, they establish them in applying vigor. (12) Seeing that sentient beings are distracted and weak in mindfulness, while they rest in meditative equipoise and cultivate samādhi, they establish them in nondistractedness, mindfulness, and alertness. (13) Seeing that sentient beings possess corrupted prajñā and thus are inferior and dull, while they possess prajñā and lack dullness, they establish them in great prajñā and being free from dullness. (14) Seeing that sentient beings fall into what is not appropriate and commit improper actions, while they are endowed with skillful means and commit right actions, they establish them in skillful means and committing right actions. (15) Seeing that sentient beings are overwhelmed by their afflictions and engage in the sphere of imagination, conception, and ideation, while they have turned away from all afflictions, they establish them in relinquishing all afflictions. (16) Seeing that sentient beings are fettered by their views about a real personality and entertain reference points, while they understand the views about a real personality and are liberated from being fettered by reference points, they establish them in fully understanding the views about a real personality and being free from reference points. (17) Seeing that sentient beings are not disciplined, restrained, and refined, while they are disciplined and so on, they establish them in being disciplined and so on. (18) Seeing that sentient beings do not repay kindness, do not know that someone has been kind to them, and thus destroy their roots of virtue, while they repay kindness, know that someone has been kind to them, and thus guard their roots of virtue, they establish them in repaying kindness, knowing that someone has been kind to them, and not wasting their roots of virtue. (19) Seeing that sentient beings are under the sway of having fallen into the four rivers and desiring nonvirtue, while they are beyond all these rivers, they establish them in being beyond all these rivers (the four rivers are ignorance, views, becoming, and craving or birth, aging, sickness, and death). The first half of VT (10v2) “[establishing] those who have come through striking with weapons in going beyond all reference points” is strange and probably corrupt (*hetvā praharaṇenāgatān sarvopalambhasam- atikrame*; Nakamura 1992 wants to read *hetv-āpraharaṇāgatān sarvopalambham abhi- krame* and translates this as “those who are going to give up the cause overcome all thoughts (which are) construed in their mind,” which is not very helpful either). (20) Seeing that sentient beings do not heed and follow advice, while they do so, they establish them in doing so too. VT (10v2) says “[establishing] those who use bad language in using good language.” (21) Seeing that sentient beings are ruined in many ways and cling to what is not genuine, while they are not ruined and dwell in the nectar of virtue, they establish them in nonclinging and dwelling in the roots of virtue. (22) Seeing that sentient beings are poor and lack the riches of the noble ones, while they possess the

seven riches of the noble ones, they establish them in attaining these riches (the seven riches of the noble ones are confidence, discipline, study, giving, shame, embarrassment, and *prajñā*). (23) Seeing that sentient beings are always sick and seized by the venomous snakes of the four elements, while their health without any disease is unchanging, they establish them in relinquishing all sickness. (24) Seeing that sentient beings are engulfed in the darkness of ignorance and lack the light of wisdom, while they have attained the light of wisdom, they establish them in the great light of wisdom. (25) Seeing that sentient beings are attached to the three realms and enter the wheel of *saṃsāra* of the five kinds of beings, while knowing that they themselves are experts in fully understanding the three realms, they establish them in becoming such experts. (26) Seeing that sentient beings have entered the left-sided path and lack the right-sided path, while they dwell on the right-sided path, they establish them on the right-sided path (in India, the left hand is considered impure, so “left-handed” or “left-sided” generally refers to what is impure or wrong, while “right-sided” means pure or correct). (27) Seeing that sentient beings are attached to body and life-force and do not see their flaws, while they disregard body and life-force and see their flaws, they establish them in disregarding body and life-force and seeing their flaws. (28) Seeing that sentient beings are separated from the three jewels, while they abide in not interrupting the continuum of the disposition of the three jewels, they introduce them to not interrupting the continuum of the disposition of the three jewels. (29) Seeing that sentient beings deviate from the genuine dharma, while they fully embrace that dharma, they establish them in fully embracing the dharma. (30) Seeing that sentient beings are distant from the precious teacher and lack the six recollections, while they never let go of these recollections, they establish them in cultivating the six recollections (recollecting the Buddha, the dharma, the *saṃgha*, discipline, giving, and deities; for details, see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 104 and 270–72). (31) Seeing that sentient beings are obscured by the obscurations of karma and afflictions, while they are free from karma and afflictions, they establish them in such freedom. (32) Seeing that sentient beings are endowed with all nonvirtuous dharmas and have relinquished all virtuous dharmas, while they have relinquished all nonvirtuous dharmas and are endowed with all virtuous dharmas, they establish them in relinquishing all nonvirtuous dharmas and perfecting all virtuous dharmas. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 172b.4–174b.6. Apart from the exceptions mentioned above, VT (fol. 10r6–10v4) agrees with these explanations, providing them in abbreviated form.

1149. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 175b.1–185a.6. For the contents of this sūtra passage, see CMW, 450–51.

1150. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 185a.6–215a.3. For these, see the text below and CMW, 451–52.

1151. In the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, in terms of their respective functions, the ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and eighteen unique qualities are described as “buddha activities” and are numbered as such up to thirty-two. Thus, the sūtra does not contain a separate section on thirty-two kinds of buddha activity apart from this description of the functions of the ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and eighteen unique qualities. This section is followed by a further general discussion of buddha activity (D147, fols. 215a.3–217a.4), which includes the example of purifying a beryl. For further details and variations on the correspondences and the contents of the passages in RGVV about the qualities of the three jewels up through the thirty-two kinds of enlightened activity of buddhas as presented in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, see CMW (435–52) and Rngog lo

- tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b (fols. 9a.6–19a.1; translated in Kano 2006, 391–414), and GC (75.5–78.15; translated in Mathes 2008a, 304–11).
1152. The five chapter headings to follow in this translation of RGVV are inserted by the translator in accordance with the contents and the chapter indications in RGVV at the end of each chapter.
1153. DP *rtogs*. RGVV makes it clear that this means “awakened” or “realized” (the same goes for *udaya* in I.7a).
1154. Often, the three qualities of wisdom, compassion, and power are presented as the three primary defining characteristics of a buddha.
1155. śāntadharmasārira.
1156. I follow de Jong’s emendation of *’bhipretotpādaḥ* to *’bhipreto notpādaḥ*, which is also supported by DP *’dod kyi skye ba ni ma yin no*.
1157. MB *avabodhāya* against J *anubodhāya*.
1158. MB *jātyandhabhūtānām* against J *jātyandhānām*.
1159. I follow MB *tadanugamamārga°* (DP *de rjes su rtogs pa’i lam*) and VT (fol. 10v6) *°vyapadeśa°* against J *tadanugāmimārgavyupadeśa*.
1160. VT (fol. 10v5) says that the sword of wisdom cuts through suffering, while the vajra of compassion breaks through the wall (of views and doubts).
1161. D100, fol. 284b.3 (the insertions in “[ ]” stem from D100).
1162. This is another name of the god Indra.
1163. *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fol. 280a.2–4. Note that, in the sūtra, this passage precedes the former one.
1164. *Ibid.*, fol. 280a.4–6.
1165. J *upaśamaprabhedapradeśa* (DP *nye bar zhi ba’i tshig gi rab tu dbye ba*). According to *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, the difference between *sama* and *upaśama* is that the realization of phenomena’s not really existing results in the mind’s being free from clinging to them.
1166. J *aśuddham avimalaṃ sāṅganam* (DP *ma dag pa dri ma dang bral ba skyon dang bcas pa*). However, the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvātārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* (D100, fol. 298a.7) has “pure, stainless, and unafflicted” (*dag pa dri ma med pa nyon mongs pa med pa*), which is confirmed and explained several times with regard to a number of phenomena right before that passage.
1167. *Ibid.*, fol. 298a.6–7. In D100 this sentence reads, “Here, Mañjuśrī, [in] the Tathāgata, who has completely and perfectly realized all phenomena to be like that and has seen the basic element of sentient beings, great compassion, which is called “playful mastery,” arises for sentient beings because sentient beings are [ultimately] pure, stainless, and undefiled.”
1168. With Takasaki, J *abhāvasvabhāvāt* is emended to *abhāvasvabhāvān*.
1169. See the text below (J29.1ff.) for an explanation of which sentient beings belong to which of these three groups.
1170. I follow MB *°nirviśiṣṭaṃ tathāgatagarbham* against J *°nirviśiṣṭatathāgatagarbham*.
1171. VT (fol. 11v.1) glosses “all objects” as “cognitive obscurations,” “passion and aggression” as “afflictive obscurations,” and “darkness” as bewilderment.
1172. J *vipakṣa/pratipakṣa*, which literally means “opponent” or “adversary,” but for stylistic reasons, I follow the Tibetan *gnyen po*.
1173. The last sentence corresponds to DP, but the Sanskrit alone could also be read as “it is explained that “the dharma free from attachment” (or “what has the nature of being free from attachment”) is characterized by the two realities of purification.”
1174. DP *’gog pa*.

1175. Taishō 668, 467b.
1176. YDC (295) explains that improper mental engagement, in its coarse form, refers to wrong notions, such as clinging to what is impermanent as being permanent. In its subtle form, it consists of all conceptions of dualistic appearances. This improper mental engagement dwells within the luminous nature of the mind, the dharmadhātu, just like clouds in the sky (see *Uttaratantra* I.52–63).
1177. In the Yogācāra system, the typical triad of “mind (*citta/sems*),” “mentation (*manas/yid*),” and “consciousness (*vijñāna/rnam shes*)” refers to the ālaya-consciousness, the afflicted mind, and the remaining six consciousnesses.
1178. D100, fol. 297a.7–297b.2.
1179. D45.48 (dkon brtsegs, vol. cha), fol. 272a.2–5. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation of °garbhaḥ sūcyate to °garbhaḥ ity ucyate.
1180. Throughout, both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV use the terms “afflictions” and “proximate afflictions” (*upakleśa*) as synonyms. This differs from the standard abhidharma use of these terms as specifically referring to the six primary afflictions versus the twenty secondary afflictions. Here, however, the use of *upakleśa* (lit. “close afflictions”) might indicate the close association of the obscuring cocoon of the afflictions with the tathāgata heart. CMW (481–82) remarks that in the specific context of the changelessness of the tathāgata heart during the phases of sentient beings and bodhisattvas, RGVV on I.51 speaks of both afflictions and proximate afflictions. According to CMW, “afflictions” in this context refers to the dense afflictions of sentient beings while “proximate afflictions” indicates the subtle afflictions of the latent tendencies of ignorance in bodhisattvas.
1181. Among the twelve links of dependent origination, the afflictiveness of afflictions corresponds to ignorance, craving, and grasping, the afflictiveness of karma to formations and becoming, and the afflictiveness of birth to the remaining seven links. Mipham Rinpoche’s commentary on the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (’Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984e, 769.5–770.2) explains that the afflictiveness of afflictions consists of (a) the causes of wrong views, (b) the causes of the three poisons (passion, aggression, and ignorance), and (c) the striving for rebirth. The remedies for (a)–(c) are the realizations of the three doors to liberation—emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness, respectively. The afflictiveness of karma consists of the formation of virtuous and nonvirtuous actions. Its remedy is the realization of the door to liberation that is nonformation. The afflictiveness of birth consists of (a) being born in a new existence, (b) the minds and mental factors that occur in each moment after having born in that existence up through dying, and (c) the continuum of rebirth (the state of dying, the state of birth, and the intermediate state). The remedies for (a)–(c) are the realizations of the lack of birth, the lack of occurrence, and the lack of nature, respectively.
1182. I follow MB *prajñāyate* against J *pravartate*.
1183. In general, “irreversible bodhisattvas” consist of those bodhisattvas on the paths of preparation, seeing, and familiarization who exhibit specific signs of irreversibility according to their faculties (those who show signs of irreversibility already on their path of preparation are of highest faculties, those who show such signs on the path of seeing are of medium faculties, and those who show these signs on the eighth bhūmi are of lowest faculties). These faculties and their respective signs are discussed in detail in the eighth point (“the signs of irreversible learners”) of the fourth topic (“the complete training in all aspects”) of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (IV.38–59). Here, as can be seen from RGVV’s explanation in the text below and CMW (462), “irreversible bodhisattvas” (as well as “the level of irreversibility”) refers to bodhisattvas on the path of seeing

- and above. YDC (259) says that “irreversible” here refers primarily to bodhisattvas on the eighth bhūmi and above.
1184. Skt. *yathāvadbhāvikatā* and *yāvadbhāvikatā*.
1185. I follow MB *yathāvattvaṃ jagac°* (confirmed by DP *ji lta nyid*) against J *yathāvat taj jagac°*.
1186. Lit. “second” (*dvitīya*).
1187. The phrase “nor does the mind [touch] the afflictions” is missing in J, but appears in MB (*nāpi cittam kleśān*) and is accordingly rendered in DP and C.
1188. D45.48, fol. 275a.5–7.
1189. The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* also says that the body of a tathāgata just like the one of the Buddha exists even in animals (D258, fol. 253a.1–2).
1190. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation of MB *suviśuddhim* to *suviśuddham* against J *suviśuddhir*.
1191. As a pair, “lack of attachment” and “lack of obstruction” refer to being free from afflictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations, respectively. This is expressed here by supramundane wisdom’s “having the naturally pure basic element of sentient beings as its object” and “having limitless knowable entities as its objects,” respectively.
1192. I follow Takasaki’s and Schmithausen’s emendation of MB and J *avaivartyād* to *avaivartyā*, which is confirmed by VT (fol. 11v5) *avivartyā*.
1193. The translation of I.18bc follows Schmithausen’s relating *buddhajñānād anuttarāt* to *avaivartyā*, which is confirmed by VT (fol. 11v5) *anuttarād buddhajñānād avivartyā āryā bhavanti*. However, lines I.18bc could also be read as “Buddha wisdom is unsurpassable. Therefore, the irreversible noble ones . . . ,” which is suggested by DP *sang rgyas ye shes bla med phyir / ’phags pa phyir mi ldog pa ni /* and RGVV’s comments on these lines.
1194. J *upaniṣad* (“cause” or “basis”).
1195. Note that RGVV speaks of only two qualities of the irreversible bodhisattva saṃgha—the wisdom of suchness and the wisdom of variety. However, many Tibetan commentaries count six qualities in *Uttaratantra* I.13–18, which are subsumed under the two categories of the qualities of awareness and liberation (just as with the eight qualities of the Buddha and the dharma, these two categories are then counted as two additional qualities of the saṃgha). The qualities of awareness are (1) the wisdom of suchness, (2) the wisdom of variety, and (3) wisdom’s being internal. The qualities of liberation are (4)–(5) being pure of both afflictive and cognitive obscurations and (6) being endowed with unsurpassable qualities.
1196. As Takasaki (1966a, 177n35) points out, C inserts here a verse on the bodhisattva saṃgha’s being superior to the śrāvaka saṃgha in ten points (this verse is not contained in DP either, but it may have been present in a different Sanskrit manuscript). Accordingly, bodhisattvas are superior in terms of their (1) perception of objects, (2) qualities, (3) attainment, (4) nirvāṇa that is attained after having liberated all beings, (5) bhūmis, (6) purity, (7) perfect compassion regarding all beings as equal, (8) birth in the family of tathāgatas due to that birth’s being ultimately unborn, (9) perfect masteries, supernatural knowledges, and so on, and (10) unsurpassable fruition of supreme awakening.
1197. DP omit the phrase “the mind streams that are the multitudes of . . .” (*gaṇasamṭāna°*).
1198. J *ananyapoṣiṅganyam*; Pāli *anaññaposin* refers to the homeless mendicant who does not maintain a family and entertains no passion.
1199. I follow MB *°niṣṭhāgatam apy āryaśrāvakam* (confirmed by DP *mthar phyin par gyur pa yang*) against J *°niṣṭhāgatam āryaśrāvakam*.
1200. J *dvipada* (lit. “one with two legs”).

1201. I follow MB *bodhisattvayānikān* against J *bodhisattvān*.
1202. That is, by ascending from taking the saṃgha as refuge to taking the dharma and finally the Buddha as the highest refuge as well as ascending from the śrāvakayāna to the pratyekabuddhayāna and then the bodhisattvayāna. The same goes for having faith in the three activities related to the saṃgha, the dharma, and the Buddha. DP read *yāna* (*theg pa*) for *naya* (which can also mean “method,” “principle,” and “doctrine”).
1203. I follow MB *sūtrādīdeśanāpāṭhaḥ* (confirmed by DP *mdo sde la sogs pa bstan pa brijod pa*) against J *sūtrādīdeśanāyā*.
1204. See, for example, *Majjhima Nikāya* 22.13–14. *Alagaddūpamasutta*; in Bhikku Nāṇamoli and Bhikku Bodhi, trans., *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995, 228–29) and the *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* §6, D16, fol. 123a.3, in E. Conze, trans., *Perfect Wisdom* (Totnes, UK: Buddhist Publishing Group, 2002, 151).
1205. J *ārṣabha* (lit. “descending from a bull”).
1206. I follow the interlinear gloss in SM, which has *ekaṃ tu* in I.21a against J *ekatra*.
1207. Referring to DP *bden pa gnyis kyi mtshan nyid* and a similar phrase above (J11.14) on I.11 (“the dharma free from attachment, which is characterized by the two realities of purification”), Takasaki and Schmithausen insert °*lakṣaṇa*° between °*dvaya*° and °*virāga*°.
1208. In other words, the dharma is nothing but the “body” of the Buddha in that it embodies everything that the Buddha realized and taught. This accords with one of the interpretations of what dharmakāya means.
1209. Instead of “ultimately,” DP read “ultimate refuge” (*don dam pa'i skyabs*) after “everlasting refuge” in the text below.
1210. J *aparāntakoṭisama* (lit. “equal to the point that is the later end”).
1211. Certain parts of this and the immediately preceding paragraphs are taken more or less literally from a passage in this sūtra (D45.48, fols. 269a.4–270a.3), with these two paragraphs being like a commentary on that passage.
1212. J *śobha*, which can also mean “brilliant,” “lustrous,” or “beautiful”; DP “virtuous” (*dge ba*). Thus, from a Buddhist point of view, “splendid or beautiful intentions” are those that are virtuous.
1213. J *śubha*, which can also mean “beautiful,” “good,” “virtuous,” “pleasant,” “eminent,” “bright,” and “pure”; DP *dge ba*. GC (209.21–23) explains that *dge ba* can refer to Sanskrit *śuddhi* (“pure”), *sukha* (“bliss”), and *śobha* (“beautiful” or “excellent”). What this means here is that the three jewels possess all these qualities.
1214. I follow Schmithausen’s reading of MB °*sambhavo* against J °*sargako*.
1215. As Takasaki 1966a (49–53) points out, chapters 2–5 of the \**Ānuttarāśrayasūtra* (only available in Chinese) bear the titles *Tathāgatadhātuparivarta*, *Tathāgatabodhiparivarta*, *Tathāgataguṇaparivarta*, and *Tathāgatakriyāparivarta*, thus corresponding to the last four vajra points. At the end of each chapter, the sūtra discusses the inconceivability of these four topics, with its descriptions being literally the same as in RGVV on I.24–25 (J 21.17–18, 22.5, 22.8–9, and 24.9–25.3 correspond, respectively, to \**Ānuttarāśrayasūtra*, Taishō 16, 470c, 473c, 475c, and 476b–c). Takasaki presents evidence for this sūtra’s having been composed after the RGVV, being modeled upon the latter, probably by Paramārtha.
1216. Due to the many different ways in which the term *āśrayaparivṛtti* is used and understood in different texts, it is very difficult to translate it in a way that covers all its many applications. In different presentations, the term *āśraya* (“foundation” or “basis”) can refer to the body, the entirety of one’s psychophysical existence (*ātmabhāva*), the five



skandhas, the physical or mental impregnations of negative tendencies, the six inner āyatanas, the impure or afflicted dependent nature, the ālaya-consciousness, all eight consciousnesses, adventitious stains, suchness, emptiness, the nature of phenomena, the dharmadhātu, nonconceptual wisdom, the nature of the mind, or *tathāgatagarbha*. *Parivrṛtti* (“change”) may refer to the removal of something (either the removal of something in something or the removal of this very something) and its being explicitly or implicitly replaced by something else, the purification of something, the change of something into something else, or the revealing of something without any change within this something through merely eliminating what obscured it (or the very foundation within which any of the above “changes” take place, but which remains changeless itself). Thus, the outcome of this process may be something entirely new, a new form of something preexisting, or the unobscured manifestation of what existed primordially. Though some texts do not explicitly specify the result of the fundamental change, others identify it in many different ways, such as the purified dependent nature, the pure elements of the mind stream, stainless suchness, purified emptiness, the uncontaminated dharmadhātu, the dharmakāya, all kinds of masteries (over phenomena, wisdom, and so on), or the *tathāgatagarbha* endowed with twofold purity (naturally pure and pure of adventitious stains). According to Paramārtha’s translations and works (preserved only in Chinese), the fundamental change refers to the change of the ālaya-consciousness into “the pure consciousness” (*amalavijñāna*). In sum, when the *āśraya* in *āśrayaparivrṛtti* is the psychophysical continuum of an ordinary being or the ālaya-consciousness, it is to be removed and replaced by something else, but when it refers to the nature of phenomena or buddha nature, it is merely to be revealed just as it is. Thus, more common renderings of *āśrayaparivrṛtti*, such as “transformation of the basis” or “revolution of the basis” may be appropriate in certain of the above cases, but when the term applies to the mere revelation of suchness or the *tathāgata* heart (which is the way in which the term is used in this text), there is no transformation of anything into anything. The only way in which one can speak of a change here is that the state of the *tathāgata* heart (the foundation) changes from its being obscured to its being unobscured, while there is no change whatsoever in that *tathāgata* heart itself (similar to space being with and without clouds). Likewise, one cannot really say that, for example, “the ālaya-consciousness has transformed,” because the texts usually explain either that the ālaya-consciousness is purified or that it ceases to exist altogether, but not that it is actually transformed into something else. For more details, see the section on “fundamental change” in the introduction in Brunnhölzl 2012b.

1217. D45.48, fol. 275b.2–4 (in D45.48, the first sentence reads, “Devī, it is like that” and “pratyekabuddhas” is omitted).
1218. D147, fol. 210b.6–7 (DP no correspondence for *lakṣana*). The term *samāyukta*, following the Tibetan translated as “having,” can also mean “encountered,” “joined,” “prepared,” and “ready.” Accordingly, this supreme prajñā is a bodhisattva’s insight in the last moment of the tenth bhūmi that is in fact ready to join with or encounter mind’s natural luminosity in a single instant, which is equivalent to realizing buddhahood. This kind of prajñā is discussed in more detail in the seventh topic (“the instantaneous clear realization”) of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 105–8 and 272–76 as well as Brunnhölzl 2012a, 358–60 and 522–24).
1219. VT (fol. 11v7) glosses this as clinging to characteristics” (*nimittagraha*).
1220. VT (fol. 11v7) glosses this as “naturally” (*svarasataḥ*).
1221. J “big manuscript” (*mahāpusta*), VT (fol. 12r1) “piece of cloth, canvas” (*paṭaḥ*), DP “big silken cloth” (*dar yug chen po*), C “roll of scripture.”

1222. This sentence (*yad uta mahācakravāḍapramāṇena mahācakravāḍa ālikhito bhavet /*) is missing in J, but is present in MA/MB and DP.
1223. I follow MB *tathāśeṣa* (confirmed by DP *ma lus pa*) against J *tathānyeṣu*.
1224. I follow MA °*jñānāpramāṇāni* (confirmed by DP *tshad med*) against J °*jñānapramāṇāni*.
1225. The compound *sarvadharmadhātusattvabhavanāni* could also be read as “the states of all sentient beings—[their respective] dharmadhātus” or, with DP *chos kyi dbyings sems can gyi gnas thams cad* “all states of sentient beings—[their] dharmadhātus.”
1226. DP “wisdom of the noble ones” (*’phags pa’i ye shes*).
1227. J *pratyabhijñā* (Tib. *so sor mngon par shes pa*) can also mean “to remember” and “to come to one’s self” or “recover consciousness,” which is quite fitting here in the sense of (re)awakening to one’s own true nature of being a buddha.
1228. D44.43 (phal po che, vol. ga, chapter 32; \**Tathāgatopattisambhavanirdeśa* in the Chinese version), fols. 116b.4–117b.6.
1229. I follow Takasaki’s and Schmithausen’s emendation *yathāvaineyikeṣu* of J *yathāvainayikeṣu*.
1230. DP “tathāgata wisdom” (*de bzhin gshegs pa’i ye shes*).
1231. D147, fol. 215a.3–6.
1232. This phrase (*tryadhvānugataṃ*) is missing in J, but found in MA/MB, DP, and C.
1233. D147, fols. 215b.7–216a.3.
1234. VT (fol. 12r2) glosses this as “the activity of the victor” (*jinakriyā*)
1235. The wordings identical or similar to the phrase “all sentient beings possess the tathāgata heart” (also found in the text below right after I.133) or “all sentient beings always possess the tathāgata heart” (see the text below right after I.28) in RGVV occur several times in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. As RGVV says just below in the text (following I.28), it is precisely according to that sūtra that the three meanings of this phrase will be explained.
1236. In the Tibetan editions of the *Uttaratantra*, this verse follows I.28, and some editions omit it altogether. JKC (50) notes this fact and says that it does belong to the text since Dölpopa, Karma Könshön (a student of the Third Karmapa), Rongtön, Gö Lotsāwa, and others quote and comment on it extensively.
1237. DP and C reverse the order of verses I.27–28 and insert this sentence between them. For the sake of conforming with the pattern of the respective initial two verses on each one of the three jewels in the text above and the following topics below, Takasaki suggests to insert “What is taught by this?” (*anena kiṃ darśitam /*) between these two verses.
1238. This follows Schmithausen’s suggestion of *sadbhāvārthena* for *sambhāvārthena*. Schmithausen points out that the virtually identical term *gotrasadbhāvārtham* appears in the text below (J72.8; see the comments on I.149ff.).
1239. There are many volumes in Tibet as well as by Japanese and Western scholars on how *Uttaratantra* I.28 in general and its compound *buddhagarbhāḥ* in particular can be interpreted, so I will highlight just a few points here. As for the somewhat differing Sanskrit and Tibetan versions, *spharaṇa* in I.28a literally means “quivering,” “throbbing,” “vibrating,” or “penetrating” (the Tibetan here is *’phro ba* but *khyab pa* in the text below in the comments on I.146). Also, *Uttaratantra* II.13, II.93, and IV.61 use *spharaṇa* in connection with light rays, and the version of I.28a in Ratnākaraśānti’s *Sūtrasamuccaya-bhāṣya* (D3935, fol. 297a.1) says “the illuminating dharmadhātu radiates” (*chos dbyings snang byed ’od ’byung*). SM 8b “since the welfare of sentient beings depends on the victor,” which is a reformulation of *Uttaratantra* I.27a and I.28a, suggests an interaction

between the dharmakāya of a buddha and the buddha natures of sentient beings. In this vein, an interlinear gloss on verse 11 explicitly relates the twofold dharmakāya—“the utterly stainless dharmadhātu and its natural outflow (teaching the principles of profundity and diversity)” in *Uttaratantra* I.145 (explained by RGVV as “consisting of the arising of [individually] corresponding [forms of] cognizance in other sentient beings to be guided”)—to “the perfect buddhakāya radiates.” Compare also the even more explicit explanation on such an interaction between the dharmakāya of a buddha and the tathāgata hearts of beings in CMW on I.28a (473), which says the following. In order to purify the basic element of sentient beings, with the dharmakāya functioning as the support, the sambhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya perform the welfare of beings through pervading pure and impure retinues, respectively. Therefore, the basis to be purified—the tathāgata heart—exists in all sentient beings. For, if this basis to be purified did not exist in them, their being pervaded by the activity of the three kāyas would be pointless. CMW (480) also says that even those with wrong craving thrive through virtue (the cause for meeting a buddha in the future) because they have the naturally pure disposition. Without this naturally pure disposition, they would not thrive through the light rays of the wisdom of the tathāgatas and virtue. Similarly, YDC (374) answers some objections to enlightened activity by explaining it as the interaction between the dharmakāya of a buddha and the basic element of sentient beings: “There is no object for the enlightened activity of awakening to engage because sentient beings are by nature afflicted, similar to the activity of digging for gold’s not engaging anything if there is no gold.’ This is not true—since awakening exists in sentient beings too without any difference, it is that in which enlightened activity engages. ‘But if awakening exists in them without difference, enlightened activity does not need to engage it.’ Since it is obscured by adventitious afflictions, just as the sky is by clouds, these must be dispelled. ‘Enlightened activity does not have the power to do so.’ It does have that power because it entails great compassion.” In addition, compare Padma Karpo’s explanation of I.28a in appendix 1. See also Ruegg (1969, 273) and Ruegg (1973, 97), who translates *spharaṇa* in I.28a as “irradiation.” For these reasons, I chose “radiating” for *spharaṇa* since that English word covers both the meaning of “penetrating” and the sense of the tathāgata heart’s being vibrant with the energy of its natural luminosity (see the example below in this note of violins vibrating). As for *vyatibheda* in I.28b, rendered as “undifferentiable” above in the text (which corresponds more to Tib. *dbyer med*), it literally means “pervading.” In the Tibetan, I.28c says “because the disposition *exists* (*yod*),” and I.28d ends in *can*, which literally means “to possess.” However, *can* is also a common way to indicate a *bahuvrīhi* compound in Tibetan translations from Sanskrit, as is the case here. The two most basic renderings of the Sanskrit of the fourth line with its compound *buddhagarbhāḥ* are “all beings are always such that they contain a buddha/have a buddha as their core.” Interestingly, in the early Tibetan translations, this line ended in *yin* (“are”), which was only replaced by *can* at a rather late point. The most obvious reason for this is to avoid the reading “all beings *are* the buddha heart,” which is immediately suggested to readers of Tibetan unfamiliar with the underlying Sanskrit. Though I use the word “possess” in I.28d, it is not meant in the sense of sentient beings’ actually owning buddha nature. Nevertheless, especially some later Tibetan (and Western) commentators greatly emphasize that beings *actually* possess the buddha heart or even full-fledged buddhahood. This is denied at length by the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (see Brunnhölzl 2010, 438–43). It is also contradicted by *Uttaratantra* I.27, which explicitly says that the disposition is *not* the actual buddhahood or dharmakāya—the fruition—but a case of labeling the cause with the

name of its result. So, one way to look at these two verses is in terms of cause, fruition, and their fundamental equality. In this way, the disposition is the cause for the fruition of the buddhakāya, with suchness indicating that this “cause” is not different from the result (the nature of the mind being always the same in sentient beings and buddhas, or, throughout ground, path, and fruition). This is underlined by *Uttaratantra* I.142ab:

Its nature is buddhakāya,  
Suchness, and the disposition.

As the Eighth Karmapa demonstrates in detail, it is impossible to establish verses I.27–28 as strict logical proofs for buddha nature’s actually existing in all beings or their possessing it (these verses may only serve as indications or metaphors from the perspective of convenient parlance). This is also highlighted by the fact that in the Tibetan tradition, buddha nature is typically considered as a “very hidden phenomenon,” which by definition does not lie within the reach of inferential valid cognition, but can be approached only through valid Buddhist scriptures. For a selection of Indian and Tibetan that offer more affirmative explanations of the three “proofs” in *Uttaratantra* I.27–28, see appendix 1.

Without going into further details, I would like to present another more path-oriented example that adds the perspective on the three “proofs,” especially “the buddhakāya radiating.” As we saw, the first lines in the three verses I.27, I.28, and I.142 of the *Uttaratantra* equate buddhakāya, buddha wisdom, and dharmakāya, respectively, clearly indicating that the dharmakāya is not just mere emptiness but—as buddha wisdom—it actively engages and communicates with sentient beings. This is also clearly suggested by *Uttaratantra* I.145, which describes the dharmakāya as twofold: (a) the completely unstained dharmadhātu and (b) its natural outflow that consists of the teachings of the principles of profundity and diversity—which is used by SM as a gloss of the first line of I.28. RGVV explains that the dharmakāya of buddhas consists not only of (a), which is the dharma that represents the sphere of nonconceptual wisdom and is to be personally experienced by these buddhas. The natural outflow of the pure dharmadhātu (b), which is the cause for attaining (a), consists of the arising of individually corresponding forms of cognizance in the beings to be guided, which is the dharma that is the teaching. This fits with the explanation of line I.28a in the Eighth Karmapa’s *Lamp* (14–15): “At the point when the wisdom of realization—the awareness that exists primordially as not being different from the sugata heart as the expanse—rises from the expanse that is the profound matrix of the sugata heart, all seeds of obscuration are relinquished. The self-awareness of this wisdom of realization is accomplished through the wisdom of the fundamental change of [having gathered] immeasurable accumulations [of merit and wisdom]. You may wonder, ‘How is it accomplished?’ The cognition that frees from stains [and exists] in the cognizance of sentient beings that is associated with obscurations is blessed by the inconceivable power of the wisdom [of a buddha]. In addition, there [also] exists the element of wisdom in the element that is the cognition [of sentient beings] free from stains. It is by virtue of the power of both [the cognition that frees from stains and is blessed by buddha wisdom and the intrinsic wisdom of sentient beings] that their cognizance fundamentally changes into being without stains, and thus the wisdom of realization becomes of one taste with the dharmakāya.” Later, the *Lamp* (30–31) says: “That certain [beings] to be guided see these miracles of the body, speech, and mind of the [buddhas] is by virtue of the power of both the tathāgatas’ compassion of blessing, emanating, and transforming adventitious seeming [reality] through their having gained mastery over powerful ultimate reality and the tathāgata hearts of those to be guided, whose mind streams

are endowed with the tathāgata heart. [Through this,] even ordinary beings are able to realize the miracles of the bhagavāns, the indestructible vajra points.” In addition, as mentioned above, the Sanskrit term *spharāṇa* for “radiates” literally means “vibrates.” So, as far as the “awakening” of buddha nature in sentient beings is concerned, one may think of both buddhas and sentient beings as violins, with the “buddha violins” being in perfect tune and playing loudly, clearly, and all the time (teaching the dharma in various ways), while the strings of the “sentient being violins” are covered by a very light cloth. In that situation, the strings of the latter violins will not resound when the former play, but all the strings with the same tuning will at least start to vibrate, even if they are covered by such a light cloth. The less they are covered and the louder the strings of the “buddha violins” play, the stronger they will vibrate, so that the cloth starts moving and gradually slips off the strings, resulting in the strings of the “sentient being violins” gradually resounding louder and clearer too. Likewise, on the path, the more the qualities of buddha nature in beings are stimulated and thus “shake off,” so to speak, their adventitious obscurations, the more these qualities manifest fully. In brief, the first line of *Uttaratantra* I.28 refers to the “buddha violins” vibrating and the third line to the “sentient being violins.” The fact that the former can actually make the latter vibrate too is shown by the second line, which states (in effect) that their “strings” are indeed of the same nature. For further discussions of *Uttaratantra* I.27–28, see appendix 1 as well as Ruegg 1969, 272–86, Mipham Rinpoche’s *Lamp of Certainty* (Pettit 1999, 384–87), and Kano 2006.

1240. RGVV provides an explanation of I.27–28 in the context of matching the nine examples for buddha nature with its threefold nature of dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition (see I.143–52).

1241. DP have this sentence in a slightly different form (“This topic in all its aspects should be explained through the sense in which it is invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha]”) immediately after verse I.27 and preceding the above sentence “That is, [he spoke of this] in the sense . . .” As for “the sense in which it is invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha],” it seems difficult to ascertain that buddha nature is always explained by way of the following ten topics in the scriptures. However, as mentioned in the introduction, the first six seem to be a rather common template, at least in Yogācāra texts, in particular in their descriptions of ultimate reality, and RGVV (J40) says at the end of the sixth topic that the remaining four topics are simply extensions of the sixth one. GC (330) also states that this template of six topics is found in many texts besides the *Uttaratantra* (such as the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*) and explains that the first topic “nature” is the main point to be understood, while the remaining five topics represent the means to understand this first topic. In addition, the *Uttaratantra* also uses the very same six topics in its second chapter to describe awakening, with the seventh and eighth topics in this chapter being again extensions of the sixth one.

1242. Due to the above-mentioned differences in PD, the section after “By virtue of which purport is that [said]?” reads: “I.28. In brief, it is in a threefold sense that the Bhagavān spoke of ‘all sentient beings always possessing the tathāgata heart.’ I.27. This topic in all its aspects should be explained through the sense in which it is invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha]. It is based on this that I shall discuss it [here]. That is, [he spoke of this] in the sense that the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata radiates in [or into] all sentient beings, in the sense that the suchness of the Tathāgata is undifferentiated [from the suchness of beings], and in the sense that the tathāgata disposition exists [in these beings]. These three topical points will be taught [in detail] below according to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. [Here, I begin with] a synopsis.” GC (263.6–7 and 22–25)

reads: “I.27. This topic in all its aspects is pointed out through the sense in which it is invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha]. It is based on this that I shall discuss it first. I.28. In brief, it is in a threefold sense that the Bhagavān spoke of ‘all sentient beings always possessing the tathāgata heart.’ That is, [he spoke of this] in the sense that the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata radiates in [or into] all sentient beings, in the sense that the suchness of the Tathāgata is undifferentiated [from the suchness of beings], and in the sense that the tathāgata disposition really exists [in these beings]. These three topical points will be taught [in detail] below according to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. [Here, I begin with] a synopsis.”

1243. Despite the plural “qualities” (*sadāvikāritvaṅeṣv*) here, the comments in the text below make it clear that this point does not so much refer to the qualities of the tathāgata heart’s being changeless (which is also true), but to its very quality of being changeless. Almost all Tibetan commentaries take “qualities” in DP *rtag tu mi gyur yon tan dbyer med ni* as relating to the next point, thus speaking of “ever-changelessness, and the inseparability of the qualities.”

1244. The compound *paramatattvajñānaviṣayasya* (“the object of the ultimate wisdom of true reality”) is a gloss of *paramārtha* (“the ultimate”) in I.29d. Bhāviveka’s *Tarkajvālā* (D3856, fol. 59a.7–59b.2) lists three different ways in which the compound *paramārtha* can be read in Sanskrit. *Artha* (“object,” “purpose,” or “actuality”) refers to what is to be understood, realized, or examined, while *parama* means “supreme.” Thus, (1) since *paramārtha* is an object and ultimate (or supreme), it is the ultimate object (technically, a *karmadhāraya* compound). (2) Or it may be read as “the object of the ultimate.” Since it is the object of ultimate nonconceptual wisdom, it is the object of the ultimate (a *tatpuruṣa* compound). (3) Or it can be understood as “that which is in accordance with the ultimate object” (a *bahuvrīhi* compound). Since the ultimate object exists in the *prajñā* that is in approximate accordance with the realization of this ultimate object, it is what is in accordance with the ultimate object. In other words, in (1), both *parama* and *artha* refer only to the object as opposed to the subject that realizes it. (2) means that *parama* refers to the subject (wisdom) and *artha* to the object (emptiness). (3) indicates a reasoning consciousness that cognizes ultimate reality not directly but inferentially. Following Bhāviveka, the majority of Indian \*Svātantrikas seem to favor the second way of reading *paramārtha*, while not denying the first. Candrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā* (D3860, fol. 163b.5–6) explicitly sides with (1). Yogācāras typically explain the ultimate along the lines of (1) and (2) as being twofold in terms of subject and object. For example, Sthiramati’s commentary on *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* VI.1 (D4034, fols. 74a.3–75b.1) says that the ultimate consists of suchness (the pure dharmadhātu) and nondual nonconceptual wisdom. Suchness is called the ultimate since it is the fruition of having cultivated the path of the noble ones and represents all phenomena. Or, in terms of its being an object, it is the ultimate because it is the object of ultimate nonconceptual wisdom. Obviously, RGVV here explains the term according to (2).

1245. J *anvaya* (lit. “descendant” or “the logical connection between cause and effect”), DP “arises” (*byung ba*).

1246. Respectively, the three points of power, being unchanging, and being moist in I.31 refer back to the three aspects of the tathāgata heart that were taught in I.27–28—the dharmakāya’s radiating, the suchness of sentient beings and buddhas being undifferentiated, and the disposition existing in all beings.

1247. J *icchāntika*, DP ‘*dod chen*. VT (fol. 12r4) glosses this term as “those who desire saṃsāra.” This term is also used to describe those beings who, according to some, have absolutely no disposition or potential for ever achieving nirvāṇa or buddhahood.

- However, texts such as RGVV take this term to mean that though these beings possess buddha nature just like all other beings, it is so densely obscured that it will take them a very long time to enter the dharma and attain nirvāṇa.
1248. VT (fol. 12r4) glosses these people as the Vātsīputriyas. Being a subset of the Saṃmitīyas, the followers of Vatsīputra (a disciple of Śāriputra) asserted an ultimately real person that is inexpressible as being either the same as or different from the five skandhas. However, it seems quite clear that RGVV refers to the Vātsīputriyas more specifically under (2ab) in the text below, while the persons referred to here seem to be any non-mahāyāna Buddhists who are averse toward the mahāyāna (usually denying it to be an authentic teaching of the Buddha). This is confirmed by CMW (456) that identifies the persons in question here as “the Sendhapas [Theravādins] who have fallen into the hīnayāna” (referring to sectarian non-mahāyāna Buddhists who oppose the mahāyāna, with the Theravādins traditionally being the most outspoken such opponents), while explicitly referring to the persons under (2ab) as the Vātsīputriyas. In addition, the hīnayāna persons in question here are clearly contrasted with śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas by RGVV under (2b), which says that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are those “who have entered the means [for liberation] . . . [and] proceed on the set way of what is rightful.” Thus, contrary to the hīnayāna followers mentioned here, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are obviously seen as those who properly follow the path of the hīnayāna without denigrating the mahāyāna.
1249. Taishō 668, 467c. The second sentence in DP reads: “Śāriputra, they proceed to the great darkness that is even greater than darkness and possesses great darkness.” YDC (280) comments on the Tibetan version of this quote as follows. “Nor are they my śrāvakas” corresponds to the statement “How could there be liberation for those whose mind is hostile toward the dharma?” Accordingly, since such people temporarily are not persons to be guided, it is just their being inferior in that way that is expressed through a negative. The darkness that is even greater than ordinary darkness is ignorance. “Proceeding into great darkness” refers to wandering from suffering into suffering. “Possessing great darkness” means possessing both ignorance (the cause) and suffering (its result).
1250. Lit. “wanderers.” This term refers to an inhomogeneous group of roaming Yajurveda adepts and performers of Vedic rituals. They may also have had contacts with the early Āyurveda school founded on the *Carakasamhita* by the famous Indian physician Caraka (born c. 300 BCE). VT (fol. 12r4) glosses them as Vaidyas, which here can mean only “those who are experts in medical science.”
1251. This is the general name for wandering mendicants of Brahmanic origin, following orthodox Vedic teachings or heterodox paths (the name for mendicants from other castes on heterodox paths, such as the Buddha, was *śramaṇa*). Some of these mendicants were mere sophists, some Ājīvikas (the followers of Maskarī Gośaliputra), but most of them experimented with a wide range of gurus and spiritual methods. VT (fol. 12r4) glosses them as “a branch of those who smear their bodies with ashes.”
1252. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation of *J nirgranthiputra* to *nirgrantha* (*putra* is missing in MA/MB and has no correspondence in DP either, but is found in C). The followers of this school are better known as the Jainas.
1253. *J durgrhitagrāhinaḥ*, DP *nges par gzung dka’ ba’i lta ba ’dzin pa*.
1254. As confirmed by CMW (456), this refers to the Vātsīputriyas.
1255. I follow Schmithausen’s suggestion *ādeśyamānāyām* against *mādyamānānām* (MB unclear), which is based on C (DP *’di la stong pa nyid du lta ba gang dag*, which seems

to be corrupt, since the sentence already contains two other instances of *stong pa nyid du lta ba*).

1256. VT (fol. 12r4–5) explains that this refers to those who think that there is some phenomenon called “emptiness” that makes entities empty.
1257. D45.43 (dkon brtsegs, vol. cha), fol. 132b.1–2.
1258. In general, “superior intention” (Skt. *adhyāśaya*, Tib. *lhag pa'i bsam pa*) is a term for the superior altruistic attitude of bodhisattvas that has solely the welfare of others in mind. They care about others with the same spontaneous intensity with which ordinary beings usually strive for their own well-being. This attitude is said to be the immediate prerequisite or cause for the arising of uncontrived genuine bodhicitta even in ordinary beings.
1259. This group of sentient beings as well as the two following ones were already mentioned above (J10).
1260. J *anāvarenaḡāminah*. This can also mean “those who have unobscured attainment,” thus DP “those who have unobscured realization” (*sgrib pa med pa rtogs pa*).
1261. This sentence in D45.48 reads, “Bhagavan, even the pure wisdom of all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas has not seen the object of omniscient wisdom and the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata before.”
1262. D45.48 adds “by virtue of their faith in the Tathāgata.”
1263. D45.48, fols. 273b.3–274a.1.
1264. I follow MA/MB *visaṃvāditatvāt* against J *visaṃvāditvāt* (the same goes for *avisaṃvāditatvāt* a few lines below).
1265. I follow MA/MB *evātmeti* against J *evātmani*.
1266. With Schmithausen, I follow MA *sattvārthagodhāpaliguddhatvād* against MB *sattvārthaparīśodhāparīśuddhatvād* (corresponding to DP *yongs su sbyong ba yongs su dag pa'i phyir*) and J *sattvārthaphaligodhāparīśuddhatvād*.
1267. *Daśabhūmikasūtra* (Rahder ed., 14ff.): *dharmadhātuvipulam ākāśadhātuparyavasānam aparāntakoṭiṇiṣṭham*. In the sūtra, these three phrases occur several times in this order in the lists of attributes of a bodhisattva's aspiration prayers, veneration of buddhas, and so on.
1268. These ten are mastery over (1) life span (being able to live for infinite eons), (2) mind (firmly dwelling in samādhi through infinite wisdom), (3) necessities (displaying all worldly realms by blessing them with many embellishments), (4) karma (displaying karmic maturations just at the time when they can be blessed), (5) birth (displaying births everywhere in the worldly realms), (6) creative will power (displaying all worldly realms as being completely filled with buddhas), (7) aspiration prayers (displaying awakening in any buddha realm and at any time one pleases), (8) miraculous powers (displaying all kinds of miraculous feats, such as going to all buddha realms), (9) dharma (displaying the light of the dharma doors without center and periphery), (10) wisdom (displaying a buddha's powers, fearlessnesses, unique qualities, major and minor marks, and becoming completely perfectly awakened). Usually, it is said that these ten masteries are attained on the eighth bhūmi. However, even bodhisattvas on the lower bhūmis possess certain degrees of such masteries.
1269. RYC (70) explains that “the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance” refers to the latencies of being ignorant in terms of a phenomenal identity. Based on that, uncontaminated karma is motivated by the subtle ignorance that consists of the cognitive obscurations. YDC (299) explains that the nature of the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance consists of subtle dualistic appearances. Since these function



as the support of the latent tendencies of the afflictions, it is called “the ground of latent tendencies.”

1270. DP and C have “body” for Sanskrit *ātmabhāva*, which is one of its meanings. The term (lit. “becoming or existing of one’s self” or “produced by one’s self”) can also refer to the entirety of one’s psychophysical existence as related to a self. The three kinds of mental bodies mentioned here are those assumed by śrāvaka arhats, pratyekabuddha arhats, and bodhisattvas, respectively.
1271. These are usually listed as desire, (wrong) views, holding (wrong) discipline and spiritual disciplines as paramount, and proclaiming a self (*ātmavāda*). VT (fol. 12r7) lists them as extreme views (*dr̥ṣṭānta*), the appropriating factor of conception (*kalpopādāna*), the appropriating factor of (wrong) discipline and spiritual disciplines (*śīlavratopādāna*), and the appropriating factor of existence (*bhavopādāna*). VT also adds the appropriating factors of a self, craving, and ignorance.
1272. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation *acintyapāriṇāmikī* against J *acintyā pāriṇāmikī* (MA/MB °*pari*°).
1273. With de Jong, I follow MB °*prakarṣa*° and DP *rab* against °*pakarṣa*° in MA and J. I also conform with DP *pha rol tu phyin pa rab kyi mthar thug pa* in connecting °*prakarṣaparyanta*° with °*śubhapāramitām*.
1274. One of the literal meanings of the Sanskrit *vāsa* or *vāsanā* for “latent tendencies” is “perfuming.” Thus, as described here, the latent tendencies of the afflictions are like the lingering traces of the smell of a perfume even when a bottle with perfume has been emptied and washed.
1275. Skt. *saṃudbhūta* can also mean “arising” and “being produced,” but those two meanings do not seem appropriate here because the tathāgata heart does not ever arise and DP read *gags pa las gyur pa*.
1276. D45.48 says “foundation” (*rten*).
1277. D45.48, fols. 265b.7–266a.2.
1278. Ibid., fol. 273b.7.
1279. I follow MA/MB °*vyupaśāntitaḥ* and DP *nye bar zhi ba* against J *kṣayaśāntitaḥ*.
1280. DP “body” (*lus*).
1281. Following de Jong, *apakarṣaṇa* and *samāropaṇa* (DP *’brid pa* and *snon pa*) are taken to correspond to the well-known pair *apavāda* (“denial”) and *samāropa* (“superimposition”).
1282. D45.48, fol. 273a.6–7.
1283. According to VT (fol. 12v1), the reason is that there is no abiding in saṃsāra or nirvāṇa nor any conceptions about them.
1284. Here and two lines below in the text, I follow Schmithausen’s emendation of *pratiṣṭhate* to *pratitiṣṭhate*.
1285. I follow MB °*śamaikāyana*° and VT (fol. 12v1) *ekāyanaṃ* against J *śamaikayāna*.
1286. J omits *nirdiśati* after *pratiṣṭhānam iti*, which is however found in MB (confirmed by DP *bstan pa ni*).
1287. Following Schmithausen and DP *’khor ba, saṃvṛtiṃ* is emended to *saṃsṛtiṃ*.
1288. D45.48, fol. 274b.5.
1289. This sentence, which the context clearly calls for, is missing in Sanskrit, but is preserved in DP (*de la ’dun pa ni mngon par ’dod pa’o*; reconstructed by Takasaki as *tatra cchando ’bhilāsa*) and C.
1290. DP and C omit this phrase.
1291. Skt. *asaṃkoca*, DP *phyogs pa* (“directing [one’s mind] toward”).

1292. DP “one’s mind truly striving for one’s desired aim” (*gang mngon par ’dod pa’i don la sems mngon par ’dun par byed pa’o*). YDC (286–87) explains that upon seeing the benefit of the happiness of nirvāṇa, beings develop the striving of seeing this happiness as a quality, the wish to attain what possesses this quality, the pursuing that seeks for the means to attain it, and the aspiration of delighting in accomplishing the outcome of these means.
1293. I follow MB *agotrāṇām na tad yataḥ* and DP *gang phyir de / rigs med pa dag med pa’i phyir* against J *agotrāṇām na vidyate*.
1294. J *śūklāṃśa* (Pāli *sukkāṃsa*: “good fortune”) P *dkaṛ po’i cha* D *dkaṛ po’i chos* C *kuśala-mūla*. According to Takasaki, the *Buddhagotrāśāstra* (Taishō 1610) explains 3 *aṃśas*—merit, liberation, and attainment.
1295. This phrase is missing in J, but exists as MB *kiṃ kāraṇam* and DP *de ci’i phyir zhe na*.
1296. I follow Takasaki’s emendation of *pāpasamucchedayogena* to *pāpāsamucchedayogena*.
1297. RYC (81) defines “adventitious” as what is primordially nonexistent or what does not taint the nature of the mind.
1298. I follow MB *satpuruṣaṣaṃsevādicatuṣcakra°* and VT *saṃsevādi* (fol. 12v3) as well as DP *skyes bu dam pa la bsten* [text: *brten*] *pa la sogs pa ’khor lo bzhi* against J *satpuruṣaṣaṃsargādicatuḥśukla°*.
1299. The other three wheels are the accumulation of merit, a favorable dwelling place, and proper vows and aspirations. Note that this a case of RGVV’s using the term “disposition” (*gotra*) not in its usual sense of unconditioned buddha nature but with its other meaning of conditioned virtue. This latter meaning of the term is found frequently in other mahāyāna texts in general and Yogācāra works in particular (such as the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*).
1300. I follow MB *’jñānaraśmayah* and DP *ye shes kyi ’od zer* against J *°raśmayah*.
1301. This phrase is not found in J, but in the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānā-lokālamkārasūtra* (D100), DP, and C.
1302. D100, fol. 285b.6–7.
1303. That is, these persons are actually able to attain nirvāṇa at some point in the distant future. This represents a typical case of “the intention with regard to another time,” one of “the four intentions” (Skt. *abhisam̐dhi*, Tib. *dgongs pa*) of the words of the Buddha (these four are explained in *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* XII.16ff. and its commentaries). Among them, (1) the intention in terms of equality means to take the three equalities between all buddhas in terms of the accumulations of merit and wisdom, the dharma-kāya, and the welfare of beings accomplished by them as the reason for the Buddha’s saying something like “At that time, I was the Tathāgata Vipaśyī.” (2) The intention in terms of another meaning means to take the threefold lack of nature of the imaginary, dependent, and perfect natures in terms of characteristics, arising, and the ultimate, respectively, as the reason for the Buddha’s saying something like “All phenomena lack a nature.” (3) The intention in terms of another time means to take the time in the far future when a certain person will actually be born in Sukhāvātī as the reason for the Buddha’s saying something like “If you make the aspiration prayer to be born in Sukhāvātī, you will be born there.” (4) The intention in terms of the thinking of a person refers to something like the Buddha’s disparaging discipline and praising generosity by intending to make persons who content themselves with discipline alone engage in other means, such as generosity, too. In addition, there are “the four indirect intentions” (Skt. *abhiprāya*, Tib. *ldem dgongs*). Just like the Sanskrit and Tibetan words, the English term “intention” can be understood in many ways (see Ruegg 1985), which has led to different (mis)interpretations. Also, the Tibetan terms are often used in different

ways than the Sanskrit ones. As the examples for the different kinds of intention and indirect intention show, there is no consistency in what they refer to—it is not always just another meaning (as the content of an intention) or an intention per se, and there also are overlaps. In a general sense, “having something particular in mind” when making a statement often seems more correct. For details, see Broido 1984, Ruegg 1985, and Brunnhölzl 2010, 289–91.

1304. As already mentioned, according to Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé’s commentary on the Third Karmapa’s *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* (Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 1990, 133), this verse is from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*. As for the question whether the Yogācāra School teaches that some beings have no disposition to attain awakening at all (and what exactly “disposition” means in this context), there have been long-standing and intricate debates in Tibet. The Gelugpa School in particular answers this question in the affirmative and many modern scholars do so too. As mentioned before, unlike the primary meaning of the term *gotra* in the *Uttaratantra*, in Yogācāra texts it is not synonymous with buddha nature. Like the *Lañkāvatārasūtra*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* speaks about five categories of *gotra* (those of bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas, śrāvakas, those with uncertain *gotra*, and those without *gotra*). The *Lañkāvatārasūtra* identifies the last category with those who just follow their great desire (*icchāntika*) and reject the dharma, thus having eliminated all their roots of virtue and not attaining parinirvāṇa. The *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* follows this very common definition of *gotra* in general, which is “roots of virtue” (see also Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāṅgaṭīkā*, Yamaguchi 1934, 188). *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* III.4cd and its *Bhāṣyā* explain that *gotra* is that from which qualities arise and increase. Also the distinction between the naturally abiding (*prakṛtistha*) and the accomplished (*samudānīta*) or unfolding dispositions in this verse differs from how these terms are understood in the *Uttaratantra*, with the former’s being defined as what has the nature of being a support for further virtue (*prakṛti* can also mean “cause”) and the latter as what is thus supported. On *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* III.9 and III.11, the *Bhāṣyā* comments that accumulating roots of virtue is indispensable for acquiring a disposition, but once the bodhisattva disposition is acquired, it serves as the source of an infinite number of further roots of virtue. Thus, *gotra* in this sense refers to conditioned and multiple phenomena, whereas *gotra* in the sense of buddha nature is clearly unconditioned and single. The former sense is also evident from Sthiramati’s commentary (D4034, fols. 41b.6–43a.2), which says that beings have infinite *gotras*, all of which refer to some (conventional) nature of theirs, such as being an angry or passionate person, or liking sweet versus other tastes. Just as the possession of the *gotra* of desire functions as the cause for giving rise to desire but not for hatred, the three different *gotras* of the three yānas are indispensable for there being three yānas. As for *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* III.11, the *Bhāṣyā* explains that to be without disposition means to possess the nature of not attaining parinirvāṇa—either for a certain time (the first four kinds of beings in the verse) or forever (the last one). According to Sthiramati’s commentary (D4034, fols. 48a.4–49b.1), this refers to those who have the nature of not attaining parinirvāṇa (that is, buddhahood) for a certain time and those who have the nature of not attaining *any* kind of nirvāṇa for a certain time. He says that the first four pertain to those who do possess the bodhisattva disposition, but, by virtue of certain conditions, will temporarily (for many eons) not attain parinirvāṇa (that is, buddhahood). Among these, “those who are solely devoted to wrongdoing” are engaged in the five negative actions without interval. “Those who have completely destroyed the immaculate dharmas” are those who, under the influence of wrong spiritual teachers, have fallen into the wrong view

of nihilism, thus denying karma, the three jewels, and so on. “Those who lack the virtue conducive to liberation” have not gathered the complete accumulations of merit and virtue necessary to attain parinirvāṇa, but only the virtues for higher rebirths as gods and humans within saṃsāra. “Those who have inferior immaculate dharmas” have only gathered a fraction of the merit and wisdom necessary to attain parinirvāṇa. Thus, as long as these four do not fully remove their negative actions and wrong views and accumulate the complete accumulations of merit and virtue necessary to attain parinirvāṇa, they will not attain this state. As for those who will not attain any nirvāṇa, “lacking the cause” refers to lacking the roots of virtue and the disposition for any of the nirvāṇas of the three yānas because without such a disposition, they do not attain any of these three nirvāṇas. They do lack the nature of attaining nirvāṇa, just as the natures of stones and trees do not turn into something that has the nature of consciousness, such as minds and mental factors. Thus, in the first four cases, Sthiramati says, “lack of disposition” has only a pejorative sense, while “lacking the cause” means utter nonexistence because they absolutely do not attain nirvāṇa. However, considering the text’s (and the commentators’) understanding of “disposition” (roots of virtue), its explicit stance that all beings possess *tathāgatagarbha* (IX.37), and its statement that mind is natural luminosity, which is merely obscured by adventitious stains (XIII.18–19), being without *gotra* (*agotraka*; the text does not use *icchāntika*) forever is not equivalent to saying that some beings have no buddha nature or absolutely can never attain awakening. Rather, there are some beings who simply never acquire a “disposition” for actually entering any of the yānas in the sense of never acquiring any—or at least a significant—amount of virtue that qualifies as such a disposition (on the Sanskrit *atyantam* being used here in the temporal sense of “forever” rather than in its meaning “absolutely” and the consequences, see also d’Amato 2003, 126–27 and 132–35). In other words, all beings have the potential for buddhahood, but some just never actualize this potential even remotely, which is exactly why saṃsāra in general is said to be endless. This is basically also what RGVV on I.40–41 explains, using the term *gotra* in both the above way and also for buddha nature. Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāṅgaṭīkā* (Yamaguchi 1934, 55.19–56.6) on I.19a (“the emptiness of the primordial nature” among the sixteen emptinesses) juxtaposes the positions on there being three versus a single *gotra*, but takes all of them to be primordial: “As for [I.19a] ‘In order to purify the disposition,’ its emptiness is the emptiness of the primordial nature. The reason for this is that, [according to the *Bhāṣya*,] ‘disposition is the primordial nature.’ How so? ‘Because of having a nature of its own,’ which means to have a nature of its own from beginningless time that is not adventitious. Just as some [phenomena] in beginningless saṃsāra are sentient and some are insentient, here too, some [sets of] the six āyatanas represent the buddha disposition, some the śrāvaka disposition, and so on. The disposition is not accidental because it has been continuing since beginningless time [up through the present], just as the distinction between what is sentient and insentient. Others say that since all sentient beings are endowed with the tathāgata disposition, the disposition should be understood here in this way” (depending on how the Sanskrit here is reconstructed, “in this way” could also be read as “as suchness,” which would conform to the above-mentioned comments by Vasubandhu, Sthiramati, and Asvabhāva on *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* IX.37). Compare also CMW (480–81) that says that even those with great desire thrive through virtue (the cause for meeting a buddha in the future) because they have the naturally pure disposition. Without this pure disposition, they would not thrive through the light rays of the wisdom of the tathāgatas and virtue. This is not contradictory to some sūtras’ explaining that seeing saṃsāra as a flaw and nirvāṇa as a quality

does not occur in those with great desire, who have the disposition of absolutely not passing into nirvāṇa. For that explanation pertains to the time of those with great desire not being endowed with the four wheels, whereas at the time of their being struck by the light rays of the wisdom of the Tathāgata, their time of being endowed with the four wheels has come. GC (33.17–21) explains that “being without *gotra*” refers to being without the unfolding disposition, which is not made explicitly clear in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. However, it is not just the sheer lack of the unfolding disposition that is called “disposition.” Rather, the mere fact that everybody has the naturally abiding disposition does not mean that no one lacks the unfolding disposition. Since everybody who possesses a mind also possesses the naturally abiding disposition, they are said to possess the disposition. However, some Yogācāras take the statement that some beings have no disposition literally.

1305. The translation follows Schmithausen’s suggestion to understand °*guṇayuktasvabhāvataḥ* as a predicative ablative that qualifies “disposition of the victors” (*jinagarbhaḥ*) in I.45c. Takasaki 1966a (400ff.) already pointed out that verses I.30, 35, 42, and 45, though interrupted by several commentarial verses, are to be considered as a unit, with *jinagarbhaḥ* in I.45c being the subject that is common to all four verses. As mentioned above, the six topics of nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, and manifestation in these four verses are described in a similar way in verses IX.56–59 of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* (which are also found as concluding verses in the *Buddhabhūmisūtra*), where they pertain to the purity of the dharmadhātu as the common subject. As for Takasaki’s different rendering of I.42cd (“because of its nature of being endowed with properties indivisible [from it]”), it seems to correspond exactly to DP *dbyer med yon tan dang ldan pa’i / ngo bo nyid phyir*.
1306. This is how DP *mthu bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i yon tan dang ldan pa* unravels the compound *acintyaprabhāvagūṇayoga* (other possible readings are Takasaki’s “endowed with inconceivable and powerful virtues” or “endowed with inconceivable power and qualities”).
1307. That is, the purity of the dharmakāya, the attainment of buddha wisdom, and great compassion’s engaging all beings.
1308. VT (fol. 12v4) glosses “wisdom” as “the wisdom of the termination of contamination” and “stainlessness” as “the termination of contamination.”
1309. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation of MB *dipāloṣṇatāvārṇṇasya* [or °sā°] *dhamamālāśraye* to *dipālokoṣṇavarṇasādharmyaṃ amalāśraye* against J *dipālokoṣṇavarṇasya sādharmyaṃ vimalāśraye*.
1310. I follow MB *āloka* against J *jvāla*.
1311. DP omit “wisdom.”
1312. VT (fol. 12v5) glosses “the change of the foundation” as “[the contaminations] not even existing as latent tendencies.”
1313. VT (fol. 12v5) glosses “relinquished” as “changed (into something else)” (*parāvṛtti*).
1314. MB *tadubhayasyā°* against J *tadubhayā°*.
1315. J omits this word, but see MB *anāsravābhijñā°* and DP *zag pa med pa’i mngon par shes pa*.
1316. I follow MB *dharmadhātusamatāsamanvāgamo* (confirmed by DP *chos kyi dbyings dang mnyam pa nyid kyis ldan pa*) against J *dharmadhātusamanvāgamo*.
1317. Taishō 668, 467a.
1318. I follow MB °*tathatābhinnavṛttitaḥ* and DP *de bzhin nyid dbye’i ’jug pa las* against J °*tathatāvyaṭirekataḥ*. The translation follows Schmithausen’s suggestion to understand this compound as a predicative ablative (as in I.42) qualifying “the

disposition of the victors” (thus, closely corresponding in meaning to *°bhinnavṛttikaḥ* in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.59b). However, as Schmithausen remarks, RGVV interprets *vṛtti* as *pravṛtti* in the sense of the more or less unmistakable ways in which ordinary beings, bodhisattvas, and buddhas engage the tathāgata heart. Besides “manifestation” and “engagement,” both terms can also mean “behavior,” “activity,” and “function.” Further meanings of *vṛtti* include “mode of being,” “nature,” “state,” and “condition,” while *pravṛtti* can also mean “advancing” and “cognition.”

1319. This verse closely parallels the words and the meaning of *Madhyāntavibhāga* IV.12.
1320. I follow MB *tattvadarśinaḥ pṛthagjanasya* (confirmed by DP *de kho na ma mthong ba'i so so skye bo*), while J omits *tattvadarśinaḥ*.
1321. I follow Schmithausen's emendation of MB *tattvadarśinaviśuddhi°* to *tattvadarśanaviśuddhi°* (confirmed by DP *de kho na mthong ba rnam par dag pa*), while J omits *tattvadarśana°*.
1322. I follow Schmithausen's suggestion *prabhedanirdeśatvena* (which is supported by DP *dbye ba ston par*) against MA/MB *prabhedanirdeśādvena* and J *prabhedanirdeśād eva*. On RGVV's saying here that the remaining four topics (phases, all-pervasiveness, changelessness, and inseparability) are simply extensions of the sixth topic “manifestation,” see RGVV's statement at the beginning of explaining the ten topics (J26) that the threefold nature of the tathāgata heart (the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition) is “invariably taught in all the words [of the Buddha]” through these topics.
1323. DP omit “basic element.”
1324. I follow DP *'di drug gis ni bsdus pa yi / khams . . .* against J and MA/MB, thus replacing *samāsataḥ* by *samāsitaḥ*.
1325. I follow MB *nirdiṣṭo* against J *vidito*.
1326. Taishō 668, 467b.
1327. *Ibid.*, 467b.
1328. VT (fol. 12v6) glosses “[can]not be realized as being divisible” as “they do not part from a tathāgata.”
1329. The references to the number of verses about the changelessness of buddha nature in each one of its three phases are rather confusing here since the twelve verses I.52–63 on the phase of its being impure are followed by two further verses (I.64–65) that elaborate on them. The one verse about its phase of being both impure and pure is then I.66, which is followed by twelve more explanatory verses (I.67–78). Finally, the one verse about its phase of being completely pure is I.79, again followed by four commentarial verses (I.80–83).
1330. This refers to the ancient Indian cosmological model of worlds arising in space due to the four elemental spheres of wind, fire, water, and earth being stacked up in that order and thus supporting the upper spheres. As VT (fol. 13r1) confirms, the element of fire is not mentioned among the four elements in this text because fire is used to illustrate sickness, aging, and death, which destroy one's prior state of existence.
1331. Here, the text has *indriya*, which is always replaced by *āyatana* below.
1332. Given the example of space's being completely unaffected by what arises and ceases in it, I follow DP's negative before “afflicted” (the Sanskrit and C lack this negative).
1333. Kano (2006, 1) refers to Sasaki (1991) who traces the *Uttaratantra*'s teaching about the progressive arising of afflictions, karma, and the skandhas from improper mental engagement back to the *\*Abhidharmaprakaraṇapādaśāstra* (Taishō 1542, 702b), attributed to Vasumitra (second century). Sasaki also points out similar discussions found in certain mahāyāna sūtras, such as the *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, which is also important for the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV.

1334. This is the name of a chapter in the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchāsūtra*.
1335. DP “great seers” (*drang srong chen po*).
1336. J *kavi*, which makes no sense here. Takasaki suggests *chavi* (“colored”) as the better reading, translating it as “darkness.” VT (fol. 12v7) has *chadi* instead, glossed by *andhakāra* (both meaning “darkness”), and DP also read the corresponding *mun pa*.
1337. Skt. *mūlavissuddhā prakṛtiḥ*; DP “natural purity is the root” (*rang bzhin gyis rnam par dag pa ni rtsa ba'o*).
1338. I follow MA/MB *baliyān* (comparative of *balin*°) against J *balī yo*.
1339. DP omit “neither increasing.”
1340. This is literally *Ānguttara Nikāya* I.10.
1341. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation *yaś cāyoniso manaskāro* (confirmed by DP *tshul bzhin ma yin pa'i yid la byed pa gang yin pa*) of MA *paścā yoniśo* and MB *paścād yoniśo* against J *paścād yo 'yoniso manaskāro*. Thus, the text of the citation simply continues and Takasaki’s insertion “After this passage . . . follows” is obsolete.
1342. I follow MA °*visāmagryāṃ* (DP *dang bral na*) against J °*visāmagryā*.
1343. J omits “completely devoid of any root,” but MB has *mūlaparicchinna* (confirmed by DP *rtsa ba yongs su chad pa*).
1344. VT (fol. 13r1) glosses this as “the foundation of the nature of phenomena’s being completely pure by virtue of its having the nature of emptiness (*sūnyatārūpatvena dharmatāparisuddham mūlam*).”
1345. D148, fols. 320b.6–321a.7.
1346. Skt. *upasarga* (which can also mean “misfortune,” “trouble,” and “change occasioned by any disease”), DP *go(i) nad* (“infectious disease”), C “calamity.”
1347. I follow MA/MB *tadupamā* against J *ta upamā*.
1348. VT (fol. 13r1) glosses “new faculties” as “another existence [consisting of] the faculties of [physical] pleasure and suffering, mental pleasure, mental displeasure, equanimity, the [five] physical [sense faculties], the life [faculty], the mental [faculty], and the five [faculties] of confidence and so on (that is, vigor, mindfulness, samādhi, and prajñā).”
1349. D and D45.48 omit “does not age.”
1350. D45.48, fol. 274b.3–6.
1351. The translation of I.66cd follows Schmithausen’s rendering, which is preferable in terms of the meaning in this context. With Takasaki, one could also read these lines as “The intelligent, despite lacking the predicaments of birth and so on, assume their causes due to having given rise to compassion for the world” (this reading seems to be supported by DP *skye sogs phongs dang bral yang de yi rgyu* [text: *rgyus*] / *blo ldan 'gro la snying rje bskyed phyir bsten /*). VT (fol. 13r2) glosses *tannidānaṃ* as *jātiṃ*, which seems to suggest that birth is the cause of death, sickness, and aging, but this gloss does not indicate which one of the above two readings is preferable. Though the reading of Takasaki and DP is less likely, it could refer to the explanation just below in the *Sāgaramatiparipṛcchāsūtra* that bodhisattvas on the bhūmis deliberately retain weak forms of the afflictions, in particular, desire, (the causes of birth and so on) in order to be able to be reborn in saṃsāra to help sentient beings. However, these retained latencies of desire do not have the power to afflict the mind streams of such bodhisattvas, nor can they cause involuntary rebirth in saṃsāra. Still, they retain a connection to the beings in saṃsāra. Another way to say this is that the most refined form of passion is the passion to free sentient beings, which is nothing other than the great compassion of bodhisattvas.

1352. For lines I.67cd, I follow Schmithausen. However, the commentary interprets *jātiḥ* as “birth” and takes suffering to be a result of birth, which is in turn caused by karma and afflictions (thus taking these lines to mean “They lack this [suffering] because they lack being born through the power of karma and afflictions”). As Schmithausen points out, this interpretation is difficult to read into these two lines (in particular, the phrase *jātiḥ tadabhāvān* does not suggest “lacking birth”).
1353. I follow MA °*saṃyojanā hi bodhisattvāḥ* (supported by DP *byang chub sems dpa' rnamṣ ni . . . kun tu sbyor ba can*) against J *saṃyojanād dhi bodhisattvāḥ*.
1354. VT (fol. 13r3) glosses *aparikhedaḥ* as “unimpeded” with regard to maturing sentient beings.
1355. I follow MA *kuśalamūlabalādhānena* and MB *kuśalamūlabalādhādhanena* (dittography of *-dhā*) against J *kuśalamūlabalānvādhānena*.
1356. DP “merchant or householder” (*tshong dpon nam khyim bdag*).
1357. MB reads *matṛjñātayaḥ*, which accords with DP and the Chinese translations of this sūtra, while the Tibetan translation has \**mātrmitrajñāyataḥ*. MA *mātāpitṛjñātayaḥ* accords with C and is also found in VT (fol. 13r3), but the latter unravels this compound to mean “the relatives of father and mother (*mātāpitṛṇām jñātayaḥ*).” The translation follows Schmithausen, who prefers the reading of MA since *mātāpitṛ* can also mean “family.” As such, it does not have to include the father, who only appears later on the scene.
1358. I follow Schmithausen’s suggestion °*adhyālamba*° (supported by DP *'don pa*) against °*adhyāśaya*°.
1359. I follow MA *kaḥ punar artho draṣṭavyaḥ* (supported by DP *don gang yin par lta zhe na*) against J *kaḥ prabhando draṣṭavyaḥ* and MB *purartho*.
1360. I follow MA/MB *hanyate* (DP *gnod*) against J *lipyate*.
1361. D152, fols. 85b.5–86b.4.
1362. Compare the detailed discussion of bodhisattvas on the bhūmis deliberately retaining subtle portions of the afflictions in order to be able to take rebirth in saṃsāra for the welfare of sentient beings, while not being affected by these afflictions or saṃsāra, in the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 549–59, 589–90, and 596 and Brunnhölzl 2011b, 135–36).
1363. Against *yadā* in MB and J, but with Schmithausen, I follow MA *yathā* (P’ji *lta bar* [text: *ba’i*]) as the correlate of *tathā* in the text below.
1364. DP omit “created” in the preceding sentence and “Being thus created,” but the Sanskrit quote accords with D152.
1365. DP *gzhan du mi gyur ba’i chos*.
1366. DP *khong khro*.
1367. DP *khro bar mi gyur*.
1368. D152, fol. 85a.2–85b.5.
1369. D45.48, fol. 271b.2–3.
1370. DP omit “minds” (*sems*).
1371. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation of J *āsravaḥṣayābhijñābhimukhyo* (MB °*ābhimukhyām*) to *āsravaḥṣayābhijñābhimukhyād*.
1372. This is the sixth and most supreme of the six supernatural knowledges, which only a buddha possesses. Here, bodhisattvas on the sixth bhūmi are said to be very close to this knowledge.
1373. DP “man” (*mi*; Skt. *nara* instead of *nagara*).
1374. This example in the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra* (D45.47, fols. 241b.7–242.a5) describes a huge city free from suffering and with many pleasures, which can be reached



by several dangerous roads. A man with a single son hears of it, leaves his child behind, and traverses all these dangerous paths. However, when he sets one foot on the threshold of the gate of this city, while his other foot is still outside, he remembers his son. Overwhelmed by his fatherly love for him and the worry about his well-being, the man does not enter the city, but returns to fetch his son in order to provide its pleasures for him too. What follows in our text here is the explanation of the meaning of this example. VT also mentions this example here and says that the father stands for bodhisattvas, while his only son exemplifies all sentient beings.

1375. Ibid., fol. 242a.5–7. The passage in “[ ]” is from this sūtra (*de snying rje chen po'i sems skyes nas sems can thams cad yongs su bskyab pa'i phyir zag pa zad pa'i ye shes 'dris par byas pa las sems can rnam la lta bas phyir phyogs te / star log nas so so'i skye bo'i sa na yang kun du snang ngo /*). It seems that both the Sanskrit and DP are missing something here since the first part of this paragraph up through “in order to protect all sentient beings” is clearly an (unfinished) quotation, while the remainder is a further explanation of this quotation.
1376. DP “unattached” (*chags pa med pa*) instead of “unobstructed” (*thogs pa med pa*).
1377. As it stands, the text's sentence *sa mahākaruṇācittotpādena sarvasattvapariṭrāṇyās-ravakṣayajñāne parijayaṇi kṛtvā punar api suparikarmakṛtacetāḥ ṣaṣṭhyām asaṅga-prajñōtpādād āsravakṣaye 'bhimukhī bhavati* includes the above phrase, “by virtue of having generated the mind-set of great compassion, in order to protect all sentient beings . . .” Thus, this sentence reads as something like: “Having trained in the wisdom of the termination of contaminations by virtue of having generated the mind-set of great compassion, in order to protect all sentient beings, once again, by virtue of giving rise to unobstructed prajñā through their excellently purified mind, they come to face [the wisdom of] the termination of contaminations on the sixth [bhūmi].” However, given the above example and its explanation in the sūtra as well as the text's own explanations immediately above and below it, it appears to be unsuitable to connect “by virtue of having generated the mind-set of great compassion, in order to protect all sentient beings” with the cultivation of the wisdom of the termination of contaminations. Rather, it is to be connected with the fact that bodhisattvas do not enter this wisdom fully, but return to saṃsāra in order to help sentient beings.
1378. With de Jong, I follow DP *mya ngan las 'das pa la mngon du phyogs pa (nir-vāṇābhīmukhasya)* against J *nirvāṇavimukhasya*.
1379. I follow Takasaki's suggestion of *pratividhya* for MB and J *prativicya*.
1380. I follow MA *samāpattisamāpannaś* and DP *snyoms 'jug la . . . snyoms par zhugs pa yin* against *samāpattipratipannaś* in J and MB.
1381. I follow Takasaki's emendation *deśanārūpakāyābhyāṃ* of J *deśanyārūpakāyābhyāṃ*.
1382. “Daily behaviors” (*iryāpatha*) refers to standing, walking, sitting, and lying down, but the Sanskrit term can also refer to the observances of a religious mendicant.
1383. RYC (95) says that these four are listed in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*.
1384. DP mistakenly “The Immovable One” (*mi g.yo ba*).
1385. I follow Schmithausen's emendation °*samādhisuvyavasthitatvāt* (confirmed by DP *ting nge 'dzin la legs par gnas pa'i phyir*) of °*samādhiṣu vyavasthitatvāt* in J and MA/MB.
1386. With Schmithausen, I follow MB °*niryātasya* (DP *mthar phyin pa*) against J *niṣṭhāgatasya*.
1387. YDC (300–301) explains that bodhisattvas from the second through the seventh bhūmis are beyond all saṃsāric worlds through their prajñā but still engage in these worlds through their compassion without being tainted by them, just like a lotus growing in a pond is not tainted by its muddy ground or water. The minds of bodhisattvas

on the eighth bhūmi effortlessly engage in accomplishing the welfare of beings, just like a fire naturally burns up dry firewood. They also rest continuously in a meditative equipoise in which all characteristics have subsided because they have gained mastery over nonconceptual wisdom by virtue of the fundamental change of the afflicted mind. Bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi effortlessly and spontaneously accomplish the maturation of sentient beings. The distant cause of this is the power of their previous aspiration prayers up through the ninth bhūmi that they may be able to effortlessly accomplish the welfare of others. The close condition is that they are free from all conceptions of characteristics. From the perspective of the world, the manner in which bodhisattvas during the subsequent attainment of the tenth bhūmi mature sentient beings is equal to that of buddhas in terms of liberating beings from saṃsāra. However, in terms of their own welfare, they are not equal to buddhas—their realization and relinquishment compared to those of buddhas is like the amount of water in a hoofprint versus the amount in the ocean because they still have certain obscurations and seeds of latent tendencies. Also, in their accomplishing the welfare of others, they are equal to buddhas in terms of their enlightened activity's being effortless, being uninterrupted, and manifesting in all kinds of ways. However, they are not equal to buddhas in accomplishing the welfare of others in all respects because they are not able to confer the empowerment of great light rays that only buddhas can bestow.

1388. Takasaki translates “because it is endowed with inexhaustible properties” (Skt. *akṣyadharmayogataḥ*, DP *mi zad chos ldan phyir*), which is also how Tibetan commentaries usually interpret this phrase. However, the parallel construction of lines a, c, and d in the quote from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa*śūtra in the text below that teaches the same meaning as I.79 (as well as line d in the additional verse in DP) shows that *dharma* is to be understood as “nature” here too. Moreover, it makes more sense to say that the tathāgata element is permanent and unchanging because it has the nature of being inexhaustible rather than because its qualities are inexhaustible (which is also true but seems not to be the point here).

1389. DP *gnod*.

1390. I follow MB °*prabhāsvarāyām* (DP *'od gsal ba*) against J °*prabhāsvaratāyām*.

1391. DP “maturation” (*yongs su smin pa*).

1392. J *pade* is clearly a mistake for *dhātau* (see commentary in the text below).

1393. I follow Schmithausen and MB *tatraiṣām asaṃskṛte dhātau* against J *tad eṣām asaṃskṛtadhātau*.

1394. Here, DP insert the following two verses:

The meaning of being permanent is its character of not changing into anything other

Because it has the quality of being inexhaustible.

The meaning of being everlasting is its character of being a refuge

Because it is equal to the final end.

The meaning of being peaceful is its true nature of nonduality

Because it has the nature of being nonconceptual.

Being eternal has the meaning of being indestructible

Because it has the quality of being unfabricated.

Note that these two verses are inserted in an awkward place in DP since they are sandwiched between the sentence that ends in “according to the [*Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa*]śūtra” (*mdo ji lta ba bzhin shes par bya'o*) and the words “As it is said: . . .” (*ji skad du*), which indicate the beginning of the actual quote from that sūtra. Also, the two verses seem somewhat redundant because they are almost verbatim identical

to both *Uttaratantra* I.79 and the quote from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra* that follows them. GC (380) also notices the close similarity between the two verses and that sūtra quote and explicitly matches each of the two lines of these verses with the corresponding lines in the quote. In any case, Ut (DP) as well as all Tibetan commentaries consider these two verses to be part of the *Uttaratantra*.

1395. Taishō 668, 467a–b. DP's version of this passage reads: "Śariputra, this unchanging dharmakāya is permanent due to its true nature of being inexhaustible. Śariputra, this dharmakāya that is the everlasting refuge is everlasting due to equaling the end of time. Śariputra, this nondual dharmakāya is peaceful due to being nonconceptual. Śariputra, this indestructible dharmakāya is eternal due to its true nature of being uncreated."
1396. I follow MB *tathāgatadhātor* against J *tathāgatagarbhāsa*.
1397. D45.48, fol. 272a.7–272b.1.
1398. Skt. *prakṛteḥ* can be understood as an apposition to "disposition." It could also be read as "the nature of the disposition." DP "by nature" (*rang bzhin gyis*, though this could just be a common misprint for a genitive *gyi*).
1399. According to C, this quote is from a *Ṣaḍāyatanasūtra* or *Ṣaḍindriyārāśīsūtra* (neither the Pāli, nor the Tibetan, nor the Chinese canons contain sūtras of that name). Both the Pāli and the Chinese canons contain the *Ṣaḍāyatanavibhāṅgasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 137), *Mahāsaḍāyatanikasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 149), and *Ṣaḍāyatanasamyutta* (*Samyutta Nikāya* 35), but none of them contains this passage. It is however found in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara ed., 3.4–6; D4037, fol. 2b.4) and, almost identically, in the *Śrāvākabhūmi* (D4036, fol. 2a.2–3).
1400. There is a partly similar passage in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fols. 272b.7–273a.1).
1401. D100, fol. 283a.3.
1402. Taishō 668, 467a.
1403. D45.48, fol. 269a.2–3.
1404. *Ibid.*, fol. 272a.2–5.
1405. *Ibid.*, fol. 269a.1–2.
1406. With Schmithausen, I follow MA *sahābhisambodhāt* and DP *lhan cig mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pas* against J *mahābhisambodhāt*.
1407. Modern scholars usually do not consider this verse as part of the *Uttaratantra* but as part of RGVV. That this verse is not part of the *Uttaratantra* but a quote from some other text is suggested by the fact that it is followed by *iti* in the Sanskrit of RGVV and by the corresponding *zhes bya ba* in DP. By contrast, such is never the case for any of the verses of the *Uttaratantra* in RGVV. Still, RGVV provides some comments on this verse (as it does with certain other verses not from the *Uttaratantra*) and in its explanation of I.88–92. Maybe due to that or based on a different manuscript, Ut (DP) and all Tibetan commentaries consider this verse to be part of the *Uttaratantra*. For further comments on it, see CMW (491–92). According to C, this verse is from the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, but, as Takasaki already remarks, it is not found there. Maybe C was referring to a partly similar passage in that sūtra: "This [nirvāṇa] is liberation. Liberation is the experience that is most everlasting, immovable, blissful, and permanent. What is this liberation is the Tathāgata" (D120, fol. 78a.1). The *Āṅgulimāliyasūtra* (D213, fol. 189a.2) also contains two similar lines: "What is nirvāṇa is liberation. What is liberation is the Tathāgata."
1408. D45.48, fol. 264a.5.
1409. *Ibid.*, fol. 264a.5–264b.2. The text's compound *sarvāprameyācintyaviśuddhiniṣṭhāgataguṇasamanvāgatā* is not found in the sūtra, but its four components

*sarvāprameyācintyaviśuddhi*<sup>o</sup> are contrasted in four separate sentences with the lack of such qualities in śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.

1410. As Takasaki does, this could also be read as “have inseparable qualities” (which is also true), but, as already explained at length, the point here is that buddhahood and nirvāṇa are inseparable.
1411. This example is from the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchāsūtra* (D45.47, fol. 221a.6–221b.4).
1412. Skt. *pratiśrutya* can also mean “to hear” or “to promise.”
1413. VT (fol. 13v1) glosses *tadākārā* as *śūnyatākārā*, which relates to the other pāramitās, thus reading “the painters are said to be generosity . . . and so on, which have the aspect of that [emptiness].” DP *de rnam*s is obviously a misprint of *de rnam* as the equivalent of *tadākārā*.
1414. DP add a fifth line *de la mngon par sbyin rnam*s *kyis* between I.92c and I.92d, but Tibetan commentaries usually omit it too.
1415. I follow MA/MB *anutpattikadharmatā*<sup>o</sup> (confirmed by DP *mi skye ba'i chos nyid*) against J *anutpattikadharmā*<sup>o</sup> (“the dharma of nonarising”), though the latter is more common as a synonym for emptiness.
1416. DP “hundreds of thousands” (*brgya stong*).
1417. Beyond RGVV’s own brief comments on “the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects,” see appendix 4 for more details. GC (386.22–388.26) explains that, in the example of the painters, the canvas symbolizes the tathāgata heart, which has the characteristic of emptiness; the king, all buddhas; the king’s order, the twelve branches of the words of the buddhas; the painters, generosity and so on; the image of the king, the emptiness that is endowed with all supreme phenomena that are the fruitions of the means in their fully complete forms; and the painters receiving the canvas, the realization of the tathāgata heart due to the words of the buddhas. Since all phenomena that are the means are included in the six pāramitās, the coarse elements of this form of emptiness are complete in them. Prajñā is like the head because all knowable objects are viewed through the eye of superior insight. Vigor is like the hands because it collects all virtuous phenomena. Dhyāna and discipline are like the feet because one proceeds on the path with these two. Generosity is like the rich flesh of the body because it creates wealth. Patience is like the hue of the body because it beautifies. Here, the actual image of the king stands for the dharmakāya because it is inseparable from the canvas of the tathāgata heart. The reflection of this image on the canvas in a mirror represents the two rūpakāyas, which thus are only the nominal forms of a buddha. The factors of the means during the phase of the path (which resemble the painters) are the causes for making the image of the dharmakāya clearly manifest. Therefore, they are the cooperative conditions, while the substantial cause is nothing but the suchness with stains. What is to be made clearly manifest through these means are the qualities that abide in the basic element with stains and surpass the sand grains in the Gaṅgā in number. Thus, RGVV says that the four features of these qualities—being of all kinds, being innumerable, being inconceivable, and being stainless—are, in due order, attained on the eight bhūmi up through the buddhabhūmi. However, this is only said in terms of what is primary, but all these four features of the qualities exist already on the eighth bhūmi. This is similar to matching the ten pāramitās with the ten bhūmis by saying that generosity is the primary pāramitā on the first bhūmi and so on, while in fact all ten pāramitās exist on each bhūmi. According to GC, RGVV’s phrase “the samādhi of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects” refers to the wisdom of the pure bhūmis that is endowed with all aspects of qualities. “The door of that” consists of having terminated flaws through prajñā and having collected all factors of means through

compassion. Through having cultivated these, on the eighth bhūmi, bodhisattvas attain the dharma of nonarising. Therefore, the effortless operation of nonconceptual wisdom from the eighth bhūmi onward is attained through the preceding cultivation of the path that entails effort up through the seventh bhūmi.

1418. Based on DP *rnam pa*, I follow Takasaki's emendation of *kāraṇena* to *ākāreṇa*.
1419. DP omit "prajñā."
1420. With DP (*chags pa med pa thogs pa med pa'i ye shes kyi gzigs pa mnga ba'i de bzhin gshegs pa*), I take *asaṅgāpratihataprajñājñānadarśanam* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound qualifying *tathāgatatvam*.
1421. DP replaces "phenomena" with "prajñā." D45.48 omits this sentence.
1422. D45.48, fol. 267a.2–4. The words in "[ ]" are added from D45.48.
1423. These nine examples stem from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* (D258, fols. 248a.3–254b.3).
1424. I follow MA *tuṣeṣu sārāny* against J *tuṣesu sārāny*.
1425. DP "lowly" (*ngan ma*).
1426. Skt. *prāṇi* (lit. "living beings" or "animals").
1427. With Schmithausen, I follow MA *°strīrūpa°* against J *°strīduḥkha°* and take *°jvalanābhitaptaprthivīdhātu°* as a unit, which is also confirmed by VT (fol. 13v2) that relates *jvalanābhitaptam* to *prthivīdhātuḥ*, saying that *jvalanābhitaptam* refers to heated gold and *prthivīdhātuḥ* to the earth that covers that gold. However, DP read "a lowly woman tormented by the blaze of suffering, and the element of earth" (*sdug bsngal 'bar bas mngon par gdungs pa'i bud med sa yi khams*).
1428. I follow Schmithausen in linking *°vimalaprakhyah* with *sa dhātuḥ paraḥ* and not with *°ratnabimba°* ("precious statue" in VI.98d). DP read "the stainless supreme basic element resembles . . ." (*dang dri med khams mchog mtshungs pa nyid*).
1429. In the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, this example occurs twice. The introduction of the sūtra describes in detail how the Buddha miraculously manifests in the sky thousands of fragrant opened lotus flowers with buddhas sitting upon them, emitting light. These lotuses blossom and fade at the same time, exuding a foul smell, but the buddhas still remain within them without a stain. In the sūtra's section of the nine examples proper, this example is presented as it is here in the *Uttaratantra*. For details of the differences between the nine examples as presented in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Uttaratantra*, see Zimmermann 2002, 105–44.
1430. With Schmithausen, I follow MA *suvarṇam asmīn idam agraratnam* (supported by DP *'di na yod pa'i gser / rin chen mchog 'di*) against *suvarṇam asmīn navam agraratnam* in J and MB.
1431. DP read "virtuous" (*dge ba*) for *śubha*, which can also mean "beautiful," "pleasant," "good," "auspicious," "prosperous," "pure," and "eminent."
1432. DP *'thon*.
1433. It may seem that this example suggests a growing process of the tathāgata heart, just as a germ or a sprout gradually grows into a tree, which entails the need for supporting conditions such as water and sunlight. However, as Zimmermann (2002, 62–64) shows, the explanation of this example in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* does not understand this to be the primary thrust of the example but rather emphasizes the imperishable nature of the seed and the fact that the result (the tree) is already contained in the seed, both being of the same nature. Also, conditions such as virtue do not produce buddhahood but only serve as conducive factors for its revelation. The same goes for the simile of a cakravartin in the womb of a poor woman. The emphasis is on the nature of a cakravartin's being unchanging, whether still being in the womb or being a grown-up person, while the growth process of the embryo is not discussed. The stress lies on the stark

contrast between the destitute and ugly woman and the glory of the cakravartin king inside her. In addition, the terminology (such as *sugatakāya*, *tathāgata*, *tathāgatadhātu*, and *dharmatā*) used in the explanation of these two examples is the same as in all the other examples and does not suggest any kind of growing or ripening process. That is, the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* throughout presents the model of the tathāgata heart with its qualities being revealed as opposed to any kind of gradual development. As Zimmermann (2002, 86–87) suggests, the reformulation of the example of the germ growing into a tree in the *Uttaratantra* could have been due to the concern that the original example's statement that the result (the tree) is already present in the seed comes too close to the position of *satkāryavāda* as espoused by the Sāṃkhya School, which is usually rejected by Buddhists as a form of eternalism. That such a concern was definitely present among at least some readers and commentators of the *Uttaratantra* is evident from the long-lasting and sometimes vicious debates in Tibet about whether a literal understanding of the teachings on buddha nature means falling into a Hinduist view.

1434. In the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, a man traveling on a dangerous path would wrap his golden buddha statue in a tattered garment to hide it from the sight of robbers, but then the statue in that garment would fall by the roadside until someone with the divine eye picked it up and paid homage to it.
1435. Skt. *ātmabhāvam*, DP *ngos po nyid*. As mentioned above, in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* (D258, fol. 253a.1–2), the Buddha says that a tathāgata's body like his own dwells in all sentient beings, even in animals.
1436. I follow MA *tiryakṣv apy avalokya* (confirmed by DP *dud 'gro la yang gzigs nas*) against J *tiryakṣu vyavalokya*.
1437. In India, this means abandoned by one's husband or being a widow.
1438. DP lit. "by the womb" (*mngal gyis*). However, as the next verse shows, *garbha* here clearly refers to the embryo of the cakravartin.
1439. VT (fol. 13v4) glosses "impure sentient beings" as "those who engage in wrongdoing" (*pāpācārāḥ*).
1440. VT (fol. 13v4) glosses *sannāthāḥ* as *santaś cāmī nāthās ca*, while DP only have *mgon bcas* (corresponding to *sanātha*).
1441. Skt. *sāntam*, DP *zhi ba*. This means that the molten gold has cooled down and has become solid.
1442. With Schmithausen, I follow MA *saṃchedayed* (corresponding to DP *sel bar byed*) against J *saṃcodayed* (the same goes for *saṃchedayen* and *saṃchedayaty* against *saṃcodayen* and *saṃcodayaty* in I.126).
1443. I follow MA/MB *prahāravidhibhiḥ* against J *prahāravidhitāḥ*. "Strokes" refer to the strokes with a chisel or hammer (DP *brdeg spyad*) to remove the clay mold from the golden statue inside.
1444. With Schmithausen, I follow MA and MB *asambaddhakleśakoṣeṣv* against J *asambaddham kleśakoṣeṣv*.
1445. In P, everything from here up through the comments on I.130–31 is missing; the text resumes with I.132. The missing passage is inserted out of place on fols. 114b.6–115b.6. Note that among the nine examples in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, five are likewise found in other sūtras and three more are at least alluded to. The analogy of a destitute woman carrying a cakravartin in her womb also appears in the *Ratnakūta*; the example of a treasure below the house of a poor man, in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*; and the similes of a piece of pure gold in a place full of filth, impoverished people living above a treasure beneath their house, a golden statue in rags, and a golden statue within a clay mold, in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, in

- one of its descriptions of *tathāgatagarbha*, alludes to both the first example (as found in the introduction of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*) and the seventh example (a precious jewel's being wrapped in a filthy garment). Though illustrating something else, the *Mahāmeghasūtra* refers to winter rice and so on (kernels in their husks) as not yet fulfilling the benefit of beings and the fruits of a palm tree, a mango tree, and sugar cane (the same enumeration as in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*) having not yet become a tree.
1446. *Samyutta Nikāya* III.151.22–23, 151.31–32, and 152.8–9.
1447. DP “path” (*lam*).
1448. Note that I.132 is preceded solely by this lone word “these” and that lines I.132cd correspond literally to lines I.131ab. This is why Johnston suggested that I.132 is not an actual verse, but just a part of the commentary on I.131ab, while the following paragraph explains I.131cd.
1449. DP have these two sentences in reverse order.
1450. DP “Just as an unknown treasure is not obtained due to its gems being obscured, so the self-arisen in people [*skye la* is difficult to construct] is obscured by the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance” (*ji ltar nor ni bsgribs pas na / mi shes gter mi thob pa ltar / de bzhin skye la rang byung nyid / ma rig bag chags sa yis bsgribs /*).
1451. Against Takasaki and DP (*rnam par smin pa bzhin*) understanding “*vat* in *vipākavat* as “like,” I follow de Jong’s suggestion of taking *vipākavat* as a possessive adjective relating to *jñānam*. Thus, the nonconceptual wisdom mentioned here seems to refer to the wisdom on the last three bhūmis that emerges from the stains of the preceding seven bhūmis, just as an embryo emerges from the womb.
1452. DP omit “wisdom.”
1453. DP “basic element” (*kham*s).
1454. This means that the Buddha’s words or scriptures are not regarded as outer matter, but as nothing but mental appearances, that is, the aspects of a being’s mind that appear—under the influence of a buddha’s dharmakāya—as the objects of the subjective cognitive aspect of that mind. This notion is commonly found in Yogācāra texts and, in particular, many commentaries on the *Abhisamayālamkāra*. For example, Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāṅgāṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 4.7–10; D4032, fol. 190a.4–5) explains the nature of a treatise (Skt. *śāstra*) as follows: “A treatise consists of the cognizances that appear as the collections of names, words, and letters. Or a treatise consists of the cognizances that appear as the special sounds (or terms) that cause one to attain supramundane wisdom. How do cognizances guide one or express [something]? The cognizances of the listener arise due to the cognizance of the guide and explainer” (for variant readings of this passage in D4032 and Pandeya 1999, see note 1875). Haribhadra’s *Abhisamayālamkāraṅlōkā* (Wogihara ed., 7) states about the scriptural *prajñāpāramitā*, “This teaching [of *prajñāpāramitā*], on the level of the seeming, has the character of cognition’s appearing as words and letters.” Compare also the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 23 and 33), which defines the dharma wheel of scriptures as “the cognizance of a disciple that appears either in the form of a buddha’s speech, whose main topics are either the causes, the results, or the nature of nirvāṇa, or, the cognizance that appears as the collections of names, words, and letters that serve as the support for such speech” and the scriptural *prajñāpāramitā* as “the cognizance that appears as assemblies of names, words, and letters, and is suitable to be observed in the disciples’ consciousnesses that entail dualistic appearances.”
1455. These are the first six of the twelve types of the sūtrayāna teachings of the Buddha (“the twelve branches of the Buddha’s speech”), the remaining six being legends,

narratives, reports on the Buddha's former lives, extensive discourses, discourses on marvelous qualities, and ascertaining discourses.

1456. The Sanskrit *aṅḍa* ("egg") is hard to make sense of here (it is probably used in analogy to *aṅḍakośa* in I.136d, but the result would still be a mixed metaphor of a kernel in an eggshell). Therefore, I follow the Tibetan *sbubs* (corresponding to *kośa*). However, given the previous example of one taste, C's reading "kernels of different tastes" also makes good sense.
1457. It could be argued that *dhātu* here takes up that term as it is used in I.146c and elsewhere, where it clearly refers to the basic element of sentient beings. See however the next sentence in which *dhātu* means "realm."
1458. IX.15 (the translation follows the Sanskrit of the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*; RGVV has a few slight variations). This verse is the fourth of six verses in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (IX.12–17) that explain buddhahood as being "the fundamental change." According to Sthiramati's *Sūtrālamkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, fol. 113b.5–117a.6), IX.12 states that this fundamental change is endowed with the supreme qualities of the pure dharmas (mirrorlike wisdom, the wisdom of equality, discriminating wisdom, all-accomplishing wisdom, the pure dharmadhātu, and all the buddha qualities such as the ten powers). This fundamental change is obtained through the supramundane nonconceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise seeing all phenomena as being empty and the pure mundane wisdom of subsequent attainment seeing all phenomena as illusions and mirages. IX.13 speaks of the superiority of the fundamental change of buddhahood even over the fundamental changes of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas since they do not have compassion for all beings and do not relinquish all cognitive obscurations. Therefore, buddhas feel compassion even for śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. IX.14 plays on the word "fundamental change" by adding ten different prefixes to the Sanskrit word *vṛtti* in *āśrayaparivṛtti*, most of which highlight the dynamic character of this fundamental change called "buddhahood." Thus, it is a "pro-change" because it is always engaged in the welfare of all sentient beings. It is a "superchange" since it is the best of all phenomena, superior to any mundane phenomena and even to supramundane śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. It is a "nonchange" because it is the changeless result that consists of the three causes of afflictions (the presence of objects, improper mental engagement, and not having relinquished the latencies of both) not being active anymore. It is a "counterchange" since it does not engage in afflictions or nonvirtue, and counteracts selfish actions. It is an "ongoing change" since it functions all the time (once this fundamental change has occurred, its operation will never decline until the end of saṃsāra) and engages in all the remedies for afflicted phenomena. It is a "dual change" because it first engages in demonstrating full awakening and finally engages in demonstrating nirvāṇa. It is a "nondual change" because, ultimately, it neither engages in saṃsāra nor in nirvāṇa. For by virtue of being endowed with prajñā and compassion, it has relinquished what is conditioned and what is unconditioned, respectively. It is an "equal change" because as far as merely being liberated from all afflictions goes, it is equal in śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and buddhas. It is a "special change" because it is superior to the fundamental changes of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas by virtue of having relinquished the cognitive obscurations and possessing the qualities such as the ten powers. It is an "omnipresent change" because it engages all sentient beings through the three yānas in an omnipresent way. Also, since it is endowed with all these supreme qualities (the uncontaminated dharmas that are the remedies for all afflictions), it operates in a very vast manner. In particular, Sthiramati comments on IX.15 say that just as space is omnipresent in all kinds of phenomena in the three times, the uncontaminated



- dharmadhātu exists in and pervades the mind streams of all sentient beings. This is to be understood here in terms of buddhas' experiencing and accepting all beings as not being different from themselves in a perfect manner—"experiencing" here means realizing the equality of themselves and all beings. Buddhahood has the nature of the dharmadhātu, and once the characteristic of the omnipresence of the dharmadhātu is realized on the first bhūmi, a state of mind of perceiving oneself and all beings as equal is attained. Through progressively cultivating the realization of this equality throughout the remaining bhūmis, at the time of buddhahood, this realization is completely perfected in an all-encompassing manner. This is what is called "being omnipresent in the hosts of beings." IX.16 answers the qualm why sentient beings do not realize the dharmadhātu and do not see buddhas despite the dharmadhātu's always existing and being omnipresent in them. Just as the moon is not seen in vessels that are without water or broken, the mind streams of beings are either like an empty vessel (due to not being filled with the accumulations of merit and wisdom) or their mind streams are impaired (due to being full of afflictions and evil deeds). Despite such beings having the nature of a buddha, they do not see it. Naturally, the reverse applies for beings whose mind streams are endowed with merit and wisdom. Thus, IX.17 says that just as fire burns in places with sufficient fuel but does not burn in places without, buddhas appear and teach when and wherever there are beings to be guided who have gathered sufficient degrees of the fuel that consists of the accumulations of merit and wisdom, but they pass into nirvāṇa when and wherever such beings are not present.
1459. As Schmithausen remarks, the *aḥ* between *vikāra*<sup>o</sup> and *ataḥ* are for the most part illegible. I follow his suggestion of a possible reading *vikāran na bhajate* (which would require Tib. *bsten* instead of DP *ston*).
1460. As mentioned above, "having arrived at [pure] suchness" or "suchness' having become pure" (lit. "having arrived at purity") is one of the meanings of "tathāgata" (as a shortened compound of *tathatā* and *āgata*).
1461. As for this partly corrupt sentence (*sa ca sarveṣāṃ api . . . prakṛtinirviśiṣṭānāṃ sarvāgantukamalaviśuddhim āgatas tathāgata . . .*), I follow Schmithausen's emendation (*sā* [MB] *ca sarveṣāṃ api . . . prakṛtinirviśiṣṭāpi sarvāgantukamalaviśuddhim āgatā tathāgata . . .*) based on DP (*de yang . . . sems can thams cad la yang rang bzhin khyad par med du zin kyang / . . . rnam par dag pa la* [text: *las*] *gyur pa de bzhin gshegs pa . . .*), whose structure moreover accords with a part of *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* IX.37 (*sarveṣāṃ aviśiṣṭāpi tathatā śuddhim āgatā tathāgatatvam . . .*) quoted in the text below.
1462. As already implied here, at the beginning of the second chapter (awakening), it will be explained that the tathāgata heart is an equivalent of suchness with stains, while buddhahood or tathāgatahood is equivalent to suchness without stains.
1463. D100, fol. 297a.5–6. In D100, the first sentence reads: "The Tathāgata knows that the grasping at propounding a self is the root." Right before this, the sūtra speaks of four types of grasping, with the grasping at propounding a self being the most fundamental one.
1464. IX.37. Besides pointing to the changelessness of suchness, the three elements in this verse (suchness without difference, tathāgata, and heart)—can also be seen as paralleling the three elements in *Uttaratantra* I.28 (suchness, dharmakāya, and disposition).
1465. I follow DP *mdzes pa* as the meaning of *śubha* here, which seems to fit best with the two reasons in lines I.151cd.
1466. With Schmithausen, I follow MB *gotrasadbhāvārtham adhikṛtya* (supported by DP *rigs yod pa'i* [don gyi] *dbang du byas te*) against J *gotrasabhāvārtham adhikṛtya*.

1467. D258, fol. 253b.5–6. The canonical versions of the sūtra literally say, “Now, the tathāgata disposition has entered sentient beings and exists within them, but these sentient beings do not realize this.” As Zimmermann (2002, 137) notes, a paracanonical translation of the sūtra from Bathang (which is closer to the Sanskrit as quoted in RGVV here) and the Chinese translation by Amoghavajra read “element” (*dhātu*) instead of “disposition” (*gotra*). As for “has entered,” in accordance with what the sūtra says a few lines down, *bzhugs* (“abides”) needs to be emended to *zhugs*. According to Zimmermann, the expression that the tathāgata element has “arisen” in or “entered” sentient beings is probably influenced by this passage’s being found in the context of the example of a cakravartin in the belly of a destitute woman, which says that life has entered (*zhugs*) the womb of that woman. The phrases, “exists . . . in the form of their heart (or in the form of an embryo)” (RGVV) and “exists within them” (DP: *khong na yod*; Bathang: *snying po la gnas pa*) render the same compound *garbhagata*. As Zimmermann (ibid., 58–60) points out, both meanings are possible from the point of view of Sanskrit grammar, though the latter is the more reasonable one for an unbiased reader (as confirmed by the Tibetan versions of the sūtra). This is also indicated by the corresponding verse 1.123 in the *Uttaratantra*, which speaks of the cakravartin’s abiding *within* the womb (*garbhāntarasthe*) and the tathāgata heart’s abiding *within* sentient beings themselves (*svātmāntarastheṣu*) as their protector. However, RGVV’s point here is to identify *tathāgatagarbha* with *dhātu*, which is then said to be the cause for attaining buddhahood. Therefore, *garbha* can here mean only “heart” (or embryo), and it is in support of this meaning that RGVV quotes the passage from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*.
1468. D45.48, fol. 275a.3–4. D45.48 reads: “Bhagavan, this tathāgata heart is the heart of the supreme dharmadhātu. It is the heart of the dharmakāya. It is the heart of the supramundane dharmas. It is the heart of the naturally pure dharmas.”
1469. Ibid., fol. 274b.2–4. D45.48 reads: “Therefore, Bhagavan, the tathāgata heart is the abode, support, and foundation of the [qualities] that do not abide as being different [from it], are connected [to it], and are known to be liberated from their cocoon (*sbubs nas grol ba’i shes pa can*). Bhagavan, thus, the tathāgata heart is also the abode, support, and foundation of the external conditioned phenomena that are not connected [to it], do not abide as being different [from it], and are not known to be liberated (*shes pa grol ba ma lags pa*).”
1470. Ibid., fol. 274a.6–7. D45.48 reads: “Bhagavan, if the tathāgata heart exists, the word ‘saṃsāra’ is reasonable” (*’khor ba zhes mchis na ni tshig de rigs pa lags so*). DP has “Bhagavan, if the tathāgata heart exists, it is labeled with the word ‘saṃsāra’” (*de la ’khor ba zhes tshig gis btags pa lags so*).
1471. Ibid., fol. 274b.5.
1472. I follow Schmithausen’s emended reading *dharmakāyavipulas tathatā*<sup>o</sup> of MB (*dharmakāyavipulas tastatathatā*), which corresponds to DP *chos kyi sku ltar rgya che ba*, against J *dharmakāyavipralambhas tathatā*<sup>o</sup>.
1473. DP “the Tathāgata” instead of “suchness.”
1474. According to C, J emends MB *niravaśeṣayogena saṃvadyatanatiṣṭhā* to *niravaśeṣayogena sattvadhātāv iti*. However, I follow DP *khyad par med pa’i tshul du yod do / zhes bya ba’i bar ni* (corresponding to *nirviśeṣayogena saṃvidyata iti yāvat*).
1475. D258, fol. 248b.6. As Ruegg (1969, 330–31) points out, the same statement is found in several other sūtras with regard to impermanence (*Aṅuttara Nikāya* I.286), dependent origination (*Samyutta Nikāya* II.25, 60, and 124; *Dīgha Nikāya* I.190; and the *Śālistambasūtra* [Sanskrit reconstruction in N. Aiyasvami Sastri, *Ārya Śālistamba Sūtra* (Adyar: Theosophical Society, 1950), 47]), and the nature of phenomena or suchness.

As for the latter, the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* (Rahder ed., 65) says, “No matter whether bud-dhas have arrived in the world or not, [this] is just what abides as the true nature of phenomena” and the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines* (Sanskrit edition by Nalinaksha Dutt, Calcutta Oriental Series 28 [Calcutta, 1934], 198; D9, vol. ka, fol. 313a.6–313b.1) states, “No matter whether tathāgatas have appeared or whether tathāgatas have not appeared, the true state of phenomena, the nature of phenomena, the dharmadhātu, the flawless dharma, suchness, unerring suchness, suchness that is never other, and the true end abide just as they are.” Very similar statements are also found in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* in one hundred thousand and eight thousand lines, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (for page references, see Ruegg 1969), and the *Ratnameghasūtra* (D231, fol. 69a.4).

1476. I follow de Jong’s emendation *yayaivam* (supported by DP *gang gis de lta bu*) of J *pariyāyaḥ evam*. In the immediately following phrase, I follow MA reading twice *evaitat* against J reading twice *eva tat*.
1477. As already mentioned, GC (432.21–23) explains that the nature of phenomena is called a “reasonable principle” (*yukti*) because it is justified that this nature and its bearers definitely are in accordance and are never in discordance. It is a “joining method” (*yoga*) because it causes the bearers of this nature to be joined with it. It is a “means” (*upāya*) because the mind will be realized through it.
1478. DP *sems nges par rtogs pa dang / sems yang dag par shes pa la ni / chos nyid kyi rtogs pa dang / chos nyid kyi rigs pa yin no*. VT (fol. 13v7–14r1) glosses “realization” (*saṃ-jñāpanam*) as *prabodhaḥ*.
1479. D45.48, fol. 275a.2–3.
1480. Skt. *vidhura* can also mean “destitute of” or “devoid of,” but DP read *gal ba*.
1481. MB has the correct form *pravarttayeyuḥ* instead of J *pravarteyuḥ*.
1482. J omits “which is like that gem” (*maṇivad*), but MB and DP (MA *maṇaṇivad*) contain this phrase.
1483. I follow MA *bhūta* instead of J *bhūtā*.
1484. D120, fol. 33a.4–33b.2. The text of D120 has several variant readings, but none is of significant difference.
1485. This could also be read as “the principle of the tathāgata heart’s being the [actual] meaning of emptiness.” DP has “the tathāgata heart as the principle of emptiness” (*stong pa nyid kyi tshul du de bzhin gshegs pa’i snying po*).
1486. “Whose minds are distracted from emptiness” translates the Sanskrit compound *sūnyatāvikiṣṭacitta*, which contains an intriguing ambiguity since it can be understood as a mind distracted by emptiness, toward emptiness, or from emptiness. The primary reading “distracted from emptiness” is supported by the occurrence of *sūnyatārthanayād bahiṣ cittam̐ vikṣipyate* in the text below and the consistent rendering *stong pa nyid las sems rnam par g.yengs pa* in DP (P once has *stong pa nyid la*). However, the comments here show that this compound also contains the meaning “distracted by or toward emptiness.” For the point is that beginner bodhisattvas are distracted by a wrong understanding of emptiness toward a wrong notion of emptiness (either misconceiving it as something that destroys phenomena or as some separate reified entity to be focused on deliberately) and thus are distracted from the correct understanding of emptiness, which is explicitly identified here as the principle of what emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart (explained in detail in the comments on I.154–155 in the text below). This ambiguity is reflected in the quotations of the passages from RGJV that contain this Sanskrit compound in other Tibetan texts and translations, which (in a rather inconsistent manner) take this compound to have either one of the

above meanings (respectively using *la*, *las*, or *kyis* after *stong pa nyid*; as mentioned already, the *Lañkāvatārasūtra* has *kyis*). GC (438.26–439.20) comments on RGVV's paragraph on "those who are distracted from emptiness" as follows. In general, among the four kinds of bodhisattvas mentioned above (those who have generated bodhicitta for the first time, those who have entered bodhisattva conduct, irreversible bodhisattvas, and those obstructed from buddhahood by only a single lifetime), it is impossible for the latter three to be distracted from emptiness. However, since such is possible for those who have generated bodhicitta for the first time, they are called "those who have newly entered the [mahā]yāna." Still, only some of them are distracted from emptiness because there are also those beginner bodhisattvas who first ascertain the ultimate and then generate bodhicitta through the power of the compassion that arises from that ascertainment. Therefore, the *Niyatāniyatagatimudrāvātārasūtra* explains that there are "the bodhisattvas proceeding as if by ox-cart" who, after having generated bodhicitta, rely on the śrāvakayāna for their practice. The ones who have that disposition are the first kind of those who are distracted from emptiness. Through not directing their minds toward phenomenal identitylessness, when they attain nirvāṇa, they apprehend the impermanence in terms of the previously existing reality of the origin of suffering having discontinued and perished to be nirvāṇa. They also assert the state that is characterized by suffering's not arising henceforth to be nirvāṇa and emptiness. The second kind of those who are distracted from emptiness are described by the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*'s speaking of bodhisattvas on the level of engagement through aspiration who hold that the characteristics of formational phenomena and the characteristics of the ultimate are different or the same (as for the term "engagement through aspiration," in its more general sense, as is the case here, it refers to both the paths of accumulation and preparation, while its more narrow sense refers to the path of preparation alone). Thus, to assert that what is called "emptiness"—the object that is to be directly realized and with which one should familiarize in a deliberate way—exists as an entity that is different from form and so on means to assert that the characteristics of formational phenomena and the ultimate are different. Since those who hold the characteristics of formational phenomena and the ultimate to be the same apprehend what is not emptiness as emptiness, they too are implicitly included in those who are distracted from emptiness. As for the phrase, "through focusing on emptiness" in RGVV, it is through focusing on emptiness as a (real) entity that the second kind of those who are distracted from emptiness assert emptiness as the door of emptiness and resort to that emptiness. By contrast, Chaba Chökyi Sengé's commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (Phyva pa chos kyi seng ge 2006, fol. 63b.5–8) says, "The principle of emptiness—the tathāgata heart—refers to being merely empty of an object to be negated that is something to be eliminated (*rnam par bcad pa*). Those who deviate from this regard it as something that is positively delimited (*yongs gcod*)." Thus, he continues to identify bodhisattvas of the first type who have newly entered the mahāyāna as being the Mere Mentalists. He elaborates that "'the destruction of [previously] really existing phenomena at a later time' refers to emptiness [in the sense of] the ultimately existent impure dependent [nature's] having been destroyed later through having been eliminated and thus having become nonexistent. As for this being asserted as nirvāṇa, it is claimed to be the stainless purity [that is the perfect nature]. To assert this as the door to liberation [that is emptiness] means that it is claimed to be the ultimate." Then, Chaba identifies bodhisattvas of the second type who have newly entered the mahāyāna as those who assert emptiness as the emptiness of one thing's not existing in another one. Regarding this as "what is to be realized and with which one should familiarize" refers to the time of the result and

the path, respectively. “Form” consists of the duality of apprehender and apprehended. “An entity that is distinct from form” refers to the self-aware mind that is empty of that duality, which is an implicative negation—the emptiness that is the ultimate dependent nature. “Those who resort to emptiness” are those who claim this limited emptiness.

1487. DP read “What is the tathāgata that is expressed as the principle of emptiness here?” (*de la stong pa nyid kyi tshul du brjod pa de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po gang zhe na*).

1488. This verse represents one of the most famous and often-cited stanzas in the literature of the mahāyāna, being essential in both the *Uttaratantra* and the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (V.21). As for its origin, Gampopa’s *Ornament of Liberation* (Lha rje bsod nams rin chen 1990, 289) says that it is found in the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchāsūtra* (D148), but I could not locate it there. Instead, except for the third line, this verse is found in the *Śrīmahābalatantra* (P36, fol. 34a.6–7). To provide a bit more of the context of these three lines in that tantra, the lines immediately preceding and following them are as follows:

Once identitylessness in phenomena is realized,  
Mind will be realized.

Everything is filled with the flavor of being empty—  
This is called “mahāsukhakāya.”

It is prajñāpāramitā—

In this, there is nothing to be removed

And not the slightest to add on.

Who sees true reality is liberated.

Be it a single disposition, three dispositions,

Five dispositions, a hundred dispositions, and so on,

In this true reality, there is no difference.

Once you have found an ox,

You don’t search for the traces of that ox.

Likewise, if you have found the true reality of mind,

You don’t search for any thoughts at all.

Note that the last four lines also represent a very common example in the Mahāmudrā tradition. To my knowledge, besides the *Śrīmahābalatantra*, the *Uttaratantra*, and the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (and the commentaries on the latter two), there are at least twenty-one further Indian works in which this verse appears: Buddhaghoṣa’s *Sumaṅgalavisāraṇī* I.12 (in Pāli, attributes the contents to the Buddha); Nāgārjuna’s *Kāyatrāyastotranāmasyavivaraṇa* (D1124, fol. 72a.3), *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayakārikā* (D3836, verse 7; some hold that it does not belong to the original Sanskrit stanzas, being added later, but it is found in this text as it appears in the Tibetan canon as well as in an eighth-century Tibetan manuscript from Dunhuang [PT 769]), and *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayavyākhyā* (D3837, fol. 149a.1–2); Aśvaghōṣa’s *Saundarananda* (paraphrase XIII.44) and *Śuklavidaśana* (a summary of the *Śālistambasūtra* that begins with this verse); the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara ed., 48; prose paraphrase); Nāgamitra’s *Kāyatrāyāvātāramukha* (D3890, paraphrased as verse 106); Jñānacandra’s *Kāyatrāyāvṛtti* (D3891, fol. 30b.5–6); Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 23; D4032, fol. 203a.6–7); Līlāvajra’s *Nāmasaṃgītiṭīkā* ad VI.5 (D2533, fol. 54a.5–6; attributing it to Nāgārjuna); the *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda* (D. T. Suzuki, *Aśvaghōṣa’s Discourse on “The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna”* [Chicago: Open Court, 1900], 57; prose); Candrahari’s *Ratnamālā* (D3901, fol. 71b.3); Jñānaśrimitra’s *Sākārasiddhi* (in Jñānaśrimitra, *Jñānaśrimitranibandhāvalī*, 487.16–17) and *Sākārasaṃgraha* (II.53); Yamāri’s *Pramāṇavārttikālaṃkāraṭīkāsuparīsuddhā* (D4226, vol. me, fol. 3a.7–3b1);

Maitrīpa's (or Nāgārjuna's) *Caturmudrānīscaya* (in Maitrīpa, *Advayavajrasaṃgraha*, 102; D2225, fol. 78b.3–4) and Maitrīpa's *Dohākośapañjikā* (Bagchi ed., 1938, 70.1–2; D2256, fol. 187b.4–5); Sahajavajra's *Tattvadaśakaṭīkā* (D2254, fol. 170a.3–4); Rāmapāla's *Sekanirdeśapañjikā* (D2253, fol. 156a.3–4); and Vibhūticandra's *Bodhicaryāvatāratāt-paryapañjikāviśeṣadyotani* (D3880, fol. 196b.4).

1489. DP “its nature is to be free from adventitious stains” (*glo bur ba'i dri ma dang bral ba ni 'di'i rang bzhin yin pa*).
1490. P *rnam par dbye ba med pa'i chos nyid ni rang bzhin yin pa'i phyir* D *rnam par dbye ba med pa'i chos dag pa'i chos nyid ni rang bzhin yin pa'i phyir*.
1491. D45.48, fol. 272a.7–272b.1. The Chinese translation of this passage (Taishō 353, 221c) uses the terms “the empty tathāgata heart” and “the nonempty tathāgata heart.”
1492. As already mentioned, these two sentences (with minor variations) originally come from the *Cūlasuññatasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 121). They are also found in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (D4049, fol. 76b.3), Vasubandhu's *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* on I.1, Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgāṭīkā* on I.1, the *Śatasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāśādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābhāṭīkā* (D3808, fol. 63a.2–3), Jagaddalanivāsin's *Bhagavatyaṃnāyānusāriṇīnāmavyākhyā* (D3811, fol. 293a.5), and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Dutt ed., 32.12–13; D4037, fol. 26b.5–6). The larger context in which this passage appears in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Dutt ed., 32.6–23; D4037, fols. 26b.4–27a.3) is the justification of the correct understanding of emptiness: “Some śramaṇas or Brahmans neither assert that of which something is empty nor do they assert what is empty of what. Such is called ‘a bad grasp of emptiness.’ For what reason? Emptiness is reasonable by virtue of that which is empty's being really existent and by virtue of that of which it is empty not being really existent. By virtue of everything's being non-existent, where would what be empty of what? Therefore, the emptiness [in the sense] of such [nonexistence] is not reasonable [though the Tibetan supports this reading, the sentence could also be understood as ‘the emptiness of something's being empty of something is not reasonable’]. Hence, such represents a bad grasp of emptiness. So how is emptiness grasped well? Since one sees that something's not existing somewhere [means that] the latter is empty of the former, one understands, in accordance with true reality, that what remains there really exists there. This is called ‘engaging emptiness unmistakably as it accords with true reality.’ . . . Therefore, the entities about which one has notions such as form are empty of the character of the designational terms ‘form’ and so on. What is the remainder here in these entities about which one has notions such as form? It is said to be the bases of the designational terms ‘form’ and so on. As for these two, it is said that one understands, in accordance with true reality, the existence of mere entities and the mere designations as mere entities. One does not superimpose what is not truly real, nor does one deny what is truly real. One does not create any redundancy, nor does one create any deficiency. One does not set up [anything], nor does one reject [anything]. One realizes, in accordance with true reality, what is in accordance with true reality—suchness, whose nature is inexpressible. This is said to be a good grasp of emptiness— its being well realized through perfect prajñā. This [description] is the one that accords with reasoning that establishes tenability and the one through which the inexpressible nature of all phenomena is to be known in an exact manner.” The *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Dutt ed., 30.27–31.4; D4037, fol. 25b.3–5) also says that those who cling through superimposing existence onto what is not truly real (the specific characteristics of the designations for entities such as forms) and those who absolutely deny the true reality of what is ultimately truly real as having an inexpressible nature (the mere entities that are the bases of designations) have fallen away from

the dharma. In addition (Dutt ed., 31.17–19; D4037, fol. 26a.5–6), those who deny both designations and true reality are the chief nihilists, with whom those with pure conduct should not associate and who bring only misery upon themselves and others. The text (Dutt ed., 146.9–14; D4037, fol. 113b.2–4) also lists the distinctive features of the *prajñā* of bodhisattvas with regard to truly realizing phenomenal identitylessness, which include being utterly peaceful, nonconceptual, free from reference points, and without the two extremes of superimposition and denial (as indicated above). Due to these features, this *prajñā* should be understood as the one that follows the middle path and realizes true reality. For the original context and the vast range of interpretations of the quote from the *Cūlasuññatasutta* in the above and other texts, see Dargyay 1990 and Nagao 1991, 51–60. The Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 510) explains it as follows: "With nondual wisdom (ultimate reality) not existing during any phase of nondual consciousness (seeming reality), one sees or realizes clearly or in a supreme way (that is, in the manner of according with the actual way of being through the *prajñā* of identitylessness that is a natural outflow of the dharmadhātu) that this wisdom is empty of nondual consciousness (seeming reality). In this nondual wisdom, there always exists the remainder that remains primordially and is primordially empty of the adventitious stains of nondual consciousness—the nondual wisdom that is not enshrouded in these adventitious stains."

1493. I follow MA/MB *viparītaṃ* and DP *phyin ci ma log pa* against J *aparyantaṃ*.

1494. As the citation of the passage from the *Cūlasuññatasutta* in Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* shows, what is said here is reminiscent of the explanation in *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1 about duality's not existing in false imagination, while emptiness exists in false imagination. Also, *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.13 declares the two defining characteristics of emptiness as the nonbeing (or nonexistence) of duality and the being (or existence) of said nonbeing (or nonexistence). That is, emptiness is neither existent as duality nor is it nonexistent altogether because it exists as the very being of the lack of duality. The same meaning is found in I.20 saying that the nonexistence of persons and phenomena is emptiness, while the real existence of the nonexistence of persons and phenomena in it is another emptiness. The *Bhāṣya* on this comments that emptiness is defined as twofold in this way as the emptiness of what does not exist (persons and phenomena) and the emptiness that is the nature of what does not exist in order to avoid the two extremes of wrongly superimposing actually nonexistent persons and phenomena and wrongly denying the existence of the emptiness of these persons and phenomena. Note that this represents the typical Yogācāra approach to the middle way of avoiding extremes that usually hinges primarily on avoiding the two extremes of wrongly superimposing what does not exist and denying what actually does exist. By contrast, the Madhyamaka approach to the middle way beyond extremes aims at avoiding any notions of existence or nonexistence altogether.

1495. This is the only instance in RGVV of the compound *śūnyatāvīkṣiptacitta*'s being unraveled as *śūnyatārthanayād bahiś cittam vikṣipyate*.

1496. D45.48, fol. 272a.5–6.

1497. DP "dharmakāya."

1498. I follow MA/MB *lokottaradharmakāya*<sup>o</sup> (confirmed by DP *'jig rten las 'das pa'i chos kyī sku ni*) against J *lokottaradharmā*<sup>o</sup>.

1499. I follow MA/MB *śūnyatāvīkṣiptacittānām* (confirmed by DP *stong pa nyid las sems rnam par g.yengs pa rnam kyī*) against J *śūnyatāvīkṣiptānām*.

1500. I follow MA *tadviśuddhiguṇa*<sup>o</sup> and DP *de rnam par dag pa'i yon tan* against MB and J *viśuddhiguṇa*<sup>o</sup>.

1501. This passage follows the passage already mentioned from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fol. 275a.2–3) that says that the tathāgata heart is the heart of the dharmadhātu, the heart of the dharmakāya, the heart of the supramundane dharmas, and the heart of the naturally pure dharmas.
1502. For further comments on *Uttaratantra* I.154 and the almost identical *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.21 in various Indian and Tibetan texts, see appendices 2 and 3.
1503. I follow MA/MB *bālaajanam* against J *bālapṛthagjanam* and DP *byi pa so so'i skye bo*.
1504. Schmithausen parallels “here and there” (*tatra tatra*) with “in each sentient being” (*sattve sattve*) in the last line. Thus, one would have to translate “Having said that, [in sentient beings] here and there, . . .” However, the more likely meaning is “here and there in the mahāyāna sūtras,” which is confirmed by VT (fol. 14r1) that glosses “here and there” as “in the sūtras.” This also corresponds to C’s rendering *sūtra[koṭi]ṣu* (“sūtra” in transcription!) instead of *bhūtakoṭiṣu* in I.158b.
1505. With Takasaki, the Sanskrit of this line could also be read as “everything is to be understood as being empty in all respects,” but I read it following DP *shes bya thams cad rnam kun stong pa zhes*.
1506. I follow Schmithausen in taking *bhūtakoṭiṣu* to mean “in myriads of beings” (though *bhūta* for “sentient beings” is not so common in mahāyāna texts) rather than DP’s rendering *yang dag mtha’ ni*, which ignores the plural and locative ending of the Sanskrit (thus reading “the true end is devoid of conditioned phenomena in all aspects”). Interestingly, the translations by Takasaki, de Jong, and Ui (as referenced in de Jong 1968, 48) all agree with DP’s reading of *bhūtakoṭi* in the singular. Since I.158 is an explanation of I.156ab, with “void” corresponding to “empty,” “conditioned phenomena” to “all (knowable objects),” and “in all aspects” to “in every respect,” *bhūtakoṭiṣu* most likely corresponds to “here and there.” However, this is where the problem lies, since Schmithausen takes “here and there” to be related to “in each sentient being” in I.156d. Though not impossible, this is not only somewhat strange in this context but, more importantly, contradicted by VT’s above gloss and virtually all Tibetan commentaries, which take “here and there” to mean “in the (prajñāpāramitā) sūtras.” If one still accepts that *bhūtakoṭiṣu* takes up “here and there” (which is likely, given the other correspondences between I.156ab and I.158), C’s rendering “in [myriads of] sūtras” (*sūtra[koṭi]ṣu*, with “sūtra” in transcription!) instead of *bhūtakoṭiṣu* seems to make much more sense. Also, if *bhūtakoṭiṣu* referred back to “in each sentient being,” it would pick up a phrase in I.156d, whereas all other correspondences with I.158 are only to I.156ab. Thus, I would prefer to read I.158ab as “It has been stated in myriads of sūtras that conditioned phenomena are void in all aspects.” However, since the Sanskrit and DP as well as all Tibetan commentaries agree on *bhūta*°, while C is the only exception, I reluctantly follow the former in reading *bhūta*°.
1507. Skt. *tantra punar ihottare*. As mentioned before, this phrase uses the title of the present text (*Uttaratantra*) in the sense of the teachings on buddha nature being the latest and also highest teachings of the Buddha. VT (fol. 14r1–2) glosses this phrase as “latest text” or “latest section” (*uttaragrantha*).
1508. VT (fol. 14r2) glosses “what is unreal” (*abhūtaṃ*) as “all flaws” and “what is real” (*bhūtaṃ*) as “all qualities.”
1509. With Schmithausen, I follow MA *taddoṣanairātmyaśuddhiprakṛtayo* against J and VT (fol. 14r2) *taddoṣanairātmyaṃ śuddhiprakṛtayo*.
1510. MB and DP omit “chapter” (*paricchedaḥ*), but J has inserted it, which is in accordance with all the corresponding sentences at the end of the remaining chapters containing this word too.



1511. D45.48, fol. 271a.4–5.
1512. J omits *laukikaṃ*, but it is present in MB and D.
1513. I follow Schmithausen's emendation of *buddhabhūmiṣv avasthitiḥ* to *buddhabhūmi-vyavasthitiḥ* (confirmed by DP *sangs rgyas sa ni rnam par gnas*).
1514. VT (fol. 14r3) relates "two" to "relinquishment," referring to the characteristic of the elimination of afflictive and cognitive obscurations.
1515. I follow MA/MB *tasmin* against J *tasmān*.
1516. I follow MA/MB *rajomalādibhyaḥ* against J *rajojalādibhyaḥ*.
1517. I follow Schmithausen in reading MA as *phullapadmadrūmādhyāḥ* (which also makes better sense) against J *phullapadmakramādhyāḥ* (MB very unclear) and DP *rim rgyas padmas khebs pa*.
1518. VT (fol. 14r3) glosses "this very" as "the mind free from duality" and "liberation" as "free from afflictions."
1519. DP mistakenly *snang ldan* (corresponding to *bhātiyuktaṃ* instead of *bhāti muktaṃ*), which is moreover immediately preceded by *'od zer (raśmi)*, thus reading "just as the sun's having been liberated from the defilements of clouds and so on, this [buddhahood] possesses radiant light rays . . ."
1520. Skt. *buddhabhāvanidarsanam*, DP "The definite attainment of the buddhakāya" (*sangs rgyas sku ni nges thob pa*).
1521. VT (fol. 14r3) glosses "what is useless" (*phalgu*) as "husks" (*tvak*), which corresponds to DP *shun pa*.
1522. VT (fol. 14r4) says that "the very qualities are the substance [of buddhahood]."
1523. DP *gnas yongs su gyur pa 'jig rten las 'das pa rnam par mi rtog pa dang / de'i rjes la thob pa ye shes kyi rgyu can bral ba'i 'bras bu'i ming can gnas yongs su gyur ba'i rgyu yin*. The general Buddhist abhidharma lists five types of results: (1) matured results, (2) dominated results, (3) results that accord with their cause, (4) results caused by persons, and (5) results of freedom (or separation). The latter is defined as "the exhaustion or relinquishment of the specific factors to be relinquished through the force of the remedy that is prajñā." Thus, in the general abhidharma, a result of freedom is defined as an absence of factors to be relinquished and thus is an unconditioned nonentity (while the other four results are conditioned entities). A nonentity is defined as "what is not able to perform a function," but here as well as elsewhere in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, it is made clear many times that buddhahood, despite being unconditioned and a result of freedom, is able to perform the functions of accomplishing the welfare of all sentient beings and so on. The entire fourth chapter is ample testimony to that, representing the detailed answer to the question in RGVV's introduction to IV.13ff (J99), "It has been declared that buddhahood is characterized by being without arising and without ceasing. How is it then that from this unconditioned buddhahood, which has the characteristic of lacking functionality, effortless, uninterrupted, and nonconceptual buddha activity manifests functionality for as long as the world lasts?" In addition, *Uttaratantra* II.18–20 describes enlightened activity in terms of eternal space-like buddhahood's being the cause for others experiencing pure objects of their six sense faculties. II.38–41 on the topic "manifestation" speaks about the undifferentiable space-like dharmadhātu's making efforts in accomplishing the liberation of beings through all kinds of appearances, thus being the cause for introducing beings to the path and maturing them. When introducing this topic, RGVV (J85) says, "Now, this tathāgatahood manifests as being inseparable from its unconditioned qualities, just like space. Nevertheless, since it is endowed with unique attributes, one should see that it, through its particular applications of inconceivable great means, compassion, and prajñā and by way of the three stainless

kāyas (svābhāvika[kāya], sām̐bhogika[kāya], and nairmāṇika[kāya]), manifests as the cause that brings about the benefit and happiness of beings in an uninterrupted, endless, and effortless manner for as long as [saṃsāric] existence lasts.” RGVV on I.7 (J8) explicitly affirms that unconditioned buddhahood entails enlightened activity: “Even though it is unconditioned and has the characteristic of being inactive, from tathāgatahood all activities of the perfect Buddha unfold without effort in an unimpeded and uninterrupted manner until the end of saṃsāra.” In this regard, it is noteworthy that the *Tathāgataḡarbhāsūtra* repeatedly emphasizes that the full revelation or manifestation of the tathāgata heart as buddhahood automatically entails the performance of buddha activity as its main characteristic, thus “describing a tathāgata primarily in terms of dynamic activity” (Zimmermann 2002, 65). Furthermore, SM 8c says that “suchness operates in accordance (*anuvṛtti*) with the welfare [of beings].” Yamabe (1997, n. 32) also refers to “the *Hsien-yang sheng-chiao lun* (Taishō 31, 581c5–8), which states that all the actions of the buddhas arise on the basis of the *\*aṣaṃskṛta-dharmakāya*.”

1524. VT (fol. 14r4) glosses “just as space” as representing the function of one’s own welfare and the remainder of lines II.18cd as representing the function of the welfare of others, with “the wise” being bodhisattvas on the ten bhūmis and wise persons (*satpuruṣa*).

1525. VT (fol. 14r4–5) glosses “powerful form” (*vibhūtirūpaṃ*) as “the excellence or accomplishment of his own form” (*svarūpasamṡpatti*) and “objects” (*artha*) as “buddha realms and so on.” DP *dbang ’byor gzugs don* corresponds to the Sanskrit *vibhūtirūpārtha* but Ut (D) has *’byung med gzugs don* (“nonelemental forms and objects”), which is also found in the versions in most Tibetan commentaries (such as GC, HLS, and JKC) and commented on accordingly. Rongtōn’s commentary (Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1997, 160) says that *vibhūti* can mean either “powerful” or “nonelemental,” but that it here means the former.

1526. VT (fol. 14r5) glosses this as “the stainless speech of the victor.”

1527. According to VT (fol. 14r5), discipline is described as fragrance because it is the cause of a buddha’s fragrance.

1528. Skt. *naya*, DP *tshul*, C *dharmā*.

1529. Skt. *susukṣmacintāparamārthagahvaram*, DP “who, when one reflects [about this] in a subtle manner, is the one who brings ultimate happiness” (*zhib mor bsams pa na don dam bde mdzad*).

1530. I follow *dvidhaikedhā* in MA/MB and VT (fol. 14r6) as well as DP *rnam gnyis rnam gcig* against J *dvir ekadhā*.

1531. With Schmithausen, I take the three ablatives in II.22.cd as predicative ablatives.

1532. For the last two lines, C has “It is the matrix because it has the nature of stainless wisdom and pure attributes” (corresponding to *amalajñānaśukla*°), which is the preferred reading of Schmithausen. However, my translation follows MB *padam tad amalajñānam* (MA *amalam jñānam*) *śukla*°, which is confirmed by DP *dri med shes de dkar po yi / chos kyi rten yin phyir na gnas /*. In the Yogācāra system in general, as exemplified by *Mahāyānasamgraha* 1.48, the usual distinction between the vimuktikāya and the dharmakāya is that the former designates the removal of only the afflictive obscurations as attained by śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats, while the latter represents the removal of both afflictive and cognitive obscurations as well as the possession of all buddha qualities. Thus, when speaking about the dharmakāya as the actual state of buddhahood in a general sense, it is understood that both types of obscurations have been relinquished in it, and it is in this sense that it can be said that the dharmakāya includes the vimuktikāya. Here, the *Uttaratantra* describes these two kāyas as the two aspects of relinquishment (purity) and realization (wisdom), respectively, of unconditioned

perfect buddhahood, without relating them to any distinction between buddhas and arhats (more commonly, it is the svābhāvīkākāya that is said to represent the aspect of the purity or the relinquishment of all obscurations). Note, however, that VT (fol. 14r5–6) glosses the vimuktikāya as “the sambhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya free from the latent tendencies of the afflictions and so on” and its “perfection” (II.21c) as “the production of the accumulation of generosity and so on.” Likewise, the vimuktikāya’s being “understood in two ways” (II.22b) is glossed as “as the difference between sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya.” As for II.21–26, most Tibetan commentaries agree that the nonconceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise (familiarizing with the wisdom of knowing suchness) perfects the vimuktikāya (the ultimate relinquishment), while the wisdom of subsequent attainment (training in the wisdom of knowing variety) purifies the stains of the dharmakāya (the ultimate realization). As for “the vimuktikāya and the dharmakāya being understood in two ways and in one way,” RYC (148–49) relates the two ways to the vimuktikāya (its being liberated from both afflictive and cognitive obscurations), while the one way pertains to the dharmakāya and consists of consummate wisdom. GC (479–80) agrees with describing the vimuktikāya in two ways and the dharmakāya in one way, saying that the former is uncontaminated (because of being free from the afflictive obscurations and their latent tendencies) and all-pervasive (because of lacking the obscurations of attachment and obstruction with regard to all knowable objects). The dharmakāya is unconditioned because it has the nature of being absolutely indestructible. YDC (344–45) explains that the vimuktikāya refers to buddhahood in terms of its aspect of relinquishment, while the dharmakāya refers to it in terms of the aspect of its qualities. Therefore, though śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas make efforts in familiarizing with the lack of a self, they do not train in the entire variety of knowable objects and therefore only attain the vimuktikāya but not the dharmakāya. As for “being understood in two ways,” the vimuktikāya is to be understood in one of these two ways—being uncontaminated because afflictive and cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies have ceased. The dharmakāya is to be understood in the other one of these two ways—being the wisdom that pervades all knowable objects because it engages them through lacking the obscurations of attachment that obscure suchness and the obscurations of obstruction that obscure variety. Both the vimuktikāya and the dharmakāya are to be understood furthermore in the one way that is common to them both—being unconditioned because they have the nature of being absolutely indestructible. Therefore, YDC says, through the *Uttaratantra*’s verses on the nature and the function of awakening, it is clearly taught that buddhas have the wisdom of self-appearance and that this existent wisdom is unconditioned, which is to be understood well by the intelligent. JKC (137–40) agrees with YDC on the vimuktikāya’s being uncontaminated because it is endowed with the relinquishment of lacking any contaminations. The dharmakāya is all-pervasive because it is endowed with the realization of pervading all knowable objects (Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1997, 161 and ’Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 448.4 also show the same pattern). Both kāyas are unconditioned because they have the nature of not being produced by causes and conditions. Rongtön, GC, YDC, and JKC agree that these three characteristics of the vimuktikāya and the dharmakāya represent one’s own welfare, while both kāyas are also the foundation of all pure attributes, which represents the welfare of others (RYC speaks only of the dharmakāya as being that foundation). Still, lines II.30ab “one’s own welfare and that of others is taught through the vimuktikāya and the dharmakāya” are taken by all commentaries to mean that the vimuktikāya represents one’s own welfare and the dharmakāya the welfare of others (which is basically just another way of

- looking at this). For the meanings of “everlasting,” “putridity,” and so on, in II.24cd–26ab, see CMW.
1533. D16, fol. 131a.6. D16 has “the consummate marks” instead of “the thirty-two marks of a great being.”
1534. I follow DP *zhi ba* (Skt. *śivam*, meaning “welfare,” “prosperity,” “bliss,” “auspiciousness,” “fortune,” or “final liberation”).
1535. VT (fol. 14r6) glosses “the three wisdoms” as “those of study, reflection, and meditation” and “people with wisdom” as “śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas.”
1536. VT (fol. 14r7) glosses °*madhya*° as °*sthāna*°, while Takasaki suggests the reading °*sudma*° instead of °*madhya*° (DP *khyim*).
1537. Skt. *mṛḍukarmaṇyabhāvāt*. DP read “since it is nondual and workable” (*gnyis med las su rung ba’i phyir*).
1538. I follow MA °*vr̥ṭty api* against J °*vr̥ṭtyāpi*.
1539. I follow MB *tatreme* (confirmed by DP *tshigs su bcad pa ’di bzhi*) against J *tatra*.
1540. VT (fol. 14r7) glosses this as “free from the two extremes.”
1541. I follow MB °*viyuktaṃ* (confirmed by DP *bral*) against J *vimuktaṃ*.
1542. VT (fol. 14r7) glosses “in three ways” as “afflictive obscurations, cognitive obscurations, and obscurations of meditative equipoise.”
1543. DP *de rtogs pa*.
1544. I follow J *amalaḥ sa dhātuḥ*, based on DP *dri med dbyings de*. MB *amalo ’sau* (which is unmetrical) should, according to VT (fol. 14r7), read *amalaś cāsau āśraya*. VT glosses this as “the stainless basis that is the dharmakāya” (*amalaśrayo dharmakāyaḥ*).
1545. VT (fol. 14v1) glosses “in the form of various light rays of the genuine dharma” as “the spoken teachings” (*deśanoktā*).
1546. Skt. *jagadvimokṣārthasamāhṛtodyamaḥ* (confirmed by DP *’gro ba’i rnam grol don grub la brtson pa*). C has here “it accomplishes the liberation of beings without ever resting,” which seems to correspond to “by way of the welfare of sentient beings being uninterrupted” and “uninterrupted activity” in the commentarial verses II.49d and II.51ab below. Therefore, Schmithausen suggests \**jagadvimokṣārtha-sadā-(a)ratodyamaḥ* or \*°*ārtham anāratodyamaḥ* for II.40b.
1547. Against MB and DP, Schmithausen gives preference to C and suggests *vicitrabhāso* for *vicitrabhāvo* because II.51c has *atatsvabhāvākhyaṇe*. However, *bhāva* can also mean “appearance” and the contrast *bhāva/niḥsvabhāva* is rather common in mahāyāna texts.
1548. VT (fol. 14v1) says that II.40 describes the sambhogakāya and II.41 the nirmāṇakāya.
1549. VT (fol. 14v1) glosses *nirvṛtiḥ/nirvāṇa* (lit. “extinction”) as “the extinction of the afflictive and cognitive obscurations.”
1550. I follow MB *paramācintya-prāptiḥ pratyātmam arhatām* (confirmed by VT, fol. 14v1–2) against J *paramācintya-prāptiḥ pratyātmaveditā* (DP *mchog tu mya ngan ’das bsam med / dgra bcom so ’i bdag gyur pa /*). Schmithausen’s suggested reading *paramācintyā-prāptiḥ* (or *prāptā*) due to DP’s connecting *acintya* with *nirvṛtiḥ* not only contradicts both MB and VT but it is also inconclusive as far as DP goes. For it is not definite that “inconceivable” in DP has to go with “nirvāṇa,” which is clearly shown by JKC and GC taking “inconceivable” as a characteristic of its own (as does C). VT relates both “highest” and “inconceivable” to attainment, speaking of “the arhats’ attainment of the highest inconceivable dharma,” which is then glossed as “buddhahood.”
1551. Schmithausen suggests *dharmadhātusvabhāvataḥ* instead of MB *dharmadhātoḥ svabhāvataḥ*. DP “it is luminous because it is pure by virtue of having the nature of the dharmadhātu” (*chos dbyings ngo bo nyid kyis / dag pa’i phyir ni ’od gsal ba /*). Verses II.45–46 comment on II.38 and II.44ac, so the five characteristics of the svābhāvika-kāya

- are its being (1) unconditioned, (2) undifferentiable from its qualities, (3) free from the two extremes, (4) liberated from the three obscurations, and (5) pure and luminous. Verses II.47–48 explain the five qualities of the svābhāvikakāya, verses II.49–51 the five characteristics of the sambhogakāya, and verses II.52–59 the features of the nirmāṇakāya.
1552. VT (fol. 14v2–3) divides the compound *vicitradharmasambhogarūpadharmāvabhasataḥ* into *vicitrasambhogadharmāvabhasaḥ* (glossing it as “teaching the dharma”) and *rūpadharmāvabhasaḥ* (glossing it as “the display of form”). However, DP read *rang bzhin* for °*rūpa*°, and the Tibetan commentaries usually take this compound to mean “By way of enjoying all kinds of dharma and by way of appearing through its natural attributes.” Both interpretations come down to the same meaning, referring to the first two characteristics of the sambhogakāya—dharma instructions and the display of a sambhogakāya form with its major and minor marks (as briefly repeated in II.51a). The remaining three characteristics of the sambhogakāya are listed in II.49cd–50c, and all five are briefly repeated in II.51.
1553. VT (fol. 14v3) glosses “not having their nature” (*atatsvabhāva*) as “the dharmadhātu’s lack of nature” (*dharmadhātvasvabhāvatā*).
1554. With DP *ma g.yos par, aviralaṃ* is to be read as *avicalan*.
1555. Schmithausen suggests *śilpasthānātikausālam* for *śilpasthānāni kauśalam*.
1556. DP *ngar ’dzin* (“ego-clinging”), which is an obvious misreading of *sngar ’dzin* since arhats of course lack ego-clinging.
1557. Ut (D) *phun tshogs* DP *sna tshogs* (“various”).
1558. Skt. *sārtha* can also mean “(travel) company” (see Takasaki) or “assembly,” but DP *don mthun pa* confirms the more likely meaning here.
1559. VT (fol. 14v3–4) glosses “for them” (*eṣu*) as “for sentient beings.”
1560. As mentioned before, the first six topics that explain the fourth and the fifth vajra points have the same names (nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment, and manifestation). In terms of their contents, the fourth vajra point refers to the tathāgata heart with stains (the cause) and the fifth one to the very same tathāgata heart without stains (the fruition). Therefore, the six topics in each of these two vajra points are naturally related in terms of cause and fruition or in terms of what buddha nature is like while it is still obscured by adventitious stains versus what it is like when it is completely unobscured. For a detailed comparison of the contents of the first six topics of the fourth and fifth vajra points, see appendix 7.
1561. As will be seen in the text below, in verses II.63–68, two lines each correspond to the ten reasons in II.62 for buddhahood’s being permanent, with “protector of the world” in II.62d (VT fol. 14v6: *lokanāthatvāt*) being considered the tenth reason.
1562. I follow MB °*pādapraṇetuś ca* against J *pādaparakāśāc ca*.
1563. The phrase in “[ ]” is found in C.
1564. I follow VT (fol. 14v6) °*śaraṇādyutpattitaḥ* against MB and J °*śaraṇābhyupapattitaḥ* (confirmed by DP *skyabs la sogs pa ’thad phyir ro*). VT furthermore glosses “refuge” as “dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, nirmāṇakāya.”
1565. I follow MB *nityatāśaraṇānām* (confirmed by VT, fol. 14v6) against J *nityam aśaraṇānām*.
1566. With de Jong and following DP *dpe las ’das pa’i phyir, upamātivṛttitaḥ* seems preferable to *upamānivṛttitaḥ*.
1567. Takasaki remarks that *vyanumeya* (DP *dpag bya min*) here and in the next line should read *vyupameya* since the latter fits better with its referent *upamanivṛttitaḥ* in II.69. VT (fol. 14v7) confirms the reading (*vi*)*anumeya* while glossing it as (*vy*)*upamā*.

1568. This refers to bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi who receive an empowerment through light rays from all buddhas.
1569. As also explicitly stated in RGVV in its introductory remarks on II.18ff, usually, the ultimate kāya and the fulfillment of one's own welfare are equated with the dharma-kāya, while the welfare of others and the conventional kāyas of seeming reality are equated with the two rūpakāyas. However, VT (fol. 15r1) glosses "one's own welfare" as "the sambhogakāya, which is the ultimate kāya." "The welfare of others" is "the nirmāṇakāya, which is the seeming kāya based on the sambhoga[kāya]." VT further comments: "The fruition that is the freedom from the afflictions consists of the powers and so on. The maturational fruition consists of the [thirty-two] marks of a great being, which is the fruition that is in common [with others, such as cakravartins]."
1570. VT (fol. 15v1–2) again glosses "the first body" as the sambhogakāya and "the second one" as the nirmāṇakāya.
1571. I follow MB *tathā tām adhiḥṛtya* against J *tathatām adhiḥṛtya*. After this sentence, DP and C add "[First, there is] a synopsis" (*uddānam*).
1572. According to VT (fol. 15r7), "the two kinds of display" refers to the Buddha's appearance through his unique or uncommon qualities and through his common qualities (the thirty-two marks of a great being), which are explained in detail in verses III.11–26 (see in particular III.15 and III.26).
1573. VT (fol. 15v2–3) glosses "what is the case" as "[karmic] causes"; "maturation of karmas," as "the maturation of these karmic [causes]"; "faculties," as the five mental faculties "such as confidence"; "constitutions," as "having the nature of desire and so on"; "inclinations," as "the inclinations of those who have such natures"; "the path that leads everywhere," as "going to hell due to hateful behavior and to heaven, due to virtuous behavior"; "[afflicted] dhyānas," as "obscurations of dhyāna"; and "peace," as "the termination of contamination." For the individual causes of the ten powers according to the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, see the note on III.5–6 in CMW.
1574. VT (fol. 15v3) glosses "the collection of faculties" as "[the above faculties] being pure and so on, through which the obscurations of dhyāna are relinquished."
1575. VT (fol. 15v3–4) comments that line III.8b means to realize the reality of suffering, while line III.8c represents the reality of the origin of suffering, with "obstacles" referring to desire and so on.
1576. MB is rather illegible here, and Schmithausen suggests that, parallel to *prāpteḥ para-prāpanād* in III.9c, J *jñānāt svayaṃjñāpanād* (*svayam* has no correspondence in DP) could well be *jñānāt parajñāpanād* (there is no correspondence for *para*° in DP in either line), which is doubtlessly what is meant here.
1577. Given the parallels in the first and third lines, I follow Schmithausen's emendation *hānihāpanakṛteḥ* of J *hānihāraṇakṛteḥ* (MA/MB *hānikaraṇakṛteḥ*, which is metrically impossible). This is also supported by DP *spangs dang spong mdzad* (*spong mdzad* corresponding to *hāpana*°, while the metric filler °*kṛti* is omitted).
1578. DP "seer" (*drang srong*).
1579. In Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, *astambhin* means "not paralyzed with fear" or "not frightened." In classical Sanskrit, it can mean "to paralyze," "to stop," and "to restrain." DP has "unobstructed" (*thogs pa med*).
1580. DP *legs gnas* (corresponding to *susthita*).
1581. DP "firm power" (*brtan pa'i rtsal*), but according to III.34, "firm" and "powerful" are two separate qualities. For the individual causes of the four fearlessnesses according to the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, see the note on III.8–10 in CMW.

1582. VT (fol. 15v5) glosses “without examination” as “ignorance” and “liberation” as “liberation from the afflictions.”
1583. VT (fol. 15v5–6) glosses “actions” as those of body, speech, and mind.
1584. VT (fol. 15v6) glosses “others” as love and so on.”
1585. Against J *citte na sambhedataḥ*, I follow VT (fol. 15v6) *citteṅkhanam bhedataḥ* (corresponding to DP *thugs g.yo tha dad*), which is glossed as “unsteadiness of mind, meaning the mind that is not in meditative equipoise.” Schmithausen suggests *cittehitam bhedataḥ* [MB °*taṃ* is clear, while the preceding *akṣara* is illegible], which is similar in meaning.
1586. DP omit “vision” (°*nidarśanāc*) and say “the wisdom of liberation that sees all objects to be known” (*shes bya’i don kun gzigs pa’i grol ba’i ye shes*).
1587. DP *gang gi/gis (yasya/yena)* instead of *artheṣu*.
1588. For the individual causes of the eighteen unique qualities according to the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, see the note on III.11–15 in CMW.
1589. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation *cāṇv api* of J *cāśv api*.
1590. Given that III.36 is the commentarial verse on III.16cd, I follow VT (fol. 15v5–6) saying that earth, water, fire, and wind in III.36c exemplify the common qualities of worldly people, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas, respectively, which are to be enjoyed by all. On the other hand, the unique buddha qualities are completely beyond even the supramundane qualities of śrāvakas and so on and therefore resemble space. However, Schmithausen understands III.16cd as referring to just the unique buddha qualities being on the one hand common to the world (similar to earth, water, fire, and wind) and on the other hand uncommon to the world (similar to space). Though Schmithausen supports his reading by referring to the commentarial verse III.36, VT’s explanation contradicts Schmithausen’s reading of both III.16cd and III.36. Also, the Tibetan commentaries usually explain III.16cd to mean that all five elements including space are common to the world, whereas the unique buddha qualities are not. Thus, ultimately, these qualities cannot even be illustrated by the example of space. In fact, as III.36cd explicitly states, they are even beyond what is supramundane (the qualities of śrāvakas and so on). Besides being listed in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* (D147, fols. 175b.1–185a.6), as indicated below by *Uttaratantra* III.27, the ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and eighteen unique qualities are also found in the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*. This sūtra is available only in two Chinese translations—as chapter 3 of the *Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra* (Taishō 397) and on its own as Taishō 399 (vol. XIII, 452–72). In Taishō 397, the ten powers and so on are found on pp. 34a ff. They are also contained in the *Anuttarāśrayasūtra* (Taishō 669, 475b) and other sūtras.
1591. VT (fol. 15v1) adds that the hands are likewise marked with wheels.
1592. Skt. *aṅguli* means both fingers and toes, and the following phrase “hands and feet” indicates both.
1593. According to VT (fol. 15v1), “shoulders” refers to both arms and legs, thus obviously to shoulders and hips.
1594. Skt. *anunnāma*, DP *mtho dman med pa*.
1595. According to VT (fol. 15v2), the throat has lines like a conch.
1596. According to VT (fol. 15v2), there are twenty teeth each in the upper and lower jaws.
1597. According to VT (fol. 15v2), none are longer or shorter (lit. “high and low”).
1598. Ordinarily, *kalaviṅka* is a name of the red-green Indian sparrow and the Indian cuckoo alike. In Buddhist texts, however, it is usually considered as a mythical bird with the head of a human (a bodhisattva) and the body of a bird, which already sings

marvelously before it breaks its shell. It is often said to live in Amitabha's pure land Sukhāvati.

1599. In Hindu cosmology, this is the son of Mahāpuruṣa, the latter being the primeval man as the soul and original source of the universe. Also, Nārāyaṇa is variously identified as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa.
1600. Obviously, the numerical breakdown of the marks into thirty-two in these verses is far from being clear, so different commentaries give different numberings and combine certain features into one (for the list of thirty-two and their causes in GC and RYC, which is based on the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, see the note on III.17–25 in CMW). Note also that this list here is just one from among a considerable number of more or less differing lists of the thirty-two marks that are found in various sūtras and treatises (for comprehensive lists, see Xing 2002, 27 and Tan 2011, 146–62). Also, the comments on them and their causes vary in different texts. Despite claims to the contrary, there is no evidence that the major marks (or the minor marks) are of Brahmanic origin or even of early Buddhist origin (all Buddhist sources are quite late; see Tan 2011). As indicated below in the *Uttaratantra*, its list of the thirty-two major marks (which includes some marks that the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* presents as minor marks) is based on the *Ratnadārikāpariṣcchāsūtra* (Taishō 397, 37b–c) and is also contained in the *Anuttarāśrayasūtra* (Taishō 669, 474a–b). Except for minor differences in counting, this list is also found in TOK (see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 457–58). For the different list of these marks and their causes in *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* VIII.13–17, which is based on the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras, see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 117–21 (for the eighty minor marks, see 121–25) and Brunnhölzl 2012a, 378–84 and 531–33 (for the minor marks, see 384–88 and 533–37). Except for a few minor changes in the order and some additional features, the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*'s list is basically repeated in Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvali* II.77–96, and II.98 adds that cakravartins also possess these marks but that their purity, beauty, and clarity matches not even a fraction of those of buddhas. Except for differences in the numbering, chapter 8 of the *\*Prajñāpāramitāśāstra* (Taishō 1509, 90a–91a) ascribed to Nāgārjuna also follows the list in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*. For a comparison of the list in the *Uttaratantra* with the lists in Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṃkāralokā* and the *Mahāvvyūtpatti*, see the notes in Takasaki 1966a on the translation of *Uttaratantra* III.17–25. For the most detailed presentations of the major marks apart from the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras, see the *Lakkhaṇasutta* (*Dīgha Nikāya* III.142–79; translated in Walshe 1995, 441–60 and Tan 2011, 180–213; the latter also provides an overview of mainly Pāli sources of both the major and minor marks and discusses the potential Babylonian origin of the former) and the *Arthaviniścayasūtra* (Samtani 2002, 205–16), which however lists thirty-three marks. See also the *Lalitavistarasūtra* ([Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1983], 1:155–56), the *Mahāvvyūtpatti* (section 17, nos. 236–67; translated in Thurman 1976, 156), and Pawo Tsugla Trengwa's commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba n.d., 720–23).
1601. In III.26b, MB reads “ponds” in plural (*hradeṣu ca*; though *ca* is hypermetrical), which corresponds to “surfaces” (*taleṣu*) in III.26d (MB is illegible here, but VT confirms °*tala*). DP have no plural for “pond,” nor any equivalents of “great” and said *ca*. For “splendor” (*vibhūta*, which can also mean “power,” “glory,” “abundance,” and “greatness”), DP have “form” (*gzugs*). “Circles” (*maṅḍala*) is here to be understood as the retines of the Buddha, which is confirmed by VT's (fol. 15v3) gloss of *sambuddhamāṅḍalatala* as “the nature of the retinue of the perfect Buddha” (*sambuddhaparṣatsvarūpaṃ*).
1602. Schmithausen emends MA/MB *ekadhyabhisamkṣipya* to *ekadhyam abhisamkṣipya* (J *ekenābhisamkṣipya*).



1603. I follow MB *vistaravibhāganirdeśo* against J *vistaravibhāge nirdeśo* and also Schmithausen's emendation of J °*guṇānām api yathānupūrvyā* to °*guṇānām anayaivānupūrvyā* (as supported by DP *go rim 'di nyid kyis*).
1604. For RYC's quotes from the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* that list the individual causes of these sixty-four qualities, see the notes on the corresponding verses in CMW.
1605. I follow Schmithausen's suggestion of linking *balādiṣu* at the beginning of III.29 with III.28.
1606. Skt. *nirvedhikatva*. Though DP mistakenly has "impenetrable" (*mi phyed pa*), as confirmed by VT (fol. 15v3) *nairvedhikatvena* and C, the point here is that a vajra penetrates other materials, not that it is itself impenetrable.
1607. Since this verse obviously refers back to and comments on III.16ab, with Schmithausen, I follow C *pañcadhātu* versus J *pañcadhā tu*. Thus, the qualities of worldly people, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas ("the intelligent") are compared with earth, water, fire, and wind, respectively, while the buddhas ("the self-arisen") with their unique qualities are like space.
1608. As mentioned above, III.36 is the commentarial verse on III.16cd. VT (fol. 15v5–6) explains here that earth, water, fire, and wind in III.36c exemplify the qualities of worldly people, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas, respectively, which are to be enjoyed by all. On the other hand, the unique buddha qualities are completely beyond even the supramundane—the qualities of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas—and therefore resemble space. Note that Schmithausen refers to the following two passages in RGVV to support his reading that the subject of the entire verse III.36 is nothing but the unique buddha qualities: (a) A verse in RGVV (J17.10f) says:
- Those who give rise to supreme compassion for others  
And adopted discipline support the livelihood of others,  
Just like fire, wind, water, and earth.
- They [truly] possess discipline, [but] others are [only] a likeness of that.
- (b) RGVV's quote from the *Avataṃśakasūtra* (J23.14 ad 24.8) says, "tathāgata wisdom, the immeasurable wisdom that is the wisdom that sustains all sentient beings, pervades the mind streams of all sentient beings in its entirety . . . this immeasurable tathāgata wisdom becomes what sustains the entire world." However, it is clear from the context that (a) refers to bodhisattvas and not buddhas. Also, (b) does not refer specifically to the unique buddha qualities as they are discussed in III.16 and III.36 but to buddha wisdom in a very general way.
1609. I follow Schmithausen's emendation °*lakṣaṇākhya ye* or *lakṣaṇāhvā ye* (supported by DP *gang / sum cu rtsa gnyis zhes bya ba*) of J *lakṣaṇāḥ kāye*.
1610. MB *dvidhā tu darśanaṃ*, J *dvidhā taddarśanaṃ* (following DP *de mthong ba ni rnam pa gnyis*). However, DP *mthong ba* for *darśanaṃ* means "seeing" instead of "display," as the term was used so far in relation to the rūpakāyas. Thus, in DP, III.39ab reads, "For those who dwell far from and close to purity, the seeing of these [kāyas occurs] in two ways."
1611. I follow Schmithausen's emendation *śuddhavāri*° of J *śuddhaṃ vāri*°, which accords with C and °*svacchadakacandra*° in III.28d. Also, DP *chu dang* means "clear/pure water" and not "water and . . ." The most straightforward reading of this verse is that the *nirmāṇakāya* appears to those distant from purity (ordinary beings, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas), which is just like the reflection of the moon in water, while the *sambhogakāya* appears to those close to purity (bodhisattvas on the bhūmis), which is just like the actual moon in the sky. However, VT (fol. 15v7) seems to relate III.39d only to "in the maṇḍala of the victor," saying that "the manifestation in the maṇḍala of the

victor for those who are far from purity [occurs] in the form of the *nirmāṇa*[kāya], which is like [the reflection of] the moon in water, while the manifestation for those who are close to purity is the *sambhoga*[kāya], which is like the moon in the sky." On this reading, the *nirmāṇakāya* and *sambhogakāya* appear only to those in the retinue of a buddha. By contrast, the ways in which a buddha appears "in the world" (that is, outside of his retinue) could implicitly be understood as the appearances of the other two types of *nirmāṇakāyas* beyond the actual form of a *nirmāṇakāya* buddha such as Buddha Śākyamuni—artistic *nirmāṇakāya* forms (such as great artists, healers, and musicians) and incarnate *nirmāṇakāya* forms (appearing as anything that is beneficial for beings, be it animate or inanimate, such as ordinary beings, animals, or medicine).

1612. I follow VT (fol. 15v7) *apratiprasrabhi*<sup>o</sup> (also suggested by Schmithausen in accordance with J99.16 and J99.21) against J *aprasrabdhi*<sup>o</sup>. The same goes for *apratiprasrabdham* against J *aprasrabdham* (MB *aprapra*<sup>o</sup> and *apрати*<sup>o</sup>, respectively).
1613. Skt. *sattvadhātu* is taken by most commentaries as "constitutions of sentient beings" (C also has "constitution" in IV.4a). However, as GC (528.4–5) points out, "the actual object of buddha activity is the stained tathāgata heart of those to be guided." See also IV.10cd, which comments on IV.2c, saying that the basic element in all sentient beings is like a treasure seen by the buddhas.
1614. I follow MB and VT (fol. 15v7) *nirmathya* against J *niṣpādyā* (referring to *niryāṇam* in IV.5; Schmithausen suggests *niryāya*). DP read "accomplished" (*bsgrubs te*).
1615. See the explanation in IV.9. However, VT (fol. 15v7) glosses "yāna" as "the three yānas."
1616. I follow VT (fol. 16r1) *ratnāmbugarbham*, which is also Schmithausen's reading of MB and supported by DP *chu mtsho*, against J *ratnasvagarbham*. Note that DP *yon tan rin chen mchog tshogs* does not accord with the position of *ratna* in that compound and moreover contradicts the explanation of the proper order of this compound in IV.9.
1617. DP split the long compound *punya . . . ābham* after *raśmi* and wrongly relate "the sun rays of merit and wisdom" to "yāna," while reading "like the vast [all-]pervasive sky without middle and end." My translation follows de Jong and C.
1618. With Schmithausen, MB is to be read as *yā yatra* (confirmed by DP *gang gang du*) instead of J *yāvaca* (*yā* is also found and explained in IV.4c)
1619. As Schmithausen points out, this verse needs to be connected back to line IV.3d.
1620. All the instances of "of that" refer to the phrase that immediately precedes them.
1621. Skt. *bodeḥ sattvaḥ parigrahaḥ*. This refers to bodhisattvas as the ones who take hold of or attain awakening.
1622. Both DP and C read "the bhūmis."
1623. D100, fols. 278b.6–280b.1.
1624. DP "yāna."
1625. I follow MB *saddharmakāyam adhyātmaṃ* (corresponding to DP *nang gi dam pa'i chos sku*) against J *saddharmakāyaṃ madhyasthaṃ*.
1626. With Schmithausen and against Takasaki, I take the compound *viṣamasthānāntaramala* as consisting of *viṣamasthāna*, *antara*, and *mala*.
1627. VT (fol. 16r4) glosses *śubhra* as "clear, transparent" (*svacchā*). *Śubhra* can also mean "radiant," "splendid," "spotless," and "bright"; DP have *mḍzes pa*.
1628. I follow Schmithausen's suggested reading of MB *surapatibhavanavyūhendramarutām* against J *surapatibhavanaṃ mātendramarutām*, with *vyūha* being supported by D *tshogs* (P mistakenly has *sna tshogs* instead of *gnas tshogs*). The maruts are the storm gods who are the retinue of Indra.

1629. I follow de Jong's suggested reading *cittāny udpādayanti* (supported by D *sems rab bskyed byed*; P mistakenly has *gshegs* instead of *sems*) against J *cittān vyutpādayanti* and Chowdury's "correction" *citrāny utpādayanati* (see de Jong 1968, 50). Obviously, this refers to all the kinds of mind-sets that represent or flow from bodhicitta.
1630. *Jñānālokālamkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 280b.1–282a.4.
1631. DP "drum of dharma" (*chos kyi rnga*).
1632. I follow VT's (fol. 16r4) gloss of °*pranūdanam* as °*pravartanam*. DP have *sel ba*, thus reading "to dispel the victorious [war]play of the forces of the asuras."
1633. I follow MB *apramādapadasaṃniyojanatayā* (supported by DP *bag yod pa'i gnas la rab tu sbyor bas*) against J *apramādasamniyojanatayā*.
1634. Skt. *vivecana* usually means "distinction" or "examination" (corresponding to DP *rnam par 'byed pa*). However, as de Jong points out, in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, *vivecayati* means "causing to abandon," "dissuading from." This seems to fit the present context of standing in contrast to "bringing close to" (*upasaṃharaṇa*) better.
1635. VT (fol. 16r4) glosses "three miraculous displays" as "display, pointing out, and miraculous powers" (*deśanā, ādeśanā* [text: *adeśanā*], *ṛddhi*). Usually, the three kinds of miraculous displays are explained to be the activities of a buddha's body (displaying miraculous powers), speech (teaching the dharma in accordance with the minds of those to be guided), and mind (demonstrating the remedies for the afflictions through *saṃādhi*). See the comments in the text below following IV.40.
1636. I follow Takasaki's emendation of MB *saṃbuddhabhūmer upayāti* to *saṃbuddhabherer upayāti* (supported by the context and DP *sangs rgyas rnga sgra*). J *saṃbud-dhatūryasya tu yāti* makes no sense here.
1637. I follow Schmithausen's reading of MB *saṃsārapātālagate tu* against J *saṃsārapātālagateṣu*.
1638. With de Jong, I follow DP *ting 'dzin sems gtod bsam pa skul byed nyid*, thus emending °*bhāvavācakam* to °*bhāvavacodakam*.
1639. I follow MB *tatparyāpannasarvasattva°* against J *tatparyāpannam sarvasattva°* (DP *de rtogs* is a misspelling of *de gtogs*).
1640. I follow MB *sarvathopalabdhīḥ* (supported by DP *rnam pa thams cad kyi dmigs pa*) against J *sarvagoṣopalabhiḥ*.
1641. I follow Schmithausen's suggestion to emend MB *atatpradinām* to *atatpravedinām* (supported by C) against J *atatprahitānām* (DP *de ma gtogs pa rnams* is an obvious misspelling of *de ma rtogs pa rnams*).
1642. *Jñānālokālamkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 282a.4–283a.5.
1643. I follow MB *sasyasaṃpadām* against J *sasyasaṃpadaḥ*.
1644. VT (fol. 16r5) glosses "awareness" (*saṃvid*) as "the four discriminating awarenesses (*pratisaṃvid*) of dharmas, meanings, semantics, and self-confidence." The awareness of (1) dharmas means to fully know the individual characteristics of all phenomena or to teach the eighty-four thousand doors of dharma as various remedial means in accordance with sentient beings' different ways of thinking. (2) The awareness of meanings is to fully know the divisions and classifications of all phenomena, that is, knowing the meanings that are expressed by the words and statements about the general characteristics of phenomena—impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and identitylessness—and their ultimate characteristic—the lack of arising and ceasing. (3) The awareness of semantics refers to knowing the languages, symbols, and terms of all the various kinds of sentient beings and being able to please them through this; being able to teach many meanings through a single word; and being free from words that are mistaken, rushed, or repetitive. (4) The awareness that is self-confidence means to be able to hear the

dharma from others and eliminate one's own doubts, explain the dharma to others and thus eliminate their doubts, and speak meaningfully, swiftly, without interruptions, and unimpededly.

1645. VT (fol. 16r5) glosses “perishable” and “not perishable” as “[samsāric] existence” and “nirvāṇa,” respectively.
1646. Compare the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* on XX.38cd, which says, “It is called ‘Cloud of dharma’ because the gate of samādhi and the gate of dhāraṇī pervade, like a cloud, the dharma that was heard—the sky-like foundation in which they are deeply immersed” (*samādhimukhadhāraṇīmukhavyāpanān meghenevākāśasthāliyāśrayasam-niviṣṭasya śrūtaadharmasya dharmameghety ucyate*).
1647. DP “as for the variety of the vessels” (*snod rnam sṅa tshogs nyid la* [text: *las*] ni).
1648. VT (fol. 16r6) glosses “those who are intermediate” as “śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.”
1649. VT (fol. 16r7) glosses “those who desire the dharma” as “bodhisattvas, śrāvakas, and so on.”
1650. I follow VT °*meghaughād*, which accords with Schmithausen’s reading °*meghaughadharmā*° of MB and is also supported by DP *sprin tshogs dag*, against J °*meghābhra*°.
1651. I follow DP *rdo tshan dang ni rdo rje'i me*; Skt. *aśani* and *vajrāgni* both meaning “lightning.”
1652. VT (fol. 16r7–16v1) takes the compound *sūkṣmaprāṇakāśailadeśagamikān* to consist of the three components “subtle creatures,” “rocks/mountains,” and “those who travel the terrain,” glossing them as “those who are hostile [toward the mahāyāna],” “bodhisattvas,” and “śrāvakas and so on,” respectively. However, line IV.49d suggests only the two components “subtle creatures” and “those who travel rocky terrains,” which exemplify “the latencies of the afflictions” and “the latencies of the views about a self,” respectively. Also, all Tibetan commentaries speak about those two components, though they interpret them in different ways. Most say that hail and lightning harm many subtle creatures but not peacocks (“those who travel rocky terrain”), while rain benefits the latter. Likewise, the rain of the wisdom of knowing what is subtle (emptiness) and the compassion of what is vast (generosity and so on) pours down equally on the fortunate who have faith in the mahāyāna, purifying their afflictions, and the unfortunate who have strong habitual tendencies of views about a self.
1653. I follow Takasaki’s emendation of MA/MB *kleśagatān drṣṭyanuśayān* to *kleśagatāmadrṣṭyanuśayān* (supported by DP *nyon mongs dag 'gyur bdag lta'i bag chags* and C). VT (fol. 16v1) glosses °*gata*° as *svarūpa*.
1654. According to VT (fol. 16v1), “five kinds” refers to the six kinds of beings of saṃsāra except the gods.
1655. I follow VT °*śraddhānusārādyā*, which accords with de Jong’s suggestion °*śraddhānusārād* (as per DP *dad pa'i rjes 'brangs nas*), against °*śraddhānumānyād* in MA/MB and J.
1656. VT (fol. 16v1) adds that, through such discrimination, those with prajñā do not cling to any powerful states among gods and humans.
1657. *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 283a.5–284b.5.
1658. DP “the suitable” (*skal ldan*).
1659. *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 284b.5–286a.7.
1660. Kumuda flowers are edible white water-lilies (*nymphaea esculenta*), which bloom at night and close their leaves during the day.
1661. VT (fol. 16v2) glosses “three” as bodhisattvas, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and ordinary beings.
1662. DP mistakenly has “sun.”

1663. DP omit “and stream forth from each body hair.”
1664. *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 286a.7–287a.4.
1665. I follow de Jong in relating *yugapad* to *kurute* (rather than Takasaki who takes *yugapadgocarasthānām* as a compound), which also seems to correspond better to DP *cig car du / spyod yul gnas pa rnam kyī ni*.
1666. I follow MA *durlabhaprādurbhāvās* (corresponding to DP *'byung ba rnyed par dka' ba*) against J *durlabhaprāptabhāvās*.
1667. *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 287a.4–288a.5.
1668. DP “inconceivable” (*bsam med pa*).
1669. *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 288b.4–289a.5.
1670. Skt. *niṣkīṃcane nirābhāse nirālambe nirāśraye / cakṣuṣpathavyatikrānte 'py arūpiṇy anidarśane /*. Note that this list is very similar to the list of the characteristics of non-conceptual wisdom in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and Vasubandhu's commentary on it (*arūpy anidarśanam apratiṣṭham anābhāsam avijñaptikam aniketam*); which is also found in the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* (Matsuda 1996, 96.5–6; D142, fol. 3b.4) and the *Kāśyapaparivarta* (Friedrich Weller, trans., *Zum Kāśyapaparivarta* [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1965], 2:97). The Tibetan versified version of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and all versions of Vasubandhu's commentary read *brtag tu med pa* for *arūpi*, thus indicating that term's meaning “ungraspable.” The same may apply here too for *arūpiṇi* (thus, “formless” would be “ungraspable”).
1671. *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, D100, fols. 288a.5–288b.4.
1672. *Prayojana* can also mean “motive” or intention” (*P dgongs pa*).
1673. This refers to the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* (“The Sūtra of the Ornament of the Light of Wisdom of Entering the Object of All Buddhas”), which is the source of the nine examples for enlightened activity. The name of this sūtra is explained in IV.79 in order to indicate the purpose or intention behind these examples for effortless buddha activity.
1674. I follow Schmithausen's emendation *jñānālokasvalaṃkṛtāḥ* of MA *jñānālokāsva-laṃkṛtāḥ* against J *jñānālokādyaḥlaṃkṛtāḥ* and Takasaki *jñānālokād alaṃkṛtāḥ*.
1675. I follow VT (fol. 16v5) and MA/MB *nirmitir* against J *vikṛtir*.
1676. I agree with Takasaki that the phrase “of those whose character is compassion” refers to all nine examples and what they teach since it is explicitly used in examples (2) and (5) and example (3) speaks of “the cloud of compassion.” However, DP (*thugs rje'i bdag nyid thob pa nyid*) relate this phrase only to the ninth example (this could also be read as “the attainment of the character of compassion”).
1677. The text has the plural *dhiyaḥ*, DP *thugs*.
1678. Against the natural reading of I.84ab and the context of establishing that activity without effort is possible (as explicitly stated in IV.77), VT (fol. 16v6) says that “the nonconceptuality of the Bhagavān” is the thesis and “effort is at peace” the reason.
1679. I follow MA *divaukasām* (supported by DP *lha yi*) against J *vibho rutam*.
1680. “Infinite numbers of beings” could also be read as “the infinite universe.”
1681. I follow MA/MB *ghoṣo* [']*nakṣaro* [']*sau* (supported by DP *gsung de . . . yi ge med*) against J *ghoṣo 'nakṣarokto*.
1682. DP take *darśana* as “seeing.”
1683. I follow DP *mi bzlog pa*. VT (fol. 16v6) glosses *asamhāryā* as *ātyantikī*, which can mean “continual,” “uninterrupted,” “infinite,” and “total.”
1684. I follow Schmithausen's emendation *nānarthabijamuk* (or *'bijahrṭ*; supported by DP *don med pa'i / sa bon spong min*) of MA *nānarthabijamut* and MB *nāna(?)rthabijavat* against J *no sārthabijavat*.

1685. I follow MA, which contains the second negation *na tat* against *J ca tat*.
1686. I follow MA °*sampadām* against *J °sampadam*.
1687. I follow VT (fol. 16v7) *caturṣu sthāneṣv* (supported by DP and C) instead of just *sthāneṣv*. These four points are vajra points 4 through 7—the tathāgata heart, awakening, its qualities, and its activity.
1688. DP “those with pure minds” (*dag pa'i sems*).
1689. Instead of °*buddhi*, DP read “buddha qualities” (*sangs rgyas yon tan*) in the next line.
1690. VT (fol. 16v7) glosses “this” as “the discussion of the doctrine that explicitly speaks of the buddha element and so on.”
1691. “The meditative states of the gods” refers to the four dhyānas and the four formless absorptions, while the four brahmāvihāras are the four immeasurables of love, compassion, rejoicing, and equanimity that lead to rebirth as the god Mahābrahmā.
1692. With Schmithausen, I follow MB and *J saṃbodhyupāyācyutaḥ* (supported by DP *rdzogs pa'i byang chub 'pho med thabs bsgoms la*) against MA *saṃbodhyupāyāc cyutaḥ*, whose meaning is also found in C.
1693. I follow MA/MB °*śakyatva*° against *J °śaktatva*°.
1694. Following DP and C, *tatcitta*° is to be emended to *tannitya*°.
1695. As V.14 explains, these refer to the three spheres of agent, object, and action.
1696. DP “conceptions” (*rnam rtog*).
1697. DP “miserliness” (*ser sna*).
1698. MA/MB *cāsyā* instead of *J cāsyā*.
1699. Following this verse, DP and C insert several headings that are absent in the Sanskrit (DP omits the first one here and also the one for V.25), but derived from V.26–28. When available, I follow the text of these headings in DP, with phrases in “{ }” being added by the translator. The present heading is a slight modification of Takasaki (1966a, 384) according to the following headings in DP.
1700. Skt. *pratibhā*, which can also mean “boldness” or “audacity”; thus DP “self-confidence” (*spobs pa*).
1701. DP omit “the words of.”
1702. The words in “[ ]” are found in DP.
1703. D pulls *kleśo vimūdhātmanām* together, saying “by those whose character is afflicted and ignorant” (*nyon mongs rmongs bdag rnams kyis*). P says “those who are under the influence of afflictions” (*nyon mongs dbang byas rnams kyis*) and omits “foolish character.”
1704. VT (fol. 17r1) explains that if one’s mind is not mingled with such stains, it is able to become as pure as the beryl and so on in the examples of buddha activity above.
1705. VT (fol. 17r1) says that the dharma is pure because it is supreme and prevents one from taking saṃsāric existence to be the most important thing.
1706. VT (fol. 17r1) glosses *vyaśanaṃ* as *vināśa*.
1707. I follow de Jong’s emendation *lābhagredhatayā* (supported by DP *rnyed la brkam*) of *lobhagredhatayā*.
1708. I follow Schmithausen’s emendation *vārād* of *ārād*.
1709. Skt. *vadhaka* can also mean “executioner,” thus DP *gshed ma*.
1710. DP “nature of phenomena” (*chos nyid*), C “genuine dharma.”
1711. I follow MA *tasyāsti muktiḥ* against *J tasmai vimuktiḥ*.
1712. VT (fol. 17r3) regards V.22–23 as describing the causes for deviating from the dharma, while taking only V.24 as explaining the result of that.

1713. This heading is a modified version of Takasaki's reconstruction from C (389). However, as V.28 and VT (fol. 17r3) make clear, lines V.25cd refer to the result of having expounded the meaning of the dharma.
1714. I follow MA *yann iṣyandaṃ ca tac chlokaiḥ* (supported by DP *rgyu mthun pa ni gang yin de*) against J *yann iṣyandaphalaṃ ślokaś.*
1715. I follow MA *parśanmaṇḍalakṣantir* and VT (fol. 17r4) *parśanmaṇḍale kṣānter* against J *saṃsāramaṇḍalakṣāntir.*
1716. MA and J *dharmārthavāda*, VT (fol. 17r4) *dharmānūvāda*, DP *chos brjod pa*. According to VT (fol. 17r4), "explaining the dharma" (*dharmānūvāda*) refers to "engaging in commenting on the seven points such as the Buddha." The first (temporary) result of this is the attainment of poised readiness (for profound true reality) on the bhūmis of the noble ones in the maṇḍala of the retinue of the tathāgata Amitābha, with these bodhisattvas being the chief persons among those who have entered Amitābha's retinue because they are noble ones. The second (ultimate) result of explaining the dharma is great awakening. In line V.28c, I follow J's reading of MA as *dvidhā* ("twofold"), which is confirmed by VT (fol. 17r3) and DP *rnam gnyis*. Schmithausen suggests taking MA here (which is difficult to read) as "threefold" (*tridhā*; as in C and Taishō 1595, 270b6) instead of "twofold." For, he says, lines V.25cd enumerate three kinds of result: (1) seeing Amitāyus ("[attaining] the maṇḍala of the retinue"), (2) the arising of the stainless eye of dharma ("[attaining] poised readiness"), and (3) attaining awakening. Therefore, Schmithausen also suggests reading MA "poised readiness in the maṇḍala of the retinue" (*parśanmaṇḍalakṣantir*) as "the maṇḍala of the retinue, poised readiness . . ." (*pariśanmaṇḍalaṃ kṣantir*). However, it is difficult to take the phrase "by virtue of the arising of the stainless eye of dharma" (*amaladharmacakṣur udayāt*) in V.25d as a separate result rather than as that through which awakening (the second result) is attained. In addition, the existence of three results is contradicted by VT's explicit comments on only two results, which are also found in all Tibetan commentaries.
1717. DP add the following verse of dedication (as the entire RGVV is traditionally attributed to Asaṅga) and a colophon indicating the translators:  
 Through whatever inconceivable merit I attained  
 Due to explaining the precious genuine dharma of the supreme yāna,  
 May all beings become stainless vessels  
 For the precious genuine dharma of the supreme yāna.  
*This completes the exposition of the Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra authored by the noble protector Maitreya, which was composed by master Asaṅga. It was translated by the great scholar, paṇḍita Sajjana (the grandson of the great scholar, the Brahman Ratnavajra of glorious great Anupamapura), in that very [city] Anupamapura. Anupamapura is identified by some as present-day Śrīnagar in Kashmir.*
1718. All topical headings are inserted by the translator (corresponding to my outline above). Though my translation sometimes differs from Kano's, I am indebted to both his translation and his Sanskrit edition of the text with critical apparatus (Kano 2006, 513–35), which in turn owe much to Profs. Schmithausen and Isaacson as well as Dr. Diwakar Acharya. Still, as Kano says, there remain unsolved problems in his edition. For this reason and also because of the sometimes very terse phrasing of the Sanskrit, both Kano's translation as well as mine are tentative in certain parts.
1719. "The three methods" are the three yānas (see *Uttaratantra* I.19).
1720. "Common" probably means common to the three yānas, thus also alluding to the principle of a single ultimate yāna as found in *Uttaratantra* II.57–59.

1721. According to RGVV on I.19, the jewel of the Buddha is taught primarily for bodhi-sattvas, the dharma for pratyekabuddhas, and the saṃgha for śrāvakas.
1722. For the sake of correspondence, the line numbering of the interlinear glosses follows the lines of verse in the English translation (due to the different syntax, the actual glosses in the Sanskrit are sometimes found in different lines, see Kano 2006, 513–18).
1723. Skt. *niḥśreyasa* means the truly best that consists of final liberation or ultimate bliss, that is, nirvāṇa.
1724. That is, the purpose of teaching the ultimate refuge that is the Buddha is to cause the generation of bodhicitta through showing the ultimate goal or fruition of this bodhicitta.
1725. “Those to be taken refuge in” refers to all three jewels.
1726. According to RGVV on I.2 (J3.21–4.9), the jewel of the Buddha is attained on the eighth bhūmi, the jewel of the dharma on the ninth bhūmi, and the jewel of the saṃgha on the tenth bhūmi.
1727. See also verses 12–13 and the interlinear gloss on verse 15.
1728. The meaning of *adhikāraiḥ* here is not very clear (*adhikāra* can also mean “title,” “rank,” “topic,” and “section”), but in the sense of authoritative properties, it seems to refer to the qualities of the saṃgha described in *Uttaratantra* I.13–18.
1729. Except for *pravṛtti*, the first line of this gloss is illegible in the manuscript.
1730. Read *bhava* for *bhāva*.
1731. Given the interlinear gloss of this verse, “dharmas” most probably refers to the buddha qualities (vajra point 5).
1732. Thus, verse 6 refers to the purification of the basic element (the cause) through the three conditions of awakening, its qualities, and its activity. “What is conducive to liberation” and “what is conducive to penetration” are names for the paths of accumulation and preparation, respectively. “The uninterrupted path” is defined as “the path that serves as the direct (or actual) remedy that relinquishes the obscurations of a given path and on which the arising of the subsequent wisdom that is the specific result of this path is not interrupted by anything other.” Thus, in general, each path (such as the path of seeing) has several uninterrupted paths, which alternate with the “paths of liberation” that represent the degrees of accomplished relinquishment subsequent to each uninterrupted path. Typically, uninterrupted paths and paths of liberation are only presented in the contexts of the path of seeing and the various levels of the path of familiarization. Thus, here, “uninterrupted path” seems to be a shorthand for these two paths.
1733. The particle *iti* in *bodhir guṇāḥ karma ceti sākṣāt pratyayam* seems to suggest that the conditions consist of awakening and so on. However, Kano translates *sākṣāt pratyayam* as “directly and indirectly,” which is not impossible. Still, this could be understood in at least two ways. (1) In accordance with verse 12 and its interlinear gloss, the basic element’s focal objects are the remaining six vajra points, with awakening, its qualities, and its activity being conditions. Thus, the three jewels could be considered as being directly perceptible to sentient beings, while the awakening of a buddha and so on would represent the (mostly not directly perceptible) conditions through which the three jewels become visible (on the other hand, verse 3 considers the three jewels also as conditions). (2) The awakening and the qualities of a buddha are the more indirect conditions for sentient beings’ entering and progressing on the path, while his enlightened activity is the more direct condition.
1734. See also verses 25–26, which say that *Uttaratantra* I.27–28 is the basis for engaging in reflection, while the ten topics (*Uttaratantra* I.29–94) are the objects of meditation.



1735. Skt. *jināśraya*. Āśraya does not only mean “basis” or “ground,” but also “source,” “origin,” and “to depend on.” Thus, the welfare of sentient beings is contingent on a buddha whose enlightened activity is the source or origin of their attaining well-being, liberation, and buddhahood.
1736. Skt. *anuvṛtti* can also mean “to comply,” “to continue,” and “to follow.” As mentioned above, this verse is an interesting reformulation or gloss of the first two reasons for all sentient beings’ possessing buddha nature in *Uttaratantra* I.27 and I.28. Line 8b corresponds to the first reason (“since buddha wisdom enters into the multitudes of beings” in I.27a and “because the perfect buddhakāya radiates” in I.28a) and highlights the intrinsic affinity between the buddha natures of buddhas and sentient beings, which enables the former to benefit the latter. Line 8c corresponds to the second reason (“since its stainlessness is nondual by nature” in I.27b and “because suchness is undifferentiable” in I.28b) and emphasizes the active nature of suchness when it is understood as buddha nature, which always engages in the welfare of sentient beings, be it in the form of external buddha activity or as the internal driving force for the path of ordinary beings and bodhisattvas to attaining buddhahood.
1737. The first half of this note is corrupt (*tad evam udghātārthaṃ ca śarīre navadhātviyāt* /).
1738. This is followed by illegible phrases and ends in *nava . . . dhodāharaṇeṣu catustikācāryāṇi dharmakāyāditi*, possibly related to *Uttaratantra* I.85.
1739. The term *gotrasaṃbhava* is also found in RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.28 (J26.9) and I.41 (J37.3–4).
1740. Lines 9cd can be understood as a further gloss on “because suchness is undifferentiable” in *Uttaratantra* I.28b. For, in its own nature, suchness is always free from any adventitious stains, even in ordinary beings. These adventitious stains represent the dependent nature, whereas suchness is not dependent. Naturally, this strongly suggests an implicit equation of suchness with the perfect nature. Thus, the tathāgata heart (suchness, the dharmadhātu) is explicitly said here to be empty of the dependent nature (that is, mere conditioned appearances). Since it is even empty of the dependent nature, there is no question of its being empty of the imaginary nature (the seeming duality of apprehender and apprehended within mere conditioned appearances) too. In this context, it is significant what RGVV on I.154–55 says about the relationship between the tathāgata heart and its adventitious stains, that is, “one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent. These two verses elucidate the unmistakable defining characteristic of emptiness [in terms of the tathāgata heart] since it [thus] is free from the extremes of superimposition and denial.” This description of what is empty of what and what remains is reminiscent of the *Madhyāntavibhāga*’s treatment of the relationship between the dependent nature and the perfect nature. *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.1 says that duality does not exist in false imagination, while emptiness exists in false imagination as its fundamental nature. Generally, the text equates “false imagination” with the dependent nature and “emptiness,” with the perfect nature. III.9 declares that the dependent nature is to be relinquished, while the perfect nature is to be attained. According to the interlinear gloss on SM 9, the tathāgata heart is obscured by both afflictive and cognitive obscurations, which implies that both these obscurations are included in the dependent nature. As for the relationship between what is afflicted, all obscurations, and the dependent nature, the *Uttaratantra* often just uses “afflictions” for all obscurations in general. However, both the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV also say that the tathāgata heart becomes free from

both afflictive and cognitive obscurations, with both being clearly defined and distinguished (see II.3, II.6, II.35–36, II.45, IV.2, IV.6, and V.14). Though neither the *Uttaratantra* nor RGVV use the term “dependent (nature),” both texts employ many terms for the obscurations that can be considered as equivalents of the dependent nature, such as “false imagination” (I.63), “improper mental engagement” (I.56–57, I.60), “the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance” (I.138; a synonym of the *ālaya*-consciousness, which is in turn often equated with the dependent nature in *Yogācāra* texts). *Uttaratantra* I.56–64 equates improper mental engagement with false imagination and says that it as well as the *skandhas*, *dhātus*, *āyatanas*, *karma*, and afflictions produced by it (all being constituents of the conditioned dependent nature) rest on the purity of the mind, while the space-like luminous nature of the mind, which lacks causes and conditions, does not rest on any of these phenomena, nor is it produced or destroyed by them. On this, RGVV quotes the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchāsūtra*, which says that all these phenomena are created by causes and conditions and cease once they are separated from these causes and conditions. In addition, it says, the afflictions are imagination (*parikalpa*), while the nature of the mind lacks imagination. Therefore, all phenomena are said to be completely devoid of any foundation. As for “the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance,” the *Uttaratantra* (I.37, I.82, I.87, and II.34) says repeatedly that the *tathāgata* heart is free from all latent tendencies and explicitly identifies the obscurations of awakening as the afflictions and their latent tendencies (IV.7). RGVV on I.82 and I.130 comments on these latent tendencies as being “the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance” (see also RGVV on I.36). Also, the description of the obscurations as being adventitious, conditioned, like clouds, illusions, and so on, fits with the characterization of the dependent nature in other texts. For example, *Uttaratantra* II.4 and II.6 say that buddhahood is like the sun and space, while the afflictive and cognitive obscurations, which are not established by any nature and are adventitious, are similar to clouds. On this, compare the interlinear note on SM verse 28 below, which explains that the examples of clouds, dreams, and illusions refer to the threefold afflictiveness of afflictions, *karma*, and birth, thus matching the deceptive nature of this threefold afflictiveness. Therefore, these examples refer to the afflictions’ not being established independently. By contrast, *Uttaratantra* I.86c states that buddhahood is the ultimate reality whose “true nature is without falsity and deception.” Likewise, I.164 says that the stains are unreal (*abhūta*) because they are fabricated and adventitious, while the qualities are real (*bhūta*) because their nature is pure due to the identitylessness of these stains. As for the *tathāgata* heart’s being equivalent to the perfect nature, many of the characteristics of the *tathāgata* heart in the *Uttaratantra* are also found in other texts as describing the perfect nature, such as being changeless suchness, unconditioned, unmistaken, nondual, unafflicted, stainless, space-like, and so on. Furthermore, the Indian texts (such as the two *Brhṛṭṭikās* on the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras, the *Bhagavatyaṃnāyānusāriṇi*, and some works by Ratnākaraśānti) that assert the Shentong model of the relationship between the three natures (the perfect nature’s being empty of both the imaginary and dependent natures) not only identify the perfect nature with *prajñāpāramitā* but also repeatedly equate it with changeless and naturally pure suchness, mind’s natural luminosity, the *tathāgata* heart, and so on, only obscured by adventitious stains and to be personally experienced by or as nonconceptual wisdom. Some of these texts add that it is precisely the manner of the perfect nature’s being empty of the other two natures that is the reason for the perfect nature’s being referred to as being the true emptiness (in the sense of a truly existent remainder that is empty of something else), which corresponds well to RGVV’s explanation of what true

emptiness means in the case of the tathāgata heart. Both these texts and RGVV say that this true emptiness avoids the extremes of superimposition and denial. Naturally, RGVV and some of these texts share the quote from the *Cūlasuññatasutta* (see J76 and Brunnhölzl 2011a, 35). In sum, SM 9 corresponds well to the classical Shentong position that the perfect nature is empty of both the imaginary and dependent natures. As mentioned above, the same can of course be said of the contents of *Uttaratantra* I.155 in particular and many other passages in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, which is further indicated by the equivalent terminologies and their relationships in the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV as already indicated. Finally, note that *kliṣṭaparatantra* in SM 9d could also be read as “the afflicted dependent.” This could either mean that the dependent is afflicted in nature (thus being identical in meaning to the above translation of this line) or that there is also a nonafflicted or pure dependent, as for example found in the ninth and tenth chapters of the *Mahāyānasamgraha*, which is basically an equivalent of the perfect nature. Some Tibetan *shentong* teachings indeed equate the pure dependent nature with the tathāgata heart and the impure dependent nature with its obscurations, but a correspondence to that in the *Uttaratantra* with its consistent description of the tathāgata heart and its obscurations being fundamentally different and disconnected is not something that is obvious.

1741. Skt. *viśvatra* can also mean “everywhere.” However, given the contrast to the accomplished disposition’s not existing always in the next lines and the close connection of this verse with *Uttaratantra* I.149, “always” seems preferable.
1742. Thus, unlike most other texts, SM defines the accomplished or unfolding disposition rather narrowly as existing only from the path of seeing onward (that is, once the naturally abiding disposition is seen directly for the first time on the first bhūmi) but not on the paths of accumulation and preparation.
1743. Since this threefold classification of the disposition is also found in verse 15 (*tathatāprakṛtāvasthasamānītatrigotrakaḥ*), it is probably Sajjana’s own. Though SM does not explain the differences between the disposition that is suchness and the other two, one may assume that the former refers to the disposition as such, that is, just as it is on its own (suchness) and without any classificatory divisions.
1744. Kano takes *anāyirekin* as a synonym of *avyatireka* (“do not contradict” or “do not exclude”), which may be suitable in terms of the meaning here. However, he relates it to J° *avyatirekataḥ* in *Uttaratantra* I.45b, while (as already pointed out) J’s reading is to be replaced by MB° *bhinnavṛttitaḥ*.
1745. See *Uttaratantra* I.3.
1746. See *Uttaratantra* I.26.
1747. See the interlinear glosses on verse 3.
1748. There follows an illegible passage in the manuscript.
1749. This could also be read as “is the goal in which awakening, the qualities, and activity are in their natural order” or “means that awakening, the qualities, and activity are in their natural order.”
1750. The double occurrence of *kva* after both *trikāyīm* and *dharmakāyatrāyīm* indicates a strong contrast between the two.
1751. See the interlinear glosses on 3b as well as verses 4 and 14.
1752. See *Uttaratantra* I.30ab and I.31.
1753. See *Uttaratantra* I.30cd and I.32–34. The naturally abiding disposition comes to life through four causes—faith in the dharma, supreme prajñā, the bliss of samādhi, and great compassion.
1754. See RGVV on I.130–31 (J67.12–15).

1755. See *Uttaratantra* I.35ab and 36–39. As RGVV on I.36 explains, the fruitions that consist of the four pāramitās of purity, self, bliss, and permanence are the respective opposites of, or remedies for, being hostile toward the mahāyāna dharma (those with great desire), lacking the supreme prajñā (tīrthikas), being afraid of saṃsāric suffering (śrāvakas), and lacking compassion (pratyekabuddhas).
1756. See *Uttaratantra* I.35cd and 40–41. One engages in the path by virtue of the function of the tathāgata heart, that is, weariness of suffering and striving for nirvāṇa.
1757. The phrase *sāstyasya* is ambiguous. It could also be read as “is related to those to be instructed.”
1758. See *Uttaratantra* I.45–46. See also the interlinear gloss after 20ab.
1759. According to RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.42–44, “endowment” consists of being endowed with three causal qualities (the causes of the purity of the dharmakāya, the attainment of buddha wisdom, and a tathāgata’s great compassion engaging all beings) and three resultant qualities (the supernatural knowledges, the wisdom of the termination of contaminations, and the termination of contaminations).
1760. See *Uttaratantra* I.47–50.
1761. See *Uttaratantra* I.51–83 (in particular I.66–78 on the changelessness of the tathāgata heart in bodhisattvas).
1762. See *Uttaratantra* I.84–94, which teaches that the tathāgata heart is inseparable from all the qualities of a perfect buddha and thus is identical to the result of the path (the dharmakāya or ultimate nirvāṇa).
1763. Compare the long note on verse 28, which says that everything conditioned is necessarily empty but luminous mind is not conditioned (and thus not empty).
1764. See verse 11.
1765. For the correlations of the nine examples of a buddha in a decaying lotus and so on with nine kinds of obscurations, see *Uttaratantra* I.130–43ab and RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.130–31. However, neither the *Uttaratantra* nor RGVV spell out the relationship of these nine obscurations with the ten topics as they are correlated here in verses 20–22 and their interlinear notes.
1766. See 17d.
1767. See the interlinear gloss on verse 17.
1768. See the interlinear glosses on verses 3 and 13.
1769. For the detailed correlations between the ten topics and the nine kinds of afflictions, see the introductory discussion of SM’s soteriological approach.
1770. Skt. *auddhatya* can also mean “insolence” and “disdain.”
1771. Skt. *nirveda* can also mean “disregard of worldly objects” or “disgust.”
1772. *Uttaratantra* I.143cd–52 presents the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition (“the threefold nature”) in relation to the nine examples. See also *Uttaratantra* I.28.
1773. According to the interlinear gloss, *bhāva* is used in the sense of *svabhāva* (the scribe of the manuscript deleted *sva-* probably for reasons of meter).
1774. The term *apavādadṛṣṭānta* means that the nine examples of a buddha in a decaying lotus and so on in *Uttaratantra* I.96–143ab teach the tathāgata heart by way of refuting or denying (*apavāda*) the real existence of its various obscurations, which can be removed.
1775. Again, the *Uttaratantra* does not spell out any correlations between the ten topics and the nine examples. However, in analogy to the correlation between the ten topics and the nine kinds of afflictions (which correspond to the nine examples) as outlined in verses 20–22, the ten topics and the nine examples can be correlated as they were in the introductory discussion.

1776. Thereafter, the manuscript is illegible but for the phrase *vidharmatā yukti*.
1777. That is, “the threefold nature” of dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition.
1778. According to the interlinear gloss on verse 26, “the summarized meaning” refers to *Uttaratantra* I.27.
1779. Skt. *vyakti* can also mean “distinctness.”
1780. This is followed by *eṣa* (*phalyām vādaneṣu?*) *nāsti* / and a (mostly illegible) reference to *Uttaratantra* I.28: *kāyaspharaṇādi . . . śa bahu . . .*
1781. That is, in *Uttaratantra* I.144–52.
1782. Note that this verse from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* still belongs to the explanation of the disposition in *Uttaratantra* I.149–52. The last section in the first chapter (*Uttaratantra* 153–67) begins right after RGVV’s comments on this verse (J73.9–78.20).
1783. See the interlinear note on verse 19, which explicitly says that the dharmadhātu is changeless because it is nonempty, unbound, inexhaustible, and unceasing, which is its intrinsic nature of nonconceptuality.
1784. Unlike ordinary states of mind—primary minds and mental factors (*citta* and *caitta*)—which are usually described as being contingent on four conditions (object condition, dominant condition, immediate condition, and causal condition), luminous mind is not conditioned by anything other; the sole factor for its continuous arising is nothing but a previous instance of that very luminous mind. Accordingly, by virtue of its being unconditioned, luminous mind is not empty, unlike conditioned phenomena, which do not exist on their own but are only adventitious stains that are just as unreal as clouds, dreams, and illusions. Thus, buddha nature does not arise from anything nor is it produced by anything. Rather, it is merely revealed by realizing that the stains are illusory and never really existed in the first place.
1785. See *Uttaratantra* I.158–59.
1786. This refers to the parts of the following syllogism: “The afflictiveness of afflictions, karma, and birth (subject of the probandum) is empty (probandum), because it is conditioned (reason), just like clouds, dreams, and illusions (examples).”
1787. This refers to the following passage in RGVV (J33.10–11): “For as long as they do not perceive the tathāgata element, which becomes apparent due to the cessation of all afflictiveness in terms of affliction, karma, and birth without exception, they are not free from the death that is an inconceivable transformation.” As mentioned before, Skt. *saṃudbhūta* can mean “becoming visible,” “arising,” and “being produced.”
1788. Skt. *pratyāyana* can also mean “to console.”
1789. This is the answer to the objection in RGVV (J77.9–10) preceding *Uttaratantra* I.156ff.: “If this basic element so difficult to behold is not an object in its entirety even for the supreme noble ones who dwell on the bhūmi that is completely free from attachment, what is the point of this instruction [on the basic element] for [anybody below these bodhisattvas,] beginning with naive beings?”
1790. See RGVV (J4.21–5.7), verses 3 and 13, and the interlinear glosses on verses 3 and 15.
1791. As the next two verses will explain, among the eight topics of awakening in *Uttaratantra* II.1–2, (1) nature (purity), (3) fruition (freedom), (4) function (one’s own welfare and that of others), and (6) manifestation (profundity, vastness, and magnanimity) refer to the qualities of awakening, while (2) cause (attainment), (5) endowment (the foundation of the function), (7) permanence (for as long as time lasts), and (8) inconceivability (in accordance with beings) serve to eliminate superimpositions onto awakening.
1792. This seems to refer to the two kinds of wisdom of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment that are mentioned as the causes of awakening in II.7 and in RGVV

- on “attainment” in II.1. Since these two wisdoms are causes, they must cease before their result (awakening) manifests.
1793. According to *Uttaratantra* III.1–3, the dharmakāya possesses the thirty-two qualities of freedom, which serve as the foundation of one’s own welfare. The rūpakāya is endowed with the thirty-two qualities of maturation, which serve as the foundation of the welfare of others.
1794. See RGVV on I.24: “The activity of the victors consists of the distinct unsurpassable activities of these very buddha attributes (such as the ten powers), continuing to give prophesying speeches about bodhisattvas in an endless, uninterrupted, and ceasing manner” (J21.11–13) and on I.26: “It is these very branches of awakening that cause the awakening of others—the fourth point of what causes awakening” (J25.13–15).
1795. See RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.14–16.
1796. The six topics of (1) deliverance, (2) the support of that deliverance, (3) the result of that support, (4) taking hold of that result, (5) the obscurations of such taking hold, and (6) the condition for eliminating these obscurations in *Uttaratantra* IV.5 are discussed in *Uttaratantra* IV.1–12. These six correspond to the aspect of “knowing variety.” The nine examples of Śakra and so on for buddha activity in *Uttaratantra* IV.13 are then explained in detail in IV.14–98 and correspond to the aspect of “knowing suchness.”
1797. Skt. *śailanirdeśa*. According to Takasaki (1989, ii), this term refers to the main body of the *Uttaratantra* or *Ratnagotravibhāga*, with *śaila* standing for *gotra* in the sense of a mountain that is a “mine” of jewels (*ratna*). Also, the term is reminiscent of the Tibetan “mountain dharma” (*ri chos*) genre, which consists of pithy instruction manuals on doing meditation retreats in remote mountain areas without performing elaborate rituals. Given its pithy contemplative approach, SM could certainly be considered as such a retreat manual. In addition, this characterization accords with Dsen Kawoché’s having requested a “death dharma” when he met Sajjana, upon which Sajjana taught him the *Uttaratantra* and the other four texts of Maitreya, possibly providing SM as the quintessence of what to contemplate in retreat or at death.
1798. *Uttaratantra* V.1–19.
1799. *Uttaratantra* V.20–24.
1800. Kano translates these two lines as “Followers [of the RGV] keep enjoying the blessing without interruption,” taking *drṣṭvā . . . vartante* to mean “keep doing.” Another option he gives is “After reading the [verses of] blessing, reciters [of the verses] continuously stand by [the blessing].”
1801. In Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, *ādinava* can also mean “evil,” “misery,” “danger,” and “wretchedness.”
1802. Skt. *svakriyā* could also be read as “means/expedient for oneself.”
1803. *Uttaratantra* V.25. For the first three lines of verse 37, compare *Uttaratantra* V.16.
1804. CMW *sel* emended to *gśal*.
1805. In SM, as already mentioned, and also in CMW, these are the three natures of the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition, as listed in *Uttaratantra* I.143cd–144/146cd–147.
1806. Thus, the first pith instruction refers to the first three vajra points (the three jewels), the second one to the fourth vajra point (the basic element), and the third one to the last three vajra points (awakening, the qualities, and activity). As for the term “conception” (Skt. *vikalpa*, Tib. *rnam rtog*) in the third instruction, it is obviously used here in the vaster Buddhist sense of referring to the entirety of the dualistic constructions, appearances, and experiences of the deluded minds of ordinary beings (the same goes for “thought”). This wider sense of the term is particularly common in the Yogācāra system, as for example in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, which presents the entirety of

phenomena as being nothing but the multiple expressions of “false imagination,” all of which are equivalent to adventitious stains. In that vein, *Uttaratantra* I.63cd says that all adventitious stains arise from false imagination. Also, RGVV (J12) explains: “‘Conception’ refers to improper mental engagement, the cause of the arising of karma and the afflictions. By virtue of realizing the natural cessation of this [improper mental engagement], there is no manifestation of the duo [of karma and the afflictions] or conception. Consequently, there is absolutely no arising of suffering. This is called ‘the reality of the cessation of suffering.’ However, it is not that the reality of the cessation of suffering is explained by virtue of the destruction of any phenomenon.” On the other hand, *Uttaratantra* V.14 differentiates between afflictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations, saying that the latter are “conceptions in terms of the three spheres.” The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 589–90) further comments on the meaning of “conception,” explaining that the obscurations to be relinquished by bodhisattvas are nothing but conceptions in the widest sense, and also resolves what V.14 says: “Bodhisattvas do not cultivate the remedy for the latencies of the afflictions in a deliberate way because they do not strive for the peace of having relinquished these [latencies]. You may wonder, ‘What do they relinquish then?’ They only relinquish the conceptions that represent cognitive obscurations. For this reason, it is said that the vinaya of bodhisattvas is what tames nothing but conceptions. You may ask, ‘Do they not relinquish the latencies of the afflictions at all?’ This is not the case. For when they deliberately relinquish the antagonistic factors of the bodhisattva path [of familiarization] (the 108 conceptions that are cognitive obscurations), they simultaneously relinquish the 108 latencies of the afflictions [too]. Thus, at this time, they do not have to cultivate an uncontaminated remedy for the latencies of the afflictions apart from [their path of familiarization]. For, in terms of general isolates, conceptions are cognitive obscurations, but they also represent the afflictive obscurations of bodhisattvas. Therefore, through primarily relinquishing conceptions, as a matter of course, [bodhisattvas] also relinquish the afflictive obscurations. With this in mind, venerable Vasubandhu declared [in his *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* on I.5; D4026, fol. 132a.3]: ‘The afflictions of bodhisattvas are conceptions.’” Note that the last sentence is also found in Asvabhāva’s *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāraṭīkā* on VIII.1a (D4029, fol. 63a.7–63b.1). On this, see also CMW’s saying that all factors to be relinquished on the five paths are conceptions (418), that the two obscurations are conceptions (420), and that the three main afflictions desire, hatred, and ignorance (and thus by implication all afflictions) consist of nothing but latent and manifest conceptions (495). The Fifth Shamarpa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 274–75) explains conception as follows: “[Conception] is what obscures the disposition for nirvāṇa (the ālaya-wisdom). It has the nature of being the consciousness that entails the dualistic appearances of apprehender and apprehended. This possesses [many] names, such as ālaya-consciousness, impure dependent [nature], nonafflicted ignorance, sentient being, and false imagination. Just as dreams arise from being asleep, certain coarse [forms of] apprehender and apprehended [arise] from this [conception or false imagination and] are seized as a self by the afflicted mind. Through this, afflictions (such as attachment) [arise], which in turn lead to accumulating various karmas. Thus, we experience suffering. [The conceptions that] apprehend by conflating terms and their referents cling to certain more subtle [forms of apprehender and apprehended] as being different in substance, same in substance, and so on. By virtue of that, the conceptions in terms of the three spheres arise and one falls into [the nirvāṇa of personal] peace. In this way, cloud-like adventitious stains obscure space-like suchness.” As for sentient

beings' being equated here by the Fifth Shamarpa with the obscurations, ignorance, and so on, see also CMW (416) and the related note.

1807. CMW obviously follows RGVV on I.20.

1808. CMW emends *drod* to {*dri med*}.

1809. Compare RW's explaining the Buddha as "the self-arisen wisdom in which thoughts are terminated through realizing the actuality of the luminosity of your own mind."

1810. I.21ab. Note that the translation of verses from the *Uttaratantra* in CMW follows Ut (D) with occasional emendations according to RGVV (D) and RGVV (P). Thus, parts of the verses sometimes differ from my translation of these verses from the Sanskrit as found in my translation of RGVV in this volume.

1811. Tib. *blo las 'das pa*.

1812. Numbers in "{ }" in this translation refer to Anonymous 2011.

1813. CMW *rtog pa* emended to *rtogs pa*.

1814. See I.149/152–152/155.

1815. This second main point of CMW's introduction generally refers to *Uttaratantra* I.23–158, but the presentation of the basic element through ten points (I.29–95ab) is discussed below under "C. The condition's being condensed in the Buddha" in its combined subpoints (1) and (2) (for details, see there).

1816. CMW *ngo bo nyid kyi* emended to *ngo bo nyid kyi*s.

1817. See I.30–31. The *Uttaratantra* speaks of a wish-fulfilling jewel instead of gold, using it to illustrate the power of the basic element, while water symbolizes the moisture of compassion. However, the examples of space, gold, and water appear with the same or similar meanings as in CMW in many other Yogācāra texts, such as the concluding lines of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (299–300), *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XI.13, *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.16, Asaṅga's *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (D4038, vol. zi, fols. 14b.5–15a.1 and 123b.5–124a.1), Vasubandhu's *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti* (D4028, fol. 38a.3–38b.5), *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (D4026, fol. 168a.3–6), and *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* (D4027, fol. 4b.4–6), as well as Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, vol. mi, fols. 75a.3–5 and 174a.1–174b.1) and *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 40.5–41.15; D4032, fols. 214a.6–215a.2). For details, see Brunnhölzl 2012b, 440n781.

1818. I.154/157.

1819. CMW's version of this line reads: "With the treasure of jewels lodged within the mind of sentient beings . . ." Throughout CMW, all quotations from the *Uttaratantra* are translated by following the Tibetan canonical version.

1820. I.113/116.

1821. CMW *rnam rtog gi dri ma glo bur ba 'di dang rang sems dri ma med pa yin* could literally mean "buddhahood refers to these adventitious stains of thoughts and one's own mind being stainless" or "buddhahood refers to these adventitious stains of thoughts and one's own stainless mind," none of which makes very much sense. Given the context and the fact that it is one of the particular features of CMW to use the word *dang* in many places where it makes no sense and is redundant, the *dang* here is omitted.

1822. CMW has *don dam ka dag de* in parentheses.

1823. In analogy to the sentence in the text below about there being nothing to be removed, CMW *la* emended to *las*.

1824. Compare the very similar explanation on the three kāyas in RW (300).

1825. I.150ab/153ab.

1826. In analogy to the next sentence, CMW *rang bzhin chos sku rtogs pa* emended to *rang bzhin rtogs pa chos sku*.



1827. This is another name of the Indian god of wealth, Kubera.
1828. As is clear from the preceding paragraph, the third main point (C) of CMW's introduction refers to the fifth, sixth, and seventh vajra points in the *Uttaratantra*. However, CMW's explanation of the subpoints C1 and C2 discusses awakening (vajra point 5) in combination with the basic element (vajra point 4), saying that the cause and the fruition are not different. Subpoints C1 and C2 are explained together in eight parts (essence, cause, fruition, function, qualities/purpose, resolving its manifestation, resolving its being everlasting, and resolving its inconceivability), which correspond to the eight topics through which awakening is explained in the second chapter of the *Uttaratantra*. However, explicitly or implicitly, this explanation also includes all ten topics through which the basic element is presented in *Uttaratantra* I.29–95ab. As already mentioned, the ten topics of the basic element and the eight topics of awakening share the six topics of nature, cause, fruition, function, endowment (with qualities), and manifestation, with the remaining four and two, respectively, being elaborations of the sixth one. Among the remaining four topics that discuss the basic element, the three topics "phases," "all-pervasiveness," and "inseparability" are included in this section of CMW at the beginning of C1–2, while the topic "changeless qualities" is included in C1–2b and C1–2e. The topic "inseparability" is also discussed under C3. The combined approach to both the basic element and awakening in this section of CMW is further highlighted by its use of citations from the first chapter of the *Uttaratantra* that are related to the basic element.
1829. CMW *byang chub* (which would be exactly the same as the next point) is emended to *rigs* (it could also be *kham*s—"basic element"—but then "basic element" would appear twice in this heading).
1830. I.155ab/158ab.
1831. In analogy to the passage in the text below about the unconditioned basic element that cannot be disconnected, CMW *bral* is extended to *bral shes pa*.
1832. I.155ab/158cd.
1833. CMW *kyi* emended to *kyis*.
1834. CMW *kyi* emended to *kyis*.
1835. In this section, there are two more cases of "scrutinizing thoughts" (*rtog pa gzhig pa*). However, these two cases are spelled *bshig pa* and *gshig pa*, respectively, with *bshig pa* meaning "to destroy" or "to annihilate." Though in Mahāmudrā meditation the scrutinizing of thoughts through nonconceptual wisdom in the sense of directly looking at their nature does not mean to "destroy" thoughts, through looking at their nature, thoughts dissolve naturally on their own. Thus, "scrutinizing" and "dissolving" are very closely related here. Still, for the sake of consistency, all three cases are translated as "scrutinizing." Furthermore, as CMW says in the text below, during the process of thoughts' being scrutinized by nonconceptual wisdom, there is still some effort, whereas here, once they have been scrutinized and thus have dissolved, there is no more effort.
1836. In accordance with the passage in the text above, CMW *bshig* is emended to *gzhig*.
1837. As mentioned already, "separating the pure essence (Tib. *dvangs ma*) from the dross (Tib. *snyigs ma*)" is a typical vajrayāna presentation, referring to distinguishing between wisdom and ordinary dualistic consciousness. Also, CMW's passage here is very similar to Dzogchen instructions about distinguishing between mind (*sems*) and basic awareness (*rig pa*).
1838. As above, CMW *gshig* is emended to *gzhig*.
1839. I.154a/157a.
1840. I.154b/157b.

1841. “Able to remove” is added by CMW {‘byin thub pa}.
1842. CMW *rtsol ba bya* emended to *btsal bar bya*.
1843. Given that CMW’s introduction accords so much with teachings on Mahāmudrā, it is quite peculiar that CMW here uses the term *tha mal gyi shes pa* not in its classical sense as the key term of Mahāmudrā (referring to mind’s nature in its natural uncontrived state, and then usually translated as “ordinary mind”) but in the sense of the truly ordinary states of mind that obscure mind’s nature.
1844. According to *Uttaratantra* II.45cd, these are afflictive obscurations, cognitive obscurations, and obscurations of meditative absorption.
1845. Note that this paragraph parallels the four phases in the discussion under C1–2b.
1846. In accordance with this sentence’s paralleling *Uttaratantra* I.81–82, *zag med kyi ye shes* is emended to *zag med kyi las*.
1847. CMW *ye shes kyi rtog pas* emended to *ye shes kyiis rtog pa’i*.
1848. CMW *ngo mthar spangs* emended to *ngo bo mtha’ spangs pa*.
1849. This sentence represents a summary of *Uttaratantra* II.45–46.
1850. On the manifestations of the two rūpakāyas’ being compared to the moon and its reflection in water, see *Uttaratantra* III.39.
1851. CMW *brtag pa* emended to *rtag pa*.
1852. See also *Uttaratantra* II.31–33.
1853. CMW *’khor bas cha bsdus pa* emended to *’khor ba’i char ma bsdus pa*. *Uttaratantra* II.69c and II.71cd say that the sphere of the Buddha is not contained in either saṃsāra or nirvāṇa, and II.72cd specifies that this refers to the two rūpakāyas.
1854. Tib. *ma ’dres pa* literally means “unmixed,” so these qualities are explained as not being mixed or blended with the mind streams of others, such as śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.
1855. Compare *Uttaratantra* I.43–44.
1856. CMW *snang bar kun* emended to *snang ba kun*.
1857. CMW *ye shes kyi* emended to *ye shes kyiis*.
1858. CMW *ye shes kyi shes pa* emended to *ye shes kyiis shes pa*.
1859. CMW *sems can gyis* emended to *sems can kyi* (*sems can la* would be even better).
1860. II.10d.
1861. *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* II.10 speaks about the four characteristics of the virtue of bodhisattvas due to which they outshine śrāvakas, with the last characteristic’s being that their virtue is “masterful.” According to the commentaries by Vasubandhu (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*, D4026, fol. 136b2) and Asvabhāva (*Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana*, D4029, fol. 50a5), this virtue is masterful because it does not even become exhausted in the nirvāṇa without any remainder of the skandhas. Sthiramati’s commentary *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, fols. 38b.7–39a.1) says that on the budhabhūmi, bodhisattvas attain all consummate qualities such as the powers, fearlessnesses, and unique buddha qualities, while the skandhas subside. Even though buddhas have entered the nirvāṇa in which all remainders of the skandhas without exception have been relinquished, these qualities never become exhausted or reach an end.
1862. This paragraph refers to *Uttaratantra* IV.1–11.
1863. This refers to *Uttaratantra* IV.12.
1864. An unknown amount of text is missing here at the beginning of CMW’s actual comments on the *Uttaratantra* since p. 423 in the hard copy of CMW starts in the middle of an unknown argument (probably about seemingly real entities being empty, while buddha nature is ultimately existent). This argument is phrased in terms of the triad of “basis of intention,” “purpose,” and “invalidation of the explicit statement” (the typical

- three criteria that are considered to determine a teaching as being of expedient meaning). The first two points of this triad are obviously missing in the text, but the extent of the entire missing passage is not clear. I tried to gain access to a copy of the original manuscript in the possession of the head of the Drikung Kagyü School, Chetsang Rinpoche, in order to see whether the passage in question as well as two more are missing in the original too, but this proved to be impossible.
1865. In accordance with RGVV (DP), CMW *rang bzhin gyis rtag rtag pa'i chos nyid ni* emended to *rang bzhin gyis dag rtag rtag pa'i chos can ni*.
1866. As already mentioned, this verse is not found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. It is a slightly varied rendering of the Tibetan version of an anonymous verse quoted in RGVV (J37). As stated before, Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé's commentary on the Third Karmapa's *Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart* (Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas 1990, 133) says that this verse is from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*.
1867. D258, fol. 248b.2.
1868. Given the context and in accordance with the phrasing of this heading in the text below, CMW *mtshan nyid* emended to *mtshan*.
1869. CMW śāstri.
1870. This is a slightly paraphrased version of Sthiramati, *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭikā*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 5.5–6 and 250.9 (D4032, fols. 192b.3–4 and 288a.5). The seven greatnesses of the mahāyāna are described in the same text (Pandeya ed., 1999, 250.10–16; D4032, fols. 288a.5–288b.2) as follows: (1) Greatness of focus means that bodhisattvas focus on the vast collection of mahāyāna scriptures, such as the prajñāpāramitāsūtra in one hundred thousand lines. (2) Greatness of accomplishment is the accomplishment of one's own welfare and that of others. (3) Greatness of wisdom is the realization of both personal and phenomenal identitylessness. (4) Greatness of vigor is to make efforts in many difficult tasks on the path for three incalculable eons. (5) Greatness of skill in means refers to bodhisattvas' not abiding in either saṃsāra or nirvāṇa. (6) Greatness of attainment means to attain countless infinite qualities, such as the powers, fearlessnesses, and unique buddha qualities. (7) Greatness of enlightened activity means to accomplish the deeds of a buddha through displaying awakening for as long as saṃsāra lasts. The same seven are also found in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XIX.59–60, which varies in explaining (4) as bodhisattvas from the first bhūmi onward being permitted to commit the seven negative actions of body and speech, because they, due to their stainless bodhicitta, never forsake any sentient being and are not subject to afflictions. (5) is called "perfect accomplishment" and means to attain the thirty-two qualities of the dharmakāya. (7) refers to the effortless, spontaneous, and ceaseless activity for the sake of all beings. GC (11.13–19) says that these seven greatnesses are also taught in the *Uttaratantra*: (1) in V.15cd, (2) in I.39ab, (3) in I.13b, (4)–(5) in II.62ab, (6) in the chapter on the qualities, and (7) in the chapter on enlightened activity. Likewise, the threefold greatness that is the aim of the path in *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* I.43ab is also explained in the *Uttaratantra*. (1) Great mind is found in IV.2c, (2) great relinquishment in IV.2d, and (3) great realization in I.26a.
1871. I.7. The *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (D4026, fol. 132b.1–2) comments that sentient beings are matured through the vastness of the power (of a buddha's) being demonstrated because beings then make efforts due to their faith in this power. Teaching the profound develops nonconceptual (wisdom). Therefore, this mahāyāna, in which these two features are taught, is the means for unsurpassable wisdom. For, through these two features, it respectively matures sentient beings and matures one's own buddha attributes.

1872. These three are (1) being a definiendum, (2) being established based on its own instances, and (3) not functioning as a definiendum for something other than its own definition.

1873. Given the context, CMW *btags pa ba ma yin te mtshan nyid pa yin na* is emended to *btags pa ba yin te mtshan nyid pa ma yin na*.

1874. Note that CMW does not answer the third question in the text above: "If it is a nominal [tantra] and does not actually fulfill the definition [of tantra], what valid cognition is there that invalidates the explicit [expression 'tantra']?"

1875. Among the two syllables of the Sanskrit word *śāstra* for treatise, *śās* means "teaching," "correcting," "punishing," or "ordering," while *trā* means "protecting" or "rescuing." As for its Tibetan equivalent *bstan bcos*, *bstan* means "teaching" and *bcos* means "restoring," "mending," "curing," and "correcting." All of these meanings are used in the explanations of this term in CMW in the text below and in Sthiramati's *Madhyānta-vibhāgaṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 4.7–20; D4032, fol. 190a.3–190b.2), which says, "Now it is to be explained what the nature of a treatise is and why it is called 'treatise.' A treatise consists of the cognizances that appear as the collections of names, words, and letters. Or a treatise consists of the cognizances that appear as the special sounds (or terms) that cause one to attain supramundane wisdom. How do cognizances guide one or express [something]? The cognizances of the listener arise due to the cognizance of the guide and explainer. Therefore, there is no flaw here. [By virtue of a treatise,] learning dharma practitioners give rise to specific [forms of] discipline, samādhi, and prajñā, therefore refraining from unfavorable actions of body, speech, and mind and engaging in favorable actions. Or it is a treatise because it is tenable as [fulfilling] the [etymological] defining characteristic of a treatise. The defining characteristic of a treatise is being a pith instruction (*upadeśa*) that, through repeatedly bringing it to mind, relinquishes all afflictions including their latent tendencies and rescues one from the lower realms that are frightful due to all kinds of intense, uninterrupted, and long-lasting suffering as well as from [saṃsāric] existence [in general]. Therefore, because it corrects the enemies of the afflictions and rescues (*saṃtāra*) one from the lower realms and [saṃsāric] existence, it has the defining characteristic of a treatise. These [two features of correcting afflictions and rescuing from saṃsāra] exist in the entire mahāyāna and everything that explains it but not elsewhere. Thus, this [text] is a treatise. On this, it is said:

What corrects the enemies of the afflictions without exception

And rescues from existences in lower realms

Is a treatise by virtue of the qualities of correcting and protecting.

These two [qualities] do not exist in other systems."

The variant readings in this passage are as follows. "Guide" (D4032 *mdzad*); "cognizances of the listener" (D *nyan pa'i rnam par rig pa rnam*s Pandeya "instructions" [*prajñāptināṃ*]); "the guide" (D *mdzad pa po*); "correcting [*śās*] learning dharma practitioners" (Pandeya *śiṣya dharmiko* D *slob ma 'chos pa'i phyir*); "through having familiarized" (Pandeya omits this phrase); "there is no flaw here" (D adds "It is a treatise because it sustains learners" [*slob ma 'chos pa'i phyir bstan bcos te /*]); "it is a treatise because it is tenable as [fulfilling] the [etymological] defining characteristic of a treatise" (Pandeya *śāsanāc chāstraṃ* / D *bstan bcos kyi mtshan nyid du 'thad pa'i phyir bstan bcos te /*); "a pith instruction that, through repeatedly bringing it to mind, relinquishes all afflictions including their latent tendencies" (Pandeya *yad upadeśo bhasamāna sarvakleśaprahāṇāya*° D *lung mnos pa goms par byas pas bag changs dang bcas pa'i nyon mongs*); "it corrects" (Pandeya *śāsana* D *'chos pa*). Note that the concluding verse in

- this passage is also quoted in Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti* (P5562, fol. 143a.4) and Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* (la Vallée Poussin ed., 3.3–4).
1876. CMW *sgra'i rkyen byin pas*.
1877. Throughout CMW, "the commentary" refers to RGVV.
1878. Since CMW's actual comments on the *Uttaratantra* never quote the pertinent verses before explaining them, I inserted them for the reader's convenience.
1879. CMW *dka' bas* emended to *dka' ba'i*.
1880. CMW *dka' bas* emended to *dka' ba'i*.
1881. CMW *sa bcu bar la gnas* emended to *sa bcu la gnas*. According to the comments on *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* IV.39–59 by Āryavimuktisena and Haribhadra (whom virtually all Tibetan commentators follow), bodhisattvas who are of sharpest faculties and exhibit the corresponding signs of irreversibility are irreversible with regard to achieving buddhahood already from the path of preparation onward. Those who are of medium faculties and exhibit the corresponding signs are irreversible from the paths of seeing and familiarization onward. Those who are of dull faculties and exhibit the corresponding signs are irreversible only from the eighth bhūmi onward. See also CMW in the text below (462).
1882. "Five aspects" refers to the five aspects of the constitutions of those to be guided and so on in the last three lines of *Uttaratantra* IV.1, which is quoted right below in the text.
1883. CMW *dang* emended to *kyi*.
1884. These are (1) the five skandhas, (2) the eighteen dhātus, (3) the twelve āyatanas, (4) the four realities of the noble ones, (5) dependent origination, and (6) what is and what is not the case.
1885. In addition to CMW's speaking of the ultimate and the seeming aspects of the three jewels, YDC (242) says that according to the former mighty lords of supreme knowledge (interlinear note: Chaba [Chökyi Sengé]), all seven vajra points are twofold in terms of ultimate and seeming. The ultimate Buddha consists of the expanse and wisdom that are free from all stains, while the seeming consists of the two rūpakāyas. The ultimate dharma consists of cessation and the path, while the seeming consists of the words of the Buddha. The ultimate saṃgha consists of the noble learners who are endowed with the qualities of awareness and liberation, while the seeming consists of ordinary beings who have properly entered the teachings. The ultimate basic element consists of the naturally abiding disposition, while the seeming consists of the unfolding disposition. The division of awakening corresponds to what was said about the Buddha; or the ultimate awakening consists of the wisdom of knowing the suchness of the expanse, while the seeming consists of the wisdom of knowing the variety of the ten powers and so on. The ultimate qualities consist of the qualities of freedom, while the seeming consist of the qualities of maturation. The ultimate enlightened activity consists of all-accomplishing wisdom, while the seeming consists of the three kinds of emanation that arise from it. However, though these divisions are the case in general, the meaning that is found in the commentaries on the intention of the *Uttaratantra* is not clearly stated in such a way. GC (14.13–22) also speaks of the ultimate and seeming aspects of the vajra points. The ultimate three jewels are taught in *Uttaratantra* I.21. The seeming Buddha is taught through the seeming kāyas for the welfare of others (the rūpakāyas), while the seeming dharma and saṃgha are found in I.20. Through teaching the tathāgata heart that is explained as the principle of emptiness, the ultimate suchness with stains is explained. The seeming suchness with stains or tathāgata heart is explained through the unfolding disposition, such as in I.40ab. In the sixth topic of awakening (manifestation), the svābhāvikakāya is taught as ultimate awakening, while the two rūpakāyas are

the seeming one. The ultimate qualities are the thirty-two qualities of freedom, while the seeming qualities are the thirty-two of maturation. The ultimate enlightened activity is the dharmakāya as the sovereign of such activity, while the seeming one consists of the two rūpakāyas. GC (19.17–20.9) also identifies the seven vajra points in general as follows. The Buddha refers to the svābhāvikakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmāṇakāya, with the latter two being labeled “buddha” due to their similarity with a buddha in order to give rise to respect for masters and physical representations of buddhas. Furthermore, the name “buddha” is applied to buddhas on the path of nonlearning and bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi, and RGVV also refers to bodhisattvas from the eighth bhūmi onward as buddhas. Among the ten meanings of the term “dharma,” here three apply: the path, nirvāṇa, and the discourses of the Buddha. The saṃgha refers to the ultimate saṃgha that consists of liberation and cessation. The psychophysical supports for that—noble bodhisattvas, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas—are also referred to as saṃgha. The meaning of the term “basic element” is the source that is the substantial cause of the final result. Here, it is explained as the disposition for the pure appearances of the three jewels and the impure appearances of saṃsāra, respectively. “Awakening” applies to flaws’ having been purified and phenomena’s having been realized. Thus, like the term “buddha,” it applies to everybody from the eighth bhūmi onward. The qualities refer to those such as the ten powers that clearly distinguish a buddha from other teachers. They also apply to everybody from the eighth bhūmi onward. Enlightened activity means that everything from worldly virtue up through achieving buddhahood is to be accomplished through the assistance of others who are buddhas. As a case of labeling the cause with the name of the result, the causes of this activity—wisdom and compassion—are also called “enlightened activity.”

1886. CMW *gzhir* emended to *bzhir*.

1887. Compared to this phrase at the beginning of RGVV’s comments on I.26, CMW omits “topical points” but adds “they are definite as four.” The Tibetan of citations from RGVV in CMW usually follow RGVV (D). However, for reasons of consistency and easy identification of such citations in my translation of RGVV, all citations in CMW are rendered in accordance with my translation of RGVV from the Sanskrit (as in this case, significant variants are noted). Also, when CMW provides only the beginning and the ending words of a quote, the English rendering and the Tibetan often do not match since the word order is different in English.

1888. As mentioned before, the *Uttaratantra* teaches two different models of the causal relationship between the seven vajra points. Model (1) in I.3 identifies the three jewels and the basic element as causes (or as three conditions and one cause, respectively) and the last three vajra points as results. Model (2) in I.23 and I.26 as well as RGVV on I.2 describes the basic element as the cause, the last three vajra points as conditions, and the three jewels as results. The beginning of Ngog Lotsāwa’s commentary (Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 2a.2–6a.5) elaborates on these two models and calls them (1) “the cycle of the nonabiding nirvāṇa” and (2) “the cycle of the three jewels” (for details, see Kano 2006, 136–47 and 370–82). YDC (244–45) uses almost identical terms for these two cycles (“the cycle of nirvāṇa” and “the cycle of the three jewels”) in terms of the relationship between the seven vajra points and their definite number but otherwise differs in several points from Ngog. (1) In terms of the cycle of the three jewels, the vajra points are definite as seven—the three that are results and the four that are the cause and the conditions. The three jewels are definite as the three results because they are the objects of refuge that are the results of those who wish for liberation, who are definite as having three dispositions (śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas).

Or, the three jewels are gradually accomplished on the last three bhūmis (see RGVV; J3–4), while all three are perfectly accomplished on the buddhabhūmi. As for the cause and the conditions being definite as four, the basic element is the substantial cause, while the remaining three vajra points are the cooperating conditions. Here, there are two modes in which this happens: (a) the close causes included in a single mind stream and (b) the distant causes included in different mind streams. (1a) The basic element from the path of accumulation up through the seventh bhūmi is the cause. The triad of profound awakening on the eighth bhūmi, the qualities of wisdom on the ninth bhūmi, and consummate enlightened activity on the tenth bhūmi represents the three conditions. Through these four that are the cause and the conditions coming together at the end of the continuum of the ten bhūmis, the three jewels are directly accomplished. (1b) The basic element in one's own mind stream during the time of its not having awakened is the cause. The triad of awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity that has already manifested in the mind stream of someone else represents the conditions. This is so for the following reasons. By virtue of profound awakening, that other awakened person teaches one the profound and by virtue of the qualities, the vast. By virtue of enlightened activity, one is made to directly engage in these two. In that way, the three jewels are accomplished progressively by virtue of the awakening of the basic element in one's own mind stream. There is no flaw in three results arising from a single cause because this single cause accomplishes those three results through the power of the three conditions—by virtue of the condition of awakening, the Buddha is accomplished; by virtue of the qualities, the dharma is accomplished; and by virtue of enlightened activity, the saṃgha is accomplished. This is what the former masters say. Nevertheless, the three jewels that are the ultimate results are one and only labeled as three. Also, the meaning of attainment here refers only to what has been present primordially in a self-arisen manner finally becoming manifest. (2) According to the cycle of nirvāṇa, the three of awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity represent the results. Among them, awakening is one's own welfare, while the sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya promote the welfare of those to be guided who are close and distant, respectively. Thus, in terms of the two welfares, the results are definite as three. The basic element is the cause, and the three jewels are the conditions. For, by virtue of the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha performing the activities of the teacher, the path, and the companions, the basic element awakens and thus is accomplished as the results that consist of awakening and so on. It may be objected that the basic element is not tenable as a cause because it is the expanse—emptiness. Though it is not tenable as a cause that produces something, it is suitable as a cause of becoming free because the three jewels are nothing but the stained basic element's having become stainless. Nor is it the case that the three jewels and the three of awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity are repetitious because there is the difference of their being either causes or results in the context of these two cycles. See also the presentation of these two cycles in a text by Sherab Jungné (Tib. Shes rab 'byung gnas; 1187–1241), the nephew and successor of Jigden Sumgön (Roberts 2011, 398–400).

1889. CMW *lta bus* emended to *lta bu'i*.

1890. For this paragraph, compare RGVV's (J3–4) quote from the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and its subsequent comments.

1891. CMW *la rtog pa* emended to *las rtogs pa*.

1892. J13. CMW reads "All this afflictiveness of all sentient beings through the three [kinds of] afflictions arises by virtue of not realizing the single basic element in just the way it is in true reality."

1893. CMW *don du gnyer bar byed pa* emended to *don du gnyer bar bya ba*.
1894. CMW emends *dang* with {*kyang*}.
1895. *Uttaratantra* I.26.
1896. CMW *dgu* emended to *rgyu*.
1897. J3. CMW replaces “in brief” by “thus” and omits “these seven vajra points.”
1898. This is the first of three stages of the fourth level (called “supreme dharma”) of the path of preparation. However, it is not clear how this relates to the topic here.
1899. CMW *khog pa* usually refers only to the trunk of the body, but the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, from which this explanation is taken (see the text below), reads *kāya*.
1900. *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 7.2–3; D4032, fol. 191b.6–7.
1901. CMW emends *pre* to {*pral*}.
1902. *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 7.4–7; D4032, fol. 191b.7–192a.2. CMW omits the phrase “If the disciples understand . . . detailed discussion.” The example of the horse is also frequently used in commentaries on the *Abhisamayālamkāra*, beginning with Dharmamitra’s *Prasphuṭapadā* (D3796, fol. 28b.4–6).
1903. As in both headings here, CMW frequently misspells *tshig bcad* as *tshig bshad* or *tshig shad*. All such cases are tacitly emended.
1904. CMW *yin pa’i* emended to *yin pas*.
1905. In accordance with RGVV and the identical correct phrase in CMW (434) in the text below, CMW *byung ba’i shes par shes rab kyis* is emended to *byung ba’i shes pas*.
1906. CMW *zhes pa’i* emended to *zhes pas*.
1907. CMW emends *de thob* with {*rjes thob*}.
1908. CMW *stam pa a na ya*. The emendation is tentative (meaning “Bring a pole”) in relation to the two following questions.
1909. CMW’s phrase *ga pa khyer la shog pa’i ga pa ’dug* seems to consist of these two questions (*pa’i* makes no sense here), with *ga pa khyer la shog* often being used in Kham dialect as meaning “Where should I bring it?”
1910. CMW *cis* emended to *zhes*.
1911. CMW omits the phrase “the establishment as vajra points,” but it is inserted here in accordance with the wording of the actual heading in the text below.
1912. CMW *bstan pa* emended to *brtan pa*.
1913. CMW omits “teach . . . relinquished.”
1914. D224, fols. 171b.6–172a.2.
1915. The three sentences are: “Ānanda, the Tathāgata is indemonstrable. He cannot be seen with the eyes. Ānanda, the dharma is inexpressible. It cannot be heard with the ears. Ānanda, the saṃgha is unconditioned. It cannot be worshipped with body or mind” (J2).
1916. CMW *spyi* emended to *byed*.
1917. CMW *med* emended to *mdo*.
1918. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fol. 8a.4–5.
1919. The three names in the quotation from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvasūtra* in RGVV (J2) are “the ultimate,” “the basic element of sentient beings,” and “the tathāgata heart.”
1920. In accordance with the corresponding sentences above and below in the text, CMW *spong* is emended to *yong*.
1921. CMW *bstan pa* emended to *brtan pa*.
1922. Despite RGVV’s introduction identifying the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvātāranirdeśa* as the general source for the seventh vajra point, CMW seems to refer here to the *Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvātārājñānālokālamkārasūtra* because this sūtra is the source



- of the nine specific examples for buddha activity (which is also acknowledged in *Uttaratantra* IV.78–79/81–82).
1923. RGVV (P) *rnam*.
1924. There is no further explanation of this heading in the text below, obviously because it was already discussed at the end of CMW's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.1 (CMW, 430).
1925. CMW *dang* emended to *nang*.
1926. In accordance with a parallel phrase in the text below, CMW *rgyud bzhi'i mdo 'das pa'i mdo dngos* is emended to *gleng gzhi'i mdo 'das pa'i mdo dngos*. CMW provides no comments on RGVV's immediately preceding phrase "the first three points should [also] be understood from the introductory section of the *Āryadhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*" but comments on the corresponding quote from that sūtra.
1927. See CMW (449–52).
1928. This represents the traditional Indo-Tibetan hermeneutical etymology of the term *bhagavān*, literally meaning "fortunate," "prosperous," "happy," "glorious," "illustrious," "divine," "adorable," "venerable," or "holy." *Bhaga* usually means good fortune, happiness, welfare, prosperity, dignity, majesty, distinction, excellence, beauty, or love, but Buddhist commentaries interpret the term as having the two meanings of (1) "destroying" and (2) "being fortunate or rich." The meaning (3) "transcending" derives from a peculiar interpretation of the ending *-vān*. In detail, (1) the *Bhagavān* has destroyed or overcome the four *māras*—the *māra* of the *skandhas*, the *māra* of the afflictions, the *māra* of death, and the *devaputramāra* (clinging to meditative experiences). (2) Among his six fortunes, riches, or qualities, (a) sovereignty or mastery refers to having overpowered all afflictive and cognitive obscurations and being the sole sovereign or master of the awakened mind. (b) He is endowed with "the dharmas," that is, the qualities of a buddha (such as the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the eighteen unique qualities). From among the five buddha wisdoms, this represents dharmadhātu wisdom. (c) "Fame" refers to the two *rūpakāyas* of a buddha since it is through these two (and not the invisible dharmakāya) that buddhas are known in the world. Among the five wisdoms, this quality corresponds to mirrorlike wisdom. (d) "Glory" refers to the wisdom of equality. (e) "Wisdom" specifically indicates discriminating wisdom. (f) "Effort" stands for all-accomplishing wisdom. (3) The syllable *-vān* in *bhagavān* here is interpreted as representing the *-vāṇi* in "nirvāṇa." Thus, the *Bhagavān* has the quality of having attained the "nonabiding nirvāṇa" of dwelling neither in *saṃsāra* nor in the one-sided nirvāṇa of arhats. Those three meanings of *bhagavān*—overcoming all obscurations, being endowed with the fortunes of all qualities, and going beyond *saṃsāra* and nirvāṇa—also make up the three syllables of the Tibetan translation (*bcom ldan 'das*) of this term. In brief, to overcome the two obscurations is the quality of relinquishment. To be endowed with the wisdom dharmakāya is the quality of realization. The quality of transcendence means to be beyond *saṃsāra* and nirvāṇa and yet be able to appear anywhere in them without being affected by them.
1929. CMW *bzhi na gling bzhi* emended to *bzhi ni gleng gzhi*.
1930. CMW *gsum char gyis dang* emended to *gsum char gyi*.
1931. See *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 157a.7–157b.3 and CMW (445).
1932. D147, fol. 142a.6–142b.1.
1933. *Ibid.*, fols. 142b.2–143a.1.
1934. *Ibid.*, fol. 143a.1–143a.5.
1935. CMW *de nyid kyi* emended to *de nyid kyis*.
1936. See CMW's (428 and 436–37) references to the phrase "the limitless very disciplined assemblies of disciples."

1937. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 143a.6–143b.2. CMW omits “as follows” and “mahāsattvas.”
1938. Skt. Gṛdhrakūṭa, Tib. Bya rgod phung po'i ri (usually translated as “vulture peak”). Though the Sanskrit *kūṭa* can mean both “peak” and “flock” (or “heap”), it is usually explained to mean the latter (which corresponds to the Tibetan *phung po* instead of *rtse mo* or the like). According to the *Śatasāhasrikāvivarāṇa* (D3802, fols. 3b.7–4a.1), Praśāstrasena's commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* (P5220, 292.3.7–8), and other sources, the mountain received its name from the shape of its rock formations that resemble a flock of vultures huddling together. Jñānamitra's commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* (P5217, 285.5.1–2) says that the name comes from flocks of vultures gathering on its top. Ngag dbang bstan dar lha ram pa's (1759–1831) commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* (trans. in Lopez 1988, 141) lists five ways of explaining this name by referring to Sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's (1653–1705) *Bai durya g.ya' sel*: (1) the mountain's being shaped like a vulture; (2) being shaped like a flock of vultures; (3) vultures protecting the mountain on which many such birds feed on corpses; (4) being a heap or flock due to the brilliance of the birds that are beings who understand emptiness; and (5) the Buddha's robe's being snatched by a demon in the form of a vulture and dropped on the mountain (which is shaped like a vulture's head), where it turned to stone in four layers, which are known as “the great vulture heap.”
1939. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *spyod yul rnam par 'phrul pa zhes* is emended to *yul rnam par 'phrul pa*.
1940. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 143b.2.
1941. That is, in the space between the highest class of gods in the desire realm and the lowest class of gods in the form realm. This and the next paragraph are paraphrases of *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 143b.2–144b.7.
1942. A *yojanā* is an ancient Indian measure of distance, corresponding to about eight miles (according to other calculations, about four or sixteen miles).
1943. CMW *rin po che'i snying po* (usually means “ground” or is another name of Vaiśravaṇa), which seems to be a contraction of *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra rin po che an da rnyil* [read: *in dra ni la*] *dang / mthon kha chen pos snying por gyur pa*. Both *indranīla* and *mahānīla* (*mthon kha chen po*) mean “sapphire.”
1944. CMW *ri las* emended to *ri la*.
1945. Nāgas are mythical beings with human faces and serpent-like bodies, who live in the oceans and other bodies of water. They are said to be fond of hoarding great riches and are also considered to have been the caretakers of the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras until Nāgārjuna retrieved these scriptures from them. Yakṣas are a class of normally benevolent and helpful but somewhat fickle spirits who live on the earth (often in forests), in the air, and in the lower divine realms. Exceptions to their benevolence are that they may cause epidemics or possess humans, and some of them even eat human flesh. Gandharvas are the celestial musicians of Indra, who sustain themselves only through smells and live in the air and the heavenly waters. Asuras are the opponents of the gods with whom they constantly wage war because they envy the superior fortunes of the gods. Garuḍas are mythical birds with eagle wings and lion heads that are the natural enemies of the nāgas (the garuḍa is also the mount of Viṣṇu). Kīṃnaras are beings with a human body and the head of a horse or with a horse's body and a human head. They live at the court of Kubera (the god of wealth) and, like the gandharvas, are celestial musicians. Uragas or mahoragas are large-bellied serpent demons living on the earth and below. “Nonhumans” often refers to ghosts and malignant spirits.
1946. CMW omits this word, but it is found in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*.

1947. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 144b.7–146a.7.
1948. CMW has “ornamental jewels” (*rgyan gyi rin po che*), but the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* only has “jewels,” while “ornaments” are offered by the next group of gods.
1949. The following paragraphs correspond to *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 146a.7–151b.3.
1950. This is how the name of that samādhi appears in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*. CMW omits *la sang rgyas* after *sgrib pa med pa*.
1951. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *bkod pa'i rgya che ba dang ldan pas na* is emended to *bkod pas rgya che ba dang ldan pa na*. Also CMW omits *lokadhātu*<sup>o</sup>.
1952. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *yon tan lag* is emended to *yan lag*.
1953. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *dbang bkur* is emended to *dbang bsgyur*.
1954. CMW follows the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* in repeating this name though it is the same as the name of the Tathāgata in the south mentioned in the text above.
1955. CMW has *'jig rten gyi khams* twice.
1956. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and the context, CMW *'jig rten gyi khams* is emended to *sangs rgyas kyi zhing*.
1957. The following paragraph corresponds to *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 151b.3–152a.2.
1958. The *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* says “the greatest chiliocosm of this trichiliocosm.”
1959. The infinite qualities of the dharma correspond to *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 152a.2–153b.6.
1960. In accordance with the corresponding passage in the text below, CMW *bzhugs pa* is emended to *gzhug pa*.
1961. CMW *snying po'i* emended to *snying pos*.
1962. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *bkang ba* is emended to *bkram pa*.
1963. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *bris pa* is emended to *bres pa*.
1964. The infinite qualities of the saṃgha correspond to *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 153b.6–157a.6.
1965. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *gdan* is emended to *rgyan*.
1966. The phrases in “[ ]” in this sentence are missing in CMW and thus added according to *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*.
1967. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* and the two Chinese translations (see Kano 2006, 402), CMW *gzungs kyi dbang phyug rgyal po* emended to *chos kyi dbang phyug rgyal po*.
1968. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *mang la rags pa ste* is emended to *che ste*.
1969. CMW *mthar phyin pa* emended to *mthar mi phyin pa*.
1970. CMW *de ni* emended to *da ni*.
1971. The ultimate qualities of the Buddha correspond to *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 157a.6–158b.1.
1972. CMW *kyi* emended to *kyis*.
1973. CMW *mnyam nas* emended to *snyam nas*.
1974. CMW *bzhugs* emended to *gzhug*.
1975. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *brgyad du* is emended to *brgya gyur du*.

1976. This is probably a red ruby.
1977. Here, CMW mistakenly adds 'od kyis ni.
1978. CMW *zhes* emended to *zhing*.
1979. CMW *na* emended to *nas*.
1980. CMW *gsungs* emended to *gzungs*.
1981. These are the second and third verses.
1982. CMW *bcom ldan khyed* emended to *bcom ldan 'das*.
1983. See the text above under 2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2. The explanation of the infinite qualities of the saṃgha.
1984. CMW emends *rta* to {*gtam*}.
1985. This section is *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 158b.1–6.
1986. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *yon tan* is emended to *yul*.
1987. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *mi skye bar* is emended to *mi skyo bar*.
1988. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *sems can gyis mi rtoqs pa'i thugs rje la rnam par* is emended to *sems can mi gtong ba'i thugs rje la gnas par*.
1989. CMW *dpa'i* emended to *dpa'*.
1990. CMW adds {*ma*} before *mchis pa*.
1991. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *lam la yang dag par bzhugs pa* is emended to *las yang dag pa la zhugs pa*.
1992. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *legs par bgyid pa* is emended to *legs par bgyid pa'i las bgyid pa*.
1993. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *las kyi rung ba ma mchis pa* is emended to *las kyi mtha' gdung ba ma mchis pa*.
1994. This section is *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 158b.6–159a.2. It is followed by the Buddha's approving of Dhāraṇīśvararāja's request and agreeing to answer his questions (fol. 159a.2–6), which is then followed by the Buddha's discussion of the four ornaments of bodhisattvas and so on (see the text below).
1995. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *spyod pa dag pa dag par 'tshal ba* is emended to *spyod pa dag yongs su 'tshal ba*.
1996. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *rnam par gyur ba* is emended to *rnam par sbyong bar gyur ba*.
1997. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW 'jug pa'i is emended to 'jug pas.
1998. CMW *nges pa* emended to *ma nges pa*.
1999. Note that this reasoning differs from the reasoning formulated in RGVV. RGVV's reasoning says, "The buddha element (subject) is explained through a description of the sixty kinds of factors that purify its [natural] purity (probandum) because it is [only] if the object to be purified is endowed with qualities that purifications of its purity are justified (reason)." CMW's reasoning goes, "As for the buddha element, it is explained that this naturally pure [buddha element] exists in all sentient beings because the sixty conditions for purifying the basic element are taught in the main part of the sūtra following the introduction." Thus, RGVV and CMW share the same subject, but differ in probandum and reason (in fact, CMW's reason is a paraphrase of the long qualifier "a description of the sixty kinds of factors that purify its [natural] purity" in RGVV's probandum). In effect, both reasonings are complementary in establishing through the scriptural passage about the sixty factors that purify the buddha element that this buddha element exists in all sentient beings because any purification of this buddha element (the object to be purified) is only tenable if that element is already endowed with intrinsic qualities that clearly manifest as the result of purification once the

purification process is finished. In that vein, RGVV's reasoning can be understood as an answer to someone challenging the validity of the subject property (the reason's indeed applying to the subject) in CMW's reasoning. For the details of the subject property, the positive concomitance, and the negative concomitance of CMW's reasoning's being established, see right below in the text.

2000. CMW *yongs su dag shes par bya ba'i don zhes pa sbyar bar bya'i gzhi* emended to *yongs su dag par bya ba'i don zhes pa sbyang bar bya ba'i gzhi*.
2001. CMW *yod na zhes* emended to *yod ces*.
2002. CMW *byed pa'i* emended to *byed pa*.
2003. In accordance with the context and the two parallel sentences in the text below, CMW *don* is emended to *gnas skabs*.
2004. CMW emends *rtam* to {*gtam*}.
2005. Here, CMW also mistakenly provides the reference to the example of pure gold's becoming visible if it is purified (*gser sa le sbram sbyangs na mthong zhes dper brjod nas*), which is correctly used in the reference to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in the text below.
2006. This refers to RGVV's Prakrit verse about gold's being covered by stony debris (J6). As already mentioned, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is not in Prakrit and contains only a partly similar verse (X.751), while the *Ghanavyūhasūtra* (D110, fol. 7b.1–3) contains a verse that corresponds closely to the first three lines of the verse in question.
2007. CMW *rkyen* emended to *rgyan*.
2008. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW '*dzin pa* is emended to *mdzes pa*.
2009. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *don* is emended to *mchog*.
2010. In accordance with the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, CMW *shin tu rnam par nges dang de bzhin zung* is emended to *shin tu rnam nges don dang de bzhin gzungs*.
2011. Tib. *bka' blo bde ba* (which is used in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* with the meaning given here) can also mean “being eloquent,” which would correspond more to VT (fol. 10v2) “[establishing] those who use bad language in using good explanations of language.”
2012. CMW omits this entry.
2013. CMW *bzhugs pa* emended to *zhugs pa*.
2014. CMW *dkon mchog dang bral ba dkon mchog gi rigs mi gcod par de dag mchod pa la sbyor ba* is corrupt and is emended according to the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*.
2015. The following (partly abbreviated) explanations of the sixteen compassions of great awakening are found in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* (D147, fols. 175b.1–182a.3). Here, awakening is without root and basis. “Root” refers to “the views about a real personality” and “basis” to “false imagination.”
2016. Awakening is peaceful and quiescent. “Peace” refers to the internal (the six sense faculties being empty of a self and what is mine) and “quiescence” to the external (through understanding that the sense faculties are empty, one does not chase after their objects).
2017. Since the mind is naturally luminous, awakening is naturally luminous. However, since ordinary beings do not realize this natural luminosity, they are afflicted by adventitious afflictions.
2018. This refers to awakening's not seizing or rejecting any phenomena and thus realizing that all phenomena and suchness are without “beyond” and “not beyond.”
2019. Awakening is without characteristics and focal objects. “Without characteristics” refers to the six consciousnesses being unobservable and “without focal objects” to not seeing their objects. What is without characteristics and focal objects is the sphere of the noble ones, that is, what is not contained in the three realms of *samsāra*.

2020. Awakening is neither what is past, nor what is in the future, nor what occurs in the present. This is the equality of the three times, in which the three spheres are extinct. The three spheres refer to mind's engaging in what is past, consciousness's coursing in what is in the future, and mental engagement's engaging in what occurs at present. Since mind, mentation, and consciousness do not abide in awakening, there is no thinking about what is past, no reflecting about what is in the future, and no entertaining of reference points about the present.
2021. CMW mistakenly counts these as two separate entries. Awakening is without body and unconditioned. "Without body" refers to what cannot be cognized by the six consciousnesses and "being unconditioned" to what lacks arising, abiding, and ceasing.
2022. Awakening is without foundation and inseparable. "Foundation" refers to suchness, the dharmadhātu, the true end, emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no sentient beings, space, being without arising, being unconditioned, awakening, and nirvāṇa. "Inseparable" refers to being without foundation, not different, immovable, unobservable, nonconceptual, there being no aspiration prayers to be made, no essence of sentient beings, being nonreferential, without ceasing, without movement, quiescent, and there being nothing to be accomplished.
2023. One will not become completely awakened through body or mind because the body is matter and the mind is like an illusion. Awakening cannot be expressed through any phenomenon, be it the body, the mind, the dharma, what is not the dharma, what is real, what is unreal, what is true, or what is false. Just like space, it is shapeless and inexpressible. All phenomena are inexpressible—words do not exist in phenomena and phenomena do not exist in words.
2024. Awakening is ungraspable and without basis. "Ungraspable" refers to understanding the six sense faculties. "Without basis" refers to the six objects' being unobservable. Through consciousness's being without foundation, buddhas understand the four foundations of the minds of all sentient beings—forms, feelings, discriminations, and formations—to be without foundation.
2025. Awakening is a synonym of emptiness, and all phenomena are empty too. It is not that emptiness is realized through emptiness, but emptiness and awakening are not two. All phenomena are nondual, without characteristics, without arising, and so on. "Empty" is a synonym for the lack of clinging and grasping. Though no phenomena are observable ultimately, they are still called "empty." Just as space is called "space" despite not being something that can be expressed, empty is called "empty" despite not being something that can be expressed. The fact that what has no name is labeled by names applies conventionally to all phenomena, but neither names nor the phenomena labeled by them abide in any location or direction. The tathāgatas realize all phenomena to be without arising, ceasing, characteristics, mind, mentation, consciousness, letters, and terms. Just as they realize that, they are liberated—there is no bondage and no release.
2026. Just as space, awakening is neither equal nor not equal. All phenomena are not really established and thus cannot be expressed as being equal or not equal. This is realized by perfect wisdom. All phenomena are without root, without arising, without ceasing, and originate from the unoriginated. They originate without any owner and separate without any owner. Though they operate in dependence on such originating and perishing, there is no operation whatsoever here. It is in order to cut through the path (of such seeming arising and ceasing) that the tathāgatas teach the dharma.
2027. Awakening is the ground of how things are. The skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas are like awakening—they do not go beyond suchness and the tathāgatas realize them just as they are. They are the same before, the same later, and the same in between. They do

not arise in the beginning, do not vanish in the end, and are devoid in between. Thus, they are all the ground of how things are.

2028. The two instances of *gnas pa* in this phrase in CMW are emended to *rnam pa*. Awakening is to engage what is without aspects through engaging aspects. “Aspects” refers to making efforts in all virtuous phenomena, reflecting on, assessing, counting, and discriminating phenomena, and discriminating what is conditioned. “What is without aspects” refers to the ground that is the mind without ground, the door to liberation that is the samādhi of signlessness, what is utterly beyond assessment (that in which there is no activity of consciousness), and the direct perception of what is unconditioned.
2029. Awakening is uncontaminated and without appropriation. “Uncontaminated” refers to being free from the four contaminations—desire, becoming, ignorance, and views. “Without appropriation” refers to being free from the four appropriations—desire, views, propounding a self, and holding discipline and spiritual discipline as paramount. These appropriations are all appropriations by virtue of being darkened by ignorance, approached through craving, and appropriated through clinging by thinking “me.” Since the Buddha knows the root of appropriating a self, he realizes that sentient beings are pure because the self is pure. The self’s purity and the purity of sentient beings do not exist as two and cannot be divided into two. The meaning of not existing as two is being without arising. Since there is neither arising nor ceasing, mind, mentation, and consciousness do not operate. Where mind, mentation, and consciousness do not operate, there is no false imagination that becomes improper mental engagement. Through being endowed with proper mental engagement here, there is nothing triggered by ignorance, thus nothing triggered by the twelve links of saṃsāric existence, and thus nothing that arises. What does not arise is certain, is of definitive meaning, and thus the ultimate, the lack of a person, the inexpressible actuality, dependent origination, the actuality of the dharma, suchness, and the Tathāgata. Thus, it is said, “Whoever sees dependent origination, sees the dharma. Whoever sees the dharma, sees the Tathāgata.” This is seeing in the sense of not seeing anything whatsoever, that is, at the time of seeing without any characteristics, focal objects, and mind, true reality is seen.
2030. Awakening is pure, stainless, and without afflictions. “Pure” refers to emptiness, lack of arising, nature, lack of reference points, suchness, and so on. “Stainlessness” refers to signlessness, nonformation, purity, nonreferentiality, dharmadhātu, and so on. “Without afflictions” refers to wishlessness, nonorigination, luminosity, peace of reference points, the true end, and so on. Awakening and all other phenomena are just like space. Therefore, it is said that all phenomena are equal to nirvāṇa—since they have reached their end, there are no remedies. Since there are no remedies, all phenomena are primordially pure, stainless, and without afflictions. It is interesting to note that most of these explanations in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra* on the sixteen kinds of compassion of great awakening greatly resemble the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* in both style and contents, sometimes even being literally the same.
2031. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 175b.1–185a.6.
2032. Here, CMW mistakenly repeats the entire above section on the sixteen kinds of compassion of great awakening.
2033. CMW *rgyun mtshan* emended to *rgyu mtshan*.
2034. Usually, the sixth unique quality in terms of realization is listed as samādhi.
2035. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fols. 185a.6–215a.3.
2036. CMW *dang po ni* makes no sense here, but is probably a typo for *da ni*.
2037. CMW *grel pa* emended to *'brel pa*. The same goes for several more instances of this misspelling in the following paragraph.

2038. CMW *rtsa bas* emended to *rtsa ba*.

2039. This sūtra is not quoted or referred to in RGVV. CMW probably means the *Sāgaramatipariṣcchāsūtra*, which is quoted twice in RGVV.

2040. This refers to the second sentence at the beginning of chapter 1 of RGVV (J7).

2041. CMW *mos pa dang sangs rgyas la mos bya ba yang sangs rgyas la byed pa* emended to *sangs rgyas la mos pa dang sangs rgyas la byed pa la mos pa*.

2042. CMW *dang pos* emended to *dang bas*.

2043. CMW *kva ta*. As explained below, this bird can look forward with one eye and backward with the other eye at the same time, thus being traditionally used as an example for something that applies to two things at the same time.

2044. RGVV (P) *ces*.

2045. In commenting on I.4, CMW already matches the elements of this verse with the qualities explained in I.5–8ab. Verses I.5–8ab are only briefly referred to in the text below as representing the detailed and distinct explanations of I.4, but all comments on them are included in this “brief introduction” here.

2046. CMW *'jigs so* emended to *'jigs med do*.

2047. CMW *thugs rje bsam pa can* emended to *thugs rjes sems can*.

2048. CMW *la thabs* emended to *lta thibs*.

2049. This refers to the two welfares mentioned in I.8cd.

2050. Though CMW speaks of four verses here, lines I.8cd are explained separately in the text below.

2051. Here and in the next instance of this term, CMW has *o ta ya*.

2052. This is what appears in the Sanskrit of *Uttaratantra* I.7b and thus seems to be what CMW *pa ra pra ti ya na o ta ya* (which makes no sense) refers to.

2053. CMW *'bi tsa o ta ya*.

2054. These six phrases are found in RGVV's third quotation from the *Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkārasūtra* (J9–10).

2055. CMW has *nges pa dang ma nges pa*, but *ma nges pa* is repeated in the next sentence.

2056. CMW *gnas ma 'os pa* emended to *gnas ma bu pa*.

2057. CMW *sen 'da' ba*. This is a Tibetan term used for the Theravādins (particularly those from Śrī Laṅka), traditionally the fiercest opponents of the mahāyāna, who usually deny that it was ever taught by the Buddha but rather concocted by later persons or even by demons. The term seems to be a corrupt form of “Sin(g)hala” (meaning “of or related to Śrī Laṅka”). According to Chandra Das's Tibetan-English dictionary (1276), *sendhapa* is probably a Tibetanized form of *siddha* (which is very unlikely). Das further mistakenly equates *siddha* with Tib. *bsod snyoms pa* (“alms-goer”). The Sanskrit for *bsod snyoms pa* is *piṇḍapātika* or *paiṇḍilika*, but it is rather unlikely that *sendhapa* is a corrupted form of these terms.

2058. This refers to RGVV's comments on I.32–33 (J27–29). CMW strictly follows RGVV's presentation but explicitly specifies the three kinds of persons that are described in more general ways by RGVV. Thus, the two kinds of persons that make up (1) those with great desire who crave for saṃsāric existence are identified as the Lokāyatas and the Sendhapas who have fallen into the hīnayāna. Among the three types of persons under (2a) those who crave to be free from saṃsāric existence and have not entered the means for liberation, the second type (Buddhists who still entertain views about the person and lack faith in the ultimate) is identified as the Vātsīputrīyas.

2059. XIV.43. Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (D4034, vol. mi, fol. 279b.4–7) explains that the nonconceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise, by virtue of realizing everything as having the nature of space, purifies the buddha attributes (such as the



powers and fearlessnesses) in one's own mind stream. Therefore, it is what matures oneself. The pure mundane wisdom that is attained subsequent to the supramundane nonconceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise is what establishes the individual characteristics, qualities, and so on, of each one of the ten bhūmis in a distinct manner. It matures sentient beings through teaching them the dharma, displaying awakening, and so on.

2060. In accordance with the same passage that is repeated below, CMW *gyis* is emended to *du*.

2061. CMW *lam gyis 'bras bu bsdus* emended to *lam gyi 'bras bus bsdus*.

2062. CMW *chos* emended to *rnam*.

2063. *Uttaratantra* I.87/89.

2064. CMW *bar chad byed* emended to *bar chad med*.

2065. This presentation is based on the first three of “the four remedies.” The first two represent the process of preparing for and actually eradicating the factors to be relinquished, with (1) “the invalidating remedy” referring to the preparatory phase, that is, focusing on the four realities of the noble ones and invalidating the obscurations in terms of their sixteen aspects (for example, the supreme dharma of the path of preparation). (2) “The relinquishing remedy” refers to the uninterrupted path, that is, actually eradicating even the seeds of the respective factors to be relinquished (for example, the first moment of the path of seeing—“the dharma readiness of suffering”). The remaining two remedies describe what happens once the factors to be relinquished have been eradicated. (3) “The sustaining remedy” is the path of liberation, that is, experiencing and sustaining the attained freedom from the factors that have been relinquished through the preceding uninterrupted path (for example, the second moment of the path of seeing—“the dharma cognition of suffering”). (4) “The distancing remedy” represents “the special path,” that is, various samādhis that enhance one's realizations attained through the preceding path of liberation (such as “the Lion's Sport Samādhi”) or that are needed as aids for benefiting sentient beings (such as “the Sky Treasure Samādhi”).

2066. CMW has *byams pa* twice.

2067. As before with verses I.5–8, in commenting on I.9, CMW already matches the elements of this verse with the qualities explained in I.10–12. Verses I.10–12 are only briefly referred to in the text below as representing the detailed and distinct explanations of I.9, but all comments on them are included in this “brief introduction” here.

2068. YDC (253) elaborates that the reality of cessation is not nonexistent because it exists as having the character of the perfect nature (*yongs su grub pa'i bdag nyid du yod pa*), that is, as the sphere that is to be personally experienced by the noble ones. Nor can it be scrutinized one-sidedly as being existent because it does not exist as any phenomenon that is a reference point, that is, it is beyond everything that is seeming. This corresponds to “neither existent nor nonexistent” in *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* IV.1a and “the basic element is empty of what is adventitious but not empty of unsurpassable qualities” in *Uttaratantra* I.155/158. Consequently, the reality of cessation is also not both existent and nonexistent because existence and nonexistence are mutually exclusive. Nor can it be scrutinized as being anything other than existent or nonexistent because it is not an object of those who cling to extremes.

2069. RGVV (P) *'phags lam mkhyen*.

2070. This is not an etymological but a common Sanskrit hermeneutical explanation of the meaning of *citta* as deriving from *cita*.

2071. Skt. *manas* is here related to *māna* (self-conceit or pride).

2072. This accords with Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* II.206c: "Consciousness is the phenomenon that apprehends objects."
2073. This is the typical Yogācāra explanation of matching the meanings of "mind" (*citta*), "mentation" (*manas*), and "consciousness" (*vijñāna*) with the eight kinds of consciousness.
2074. CMW *spong* emended to 'ong.
2075. This refers to the path resembling the sun in its three characteristics of being pure, luminous, and a remedial factor.
2076. CMW *bzhi* emended to *gzhi*.
2077. This seems to say that if the irreversible saṃgha consisted only of bodhisattvas on the eighth bhūmi and above, the defining characteristics of irreversibility—the wisdoms of knowing suchness and variety—would mistakenly not cover many of the instances to which they actually apply, that is, all bodhisattvas on the first seven bhūmis.
2078. As before, CMW provides no separate comments on I.14 but includes parts of that verse in its comments on I.13.
2079. As already mentioned, this corresponds to the explanation in *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* IV.39–59 and its commentaries.
2080. RYC (40) says that the seeing of suchness and variety of bodhisattvas arises on the first bhūmi because they realize on this bhūmi that the dharmadhātu is omnipresent.
2081. In English, this is the second line of I.13, while CMW refers to the different order of the lines in the Tibetan version.
2082. CMW *zhes pas* emended to *zhes nas*.
2083. Skt. *gati* means "going," "movement," "state," "mode of existence," "the course of beings through numerous forms of life," and "the condition of a person undergoing this migration." Likewise, the corresponding Tibetan word *gro ba* literally means "going" but is also used with the meanings "state of existence" or "being."
2084. Tib. *gzhan dbang gi sems*. Note that this corresponds very well to SM 9cd ("The suchness of the dhātu is devoid of what is afflicted—the dependent") and all the implications explained there.
2085. D45.48, fol. 275a.4–5.
2086. CMW omits "not."
2087. Referring back to "inner wisdom vision" in I.14ab, YDC (258) adds that the two wisdoms of suchness and variety that realize mind's true nature—identitylessness—and that pervade all sentient beings are also self-awareness because they are the vision of personally experienced wisdom without depending on anything else.
2088. D147, fol. 142a.4–5. CMW *slob ma'i tshogs 'dus pa mtha' yas pa de yang* emended to *slob ma shin tu dul ba mtha' yas pa'i tshogs ni mnga'*.
2089. Ibid., fol. 142a.6. CMW *dge slong gi dge 'dun gsungs pa de chen po dang thab cig ste* emended to *dge slong gi dge 'dun chen po dang thab cig tu*.
2090. RGVV (P) *ston pa'i bstan pa*.
2091. In accordance with the Sanskrit, I follow RGVV (DP) *theg gsum pa dang byed gsum la* against Ut (D) *theg pa gsum dang byed gsum la*.
2092. This is another expression for liberation or nirvāṇa.
2093. CMW has "with regard to those with the mahāyāna disposition."
2094. CMW *rigs pa* emended to *rig pa*.
2095. Here, "awareness" refers to complete awakening and "venerable" to possessing the three trainings of discipline, samādhi, and prajñā.
2096. CMW *sogs pa* emended to *gsog pa*.
2097. CMW *ston pa* emended to *bstan pa*.

2098. CMW *chos kyi ni* emended to *chos ni*.
2099. This refers to the persons who have attained the four fruitions of stream-enterers, once-returners, nonreturners, and arhats, each being divided into approachers to and abiders in the respective fruitions. For details, see Brunnhölzl (2010, 253–56 and 670) as well as Brunnhölzl (2012a, 97–107).
2100. CMW “the yāna.”
2101. As it stands, this paragraph about the mahāyāna saṃgha on the bhūmis is quite confusing. For it was already said that the four reasons in I.20 for not being an ultimate refuge—summarized in the three reasons of not being free from fear, not being able to liberate others from fear, and not having an utterly stable essence—do not apply to the mahāyāna dharma and saṃgha. In the preceding paragraph, the actual dharma was identified as the reality of cessation, for which it seems tenable to say that none of these reasons apply. However, the two sentences here about bodhisattvas on the first seven bhūmis lacking the ability to liberate others from fear and bodhisattvas on the last three bhūmis lacking permanence mean that the last two among the above three reasons *do* apply to these bodhisattvas. Thus, only the first reason of “being fearful” does not apply to bodhisattvas on the bhūmis (maybe this is regarded as sufficient here for them being a genuine object of refuge).
2102. CMW *rab tu che bas* emended to *rab tu phye ba'i*.
2103. CMW *dang* emended to *kyang*.
2104. CMW *sangs rgyas kyi* emended to *sangs rgyas kyi*.
2105. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 27b.6–28a.4.
2106. GC (241.6–14) comments on I.24cd–25 that the main subject of the *Uttaratantra* is the awakening (*byang chub*) of a buddha (*sangs rgyas*). Since the first two reasons in I.25 teach the progression of the stains becoming pure, they teach the two aspects of being cleansed (*byang*) and being purified (*sangs*). Since the latter two reasons teach the qualities and their functions, they teach the two aspects of final realization (*chub*) and unfolding (*rgyas*). In terms of the ground, the first two reasons mainly teach the basic element's aspect of being free from reference points because they teach that due to suffering and its origin being adventitious, they are primordially empty (and the basic element is empty of them). The latter two reasons mainly teach the aspect that the basic element abides as the phenomenon of basic awareness because they teach its qualities and activity. This is also the case because it is due to the basic element's aspect of being free from reference points that it represents the nirvāṇas of the three yānas by virtue of this aspect's being realized partially or in its entirety. It is due to the aspect of the basic element's being awareness that it represents the phenomena of saṃsāra because the entirety of saṃsāra arises from the ālaya-consciousness that represents a mere reflection of this phenomenon of awareness appearing. The Third Karmapa's autocommentary on his *Profound Inner Reality* (Rang byung rdo rje n.d., 21) explains the four inconceivable points as follows: “The [inconceivable] point of the ‘basic element’ is that the buddha heart is [primordially] not tainted by any stains, but does not become buddhahood until all afflictive and cognitive stains have been relinquished. The [inconceivable] point of awakening is that [the basic element] is associated with these stains since beginningless time, but because these stains are adventitious, they are not established as any real substance. The [inconceivable] point of the qualities [of awakening] is that the sixty-four qualities of buddhahood exist in all sentient beings right now in a complete way, but if they are not triggered through the condition of the immaculate dharmas (the natural outflow of the utterly stainless dharmadhatu), their power does not come forth. [The inconceivable point of enlightened activity is that] there is no

difference in enlightened activity's [effortless, spontaneous, and nonconceptual] operation in terms of all sentient beings and buddhas being either the same or different. Thus, its inconceivability is its being free from all expressions, yet serving as the basis for all expressions." For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2009, 129–31.

2107. CMW *kyi* emended to *kyis*.

2108. For YDC's general presentation of the basic element, see appendix 4.

2109. CMW lacks any comments on I.27, thus obviously referring to a version of the *Uttaratantra*/RGVV that did not include this verse. Nevertheless, I retain the numbering of the following verses for the sake of concordance.

2110. This refers to verses I.144/147–152/155 matching the dharmakāya, suchness, and the disposition with the nine examples.

2111. *Uttaratantra* I.145/148.

2112. Compare CMW's (480–81) comments in the text below on a passage from the *Jñānālokāṅkārāsūtra*, which say that even those with great desire (equivalent to "those without the disposition") thrive through virtuous dharmas because they have the naturally pure disposition. If they did not have the naturally pure disposition, they would not thrive through the light rays of the wisdom of the tathāgatas. But at the time of being struck by the light rays of this wisdom, their time of being endowed with the four wheels (such as relying on wise persons) has come.

2113. IX.15.

2114. IX.37.

2115. I.150/153. In line d, CMW *gnyis pa'i sa ni* is emended to *gnyis pa yis ni*.

2116. Respectively, the three points of power, being unchanging, and being moist in *Uttaratantra* I.31 refer back to the three aspects of the tathāgata heart that were taught in I.27–28—the dharmakāya's radiating, the suchness of sentient beings and buddhas being undifferentiated, and the disposition's existing in all being.

2117. Note that CMW does not refer to *Uttaratantra* I.27.

2118. CMW already includes parts of I.30–31 in its comments on the nature here, while no separate explanation of these two verses is offered in the text below.

2119. CMW already includes most of the elements of I.32–34 in its comments on the cause here. Some additional explanation of verses I.32–33 is offered in the text below, but it refers only to a few of their elements.

2120. CMW *gang dag* emended to *gang zag*.

2121. CMW mistakenly repeats *sems can*.

2122. CMW's comments on the fruition here already include I.35ab, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.

2123. CMW's comments on the function here already include I.35cd, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.

2124. CMW's comments on endowment here already include the main elements of I.42–44, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.

2125. CMW's comments on manifestation here already include the main elements of I.45–46, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.

2126. In accordance with the other two phrases here, CMW *kham s rgyud la yod* is emended to *rgyud la yod pa'i kham s*.

2127. CMW's comments on the phases here already include the main elements of I.47–48, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.

2128. CMW *sku* emended to *su*.

2129. "Essences" instead of "names" would make more sense here.

2130. CMW's comments on all-pervasiveness here already include the main elements of I.49–50, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.
2131. CMW *gyur ba 'gro ba la* emended to *gyur bar mi 'gro ba ltar*.
2132. CMW's comments on inseparability here already include the main elements of I.86, for which there is no additional explanation in the text below.
2133. CMW *rgyud* emended to *brgyad*.
2134. YDC (279–80) says that, if the nature of the naturally pure basic element is divided by way of isolates, it is threefold—the dharmakāya (which primarily represents wisdom), suchness (which primarily represents the expanse), and the disposition (which primarily represents means and prajñā). In addition, YDC quotes *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.16cd on the examples of water, gold, and space for emptiness's always being naturally pure but only being afflicted by adventitious stains. It also cites *Dharmadhātustava* 9–10 and 23 on the dharmadhātu free of stain not radiating while obscured by the afflictions, just as a beryl inside its ore, and wisdom within the afflictions remaining stainless, just as water within the earth.
2135. In Tibetan, this verse has only three lines.
2136. Obviously, these two sentences in RGVV still refer to the persons who possess the obscurations. The actual beginning of RGVV's explanation of the obscurations is its following sentence, "What are these four [obscurations]?"
2137. RYC (64) says that it is not definite that these four obscurations in that order exist exclusively in the corresponding kinds of persons but they are presented as the kinds of obscurations that exist predominantly in these four types of persons.
2138. To make sense in the context of what CMW says here, *'di ltar* should be *'dir*.
2139. CMW's remark on the position of the sentence, "These are the four kinds of obscurations . . ." seems to be based on using a Sanskrit manuscript of RGVV in which this sentence appears right after the sentence that ends in "not perceiving the tathāgata element" rather than further below (as it does in the present Sanskrit version of RGVV). Thus, according to CMW's Sanskrit version, the passage in question in RGVV should read, "Now, apart from those sentient beings who are firmly grounded in the mahāyāna . . . and not perceiving the tathāgata element. These are the four kinds of obscurations of the four kinds of sentient beings. 'What are these four?' . . ." As a consequence of the different position of the sentence "These are the four kinds of obscurations . . .," CMW obviously takes RGVV's question "What are these four?" as referring to the four remedies and not to the four obscurations. However, even if the sentence in question is shifted as in CMW's version, the resultant passage "Now, apart from those sentient beings who are firmly grounded in the mahāyāna . . . These are the four kinds of obscurations of the four kinds of sentient beings" only speaks about the persons who possess the four obscurations. Though that passage simply mentions "the four obscurations," it does not name or describe them, which is only done in the passage that follows the question, "What are these four?" Moreover, no matter whether the sentence in question is shifted or not, the context and syntax of the Sanskrit clearly indicate that the passage that follows the question "What are these four?" primarily describes the four obscurations, with each one's being followed by its remedy. CMW's suggested rearrangement of Ngog's translation of the four sentences that speak about the four obscurations and their remedies precisely follows the syntactical order of the Sanskrit (thus supporting rather than contradicting its primarily being a description of the obscurations), whereas each of Ngog's four sentences start with the phrases about the corresponding remedies (this is obviously a translation issue that is exclusively rooted in the Tibetan since both Ngog's and CMW's Tibetan version can be rendered into English in another

order than the one of the Sanskrit). Still, apart from Ngog's translation thus not following the exact order of the Sanskrit (though it cannot be ruled out entirely that he had a different Sanskrit version of these sentences) and being more unwieldy in Tibetan, the meaning does not change at all. In brief, either way it is clear that RGVV speaks here about the obscurations together with their remedies, especially since this is the text's only description of these four obscurations.

2140. CMW *pu ra te ka* makes no sense, thus it is tentatively emended to *pratika* (meaning "the first part or word of a verse" or "a line of verse") since CMW seems to refer here to the reverse order of the phrases in each of the first three lines of the Sanskrit and Tibetan of this verse (for example, the first line in Sanskrit starts with "those whose seed," followed by "is the faith in the supreme yāna," while the Tibetan reverses the order of these two phrases).
2141. CMW *sang ba* emended to *tsang ba*.
2142. YDC (283) says that the instructions on the four causes, such as faith in the mahāyāna, and their four results (the four pāramitās) also implicitly teach these two sets of four as being the causes and results of awakening the basic element.
2143. CMW *mdo'i* emended to *mdos*.
2144. CMW *zhe na* emended to *zhes pa*. This is an abbreviated paraphrase of RGVV's (J34) brief quote from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (fol. 273b.7).
2145. Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (oral communication, July 25, 2013) explains the four pāramitās and their close connection to the presentation of ultimate reality in the vajrayāna as follows. (1) As for the pāramitā of supreme purity, ultimately, the tathāgata heart is primordially unobscured by, and primordially liberated from, any adventitious stains. This represents its "natural purity." On the level of seeming reality, the tathāgata heart appears to be obscured by the adventitious stains together with their latent tendencies. Once all of these have been relinquished through the path, the tathāgata heart also possesses "the purity of having been freed from adventitious stains." This twofold purity of the tathāgata heart represents the pāramitā of supreme purity. This description is very close to the vajrayāna's speaking of "the inseparability of the two realities that is the great purity and equality" (Tib. *dag mnyam chen po bden gnyis dbyer med*), "apparitional existence's being primordial buddhahood" (Tib. *snang srid ye nas sangs rgyas*) and "the kāya of complete purity" (*suviśuddhikāya*). (2) As for the pāramitā of the supreme self, ordinary beings assume the existence of a self and cling to it, while śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas hold on to the view of there being no self. Just as ordinary beings are afraid of the nonexistence of a self, so śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are afraid of the existence of a self. However, in the pāramitā of the supreme self, both of these views and attitudes are completely transcended. For, ultimately, any reference points about a self as well as any reference points about the lack of a self are equally nothing but wrong views. The basic nature that is beyond all reference points of self and no-self represents the primordially present buddha wisdom that pervades and dwells in everything. This is the pāramitā of the supreme self, which is also called "wisdom dharmakāya" (*jñānadharmakāya*; as explained in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*). In the vajrayāna, this corresponds to the teachings on "vajra pride" and so on. (3) The pāramitā of supreme bliss means that the tathāgata heart is completely free from all elements of clinging. Also, on the level of seeming reality, all kinds of manifestations of the reality of suffering and the reality of the origin of suffering are experienced. That is, there are many phenomena that move and change, and whatever has the nature of moving and changing has the nature of suffering. Ultimately, the basic nature is without any movement and change, and to abide in that basic nature entails the experience of bliss. In

the vajrayāna, this is expressed as “the wisdom of great bliss” and “immutable wisdom” (Tib. *'pho med ye shes*). In other words, if there is no movement or transference (Tib. *'pho ba*), there is bliss, which is also called “the kāya of great bliss” (*mahāsukhakāya*). (4) The pāramitā of supreme permanence refers to buddha wisdom’s never changing into anything other than this very wisdom. In the fruitional buddha wisdom, there is no clinging to saṃsāra and nirvāṇa being different. Rather, the complete equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is realized as the great unconditioned state, which is free from any extremes of clinging to entities or nonentities. In the vajrayāna, this corresponds to “the vajrakāya,” which cannot be changed through anything whatsoever, just like a vajra or a diamond. A diamond cuts all other gems, but it cannot be cut by anything. Likewise, the nature of the mind cannot be altered by anything, and it is solely from this perspective that it is called “permanent.” It is not referred to as permanent because there is some permanent entity called “the nature of the mind” or “tathāgata heart.” Thus, the notion of permanence here is not like the one in elementary texts such as *The Collected Topics* (Tib. *Bsdus grva*) or in the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika schools. Rather, according to Sakya Pandita, even Dharmakīrti in his teachings on valid cognition used “permanent” only in the sense of being the reverse of “impermanent” but not in the sense of a permanently existent entity. In other words, when the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is realized, there is no clinging to any extremes such as permanence and impermanence. This is what is understood by the pāramitā of supreme permanence.

2146. In accordance with the context and the parallel phrase in the next paragraph, CMW *rjes su byed par ldog pa'i sgo nas* is emended to *rjes su byed par rjes su 'gro ldog gi sgo nas*. The positive concomitance here reads, “If the buddha element exists, there is weariness of suffering and the wish for nirvāṇa.” The negative concomitance says, “If the buddha element did not exist, there would be neither weariness of suffering nor the wish for nirvāṇa.”
2147. RYC (75) explains that through I.40–41 explicitly teaching the function of the unfolding disposition, one implicitly understands the function of the naturally abiding disposition too. For, without the support (the naturally abiding disposition), the supported (the unfolding disposition) does not arise.
2148. In accordance with the parallel phrase in the immediately preceding sentence, CMW *'dod pa* is emended to *'byung ba*.
2149. Here, there is a note in CMW saying that the original copy is spoiled and that text is supplied by taking Asaṅga’s autocommentary as the basis because there is no way to be able to see what the original copy says (though there is no explicit indication up to where the text is illegible, given the nature of the supplied text, this probably refers only to parts or all of the quote from RGVV but not the text of CMW itself).
2150. CMW *sdig to sel ba'i tshul* emended to *sdig pa mi zad pa'i tshul*.
2151. CMW mistakenly has *der 'gyur na* twice.
2152. CMW *rang* emended to *yang*.
2153. Given the context and the question by someone in the next paragraph, the original subject of the above concomitances and the consequence is “those with great desire” (which is taken as an equivalent of “those without the disposition”).
2154. Throughout this section, CMW replaces “those with great desire” with “those with wrong craving,” which follows the reading of RGVV (DP).
2155. CMW *rten* emended to *gtan*.
2156. CMW *la 'ong ba* emended to *ma 'ong ba*.
2157. CMW *rten* emended to *gtan*.
2158. CMW *tshad ma dgod* emended to *tshad ma ma dgod*.

2159. YDC (287) agrees that the statement in the *Mahāparinirvāṇāsūtra* is a statement with an intention behind it. Its purpose is that it was made for the sake of turning those with great desire away from their hostility toward the mahāyāna dharma since that is the cause for their having great desire. Its basis of intention is that the Buddha had another time in mind. The rest of RGVV's passage ("Since the naturally pure disposition exists . . .") represents the invalidation of the explicit statement.
2160. RGVV (P) *yis 'di*, RGVV (D) and Ut (D) *yis ni*.
2161. In due order, the topics of endowment, manifestation, phases, and all-pervasiveness correspond to verses I.42–44, 45–46, 47–48, and 49–50.
2162. As mentioned before, after the introductory verse I.51, the fourteen verses in question are I.52–63 on the changelessness of the basic element in the phase of its being impure (followed by explanatory verses I.64–65), I.66 on its phase of being both impure and pure (followed by explanatory verses I.67–78), and I.79 on its phase of being completely pure (followed by explanatory verses I.80–83).
2163. This refers to RGVV's commenting on I.51.
2164. CMW *kyis* emended to *kyi*.
2165. RYC (92) says that the phase of bodhisattvas is called "impure and pure" because this phase entails engaging in minds and mental factors that are a blend of conditioned and unconditioned phenomena.
2166. I follow RGVV (P) *tshogs* against RGVV (D) and Ut (DP) *sogs*.
2167. CMW *tshul bzhin* emended to *tshul bzhin ma yin pa'i*.
2168. CMW *me* emended to *sa*.
2169. CMW follows RGVV (DP) "great seers" (*drang srong chen po*).
2170. CMW *bshad* emended to *med*.
2171. CMW follows RGVV (DP) "man" (*mi*).
2172. D45.47, fols. 241b.7–242a.5.
2173. CMW *mig lta bu bu gcig pu* emended to *mig lta bu gcig pu*.
2174. For more details on this topic of bodhisattvas deliberately retaining a certain degree of affliction in order to take rebirth in saṃsāra for the benefit of all beings, while not being affected by these afflictions or saṃsāra, see Brunnhölzl (2010, 549–59, 589–90, and 596) and Brunnhölzl (2011b, 135–36).
2175. This refers to *Uttaratantra* I.77–78.
2176. *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.82–85.
2177. The Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 520) provides yet another explanation for the enlightened activity of buddhas and bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi being said to be equal: "In terms of the enlightened activity that exists for its recipients (its objects), there is no difference between someone on the tenth bhūmi and a buddha, but there is a difference in terms of the enlightened activity that exists for the agents [of this activity]. By virtue of this explanation that there is no difference in terms of the enlightened activity for the recipients (the objects), one should not think that there is no difference between buddhas and bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi in terms of the extent of the power of their qualities, such as promoting the welfare of sentient beings. Rather, it is explained that their difference is like the one between the [amounts of] water in the ocean and in the hoof print of an ox. Nevertheless, the intention behind the explanation that there is no difference between their enlightened activities in terms of the recipients (the objects) is to realize that, from the perspective of the objects of enlightened activity (that is, worldly beings), there is no difference between the enlightened activities of buddhas and bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi. It is in this sense that [Uttaratantra I.77b] says, 'for the worlds, bodhisattvas are



- equal.' The outcome of this statement is that merely appearing as equal in the world does not fulfill the function of actually being equal."
2178. Technically speaking, the thesis here is "the dharmakāya is permanent." This is also what the Tibetan word *dam bca'* usually indicates, but here it is obviously used for just the predicate of the reasoning.
2179. CMW *nyon mongs pas* emended to *nyon mongs pa*.
2180. CMW *bshad pa de'i* emended to *bshad pa des*.
2181. CMW *'bad pa nyid* emended to *bdag nyid*.
2182. RGVV (DP) *bsam gyis mi khyab bsgyur ba yi / 'chi 'pho brtan phyir de mi 'chi*, Ut (D) *bsam mi khyab 'gyur 'chi 'pho yis / de ni mi 'chi brtan pa'i phyir*.
2183. The Tibetan of I.81ad has "it" (*de ni*) whereas that pronoun is missing in I.82 (by contrast, in the English syntax, the subject "it" has to appear in every sentence in I.82–83.)
2184. CMW has an isolated *rtag par* after this paragraph, which is linked with "the dharmakāya" here in analogy with what the parallel sentences in the preceding and the next paragraphs say.
2185. CMW *brtan pa* emended to *rtag pa*.
2186. CMW *dang* emended to *yang*.
2187. These two verses, which basically reiterate and match I.79 and 80ab, are not contained in the presently available Sanskrit version of the *Uttaratantra* in RGVV but are found in Ut (DP) and RGVV (DP).
2188. Apart from this being a general reference to the *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras, CMW could also be read as specifically referring to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, but I could not locate any passage in this sūtra that uses the words of the verses in question.
2189. While the Sanskrit *āryasatyam paramārthanirvṛtiḥ* of I.84b is very clear as "the reality of the noble ones and the ultimate nirvāṇa," the Tibetan *'phags pa'i bden pa don dam mya ngan 'das* is ambiguous. Therefore, some Tibetan commentaries (such as CMW and RYC) connect "the ultimate" to "the reality of the noble ones," while others connect it to "nirvāṇa."
2190. In accordance with I.86c, CMW *de las ma rtogs* is emended to the more likely *de las ma gtogs*. Read on its own, CMW also makes sense, saying, "apart from that [buddhahood], the nirvāṇa without any remainder of the skandhas does not exist in those who do not realize that [buddhahood]."
2191. CMW *sangs so* emended to *sangs rgyas so*.
2192. CMW *med pa* emended to *med pas*.
2193. CMW *don dam pa'i ming* emended to *don dam pa'i bden pa ming*.
2194. As mentioned before, in the Sanskrit of RGVV, this verse is not part of the *Uttaratantra* but is part of RGVV's comments on I.87/89.
2195. CMW *bstan pa dang po'o* emended to *bstan pa'o*.
2196. CMW *la ltos te ma bshad pa*.
2197. D45.47, fols. 220b.3–221b.7. In all instances of the phrase "lacks incompleteness" (*ma tshang ba med pa*), CMW reads "is not free from" (*dang ma bral ba*).
2198. CMW *'grel pa'i* emended to *'grel pas*.
2199. YDC (306) says that the six pāramitās are symbolized by "the six limbs of the body" (legs, arms, trunk, and head). When they are complete, the body of the nirvāṇa that possesses the four qualities as in I.90 is accomplished. Thus, the six pāramitās are the causes of this nonabiding nirvāṇa, which is the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects. According to YDC, the Third Karmapa says that the meaning of the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects should be understood from establishing utterly changeless wisdom in the *Kālacakratāntra*.

2200. Compare the comments in the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 175–79) on the four qualities in *Uttaratantra* 1.90: “All aspects’ of the knowledge of all aspects [a term for a buddha’s omniscience] do not exist as conventional numbers. Or they are ‘innumerable’ because the aspects of the ultimate knowledge of all aspects are limitless. Since the knowledge of all aspects does not concord in type with the nature of consciousness, it is ‘inconceivable.’ It is ‘stainless’ because the inseparable aspects or nature of this knowledge of all aspects represent supreme purity. It is ‘inseparable from’ all consummate ‘qualities.’ ‘Liberation’ is what possesses these ‘characteristics.’ ‘What is liberation is the Tathāgata’ because the single nature that is labeled with various names from the perspective of isolates (such as ‘tathāgata,’ ‘awakening endowed with these four qualities,’ and ‘the seven vajra points, such as the basic element’) is unconditioned and permanent. This nature of phenomena is not something unconditioned and permanent in the sense of merely negating its being conditioned and impermanent, though it is distinguished through negating these two. It is unconditioned in the sense of not being conditioned through specifically characterized conditional formations, and it is permanent in the sense of not being something like an impermanent phenomenon that represents an entity which appears for (ordinary) mental states.

. . . As for the manner in which the nature of phenomena and the Tathāgata are permanent entities, ultimately, as the object of self-aware wisdom, liberation—the Tathāgata endowed with the four qualities—abides as an entity that is able to perform functions. It is permanent because a situation of it becoming interrupted is impossible, that is, liberation and the Tathāgata can never be reversed and change into something else. Also, the intention of glorious Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is nothing but this—the opening lines of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* say:

To the one who embodies valid cognition and wishes to benefit beings,  
The teacher, the Sugata and protector, I pay homage.

Thus, the fruition that arises from the cooperative cause which consists of the consummate motivation and application of this motivation—the teacher who has the character of being the Sugata in terms of his own welfare and performing the activity of protection in terms of the welfare of others—is clearly described as an entity. In accordance with this, the opening verse of the *Pramāṇavārttika* says:

To the embodiment of profundity and vastness  
In which the web of conceptions is eliminated,  
The ever-excellent one, whose light  
Radiates everywhere, I pay homage.

Thus, it teaches on the entity that performs the function of the light rays of the profound and vast kāyas radiating, and the phrase, ‘radiates everywhere’ indicates that this radiating is not something intermittent, but is displayed permanently. . . .

‘But how does permanent liberation—the dharmadhātu, emptiness—produce the entity that performs the function of promoting the welfare of others?’ In the above example in the *Uttaratantra*, when the one painter who is the expert in painting heads is missing . . . the painted form of the king will not be complete in that it lacks the head. Likewise, on the path of learning, the stains that obscure permanent liberation are removed and liberation is excellently accomplished through the means (such as the ten pāramitās) that produce the appearance of the two genuine kāyas. Therefore, the genuine permanent emptiness that has been accomplished through its being endowed with all aspects of the means is described as the entity that is able to perform functions and serves as the kāya or the form of the nature of phenomena. For, without each and every aspect of

said means being complete, the two kāyas of perfect buddhahood will not clearly manifest. Thus, with the pure mirrors of the mind streams of the beings to be guided serving as the remedial factors and through the power of the dependent origination within the facet of their minds that is the lucid and aware cognition which is close to the nature of genuine liberation and accords in its realization with the nature of phenomena, the obscurations of sentient beings are relinquished in dependence on the aspects of the rūpakāyas appearing in said facet of their minds by virtue of permanent liberation—the Tathāgata—functioning as the dominant condition for such appearance. Since the functions such as generating the remedies arise or are accomplished naturally, despite the Tathāgata's being permanent, by way of profound dependent origination, the triad of agent, object, and action is justified. The example to illuminate that this is justified is as follows. Though all seeming and ultimate phenomena are permanent emptiness, it is seen that, through the principle of dependent origination, the triad of agent, object, and action operates in a conventional manner on the level of the seeming. This is the way in which the Yogācāra masters present this justification and its example to the Niḥsvabhāvavādins.”

2201. CMW *mchog tu bden* emended to *mchog dang ldan*.

2202. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 39b.5–40a.4.

2203. CMW mistakenly has *sho lo ka gnyis*.

2204. The *Uttaratantra*'s section on the nine examples starts with I.99/102 and ends with I.152/155, thus there are fifty-four verses on the nine examples. That CMW speaks of fifty-three seems to be due to having mistakenly correlated two verses (instead of one) with the previous heading.

2205. I follow GC and JKC *bdag can* against all versions in DP and HLS *bdag cag*.

2206. I follow Ut (D) and HLS *tshogs* against RGVV (DP) *sogs*.

2207. Ut (D) and HLS *sbub*, RGVV (DP) *sbun*.

2208. Ut (D) *bkres pa*, RGVV (DP) *bru ba*, HLS 'bru ba.

2209. I follow Ut (D) *gnas su* against RGVV (DP) and HLS *nang du*.

2210. I follow Ut (D) and HLS *mthong* against RGVV (DP) 'thon.

2211. I follow Ut (D) *thogs med spyan mnga'* (corresponding to the Sanskrit) against RGVV (DP) and HLS *de bzhin thogs med*.

2212. Ut (D) mistakenly has *dri med* instead of *dri ma*.

2213. CMW *gnyis pa'i* emended to *gnyis pas*.

2214. Due to the different syntax of the English of I.132, this refers to the phrase “within the beginningless cocoons of the afflictions that are not connected to the basic element of sentient beings.”

2215. This refers to the phrase “The beginningless stainlessness of the nature of the mind . . . is declared to be.”

2216. CMW *bstan pa'i* emended to *bstan pas*.

2217. CMW *phyed po* emended to *phyed dang po*.

2218. This whole explanation is based on the ambiguousness of the Tibetan term *rgyu mthun pa* for Skt. *niṣyanda* (“natural outflow” or “necessary consequence or result”). Its meaning in *Uttaratantra* I.145/148 and RGVV is obviously that teaching the principles of profundity and diversity to others is the natural outflow or result of the dharmakāya of a buddha, which in turn leads to others attaining the dharmakāya too. However, the Tibetan *rgyu mthun pa* can mean either “what is concordant with its cause” or “concordant cause” (used in both ways in Tibetan texts), thus referring to either the result that is concordant in type with its cause or the cause that is concordant in type with its result. The first meaning corresponds to the Sanskrit *niṣyanda*, while the second one

represents the understanding of this term here in CMW. Thus, CMW refers first to the fact that the rūpakāyas are the cause for other beings' attaining the dharmakāya, with that cause that is concordant with that dharmakāya of others as its result. Secondly, the dharmakāya of a buddha is also a concordant cause, that is, the cause for the result that consists of the dharma's being taught by the rūpakāyas of that buddha.

2219. CMW *de'i* emended to *des*.

2220. As other commentaries show, *dge ba* for Skt. *kalyāṇatva* in all Tibetan versions of the *Uttaratantra* is to be understood here as "excellent."

2221. The seven jewels of royalty are ruby, sapphire, beryl, emerald, diamond, pearl, and coral. An alternative list consists of beryl, gold, silver, crystal, white coral (*musāragalva*), red pearl, and emerald.

2222. For example, *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.1 (D4048, fol. 3a.7).

2223. The Tibetan term *kun gzhi* for ālaya means "basis of all."

2224. CMW *zag pa 'am* emended to *zag pa med pa'am*.

2225. Differing from this quote in the three texts mentioned, CMW omits "consciousness" both here and in the following instance.

2226. As a literal quote, this is found only in *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.3 (D4048, fol. 3b.1–2). Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (Pandeya ed., 1999, 26.29–30; D4032, fol. 205a.6) has the same passage without the initial question and "all afflicted phenomena" is replaced by "all contaminated phenomena." Sthiramati's *Pañcaskandhaprakaraṇavai-bhāṣya* (D4066, fol. 232b.1–4) contains a passage with different wording but to the same effect. Another passage in it (fol. 238a.6–7) says, "Why is it called 'ālaya-consciousness'?" This ālaya-consciousness is the very basis of all seeds."

2227. CMW *mkhan po'i* emended to *mkhan pos*.

2228. The fragmentary *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā* (a commentary on about three-quarters of the first chapter of the *Mahāyānasamgraha*) is sometimes attributed to Vasubandhu. CMW obviously refers here to the following passage in that text (D4052, fol. 311b.1–5): "[The phrase] 'all afflicted phenomena, which entail arising, adhere to it as being its results . . .' is stated in this way because [afflicted phenomena] are the majority [in the ālaya-consciousness]—the realms of sentient beings are mostly afflicted. Some [beings] who are not afflicted are nonlearners, bodhisattvas who dwell on the eighth bhūmi [and above], and so on. It is not that what represents the ālaya-consciousnesses of these [beings] does not serve as the support of purified phenomena. During the phase of being afflicted, it is the naturally abiding disposition and the accomplished [disposition] that represent the cause of purified phenomena. However, they are not asserted as the ālaya because they are not the primary factors [in the ālaya] during the phase [of being afflicted] and because they do not exist substantially [in it]. Therefore, when the conventional term 'ālaya' appears to designate merely being a cause without [further] specification, it also refers to the fundamental change, as it is found in the *Mahāparinirvāṇāsūtra*'s statement 'The sambhogakāya consists of the ālaya-consciousness and the active consciousnesses.' Here, no matter whether it is said that other [phenomena] adhere to it or that it adheres to other [phenomena], in both cases, the ālaya has solely the nature of a cause."

2229. The preserved portion of the *Vivṛtagūḍhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā* (or any other Indian commentary on the *Mahāyānasamgraha*) does not mention a metal bowl when referring to the example of a mixture of water and milk. This example for the coexistence of the ālaya-consciousness and the latent tendencies of listening (with the latter's being the remedies for the former) is found in *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.46 (D4048, fol. 10b.5).

2230. Again, this example is not found in the preserved portion of the *Vivṛtagūdhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā* but in *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.49 (D4048, fol. 11a.5). It also appears in verses 62–63 of Nāgārjuna’s *Dharmadhātustava*, illustrating the process of yogins extracting buddha wisdom from the body and leaving ignorance behind. To provide the context of this discussion in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* and the *Vivṛtagūdhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā*, the following is a translation of the relevant passages in these two texts. *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.45–49 (D4049, fols. 10b.2–11a.6) says: “[I.45] ‘If the maturational consciousness that contains all seeds is the cause of afflicted phenomena, how could it be acceptable as the seed of its remedy—the supramundane mind?’ Since the supramundane mind is not mixed [with the ālaya-consciousness], the latent tendencies of this [supramundane mind] do not exist [in it]. ‘But if these latent tendencies do not exist [in it], it must be stated from which seeds they arise.’ The [supramundane mind] arises from the seeds that are the latent tendencies of listening, which are the natural outflow of the completely pure dharmadhātu. [I.46] ‘So are these latent tendencies of listening then of the nature of the ālaya-consciousness [or are they not]? If they are of the nature of the ālaya-consciousness, how could they be acceptable as the seeds of its remedy? But if they are not of its nature, what is consequently regarded as the matrix of these seeds that are the latent tendencies of listening?’ As for the matrix within which the latent tendencies of listening [that operate] in dependence on the awakening of buddhas operate, they operate within the maturational consciousness in a manner of coexisting with it, just like [a mixture of] milk and water. They are not the ālaya-consciousness because they are the very seeds of its remedy. [I.47] Here, based on small latent tendencies, they become medium latent tendencies, and based on medium latent tendencies, they become great latent tendencies. For they entail listening, reflection, and meditation being performed many times. [I.48] Now, the small, medium, and great latent tendencies of listening are regarded as the seeds of the dharmakāya. Since they are the remedy of the ālaya-consciousness, they are not of the nature of the ālaya-consciousness. They are something mundane, but since they are the natural outflow of the supramundane completely pure dharmadhātu, they serve as the seeds of the supramundane mind. Even when the supramundane mind has not yet arisen, these [latent tendencies] are the remedy for being ensnared by the afflictions, the remedy for migrating in the miserable realms, and the remedy that makes all wrongdoing vanish. They are [also] conducive to meeting buddhas and bodhisattvas. Though [the latent tendencies of listening] of beginner bodhisattvas are mundane, [these latent tendencies] are regarded as being included in the dharmakāya and those of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas as being included in the vimuktikāya. They are not the ālaya-consciousness but are included in the dharmakāya and vimuktikāya, respectively. To the extent that they gradually increase from being small to being medium to being great, to that same extent the maturational consciousness wanes and also undergoes the fundamental change. If it has undergone this fundamental change in all respects, the maturational consciousness that contained all seeds is then without [any] seeds and is also relinquished in all aspects. [I.49] ‘How can the ālaya-consciousness, which coexists with what is not the ālaya-consciousness like water and milk, wane in all aspects?’ This is like wild geese drinking [by separating] milk from water. It is also similar to the following: as one becomes free from mundane desire, the latent tendencies of the level of not being in meditative equipoise wane, while the latent tendencies of the level of being in meditative equipoise increase until [finally there occurs] the fundamental change.” The *Vivṛtagūdhārthapiṇḍavyākhyā* (D4052, fol. 357b.6–361a.6) comments on this as follows: “[I.45] ‘How could the ālaya-consciousness, which is the cause of afflicted

phenomena, be acceptable as the seed of its own remedy? Poison is not suitable as the seed of nectar.' . . . In order to relinquish both of these qualms, [the text] says, '[The supramundane mind] arises from the seeds.' Here, the dharmadhātu is suchness. Since it is also perfectly pure by nature, it is in terms of its temporary purity [in bodhisattvas] that [the text] says 'completely pure.' In this regard, [the dharmadhātu] of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas is [said to be just] pure. Since [the dharmadhātu] of tathāgatas is free from both obscurations, it is completely pure. . . . [I.46] The passage 'As for the matrix . . .' teaches that that support is nothing but the ālaya-consciousness. . . . The phrase 'the matrix within which [they operate]' [means that they operate] in the mind streams of sentient beings. That [the text] says 'they operate within the maturational consciousness in a manner of coexisting with it' is because to say 'ālaya-consciousness' is not inclusive [enough]. That is, the [ālaya-consciousness] does not exist in the mind streams of bodhisattvas who dwell on the eighth bhūmi and so on, nor in the mind streams of arhats and pratyekabuddhas, but the maturational consciousness does exist [in those mind streams]. Also, it is not the case that the latent tendencies for listening become one with the seeds of afflicted phenomena [just] because they are contained in the same support. For, just like [in a mixture of] milk and water, their own specific characteristics are different. 'If the seeds that are conducive to merit and the seeds of desire and so on have different characteristics in that way and therefore abide like [a mixture of] milk and water, what preeminence do these [former seeds] have?' Therefore, [the text] says, 'They are not the ālaya-consciousness.' This means that the intention [behind this] is that [the two kinds of seeds] have different characteristics by virtue of [the former's] having the nature of being the remedy [of the latter] and not just by virtue of [their having] different results. [Thus, the seeds] that are conducive to merit are also the remedy of the ālaya-consciousness. Just as a poison and a medicine that eliminates poison can exist in a single support, this too should be understood like that. One is also not able to say that these latent tendencies are not suitable as the remedy of afflicted phenomena because they cannot be expressed as being the same as or other than the ālaya-consciousness. For this is not certain by virtue of suchness. . . . [I.48] According to the view of others, the dharmakāya has the characteristics of the uncontaminated skandhas of discipline and so on, and these [latent tendencies] are the seeds that produce the [dharmakāya]. According to our own view, the dharmakāya has the characteristic of suchness, and these [latent tendencies] should be understood as the seeds that make one attain the [dharmakāya]. 'Why should they be understood in that way?' The sentence 'Since they are the remedy of the ālaya-consciousness, they are not of the nature of the ālaya-consciousness' teaches the reason for what was said. 'If it is explained that they are not of the nature of the ālaya-consciousness since they are the seeds that are its remedy, how are they its remedial seeds?' Therefore, [the text] says, 'They are something mundane, but since they are the natural outflow of the supramundane completely pure dharmadhātu . . .' For these mundane [remedial seeds] engage during the phase of seeing true reality. When these seeds are specified in terms of their qualities, they are what induces the remedy. Therefore, [the text] continues, 'Even when the supramundane mind has not yet arisen, these [latent tendencies] . . .' This teaches that they are the aids that are the remedy for the [three] afflictivenesses of afflictions, birth, and karma . . . . [I.49] 'As for its having been explained above that they are the seeds of the dharmakāya, which ones are the seeds of the dharmakāya?' Therefore, [the text] says, 'Though [the latent tendencies of listening] of beginner bodhisattvas are mundane . . .' This explains that they are included in the dharmakāya because they are the cause of the dharmakāya. Here, since the suchness that is liberated from [all] afflictive and

cognitive obscurations including their latent tendencies is the support of [all buddha] dharmas (such as the powers and fearlessnesses), it is called 'dharmakāya.' In which kāya are the [latent tendencies for listening] of beginners who have the dispositions of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas included?' [The text] says that those 'are included in the vimuktikāya. . . .' It is called 'vimuktikāya' because it has the nature of being liberated from the afflictive obscurations. As for [the phrase] 'to that same extent the maturational consciousness wanes,' [this happens] in the phase of the vajra-like samādhi. That it 'also undergoes the fundamental change' means that it becomes the dharmakāya that is characterized by being suchness. The phrase 'the maturational consciousness wanes' refers to [such waning happening] during the state of the vajra-like samādhi. The phrase 'also undergoes the fundamental change' means that it becomes the dharmakāya that has the characteristic of suchness. This is explained with regard to the tathāgatas. 'If it has undergone this fundamental change in all respects' means 'if the foundation that is suchness has changed into the vimuktikāya.' 'The maturational consciousness that contained all seeds is then without [any] seeds' means that all seeds of afflicted phenomena have been relinquished. This is explained with regard to the nirvāṇa with the remainder of the skandhas of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha nonlearners because in that [nirvāṇa, karmic] maturation is impossible in all respects. [Some] raise discussions such as, 'It was explained [above] that [the latent tendencies of listening] operate within [the maturational consciousness] in a manner of coexisting with it. [But] at the end here it is also explained that the maturational consciousness wanes. Therefore, how is it?' It is well known that 'this is like wild geese drinking [by separating] milk from water.' This means that though [both contaminated and uncontaminated seeds] operate [within the ālaya-consciousness] as having the nature of [existing] together [in it], some become exhausted in their entirety, while some [others—the uncontaminated seeds—] consist of those that do not deteriorate. The passage 'as one becomes free from mundane desire . . .' teaches the following. It should be understood that for those who do not present the ālaya-consciousness, there is a fundamental change in a single support due to the latent tendencies of the afflicted phenomena of the sphere of desire deteriorating through being overcome by the mundane path that operates as having the nature of [existing] together with the latent tendencies of the level of not being in meditative equipoise, while the latent tendencies of the level of being in meditative equipoise are caused to increase. Likewise, it should be understood that for those who present the ālaya-consciousness, the supramundane [seeds] increase in all aspects and the seeds of afflicted phenomena are relinquished without exception. I think that the phrase 'It is also similar to . . . the fundamental change' refers to the fundamental change of suchness." Note that, as above, the Yogācāra system in general distinguishes the vimuktikāya and the dharmakāya such that the former designates the removal of only the afflictive obscurations as attained by śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats, while the latter refers to the removal of both afflictive and cognitive obscurations (thus including the vimuktikāya) and also represents the realization of the nonconceptual wisdom of a buddha. By contrast, *Uttaratantra* II.21–26 describes these two kāyas as the two aspects of the function of awakening that represent one's own welfare, without relating them to the distinction between arhats and buddhas. The vimuktikāya is said to represent buddhahood's quality of being uncontaminated (because the afflictions together with their latent tendencies have ceased) and its quality of being all-pervasive (because its wisdom is without attachment and obstruction). The dharmakāya is the unconditioned matrix of buddhahood, which is due to its absolutely indestructible nature.

2231. Sthiramati, *Madhyāntavibhāṅgāṭikā*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 235.7–8; D4032, fol. 276b.6–7. “Virtues conducive to liberation” and “virtues conducive to penetration” are terms for the path of accumulation and the path of preparation, respectively.
2232. CMW *zhi byed* emended to *gzhi byed*.
2233. Compare the Fifth Shamarpa’s commentary on *Abhisamayālamkāra* IV.54a (Brunnhözl 2011b, 68) on the path of familiarization’s being an uninterrupted continuum: “If the direct realization of the naturally pure dharmadhātu is subsequently divided, because self-aware wisdom is permanent in that it exists as an uninterrupted continuum right from the start, it is divided from the perspective of wisdom’s becoming manifest in an increasingly lucid manner by virtue of its becoming free a little bit, becoming more free, and becoming greatly free from the stains that obscure it, respectively.”
2234. CMW *yod do* emended to *yod dam*.
2235. J25. “The supramundane attributes” is an equivalent of “the uncontaminated attributes.”
2236. CMW *tshogs* emended to *tshig*. In this context of commenting on the quote from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra*, RGVV cites only four passages from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*. Maybe CMW refers to these four passages as consisting of seven sentences or phrases (two sentences in the first quote, two sentences in the second, one sentence in the third, and two phrases in one sentence in the fourth).
2237. CMW *yod pas* emended to *yod par*. CMW literally says “ascertain the ascertainment that . . .”
2238. CMW *bsnan pa* instead of *gzhag pa*.
2239. Given the context and RGVV’s comments, CMW *mthong* is emended to *ma mthong*.
2240. For an interesting alternative answer to this question, see the Eighth Situpa’s commentary on the Third Karmapa’s *Aspiration Prayer of Mahāmudrā* (41–43) presented in chapter “The *Uttaratantra* and Mahāmudrā.”
2241. According to GC (446.25–449.16), I.159 contains two qualms—“If this basic element so difficult to see is not even an object for the noble ones on the bhūmi free from attachment, what is the point of teaching the third dharma wheel to ordinary beings?” and “Since the second and third dharma wheels are contradictory in meaning, isn’t one of them to be rejected?” The first qualm is answered by stating the purpose of eliminating the five flaws. The second one is answered by saying that the teaching on the existence of the tathāgata heart does not contradict the explanation of the lack of nature in the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras because that teaching is an explanation of what was not explained clearly before. When the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras speak of being cloud-like and so on, this is not a statement that all knowable objects are like clouds and so on. Rather, among the two realities, the *prajñāpāramitā* sūtras take ultimate reality—the true end—as the basis of emptiness and then say that it is void of all aspects of conditioned phenomena. Through thus negating that conditioned phenomena are the ultimate, they teach that the ultimate is empty of conditioned phenomena, but that does not mean that separately from conditioned phenomena, there exists an ultimate that is different in nature from them. For these sūtras say, “Subhūti, there is neither a worldly seeming reality that is other nor an ultimate that is other. It is the very suchness of the seeming that is ultimate reality.” Nor is it the case that through negating that seeming phenomena are the ultimate, the basis of negation (the ultimate) becomes nonexistent—the ultimate is explicitly and clearly asserted in these sūtras. In the last dharma wheel too, it is taught that the ultimate is empty of what is adventitious because phenomena such as desire are not the ultimate since they are adventitious. However, since these adventitious stains do not occupy the slightest location other than the ultimate basic element,



it is also taught that this element is the foundation of all afflicted phenomena. Likewise, the svābhāvīkākāya of a buddha is explained to be unfabricated, while it is taught that what exists in sentient beings is merely something that is similar in kind to it. Since it is realized by the direct seeing of the noble ones alone, it is also expressed as “the ultimate” because it is the object of ultimate cognition. The instruction that the tathāgata heart exists in all sentient beings, which was not taught clearly in the second dharma wheel, clearly teaches the substantial cause of buddhahood because the stains are obviously not the substantial cause of buddhahood. If this cause is accepted to be empty of everything that has the nature of an entity, there is not the slightest invalidation of this through prajñāpāramitā scriptures or reasonings. Also, the statement that emptiness does definitely not exist is not a negation of the emptiness that is ultimate reality, but it is a negation of an emptiness that is deliberately imagined by thoughts. This is also taught by *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* XIII.7cd:

If there is not the slightest being nonempty,  
How could being empty exist?

The meanings of afflictions, karma, and their maturations are illustrated by the examples of clouds and so on in the third dharma wheel too. Afflictions are like clouds because they arise in an adventitious manner and cover the basic element. Karmic actions are like dream experiences because though they are formed as nothing but something delusive, their results are seen. The skandhas that are the maturations accomplished by afflictions and karma are like illusions and magical creations because while they do not exist when examined, they display as something like sentient beings. Just as it was taught before in the second dharma wheel that afflictions and so on are like clouds and so on, the same is taught later in the third wheel too, but thereafter this wheel also teaches that the basic element that is liberated from afflictions, karma, and their maturations exists. This is done in order to eliminate the five flaws in ordinary beings because these five are obstacles to the mahāyāna path. As for GC’s explanation of ultimate reality as “the object of ultimate cognition,” Bhāviveka’s *Tarkajvālā* (D3856, fol. 59a.7–59b.2) lists three different ways in which the Sanskrit compound *paramārtha* can be read. He says that *artha* (“object,” “purpose,” or “actuality”) refers to what is to be understood, realized, or examined. *Parama* means “supreme.” Thus, (1) since *paramārtha* is an object and ultimate (or supreme), it is the ultimate object (technically, a *karmadhāraya* compound). (2) Or it may be read as “the object of the ultimate.” Since it is the object of ultimate nonconceptual wisdom, it is the object of the ultimate (a *tatpuruṣa* compound). (3) Or it can be understood as “that which is in accordance with the ultimate object” (a *bahuvrīhi* compound). Since the ultimate object exists in the prajñā that is in approximate accordance with the realization of this ultimate object, it is what is in accordance with the ultimate object. In other words, in (1), both *parama* and *artha* refer only to the object as opposed to the subject that realizes it. (2) means that *parama* refers to the subject (wisdom) and *artha* to the object (emptiness). (3) indicates a reasoning consciousness that cognizes ultimate reality not directly but inferentially. Following Bhāviveka, the majority of Indian \*Svāntarikas seem to favor the second way of reading *paramārtha*, while not denying the first. Candrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā* (D3860, fol. 163b.5–6) explicitly sides with (1). Yogācāras typically explain the ultimate along the lines of (1) and (2) as being twofold in terms of subject and object. For example, Sthiramati’s commentary on *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* VI.1 (D4034, fols. 74a.3–75b.1) says that the ultimate consists of suchness (the pure dharmadhātu) and nondual nonconceptual wisdom. Suchness is called the ultimate since it is the fruition of having cultivated the path of the noble ones and represents all phenomena. Or, in terms of its

being an object, it is the ultimate because it is the object of ultimate nonconceptual wisdom. Obviously, GC's explanation here corresponds to (2). Mipham's commentary ('Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 434.3–435.3) presents the same two qualms with regard to I.159 as GC and answers the first one as above. The answer to the second qualm is that the earlier statement that all phenomena from form up through omniscience lack real existence is a teaching from the perspective of the essence of the expanse's being empty. The statement here that the sugata heart exists is not saying that its nature is really existent, but it is a teaching from the perspective of the nature of awareness-wisdom's being lucid. Therefore, these two are not only not contradictory but they are a unity because they are aids for each other. For YDC's general presentation of the purpose of teaching the tathāgata heart and its comments on I.161–63, see appendix 6.

2242. CMW *thob* emended to *thos*.

2243. CMW *nyon mongs . . . mthong yang zhe na* is odd and, given the context, interpreted as this question. The same goes for the next question in the text below.

2244. CMW *ltos te* emended to *nyes de*.

2245. CMW *bdag cag* emended to *bdag chags*.

2246. GC (449.16–451.6) explains that (1) the flaw of faintheartedness is an obstacle to giving rise to bodhicitta. (3)–(4) In those who, due to having generated bodhicitta, think of themselves as being superior to those who did not generate it, perfect wisdom—the opposite of the views about a real personality—will not arise. Therefore, since they cling to unreal afflictions and do not realize the tathāgata heart, they fall away from both prajñā and compassion. The flaws of sentient beings are unreal and mistaken because they are eagerly fabricated by conceptions and because a self and phenomena are adventitious stains that are eagerly superimposed while actually being nonexistent. The qualities of the tathāgata heart are naturally pure because they are without any owner since the afflictions of sentient beings, when examined, lack any nature of their own. Through views about a self, real existence is superimposed onto unreal flaws and the existence of what has the nature of real qualities is denied. (5) Due to that, one will not develop the love for sentient beings that arises by virtue of seeing that oneself and sentient beings are equal in that the tathāgata heart, which is free from reference points and lacks the characteristics of the skandhas, is the disposition of both oneself and others. In the scriptures, there are three ways in which bodhisattvas see themselves and sentient beings as equal—being equal in wishing to attain happiness and to avoid suffering, being equal in lacking any essence ultimately, and being equal in the basic ground of the mind, natural luminosity. Without hearing and knowing that the tathāgata heart is the heart within all views about a real personality, one does not disdain views about a self. Therefore, excessive attachment to oneself is the root of the other four flaws here because one is fainthearted about oneself, is proud about oneself, clings to one's own particular features as being real, and sees the lack of a self as a mistake. The opposites of these five flaws—the five qualities of ardor and so on—are nothing but the four causes for purifying the tathāgata heart in I.34 (faith in the mahāyāna, prajñā, samādhi, and compassion). Ardor for accomplishing the buddha qualities is the result of faith. To respect all beings like the teacher is the faith that the teacher and beings are equal in terms of the naturally pure dharmakāya. Prajñā obviously corresponds to prajñā, wisdom means to cultivate the samādhis that serve as treasures of qualities, and love is what leads to compassion. Likewise, the five flaws correspond to the four obscurations to those four causes. Though being fainthearted about accomplishing buddhahood is not actual anger, it resembles anger or hostility toward the dharma and turning one's back to it. Pride about oneself and clinging to what is unreal represent views about a

self. Not understanding that the tathāgata heart with its qualities abides within oneself corresponds to fear of saṃsāra's suffering. Lacking love and compassion corresponds to indifference about the welfare of sentient beings.

2247. In accordance with the context and the next section, CMW *btags* is emended to *rtogs*.

2248. RYC (139–41) comments that according to the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, “the true end” refers to the unmistakable focal object. Thus, it is the ultimate of what is unmistakable—the tathāgata heart that serves as the focal object of unmistakable nonconceptual wisdom and is void of delusive, deceiving, and conditioned phenomena in all aspects. Conditioned phenomena are what the statements in the *prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in one hundred thousand lines and so on have in mind when they say that all phenomena are like clouds and so on. The afflictions are like clouds because they are not the nature of the mind and are pervasive and adventitious. The karmas motivated by them resemble experiences in a dream because they arise from mistaken conditions and appear as certain experiences despite not existing as entities. The skandhas and so on (the maturational results of afflictions and karma) are like the magical manifestations in an illusion because they arise from conditions and lack real existence. After conditioned phenomena were presented like this in the middle cycle of the Buddha's teachings, in this ultimate continuum here, which means “in later sūtras,” that is, in the sūtras and treatises of the last turning that ascertains the ultimate, it is said that the basic element exists because buddhahood is swiftly attained by relinquishing the five flaws and giving rise to the five qualities instead. Therefore, what the statements in the middle cycle of the Buddha's teaching about all phenomena's lacking real existence have in mind are seeming conditioned phenomena, whereas the statements in the final cycle about the sugata heart's being real and changeless have the ultimate unconditioned dharmadhātu in mind. As for the third and fourth among the five flaws, since the stains of sentient beings are adventitious, they are not real, but those who have not heard the teachings on the tathāgata heart cling to them as being real and not adventitious. On the other hand, ultimately, since the stains do not exist as the nature of the mind and are adventitious, the qualities exist by nature. Still, those who have not heard about the tathāgata heart do not realize the existence of these qualities and even deny their existence. Therefore, they cling to the adventitious stains as being the nature of the mind and deny the existence of the naturally existent real qualities. Through hearing about the tathāgata heart, they then develop the *prajñā* of realizing the stains to be adventitious and the wisdom of realizing the naturally existent qualities. All of this is the answer to the question, “If the tathāgata heart is not even realized by bodhisattvas on the final bhūmi, what is the point of teaching it to ordinary beings?” For, through teaching that the tathāgata heart exists in all sentient beings, though ordinary beings do not realize it as it is, based on trustworthy scriptures, they do realize a mere fraction of it through trusting faith. Thus, when trust in the existence of the tathāgata heart arises, this serves as the remedy for the five flaws and the five qualities will arise in them.

2249. Ut (D) and RGVV (DP) *rang bzhin don* emended to *rang gzhan don*.

2250. CMW *de rtogs pa gcig* is more probably *de rtogs byed*.

2251. The words in “[ ]” are added in CMW in “{ }.”

2252. GC (472.8–14) explains that the supramundane wisdom of meditative equipoise engages knowable objects properly and lacks conceptions and obscurations since these are mundane. When rising from this meditative equipoise, the pure mundane wisdom that is attained subsequent to this meditative equipoise through its power consists of venerating buddhas, purifying buddha realms, and maturing sentient beings through all kinds of phenomena of seeming reality appearing at that time. Since this wisdom

does not directly see ultimate reality, it does not engage properly in knowable objects and is the subject that cognizes seeming reality. Therefore, it is itself a phenomenon that is an obscuration. For both this reason and because its own nature is conceptual, it is mundane. Though it lacks the conceptions that blend terms and their referents, it is described as conceptual by virtue of the dualistic phenomena that appear to it. Also, below the seventh bhūmi, it entails subtle conceptions that blend terms and their referents.

2253. CMW *stong pa* emended to *ston pa*.

2254. CMW *kyis* emended to *kyi*.

2255. CMW *rtag pa brtan pa pho med* emended to *brtan zhi rtag pa pho med*.

2256. CMW *bden* emended to *bde*.

2257. CMW *dmigs pa* emended to *myags pa*. The same goes for the same term in the next sentence.

2258. CMW *'dul byed* emended to *'dul bya*.

2259. CMW *chos sku la* is found at the beginning of the previous sentence, which ends in a Tibetan final particle. However, in terms of the meaning, it is clear that this phrase belongs to this sentence.

2260. CMW *lnga lnga* makes no sense here and is emended to *lnga*.

2261. CMW *rtog pa* emended to *rtogs pa*.

2262. CMW *de na* emended to *de nas*.

2263. CMW *dmus long gi* emended to *dmus long gis*.

2264. CMW *ston* emended to *mothong*.

2265. CMW *rang bzhin med pa tsam* emended to *rang bzhin med pa*.

2266. CMW *'grel pa'i* emended to *'grel pas*.

2267. GC (484) says that the first characteristic refers to the dharmakāya or svābhāvika-kāya being without arising, remaining, and ceasing. The second one means that it is inseparable from the qualities such as the ten powers. The third one means that it lacks the two extremes and is not a middle either. The fourth one means that it is free from the three kinds of obscurations—afflictive, cognitive, and those of meditative absorption. The fifth one means that it is uncommon because it cannot be made an object by conceptions and is only seen by yogins who are endowed with the wisdom of the meditative equipoise of a buddha. JKC (146) agrees with GC's descriptions of the first and the fourth characteristics, but calls the latter "the characteristic of purity." The second characteristic of being undifferentiable means that the dhātu and awareness cannot be separated as being different. The third characteristic of being unmistakable means that the dharmakāya does not exist in the two extremes of superimposition and denial. The fifth characteristic of luminosity means that it is naturally stainless and does not exist as an object of the conceptions of dialecticians.

2268. CMW *kham*s emended to *lam*.

2269. In accordance with two of the meanings of the Sanskrit verb *budh*, the Tibetan *sangs rgyas* for buddhahood consists of the two words "awakening" and "unfolding."

2270. In accordance with the corresponding heading below, CMW *kyis* is emended to *kyi*.

2271. CMW *rten* emended to *brten pa* (this could also be emended to *yon tan*—"qualities").

2272. CMW *gnyis pas* emended to *gnyis pa*.

2273. CMW *mkhyen pa'i* emended to *mkhyen pas*.

2274. RYC (165–67) quotes the section of the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* on the ten powers, which also includes their individual causes. Accordingly, in due order, these causes are (1) its never being the case for bodhisattvas that they desire the hīnayāna and do what should not be done, (2) bodhisattvas' teaching the karmic maturations that come from

one's own actions, (3) their teaching the dharma by examining the faculties of beings, (4) their knowing the different constitutions of beings and then acting according to these constitutions, (5) their searching for the wisdom of liberation in accordance with the different inclinations of beings and not putting down any such inclinations, (6) their directing their wisdom toward conditioned and uncontaminated phenomena, the śrāvakayāna, the pratyekabuddhayāna, and the mahāyāna in their entirety, (7) their emphasizing dhyānas and samādhis and thus realizing the mind and being free from afflictions, that is, being tamed and knowing everything, (8) their not wasting the roots of virtue that arise from previous causes and thus being heedful and not breaking the vows they took, (9) their never discouraging any beings, not faking what they did not learn, and illuminating all sentient beings, and (10) their not being present in order to increase contaminations but teaching the path of the dharma in order to terminate the contaminations. GC (511–14) also lists these causes without referring to the sūtra.

2275. The four māras are not mentioned as such in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* but its *Bhāṣya* on XXI.51 (Limaye 1992, 526–27; D4026, fol. 258a.1–5) says: “Here, the māras who deceive sentient beings with regard to four points are vanquished [by the Buddha]. This teaches the function of the ten powers of the Bhagavān. [The māras deceive in four ways] as follows: (1) they deceive [beings] about the means for progressing to happy realms and miserable realms, (2) they deceive them about those who are not refuges (such as gods) as being refuges, (3) they deceive them about [actual] purity through contaminated [forms of] purity, and (4) they deceive them about the final deliverance through the mahāyāna. One should understand that through the power of knowing what is the case and what is not the case, the Bhagavān vanquishes the māras with regard to the first point. Through the power of knowing the maturation of karma, [he vanquishes the māras] with regard to the second [point]. Through the power of knowing dhyānas, liberations, samādhis, and meditative absorptions, [he vanquishes the māras] with regard to the third [point]. Through the [remaining] powers of knowing higher faculties and those that are not higher and so on, [he vanquishes the māras] with regard to the fourth [point] because after relinquishing the inferior faculties, he joins [those to be guided] with the higher ones.” Asvabhāva's *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāraṭīkā* (D4029, fol. 172a.1–172b.2) adds on point (1) that the māras make one engage in things such as sacrificing cattle or entering a fire, which are not means to progress to happy realms. Through the power of knowing what is and what is not the case, the Buddha knows that killing leads to rebirth in the hells and so on but not in happy existences. Thus, he not only correctly knows a cause for something as being this cause and a result of something as being this result but also annihilates the wrong views of śramaṇas and Brahmans who propound causelessness and discordant causes. As for (2), the gods are not a refuge because they do not know the path to final deliverance. Since they do not know the means for liberation, they are not able to protect sentient beings from all fears in saṃsāra in general and the lower realms in particular. However, the māras present the gods as mundane refuges, who deceive worldly beings through their miraculous powers and so on. As for (4), māras denigrate the mahāyāna in front of beginner bodhisattvas, thus turning them away from bodhisattva conduct and joining them with the śrāvakayāna. Through his remaining seven powers, the Buddha vanquishes such māras, teaching bodhisattva conduct to bodhisattvas and joining them with it. Differing from this explanation, the more common use of the term “the four māras” refers to the māra of the skandhas, the māra of the afflictions, the māra of death, and the devaputramāra (attachment to sense pleasures or meditation experiences).

2276. RYC (169–70) quotes the section of the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* on the four fearlessnesses, which also includes their individual causes. According to this sūtra, the four fearlessnesses are expressed in the following statements by a buddha in the middle of those who surround him, which he proclaims as fearlessly as a lion roars among other animals and that cannot be disputed by anyone in accordance with the dharma: (1) “I am a completely perfect buddha,” (2) “I teach all phenomena that are obstructions to that,” (3) “I teach all pure phenomena,” and (4) “I have terminated all contaminations.” In due order, these four are the expressions of a buddha’s complete realization of all phenomena that can be known, teaching that all obstacles to that are to be put to an end, teaching that one needs to rely on the path that leads to buddhahood, and stating that he himself has attained the cessation in which all contaminations and their latent tendencies have come to an end. The causes of these four are that bodhisattvas (1) as teachers never hide any dharmas from others but have an unbiased mind toward all sentient beings, give all material goods, and see all phenomena as equality, thus being free from any notions of difference, (2) know all obstructions to buddhahood as being such obstructions, just as they are, do not engage in them but relinquish them, and do not teach them to others as anything other than being such obstructions, (3) through always aspiring for pure dharmas, enter the path of purified phenomena and also teach these pure phenomena to all sentient beings so that the true nature of the qualities becomes manifest, engage in the branches that enhance this path, and teach them to others, and (4) never pride themselves that they know and see while others do not know and see, but always are without pride and train their minds in discriminating wrongdoing. GC (515–16) also lists these causes in abbreviated form. In general, Tibetan commentaries say that among the four fearlessnesses, (1) and (4) represent one’s own welfare in terms of realization and relinquishment, respectively, while (2) and (3) represent the welfare of others in terms of teaching the factors to be relinquished and the path that is their remedy, respectively.

2277. RYC (171–73) refers to the section of the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* on the eighteen unique qualities, which also includes their individual causes. The causes of the six unique qualities of conduct are that bodhisattvas (1) build roads and bridges, offer lamps, and so on, (2) relinquish all flaws of words, (3) cultivate the six recollections (of Buddha, dharma, saṃgha, discipline, giving, and deities) and make others cultivate them too, (4) always guard the minds of others, do not create any obstacles to virtue, aspire for all phenomena as being illusion-like, and so on, (5) lack mistaken discriminating notions, and (6) always have continuous equanimity. The causes of the six unique qualities of realization are that bodhisattvas (7) always have the strong aspiration to seek for all kinds of virtue, (8) are insatiable in terms of never abandoning effort and accomplishing virtue, and so on, (9) always have consummate mindfulness, possess supreme mindfulness and alertness, and cultivate the special foundations of mindfulness, (10) always engage in prajñā and thus make efforts in seeking for the genuine dharma through being insatiable in terms of studying it and delighting in such study, and so on, (11) always delight in going into homelessness, stay in solitude, cultivate the three doors to liberation, and so on, and (12) always emphasize wisdom and thus are endowed with the power of wisdom and so on. The causes of the three unique qualities in terms of enlightened activity are that (13) the physical actions of bodhisattvas lack hostility, deception, hypocrisy, corrupt discipline, and so on, and always represent efforts for the welfare of sentient beings, (14) the verbal actions of bodhisattvas lack hostility and so on, are words of truth, and relinquish all flaws of speech, and (15) the mental actions of bodhisattvas lack hostility, are free from greed and so on, and are immersed in love and

compassion, through which they have an unbiased mind toward all beings and do not forget their bodhicitta. Through these three sets of causes, the enlightened activities of a buddha's body, speech, and mind are always preceded and followed by wisdom. The causes of the three unique qualities in terms of wisdom are as follows. (16) The wisdoms without attachment and obstruction, the qualities, and the enlightened activities of all buddhas of the three times are accomplished through aspiring for them and not having doubts about them. That is, through hearing about the qualities of the past buddhas, such as their wisdoms without attachment and obstruction, bodhisattvas aspire for these qualities and also make others aspire for them. Through that, as buddhas, they attain the wisdom vision that is without attachment and obstruction toward all past knowable objects. The same applies to (17)–(18) the unobscured wisdoms of the future and the present. RYC concludes by saying that these causes are the primary ones listed in the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, which also lists further causes—certain samādhis to be cultivated and certain dhāraṇīs to be skilled in. These samādhis are listed in GC (518–19), which presents the following causes. Bodhisattvas (1) benefit sentient beings, seize the genuine dharma, and cultivate the All-Illuminating Samādhi, (2) speak the truth and cultivate the Samādhi of the King of Emanations, (3) cultivate the six recollections and the Samādhi of Mastering All Dharmas, (4) have an equal mind toward all sentient beings and cultivate the Samādhi of Manifesting the Equality That Is the Nature of All Phenomena, (5) lack mistaken discriminating notions and views and cultivate the Samādhi of Signlessness, (6) have equanimity toward the eight worldly dharmas and cultivate the Samādhi of Liberation from Attachment to Duality, (7) seek for the dharma through great aspiration and cultivate the Samādhi of the Mental Formation of Aspiration, (8) approach spiritual friends through making efforts in the dharma and so on and cultivate the Samādhi of Vigor, (9) cultivate the foundations of mindfulness and the Samādhi of Being Endowed with the Mental Formation of Mind Relinquishment, (10) frequently familiarize with prajñā and cultivate the Samādhi of Being Endowed with the Mental Formation of Analysis, (11) after having gone into homelessness, cultivate the three doors to liberation, liberate other beings from stains, and cultivate the Samādhi of the Stainless Heart, (12) train in the wisdom of knowing reality, dependent origination, and so on, and cultivate the Samādhi of Establishing Power, (13) engage in all physical actions without afflictions and cultivate the Samādhi of Displaying All Forms, (14) engage in all verbal actions without afflictions and cultivate the Samādhi of the Jewel Mine, (15) engage in all mental actions without afflictions and cultivate the Samādhi of the Direct Presence of All Presently Living Buddhas, (16) aspire for all past buddhas' infinite bodies, speeches, minds, pure realms, and promotions of the welfare of beings and cultivate the Samādhi of Heroic Stride, (17) aspire for the same features of all future buddhas and cultivate the Samādhi of the Rise of the Power and Aspiration Prayers of Great Compassion, and (18) aspire for the same features of all present buddhas and cultivate the Samādhi of the Very Pure and Stainless Mudrā. Both RYC (173–74) and GC (518) list thirty-four more unique buddha qualities that are presented in the *Ratnadārikāsūtra*, such as the body's being without measure and being able to pacify the flaws of sentient beings right upon being seen.

2278. CMW *ma 'dres pa* emended to *'dres pa*.

2279. CMW *thun mong ma yin* emended to *thun mong ba yin*.

2280. I follow RGVV (DP) *rab dangs* against Ut (D) *rab dag* and HLS *dkar dang*.

2281. RYC (176–78) quotes the section of the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* on the thirty-two major marks, which also includes their individual causes: bodhisattvas (1) being firm in their vows, (2) accumulating all kinds of generosity, (3) not putting down sentient beings,

(4) protecting beings through the dharma, (5) not creating schisms among the servants and retainues of others, (6) giving all kinds of clothes, (7) giving lavish foods and drinks, (8) fully embracing the buddhadharma, (9) keeping secret words secret and relinquishing sexual intercourse, (10) progressively engaging in vast virtuous actions, (11) perfectly accomplishing virtuous dharmas, (12) comforting others due to being fearless, (13) being enthusiastic about everything to be done for others, (14) insatiably practicing the path of the ten virtuous actions, (15) giving all kinds of medicine to the sick, (16) training in virtue in a pure manner, (17) training in having an equal mind toward all beings, (18) reconciling people who have disharmonies, (19) giving pleasing jewels, (20) greatly guarding their physical, verbal, and mental actions, (21) guarding words of truth, being firm in limitless merit, and giving supreme tastes, (22) speaking gentle words to beings, controlling their own words, and proclaiming words that delight all, (23) being endowed with love and guarding everyone, (24) having a motivation that is without deception, (25) praising those worthy of praise, (26) respecting and bowing to the gurus, (27) having a workable mind that perfectly courses in the dharma, (28) giving pleasing clothes, beddings, and seats, (29) completely avoiding hustle and bustle and accepting the words of preceptors, masters, and spiritual friends as they spoke them, (30) possessing loving-kindness for all that lives and abandoning stones, sticks, and weapons, (31) training themselves and others in samādhi, and (32) making buddha statues, repairing dilapidated stūpas, comforting others who are afraid, and reconciling those who are in disharmony. As mentioned before, the numerical breakdown of the marks into thirty-two in verses III.17–25 is far from being obvious, and RYC's quote from the *Ratnadārikāsūtra* actually lists thirty-four marks and their causes, taking "the tongue's being long and tasting the supreme of tastes" as two marks and "his body hairs' being subtle and soft, each one pointing upward from the body and curling to the right" also as two marks. The number thirty-two as inserted in the verses above is arrived at by following GC's presentation of these marks and their causes, which is identical to the one in RYC except for counting each of the above two passages as one mark. Other commentaries, such as JKC (174–78), show different numberings and also sometimes varying causes. JKC says that in the list of the *Uttaratantra*, mark (8) "the body's being tall and straight" in the list of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* is implicitly taken as the general support of the actual thirty-two marks, while each of the following three pairs of marks in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* are counted as a single mark—"the feet being well placed" and "being marked with wheels," "having broad heels" and "having nonprotruding ankles," and "the body hairs' being subtle and soft" and "each one pointing upward from the body and curling to the right" (in addition, JKC subsumes the *Uttaratantra*'s "possessing the strength of Nārāyaṇa and being firm," which is absent in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, under "being well proportioned like a perfect nyagrodha tree"). It may be asked then what the point is in summarizing these marks into thirty-two. JKC answers that not only these thirty-six marks but also the eighty minor marks are qualities of maturation. In addition, the entirety of all the maturational results of having gathered the accumulations on the paths of training are qualities of maturation. Here, it is from the perspective of summarizing them into their main categories that they are counted as the thirty-two qualities of freedom in terms of the results of meditative equipoise (the accumulation of wisdom) and the thirty-two qualities of maturation in terms of the results of subsequent attainment (the accumulation of merit). Thus, the definite number of sixty-four qualities is only given as a rough count.

2282. In accordance with the above, RGVV speaks of four sets of qualities (powers, fearlessnesses, unique qualities, and major marks).



2283. CMW *dang po'i* emended to *dang pos*.
2284. CMW emends *gal rten* to {*gang la brten*}.
2285. CMW *gsum mo* emended to *gcig go*.
2286. CMW *rkyen nam ston pa* tentatively emended to *rkyen nam rton pa*.
2287. CMW refers to the three-line version of this verse in RGVV (DP) as opposed to the four-line version of Ut (D). However, the meaning is exactly the same.
2288. YDC (374) concludes its comments on the six points of enlightened activity by rebutting some objections. It may be said, "There is no object for the enlightened activity of awakening to engage because sentient beings are by nature afflicted, similar to the activity of digging for gold not engaging anything if there is no gold." This is not the case—since awakening exists in sentient beings too without any difference, it is what enlightened activity engages. "But if awakening exists in them without difference, enlightened activity does not need to engage it." This is not the case either—since it is obscured by adventitious afflictions, just as the sky is by clouds, these must be dispelled. "Enlightened activity does not have the power to dispel them." It does have that power because it entails great compassion.
2289. I follow Ut (D) and RGVV (D) *mdzad mi chad* against RGVV (P).
2290. IV.81/84.
2291. CMW *thugs kyi* emended to *thugs rje'i*.
2292. In accordance with the following sentences, CMW *dang po /* is emended to *dang ngo /*.
2293. The single Sanskrit verse IV.34 is split up into the two verses IV.34–35 in the Tibetan versions.
2294. DP and HLS *rgyun* emended to *rgyus*.
2295. See RGVV (J104) on these verses.
2296. CMW *thog ma med* emended to *thogs pa med*.
2297. This passage in RGVV introduces IV.41/42–43 (the single Sanskrit verse IV.41 is split up into two verses in the Tibetan versions).
2298. After the preceding sentence, CMW is quite corrupt here, with some parts missing, being jumbled up, or being mistakenly repeated. Thus, this sentence is added in accordance with CMW's above reference to RGVV.
2299. The single Sanskrit verse IV.46 is split up into the two verses IV.48–49 in the Tibetan versions.
2300. This sentence is added in accordance with CMW's reference to RGVV.
2301. Ut (D) *thog ma* instead of *thog mtha'*.
2302. Ut (D) omits *kha ba*.
2303. All passages of CMW in "[ ]" from here up through "This has four parts—" in the text below are added according to CMW's partially preserved outlines and RGVV.
2304. Ut (D) *'jig rten khams kun du*.
2305. UT (D) *gong du*.
2306. CMW has *phan tshun ltos pa med pa'i rgyur bsgrub pa*, which is hard to make sense of here. Thus, this phrase is emended to *ltos pa med par bsgrub pa* in accordance with the identical phrase used by CMW in the text below. In addition, the phrase *phan tshun ltos pa med pa'i rgyur bsgrub pa* appears in CMW in reverse order with phrase (3) (the same reverse order is found in CMW's correlation of these two phrases with the verses in the text below). However, as will be seen, the order as presented here accords with the topics of the verses of the *Uttaratantra* and CMW's reference to RGVV in the text below.
2307. This sentence is added in accordance with CMW's outline and RGVV.
2308. This phrase is added in accordance with CMW's outline and RGVV.

2309. RGVV (DP) *dkyil*, Ut (D) *mthil*, HLS *mtha'*.
2310. RGVV (DP) *bsam med pa*.
2311. In the Tibetan, this verse has only three lines.
2312. CMW *gal* emended to *'ga'*.
2313. CMW *yon tan* emended to *ston dang*.
2314. This refers to the line “the nonconceptual mind [of the Buddha],” which is the second line of verse in the Tibetan.
2315. CMW *skabs kyi don ni rab sgrub phyir* emended to *'dir ni skabs don 'di yin te*.
2316. IV.85/88.
2317. Ut (D) *sa gzhi* instead of *sa bzhin*.
2318. Despite speaking of “two disputes,” CMW only describes the first one among the two disputes and the answer to the second one (they are the same two disputes that were already mentioned two times above). Thus, two passages in “[ ]” about the second dispute and the answer to the first one are inserted here and right below in the text in accordance with how the second dispute was already described in CMW and how CMW presents the answer to the second dispute below in the text (however, any additional comments on IV.92–93 that CMW may have contained are lost). This reconstruction also accords with RGVV’s presenting the answer to its corresponding question “Why are the buddha bhagavāns . . . ?” as the three verses IV.89–91/92–94.
2319. CMW adds *ston dang* in “[ ]”.
2320. CMW *chos bstan pas* emended to *chos mi mthun*.
2321. CMW *sangs rgyas kyi dpe snga ma snga ma spangs pas sgo nas* emended to *sangs rgyas kyi dpe snga ma snga ma spangs pa'i sgo nas*.
2322. CMW has “fourth” (*bzhi ba*).
2323. CMW *rang gis* emended to *rang gi*.
2324. CMW *yum* emended to *yul*.
2325. CMW *gang zag mos* emended to *gang zag gang mos*.
2326. CMW has “five.”
2327. These three verses or a passage something similar to them are not found in the *Kangyur* version of the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra*. The *sūtra* contains a passage about the accumulation of merit of bodhisattvas being inexhaustible (D175, fol. 151a.6–153a.1), which starts with the merits arising from generosity, discipline, and meditation, and sometimes seems to echo some parts of these verses, but does not contain a comparison of generosity, discipline, and dhyāna with “having faith in this dharma.”
2328. CMW *thob pa yin pas* emended to *thos pa yin pa*.
2329. CMW *gang gi* emended to *gang gis*.
2330. CMW *nyes pa* emended to *nyams pa*.
2331. CMW *gang gis phyir* emended to *gang gi phyir*.
2332. CMW *rnyed pa dka'* emended to *rnyed la brkam*.
2333. All other commentaries speak of ten causes for rejecting the mahāyāna dharma, following the number of phrases starting with “because” in V.22. YDC (406) adds that the prajñāpāramitā sūtras speak of four such causes—being obscured by māras, lacking faith in the profound dharma, clinging to the skandhas and so on, and associating with evil friends. According to *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* I.8 and its commentaries, the four causes of being afraid of the mahāyāna are lacking the bodhisattva disposition, associating with bad spiritual friends of the śrāvakayāna and the pratyekabuddhayāna, not having accumulated virtue in former lifetimes that leads to the understanding of the mahāyāna, and not having trained one’s mind through studying and reflecting on the mahāyāna in both former lifetimes and this one.

2334. Ajātaśatru ruled the kingdom of Magadha in northern India c. 491–c. 461 BCE. He was the son of King Bimbisara, a great patron of the Buddha. Ajātaśatru forcefully took over the kingdom by imprisoning and eventually killing his father. He also fought a very bloody war against the realm of the Licchavis and conquered the Vaiśālī Republic. Later, he repented his actions and became a student of the Buddha.
2335. Skt. *anantarya*, Tib. *mtshams med*. Often translated as the “five immeasurably negative actions” or “the five heinous crimes”—killing one’s father, one’s mother, or an arhat; creating a schism in the saṃgha; and intentionally causing blood to flow from the body of a buddha. However, the more literal rendering “the five actions without interval” refers to their results being the unavoidable rebirth in a hell realm immediately after death, without going through the interval of an intermediate state (bardo) before the next rebirth.
2336. CMW *nga lta* emended to *da lta*.
2337. CMW *rnam par byas* emended to *rnam par byang*.
2338. In CMW, this phrase (*don tshigs su bcad pa ni*) follows the phrase “Because of weak intelligence . . .” in the text below, where it is completely out of place. Therefore, I shifted it to the beginning of the discussion of these three verses that are indeed “verses that summarize the meaning” of what was taught in the text above.
2339. The remaining three phrases in V.26 correspond to V.17, 18, and 19, respectively, while line V.27a corresponds to V.20–21.
2340. CMW *gnyis ka’i* emended to *gnyis kyis*.
2341. The following passages enclosed in double quote marks refer to the final verse of dedication found only in the Tibetan versions of RGVV:  
 Through whatever inconceivable merit I attained  
 Due to explaining the precious genuine dharma of the supreme yāna,  
 May all beings become stainless vessels  
 For the precious genuine dharma of the supreme yāna.
2342. CMW *bsam bya’i* emended to *bsam yas*.
2343. Numbers in “{ }” in this translation refer to Bkra shis ’od zer 2006.
2344. HLS *dgongs don zab don zab mo* emended to *dgongs don zab mo*.
2345. Tib. Gsal ba’i tshul khriims. This accords with Bu ston rin chen grub (1931, 2:137; Obermiller retrotranslates as \*Prasannaśilā) and Tāranātha (1980, 155). Their mother is said to have made aspiration prayers to give birth to sons who would uphold the Buddhist teachings. However, contrary to common Tibetan tradition, Tāranātha explicitly says that she was not a nun who had relinquished her vows to give birth to these sons. Paramārtha’s (499–569) Chinese biography of Vasubandhu says that the mother’s name was Viriñci and that both Asaṅga’s and Vasubandhu’s father was a Brahman, with whom she also had a third son, called Viriñcivatsa.
2346. According to Tāranātha (1980, 158–59), there are different accounts on how much time Asaṅga spent in Tuṣṭa—six months, fifteen years, twenty-five years, or fifty years.
2347. These five form the five sections of the *Yogācārabhūmi*.
2348. HLS *sdoms theg bsdus dang bslab bsdus gnyis rnam pa gnyis* emended to *sdom theg bsdus dang mngon pa kun btus rnam pa gnyis*.
2349. *Prakarāṇa* means “treatise” or “monograph.” Vasubandhu’s eightfold collection consists of his *Vyākhyāyukti*, *Karmasiddhiprakarāṇa*, *Pañcaskandhaprakarāṇa*, *Viṃśatikākārikā*, *Triṃśikākārikā*, *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāṣya*, *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya*, and *Dharmadharmatāvibhāgavṛtti*. HLS contains an interlinear note here, saying that “the five such as the *Triṃśikā* are his independent compositions and the three such as [the commentary on] vast conduct are his compositions based on [the works of]

- others.” The last three among the eight texts above are Vasubandhu’s commentaries on texts by Maitreya (probably, HLS’s “vast conduct” refers to the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* since that text primarily discusses the vast activities of the bodhisattva path).
2350. There is no known commentary on that text by Vasubandhu, but HLS probably refers to the *Śatasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāṣṭādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābṛhaṭṭikā* (a commentary on the three longest prajñāpāramitā sūtras), which is often attributed to Vasubandhu. For details on this text, see Brunnhölzl (2010, 692n99) and Brunnhölzl (2011a, 26–46).
2351. HLS *snying po’i don gyis rab rnams* emended to *snying po’i don gyi gsung rab rnams*.
2352. Tib. Gsang phu.
2353. Tib. ’Jam dbyangs shā kya gzhon nu. According to the *Blue Annals* (’Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 1996, 329), he occupied the chair of Sangpu monastery for twenty years starting in 1326.
2354. Tib. Karma [HLS Karma pa] dkon mchog gzhon nu (born 1333). According to Dpa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba (2003, 972) and Chos kyi ’byung gnas (Situpa VIII) and ’Be lo tshe dbang kun khyab (2005, 1:580), Karma Gönshön just met the Third Karmapa (without receiving teachings) and was primarily a disciple of the Fourth Karmapa, Rölpe Dorje (1340–1383). He studied the yāna of characteristics at Sangpu and became renowned as a great scholar. It was primarily with him that the Sakya scholars Yagtön (1350–1414) and Rongtön (1367–1449) studied the last two Maitreya works (*Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* and *Uttaratantra*). Stearns (2010, 58) also mentions a debate between Karma Gönshön and Rendawa Shönnu Lodrö (1348–1412) on the question of internal contradictions in the *Kālacakratantra*.
2355. That is, Dölpopa.
2356. This refers to ’Bri gung chos kyi rgyal po (1335–1407), a student of the Fourth Karmapa, who served as the eleventh abbot of the major Drikung Kagyü monastery Drikung Til (Tib. ’Bri gung mthil) from 1351–1395.
2357. The translation of the verses of the *Uttaratantra* in HLS is the same as in CMW, following Ut (D) and RGVV (DP). Therefore, the numerous misspellings and slight variants in HLS, which usually follow the version of the verses in RGVV (P) are not listed. Also, for reasons of space, I mostly do not retain the verses to which HLS assigns only headings but does not comment on. In such cases, I list only the numbers of these verses in the Tibetan versions of the *Uttaratantra* (for their contents, refer to CMW).
2358. *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*, D147, fol. 142a.4–5.
2359. In accordance with RGVV, HLS *byang chub sems dpa’i* is emended to *byang chub chen po’i*.
2360. This sentence on the qualities, which is absent from HLS, is inserted from RGVV.
2361. HLS *brten pa* emended to *brtan pa*.
2362. D224, fol. 172b.2–3.
2363. Taishō 668, XVI, 467a.
2364. Ibid., 467a (RGVV ascribes this quote to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, but it is also found in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdēśaparivarta*).
2365. Ibid.
2366. D185, fol. 187b.4–5. HLS omits this quote.
2367. HLS *byed pa* emended to *med pa*.
2368. Given the Sanskrit *dvayavikalpasamudācāra*<sup>o</sup> and the context, I follow RGVV (D) *rnam par rtog pa dang gnyis* against RGVV (P) *rnam par rtog pa rnam pa gnyis* and HLS *rnam par rtog pa dang/ las gnyis*.
2369. RGVV, D4025, fol. 80b.1–2.

2370. As mentioned before, these two sets of qualities represent the two categories under which many Tibetan commentaries subsume what they count as the six qualities of the jewel of the saṃgha in *Uttaratantra* I.13–18. The qualities of awareness are (1) the wisdom of suchness, (2) the wisdom of variety, and (3) wisdom’s being internal. The qualities of liberation are (4)–(5) being pure of both afflictive and cognitive obscurations and (6) being unsurpassable. HLS clearly follows this model up through identifying (4)–(5) as the qualities of liberation, while it seems that (6) being unsurpassable is not included in either category.
2371. HLS omits this verse.
2372. An interlinear note here says that this refers to the twelve branches of the Buddha’s speech, such as the sūtra collection and proclamations in song.
2373. HLS *rten* emended to *gtan*. The same applies a few lines down in the text for the saṃgha.
2374. Tib. *khyu mchog* translates *ārṣabha* (lit. “descending from a bull”).
2375. HLS *de na* emended to *des na*.
2376. Given the context, the translation of the second clause beginning with “because” (which on its own is difficult to construe in both RGVV (DP) and HLS) follows the Sanskrit of RGVV.
2377. Like some other Tibetan commentaries, HLS omits *Uttaratantra* I.27, but I retain the numbering of the following verses for the sake of concordance.
2378. HLS *yid ni nor bu* accords with the Sanskrit *cintamaṇi*, but all other Tibetan versions have “precious gem” (*nor bu rin chen*).
2379. HLS *chu bo* (“river”).
2380. HLS *gsum* emended to *gnyis*.
2381. This group of sentient beings as well as the two following ones are described in RGVV (J10).
2382. HLS omits this phrase.
2383. Though HLS has *rgyu* (“cause”), the explanation in the text below refers to reasons rather than causes (Skt. *kāraṇa* can mean both “reason” and “cause”).
2384. HLS *chos pa* emended to *mos pa*.
2385. That is, the purity of the dharmakāya, the attainment of buddha wisdom, and great compassion engaging all beings.
2386. HLS *grol ba* emended to *drod*.
2387. In HLS, the entire passage from here up through the sentence that ends “because they have relinquished such mistakenness” in the comments on I.46 is mistakenly placed on 167–68. Thus, for the sake of consistency and staying oriented in the Tibetan, I retain page numbers 167 and 168 in this passage and repeat page number 164 when the text resumes on that page.
2388. Taishō 668, XVI, 467b.
2389. HLS *rgyu gsum gyi[s]*.
2390. HLS *bdag gis* emended to *bdag gi ba*.
2391. HLS omits this sentence.
2392. RGVV (D) and D45.48 omit “does not age.”
2393. D45.48, fol. 274b.3–6.
2394. HLS *tshul bzhin ma dag yin* emended to *tshul bzhin ma yin*.
2395. HLS *snying rje'i* emended to *snying rjes*.
2396. According to the comments in the text below, HLS *sa drug pa* is emended to *sa drug*.
2397. HLS *rnam grangs* emended to *ming gi rnam grangs*.

2398. Despite speaking of four synonyms in the heading, HLS here lists “the ultimate” as an additional fifth synonym.
2399. HLS *mya ngan la 'das pa yin pa'i phyir don* emended to *mya ngan las 'das pa yin pa'i don*.
2400. Though there is a similar passage in the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśasūtra* (Taishō 668, 467a), as it stands, this quote is from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fol. 272a.7–272b.1).
2401. On the origin of this quote, see the note on it in my translation of RGVV.
2402. HLS *'di dag re re la'ang sangs rgyas kyi spyod yul mtha' yas pa* emended to *'di dag nyid las re re yang sangs rgyas kyi spyod yul la mtha' yas par*.
2403. HLS *mya ngan las 'das pa'i phyir dbyings* emended to *mya ngan las 'das pa'i dbyings*.
2404. HLS *dgu'i* emended to *dgus*.
2405. As mentioned before, these examples stem from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* (D258, fols. 248a.3–254b.3).
2406. I cannot make sense of and thus omit HLS *stong* before *'khor los bsgyur ba'i rgyal po*.
2407. HLS *yongs su rdzogs* emended to *longs spyod rdzogs*.
2408. HLS *'grub* emended to *'jug*.
2409. RGVV (DP) *lam*.
2410. It could be argued that HLS *kham*s here takes up that term as it is used in I.146c, where it clearly means “the basic element.” See however the next sentence in which *kham*s means “realm.”
2411. HLS *brten* emended to *ston*.
2412. HLS and DP *rgyu can gyi* emended to *rgyud can gyi (saṃtānānām)*.
2413. As already implied here, at the beginning of the second chapter (awakening), it will be explained that the tathāgata heart is an equivalent of suchness with stains, while buddhahood or tathāgatahood is equivalent to suchness without stains.
2414. These are lines 50–55 from the Third Karmapa's *Treatise on Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart*.
2415. *Uttaratantra* I.37cd.
2416. RGVV (DP) *gnas yongs su gyur pa 'jig rten las 'das pa rnam par mi rtog pa dang / de'i rjes la thob pa ye shes kyi rgyu can bral ba'i 'bras bu'i ming can gnas yongs su gyur ba'i rgyu yin*. In RGVV, the whole paragraph beginning with this sentence belongs to the topic of the function (and not the fruition) of awakening, which—as HLS agrees—is only explained in *Uttaratantra* II.18–28, as being the function of twofold wisdom.
2417. HLS *sam* emended to *so*.
2418. II.14–16.
2419. HLS *spyad pa* emended to *sbyang ba*.
2420. HLS *thob pa* emended to *thos pa*.
2421. HLS omits “for this purpose.”
2422. HLS omits “the actuality of.”
2423. *Madhyāntavibhāghāṣya*, D4027, fols. 9b.2–10a.2. According to Mipham Rinpoche's commentary on the *Madhyāntavibhāga* ('Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984e, 693–97), in the nature of the dharmadhātu (the object to be realized), there are no different types. Still, in the subject that realizes this dharmadhātu (the meditative equipoises of the ten bhūmis), there are differences in terms of its increasingly pure seeing of the dharmadhātu, though there is no difference in these meditative equipoises in terms of the manner in which dualistic appearances vanish within the dharmadhātu free from reference points. Therefore, just as one is not able to distinguish the traces of a bird in space, one cannot distinguish the bhūmis from the perspective of meditative equipoise. When bodhisattvas progress from bhūmi to bhūmi, the corresponding factors

to be relinquished are relinquished through the particular wisdoms of the meditative equipoises of the respective bhūmis. Through the power of that, particular kinds of certainty about the dharmadhātu arise during subsequent attainment. Thus, the manner in which the factors to be relinquished are relinquished is explained here from the point of view of the aspects of those certainties. (1) When the dharmadhātu has been seen directly in the meditative equipoise of the first bhūmi, during its subsequent attainment, there arises the realization that the dharmadhātu has the nature of being all-pervading and omnipresent. In this way, the meditative equipoise of the first bhūmi is that which induces this subsequent certainty because the latter is attained based on the former. Or one could say that bodhisattvas realize that the dharmadhātu entails the actuality of omnipresence. Consequently, the obstacle for not realizing this actuality of the omnipresence of the dharmadhātu is the obscuration of this bhūmi. Since this obscuration is relinquished through the arising of the wisdom of the first bhūmi, that certainty during subsequent attainment arises automatically. This is also the case because all phenomena have become of the nature of the dharmadhātu when the dharmadhātu is seen directly, and therefore the nature of phenomena that is the equality of oneself and others is attained. The same goes for the remaining bhūmis. (2) The wisdom of the second bhūmi consists of the actuality of the further eminence, or the supreme increase, of the realization of the dharmadhātu. This means that bodhisattvas who have attained this wisdom practice purification through even greater efforts than before. (3) On the third bhūmi, bodhisattvas realize that studying the words of the Buddha—the natural outflow of the dharmadhātu—is the supreme purpose to be striven for. Thus, for the sake of a single verse of dharma, they even cross a pit that is filled by a fire the size of a trichiliocosm. They do so because they see that the dharmadhātu is the most significant and supremely undeceiving one among all objects to be realized, and that there is no superior cause for its realization than to study the words of Buddha. (4) On the fourth bhūmi, bodhisattvas realize the actuality of nonclinging (such as clinging to any phenomena as being what is “mine”)—they even put an end to craving for the dharma, let alone any clinging to what is not the dharma. (5) On the fifth bhūmi, they realize the actuality that the phenomena included in their own mind streams and those of others are not different. They also see that their own mind streams are not different from the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three times. Furthermore, the sūtras describe this as the ten equalities of completely pure mind and intention: (a)–(c) the equality of past, present, and future buddhas in their intentions with respect to the completely pure dharma, (d) the equality of intention with respect to completely pure discipline, (e) completely pure sentient beings, (f) completely pure elimination of views, doubts, and regrets, (g) completely pure knowledge of what is the path and what is not the path, (h) completely pure knowledge of the path, (i) completely pure increasing application of the dharmas concordant with awakening, and (j) completely pure maturation of sentient beings. Through these equalities, bodhisattvas realize that the dharmakāya of all buddhas is not different from their own mind stream (note that, according to the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, the ten equalities are the equality of all phenomena in (1) their lack of defining characteristics, (2) their lack of characteristics, (3) their nonarising from the four extremes, (4) their nonarising, (5) their being void, (6) their primordial purity, (7) their lack of reference points, (8) their lack of being adopted or rejected, (9) phenomena’s being like dreams, optical illusions, water moons, reflections, and magical creations, and (10) their being entities or nonentities). (6) On the sixth bhūmi, bodhisattvas see the actuality of profound dependent origination. Therefore, this is the realization that there is no phenomenon that is first afflicted and later becomes pure.

(7) On the seventh bhūmi, through realizing signlessness, they realize the actuality of all phenomena's having the single taste of not being different. (8) On the eighth bhūmi, through attaining the poised readiness for nonarising, they realize the actuality of all phenomena's existing as equality, in which there is neither decrease nor increase. In general, through the wisdoms of the three pure bhūmis, bodhisattvas realize the dharmadhātu as the matrix of the fourfold mastery over the nonconceptual dharmadhātu, pure realms, wisdom, and enlightened activity. On the eighth bhūmi, they attain mastery over nonconceptuality because they lack any reference points and characteristics by virtue of resting in meditative equipoise in the dharmadhātu in the manner of one taste. They also attain mastery over pure realms because there appear, and they display, limitless appearances of buddha realms and maṇḍalas of retinues. (9) On the ninth bhūmi, they attain mastery over the wisdom of teaching the dharma through the four types of discriminating awareness. (10) During the subsequent attainment of the tenth bhūmi, bodhisattvas attain mastery over enlightened activity happening in exactly the way they wish. In this manner, the wisdoms of the meditative equipoises of the last three bhūmis are the cause or matrix of those masteries. Since this is the case through the power of bodhisattvas focusing on the dharmadhātu, the dharmadhātu should be understood as the actual matrix in which those qualities arise. Bodhisattvas are able to ascertain this through seeing it directly, whereas ordinary beings should understand it through inference. It is true that there is some degree of simply inducing certainty about the dharmadhātu's being omnipresent, without decrease and increase, and so on, even on the level of engagement through aspiration. However, during the subsequent attainments of having directly encountered the pure dharmadhātu through the wisdoms of the respective bhūmis, bodhisattvas attain the effortless certainty that cuts through superimpositions through the power of their experience. This is to be understood as the increasingly pure special seeing of the nature of the dharmadhātu that consists of the phases of progressing from bhūmi to bhūmi. Thus, the ignorance that obscures seeing the nature of the dharmadhātu as it is bears the names "great dullness" or "cognitive obscurations." For its nature consists of the ten obscurations that are not afflictions, while the ten bhūmis represent the remedies for the antagonistic factors of the wisdoms of these ten bhūmis. That is, through attaining the respective bhūmis, these obscurations are relinquished for good. See also Brunnhölzl 2010, 519–21 on "the distinctive features of realization."

2424. HLS *chu bo* emended to *chu*.

2425. HLS *rgyun mi chad pa* emended to *rgyun chad pa*.

2426. HLS *nus mthun* emended to *nus mthu*.

2427. HLS *don bshad* emended to *don byed*.

2428. HLS *'di don* emended to *dpe don*.

2429. HLS *don bsdu ba* emended to *don grub pa*.

2430. Though numbering this and the following headings correctly, HLS mistakenly replaces the words of this heading by repeating the preceding heading 2.3.1.7.2. and then replaces the words of the following headings 2.3.1.7.4. and 2.3.1.7.5. with headings 2.3.1.7.3. and 2.3.1.7.4., respectively (thus omitting heading 2.3.1.7.5.).

2431. This refers to the ongoing Tibetan debate about the order of the five Maitreya texts and which one of them is the final one. YDC (409) presents the standard argument that among these five, the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* is the first one since it is the only one that starts with verses of paying homage and committing to compose the treatise, while the *Uttaratantra* is the last one because it is the only one that ends with a verse of dedication (the remaining three texts have no such verses).



2432. This refers to the commentaries on the *Uttaratantra* by Ngog Lotsāwa, Chaba Chökyi Sengé, and the latter's two students Dsangnagpa Dsöndru Sengé and Tenpagpa Mawé Sengé.
2433. Judging by the above references to Ngog Lotsāwa and so on, these four verses are obviously part of the Third Karmapa's topical outline.
2434. HLS *bskor* emended to *'khor*.
2435. Tib. La rtsa rdo rje gdan.
2436. This is 1539 CE.
2437. Tib. 'Od zer bzang po.
2438. Tib. Ber nag po chen.
2439. Tib. Dpal [ldan] lha mo.
2440. Tib. Dam can rdo rje legs pa.
2441. Obviously, this refers to the dhātu (the cause), awakening, the qualities, and enlightened activity (the conditions), and the three jewels (the results) as presented in the *Uttaratantra*.
2442. This refers to the last four vajra points' being inconceivable as explained in *Uttaratantra* I.24–25 and RGVV: the tathāgata heart's being naturally pure and yet being afflicted by adventitious stains, awakening's never being afflicted by adventitious stains and yet being purified from them through the path, all buddha qualities' existing already in sentient beings and yet not manifesting until buddhahood, and enlightened activity's fulfilling the needs of all those to be guided and yet being completely free from thoughts or efforts.
2443. IM *somsp* emended to *soms*. Note that, besides the common abbreviations in *dbu med* manuscripts, the manuscripts of IM and RW exhibit several orthographical variants (such as many cases of additional redundant *dang*, *sa* as superscript instead of *ra*, additional final *a chung*, *a chung* as prefix instead of *ma*, *pa* following words that end in *-ng*, and *ka* instead of *mkha'*). I have not adapted these variants to present-day orthography but only indicate obvious misspellings that make no sense or change the meaning.
2444. IM *yid ches su* emended to *yid ches*.
2445. IM *sdzogs skyo* emended to *rdzogs so*.
2446. These are the five sense consciousnesses and the mental consciousness.
2447. Compare *Uttaratantra* I.55–63 on the way in which the universe is formed in space through the elements as an example for how mistakenness and its results arise within the purity of the mind. In this example, improper mental engagement is like the wind element, which gives rise to afflictions and karma as well as the skandhas (which resemble the elements of water and earth, respectively). Just as the elements in space, improper mental engagement, afflictions, karma, and the skandhas arise and cease within the purity of mind, which is unchanging and never afflicted by these adventitious stains.
2448. This is an expression for the ālaya-consciousness (compare the term *mūlavijñāna* in Vasubandhu's *Trisvabhāvanirdeśa* 9a).
2449. This refers to the seventh consciousness, the afflicted mind.
2450. In accord with the parallel phrase in the text right below, IM *rtogs pa* is emended to *rtog pa*.
2451. IM *gzhan gi* emended to *gzhan gyis*.
2452. These four are “empty luminosity,” “very empty luminosity,” “greatly empty luminosity,” and “all-empty luminosity.” These are also referred to as “the manner of being liberated as the essence of fourfold luminosity.” In due order, they correspond

to the four stages of the internal dissolution of consciousness into space and eventually luminosity during the process of dying. These four stages, which are also used in certain vajrayāna practices, are called “appearance,” “increase,” “attainment,” and “full attainment” with their experiences of whiteness (like moonlight shining in a clear sky), redness (like sunlight shining in a clear sky), blackness (like a cloudless sky without any sunlight, moonlight, or starlight), and natural luminosity.

2453. Interlinear note: [in terms of] good and bad.

2454. Interlinear note: example.

2455. Interlinear note: You may wonder, “So what about the experience of suffering?”

2456. Interlinear note: “So what about the afflictions?”

2457. Interlinear note: “So what about the arising of thoughts?”

2458. Interlinear note: You may wonder, “What is the actuality of mind?” The last six lines echo *Uttaratantra* I.28.

2459. Interlinear note: the identification of self-arisen wisdom.

2460. The last six lines accord with the nine examples for the basic element and its obscurations in the *Uttaratantra*.

2461. Interlinear note: the basis. These two lines could also be read as “Self-arisen wisdom naturally abides in . . .” or “The nature of self-arisen wisdom abides in . . .”

2462. Interlinear note: You may wonder, “What cause precedes [this]?”

2463. Interlinear note: this essence.

2464. Interlinear note: as for being agitated about appearances.

2465. Interlinear note: the cause.

2466. Interlinear note: it is certain that clinging arises.

2467. Interlinear note: the conditions.

2468. Interlinear note: the results—the lower realms.

2469. Interlinear note: the manner of being fettered.

2470. Interlinear note: unreal.

2471. Interlinear note: not knowing one’s own true face.

2472. Interlinear note: suffering is mistakenness.

2473. Interlinear note: You may wonder, “It is tainted by thoughts.”

2474. These four lines correspond to *Uttaratantra* I.49–50 and the comments in RGVV.

2475. Interlinear note: the three [kinds] of persons [just mentioned].

2476. Interlinear note: self-arisen.

2477. IM *gnyan par bskur* emended to *bsnyen par bkur*.

2478. Interlinear note: those with great desire [among] the four mind streams [of those who are not suitable to realize the tathāgata heart] (IM *rgyu* emended to *rgyud*). See *Uttaratantra* I.32–33ab and the comments in RGVV.

2479. Interlinear note: the śrāvakas.

2480. Interlinear note: the pratyekabuddhas.

2481. For some unknown reason, the numbering of the instructions starts again with one.

2482. Interlinear note: when having become a buddha.

2483. Interlinear note: the dharma [from among the three jewels].

2484. Interlinear note: in the ultimate sense.

2485. These verses, which explain the three jewels from the internal perspective of luminosity and self-arisen wisdom, take up some of the features of the three jewels as they are discussed in *Uttaratantra* I.4–21.

2486. Interlinear note: the basic element.

2487. Interlinear note: this refers to having revulsion toward saṃsāra. Thus, “the signs” (*rtags*) most probably refer to “the four seals that are the signs of the Buddha’s words”

(Tib. *bka' rtags kyī phyag rgya bzhi*): (1) everything conditioned is impermanent, (2) everything contaminated is suffering, (3) all phenomena are empty and identityless, and (4) nirvāṇa alone is peace.

2488. IM *rje* emended to *snying rje*.
2489. Interlinear note: the fruition.
2490. Interlinear note: sign (*rtags*).
2491. Interlinear note: changeless suchness.
2492. Interlinear note: the noble ones.
2493. Interlinear note: the saṃgha.
2494. These two lines echo *Uttaratantra* I.13b and I.15 on the saṃgha.
2495. These two lines echo *Uttaratantra* I.16.
2496. This line in IM ends in *skye'i du*, which could be *skye 'dug*.
2497. Interlinear note: awakening.
2498. Interlinear note: the qualities.
2499. Interlinear note: enlightened activity.
2500. Interlinear note: *las kyī dgos*. Given the following explanations, this refers to the purpose of teaching the tathāgata heart.
2501. Interlinear note: faintheartedness.
2502. IM *zhim* emended to *zhum*.
2503. Interlinear note: contempt [for inferior beings].
2504. Interlinear note: respect.
2505. Interlinear note: clinging to the flaws.
2506. Interlinear note: thoughts are nonentities.
2507. Interlinear note: what exists as [thoughts].
2508. IM *'od gsol* emended to *'od gsal*.
2509. Interlinear note: the nature of wisdom.
2510. Interlinear note: being attached to oneself.
2511. Interlinear note: great love.
2512. Interlinear note: it is taught that this is the instruction that matches the sixth guiding instruction, on medicine.
2513. IM *i ti*.
2514. Interlinear note: who has the two dharmas of the victor Maitreya (obviously referring to the *Uttaratantra* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*).
2515. IM *ma ga ta*.
2516. At the top of p. 155, an interlinear note says: there was a monk with an opened white parasol, surrounded by many retinues of gods.
2517. IM *chos nyi* emended to *chos nyid*.
2518. IM *ma rga ba*. Literally, this means something like “he did not age,” which obviously makes no sense here. Therefore, given the context and an identical misspelling in the text right below, in which *rga ba* is clearly to be replaced by *dga' ba*, *ma rga ba* here is also emended to *ma dga' ba*.
2519. IM *a nan ta bhī rti*.
2520. IM *a ka ra shan ti pa*.
2521. IM *sa sja na*.
2522. IM *gzū rga bar do rje*. Interlinear note: a translator in the Kashmiri city Anupamapura.
2523. Tib. *Spu rangs tho gling gser khang*.
2524. Tib. *La stod lho pa*.
2525. Tib. *Do pa snyan*.
2526. Interlinear note: the eighth one to come [into this position]. This is Mönlam Tsültrim.

2527. Interlinear note: *ze'u*.
2528. IM *dgo* emended to *dge'o*.
2529. See *Uttaratantra* I.4–5 and I.7 and the comments in RGVV. Compare also CMW's introduction discussing the jewel of the Buddha as luminosity and self-arisen wisdom.
2530. Compare *Uttaratantra* I.10–12 and the comments in RGVV. In particular, the above three features of cessation are found in *Uttaratantra* I.10a: being inconceivable, free from the dual (karma and afflictions), and nonconceptual. The three features of the path represent what is found in *Uttaratantra* I.10b: being pure, luminous or clear, and a remedial factor.
2531. These two features of the saṃgha correspond to the wisdoms of suchness and variety as explained in *Uttaratantra* I.14–16 and the comments in RGVV.
2532. An interlinear gloss here says that the temporary three jewels “are asserted as the objects of refuge by way of aspiration, without the realization of one's own mind's being dharmakāya having arisen directly.”
2533. Compare this passage to *Uttaratantra* I.20–21 and the comments in RGVV.
2534. *Uttaratantra* I.28d.
2535. In the text below, RW (298.2–4) defines adventitious flaws as consisting of the mistaken appearances of thoughts. They are the kind of mistakenness that has the nature of phenomena as its basis. However, the nature of thoughts is mistakenness in terms of both having and not having a basis—thoughts are mistaken through taking the self-arisen wisdom that is beyond thought and expression as their object.
2536. This paragraph represents a general discussion of the fourth vajra point of the *Uttaratantra*.
2537. This paragraph represents a brief explanation of the fifth and seventh vajra points (the sixth one is implied).
2538. In this context, this expression does not refer to the path of accumulation but to the path of seeing as the beginning of the actual path of directly seeing the nature of phenomena.
2539. This example is found in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. A newborn prince is already superior to all the king's ministers inasmuch as he is born into a royal family. However, in terms of his own mental power while still a child, he is not superior to the ministers. Finally, when he has grown up and received the best possible education, he surpasses the king's ministers in all respects. Likewise, once bodhisattvas have truly generated bodhicitta, they are superior to śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas in terms of their motivation but not their mental power. On the seventh bhūmi, by virtue of their great wisdom, they surpass śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas in all respects.
2540. RW *mnyam* emended to *snyam*.
2541. If RW *rtogs pa* is taken to mean *rtog pa*, the second part of this sentence would mean “they do not become thoughts for their own welfare.”
2542. RW *spyad* emended to *dpyad*.
2543. An interlinear note above the first line of p. 300 says: “[The following] are the causes for attaining the three kāyas. The dharmakāya is attained through familiarizing with your mind as being luminosity. The sambhogakāya is attained through familiarizing with thoughts as being without basis. The nirmāṇakāya is attained through cultivating compassion for those who do not realize such.” What this note and the above paragraph say about the three kāyas is very similar to how CMW (416) explains them.
2544. Compare what Gampopa says (quoted in Mi bskyod rdo rje 1996, 256–57):  
 Make firm your resolve  
 That this connate consciousness is wisdom.

Once you gain certainty about this, you see true reality.

Make firm your resolve

That these thoughts that emerge from the mind

Are the ultimate.

Once you experience this, you see your heart.

Make firm your resolve

That these imputed tendencies that appear and resound

Are the dharmakāya.

Once you attain realization of this, you see what is real.

2545. Compare *Uttaratantra* I.55–63 on the way in which the universe is formed in space through the elements as an example for how mistakenness and its results arise within the purity of the mind.

2546. RW *dri ma'i ma yin* emended to *dri ma yin*.

2547. RW *bde zhen* emended to *bden zhen*.

2548. RW *yod tan* emended to *yon tan*.

2549. RW *bcu pa'i* emended to *bcu'i*.

2550. RW *de men na* emended to *de min na*.

2551. RW *rtogs pa* emended to *rtog pa*.

2552. *Uttaratantra* I.28.

2553. *Uttaratantra* I.96–97.

2554. *Uttaratantra* I.144–152.

2555. HML *ba'* emended to *sa 'dam*. *Uttaratantra* I.134–43.

2556. *Uttaratantra* I.133.

2557. Compare RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.50.

2558. *Uttaratantra* I.52–61.

2559. *Uttaratantra* I.66–67.

2560. *Uttaratantra* I.79–82.

2561. This refers to the above-mentioned model (2) of the causal relationship between the seven vajra points (according to *Uttaratantra* I.23 and I.26 as well as RGVV on I.2): the three jewels being the results, the basic element being the cause, and awakening, the qualities, and the enlightened activity of someone else being the conditions for one's own awakening.

2562. HML *sus* emended to *dus*.

2563. As already mentioned, the last two pages of this text at the end of vol. 50 of the *Bka' gdams gsung 'bum phyogs sgrig thengs gnyis pa* are missing. Here, the text obviously speaks about the four inconceivable features of the tathāgata heart in *Uttaratantra* I.25, with the last two (according to RGVV) being that the inseparable buddha qualities exist even on the level of ordinary afflicted beings and that enlightened activity operates for all sentient beings everywhere simultaneously, effortlessly, nonconceptually, and flawlessly in the respectively appropriate ways. More information related to HML's points (2) the purification of the adventitious stains of thoughts and (3) the manner in which the tathāgata heart dawns as wisdom can be gleaned from IM and RW.

2564. This is a slightly paraphrased rendering of the main part of this text (I omit the very brief instructions for those of medium and lesser faculties). The colophon says that it was copied by Séu (Chökyi Gyaltzen) from Lama Nartangpa's original.

2565. This is an abbreviated paraphrase of the main passage of the *Atyantajñānasūtra* (D122, fol. 153a.2–5), which is often regarded as a source for Mahāmudrā in the sūtras: “‘Bhagavan, how should bodhisattvas look at the mind at the time of being at the point of dying?’ The Bhagavān spoke, ‘Ākāśagarbha, at the time of being at the point of

dying, bodhisattvas should cultivate the wisdom at the point of passing. Here, as for this wisdom at the point of passing, they should familiarize with the notion of the lack of entity since all phenomena are naturally pure. They should familiarize with the notion of great compassion since all phenomena are included in bodhicitta. They should familiarize with the notion of nonreferentiality since all phenomena are naturally luminous. They should familiarize with the notion of not being attached to anything since all entities are impermanent. If the mind is realized, it is wisdom. They should familiarize with the notion of not searching buddhahood elsewhere since the mind, if realized, is wisdom.”

2566. This paragraph as well as all headings in the text are inserted by Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, the editor of the *Lamp* in the Rumtek book edition.

2567. Note that most of the comments in the notes are based on Khenchen Tsültrim Gyatso Rinpoche's explanations on the *Lamp*. Here, “the expanse” refers to the inseparability of mind's infinite expanse and awareness (Tib. *dbyings rig dbyer med*). Just as in classical Madhyamaka, Shentong accepts the emptiness of all phenomena of seeming reality. As for ultimate reality, its basic nature is also emptiness free from all reference points, but the final ultimate is that inseparability of expanse and awareness. In Shentong, the ultimate reality realized by yogic practitioners can only be this unity of mind's expanse and awareness. For, if it were nothing but emptiness, it would be the extreme of extinction or nihilism. The sheer freedom from reference points of, for example, the \*Prāsaṅgika School, is not considered to be ultimate reality, but just the ultimate nonstatement (see more below). As for “the secret of the secret,” “the secret” is Great Madhyamaka, which is secret in the sense of being difficult to realize by ordinary dualistic minds. “The secret of the secret” is its being realized through the inner experience of yogic practitioners. Thus, “the secret of the secret” is the final ultimate reality as experienced in an incontrovertible manner by nonconceptual and nondual personally experienced wisdom. The meaning of the expanse's being “unmixed with any specific or general characteristics” is that all phenomena of seeming reality arise from clinging to specific and general characteristics, but ultimate reality neither arises in this way nor is it tainted by such clinging. “The adventitious mind” is the mind of ordinary beings, which works in a dualistic fashion, creates concepts, and works by way of reasoning. Thus, the awareness of mind's true expanse cannot be any dualistic form of cognition, but refers to the direct realization that arises from yogic practice, that is, resting in non-dualistic and nonconceptual meditative equipoise. This is “the vajra of the wisdom of yoga.” Dpal ldan rang byung phrin las kun khyab bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (n.d., 37–38) comments on these lines that the basic nature of inseparable emptiness and lucidity, which is not connected to any specific or general characteristics, is greatly more secret than secret and cannot be realized as it is by Rangtongpas who cling to mere emptiness in the sense of a nonimplicative negation. This nature is secret in general because it cannot be fathomed by dualistic clinging. It is greatly secret because it is not the sphere of dialecticians who cling to just the aspect of an emptiness in the sense of a nonimplicative negation. Those who realize it properly as it is are the yogins who cut through all doubts through making one-pointed efforts in the pith instructions on mind's true actuality and do so by connecting with the pith instructions of a genuine guru. Though the progressive stages of emptiness that are related to the way of being of identitylessness are profound objects, given that the inconceivable secret basic nature that is the very final definitive meaning exists, they cannot be realized clearly through merely clinging to a path that is a limited emptiness.

2568. The imagery here is based on the Indian epithets for the moon. The Buddha is like the clear moon and his teachings are like its cooling light rays (cooling the tormenting heat of the mental afflictions, which is like the unbearable heat of Indian summer days). In India, what we usually call “the man in the moon” appears like the shape of a rabbit or an antelope, whose fine lines stand for Maitreya (aka Ajita, “the invincible one”) as the illuminator of the true meaning of the Buddha’s teachings. Asaṅga, as the primary recipient of Maitreya’s teachings, is compared to the ocean in which the moon (with the image of the antelope in it) is reflected. Just as moonlight dances on the waves of the vast ocean, producing all kinds of light displays, the mahāyāna teachings manifest in many wonderful ways through Asaṅga’s vast expositions.
2569. Traditionally, the children of the Buddha’s mind are said to be the bodhisattvas. The children of his speech are the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and the child of his body is his physical son Rāhula.
2570. The seemingly most obvious referent of *rnal ’byor spyod pa’i sa* (yogācārabhūmi) here is the text by this name that is attributed to Asaṅga but the *Lamp* does not specifically rely on teachings in that text. Rather, according to Ācārya Sherab Gyaltzen Negi, here, this expression refers to the realization during the meditative equipoise of bodhisattvas from the first bhūmi onward, which indicates that the Eighth Karmapa wrote this text from the perspective of the direct realization of ultimate reality.
2571. These three headings represent the three reasons for all sentient beings’ possessing buddha nature as given in *Uttaratantra* I.28.
2572. Parts of the Tibetan tradition, such as Sakya Paṇḍita in his *Tshad ma rigs gter* (Sa skya paṇḍita kun dga’ rgyal mtshan 1992a, 328) and Gorampa’s commentary on it (Go bo rab ’byams pa bsod nams seng ge 1979a, 3:281), sometimes present a threefold division of awareness (*rig pa*): (1) awareness of something other (*gzhan rig*), (2) self-awareness (*rang rig*), and (3) awareness of the lack of nature (*rang bzhin med par rig pa*). The first means that mind is aware of something that seems to be other than itself, such as outer material objects (sense perception and mental perception). The second refers to mind’s being aware of itself in a nondual way, that is, without any identifiable difference between mind as the perceiving subject and mind as the perceived object. The third is the direct realization of the true nature of all phenomena, that is, that they are without any nature. Obviously, (1) pertains only to ordinary beings. Awareness (2) is found in both ordinary beings and noble ones (those who directly perceive the nature of phenomena) in a general sense, though the profundity of nondual experience differs. Awareness (3) occurs only in noble beings from the path of seeing onward. It is also called “the wisdom that realizes identitylessness,” “yogic valid perception,” or “personally experienced wisdom” (Skt. *pratyātmavedānīyajñāna*, Tib. *so so rang rig pa’i ye shes*). The latter term emphasizes that this wisdom is one’s own unique, immediate, and vivid experience, not just some imagined idea of something one has heard or read of. Mind’s realizing the nature of all phenomena includes mind’s being aware of its own ultimate nature, which is the unity of awareness and emptiness. The nature of such a realization is to be free from the triad of something that is aware, something of which it is aware, and the act of being aware, while at the same time being an incontrovertible transformative experience in the noble ones’ own minds (Skt. *pratyātmāryajñāna*, Tib. *’phags pa’i so so rang gi ye shes*). The difference between (2) and (3) is reflected in the rather specific Buddhist use of the Sanskrit words *svasaṃvid*, *svasaṃvedana*, and *svasaṃvitti* (all translated into Tibetan as *rang rig*) for (2), while *pratyātmagati*, *pratyātmādhigama*, *pratyātmavid*, and the latter’s derivatives, such as *pratyātmavedya* and *pratyātmavedānīya* (all translated into Tibetan as *so so rang rig*) are used for (3). More literally,

*pratyātmavedaniyajñāna* means “the wisdom of what is to be experienced or realized personally or by oneself (that is, the nature of phenomena).” Of course, there is some overlap in the semantic range of these two groups of words, and, as the examples of Jñānaśrīmitra and two of the Karmapas in the text below show, the words in the first one may also sometimes be used in the second sense. However, the emphasis in the latter group is clearly on one’s own firsthand knowledge or experience of something, be it identitylessness, emptiness, or the union of dharmadhātu and awareness (the nature of one’s mind). As for the corresponding Tibetan expressions *rang rig* and *so so rang rig*, in themselves, they do not mirror this distinction and are often taken to mean just the same. If the Tibetan tradition gives a distinct explanation of the meaning of *so so* in *so so rang rig pa’i ye shes*, this is usually done in two ways. First, in the explanation usually preferred by adherents of Shentong, *so so* refers to the fact that the final unmediated realization of the nature of our mind can be accomplished only by this very mind’s wisdom and not by anything extrinsic to it, such as a teacher’s instructions or blessings. In other words, the only way to really personally *know* what the wisdom of a buddha or bodhisattva is like is to experience it in our own mind. In this sense, such wisdom is truly inconceivable and incommunicable, which is part of what the term “personally experienced wisdom” indicates, since it is one’s very own “private” experience unshared with others. Of course, in this context, it should be clear that “personal” or “private” does not refer to an individual person in the usual sense, since the wisdom of the noble ones encompasses the very realization that there is no such person or self. Nevertheless, it is an experience that occurs only in distinct mind streams that have been trained in certain ways, while it does not happen in others. The second explanation of *so so*, usually given by adherents of Rangtong, is that, just like a mirror, this wisdom clearly sees all phenomena in a distinct way without mixing them up. Certain Indian and Tibetan masters, such as Jñānaśrīmitra (one of Maitripa’s teachers), the Seventh Karmapa, and the Eighth Karmapa, use self-awareness and personally experienced awareness/wisdom as equivalents in the sense of this wisdom’s representing the most sublime expression of the principle that mind is able to be aware of itself in a nondual way, that is, free from any aspects of subject and object. Jñānaśrīmitra’s *Sākārasiddhi* (in Jñānaśrīmitra, *Jñānaśrīmitranibandhāvali*, 478.10–13) says: “In *Uttaratantra* [I.9, we find] the words ‘the dharma is to be personally experienced.’ Since it has been said that false imagination exists, there is no refuge other than self-awareness (*uttaratantra ca/ pratyātmavedyo dharmah/ ity evākṣaram/ na cābhutaparikalpo ’stīti bruvataḥ svasaṃvedanād anyāc charaṇam*).” Obviously, this kind of self-awareness that is a refuge is to be clearly distinguished from the ordinary notion of self-awareness (2), which basically means that all beings are aware of their own direct experiences, such as being happy or sad. The Seventh Karmapa’s *Ocean of Texts on Reasoning* (Chos grags rgya mtsho 1985, 2:163) first equates self-awareness and personal experience in a general way: “Perception (the subject [in question]) is established to be free from conception through self-aware perception itself, because it is experienced through self-awareness as a cognition that does not appear as being suitable or not being suitable to conflate terms and referents. For, every person’s conceptions that are based on apprehending names and referents as being suitable to be conflated are to be experienced personally by the experiencer that is self-awareness.” Later, the Karmapa (*ibid.*, 2:338) also identifies the personally experienced wisdom of a buddha’s omniscience as an instance of self-awareness: “It is not contradictory for awareness to be what it is aware of. For, when this awareness knows the minds of others, it must be aware of knowing itself, and the wisdom of the knowledge of all aspects is [also] a personal experience of itself.” In this



vein, the Eighth Karmapa's *Lamp* says (19–20, 21, and 41): “The [cognizing] subject that is the type of realization that realizes this very [dharmakāya] does not depend on any other hosts of reference points, but is self-awareness by nature. Therefore, by virtue of this self-awareness's being pure through its very [own] purity, it is not dependent on anything else,” and “the great Mādhyamika, venerable Asaṅga, holds that [during the vajra-like samādhi] at the end of the path of familiarization, in this very mind stream that will become a buddha and in which tathāgatahood abides, remedial self-awareness dawns and thus everything to be relinquished [at this point] is relinquished without exception,” and “liberation is to have attained the mastery of self-aware wisdom over the sugata heart of one's own mind stream.” In addition, the *Lamp* repeatedly identifies the realization of buddhahood as being self-awareness and self-arisen.

2573. The phrase “wisdom rising from the expanse” is to be understood in the sense of luminosity's power becoming manifest, which is due to the fact of this wisdom's existing primordially as not being different from the sugata heart. Thus, this wisdom does not newly arise, but in the same way that gold “arises” from gold ore—it is already present, but just becomes manifest and its excellent qualities become apparent. In this vein, “fundamental change” does not mean that one thing changes or transforms into another, but what is previously existent yet obscured becomes clearly manifest. In other words, mind's basic nature is the inseparable unity of expanse and awareness free from reference points, but, within sentient beings, its aspect of awareness or luminosity is not manifest. Once the actuality of expanse and awareness being inseparable is realized, the aspect of mind's intrinsic luminosity is clearly experienced. In the Mahāmudrā tradition, this is described as letting the mind rest in its own nature in a naturally relaxed and uncontrived manner (*rang babs su gnas pa*). This is “the wisdom of realization” free from subject-object duality, in which there is neither anything to be realized nor any realizer. Thus, the Shentong tradition always emphasizes the fact that ultimate reality or the unity of expanse and awareness is realized only through the personally experienced wisdom in meditation. “The cognition that frees the minds of sentient beings from stains” refers to the prajñā arising from study, reflection, and meditation on the dharma. This prajñā influences the obscured mind just as knowing in a dream that one is dreaming influences the dreaming mind. “The element of wisdom” is the wisdom that abides as the primordial ground of the mind of all beings, which is like the mind that is the basis for having a dream. It is this wisdom that, blessed by the dharmakāya or sugata heart of buddhas (compare section 2.1.3.4.), eventually becomes the wisdom that is endowed with both of the two purities (natural purity and the purity of its being free from all adventitious stains). This “wisdom of realization” is personally experienced wisdom. In other words, this prajñā and wisdom refer to “the unfolding disposition” and “the naturally abiding disposition,” respectively. In the Shentong view, these two are essentially identical in being mind's luminous nature or the ultimate unity of expanse and awareness, with the unfolding disposition referring simply to this luminous mind's being in the process of fully manifesting as it is. “The cognizance free from stains” refers to this stainless luminosity, just as pure gold within gold ore. If stainless gold were not present in the ore from the beginning, once all impurities are removed, there would be nothing left. In the same way, mind, which is stainless by nature, can go through a process of purification and thus “fundamentally change” from being obscured to being unobscured. This is the meaning of “the wisdom of realization's becoming of one taste with the dharmakāya.” Compare the following passage in the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 179), which reads like a reformulation in slightly different terms of what his *Lamp* says here:

“Thus, with the pure mirrors of the mind streams of the beings to be guided serving as the remedial factors and through the power of the dependent origination within the facet of their minds that is the lucid and aware cognition which is close to the nature of genuine liberation and accords in its realization with the nature of phenomena, the obscurations of sentient beings are relinquished in dependence on the aspects of the rūpakāyas appearing in said facet of their minds by virtue of permanent liberation—the Tathāgata—functioning as the dominant condition for such appearance.”

2574. “Correct aspiration” for “the expanse of all tathāgatas” refers to purifying the mind stream through studying, reflecting, and meditating. This is brought about by the primary mind that is the sixth consciousness and its associated mental factors. Through this, beings remove many of the cloud-like obscurations from the tathāgata heart, but such efforts can never create or bring in the sun of buddha nature. Nor does it need to be created or imported because it has always been there since beginningless time. This resembles the sun’s being right there once enough clouds have vanished. If the tathāgata expanse did not exist primordially, beings on the path would have the tiresome task to newly produce it, which would make it a conditioned phenomenon that is impermanent—arising and also ceasing. Thus, aspiring for it as the incontrovertible state of buddhahood would be pointless. Finally, at the very end of the path of familiarization, during the last moment of the tenth bhūmi, the vajra-like samādhi overcomes the last (and most deeply ingrained) traces of obscurations, which means that the luminous wisdom aspect of mind overcomes the final vestige of beginningless ignorance in a single instant, just as sunlight overcomes the darkness in a cave under the earth right upon its shining into this cave, no matter how long that darkness existed in it. That this final realization does not even rely on the power of meditation means that it is not contrived and is free from any notions of meditator, object of meditation, and meditating.
2575. This can either refer to the three states of ordinary beings, bodhisattvas on the path, and buddhas (aka ground, path, and fruition) or, as explained in the text below, the states of the three jewels of buddha, dharma, and saṃgha.
2576. The first two sentences in this section resemble *Uttaratantra* I.84ab, which equates the dharmakāya with the Tathāgata, the reality of the noble ones, and ultimate nirvāṇa. The all-pervasiveness of the dharmakāya is found in *Uttaratantra* I.49ff. as the space-like all-pervasiveness of “the stainless basic element that is the nature of the mind” and also in several other verses (such as II.22–23 and 29). For example, in a dream, the mind pervades all the appearances in that dream, including empty space. Without this underlying mind, there would not be any dream appearances simply appearing on their own. It is in this way that the dharmakāya is said to pervade all phenomena and manifest the rūpakāyas. *Uttaratantra* I.45–83 discusses the changelessness of the dhātu throughout the three states of ordinary beings, bodhisattvas on the path, and buddhas. In the state of sentient beings, in itself, the sugata heart is pure by nature, but not purified of the adventitious stains. Thus, it is not yet the dharmakāya with twofold purity, but the wisdom that abides as the ground. In other words, buddhahood is not just a state or quality of awakened beings, but is, in itself, the primordially and perfectly pure nature of the mind that is either hidden or manifest. It is in this sense that buddhas can be said to be awakened primordially. In this vein, since the tathāgata heart is essentially the same as a tathāgata, just as the latter, it embodies not only all buddha qualities and enlightened activities but also all three jewels (as described in *Uttaratantra* I.4–22). Thus, the tathāgata heart is also the actual source and the reliable basis of the blessings of taking refuge in the three jewels because these jewels are already present right now within us. Thus, ultimately, one’s own buddha nature is the sole genuine and inner refuge—to

- take refuge in external buddhas, their dharma teachings, and their saṃghas represents merely outer conditions that serve to reflect and point back to the buddhahood within. Likewise, it is only the progressively more obvious manifesting of the tathāgata heart on the path (aka “unfolding disposition”) through the elimination of the adventitious stains that appears as the seemingly new accumulations of merit and wisdom, while its full manifestation as the dharmakāya or self-arisen wisdom makes all its intrinsic qualities apparent (which are described in detail in the third chapter of the *Uttaratantra*).
2577. From the Shentong point of view, all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are the mind’s own radiance or light (*sems kyi rang ’od*), just as the rays of the sun radiate from and are not possible without the sun or just as the appearances in a dream manifest in and are not possible without a mind that dreams. However, they are neither this very mind itself, nor anything else that really exists. “The actualization of the state of personally experienced wisdom within the unsurpassable expanse of the tathāgata heart” refers again to mind resting in meditative equipoise in its own nature in an uncontrived manner. In other words, one does not really go anywhere in order to become a buddha, but rediscovers what the true nature of one’s mind has always been.
2578. The intrinsic qualities of the sugata heart, such as omniscience, compassion, and the power to guide sentient beings, exist primordially. Therefore, for these qualities to become apparent, it is sufficient to remove the adventitious stains that obscure them. Once these are removed, the qualities shine forth and, within the experiential sphere of a tathāgata, the enlightened activity that is the natural outflow of these qualities manifests in a spontaneous, uninterrupted, and completely nonreferential manner for those who are to be guided to their own sugata hearts. As the *Uttaratantra* and its commentaries say, the true nature of the sugata heart in its entire inconceivability can be fathomed only by buddhas—even bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi perceive only a resemblance of it.
2579. As quoted in RGVV (J5–6), the *Dhāraṇīśvararājapariprcchāsūtra* (D147, fol. 215b.1–7) matches the three turnings of the wheel of dharma with the example of the gradually refined cleansing of a precious stone and refers to the third wheel as “the wheel of irreversibility.”
2580. That the sugata heart, its qualities, and its activities are permanent and enduring are recurring themes throughout the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV. By contrast, scholars of the Gelugpa School and others usually assert buddha nature as being just another name for sheer emptiness and consider the buddha qualities and activities as belonging to seeming reality.
2581. Here, an interlinear note (*mchan bu*) in the Tibetan editions says, “It is not the object of those Mādhyamikas who behave like Vaibhāṣikas.” This refers to those Mādhyamikas who, on the conventional level, assert outer objects different from mind, which is usually held by Tibetans to be the position of \*Sautrāntika-Svātantrikas such as Bhāviveka. Tsongkhapa and his followers claim that even \*Prāsaṅgikas assert outer objects in this way, which is one among Tsongkhapa’s “eight difficult points of Madhyamaka.”
2582. This section largely follows RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.5–8 (J8; D4025, fol. 78a.1–6). The three qualities mentioned in the heading of this section are being unconditioned, being effortless or spontaneously present, and not being realized through any other conditions (which are discussed in this and the next section). These three represent the first three of the six (or eight) qualities that make up buddhahood as described in *Uttaratantra* I.4–8. The last sentence of this section presents the next three of these qualities—omniscient wisdom (knowing both one’s own welfare and that of others), compassion or loving-kindness, and power (skillfully guiding sentient beings in

purifying their stains and realizing their sugata heart). As for unconditioned buddhahood's being realized by self-aware wisdom, though the former seems to be presented like the ultimate object and the latter like the ultimate subject, this is just a pedagogic manner of speaking. In actual fact, it is mind's innate purity that purifies itself through realizing, and resting in, its true nature in a completely nondual and nonreferential way.

2583. This is a slightly paraphrased and abbreviated quote from RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.7 (J8; D4025, fol. 78a.4–5).
2584. I could not locate this sentence in Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārabhāṣya*. It seems to refer to the fact that, in the end, both pratyekabuddhas and perfect buddhas realize their respective state of awakening through the power of their very own insight and not through any external conditions. "What is to be mentally formed first by a buddha" refers to the realization that all contaminations (suffering and its causes) are terminated. The realization that they will never arise again follows suit.
2585. In the vajrayāna, it is said that it is impossible to attain full buddhahood without receiving empowerment and thereby entering the mind's inseparable unity of expanse and awareness, which is the indestructible and immutable vajra of mind's luminous nature. It is also said that this is what the sūtras mean by saying that all buddhas bestow the empowerment of great light rays upon bodhisattvas at the end of the tenth bhūmi. However, as the *Lamp* says, such empowerments are only means or contributing conditions, which simply serve to remove obscurations but do not produce the tathāgata heart, just as removing dross from gold does not newly produce gold but only makes it apparent. In other words, buddhahood is not produced by anything or anybody, but, in essence, only becomes manifest through recognizing its primordially existent very nature, which is one and the same in all beings and buddhas alike.
2586. This corresponds to *Uttaratantra* I.4cd and RGVV on I.4–8 (J8–9; D4025, fol. 78a.6–78b.2).
2587. Just as other Shentongpas (such as Dölpopa and Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé), Mikyö Dorje does not consider the teachings of Maitreya as the sole source of the Shentong view, but adds Nāgārjuna's collection of praises (such as the *Dharmadhātustava*) and tantric sources such as the *Kālacakratantra*. This is a crucial element in the Shentong view's being regarded by many as the one that links the sūtras to the tantras. However, there are also many Tibetan masters who favor the Rangtong view from the point of view of the sūtras or philosophical analysis through study and reflection, while preferring the Shentong view from the point of view of the tantras or making mind's nature a living experience through meditation.
2588. These two qualities represent the first two of the six (or eight) qualities of the jewel of the dharma as described in *Uttaratantra* I.9–12 and RGVV's comments on it. The next four are the dharma's being nonconceptual, pure, lucid, and a remedy (which are also taught in this and the following four sections).
2589. This section is based on *Uttaratantra* I.9. The phrase "tathāgatahood is awareness in the manner of being aware of itself and abides as the nature of [utter mental] peace" is equivalent to "the inseparable unity of expanse and awareness resting in itself in a naturally relaxed and uncontrived manner (*dbyings rig dbyer med rang babs su gnas pa*)." "Utter mental peace" means freedom from all reference points, as indicated here by the four extremes of existence, nonexistence, and so on. Ultimately speaking, the realization of a buddha—yogic valid perception or personally experienced wisdom—is the only truly valid cognition. Compared with this, all nonconceptual perceptions and inferential cognitions of ordinary beings (including those based on Madhyamaka

reasonings) cannot be valid, since they are always essentially dualistic and mistaken by virtue of their latent tendencies of ignorance. By contrast, Tsongkhapa and his followers claim that it is nothing other than ultimate reality (which they take to be emptiness as a nonimplicative negation) that is realized through even an ordinary being's correct inferential cognition based on Madhyamaka reasoning. Compare the Eighth Karmapa's commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* that repeatedly says that the tathāgata heart and the nondual nonconceptual wisdom in the meditative equipoise of buddhas and bodhisattvas on the bhūmis are beyond being conceivable or analyzable as anything (such as the four extremes) by beings with dualistic minds (on this, see also the next section of the *Lamp*). For example, the Karmapa (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 219) says that all seeming cognitions and their objects are magical creations by nothing but the states of mind that cling to characteristics. Since these states of mind obstruct the arising of the wisdom without characteristics, in all respects they are factors to be relinquished. Though these states of mind are relinquished, it is solely in the nondual wisdom that is the nature of ultimate reality that there is no clinging to extremes. For it is this very wisdom that completely eradicates said extremes, but this wisdom has the nature of its being impossible for it to entertain any views about extremes about itself, such as its being existent or nonexistent. On the other hand, it is equally impossible for any cognitions of those who possess a mind stream of clinging to extremes to cling to any extremes (such as existence and nonexistence) with regard to this wisdom. For if this wisdom is not even suitable to appear in the form of a mere object generality as an object of any cognitions that cling to extremes, it is certainly impossible for any cognitions of those who possess a mind stream of clinging to extremes to take this wisdom as their basis of analysis and then cling to it as existent, nonexistent, or anything else. For this reason, the reasoning of this really established nondual wisdom's lacking or being empty of a nature is not something that can be conceived. Thus, this is the manner in which both true reality and what appears as if it is false reality are free from extremes. If one rests in meditative equipoise in accordance with this manner of being just as it is, the seeds of all obscurations are eradicated. Furthermore, the Karmapa (Brunnhölzl 2010, 493) says that when the nature of all imaginary and dependent phenomena is analyzed, their own nature is emptiness, just as in the example of a banana tree without pith. As for the perfect nature (the emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects), in general, it cannot be analyzed, and no matter how it may be analyzed, it does not become empty of a nature of its own. For it never changes into anything else than this supreme kind of wisdom. In that vein, Mikyö Dorje (*ibid.*, 505) continues that, in the final turning of the wheel, when something like the tathāgata heart—which is introduced subsequent to having eliminated all reference points—is taught as the basis of emptiness, the minds of bodhisattvas are perfectly ready for such a teaching, without misunderstanding or reifying it. For, at this point, all reference points with regard to all phenomena and their true nature have already been cut through. Therefore, the Karmapa (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 172–73) states that the position of the true proponents of Shentong is that the ultimate perfect nature, which *has* a nature, is the nature that actually fulfills this function. But when such is said, this nature is not nonempty either and the existence of this nature is not something that consists of, or is included in, reference points and characteristics. Therefore, it does not fall into any extremes of reference points. Since said existence abides ultimately, it is free from all extremes of permanence and extinction. To explain this nature as the nature of the nonexistence of entities entails an intention because it is taught as such from the perspective of people who entertain reference points and out of the concern that these people may become afraid of emptiness. From the perspective

of the noble ones without reference points, the very same nature is explained as the nature that is the existence of an entity (which is the true intention behind the former explanation). Therefore, the explanation of the ultimate perfect nature as the nature of the nonexistence of entities is the expedient meaning and its explanation as the nature that is the existence of an entity is the definitive meaning.

2590. The following is a paraphrase of the beginning of the comments of RGVV on *Ut-taratantra* I.12.

2591. In this combination, “attachment and obstruction” are equivalents of the afflictive and cognitive obscurations, respectively (see also the last section on the jewel of the saṃgha below).

2592. Here, Mikyö Dorje openly criticizes both \*Prāsaṅgika and \*Svātantrika Mādhyamikas (represented by Candrakīrti and Haribhadra, respectively) for claiming that ultimate reality is nothing but the emptiness that is the mere nonfinding of any phenomenon under analysis through Madhyamaka reasoning, which can be arrived at even by ordinary beings. Though it is true that Mādhyamikas like Bhāviveka, Candrakīrti, Haribhadra, and others take said nonfinding to be the ultimate, they do not say that this ultimate, just as it is, can be realized by ordinary beings or reasoning alone (as mentioned above, this is only the position of Tsongkhapa and his followers). Rather, they also agree that the ultimate is only an object of the personally experienced wisdom of the noble ones. In order to distinguish the conceptual ultimate arrived at through reasoning from the actual ultimate directly realized by nonconceptual wisdom, \*Svātantrika Mādhyamikas like Bhāviveka use the terms “nominal ultimate” (Skt. *paryāyaparamārtha*, Tib. *rnam grangs pa'i don dam*) and “nonnominal ultimate” (Skt. *aparyāyaparamārtha*, Tib. *rnam grangs ma yin pa'i don dam*), respectively. Also, Bhāviveka’s *Prajñāpradīpamūlamadhyamakavṛtti* (D3853, fol. 190a.5–190b.1) says, “Since [true reality] is without conceptions, it is not discursive through reference points. Since it is not discursive through reference points, it is peace. Since it is peace, it is the sphere of nonconceptual wisdom. Since it is the sphere of nonconceptual wisdom, it is not known through anything else. Since words do not apply to what is not known through anything else [than this wisdom], the very nature of true reality is completely beyond the superimpositions of words. Though it undoubtedly cannot be expressed, [Mūlamadhyamakakārikā XVIII.9 on the above characteristics of true reality] is explained in order to teach the negation of any nature and any features of all entities. The ability to realize the nature of true reality will [eventually] arise from the superimpositions of those words that accord with the arising of nonconceptual wisdom in the manner of nonarising. Thus, true reality, which is to be experienced personally, is taught by way of such means.” Candrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā* (D3860, fol. 163b.4–6) states, “In the ultimate, these [phenomena of seeming reality] do not exist, because what can be expressed has been put to an end and what is the sphere of mind (*citta*) has been put to an end. Since the unarisen and unceasing nature of phenomena accords with nirvāṇa, how could words or cognitions operate within the ultimate? The ultimate is not known by virtue of anything else—it is peace, what is to be personally experienced by the noble ones, and beyond all reference points” and (*ibid.*, fol. 184a.3–4), “Once, through the power of personal realization . . . stainless nondual wisdom has been manifested . . . one will be liberated.” His *Madhyamakāvatarabhāṣya* (D3862, fol. 255a.5–6) explains, “What is the ultimate of ordinary beings is merely the seeming of those noble ones whose experiential sphere entails appearances, [that is, during subsequent attainment]. What is the nature of this (emptiness) is the ultimate of these [noble ones]. The ultimate of the buddhas is this very nature. It is ultimate reality by virtue of its very undeceptiveness. Still, all

of them have to personally experience it on their own.” All of this is very much in accord with what was explained by Asaṅga and Mikyö Dorje so far. Also, Haribhadra states that, in terms of the subject, the only ultimate is a buddha’s wisdom—even the paths of seeing and familiarization are not the actual ultimate, let alone what ordinary beings cognize. His *Abhisamayālamkārah* (Wogihara ed., 23) declares: “The illusion-like nondual wisdom of a buddha bhagavān is the actual [prajñāpāramitā]. By virtue of being concordant with attaining this, the scriptures (collections of words and sentences) and the paths that have the characteristics of seeing and so forth are also called “prajñāpāramitā,” [but] this is nominal.” Compare the Eighth Karmapa’s above-quoted passages in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* on the tathāgata heart and nondual nonconceptual wisdom’s not being conceivable or analyzable as anything by beings with dualistic minds. Note that whenever Mikyö Dorje criticizes the use of reasoning in his *Lamp*, this does not mean that he suggests the complete abandonment of Madhyamaka reasoning and instead advocates a simplistic approach of philosophical irrationalism or the rejection of one’s intelligence. Rather, he just points out the limited scope of reasoning (be it Madhyamaka or other), which will never suffice to realize mind’s true nature as it is. Nevertheless, for any Mādhyamika (including the Great Mādhyamikas), such reasoning is a necessary preliminary step toward direct realization. For it dismantles any clinging to reference points and characteristics, thus leading to the point at which one is able to let go of any grasping at anything and relax the mind in itself in a nondual and nonconceptual manner. At that point, all intrinsic awakened qualities of mind’s ultimate nature—the tathāgata heart—manifest. In brief, the point is that Madhyamaka reasoning can serve as a preparation for mind’s true nature eventually manifesting clearly on its own but that such reasoning itself cannot make this nature manifest. More generally speaking, all Buddhist teachings (such as about the four realities of the noble ones, no self, all phenomena’s being nothing but appearances in the mind, and emptiness) that precede the teachings on buddha nature are just means to remove the dross-like adventitious stains from the pure gold of the tathāgata heart, while the Shentong teachings essentially come down to announcing that there is indeed gold within the dross.

2593. This refers to the typical Yogācāra triad of “mind (*citta/sems*),” “mentation (*manas/yid*),” and “consciousness (*viññāna/rnam shes*)” as indicating the ālaya-consciousness, the afflicted mind, and the remaining six consciousnesses. Shentongpas (such as Dölpopa, Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé, and Mikyö Dorje in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālamkāra*) often speak of the “ālaya-consciousness” versus the “ālaya” or “ālaya-wisdom” in the sense of the sugata heart. According to Khenchen Tsültrim Gyatso Rinpoche, from a Shentong point of view, the problem with the position that Tibetans call “Mere Mentalism” (taking smallest moments of self-aware consciousness free from the duality of apprehender and apprehended to be ultimately existent) is that it fails to realize that, ultimately, the ālaya and self-awareness are nothing but the luminous nature of the mind. Naturally, any attempt to establish the ālaya and self-awareness as really existing phenomena on the level of seeming reality cannot withstand Madhyamaka reasoning. In Mere Mentalism, self-awareness is the inward-facing aspect in each moment of consciousness (be it a sense consciousness, a thought, or an emotion) that experiences itself without being differentiable into an experiencer and what is experienced. Once the illusion of external objects is seen through, it is this self-awareness that realizes the absence of any subject-object duality and is itself free from such duality. This is called “the ultimate dependent,” which is equivalent to the perfect nature when understood as the dependent nature’s being empty of the imaginary nature.

The self-awareness (in the sense of the personally experienced wisdom of the sugata heart) that is discussed in the *Lamp* and other Shentong texts operates on the level of ultimate reality alone and is never connected with afflictions or any states of mind of seeming reality, but is empty of both the imaginary and the dependent natures. Just as all phenomena depend on space for their existence and interactions, while space neither depends on, nor is connected to, them, all seeming phenomena—the adventitious stains—operate within the infinite space of the inseparability of mind's expanse and awareness, but this nature of the mind neither depends on, nor has any connection with, these stains. This is explained at length in *Uttaratantra* I.52–63. Without exception, the afflictions and the resulting karma and suffering of ordinary beings arise from “improper mental engagement,” that is, their fourfold mistakenness of taking what is impermanent to be permanent, what is suffering to be happiness, what is impure to be pure, and what lacks a self or identity to have a self or identity. From the perspective of the *Uttaratantra* and RGVV, even the opposites of these four (as realized by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas) are not “proper mental engagement.” For, such proper mental engagement consists of “the power of yoga”—the nondual and nonconceptual meditative equipoise of realizing the four pāramitās of supreme permanence, bliss, purity, and self, which are beyond any clinging to the above four mistakennesses and their opposites (for details on these four pāramitās, see section 2.2.1. in the text below). Since such yoga entails the freedom from the duality of apprehender and apprehended, it lacks the fundamental ignorance of “improper mental engagement,” which is also known as “false imagination.”

2594. Here, an interlinear note in the Tibetan editions says, “[However,] some present Mahāmudrā followers in the [Land] of Snows assert that this profound actuality appears even in ordinary beings.” As mentioned in the introduction, in many of his texts, Mikyö Dorje cautions against a simplistic understanding of Mahāmudrā in general and Gampopa's approach to it in particular.

2595. The *Lamp* emphasizes the point that the adventitious stains—as primordially not really existent illusions—do not arise in the first place and thus are free from ceasing. Thus, it is enough to fully realize just this nonexistence of what appears as adventitious stains in order to manifest the underlying true actuality—the sugata heart—that seems to be obscured by them. For example, a fire in a dream does not ever really arise and thus there is no question of its ceasing either. One may dream that it is produced by firewood and matches, that it burns all day, and finally is extinguished through water. In actual fact, it does not matter how long it seems to have lasted, nor is there any need to extinguish it, since there never really was a fire in the first place. It is in this sense that the adventitious stains are said to be without nature and without arising and ceasing. Thus, from the point of view of the adventitious stains themselves (as an object), there is nothing to be relinquished. However, while understanding this, what *is* to be relinquished is the subjective taking of these unreal adventitious stains to be real.

2596. Mikyö Dorje obviously considers it absolutely untenable to take the mere nonseeing of seeming reality as being the seeing of ultimate reality. Strictly speaking, Mādhyamikas do not assert this either, since that would just be putting forth another reference point. Nevertheless, the Karmapa here refuses to take the \*Prāsaṅgikas' stance of not asserting anything whatsoever as reflecting the assumed profundity of their approach, but merely as a means to avoid the issue of what the ultimate is altogether. In this vein, there are many who accuse the Mādhyamikas, and in particular the \*Prāsaṅgikas, of being dishonest in just refuting everybody else's position while never putting forth any position of their own that their opponents could address. On this point, Pawo Tsugla



Trengwa's commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba n.d., 888) says, "[Some] consider merely not giving an answer as the ultimate actuality. This is certainly a case of giving those who understand the meaning of Madhyamaka a good chance for a laugh. . . . Therefore, it is explained that when Mañjuśrī asked Vimalakīrti about the meaning of the actual, the genuine answer [in this case] was not to give an answer. However, when one naive being does not give an answer to the question of another one, how could these two cases ever be comparable? You should know the difference between a bodhisattva in his last existence who dwells under the bodhi tree and [someone like] Devadatta sitting under a nimba tree. If you think that these [cases] are comparable, then ask about ultimate [reality] in front of an ox and you will get the final answer that you wish for." Thus, ultimately, from the point of view of the true nature of phenomena itself and for such highly realized beings as Mañjuśrī and Vimalakīrti who directly experience it in meditative equipoise, there is nothing that could be said about it, since its very essence is that all discursiveness and reference points have dissolved. Conventionally and from the perspective of beings who have not yet realized this ultimate nature, however, this does not mean that nothing can be said about the view and the methods that gradually lead to the direct realization of this nature as an incontrovertible experience. As Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* XXV.24 and the already-quoted passage from Bhāviveka's *Prajñāpradīpa* say, without relying on conventions, the ultimate cannot be taught and thus cannot be realized. Thus, the Madhyamaka message is to use fingers to point to the moon, but not to mistake the former for the latter. In his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, Mikyö Dorje agrees with this (for details on his discussion of how, ultimately, Mādhyamikas do not and cannot have a position, see Brunnhölzl 2004, 218–30 and 346–51).

2597. Though this passage up through here is not an explicit comment on *Uttaratantra* I.154, it includes all the elements of this verse. The correspondences to lines I.154ab in terms of there being nothing to be removed nor anything to be added are obvious. The phrase "the ultimate is the object that is seen by the tathāgatas—that which [truly] exists in just the way it is in actual reality" corresponds to line I.154c. The phrases "the completely pure seeing of the tathāgatas" and "having become lastingly free from the adventitious stains" correspond to line I.154d.

2598. This passage corresponds greatly (often literally) to some parts of RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.12 (J12–13; D4025, fol. 81a.2 and 81b.4–6) on the last three of the six qualities of the jewel of the dharma.

2599. Shentongpas agree with other Mādhyamikas that all phenomena of seeming reality lack any nature of their own, thus being empty of themselves and free from all reference points. However, they do not say that this being empty of all phenomena of seeming reality, in itself, is ultimate reality. Rather, the mind's becoming free from all reference points is only the setting within which it can then rest in its very own luminous nature in a nondualistic, nonreferential, and uncontrived manner. For example, one can establish through analysis and reasoning that the reflections in a mirror have no intrinsic nature of their own, do not have the nature of the mirror, and do not really exist in it. Thus, these reflections are empty of themselves, while the mirror is empty of these reflections, but does exist. To simplify, an exclusive Rangtong approach, as it is criticized here by Mikyö Dorje, would be limited to the one-sided realization that the reflections do not really exist and are empty but would not go on to acknowledge the existence of the mirror (the basis in which all these temporary reflections have appeared). In addition, instead of relaxing into the tathāgata heart, in this approach, one would be trapped by continuing to use reasoning even at the point of having realized

that all adventitious stains are completely unreal (which is an obscuration in itself). In the Shentong approach, it is the “mirror” of the nondual luminous nature of the mind free from all obscuring reference points that is “seen” by buddhas, and it is solely from this perspective of nonconceptual realization in the meditative equipoise of a buddha that it can (conventionally and subsequently) be said to be an “existent.” However, this is a completely different level of “existence” than the existence that is refuted by Madhyamaka reasoning (which is always a more or less subtle imputation or reference point). This is also the reason why many Shentongpas say that the sugata heart is beyond, or cannot be attacked by, Madhyamaka reasoning and transcends the four extremes of existence, nonexistence, and so on. Just as in other passages in the *Lamp* and the Eighth Karmapa’s explanations in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, this emphasizes the experiential thrust of what *shentong* refers to, which is the most crucial distinction in any meaningful discussion of *rangtong* and *shentong*—that these notions apply to two different realms of experience and discussion. This is also one of the major points in Dölpopa’s original presentation of *rangtong* and *shentong* (often overlooked by later Shentongpas as well as their opponents), which uses this distinction in an epistemological sense and not in an ontological or reifying manner. In one of his main works, *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (Tib. *Nges don rgya mtsho*), he makes the clear distinction between a “philosophical system” (Skt. *siddhānta*, Tib. *grub mtha*), which is based on certain explanations and arguments, and a “point of view” (Skt. *darśana*, Tib. *lta ba*) in the sense of a more encompassing and experiential outlook. He understands the latter as not being primarily focused on, or limited to, what can be determined through scholarly analyses. Rather, all such intellectual approaches represent only a preliminary part of a worldview that is primarily grounded in direct meditative experiences and realizations (often in the context of advanced vajrayāna practices). It is the entirety of this that Dölpopa calls “Great Madhyamaka” and Shentong—the outlook of noble beings who have directly realized how their minds and phenomena really are. In this sense, he clearly contrasts Shentong with ordinary Madhyamaka or Rangtong as a mere system of conceptual philosophical analysis. Consequently, on these two levels, the entire perspective of what ultimate reality or the nature of phenomena is, how it is perceived, and any style of discourse about this must be very different. As for the *Lamp*’s saying above that cause and result always abide inseparably in the sugata heart, it is just from the perspective of conventional expressions that the sugata heart is referred to as a “cause” and the dharmakāya as its “result.” For, the dharmakāya is nothing other than the very same sugata heart’s finally being without adventitious stains. Consequently, Madhyamaka reasonings about its being impossible for the result to either exist or not exist at the time of the cause do not apply here, since these reasonings are always based on the principle of cause and result having to be two different entities at two different times. Thus, contrary to what many of its critics say, the Shentong view is not comparable to the view of the non-Buddhist Sāṃkhya School that the result—which is different from its cause—exists already at the time of that cause. As for the analogies of water, gold, and space, the *Lamp* uses them here in the same way as many Yogācāra texts do, indicating the changelessness of the ultimate versus the adventitiousness of its stains (as mentioned before, *Uttaratantra* I.30–31 speaks of a wish-fulfilling jewel instead of gold, which illustrates the power of the basic element, while water symbolizes the moisture of compassion).

2600. As mentioned above, these two qualities represent the two categories under which many Tibetan commentaries subsume what they count as the six qualities of the jewel of the saṃgha in *Uttaratantra* I.13–18. In the *Lamp*’s four sections on the jewel of

the saṃgha, four among these six qualities (the wisdoms of suchness and variety as well as being pure of both afflictive and cognitive obscurations) are explained explicitly in accordance with RGVV. The remaining two qualities are included implicitly—wisdom’s being internal is reflected in phrases such as “the noble ones’ realization of the tathāgata heart in their own mind streams” and (according to *Uttaratantra* I.14) the unsurpassable qualities of the bodhisattva saṃgha consist of the purity of the wisdoms of suchness and variety.

2601. The phrase “the naturally luminous mind of ordinary beings will touch the tathāgata heart” corresponds to the classical vajrayāna expression of “mother and child luminosity meeting,” meaning that the experiences of mind’s luminosity through practicing the path finally merge with—or are realized to be one with—mind’s primordial and natural luminosity. The second sentence above corresponds not only to the famous passage “The mind is no-mind. The nature of the mind is luminosity” in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtra* in eight thousand lines (Vaidya ed., 3.18; D12, fol. 3a.3), but also to equating sentient beings with the obscurations or adventitious stains, which eventually dissolve within the vast expanse of mind’s true nature (see CMW and the quotations to that effect from the commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* by the Fifth Shamarpa and the Eighth Karmapa). As for nothing in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa being possible without mind’s luminous nature, this is illustrated by its being one and the same mind that has a dream and then awakens from that dream. The appearances in a dream are empty and have no nature of their own, but if their underlying nature—the dreaming mind—did not exist, there would be neither a dream nor any awakening from it. The term “adventitious” is explained here as not being produced by really existing causes and conditions and thus not being real in any way either, just as a fire in a dream.
2602. Mikyö Dorje says here (as do many others) that the ultimate’s having no nature amounts to saying that it does not exist, which is the worst case of falling into the extreme of extinction that all Buddhist schools, including the \*Prāsaṅgikas, desperately attempt to avoid. Of course, the Mādhyamikas would reply that having no nature is not at all equivalent to being nonexistent, because having no nature means to be neither existent, nor nonexistent, nor both, nor neither. In fact, Rangtongpas counteraccuse the Shentongpa position that the sugata heart exists ultimately as representing the extreme of permanence. As explained before, the real problem here is that both sides are trying to explain, through words, concepts, reasonings, and examples, something that lies completely beyond words, concepts, reasonings, and examples. If one wonders why both spend so much time and effort on such explanations, for those who do not realize what lies beyond words, there is a great difference between simply saying or thinking nothing and using words and reasoning in order to arrive at what lies beyond them. Also, though such explanations may differ, or even appear to be contradictory, individually, they may prove to be the most helpful approach for different people to point to, eventually making them realize what lies beyond these explanations.
2603. Both the Rumtek book edition and the xylographic block print have *rtogs* instead of *btags*.
2604. The “selfless self” refers to the pāramitā of the supreme self (which is beyond self and lack of self) in *Uttaratantra* I.35 and I.37 (see also in the text below under 2.2.1.).
2605. This paragraph corresponds to the quote from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fol. 275a.5–7) in RGVV (J15; D4025, fol. 82a.6–82b.2) on the wisdoms of suchness and variety. The *Uttaratantra* presents its well-known nine examples of buddha nature and adventitious stains coexisting, such as a buddha statue in a decaying lotus and bees around honey. Nāgārjuna’s *Dharmadhātustava* uses thirteen examples for the

dharmadhātu and adventitious stains coexisting, such as butter within milk and a lamp within a vase (for all these examples, see note 2639). According to *Mahāyānasamgraha* I.45–46 (D4048, fol. 10b.3–5), the ālaya-consciousness and “the latent tendencies of listening” (as the natural outflow of the dharmadhātu) coexist like a mixture of milk and water. What is common to all these examples is that the dharmadhātu and adventitious stains never contact or even mix. Just as clouds in the sky may obscure the sun, but never come even close to it (or gold’s pure nature is never altered by the surrounding dross in gold ore), the sugata heart and adventitious stains have not the slightest connection or interaction. Thus, ultimately, mind’s luminous nature is not realized or “purified” through any activities within the realm of adventitious stains, such as reasoning, but only through naturally resting in its own nature. On the level of seeming reality, “purification” occurs through increasingly more subtle adventitious stains (aka the prañās of study, reflection, and meditation) counteracting coarser ones. Also, though the adventitious stains operate within the expanse of mind’s luminosity, they are neither created by it nor can they afflict it. This is the reason why the Eighth Karmapa’s discussion of the disposition in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (see Brunnhölzl 2010, 438–46) refutes at length that the three reasons in *Uttaratantra* I.28 can prove that there is any connection between sentient beings and buddha nature in terms of the former having or being the latter.

2606. For Shentongpas, the realization of one’s own sugata heart, just as it is, and the realization that all other beings are also endowed with such a sugata heart are just two facets of the single inner wisdom of realizing mind’s luminous nature. This self-aware and personally experienced realization—mind resting in its own nature in a nondualistic manner—means to be aware of this very nature and its likewise being the nature of the minds of all other beings. As for “omniscience,” Buddhists have various descriptions of its extent, ranging from a buddha’s literally knowing everything to knowing just what is necessary to liberate all kinds of sentient beings (for which knowing facts such as the total number of certain insects in the world would not be required) to the above more limited description. In a less radical way, the latter is sometimes also explained in terms of the full realization of mind’s true nature in both one’s own mind and those of others being what represents a buddha’s own sphere of experience. Any aspect of seeming reality or the adventitious stains cannot be something that appears in, or is perceived by, a buddha’s awakened mind. For, otherwise it would still be experiencing seeming reality or adventitious stains and thus not be fully awakened. Thus, all aspects of seeming reality or the adventitious stains are solely the sphere of experience of others. In order to address the obvious question how, in this case, a buddha can skillfully relate to the distinct patterns of ignorance in various sentient beings, it is said that a buddha sees everything that happens within the expanse of the minds of these beings, but whatever is seen in these minds is not that buddha’s own sphere of experience. This may be compared to seeing a war in another country on a TV screen and thus being able to, for example, donate food and medical treatment to the victims of this war, but whatever one sees on the screen is not something that is one’s own experience or one’s own suffering. Compare the following excerpts from the Eighth Karmapa’s detailed discussion of this issue in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 289–93): “Aśaṅga, Dignāga, and others hold that all consciousnesses of dualistic appearances appear under the sway of ignorance and thus do not appear to buddha wisdom—wisdom only perceives the ultimate. . . . Also, if dualistic appearances still emerge after the latent tendencies of the mistakenness of dualistic appearances have been eradicated, it follows that the minds of buddhas are not stable in terms of relinquishment. For example,

if strands of falling hair continue to appear after the disease of blurred vision has been cured, it is very difficult to speak of this disease having been removed.

... Also, deceiving referents do not appear to valid perception. If they did, it would follow that the cognition of a buddha is just seeming valid perception. ...

In brief, though seeming reality does not appear for buddhas, this is not contradictory to their cognizing all cognizable objects. Their cognition is one that truly fulfills this function because it distinctly cognizes, without mixing them, both the mistaken and unmistaken manners of the actual way of being and the way of appearing of the seeming. Still, what is assessed through a buddha's cognizing the way of appearing of the seeming is nothing other than this buddha's very own self-awareness. ... [Buddhas] solely cognize the nature of ultimate reality, that is, the perfect nature—the true end free from meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. ...

... In general, since all aspects of the seeming are unreal, from the perspective of the yoga of yogins who are engaged in what is truly real there is absolutely no seeing of anything as being mistaken and, in particular, there are absolutely no external entities. Therefore, if what does not exist at the time of being a sentient being appears as existent at the time of being a buddha, what could be more unreasonable than that? ... In brief, within the scope of what appears to others, a buddha's mere cognizing the appearances of the seeming is justified, but it is not the case that these appearances are cognized by way of appearing as direct objects for buddha wisdom.

... For this wisdom cognizes object generalities and so on in the manner of their being appearances for others, just as a wakening consciousness, at its own time, realizes the way of appearing of objects in a dream."

2607. See RGVV (J2; D4025, fols. 86a.5–87a.6).

2608. The sugata heart exists as the very foundation (the disposition) for the path to liberation, that path itself (nonconceptual personally experienced wisdom), and the fruition of that path (the dharmakāya). "To exist ultimately" means again not in the usual sense of existence within the tetralemma of existence, nonexistence, both, and neither, but to exist from the perspective of a buddha's valid cognition, that is, in a manner that is free from all reference points. If there were no buddha nature that can be realized as buddhahood, the teachings of the Buddha in general would be pointless and, in particular, his teachings in the final turning of the wheel of dharma would be untrustworthy. They would not resemble watering seeds in a fertile field, but would be like trying to water empty space. In the sense of existing in all sentient beings, the sugata heart also represents the foundation of the paths of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. However, their paths engage it only partially, and they do not attain the fruition of its full manifestation as buddhahood. This is similar to the repeated statements in the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are distant from mother *prajñāpāramitā* by virtue of lacking skill in means and clinging to characteristics, while bodhisattvas are close for the opposite reasons (see also *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* I.10cd and III.2). The dharmadhātu as "the disposition" is said to be indivisible, but, through focusing on it in three different ways, there are the three yānas (*Abhisamayālaṃkāra* I.39). The terms "permanent," "enduring," and "immutable" (to which "peaceful" is usually added) for the sugata heart and the dharmakāya are found in several places in the *sūtras* on buddha nature and the *Uttaratantra* (I.80ff., II.3, and II.29). As for the meanings of these terms, see *Uttaratantra* I.80ff. and RGVV on it. In equating the adventitious stains (what is to be rejected) with both the imaginary and the dependent natures, the *Lamp* advances the classical Shentong model of the relationship between the three natures. In Shentong, the sugata heart (what is to be adopted) is usually said to

be equivalent to the perfect nature, which is not mentioned explicitly here in the *Lamp* but is clearly implied. Thus, in effect, the perfect nature is said to be empty of both the imaginary and the dependent natures. This differs from the usual model in Yogācāra texts, which says that the perfect nature is the dependent nature empty of the imaginary nature. For details on these two models and the Indian sources in which the Shentong model already appears, see Brunnhölzl 2011a.

2609. For Rangtongpas, the naturally abiding disposition is emptiness (as the “cause” of the dharmakāya), and the unfolding disposition consists of the conditioned accumulations of merit and wisdom (as the causes of the rūpakāyas). For Shentongpas, both dispositions are just two sides of the same coin—the unfolding disposition is nothing but the naturally abiding disposition’s becoming gradually manifest (“the dharmakāya that is in the process of fundamentally changing”). In this vein, Nāgārjuna’s *Dharmadhātustava* (verses 5–7) gives the famous example of a lamp within a vase—the more holes that are punched into this vase, the more the lamp’s light can shine everywhere in an unimpeded manner.
2610. Here, the *Lamp* makes the point that buddhahood is not only the freedom from clinging to the reference points of existence and nonexistence, but the actual freedom from reference points is necessarily free from any subtle clinging to a freedom from reference points too. Certain Shentongpas accuse the Rangtongpas of still entertaining a subtle habitual fixation onto the freedom from reference points after having refuted the four possibilities of existence, nonexistence, both, and neither (though such a fixation is clearly and repeatedly denied and warned against in Madhyamaka texts). According to the Shentongpas, the actual freedom from clinging even to the freedom from reference points is the realization of the sugata heart. However, the sugata heart is not yet another “super-reference point” beyond the freedom from reference points, since it is clearly said here not to be observable either. Also, as Sakya Paṇḍita says, it is impossible to go beyond the freedom from reference points, and even if one tried to go beyond, one would only end up again in a reference point. This also means that the sugata heart cannot be perceived by any referential state of mind, but only by personally experienced wisdom, which, by definition, is completely nonreferential and non-dual. However, this does not mean that the sugata heart is fundamentally difficult to realize, because, in itself, it is completely lacking any of the agitation and confusion of the dualistic mind. The sugata heart is unmoving, never stirring from its own nature, and ready to be disclosed at any time, once its adventitious stains are seen through. This accords with the Mahāmudrā teachings saying that the nature of our mind is always present as the closest thing possible, but it is precisely because of its being too close and also its being too simple for our complex dualistic mind that we fail to recognize it. As for “the sugata heart’s not conceiving of the element of the proximate afflictions,” “conceiving” means that the sugata heart neither created nor invented the stains, nor do they arise from it, rest on it, or share anything with it. Therefore, the sugata heart and the adventitious stains are not connected in any way, and thus the former is never defiled by the latter. The only two types of connection that Buddhist logicians accept are that two phenomena are either connected in terms of sharing the same nature or through depending on each other (either in the form of being cause and result or in the form of being support and supported). However, neither is the case for the sugata heart and the adventitious stains. From the perspective of seeming reality, they are mutually exclusive, and from the perspective of ultimate reality, the question of any possible connection or their being mutually exclusive is moot, because the adventitious stains never existed in the first place. Once the actual nonexistence of the adventitious stains

is realized, it is conventionally said that they have been relinquished, but by virtue of their primordial nonexistence, they cannot be relinquished and thus they cannot come back either. Rather, to realize buddhahood is a matter of realizing what does not exist and seeing what actually does exist. This is similar to realizing that a mottled rope is not a snake—there is no need to remove the “snake” in order to see the rope, but clearly perceiving the rope as the only thing that is actually there is sufficient, and, once certainty about this is gained, the “snake” will never come back. Thus, from the very beginning, the sugata heart exists absolutely independently of the adventitious stains, and their disappearance does not represent a removal of something existent that might come back or arise again, but is simply realizing the fact that they never existed in the first place. For these reasons, once such realization happens, the sugata heart simply dwells in its natural irreversible state, in which there is no way for intrinsically nonexistent stains to reappear.

2611. This passage is almost literally found at the end of RGVV’s above-mentioned quote from the *Avatamsakasūtra* about the canvases with a trichilocosm drawn on them (J24; D4025, fol. 87a.4–5). As mentioned before, the Sanskrit *pratyabhijñā* (Tib. *so sor mngon par shes pa*) for “recognizing” can also mean “to remember” and “to come to one’s self or to recover consciousness,” which is quite fitting here in the sense of (re)awakening to one’s true nature of being a buddha.
2612. As already briefly mentioned in section 2.1.1.1., the uncovering of beings’ own sugata heart depends not only on their own sugata heart, but also on its being blessed through the sugata heart of buddhas. Beyond the superficial level of buddhas and sentient beings interacting, such as the buddhas, from the perspective of those to be guided, apparently teaching, performing miracles, and so on, the actual interaction (“the miracle of the mind”) occurs on the most fundamental level of one buddha nature’s influencing or “blessing” the other (this corresponds to RGVV’s explaining that the dharmakāya of buddhas consists not only of the pure dharmadhātu but also of its natural outflow, which manifests as teaching sentient beings). It is not that there is some real exchange between two buddha natures or a “friendly invasion” of the buddha nature of sentient beings by the one of buddhas, but the process of blessing is comparable to the above-mentioned example of the strings on a violin vibrating and resounding when the strings of another one are played. This analogy fits with the literal meaning of the Tibetan word *byin gyis rlobs pa* for “blessing,” which is explained as “to change something into being powerful through radiance or brilliance, or, to instill power and bring it forth.” That the power over ultimate reality is able to influence seeming reality can be illustrated by the example of the influence that a mind that recognizes a dream to be a dream can have on the appearances in that dream. Upon not only recognizing, but gaining mastery over these appearances, this mind can control and even change them into anything at will. This is comparable to a buddha’s emanating and transforming certain appearances in order to teach beings. Such miracles of a buddha include the display of attaining awakening, its qualities, and its activities (the last three vajra points). In general, the occurrence of enlightened activity is said to depend on three factors—the blessings of a buddha’s dharmakāya, that buddha’s former aspiration prayers as a bodhisattva to be able to promote the welfare of all beings, and the (at least somewhat) purified minds of sentient beings. Among these, the aspiration prayers are like the great amount of initial fuel and energy that is needed to launch a rocket, which, once in outer space, keeps flying forever without further fuel or energy supplies. The last paragraph in the text above on the sugata heart’s specific and general characteristics corresponds closely to RGVV’s description of the sugata heart’s representing the

pāramitā of supreme purity, that is, being both naturally pure and pure of adventitious stains (J34; D4025, fol. 93a.3–4; see section 2.2.1.3. in the text below). It is also echoed in the description of the dharmadhātu's specific and general characteristics in *Madhyāntavibhāga* V.18–19.

2613. These pāramitās are described in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fols. 273b.3–274a.1) and *Uttaratantra* I.35–38. See also section 2.2.1.3. in the text below.

2614. The ways ordinary beings, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas cling versus a buddha's complete lack of clinging to anything may again be illustrated by the dream example. Within a dream, an object may be taken to be permanent, while, from the perspective of the waking state, it is impermanent. In actual fact, however, it is not even impermanent, since it never really existed in the first place (a nonexistent cannot be either permanent or impermanent). The same goes for happiness and suffering in a dream—both as well as their seeming causes are nothing but appearances in the dreamer's mind. Their true nature is mind's natural luminosity, and to realize and dwell in it is the true bliss beyond all fabrications of happiness and suffering. The way in which Shentongpas avoid the two extremes of permanence and extinction, respectively, is to say that the phenomena of seeming reality are impermanent, without self, and so on, while the ultimate sugata heart exists beyond all reference points of existence and nonexistence. Or, relative tathāgatas do not exist, while ultimate tathāgatas do exist. In general, “seeming tathāgatas” refers to what appears physically and verbally as tathāgatas and their activities. In particular, saying that seeming tathāgatas do not exist represents a rejection of the position of certain Rangtongpas (such as the Geluggpas) who claim that a tathāgata's wisdom, qualities, and rūpakāyas belong to seeming reality. As for “the tathāgata heart's not falling into extremes or confines,” this expression is reminiscent of the Third Karmapa's opening lines of the first chapter of his *Profound Inner Reality* (“The cause is beginningless mind as such. Though it is neither confined nor biased . . .”). Its autocommentary (Rang byung rdo rje n.d., 37) explains not “confined” as the very nature of the mind's being inexpressible as being either the same or different in all buddhas and sentient beings. It is “not biased” because it does not fall into any biases such as permanence or extinction.

2615. This is a critique of the Rangtong assertion that the sugata heart is nothing but the sheer emptiness that is the object of meditative equipoise, while the illusion-like mere appearances of subsequent attainment are nothing but dependent origination, which also lacks any nature of its own. To say that, even in this context of illusion-like appearances, the sugata heart is neither existent nor nonexistent comes down to avoiding the issue of what is the ground, the nature, and the fruition of the path even on a conventional level (see also section 2.5. on the purpose of teaching buddha nature). In other words, in mere emptiness, there would simply be no basis for carrying over any realization during meditative equipoise into subsequent attainment, nor any basis for accumulating merit during such subsequent attainment. Thus, to still speak about a subsequent attainment and accumulating merit during it is dishonest. As for such a position “being mixed with dialectics,” it is not a genuine way of experientially going beyond reference points, but a self-deception fabricated through reasoning with regard to how things actually are within the sphere of personally experienced wisdom (see also the comments in RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.12). Compare *Mahāyānasamgraha* X.3 (D4048, fol. 38a.1–2) on the last one of the five characteristics of the dharmakāya, which says, “It has the characteristic of being inconceivable, because pure suchness is to be experienced personally, lacks any example in the world, and is not the sphere of dialectics.”



2616. The point here seems to be that, let alone the four mistaken notions of purity, permanence, bliss, and self of ordinary beings with regard to afflicted phenomena applying to the sugata heart, any notions of supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self about a Brahman, *ātman*, or creator god as found in various non-Buddhist Indian traditions do not apply to buddha nature either. For, it is beyond all reference points and speculations and yet pervades all appearances and experiences. In this, it is like the mind that pervades all the illusory appearances in a dream, but is beyond these mere appearances. However, it has to be acknowledged that the descriptions of the ultimate in many Buddhist and non-Buddhist Indian texts are often exactly the same (which is also recognized by a number of Tibetan scholars, such as Mipham Rinpoche in his commentary on the *Madhyamakālaṅkāra* and Mikyö Dorje in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*) and that Buddhist texts adopted many of these descriptions from non-Buddhist ones (supreme purity, permanence, bliss, and self being just a few examples) and vice versa. It is noteworthy that even a Mādhyamika like Bhāviveka (*Madhyamakahr̥daya*, D3855, fols. 30b.5–31a.1) uses “self,” “permanent,” and “purity” as terms for the ultimate (the fact that all phenomena are unborn), because it is the unfabricated nature, does not deteriorate, and is without afflictions, respectively. In this context, the senior contemporary Kagyü master Thrangu Rinpoche said that if one does not practice and realize the teaching on buddha nature in meditation, its mere descriptions *are* in fact just like the Sāṃkhya position.

2617. For example, this is said in Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* IX.2c: “The ultimate is not the sphere of cognition.” Pawo Rinpoche’s commentary on this (Brunnhölzl 2004, 622–24; here abbreviated and slightly rephrased), which accords with Mikyö Dorje’s point that the ultimate is not accessible through reasoning but only through personally experienced wisdom in meditative equipoise, says: “[Ultimate reality] is that for which it does not matter whether buddhas have arrived or not; it is what could not be contrived even by the Buddha. . . . Thus, the native nature of all phenomena was not, is not, and cannot become the sphere of the consciousnesses of any ordinary beings, noble ones, learners, or nonlearners whatsoever, be they conceptual or nonconceptual [consciousnesses], perceptions, or inferential cognitions. For this dharmadhātu just as it is, the conventional term ‘ultimate reality’ is used

. . . For example, when one [mentally] analyzes the Brahmā world, [such an investigation] is nothing but an analysis through imagining [this world within] one’s own cognition. . . . [Thus,] this [cognition] possesses the aspect of an object generality in the form of the Brahmā world. However, through that, the Brahmā world does not come here, and neither does the analyst go to the Brahmā world. Hence, this [type of analysis] mistakes the analysis of one’s own mind through one’s own mind for [an actual analysis when one directly faces the Brahmā world]. . . . Consequently, [even] focusing on the ultimate is also nothing but this kind of [mistakenness]. Therefore, the ultimate is definitely not the sphere of cognition.

. . . ‘Why is the ultimate not the sphere of cognition?’ Because it is asserted that cognition, or consciousness, is the very seeming and it is impossible for the seeming to take the ultimate as its object.

. . . ‘Through what is it certain that the ultimate is not an object of cognition?’ This is certain through the principle of the inconceivable nature of phenomena. When the great noble ones settle in meditative equipoise within the dharmadhātu, then this becomes all the more subtle and inconceivable the more they settle [within it]. This is so for the following reasons: That very something that is settled in meditative equipoise

and the one who settles it will subside, while one is not able to realize a limit of the dharmadhātu. Even the tathāgatas do not state any extent of the dharmadhātu.

Thus, it is seen that the dharmadhātu is not an object of speech, reflection, or expression. It is for just this [type of seeing] that the conventional terms ‘penetrating the nature of phenomena’ and ‘beholding ultimate reality’ are used. The conventional term ‘personally experienced wisdom’ is then used for the very knowledge that does not observe the characteristics of reference points in terms of subject and object. Thus, the nature of phenomena is not seen through apprehending a subject and an object. Rather, if one knows that subject and object are not observable, one engages in the nature of phenomena. Therefore, [the expression] ‘personally experienced wisdom realizes the nature of phenomena’ is a conventional term that is used based on something else. However, in no way does this abide in the mode of subject, object, something to be realized, and a realizer in the way that these are imputed by cognition.”

2618. The other two bodhisattvas indicated by this expression are Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi, all three being considered as the protectors of the kriyātantras. More likely though, this is a reference to the so-called trilogy of bodhisattva commentaries that is often given as a source of the Shentong view (Vajrapāṇi’s commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*, the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra* by Kalkin Puṇḍarika, an emanation of Avalokiteśvara, and Vajragarbha’s *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā*). The reference to Mañjuśrī is probably to the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* (also often used by Dölpopa and other Shentongpas), which the Tibetan tradition accepts as perhaps the most authoritative Buddhist text of definitive meaning, with its terminology being used to describe the ultimate not being open to interpretation. The *Tengyur* also contains a related *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgītyabhisamaya* (D1400), which is attributed to Avalokiteśvara himself.

2619. The emptiness of all phenomena of seeming reality can be established and understood through words and reasons by any ordinary being who is able to follow logic and reasoning. This is evidenced by modern physics arriving at the conclusion of the utter insubstantiality of all phenomena. Thus, the Buddha and Śāntideva must have had something more in mind when they taught that ultimate reality is beyond the range of an ordinary being’s mind. That this refers to mind’s luminous nature or the sugata heart is clear from many passages in the sūtras, tantras, and also from the songs of realization of the great siddhas. Mikyö Dorje contrasts the limited understanding of masters who are ordinary beings (that is, below the first bodhisattvabhūmi) with what the two supreme masters of Indian mahāyāna—Nāgārjuna (mainly in his collection of praises) and Asaṅga—say on this topic (these two are considered to be bodhisattvas on the first and third bhūmis, respectively). Following the Buddha’s prophecies in certain sūtras and tantras, the Tibetan tradition unanimously agrees that Asaṅga is the one who distinguishes between the expedient and the definitive meanings in the Buddha’s teachings. By contrast, certain ordinary masters mistake the sūtras of definitive meaning as being of expedient meaning (that is, entailing an intention). Also, they wrongly think that everything that is not to be taken literally is necessarily of expedient meaning. As the *Lamp* says, the four pāramitās of the sugata heart are not to be taken literally, but the teachings that they contain are to be taken as the definitive meaning. For example, the pāramitā of supreme self in no way refers to an actual ultimate self or *ātman* beyond self and the lack of self. Rather, it represents one of the many conventional terms (many of which are also used by Rangtongpas) that point to what is beyond the scope of terms and can be realized only through the power of personally experienced wisdom in meditative equipoise.

2620. Both the Rumtek book edition and the xylographic block print have *chos nyid*. However, in line with what was said repeatedly before (that luminosity or the sugata heart does not conceive of, or cling to, the adventitious stains), *chos* (phenomena) seems to make more sense. Translated as it stands, the above phrase would be “without conceiving of, or forming, anything of the entire nature of phenomena, but operating as the nature of all of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.”
2621. The Tibetan *khams* here could also be understood as “the realms.”
2622. This section of the text begins by contrasting the subject-object pairs of ordinary beings and noble ones. “Knowable objects” (Tib. *shes bya*) and the “cognitions” (Tib. *shes pa*) that cognize them only refer to the sphere of seeming reality. The ultimate subject and object, respectively, are nonconceptual wisdom (“the nature of phenomena”) and the dharmadhātu, which are summarized in the term “dharmadhātu wisdom,” the fifth and most fundamental among the five wisdoms (such as mirrorlike wisdom). Needless to say, to speak of the ultimate subject and object is just on the conventional level, since personally experienced, self-aware wisdom is completely nonconceptual and nondual. Thus, to speak of wisdom (the nature of all phenomena) “perceiving” the dharmadhātu is just another way of saying that mind’s luminous nature rests in itself in a completely uncontrived, nondual, nonconceptual, and nonreferential manner. Unlike Shentongpas who equate the nature of phenomena with wisdom as the cognizing subject, Rangtongpas usually take the nature of phenomena to be nothing but emptiness (the object), while nonconceptual wisdom is a part of seeming reality. Emptiness is said to pervade all seeming and ultimate subjects and objects alike, which is considered as the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. In the Shentong system, to say that the dharmadhātu pervades the knowable objects and cognitions of ordinary beings, but has absolutely no connection to them is the same as the repeated statement above that the sugata heart, just as space, is the foundation of the adventitious stains, but is not connected to them. Next, there is a reference to Maitreya’s *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, in which “phenomena” refer to all subjects and their objects within the sphere of the dualistic mind, which are none other than the sum of the adventitious stains (or saṃsāra). “The nature of phenomena” is discussed in this text in great detail under the topic of “fundamental change.” The nature of this fundamental change is explained as suchness’s having become free from all adventitious stains, which means that these stains no longer appear, while only suchness itself appears. The basis or foundation of this fundamental change is described in detail as nonconceptual wisdom. Though the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* does not call this nonconceptual wisdom “sugata heart” and does not explicitly say that it is not empty of itself, it describes four flaws that would occur if said fundamental change (and thus nonconceptual wisdom) did not exist, as well as four advantages that its existence entails. Also, as mentioned before, the text uses the examples of water, gold, and space in the same way as many other Yogācāra works do, such as the *Madhyāntavibhāga*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, and the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇi* (for details, see Brunnhözl 2012b, 184–95, 250–98, and 305–28). As for the explanation in the last paragraph of the *Lamp* in the text above, it corresponds to RGVV’s comments on *Uttaratantra* I.39 and describes how the realization of the noble ones resting in mind’s luminous nature is nothing other than what is called “nonabiding nirvāṇa.” To speak of the sugata heart as the nature of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa being inseparable is like saying that the appearances in a dream are actually nothing but the mind of the waking state, because it is the very same mind that is the basis for both dreams and the waking state. On the notions of “the nonabiding nirvāṇa” and “the inseparability of saṃsāra

and nirvāṇa” from the perspective of the tathāgata heart, see also the first paragraph of section 2.3.4. and the last paragraph of section 2.4.3. in the text below.

2623. This is stated in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fol. 274b.5) and *Uttaratantra* I.40–41.

2624. From a Rangtong point of view of taking the sugata heart as being mere emptiness, it is particularly hard to explain how emptiness could trigger weariness with suffering and striving for nirvāṇa (just as it is hard to explain how mental qualities such as a buddha’s omniscience, loving-kindness, and compassion could be parts of mere emptiness). Usually, in Buddhism, what is conditioned is defined as “what arises from causes and conditions.” The explanation here that what is conditioned lacks causes and conditions and is nonexistent is obviously from the perspective of ultimate reality (as is pointed out in the next section’s answer to the objection that conditioned phenomena without causes and conditions are not tenable). The point here is that as long as the path operates on the level of seeming reality or conditioned phenomena, the overall category of adventitious stains (what is ultimately nonexistent, but seemingly appears to be conditioned) has two facets—what appears as the factors to be relinquished (such as the flaws of saṃsāra) and their remedies (such as becoming weary of it and striving for nirvāṇa). Though the latter appear to relinquish the former, in essence and from the perspective of buddha nature, they are both extrinsic to the sugata heart and thus are both nothing but impermanent adventitious stains. For, what appear as remedies make the factors to be relinquished cease, and once they have done so, they themselves cease too (thus the *Lamp’s* above phrase “what is adventitious, conditioned, and lacks causes and conditions being mutually impermanent”). Eventually, once the path operates on the level of ultimate reality (from the meditative equipoise of the path of seeing onward), it is the nonconceptual wisdom that directly experiences the sugata heart that overcomes both factors to be relinquished and remedies (the classical example for this is a fire that is produced by rubbing two sticks eventually consuming these sticks). Thus, it is not that the sugata heart itself could become weary because it never experiences any imperfection or suffering in the first place. Rather, it is the power of the sugata heart that seemingly triggers or manifests as an initial stir—weariness—within the realm of the adventitious stains (and actually sustains this stir), though the two are not intrinsically connected. This stir manifests as remedial states of mind counteracting those that are to be relinquished in order to realize the sugata heart. However, up to the first bhūmi, this process happens entirely within the sphere of the dualistic mind, that is, within the adventitious stains themselves. Once the natural wisdom radiance of the sugata heart shines forth fully, even the most subtle remedies dissolve back into mind’s luminous nature, having been nothing but its (misperceived) natural play all along. To use the dream example, even when one has a nightmare, the mind, as it is in its waking state, is never really affected by it. When the dreaming mind recognizes the dream as a dream, in a sense, it returns to its waking state, but also influences the dream experience, such as thinking, “This is an awful nightmare, I must transform it or wake up.” Though effective, such thoughts are still dualistic thoughts within a dream. Once one is completely awake, in order to recognize that one is awake, one no longer needs such thoughts that one had in the dream, such as “It is only a dream.” For, conventionally, the waking state is, in and by itself, self-evident.

2625. In brief, on the level of seeming reality, all illusory appearances of both the waking state and dreams have equally illusory causes and conditions. Ultimately and upon analysis, neither these appearance nor their causes can be experienced or found. As for the example of the rope and the snake, there are varying interpretations in terms of the three natures. However, the Shentong understanding is that the rope’s being mistaken

for, and labeled as, a snake represents the imaginary nature, the mere appearance of what is called “a rope” and is mistaken as a snake the dependent nature, and the fundamental space of mind’s luminosity in which both appear the perfect nature.

2626. It seems to be contradictory to attain buddhahood through accumulating more causes and conditions if there are no causes and conditions in the first place, but this is only so if one does not clearly distinguish between the two levels of reality—seeming and ultimate. On the level of seeming reality, one can speak of the sugata heart’s being obscured and its becoming unobscured, which is brought about by seeming remedial causes and conditions that counteract the seeming factors to be relinquished. On this level, and this level only, the principle of dependently originating causes and results works. Ultimately, however, the nature of the sugata heart never changes into anything else, no matter whether it, from the perspective of sentient beings or adventitious stains, seems to be “obscured” first and “purified” later. As mentioned before, “purification” takes place only on the level of seeming reality or the adventitious stains, but it is precisely on this level that it is necessary because it is only on this level (never on the level of ultimate reality) that the sugata heart appears to be stained. As was said in the above passages on the sugata heart’s blessing, in actual fact, the ground or fundamental cause (the sugata heart), the path as its natural outflow, and the result (the full manifestation of the sugata heart as the dharmakāya) are inseparable in nature. In other words, to speak of the path as a natural outflow of the sugata heart means that the actual driving force of the path is buddha nature’s natural radiance shining through more and more. The full culmination of this is called “dharmakāya,” which means that the path accords with the sugata heart in that the latter, conventionally speaking, is both the “cause” and the “result” of this path. The changelessness of the sugata heart throughout its being adventitiously obscured and purified during the three phases of ordinary beings, bodhisattvas on the path, and buddhas is referred to throughout the *Uttaratantra* (for example, I.45ff.). After this paragraph in the *Lamp*, an interlinear note in the Tibetan editions says, “Furthermore, in this Land of Snows, some who hate noble Aśaṅga and have bad fortunes proclaim, ‘This great master accepts the existence of the disposition that is the cut-off disposition’ and ‘He does not assert that, ultimately, there is a single yāna.’” No doubt, RGVV asserts the single yāna several times and, through following the *Uttaratantra*’s central theme of all beings’ being endowed with buddha nature, does not assert a “cut-off disposition” in the sense of its being impossible for certain beings to ever become buddhas. For the details of issues around the “cut-off disposition” and the single yāna, as well as the positions of Aśaṅga and other Yogācāras on them, see Brunnhölzl 2010, 447–48, and in particular, 879n1301.

2627. Both the Rumtek book edition and the xylographic block print have *rgyu* (“cause”). Given the phrase “the continuum of the perfect path that makes . . . perceptible” in the preceding sentence, it would also make sense to read *rgyu* as *rgyud* (“continuum”).

2628. This paragraph is based on RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.42–44 (J37–39; D4025, fols. 94b.5–95b.2).

2629. In general, the dharmakāya is often referred to as “dharmatākāya” (“the kāya of the nature of phenomena”) or “svābhāvika-dharmatākāya,” with “dharmakāya” being explained as an abbreviation of these two terms. See, for example, Āryavimuktisena’s *Abhisamayālaṅkāravṛtti* (D3787, fol. 192a.7–8), Vasubandhu’s *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* on X.1, the *Buddhabhūmyupadeśa* (Taishō 1530, 325c5–7), Śīlabhadra’s *Buddhabhūmivyākhyāna* (D3997, fol. 272b.5), and Jñānacandra’s *Kāyatrayavṛtti* (D3891, fol. 8b.2). In his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2010, 753n611), the Eighth Karmapa says that, in his opinion, the dharmakāya and the svābhāvikakāya

are not different in both being the dharmatākāya, but that this dharmatākāya has two aspects—the aspect of its own nature’s being natural luminosity and the aspect of never abandoning that which is its own nature. The former is taught as the dharmakāya and the latter as the svābhāvikakāya. By virtue of this meaning, the dominant condition of primarily the svābhāvikakāya makes this dharmatākāya appear as the sambhogakāya within the stainless dharmadhātu, while the dominant condition of primarily the dharmakāya makes it appear as the nirmāṇakāya, together with its enlightened activity, for those who are endowed with the pure appearances that are a natural outflow of the dharmadhātu. In this context of the *Lamp*, this means that, in themselves, the appearances of the rūpakāyas do not constitute buddhahood, but the dharmakāya’s power to manifest them is an intrinsic capacity of the sugata heart. As for “mastery over all phenomena,” in the Shentong view, this means to have realized mind’s luminous nature and thus to have full control over all phenomena, which are nothing but luminosity’s radiant display.

2630. This quote is from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* (Taishō 668, 467b) and is also found in RGVV on *Uttaratantra* I.50 (J41; D4025, fol. 97a.1–2). The first sentence in the *Lamp* slightly differs: “Therefore, Śāriputra, the dharmakāya is not other than the basic element of sentient beings.”
2631. This may refer to some who explain the ālaya-consciousness (which in fact is nothing other than the adventitious stains) as being the same as buddha nature, which a superficial reading of certain passages in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* seems to suggest.
2632. *Uttaratantra* I.51cd.
2633. This refers to the example of the four elements’ arising and ceasing in ordinary space in *Uttaratantra* I.52ff., which illustrates the process of the skandhas and so on arising and ceasing within the basic space of the sugata heart without altering it.
2634. Compare RGVV on. I.26 saying that the tathāgata heart “due to its being the seed of the supramundane attributes, should be understood as the cause for the arising of the three jewels.” RGVV also speaks of the tathāgata heart as being the cause for the purification of the mind (J69) and the cause for attaining the three kāyas, glossing “dhātu” to mean “cause” (J72).
2635. The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Brunnhölzl 2011b, 248–49) quotes the *Daśabhūmikāsūtra* and the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, saying that bodhisattvas on the sixth bhūmi are able to enter the meditative absorption of cessation of bodhisattvas, while on the seventh bhūmi they are able to enter and rise from this meditative absorption in a single instant. According to the Karmapa, these statements are made with the intention of such bodhisattvas not being able or being able, respectively, to enter this meditative absorption in the manner of being without any characteristics. However, in general, he says, according to the prajñāpāramitā sūtras, bodhisattvas are able to enter the meditative absorption of cessation from the path of seeing onward.
2636. Compare section 2.2.2.1. in the text above.
2637. From the perspective of buddha nature, nirvāṇa is nothing but one’s own mind in its natural state, which is present in all sentient beings primordially and without ever being altered by adventitious stains. Therefore, in terms of their ultimate true nature, sentient beings are already in nirvāṇa. As was explained before, to realize mind’s luminous nature means that dualistic mind dissolves within the expanse of this primordial nirvāṇa without any abiding, that is, without any ground to hold on to and without any reference points. When this luminous nature, after the relinquishment of adventitious stains, appears to others as persons like Buddha Śākyamuni, it is called “nirmāṇakāya.” When this luminosity (ultimate reality, the svābhāvikakāya, or buddhahood) manifests

as pure appearances in all buddha realms, it is called “sambhogakāya.” Thus, though the ultimate reality of all buddhas is single and undifferentiable, it appears in diverse pure forms (such as the lords of the five buddha families) for the minds of greatly purified bodhisattvas. The dharmakāya is nothing but the sugata heart itself—the ultimate nature of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. In this way, the primordial nirvāṇa of the sugata heart is explained as manifesting as the three buddhakāyas. Again, the point is made that an emptiness that is understood as the mere absence of a self cannot qualify as true liberation with all its buddha qualities, but that mind’s own luminous wisdom nature must gain full power over itself.

2638. See *Uttaratantra* I.95cd–152.

2639. These examples are found in verses 5–7 and 74–76 of the *Dharmadhātustava*. The remaining eleven examples for the dharmadhātu’s remaining unaltered within adventitious stains are butter within milk, an encrusted beryl, gold in its ore, rice grains in their husks, sun and moon covered by five obscurations, a soiled fireproof garment, water deep in the earth, a baby in the womb, the same water’s being cold or warm, milk mixed with water, and a banana tree and its fruit.

2640. This refers to the “empty forms” that are the ten signs of accomplishment when practicing the six-branch yoga of the *Kālacakrantra* (for details, see GISM, 197–98).

2641. These two sentences correspond to *Uttaratantra* I.153. Speaking of faith here does not mean to simply believe that there is a buddha nature, without realizing the unreality of all the adventitious phenomena that obscure it. This may be temporarily appropriate and beneficial for beginners, but it is important to keep in mind that, even in the Shentong approach, during the stages of developing the correct view, the use of reasoning is necessary to dispel all wrong views and all reference points. However, once that has been accomplished, the mind needs to turn inward and directly face its own true nature, not continue to negate. Thus, ultimately, it is in order to stop the tendency to keep negating at this point that faith in, aspiration for, and openness toward the inconceivable reality of the tathāgata heart are needed. Hence, this does not mean faith in the sense of believing in something impossible, irrational, contrary to reason, or unreachable but being open to finally recognizing that one has been a buddha all along.

2642. As for “aspects of seeming reality,” in addition to realizing that the five skandhas lack a personal self, both śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas realize that coarse collections of matter and continua of mind do not exist ultimately. As for “the mere emptiness of a real existence that is other in substance,” according to the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhözl 2011b, 138–39 and 221–22), Vaibhāṣikas cling to appearances as being outer objects, while Sautrāntikas and Real Aspectarian Mere Mentalists cling to appearances as being aspects of mind (though the former still claim that there are imperceptible material entities independent of mind that cast these aspects into the mind). According to the Eighth Karmapa, pratyekabuddhas hold the view of Real Aspectarian Mere Mentalists and thus realize that apprehender and apprehended are empty of being other in substance, which is equivalent to realizing the lack of an independent nature of the apprehended. However, they lack the mahāyāna realization that both apprehender and apprehended are completely empty of a nature of their own.

2643. In his *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (D3862, fols. 226a.2–228a.3), Candrakīrti asserts that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas also realize phenomenal identitylessness, adducing three reasonings and seven scriptural quotations (note that he and his commentator Jayānanda are the only Indian Mādhyamikas who assert this). However, there is a considerable number of Tibetan masters, foremost among them Tsongkhapa and his

followers, who side with Candrakīrti's position. In his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, the Eighth Karmapa also follows Candrakīrti, but extensively refutes the claim that the difference in the realization of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats in comparison to bodhisattvas lies in the conciseness of reasoning. Rather, the Karmapa says, concise versus extensive identitylessness means that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, by virtue of being interested solely in their own personal liberation, only realize identitylessness with regard to the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas that make up their own continua as well as the phenomena of the uncontaminated reality of the path. Unlike them, bodhisattvas also realize identitylessness with regard to all remaining knowable objects pertaining to themselves and all other beings, such as the sugata heart, the dharmakāya, and dharmadhātu wisdom. For details on this issue, see Brunnhölzl 2004, 424–38. Throughout his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, the Eighth Karmapa follows the Indian mainstream position of denying that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas possess the mahāyāna realization of phenomenal identitylessness. Rather, śrāvakas realize only personal identitylessness; pratyekabuddhas, personal identitylessness and one half of phenomenal identitylessness (the lack of nature of the apprehended); and bodhisattvas, both personal and phenomenal identitylessness in their entireties.

2644. Compare the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* (D45.48, fol. 275a.3–4) that says, “Bhagavan, this tathāgata heart is the heart of the supreme dharmadhātu. It is the heart of the dharmakāya. It is the heart of the supramundane dharmas. It is the heart of the naturally pure dharmas.” An abbreviated variation of this passage is also quoted in RGVV (J72–73; D4025, fol. 112a.1).

2645. This paragraph corresponds to the last part of RGVV's comments on I.155. As an elaboration on this, *Uttaratantra* II.33 says that, just as people born blind, ordinary beings never see the tathāgata heart, while even noble bodhisattvas are like newborn infants who see just a small part of the sun from inside the house of their birth. As for “saṃsāra and nirvāṇa not being different from the perspective of the tathāgata heart,” “saṃsāra” simply refers to this tathāgata heart's being temporarily obscured by adventitious stains, while “nirvāṇa” means nothing other than this very tathāgata heart's having become free from those stains. Thus, since the adventitious stains are primordially nonexistent, it is solely the tathāgata heart that is the ultimately real underlying basis of both what appears as saṃsāra and what appears as nirvāṇa. Compare also section 2.2.2.1. on this.

2646. Even śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas realize that the object of their own realization—the lack of a self (nirvāṇa)—is empty and thus they realize that the assumed self of other beings (saṃsāra) is empty too. However, merely through that realization, they do not become buddhas because such realization is not sufficient to eradicate the latent tendencies of ignorance that still exist in all śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats as well as all bodhisattvas up through the tenth bhūmi. Compare RGVV (J32–34) on the four obstructions to the four pāramitās of supreme purity, bliss, permanence, and self that are the qualities of the dharmakāya, the primary one of which is the ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance that is still present in śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas. In that context, RGVV also says that the pāramitā of the supreme self “should be understood by virtue of being free from the reference points of a self due to having abandoned the extreme of the tīrthikas and by virtue of being free from the reference points of no-self due to having abandoned the extreme of the śrāvakas.”

2647. A more extended version of this statement, which includes the ensuing question of why buddha nature is then taught to anyone at all, is found in RGVV (J77; D4025, fol. 114b.5–6).



2648. This refers to the five flaws explained in *Uttaratantra* I.157–67. See also section 2.5.2.1. in the text below.
2649. The last two sentences combine the contents of *Uttaratantra* I.156–57/159–60 and I.160/163 as well as RGVV’s passage “Thus, one clearly sees that when something does not exist somewhere, the [latter] is empty of the [former]. In accordance with actual reality, one understands that what remains there exists as a real existent” (J76, D4025, fol. 114a.3). The last sentence in the *Lamp* here corresponds well with YDC’s comments on *Uttaratantra* I.158–61/161–63 (see appendix 6, section 2.2.).
2650. In other words, according to those who take buddha nature to refer to nothing but emptiness, the teachings on the tathāgata heart are only like a carrot held in front of beings who lack the courage to generate bodhicitta and face emptiness (see *Uttaratantra* I.161). However, Mikyö Dorje says that if these teachings were not of definitive meaning, the five flaws would not be flaws, but correct attitudes, since the tathāgata heart does not really exist. Consequently, any striving for it would not accord with how things actually are. Thus, such teachings would be nothing but an utter hypocrisy of fooling people into believing into something that does not really exist. In other words, one cannot have it both ways—teaching people to relax through the teachings on buddha nature in order to get rid of the five flaws and at the same time claiming that these teachings are not really true. Though the two flaws of clinging to what is unreal and excessive self-cherishing are not explicitly mentioned here in the *Lamp*, the same would apply to them as well. That is, if there is no tathāgata heart, it would be perfectly fine to cling to the real existence of the adventitious stains (seeming reality) and take them to be the only reality there is. It would also be correct not to develop the great love and compassion that is based on realizing the equality of oneself and others due to all beings possessing buddha nature. In addition, if the teachings on buddha nature were merely like an enticing carrot, they would not even work as such but only pointlessly delay the ultimately justified self-contempt and faintheartedness of beings. That, is, first, beings would become depressed by hearing that they have no self and that everything is empty, then they would be cheered up by hearing about buddha nature, but ultimately they would have to find out that the teachings on buddha nature are not true either, so they would end up ultimately becoming depressed. Note that this section of the *Lamp* and the following one are quoted in Jamgön Kongtrul’s commentary on the *Uttaratantra* (Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas 2005b, 124). Compare YDC’s similar general argument in appendix 6 (section 2.1.2.).
2651. This could also be read as “The ultimate is primordially not empty of real existence.”
2652. Tib. Sangs rgyas dpal grub (born sixteenth century).
2653. Tib. Mi bskyod dga’ ba’i dbyangs (one of the many names of the Eighth Karmapa).
2654. Tib. Phrag yul zu ru gdong.
2655. The Rumtek book edition adds in “[ ]” that this refers to “the glorious Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpé Dorje.” As for the three kindnesses, in the sūtra tradition, these consist of the guru’s giving precepts (*sdom pa*), reading transmissions (*lung*), and guiding instruction (*khrid*). In the tantra tradition, they refer to bestowing empowerments (*dbang bskur*), explaining the tantras (*rgyud bshad*), and giving pith instructions (*man ngag*).
2656. The Rumtek book edition inserts this in parentheses.
2657. The Rumtek book edition adds Thrangu Rinpoche’s primary name Karma Lodrö Ringlug Mawé Sengé (Tib. Ka rma blo gros ring lugs smra ba’i seng ge).
2658. Being the first reprint of the *Lamp* at Rumtek monastery, the xylographic block print does not contain Thrangu Rinpoche’s colophon, but ends with dedicatory verses at the occasion of this printing by order of the sixteenth Karmapa.

2659. This refers to all teachings that accord with “the dharma wheel of irreversibility” found in the *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra*, that is, the Shentong teachings in general and those on the tathāgata heart in particular.
2660. The corresponding passage in chapter 7 of this sūtra, called “The Questions of Paramārthasamudgata” (D106, fols. 38a.7–39a.1), actually says that the first two wheels are of expedient meaning, while the last one is of definitive meaning.
2661. Tib. Dri med ’od zer. This is the name of Longchen Rabjampa (1308–1364), whom Jamgön Kongtrul counts as a major Shentongpa in his TOK (2:544) too.
2662. This refers to the Seventh Karmapa, Chötra Gyatso.
2663. Tib. Zi lung paṅ chen. This is another name of Śākya Chogden.
2664. Tib. Bstan pa’i nyin byed. This is another name of the Eighth Situpa, Chökyi Jungné.
2665. This is one of the twelve samādhis mentioned, for example, in Longchenpa’s *Treatise of the Supreme Yāna*. These are the four outer samādhis of Hero’s Stride, Precious Crest-Ornament, Display, and Casket; the four inner samādhis of Entering All Objects, Appearance, Crown Jewel, and Array of the Tip of the Victory Banner; and the four secret samādhis of Pure Motion, Illumination of the Profound, Jewel Lamp, and Excellence.
2666. The *Tengyur* contains four texts by this name (two by Kṛṣṇa, and one each by Atiśa and Bodhibhadra), but this verse is not found in any of them.
2667. This is a Tibetan expression implying precision and perseverance, originally coming from making meat soup through breaking bones with a rock to extract the marrow. As an expression for one’s practice, it means to be decisive and effective, as well as striking the vital point, just as when hitting the right spot on a bone with a rock in a proper way so that one is able to crush the bone (that is, not striking it too weakly or off-center).
2668. VI.8.
2669. GISM has simply *rjes*, which as the third element in a triad with “preliminaries” and “main part” usually means “conclusion,” but the corresponding heading in the text below says “subsequent attainment” (*rjes thob*).
2670. These are also known as “the four seals of the dharma” and are listed at the end of this paragraph.
2671. The Tibetan word *mya ngan las ’das pa* for “nirvāṇa” literally means “beyond misery.” The phrase here could also be rendered as “the nirvāṇa of [being beyond] adventitious mistakeness.”
2672. Tib. *lam rim*.
2673. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, X.750–52 (the translation of these three verses and the following one follows the Sanskrit).
2674. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, X.753.
2675. The Tibetan term *la zlo ba* literally means “having crossed a mountain pass” and thus can also be understood as “arriving at a decisive experience” and “leaping into.”
2676. This is an expression for the common Mahāmudrā approach of beginning to cultivate superior insight through searching for any essence or characteristics of the mind that rests as a result of the previous cultivation of calm abiding, such as what color or shape this resting mind might have, where and how it arises, abides, and ceases, whether it is inside or outside the body, and whether it is different from the moving mind.
2677. This could also be read as “let the basic awareness that is without foundation rest within the state of nonmeditation.”
2678. See, for example, *Aṅguttara Nikāya* III.65. The four reliances are that one should rely not on persons but on the dharma; not on words but on the meaning; not on

consciousness but on wisdom; and not on the expedient meaning but on the definitive meaning.

2679. Except for omitting “Ānanda” at the beginning of the first, third, and fifth sentences and adding “speech” in the sixth one, this is a literal quote from the *Sthirādhyāsayapari-vartasūtra* (D224, fol. 172b.2–3), which is also found in RGVV (J2; D4025, fol. 74b.6–7) as the scriptural source for the three jewels as the first three vajra points.

2680. Compare *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* X.256–57 (D107, fol. 168b.5–6; translation according to the Sanskrit, the *Kangyur* versions, and the versions quoted in different Indian texts):

By relying on mere mind

One does not imagine outer objects.

By resting in the focal object of suchness,

One should go beyond mere mind too.

Having gone beyond mere mind,

One must even go beyond nonappearance.

The yogin who rests in nonappearance

Sees the mahāyāna.

The negative in line 257d (which obviously changes the meaning significantly) is also found in the *Kangyur* versions of the sūtra, but it is lacking in the identical verses 54–55 in Nāgārjuna’s *Bhāvanākrama* and the citations of these two verses from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in Indian treatises such as Śāntarākṣita’s *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti* (D3885, fol. 79b.3–4), Kamalaśīla’s *Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā* (D3886, fols. 128b.2–129a.3) and first *Bhāvanākrama* (D3915, fol. 33a.3–33b.6), Jñānakīrti’s *Tattvāvātāra* (D3709, fols. 63b.1–65a.2), and Ratnākaraśānti’s texts. In his translation of the sūtra, Suzuki (1979, 247) says that most Sanskrit manuscripts have *na* (“not”), but that one has *sa* (“he”). Nanjio’s Sanskrit edition also has *sa*. Besides that, the main differences in these verses hinge on how one understands the two occurrences of “nonappearance.” Kamalaśīla’s detailed explanation of these verses in his *Bhāvanākrama* (translation in Brunnhölzl 2004, 300–302) takes the first “nonappearance” as referring to the cognition that lacks the duality of apprehender and apprehended, and this cognition is to be transcended. The second one signifies the wisdom in which not even nondual wisdom appears, which is the path of seeing—the true seeing of the mahāyāna. This means that there is nothing to be seen when the light of perfect wisdom dawns through the examination of all phenomena with the eye of *prajñā*. However, such nonseeing of any phenomenon is not like being blind, closing one’s eyes, or not mentally engaging in seeing. The *Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā* adds that it is through self-awareness in meditative equipoise that the yogin’s mind is experienced as being nondual and without appearance and is described accordingly during subsequent attainment. Thus, though wisdom does not appear as something that can be referred to as nondual wisdom (or anything else, for that matter), since all phenomena lack a nature of their own, given Kamalaśīla’s mentioning of the light of wisdom and self-awareness, at least in terms of experiential events on the subject side, he does not seem to refer to a total lack of appearance of anything whatsoever in meditative equipoise. Ratnākaraśānti’s *Prajñāpāramitopadeśā* (D4079, fols. 161a.5–162a.4) explains these verses according to the four yogas of focusing on (1) entities, (2) mere mind, (3) suchness, and (4) nonappearance. (1) The first yoga is taught implicitly—as long as one does not identify phenomena as such and such, one is not able to apprehend their emptiness either. (2) The second yoga refers to seeing these phenomena as being mere mind empty of apprehender and apprehended, which still entails appearance. (3) The third yoga means to apprehend the nonappearance of the characteristics of phenomena, viewing them as sheer lucidity. (4) The fourth yoga

is the seeing by virtue of the nonappearance of any characteristics of both phenomena and the nature of phenomena. In more detail, “mere mind” in the first line of these two verses refers to the cognition of focusing on mere mind, which represents yoga (2). “Not imagine” means to go beyond yoga (1) of still imagining or examining external referents. “The focal object of suchness” refers to yoga (3)—wisdom’s focusing on suchness, with “having gone beyond mere mind” meaning to continue to train in this, while not yet having accomplished something previously nonexistent. Such an accomplishment is marked by “One must even go beyond nonappearance.” Here “nonappearance” means that the characteristics of phenomena do not appear, which means that one focuses on suchness alone. To go beyond even that is indicated by “the yogin who rests in nonappearance,” which refers to seeing that the characteristics of phenomena and the nature of phenomena do not appear at all. This means resting in yoga (4). “Mahāyāna” refers to the uncontaminated path of bodhisattvas superior to śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. “Sees” means perceive directly because the wisdom at this stage is the mahāyāna. As for how one proceeds through this mahāyāna, who proceeds, and where to, the next verse in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (X.258) says:

Peace is entered effortlessly,  
Purified through aspiration prayers.  
The highest identityless wisdom  
Sees the mahāyāna.

As for how one proceeds, “effortlessly” means that one transits through the supramundane bhūmis without exertion. These bhūmis are “peace” because they lack afflictions and conceptions. “Purified through aspiration prayers” means that inferior forms of awakening are ruled out. As for who proceeds and to where, “identityless wisdom” is so because it is utterly without appearance. It is “the highest” because all obscurations, including their latent tendencies, are relinquished. This means the bodhicitta of a buddha, which will be seen by yogins of the mahāyāna. As mentioned above, Jñānakīrti’s *Tattvāvātāra* (P4532, fols. 70b.1–72a.6) explains X.256 in a rather standard way by matching it with the first three of the four yogic practices: (1) outer objects are observed to be nothing but mind, (2) thus, outer objects are not observed, and (3) with outer objects’ being unobservable, a mind cognizing them is not observed either. On X.257 (corresponding to (4) not observing both apprehender and apprehended, nonduality or suchness is observed), he comments that since suchness is unborn, it neither exists as an entity nor the lack of entity. This means that suchness is the complete lack of reference points, since entities and the lack of entity include all possible reference points. Through realizing that, all beings are understood as having the nature of the dharmakāya, thus going beyond the understanding of mere mind. The yogin must even transcend the state of true reality’s not appearing in the manner of being a unity or a multiplicity and the like. To fully rest in the nonappearance of any reference points whatsoever is to realize true reality, here called “the mahāyāna,” another form of that name being “Mahāmudrā.” Thus, Jñānakīrti indicates that the final realization of the freedom from reference points even in the mahāyāna of the sūtras is nothing but Mahāmudrā, which he further equates with the famous “nonseeing is the supreme seeing” in the prajñāpāramitā sūtras (he also clarifies that such nonseeing is of course not just the same mere absence of mental nonengagement as when being asleep or closing one’s eyes). Finally, compare Jamgön Kongtrul’s comments on these two verses in the text with the similar but expanded explanation by the late Nyingma master Düjom Rinpoche (Bdud ’joms ’jigs bral ye shes rdo rje 1991, 183): “Accordingly, after Mind Only has been provisionally taught and then genuinely transcended, the

apparitionless Madhyamaka is taught; and when that too has been transcended, the apparitional Madhyamaka is revealed. If that is not reached, it is said that the profound meaning of the greater vehicle is not perceived. It is, in general, erroneous to describe everything expressed by the word *mind* as the Mind Only doctrine, for there are occasions when the abiding nature free from all extremes, [known] inclusively as the nature of just what is, the genuine goal, the natural nirvāṇa, the expanse of reality, the mind of inner radiance, and the intellect of Samantabhadra, is indicated by the word *mind*. . . . One should not therefore mistake that which is spoken of as mind-as-such, the inner radiance transcending the mind of saṃsāra and its mental events, for the Mind Only system, which does not transcend consciousness.” In general, many Tibetan texts cite the version quoted here in GISM (or variations of it) and comment accordingly. For example, see the Third Karmapa’s commentaries on the *Dharmadhātustava* (Brunnhözl 2007b, 262) and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (Brunnhözl 2012b, 263–64), as well as the Eighth Karmapa’s and the Fifth Shamarpa’s commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Brunnhözl 2011b, 88 and 220).

2681. As mentioned before, the phrase “has been obtained through the nature of phenomena since beginningless time” is found in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara ed., 3.4–6; D4037, fol. 2b:4) and in the Śrāvakabhūmi (D4036, fol. 2a.2–3). It is also quoted in RGVV on I.86.
2682. *Uttaratantra* I.96/99–97/100.
2683. Note that this feature among the buddha qualities does not appear in the *Uttaratantra* but is found as *Mahāvīyutpatti* no. 187, and in *Abhidharmakośa* VII.32d and *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* VIII.5a.
2684. *Uttaratantra* I.155/158 and II.5.
2685. *Uttaratantra* I.37–38.
2686. The four notions of the basis of purification, what is to be purified, the means of purification, and the result of purification represent a common hermeneutical set in the Buddhist tantras. Compare also RGVV (J5; D4025, fol. 76b.2–3): “The buddha element is explained through a description of the sixty kinds of factors that purify its [natural] purity because it is [only] if the object to be purified is endowed with qualities that purifications of its purity are justified.”
2687. *Uttaratantra* I.154/157.
2688. *Uttaratantra* I.51cd.
2689. *Uttaratantra* II.3 and II.38.
2690. That is, regard the guru as the dharmakāya of a buddha.
2691. In accordance with RGVV (DP) and Ut (D), GISM *chos* is emended to *thob*. Also, *chos* (“attributes”) is mentioned in the next line.
2692. These are slight variations of *Uttaratantra* I.3, III.1, IV.1, and V.25.
2693. This is a description of the outer, inner and “other” Kālacakra. However, usually, the outer Kālacakra refers to the outer universe (beginning with a four-continent world with Mount Meru and so on). The inner Kālacakra refers to the thirty-one levels of saṃsāric beings—the five realms of the desire realm below the gods, the six god realms of the desire realm, the sixteen god realms of the form realm, and the four god realms of the formless realm. The “other” Kālacakra refers to the maṇḍala of the generation stage (*utpattikrama*) with its support (palace and so on) and supported (the deity), the nāḍīs, vāyus, and tilakas of the completion stage (*sampannakrama*), and so on.
2694. This refers to the main Indian commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, the *Vimala-prabhānāmamūlatantrānusārīṇīdvādaśasāhasrikālaghukālacakratāntrarājaṭīkā*

- ascribed to Kulika Puṇḍarīka, one of the kings of Shambhala and an emanation of Avalokiteśvara, which contains the following verses (D1347, vol. tha, fol. 110a.6–7).
2695. For details, see Kongtrul 2005, 173–74, 199–200, 435n12, 437n21, 454n37.
2696. See *Uttaratantra* V.3–6.
2697. “The worlds of the gods and the worlds of Brahmā” refers to the god realms of the desire realm and the three god realms based on the first dhyāna of the form realm.
2698. What is said in the first sentence of this paragraph is found in many places in the longer prajñāpāramitā sūtras. The contents of the second sentence are found in Conze 1975, 507.
2699. D106, fol. 125b.1–4.
2700. D213, fol. 158a.2.
2701. *Ibid.*, fol. 156b.5–7 (GISM omits “past, present, and future”).
2702. GISM adds “everlasting” after “permanent.”
2703. *Aṅgulimāliyasūtra*, D213, fol. 156a.3–4.
2704. D120, fol. 84b.2–7. GISM presents this paragraph as two consecutive sentences, starting with “These sentient beings who teach ‘The tathāgata heart exists in all sentient beings’ are endowed with immeasurable qualities. That is, these sons . . .”
2705. The first sentence and the second one up through “the mahāyāna” represent an abbreviated paraphrase of *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, D120, fol. 82b.1–3. I could not locate the remainder of the second sentence in the sūtra.
2706. *Ibid.*, fol. 126a.6–7. GISM says, “If sons of good family . . . make efforts in understanding by thinking, ‘The Tathāgata . . .’ just like me, they too should be regarded as the abode of a buddha.”
2707. This means that people in India refrain from most activities during the hottest time of the day.
2708. These are the four major ways of breaking the Buddhist monastic vows that are in common for both fully ordained monks and nuns—sexual misconduct, taking what was not given, killing, and pretending to possess spiritual realizations or attainments that one does not have. When committed in full, these four lead to the immediate loss of all other vows of ordination and expulsion from the ordained saṃgha. Fully ordained nuns have to avoid four more defeating offenses, such as embracing or touching a man with a desirous mind.
2709. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, D120, fol. 126a.4–5 and 126b.3–5. GISM says, “For example, just as . . . the sun shines, merely through hearing this sūtra on the heart, the hosts of . . . immediate consequence will swiftly be purified. . . . Even if one were to think “I do not need awakening” or did not generate [bodhi]citta, no matter whether doing so due to competing [with others], being made to do so by others, or doing so for the sake of . . . , merely through hearing this sūtra on the heart, the cause of awakening will enter all the pores of one’s body, just like dust motes in the spring sun.”
2710. *Ibid.*, fols. 83b.7 and 84a.7–84b1. GISM says, “If one has generated bodhicitta with previous buddhas as many as the sand grains in a single river Gaṅgā, during bad times one will not denigrate this dharma and will have faith in it. If one has generated . . . eight [times] the river Gaṅgā, during bad times one will retain, uphold, read, and recite this sūtra, encourage others also to write down its volumes, retain them, uphold them, and read them, and one will also be able to teach its meaning.”
2711. See the introduction.
2712. This is another name of the Eighth Situpa, Chökyi Jungné.
2713. All Situpas are considered as emanations of Maitreya.

2714. This means that from the time of having received this transmission of the Shentong lineage properly in all its aspects, Jamgön Kongtrul has also become a holder of this lineage.
2715. This is another of the many names of Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé.
2716. Tib. Mkhas grub ngag dbang chos 'phel rgya mtsho (c. 1788–1865).
2717. RGVV (J6) adds that the Buddha uttered this verse while having the pure disposition and buddha nature (the *tathāgatadhātu*) in mind.
2718. Verse 27. This corresponds to the eighth of the nine examples for buddha nature in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* (D258, fols. 253b1–254a5) and *Uttaratantra* I.121–23.
2719. I.28: *chos dbyings snang byed 'od 'byung zhing / de bzhin nyid la tha dad med / rigs kyid don ni snang ba'i phyir / thams cad bde gshegs snying po can /*.
2720. D3935, fols. 296b.5–297a.2.
2721. Given the significant differences in lines I.28ac and the well-known literalness of Tibetan translators, it seems rather unlikely that the translator here just produced a very free rendering of the Sanskrit as it is found in J and translated in DP.
2722. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 28b.4–29b.2.
2723. 472–74.
2724. *Uttaratantra* I.145/148.
2725. This agrees with another passage in CMW (480–81), which comments on a passage from the *Jñānālokāṃkārasūtra*: “The meaning of this sūtra passage is that even these persons with wrong craving thrive through virtuous dharmas because they have the naturally pure disposition. For if they did not have the naturally pure disposition, they would not thrive through the light rays of the wisdom of the tathāgatas and virtuous dharmas. You may wonder, “Above it was explained that seeing saṃsāra as a flaw and seeing nirvāṇa as a quality does not occur in those with wrong craving, who have the disposition of absolutely not passing into nirvāṇa. Is that not contradictory to the explanation in this sūtra that [even] those with wrong craving generate virtue—the cause for meeting a buddha in the future?” It is not contradictory—the above [explanation pertains] to the time of those with wrong craving not being endowed with the four wheels. In this [sūtra] here, at the time of being struck by the light rays of the wisdom of the Tathāgata, their time of being endowed with the four wheels has come.”
2726. IX.15.
2727. IX.37.
2728. I.150/153.
2729. CMW, 474.
2730. *Ibid.*, 496–98.
2731. *Ibid.*, 498–99 (for details, see there).
2732. *Ibid.*, 415–17.
2733. I.154/157.
2734. I.113/116.
2735. I.150ab/153ab.
2736. Lha rje bsod nams rin chen 1990, 7–16.
2737. For Vasubandhu's and Sthiramati's comments on this verse, see the note on the potential verse from the *Abhidharmamahāyānasūtra* in the translation of RGVV (J37).
2738. D111, fol. 87a.7–87b.1.
2739. RYC, 57–59.
2740. Note that the last three sentences are found almost verbatim in CMW.
2741. *Ratnaḡuṇasaṃcayagāthā* XII.3. Rin chen ye shes 2010 omits the fourth line and has “children of the victors” instead of “victors” in the second line.

2742. *Ratnagūṇasaṃcayagāthā*, XVI.1–2.
2743. Note that RYC does not include *Uttaratantra* I.27 and that its comments on I.154–55 add nothing to what RGVV says.
2744. Bu ston rin chen grub 1965–71, fols. 12a.5–19a.3.
2745. The text later elaborates on these flaws in detail (*ibid.*, fols. 19a.3ff.).
2746. D45.48, fol. 272a.7–272b.1.
2747. Dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan 1992b, fols. 12a.2–a.
2748. The same passage is found in JKC (49–50), which adds that, according to Ngog Lotsāwa, the perfect buddhakāya is the resultant tathāgata heart, suchness is the natural tathāgata heart, and the disposition is the causal tathāgata heart. The dharmakāya is the actual tathāgata, while it is only the nominal heart of sentient beings. It is explained to be all-pervading because it is suitable to be attained by sentient beings. Suchness is the actual heart of both tathāgatas and sentient beings—in terms of the isolate of natural purity, suchness actually exists in both. Since the disposition is the cause of tathāgatas, it is labeled as “tathāgata heart,” but it is the actual heart of sentient beings.
2749. Tibetan as quoted in Ruegg 1969, 291–92.
2750. Interestingly, this interpretation of the first reason in I.28 is very close to Sajjana’s gloss on this verse, as well as CMW’s (473) explanation of I.28a, and YDC’s (374) above-mentioned explanation of enlightened activity as the interaction between the dharmakāya of a buddha and the basic element of sentient beings.
2751. Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1997, 80–83.
2752. J70.
2753. J71.
2754. J72.
2755. GC, 24.3–5.
2756. 262.12–263.4 and 263.13–22.
2757. 268.2–8.
2758. 451.24–452.3.
2759. Śākya mchog ldan 1988a, 122.5–123.5.
2760. Tāranātha 1982–87, 790.3–792.1 (see also Mathes 2004).
2761. Śākya mchog ldan 1988a, 126.2–131.4.
2762. J77.
2763. See the translation of the *Lamp* (14–31).
2764. See Brunnhölzl 2010, 438–43.
2765. Padma dkar po 1991, fol. 74a.2–74b.3.
2766. D258, fol. 248b.6.
2767. JKC, 49–50. For the comments on I.27 in JKC’s introduction, see my introduction.
2768. X.256–57.
2769. GISM, 188–89.
2770. ’Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 371.5–383.3.
2771. ’Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984c, 564.2–587.2. For a complete translation of the *Synopsis*, see Duckworth (2005, 221–60).
2772. That is, they may neither contradict valid perception, nor valid inferential cognition, nor any other scriptures that have already been established as authentic.
2773. These are valid perception, valid inferential cognition, and the valid cognition of trustworthy scriptures.
2774. D120, fol. 35a.7–35b.1
2775. *Ibid.*, fol. 45b.5–6.
2776. *Ibid.*, fol. 52b.3–4.



2777. Ibid., fol. 76b.6–7.

2778. This sentence appears many times in *ibid.*, fols. 70aff.

2779. Sections 26a–b. The translation follows the Sanskrit as quoted in Makransky 1997, 375.

2780. XV.2cd.

2781. XXV.13.

2782. I.51cd.

2783. I.63.

2784. I.155.

2785. In explaining the three reasons in *Uttaratantra* I.28, Mipham Rinpoche and others join them with the Buddhist standard set of “the four principles” (Skt. *yukti*, Tib. *rigs pa*). The Śrāvakabhūmi clarifies that *yukti* in the context of these four is equivalent to *yoga* and *upāya*, and RGVV (J73) gives the same two synonyms for *yukti* in its discussion of the nature of phenomena being such a principle. Any of these three terms can mean “application,” “means,” and “expedient” (yet another way of understanding *yukti* here would be as “consistency” or coherence”). In answer to the question how one reflects on the teaching about the skandhas by using a form of investigation that applies various principles, the Śrāvakabhūmi (D4036, fol. 57b.2–58b.1) says that one investigates this teaching by means of the four principles. (1) The principle of dependence is twofold in terms of arising (Skt. *utpattyapekṣā*, Tib. *skye ba'i ltos pa*) and in terms of designation (Skt. *prajñāptyapekṣā*, Tib. *gdags pa'i ltos pa*). (a) Dependence in terms of arising means that the skandhas appear by virtue of causes and conditions and that their arising thus depends on these causes and conditions. (b) Dependence in terms of designation means that any designations of the skandhas depend on certain collections of names, words, and letters. These dependencies are principles or means or methods with regard to the arising and the designation of the skandhas. (2) The principle of performing activity is the principle or means or method of correlating the skandhas, which have arisen through their own individual causes and conditions, with the performance of their respective specific activities or functions, such as the eyes' seeing visible forms, the ears' hearing sounds, the mind's cognizing phenomena, visible form's functioning as the perceptible sphere of the eye, sound's functioning as the perceptible sphere of the ears, and phenomena's functioning as the perceptible sphere of the mind. In addition, there is the performance of specific activities through certain phenomena's interacting with each other in certain ways. (3) The principle of demonstrating evidence means that the skandhas are investigated through the three kinds of valid cognition that establish the skandhas as being impermanent, being dependently arisen, having the nature of suffering, being empty of a self, and not constituting a self. These three forms of valid cognition are trustworthy scripture, direct perception, and inference. (4) The principle of the nature of phenomena is applied in response to questions such as, “Why do the skandhas have such a nature?” “Why does the arrangement of the world have that nature?” “Why does the earth element have the characteristic of hardness, the water element the characteristic of wetness, the fire element the characteristic of heat, and the wind element the characteristic of motility?” “Why are the skandhas impermanent?” “Why is nirvāṇa a state of peace?” “Why does form have the characteristic of displaying the quality of form?” “Why do feelings have the characteristic of experiencing?” “Why do discriminations have the characteristic of causing phenomena to be discriminated?” “Why do formations have the characteristic of forming?” and “Why does consciousness have the characteristic of being conscious?” The fact that this is the very nature, essence, or dharmatā of these phenomena is here the principle or

means or method that is called “the principle of the nature of phenomena.” Alternatively, the principle that everything has its own nature or is based on its own nature is applied for the sake of settling the mind upon and making it understand that this is the way things are, that they are not some other way, that they do not become something other, and that they are this way everywhere and always. In this way, the four principles serve to properly investigate the teachings on the skandhas or any other teaching. The *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (D4049, fol. 103a.3–5) basically agrees with this, saying that the four principles serve to analyze the dharma. (1) The principle of dependence is the fact that when formational or conditioned phenomena arise, they depend on conditions. (2) The principle of performing activity is that phenomena, which have different specific characteristics, perform their own specific activities. (3) The principle of demonstrating evidence is to show that an established meaning does not contradict valid cognition. (4) The principle of the nature of phenomena refers to what are known since beginningless time as the individual natures of all phenomena that exhibit specific and general characteristics. The tenth chapter of the *Samādhinirmocanasūtra* (D106, fols. 51a.3–52b.4) also agrees on the first three principles and further elaborates on the third one. (1) The principle of dependence refers to the causes and conditions for the arising of formational or conditioned phenomena and for designating them with conventional expressions. (2) The principle of performing activity refers to the causes and conditions that perform the functions of phenomena arising, being obtained, and being established. (3) The principle of demonstrating evidence refers to the causes and conditions for cognizing, explanation, establishing the meaning of statements, and thorough comprehension. This is twofold—pure and impure. As for the five characteristics of the pure demonstration of evidence, (a) the characteristic of direct observation consists of the direct observation in the world that all conditioned phenomena are impermanent, have the nature of suffering, and are without a self, as well as everything that accords with those. (b) The characteristic of directly observing what is based on something consists of the direct observation of the principle of impermanence’s being based on all conditioned phenomena’s being momentary, the existence of worlds beyond this one, and virtuous and nonvirtuous karmas’ not disappearing (without having produced their respective results); the direct observation of diverse sentient beings’ being based on their diverse karmas; the direct observation of the happiness and suffering of sentient beings’ being based on their virtuous and nonvirtuous karmas, respectively; what is not directly observed by these but is to be inferred; and everything that accords with those. (c) The characteristic of matching this with examples of their own type consists of matching it with examples of observing the disintegration and arising of inner and outer conditioned phenomena that is well known in the world; matching it with examples of observing the suffering of being born and so on; matching it with examples of observing the lack of independence; matching it with examples of observing prospering and deteriorating as they are well known in all worlds, even those beyond this one; and everything that accords with those. (d) The characteristic of thorough establishment is listed in order to fully ascertain that characteristics (a)–(c) apply to what is to be established. (e) The characteristic of teaching through determining utterly pure scriptures refers to the teachings by omniscient persons that nirvāṇa is peace and so on as well as everything that accords with such teachings. Omniscient persons are characterized by five features: when they appear in the world, they are renowned as being omniscient; they possess the thirty-two marks of a great being; they eliminate the doubts of all sentient beings through the ten powers; by virtue of the four fearlessnesses, the words with which they teach the dharma cannot be disputed by any opponents; and in

their vinaya teachings, the eightfold path of the noble ones and the fourfold practices of a śramaṇa (not scolding back even when being scolded, not becoming angry even when others are angry at one, not hitting back even when being hit, and not exposing hidden faults even when being exposed) appear. Thus, the principle of demonstrating evidence is pure due to these five characteristics by means of valid perception, valid inferential cognition, and the valid cognition of trustworthy scriptures. (4) The principle of the nature of phenomena refers to the abiding of the dhātu of the nature of phenomena in order to make phenomena abide, no matter whether tathāgatas appear or do not appear. GC (431.16–432.15) also explains these four based on this sūtra.

2786. VIII.1.

2787. This is one of the ten powers of a buddha.

2788. *Madhyamakāvatāra* XI.11.

2789. D107, fol. 9b.1–2.

2790. Verse 22.

2791. Bod sprul mdo sngags bstan pa'i nyi ma n.d., 17.5–18.1

2792. Zur mang padma rnam rgyal n.d., 32–33.

2793. Ngag dbang kun dga' dbang phyug 1987, 197–99.

2794. D1124, fols. 71b.6–72a.4.

2795. *Ibid.*, fol. 72a.6–72b.1.

2796. D3837, fol. 149a.1–2.

2797. Sthiramati, *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, Pandeya ed., 1999, 23; D4032, fols. 202b.4–203a.7.

2798. D2533, fol. 54a.5–6.

2799. D3891, fols. 30b.4–31a.1.

2800. Note that this echoes verse 11 of Nāgārjuna's *Dharmadhātustava*:

If this element exists, through our work,

We will see the purest of all gold.

Without this element, despite our toil,

Nothing but misery we will produce.

2801. In Jñānaśrīmitra, *Jñānaśrīmitranibandhāvali*, 483.12–13.

2802. *Ibid.*, 486.18–487.6.

2803. This term can be understood as “lucid form” or “what has the nature of lucidity.”

2804. J75–76.

2805. J76.

2806. In Jñānaśrīmitra, *Jñānaśrīmitranibandhāvali*, 487.7–488.4. Note that, similar to Jñānaśrīmitra, Gö Lotsāwa and the Eighth Karmapa also comment on both *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 and *Uttaratantra* I.154 but do so in different ways (see in the text below and appendix 3).

2807. *Ibid.*, 511.8–11.

2808. The Sanskrit omits the negative.

2809. Skt. *bhūta* has no correspondence in the Tibetan.

2810. This sentence is missing in the Sanskrit.

2811. This means that sentient beings in the bardo are attracted by the bliss of the sexual union of their future parents.

2812. Tib. *ma rtogs pa de cis lan zhe na/* (the Sanskrit lacks this question).

2813. Skt. *tanmayatvenāvācyatvāt*. The Tibetan reads *de'i rang bzhin brjod du med pa'i phyir*. Thus, this could also be read as “it is inexpressible due to its very make-up (or nature).” In other words, the nature of experiencing innate bliss is to be without any subject-object duality or thoughts, and therefore it cannot be expressed.

2814. Bagchi Sanskrit edition, 89.17–90.5 (D2256, fols. 187b.3–6).

2815. D4226, vol. me, fols. 2a.4–3b.5.

2816. D2254, fols. 170a.1–4.

2817. D2253, fols. 155b.6–156a.4.

2818. D3880, fol. 196b.2–4.

2819. Though the Tibetan supports this reading, the sentence could also be understood as “the emptiness of something’s being empty of something is not reasonable.”

2820. *notkṣipati na pratikṣipati / yathābhūtaṃ ca tathatām nirabhilāpyasvabhāvatām yathābhūtaṃ prajānāti /*.

2821. Dutt ed., 32f.

2822. Ibid., 45.

2823. Ibid., 46.

2824. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993b, fols. 42b.2–43a.2. Note that both Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen and Rongtön are greatly influenced by Ngog’s comments (see in the text below). For further details on Ngog’s position on *tathāgatagarbha*, which seeks to adapt the teaching of the *Uttaratantra* to the Madhyamaka understanding of emptiness, as well as its impact on later Tibetan commentators, see Kano 2006, 129–253 and 367–495 and Kano 2009.

2825. 499–501.

2826. Compare CMW’s explanation (426) that the essence of the basic element is “the nature of phenomena free from superimposition and denial,” for which I.154 is adduced as scriptural support.

2827. 419–20.

2828. Rang byung rdo rje 2006b, 610–13. The last sentence here corresponds to the almost identical passage in RGVV on the above two verses from the *Uttaratantra* (J76; D4025, fol. 114ba.4).

2829. J72.

2830. II.27–28.

2831. Rang byung rdo rje 2006c, 31–32.

2832. Dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan 1992, fols. 49b.5–50a.5.

2833. The same passage is found in JKC (117–18), which speaks of “flaws of afflicted phenomena that are established as the nature of the basic element.”

2834. IX.151ab.

2835. YDC, 326–27.

2836. D45.48, fol. 272a.7–272b.1.

2837. *rtsod spang du sbyar ba ni gi’i nus pa dpyad par bya’o* emended to *rtsod spang du sbyar ba ni rang gi nus pas dpyad par bya’o*.

2838. J76; D4025, fol. 114a.3–4.

2839. Dutt ed., 32.6–14; D4037, fol. 26b.4–6.

2840. YDC, 327–28.

2841. Dar ma rin chen 1982, 321.5–325.6.

2842. Rong ston shes bya kun gzigs 1997, 143–45.

2843. Note that this explanation is the same as what Ratnākaraśānti’s *Sārottamā* on *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* V.21 says (see appendix 3).

2844. J13.

2845. The Sanskrit says “because it has the nature of inseparable pure dharmas” (*avinirbhāgaśuddhadharmaprakṛtīvāt*). Rongtön quotes a part of *D rnam par dbye ba med pa’i chos dag pa’i chos nyid ni rang bzhin yin pa’i phyir* (but even here, *dag pa* should qualify *chos* and not *chos nyid*). P has *rnam par dbye ba med pa’i chos nyid ni rang bzhin yin pa’i phyir*.

2846. IV.10cd (DP *chos nyid*, Sanskrit *dharmatva*).
2847. IV.6d. This seems to be how Rongtön understands *byang chub sems can yongs su 'dzin* (Skt. *bodeḥ sattvaḥ parigrahaḥ*) in order to support his above statement that the nature of phenomena pervades all beings. However, as is clear from the context in the *Uttaratantra*, this line explains the phrase “taking hold” in IV.5 as referring to bodhisattvas as the ones who take hold of awakening.
2848. GC, 433.12–13 and 439.20–446.21.
2849. D3791, fol. 303a.7–303b.2.
2850. D3793, fol. 125b.1–3.
2851. Here, Gö Lotsāwa correctly remarks that the Sanskrit *ataḥ* is often rendered as *'di la* (instead of *'di las*) in the Tibetan translations as if it were a locative (seventh case) instead of being an ablative (fifth case).
2852. A simple example of an “exclusion of possession by others” (Skt. *anyayogavyavacheda*, Tib. *gzhan ldan rnam gcod*) would be “Only Susan is a good cook,” which excludes that others too possess the feature of being a good cook. An example of an “exclusion of nonpossession” (Skt. *ayogavyavacheda*, Tib. *mi ldan rnam gcod*) would be the statement “Susan definitely is a good cook,” which excludes that she does not possess the feature of being a good cook.
2853. J76–77.
2854. As above, GC glosses *'di la(s)* in I.154a as *de'i phyir*.
2855. As will be clear from what follows, here GC takes Skt. *nimitta* (Tib. *rgyu mtshan*) to mean “cause” and not “characteristic.” The same goes for this term in relation to purified phenomena in the text below.
2856. Here, *'di la* in I.154a is taken literally.
2857. This is how Gö Lotsāwa wants Skt. *prabhāvitānām* (Tib. *rab tu phye ba*) to be understood here.
2858. D3791, fols. 58b.7–59a.1.
2859. These are lines 50–55 from the Third Karmapa's *Treatise on Pointing Out the Tathāgata Heart*.
2860. *Lamp*, 24.
2861. *Ibid.*, 45.
2862. Lo chen Dharmasrī n.d., 374.
2863. JKC, 117–18.
2864. 3:376–78.
2865. 3:82.
2866. GISM, 190–92.
2867. Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas 1990, 153–54.
2868. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984b, 433.3–434.2.
2869. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984c, 598.2–4.
2870. For some further commentators on *Uttaratantra* I.28 and I.154–55, see Mathes 2008a, 93–95, 107, and 121–22.
2871. D3791, fol. 303a.7–303b.2.
2872. D3793, fol. 125a.7–125b.3.
2873. D3795, fol. 273a.7–273b.2.
2874. D3794, fols. 232b.7–233b.6.
2875. D3800, fol. 60a.5–60b.3.
2876. These four stages of realization correspond to the four yogas that are explained in Haribhadra's commentaries on *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V.20—the yogas of realizing the lack of a self, the lack of something apprehended, the lack of an apprehender, and

the illusion-like existence of dependently originating nondual wisdom that realizes the freedom from all reference points.

2877. D3796, fol. 81a.7–81b.5.

2878. XI.29. The *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāsyā* explains that remedial phenomena are like an illusory king due to their sovereignty in terms of purifying afflicted phenomena. Afflicted phenomena are also like an illusory king due to their sovereignty in terms of producing more afflicted phenomena. Thus, the defeat of afflicted phenomena by remedial phenomena is like one illusory king's being defeated by another illusory king. Since bodhisattvas know this, they are without any pride about either one of these two sides.

2879. D3799, fol. 244b.3–6.

2880. D3801, fol. 181a.5–7.

2881. D3803, fols. 183b.6–184a.1.

2882. D3805, fol. 180a.4–7.

2883. Maitrīpa 1938, 70.1–2; D2256, fol. 187b.3–5.

2884. Maitrīpa 1989, 100–102; D2225, fol. 78a.5–78b.4. This text is included in the *Advaya-vajrasaṃgraha* by Maitrīpa but the *Tengyur* attributes it to Nāgārjunagarbha.

2885. For the comments on *Abhisamayālamkāra* V.21 in Jñānaśrīmitra's *Sākārasiddhi*, see appendix 3.

2886. Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab 1993a, fol. 86b.3–5.

2887. 'Ju mi pham rgya mtsho 1984a, 274.2–275.2.

2888. Mi bskyod rdo rje 2003, 2:304 and 2:310–11.

2889. *Ibid.*, 2:304–10.

2890. For more details on this, see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 508–14.

2891. Dkon mchog yan lag 2006, 240.

2892. For more details, see Brunnhölzl 2011b, 87–88 and 600–601 and Brunnhölzl 2012a, 326 and 511. For the comments on *Abhisamayālamkāra* V.21 in GC, see appendix 3.

2893. As the following explanations will show, the translation “emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects” is to be preferred over “emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects.”

2894. D45.47, fols. 220b.2–221b.7.

2895. D3916, fol. 51a.7–51b.5.

2896. D3917, fol. 67b.1–3.

2897. Brunnhölzl 2007a, 174–75.

2898. Karma phrin las pa phyogs las rnam rgyal 2006, 329.

2899. Brunnhölzl 2007b, 300.

2900. Brunnhölzl 2012b, 298.

2901. As mentioned in the note on CMW's comments on *Uttaratantra* I.161–63, YDC (337) quotes the same verse and attributes it to Mañjuśrīkīrti, but it is not found in any of this author's works in the *Tengyur* nor in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*.

2902. Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba n.d., 310–11.

2903. Chos grags rgya mtsho 1985, vol. 1, nga–ja.

2904. Brunnhölzl 2007a, 435.

2905. Skt. *pratyaḥāra*, Tib. *so sor sdud pa* or *so sor gcod pa*.

2906. Skt. *śaḍaṅgayoga*, Tib. *sbyor ba yan lag drug pa*.

2907. Skt. *śūnyabimba*, Tib. *stong gzugs*.

2908. D1347, vol. da, fol. 221b.1–3.

2909. *Ibid.*, fol. 237a.2–4. See also GISM, 197–98.

2910. Mi bskyod rdo rje 1996, 28–35.

2911. Brunnhölzl 2007a, 451–52.

2912. 3:379–80.
2913. YDC, 329–35. Note that some parts of this presentation are not literal translations but paraphrases (sometimes abbreviated).
2914. D420, fol. 71a.4. Note that the same text also says, “Remember the expanse as ‘seed’” (ibid., fol. 71a.3).
2915. D222, fols. 104a.5–6, 108a.4–7, and 116b.3–5.
2916. D417, fol. 11a.1–2.
2917. D1347, vol. da, fol. 237a.4–5.
2918. Ibid., fol. 229b.1.
2919. D1180, fol. 4b.4–5.
2920. As mentioned already, the three bodhisattva commentaries are Kulika Puṇḍarīka’s *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Vajragarbha’s *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā*, and Vajrapāṇi’s commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra* (*Lakṣābhīdanādud-dhṛṭalaghutantrapīṇḍārthavivaraṇa*).
2921. D1180, fol. 11b.4–5.
2922. I.107cd.
2923. 308 and 333.
2924. An interlinear gloss identifies this as the position of Butön.
2925. V.25a.
2926. In chapter 7, “The Questions of Paramārthasamudgata” (D106, fols. 24b.5–25a.4).
2927. Ibid., fol. 25b.5–6.
2928. D120, fol. 111a.2–5.
2929. Ibid., fol. 126b.6–7.
2930. These were the first two lay disciples of the Buddha.
2931. This term refers to the first five ordained human disciples of the Buddha—Ajñā-takaunḍinya, Aśvajit, Bhadrīka, Daśabalakāśyapa, and Mahānāmakuḷika.
2932. The text adds that these eight kinds are the prajñāpāramitā sūtras in 300, 500, 700, 2,500, 8,000, 18,000, 25,000, and 100,000 lines.
2933. D4052, fol. 301a.3–301b.1.
2934. II.58cd.
2935. D4090, vol. ku, fol. 118a.5–6.
2936. Interlinear note: Sakya.
2937. Interlinear note: Butön.
2938. Compare the same but more extensive argument in the Eighth Karmapa’s *Lamp* (45–46).
2939. D107, fol. 86a.4–7.
2940. Ibid., fol. 86b.2.
2941. From among the three possibilities of explaining the meaning of “ultimate reality” as stated in Bhāviveka’s *Tarkajvālā*, just as in GC’s explanation, the one by YDC corresponds to the second one—ultimate reality’s being the object of ultimate wisdom.
2942. I.289ab.
2943. *Uttaratantra* I.158–61/161–63.
2944. D213, fol. 160a.2–160b.1.
2945. I could not find this verse in any of Mañjuśrīkīrti’s texts in the *Tengyur*, nor in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti*.
2946. Compare the Eighth Karmapa’s comments on this verse in appendix 4.
2947. Nanjio ed., 75.7–9; D107, fol. 85a.1–2. Note that YDC switches the order of “the emptiness of one being empty of something other” and “the great ultimate emptiness of the wisdom of the noble ones” in the list of seven emptinesses in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, but that is of no consequence to the argument at hand.





## *English–Sanskrit–Tibetan Glossary*

English	Sanskrit	Tibetan
adventitious stains	āgantukamala	glo bur gyi dri ma
afflicted phenomena	saṃkleśa	kun nas nyon mongs pa
afflictive obscuration	kleśāvaraṇa	nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa
ālaya-consciousness	ālayavijñāna	kun gzhi'i rnam shes
ālaya-wisdom	—	kun gzhi'i ye shes
basic element	dhātu	khams
basis of intention	*abhipretavastu	dgongs gzhi
cognitive obscuration	jñeyāvaraṇa	shes bya'i sgrib pa
connate	sahaja	lhan skyes
connate union	—	lhan cig skyes sbyor
contaminated	sāsrava	zag bcas
dependent (nature)	paratantra(svabhāva)	gzhan dbang (gi rang bzhin)
dharmas concordant with awakening	bodhipakṣadharmā	byang chub phyogs chos
disposition	gotra	rigs
distinctive feature of the six āyatanas	ṣaḍāyatanaviśeṣa	skye mched drug gi khyad par
door to liberation	vimokṣadvāra	rnam par thar pa'i sgo
emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects	sarvākāraropetāśūnyatā	rnam kun mchog ldan gyi stong pa nyid
emptiness in the sense of extinction	—	chad pa'i stong pa nyid
engagement through aspiration	adhimukticaryā	mos pas spyod pa
entity	bhāva/vastu	dngos po
factors conducive to liberation	mokṣabhāgīya	thar pa cha mthun
factors conducive to penetration	nirvedhabhāgīya	nges 'byed cha mthun

false imagination	abhūtaparikalpa	yang dag ma yin kun rtog
freedom from reference points	niṣprapañca	spros bral
fundamental change	āśrayaparivṛtti /āśrayaparāvṛtti	gnas (yongs su) gyur pa
ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance	avidyāvāsanābhūmi	ma rig bag chags kyi sa
identitylessness	nairātmya	bdag med
imaginary (nature)	parikalpita(svabhāva)	kun brtags (kyi rang bzhin)
implicative negation	paryudāsapraṭiṣedha	ma yin dgag
impregnations of negative tendencies	dauṣṭhulya	gnas ngan len pa
innate	sahaja	lhan skyes
invalidation of the explicit statement	muktyārthabhāda	dngos la gnod byed
isolate	vyatireka	ldog pa
lack of nature	niḥsvabhāva	ngo bo nyid/rang bzhin med pa
latent tendencies of listening	śrutavāsanā	thos pa'i bag chags
latent tendency	vāsanā	bag chags
mental consciousness	manovijñāna	yid kyi rnam shes
mental nonengagement	amanasikāra	yid la mi byed pa
mentation	manas	yid
mere cognizance	vijñaptimātra	rnam rig tsam
Mere Mentalist	—	sems tsam pa
mere mind/Mere Mentalism	cittamātra	sems tsam
mind as such	cittatvam, cittam eva	sems nyid
natural outflow	niṣyanda	rgyu mthun pa
naturally abiding disposition	prakṛtisthagotra	rang bzhin gnas rigs
nature of phenomena	dharmatā	chos nyid
nonconceptual wisdom	nirvikalpajñāna	rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes
nondual wisdom	advayajñāna	gnyis med ye shes
nonentity	abhāva/avastu	dngos med
nonimplicative negation	prasajyapraṭiṣedha	med dgag

nonobservation	anupalabdhi, anupalambha	mi dmigs pa
nonreferential	anupalambha, anālambana	mi dmigs pa, dmigs med
object generality	arthasāmānya	don spyi
ordinary mind	*prākṛtajñāna	tha mal gyi shes pa
path of liberation	vimuktimārga	rnam grol lam
perfect (nature)	pariṇiṣpanna (svabhāva)	yongs grub (kyi rang bzhin)
personal identitylessness	pudgalanairātmya	gang zag gi bdag med
personally experienced (wisdom)	pratyātmavedanīya(jñāna) (svapratyātmāryajñāna)	so so rang rig (pa'i ye shes)
phenomenal identitylessness	dharmanairātmya	chos kyi bdag med
philosophical system	siddhānta	grub mtha'
purified phenomenon	vyavadāna	rnam par byang ba
reference point	prapañca	spros pa
result of freedom	viśaṃyogaphala	bral ba'i 'bras bu
seeming (reality)	saṃvṛti(satya)	kun rdzob (bden pa)
self-aware(ness)	svasaṃvedana, svasaṃvitti	rang rig
subsequent attainment	pr̥ṣṭhalabdha	rjes thob
term generality	śabdāsāmānya	sgra spyi
three natures	trīsvabhāva	ngo bo nyid/rang bzhin gsum
three spheres	trimaṇḍala	'khor gsum
true end	bhūtakoṭi	yang dag pa'i mtha'
true reality	tattva	de (kho na) nyid
ultimate (reality)	paramārtha(satya)	don dam (bden pa)
unconditioned (phenomenon)	asaṃskṛta	'dus ma byas
uncontaminated	anāsrava	zag med
unfolding disposition	paripuṣṭagotra	rgyas 'gyur gyi rigs
uninterrupted path	ānantaryamārga	bar chad med lam
views about a real personality	satkāya-dṛṣṭi	'jig tshogs la lta ba
wisdom of knowing suchness	yathāvatjñāna	ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes
wisdom of knowing variety	yāvātjñāna	ji snyed mkhyen pa'i ye shes
yogic practice	prayoga	sbyor ba
yogic valid perception	yogipratyakṣapramāṇa	rnal 'byor mngon sum tshad ma



## *Tibetan–Sanskrit–English Glossary*

Tibetan	Sanskrit	English
kun brtags (kyi rang bzhin)	parikalpita(svabhāva)	imaginary (nature)
kun nas nyon mongs pa	saṃkleśa	afflicted phenomenon
kun rdzob (bden pa)	saṃvṛti(satya)	seeming (reality)
kun gzhi'i rnam shes	ālayavijñāna	ālaya-consciousness
kun gzhi'i ye shes	—	ālaya-wisdom
skye mched drug gi khyad par	ṣaḍāyatanaviśeṣa	distinctive feature of the six āyatanas
khams	dhātu	basic element
'khor gsum	trimaṇḍala	three spheres
gang zag gi bdag med	pudgalanairātmya	personal identitylessness
glo bur gyi dri ma	āgantukamala	adventitious stains
dgongs gzhi	*abhipretavastu	basis of intention
rgyas 'gyur gyi rigs	paripuṣṭagoṭra	unfolding disposition
rgyu mthun	niṣyanda	natural outflow
sgra spyi	śabdāsāmānya	term generality
nges 'byed cha mthun	nirvedhabhāgīya	factors conducive to penetration
ngo bo nyid med pa	niḥsvabhāva	lack of nature
dngos po	bhāva/vastu	entity
dngos med	abhāva/avastu	nonentity
dngos la gnod byed	muktyārthabhāda	invalidation of the explicit statement
chad pa'i stong pa nyid	—	emptiness in the sense of extinction
chos kyi bdag med	dharmanairātmya	phenomenal identitylessness
chos nyid	dharmatā	nature of phenomena
ji snyed mkhyen pa'i ye shes	yāvātjñāna	wisdom of knowing variety
ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes	yathāvātjñāna	wisdom of knowing suchness

'jig tshogs la lta ba	satkāyadr̥ṣṭi	views about a real personality
rjes thob	pr̥ṣṭhalabdha	subsequent attainment
nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa	kleśāvaraṇa	afflictive obscuration
gnyis med ye shes	advayajñāna	nondual wisdom
tha mal gyi shes pa	*prākṛtajñāna	ordinary mind
thar pa cha mthun	mokṣabhāgiya	factors conducive to liberation
thos pa'i bag chags	śrutavāsanā	latent tendencies of listening
de (kho na) nyid	tattva	true reality
don dam (bden pa)	paramārtha(satya)	ultimate (reality)
don spyi	arthasāmānya	object generality
'dus byas	saṃskṛta	conditioned (phenomenon)
'dus ma byas	asaṃskṛta	unconditioned (phenomenon)
ldog pa	vyatireka	isolate
gnas ngan len pa	dauṣṭhulya	impregnations of negative tendencies
gnas (yongs su) gyur pa	āśrayaparivṛtti /āśrayaparāvṛtti	fundamental change
rnam kun mchog ldan gyi stong pa nyid	sarvākāravāropetā- śūnyatā	emptiness endowed with all supreme aspects
rnam grol lam	vimuktimārga	path of liberation
rnam par thar pa'i sgo	vimokṣadvāra	door to liberation
rnam par byang ba	vyavadāna	purified phenomenon
rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes	nirvikalpajñāna	nonconceptual wisdom
rnam rig tsam	vijñaptimātra	mere cognizance
rnal 'byor mngon sum tshad ma	yogipratyakṣapramāṇa	yogic valid perception
spros pa	prapañca	reference point
spros bral	niṣprapañca	freedom from reference points
bag chags	vāsanā	latent tendency
bar chad med lam	ānantaryamārga	uninterrupted path
byang chub phyogs chos	bodhipakṣadharmā	dharmas concordant with awakening
bral ba'i 'bras bu	viśaṃyogaphala	result of freedom
sbyor ba	prayoga	yogic practice

ma yin dgag	paryudāsapraṭiṣedha	implicative negation
ma rig bag chags kyi sa	avidyāvāsanābhūmi	ground of the latent tendencies of ignorance
mi dmigs pa	anupalabdhi, anupalambha	nonobservation, nonreferential
med dgag	prasajyapraṭiṣedha	nonimplicative negation
mos pas spyod pa	adhimukticaryā	engagement through aspiration
dmigs med	anupalambha, anupalabdhi	nonreferential, nonobservation
gzhan dbang (gi rang bzhin)	paratantra(svabhāva)	dependent (nature)
zag bcas	sāsrava	contaminated
zag med	anāsrava	uncontaminated
yang dag pa'i mtha'	bhūtakoti	true end
yang dag ma yin kun rtog	abhūtaparikalpa	false imagination
yid	manas	mentation
yid la mi byed pa	amanasikāra	mental nonengagement
yongs grub (kyi rang bzhin)	pariniṣpanna (svabhāva)	perfect (nature)
rang bzhin gnas rigs	prakṛtisthagoṭra	naturally abiding disposition
rang bzhin med pa	niḥsvabhāva	lack of nature
rang bzhin gsum	trisvabhāva	three natures
rang rig	svasaṃvedana, svasaṃvitti	self-aware(ness)
rigs	gotra	disposition
shes bya'i sgrib pa	jñeyāvaraṇa	cognitive obscuration
sems nyid	cittatvam, cittam eva	mind as such
sems tsam	cittamātra	mere mind, Mere Mentalism
sems tsam pa	—	Mere Mentalist
so so rang rig (pa'i ye shes)	pratyātmavedaniya(jñāna) (svapratyātmāryajñāna)	personally experienced (wisdom)
lhan skyes	sahaja	connate, innate
lhan cig skyes sbyor	—	connate union





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I have included all of the Indic works cited except for works included in the Derge Tibetan Tripiṭaka or the Chinese Buddhist Canon, which are cited only by Derge or Taishō number. The Indic works are arranged by author and title, whereas the Tibetan and modern works are arranged by author and date of publication. In the modern works, I have included not only all the works cited but also some works that I consulted or consider to be significant background literature that may be useful to readers who want to explore some of these subjects in greater depth.

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