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Restricted Dzogchen Teachings, Part 3: The Sharp Vajra of Conscious Awareness Tantra

B. ALAN WALLACE

Lesson 3:
Luminosity and Space:
Releasing the Mind onto the Path

Reading:
The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism
“The Essence and Definition of Dharma,” “Doctrines
of Samsara,” “Doctrines of Nirvana,” pages 51-72

*The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism
Its Fundamentals and History*



HIS HOLINESS DUDJOM RINPOCHE

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Section One: The Translations

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1 *The Essence and Definition of Dharma*

[3a.1-4b.5] At the outset, the doctrines of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa must be recognised in general and their characteristics established. This has three aspects: essence, verbal definition and classification.

The essence is as follows: Mundane doctrines are characterised as those which, when referred to objectively, cause one to wander in the three realms by the power of corrupt deeds, and as those whose nature is flawed in such a way that suffering alone is experienced. Supramundane doctrines are characterised as those which destroy the two obscurations when founded upon the continuum of the mind, and which are endowed with positive attributes affording protection from the suffering of saṃsāra. As it is said [in the *Rational System of Exposition, Vyākhyāyukti*, T 4061]:

The true doctrine (*saddharma*) is that which removes all suffering and every obscuration.

The verbal definition is that the term *dharma*, which is derived from the root *dhr*¹⁴ “to hold”, holds or conveys ten meanings. The *Wish-fulfiller* (*Amaratīkākāmadhenu*, T 4300) explains:

Because it holds everything
It is the *dharma*.¹⁵

In the *Rational System of Exposition* the ten meanings emerge as follows:

Dharma is that which is knowable, the path, nirvāṇa, an object of mind, merit, life, the scriptures, material objects, regulation, and the doctrinal traditions.

Accordingly, there are quotations from the sūtras illustrating the word *dharma* when it conveys the meaning of that which is knowable, for example:

Some things (*dharma*) are compounded,
Others are uncompounded.

And,

All things (*dharmā*) should be known in that way.

When *dharmā* conveys the meaning of the path, it may be illustrated by the words:

O monks, the wrong view is not the doctrine (*dharmā*), but the correct view is the doctrine.

When it conveys the meaning of nirvāṇa, it may be illustrated by the words:

He took refuge in the doctrine (*dharmā*).

When conveying the meaning of an object of mind, it may be illustrated by the expression “activity field of phenomena” (*dharmāyatana*). When conveying the meaning of merit, it may be illustrated by the words:

He practised the doctrine (*dharmā*) in the company of a retinue of queens and maidens.

When conveying the meaning of life, it may be illustrated by the words:

A childish person dearly holds to the things (*dharmā*) which he sees.

When conveying the meaning of the scriptures, it may be illustrated by the words:

O monks, that which is called the doctrine (*dharmā*) includes for instance the piṭaka of the sūtras and the piṭaka of prose and verse combined.

When conveying the meaning of emergent objects, it may be illustrated by the words:

As for compounded substances, this is their reality (*dharmā*).

and:

Even I have not transcended the phenomenon (*dharmā*) of death and the reality of death.

When conveying the meaning of regulation, it may be illustrated by the term “four doctrines (*dharmā*) of a spiritual ascetic”,¹⁶ and by the words:

O monks, to kill is not the doctrine, but to renounce killing is the doctrine (*dharmā*).

And so forth. When it conveys the meaning of tradition, it may be illustrated by “national traditions” (*dharmā*) and “ethnic traditions” (*dharmā*).

If one then wonders how these [ten definitions] relate to the sense of the term “to hold”, then the things which are knowable hold both

individual and general characteristics. Individual characteristics are held as illustrated, for example, in the following words:

Earth is hard, water wet, fire hot
And wind is light and mobile.

And the manner in which general characteristics are held may be illustrated by the words:

All that is compounded is impermanent.
All that is corrupt is suffering.
All things are devoid of self.
Nirvāṇa is peace.

By the path and nirvāṇa one is held from falling into saṃsāra. By the object of mind the mind is held. By merit one is held from falling into evil existences. By the life-span or life itself one holds the body or its appropriate stations. The scriptures hold the unmistakable truth. Emergent objects hold that which has a transient basis. Regulations hold the precise foundation. Traditions uphold an idiosyncratic conduct; and by awareness [of all these] one is held apart from the area of bewilderment. Such analogies may be inferred by reason.

The classification is twofold, consisting of the doctrine of saṃsāra and the doctrine of nirvāṇa. Concerning the distinction between these two, the *[Long] Mother* [i.e. the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in One Hundred Thousand Lines*] says:

Liberality is possessed by both mundane and supramundane beings. What, you may ask, is mundane liberality? That which, by the act of having made some offering, neither moves beyond, nor sublimates, nor transcends the world, is said to be mundane liberality. That which does move beyond, sublimate, or transcend the world, by the act of having made some offering, is called supramundane liberality.

According to such quotations, when one has reached a conclusion through any method, the result is distinguished by having or lacking the power to sublimate the world.

2 Doctrines of Saṃsāra

[4b.5-16a.3] First, the doctrines of saṃsāra are explained under three headings: (1) the characteristics of saṃsāra, (2) the mundane vehicle [and the Brahmā vehicle], and (3) an ensuing discussion of the views held by those of no understanding and by those of wrong understanding.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SAṂSĀRA

The doctrines or phenomena of saṃsāra are originally caused by ignorance which arises in three interrelated aspects. Firstly, the ignorance of individual selfhood (*bdag-nyid gcig-pu'i ma-rig-pa*) arises as consciousness, but it is not recognised as such. Secondly, through the co-emergent ignorance (*lhan-cig skyes-pa'i ma-rig-pa*), the unconsciousness of the true essence and that consciousness emerge together. Yet it is thirdly, through the ignorance of the imaginary (*kun-tu brtag-pa'i ma-rig-pa*), that one's own perceptions are externally discerned. Since these three aspects arise diversely from a single essence, they arise from the ground as the appearance of the ground; and since this is not known to have been self-originated, the threefold ignorance which subjectively discerns objects is the causal condition [of saṃsāra]. The objective appearances, which arise like one's own reflection in a mirror, through clinging to externals apart from oneself, are the referential condition [of saṃsāra]. The consciousness which holds to the [concepts] of "I" and "mine" is the possessive condition, and since these three [conditions] are simultaneous, they form the immediate condition. Bewilderment originates from the impure referential aspect containing these four conditions [of saṃsāra] and is maintained by divisively clinging externally to objective phenomena, and internally to subjective consciousness. As it is said in the *Penetration of Sound* (*sgra thal-'gyur*, NGB Vol.10):

The basis of bewilderment is ignorance.
Ignorance has three forms.

And:

Owing to that root which is the single indivisible¹⁷ cause,
The true essence is not perceived;
This, therefore, is the beginning of saṃsāra.

And in the *Great Array* (*bkod-pa chen-po*):

Spontaneous presence arises as an object,
Which is emptiness.
At that time, from the cycle of bewilderment
Which has four conditions,
The snare of clinging comes into being.

From the very moment of bewilderment, that same bewilderment arises as the ground-of-all (*kun-gzhi*, Skt. *ālaya*) in its role as the ignorance, the naturally obscuring expressive power, which is the unconsciousness of the true essence. Dependent upon that [ground-of-all] is the mind which is the consciousness of the ground-of-all and the six conflicting emotions which originate from it. These are [ignorance, the basis on which bewildering thoughts are grasped];¹⁸ delusion, the bewilderment in the area of discriminative awareness; hatred, the bewilderment in the area of creative phases;¹⁹ pride, the bewilderment in the area of the view; desire, the bewilderment in the area of appearances; and envy, the bewilderment in the area of non-understanding [in relation to these]. Eighty-four thousand phenomena (*dharma*) then emerge through the gradual accumulation of ideas, beginning with the mind which apprehends emotionally conflicted thoughts such as the above, the intellect which apprehends all memories, the ideas which form the ground of connecting propensities and doubts, and that area [of mind] which clings to objects and entities.

In this way then, the five sensory perceptions originate together with the consciousness of the intellect wherein the twenty-one thousand phenomena [in each of four categories], namely, the three poisons and their equal combination, arise dispositionally.

The object which maintains the continuity of any of these six active consciousnesses²⁰ at the moment of objectification, the immediate consciousness which at the same instant apprehends the object and its form, and any of the three subsequent feelings of pleasure, suffering or neutrality, are together called the sensation of contact. So it is that the eighteen psychophysical bases originate, divided into three groups of six.²¹

[Thereupon, the evolution of] the five components, the twelve activity fields, the six sense organs and karma or [world-forming] deeds ensues. The five components are, namely, the component of form, which is an accumulation of atoms and is capable of being destroyed and split; the component of feelings, which are the source of enjoyment

and desire; the component of perceptions, which are dynamic and object-oriented; the component of habitual tendencies which create and accumulate propensities; [and the component of consciousness which is aware and objectifying].²²

As for the twelve activity fields which cause any accumulation of ideas to be sensed, there are six objective modes, such as form, the object apprehended by the eye, which causes both the continuity [of the object of perception] in the subsequent instant and the apprehending consciousness to be sensed; and there are also six subjective modes, such as the consciousness of the eye,²³ which arises in that subsequent instant and perceives as form that form which may be objectively sensed. There are five organs of sense, such as the eye, which have the power to apprehend objects, or six with the inclusion of the sense organ of the intellect, which originates from the possessive condition of the initial apperceptive consciousness.

Deeds may be of three types: virtuous, unvirtuous or neutral. The first includes the ten virtues which produce worldly happiness as their result. The second comprises the contrary deeds which cast [beings] into evil existences. The third refers to those [neutral] deeds²⁴ which cast beings into higher realms.

Although all these phenomena are compounded internally by the mind, their apparitional aspect and supporting foundation are the five gross elements of which external objects are compounded, and which are caused, conditioned, supported and substantiated by the fourfold process of creation, duration, destruction and dissolution. As the number of mental propensities through which they appear as objects expands, the world realm of desire containing the four continents, Mount Sumeru and perimeter appears like a dream, along with the realm of form, like self-radiating rainbow light of five colours, and the formless realm, which originates from the contemplation of the summit of existence, and so on.²⁵ In brief, the entire array of the inanimate container and animate creatures, mobile and motionless, subsumed by the three world realms, does not appear in the ultimate vision of sublime beings. Rather, it is an apparitional mode of the bewildered intellect of sentient beings, which appears by the power of the subject-object dichotomy lapsing into delusion, like water in a mirage, and into erroneous perception, like seeing a multicoloured rope as a snake. As it is said in the *Pearl Necklace* (*mu-tig phreng-ba*, NGB Vol.9):

In this way, the diverse appearances
 Resemble a rope when seen as a snake.
 Though not so, by clinging to them as such
 The outer container and inner essence
 Are established as a duality.
 The rope itself, on further investigation,

Is primordially empty of container and essence.
The ultimate takes form as the relative.
That perception of the snake is visually true,
The perception of the rope is genuinely true.
Enduring, for example, as a bird relates to a scarecrow,
The independent existence of the two truths
Refers only to the relative world.
It has no relation to genuine reality.
Because of the expanse of emptiness
The essence of that [reality] is that all is free.

And in the *Oral Instructions of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmukhāgama*, T 1853-4) it says:

All things of saṃsāra are held to be non-existent
Like the multicoloured rope when perceived as a snake.

Moreover, the creator of the happiness and suffering of saṃsāra, the high and the low and all such apparitional modes, is karma or [world-forming] deeds, corrupted by all-conflicting emotions, which are of three types. Without exception these modes are created by deeds, emanated by deeds, matured by deeds, and they appear through the power of deeds. Accordingly, it is said in the *Hundred Parables on Deeds* (*Karmaśatakasūtra*, T 340):

The diversity of the world is developed through deeds.
Happiness and suffering are created by deeds.
Deeds originate from an accumulation of conditions
And by deeds happiness and suffering are made.

And in the *Introduction to the Madhyamaka* (*Madhyamakāvātāra*, T 3861, Ch.6, v.89) it explains:

By mind itself the diverse
Sentient and inanimate worlds
Are allocated their share of deeds.
Living creatures without exception
Are said to be created through deeds.

THE MUNDANE VEHICLE AND THE BRAHMĀ VEHICLE

The Mundane Vehicle

[7b.2-10a.3] The mundane vehicle or the basic vehicle followed by gods and human beings is explained under three headings: essence, verbal definition and classification.

The essence is any method of progressing to the conclusive happiness of gods and human beings which lacks the power to sublimate saṃsāra.

It is verbally defined as a vehicle because it can merely unite with, and progress towards, the result of happiness experienced by gods and human beings. Its classifications are sixfold, namely, entrance, view, moral discipline, meditation, conduct and result.

Firstly, concerning the entrance: After having seen the three evil existences, which are naturally endowed with suffering, one enters by means of renouncing the unvirtuous deeds, which are the cause of birth therein. As it is said in the *Heruka Galpo* (*he-ru-ka gal-po*, NGB Vol.25):

Non-virtue is renounced by the vehicle of gods and humans.

In this context the ten non-virtues consist of three physical deeds – to kill, to steal and to commit sexual misconduct; four verbal deeds – to lie, to slander, to talk irresponsibly and to utter abuse; and three mental deeds – to covet, to be malicious and to hold wrong views.

Secondly, concerning the view: The correct view is the conviction that there are such things as a future world and the cause and fruition of deeds. It says in the *Collection of Meaningful Expressions* (*Udānavarga*, T 326, Ch.4, v.9):

The great one who possesses
The correct view for a mundane being
Even in a thousand lifetimes
Will not turn to evil existences.

Conversely, with a wrong view, even though one may have practised other virtuous deeds, such as abstaining from murder, one will reap the fruit of suffering. As it is said in the *Letter to a Friend* (*Suhrillekha*, T 4182, v.46):

Even though an individual may have practised well,
with a wrong view
All that matures will be unbearable.

Therefore, it is important that the correct view be retained.

Thirdly, moral discipline is nothing but the moral discipline of renouncing the ten non-virtues. It has been said in the above-mentioned [*Letter to a Friend*, v.11]:

The [eight vows of the] purificatory fast
Cause the pleasant body of the gods who act as they desire
To be bestowed upon lay people.

This being the case, is not the moral discipline derived from correct commitment explained to be necessary for one who would progress to the rank of the gods? Though indeed mentioned, it is spoken of only with reference to [the attainment of] the extraordinary [form] realms. For the ordinary [form] realms, its necessity is uncertain.²⁶ Therefore,

these latter realms are held to be attained simply by enacting the deeds and path of the ten virtues, along with their concomitants, which are retained by the correct view.

Furthermore, concepts such as purity of the grasping components are adhered to, and one who has been motivated by the possession of conscience and humility is called a holy or superior being for performing his or her duties of body and speech with propriety. And the converse is true for an evil or inferior being. The *Treatise on Behaviour entitled the Holy Ornament* (*lugs-kyi bstan-bcos dam-pa'i rgyan*) says: ²⁷

To honour well those who are worthy of reverence,
 To be especially benevolent to those who are unprotected,
 And not to forget to repay kindness
 Is the conduct of a holy being.
 The holy person actually chooses death,
 Rather than a life which has forsaken conscience,
 Experiences which are tainted with sin,
 And power gained 'y the deception of friends.

And again:

An evil creature delights in sin,
 Shows ingratitude and casts away
 Conscience like an enemy.
 That one will do anything
 To achieve his or her own purpose.

And in the *Short Chapter on Discrimination* (*'byed-pa le'u chung*) sixteen pure human laws (*mi-chos gtsang-ma bcu-drug*) are taught as follows:

Develop faith in the Three Precious Jewels without sorrow or weariness; search ultimately for the true doctrine; skilfully study the excellent sciences; first recollect and then appraise anything that is to be undertaken; do not hanker after unassigned work; look to a higher level and emulate the ancients and those of superior conduct; repay kindness to one's parents of the past, present and future; be broad-minded and hospitable in one's dealings with elder and younger siblings and paternal relatives; ensure that the young respect their elders by degrees; show loving kindness to one's neighbours; arduously assist one's acquaintances who are spiritual benefactors; perfectly fulfil the needs of those nearby who are connected through the worldly round; help others through one's skill in science and the arts; provide a refuge with kindness to those who depend upon it; resist bad advice and establish advice which will increase the happiness of the country; and, entrusting one's deeds to the doctrine, one

should bring one's spouse to obtain the ground of enlightenment in future lives.

Fourth, meditation: There is training until one has the power to bring about the proper result.

Fifth, conduct: One enacts the deeds and path of the ten virtues “endowed with corruption” along with their concomitants, which [virtues] are so named after their function which is [merely] to renounce the ten non-virtues. The positive virtues of such physical actions as prostration, verbal actions as praise and mental actions which benefit others by virtuous thoughts are also included. However, one might object, is it not said in the *Heruka Galpo* that on the vehicle of gods and humans, the ten modes of doctrinal conduct such as writing [scriptures] and making offerings are necessary? Here, as before, there is a distinction between [the attainment of] the extraordinary realms, and the ordinary realms.

Sixth, the result is as follows: By the extent of the power of one's virtuous deeds, one is born in the ten higher levels of the desire realm, namely, among the human beings of the four continents or among the six species of Kāma divinities. Accordingly, the *Tantra of the Extensive Magical Net* says:

The practice of the ten virtues and the renunciation of non-virtues
Are the basis for birth among the gods and humans of the
desire realm.

And in Buddhaghya's²⁸ *Sequence of the Path* it says:

By emphasising the ten virtues
And not equating virtue with non-virtue,
One is born among the gods and human beings.
Without understanding sameness, one wanders in the
desire realm.

Since this vehicle progresses to the culmination of the happiness desired in this life either as an emperor among men, or as a master of the Paranirmitavaśavartin²⁹ realm of the gods, the *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā* speaks of it as the divine vehicle, after the name of the highest realm to which it progresses. It has been said of this vehicle in the *Sequence of the Path*:

It is definitively arranged
As the first of the fundamental vehicles.

Accordingly, it either forms the foundation of, or is preliminary to, all the vehicles, because the vehicle which is not retained by the correct view and which does not observe the deeds and path of the ten virtues

as its actual foundation is nowhere to be found. The *Hevajra Tantra* (T 417-18, Pt.2, Ch.2, v.18cd) also states:

Having commenced from the ten virtues
His doctrine is disclosed.

The Brahmā Vehicle

[10a.3-11b.3] The *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā* also speaks of the vehicle of Brahmā. Here Brahmā does not only apply to the three realms which begin with the Brahmakāyika,³⁰ but the meanings of chaste, clean and pure are also conveyed by the word Brahmā; for the conflicting emotion of desire is cleansed and purified. In this way the above sūtra refers to the whole range of the word Brahmā. All twenty-one higher realms, including the seventeen form realms of the gods and the four formless realms, are expressed by the word Brahmā, and the path, along with its concomitants, which progresses to these realms is called the vehicle of Brahmā.³¹ It also says that one who has renounced the conflicting emotions of the lower level will be born in a higher realm by the power of having meditated with tranquillity, and with higher insight which perceives as coarse the level below one's own and perceives as subtle one's own level. Therefore, one will not be born in the higher realms without obtaining an actual foundation in the four meditative concentrations and the four formless absorptions on the path which removes attachment to the level below one's own. So it is that the meditative concentrations and absorptions are held to be the actual vehicle of Brahmā and the four immeasurables and five mundane super-normal cognitive powers to be the extraordinary path of enlightened attributes in the vehicle of Brahmā.

These attributes also require a view which accepts the [doctrine of] deeds and their result; an entrance and a moral discipline through which the ten non-virtues are renounced; a conduct through which the ten virtues are observed as before, but through which in addition the four immeasurables, namely, loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity are practised; and a meditation which includes both formal and formless absorptions. The formal ones are the four meditative concentrations which are characteristically disillusioned with the sensations of desire. As the *Intermediate Mother* [*Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-five Thousand Lines, Pañca-viṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, T 9] says:

That which possesses both ideas and scrutiny is the first concentration. That which possesses no ideas but scrutiny alone is the second concentration. Mental action devoid of both ideas and scrutiny is the third concentration, and mental action united with delight is the fourth concentration.

The latter [i.e. the formless ones] are the four absorptions which are characteristically disillusioned with the cognition of the four concentrations. These are the absorptions into the activity field infinite as the sky, into the activity field of infinite consciousness, into the activity field of nothing at all, and into the activity field where there is neither perception nor non-perception. They are the culmination of the path to the summit of existence.³² Concerning these, the *Tantra of the Extensive Magical Net* also says:

One whose conduct is the four immeasurables
 And whose meditation is unwavering
 Will be born in the Brahmā realms and so forth.

The result [in this context] refers to both the form and formless realms. As regards the former, one takes birth in the three realms which begin with Brahmakāyika through having meditated respectively on the weak, middling, and strong aspects of the actual foundation of the first concentration, and [by applying the second, third and fourth concentrations] in the same way, altogether there are twelve such ordinary realms in which one revolves. During the fourth concentration the uncorrupted discriminative awareness of the sublime beings increases and one takes birth in the Five Pure Abodes beginning with Avṛha through meditation in five respective stages. Yet, one does not obtain freedom from attachment to form, and one continues to wander in saṃsāra through attachment to the flavour of concentration. As the *Sequence of the Path* says:

Holding to individual selfhood through the stages
 Of the four immeasurables and four concentrations,
 And imputing self in all forms,
 One takes birth successively in the Brahmā realms.

As regards the latter [type of result], one takes birth as a formless god by clinging to [the idea of] self during the contemplation endowed with four nominal components³³ in which the discriminative awareness of higher insight is absent. The same text [*Sequence of the Path*] says:

Without understanding sameness and that which is
 formless,
 One does not know the four names to be non-existent.
 When one abides in the four activity fields,
 One is born on the level of the summit of existence.

THOSE OF NO UNDERSTANDING AND THOSE OF WRONG
 UNDERSTANDING

[11b.3-16a.3] The ensuing discussion of the views held by those of no understanding and by those of wrong understanding is explained as

follows: on this topic the opinions of past masters slightly differ. The master Sūryaprabhāsiṃha³⁴ claims that those of no understanding are the trio of the apathetic (*phyal-ba*), the materialists (*rgyang-'phen-pa*, Skt. *Lokāyata*) and the nihilistic extremists (*mur stug-pa*), while those of wrong understanding are the eternalistic extremists (*mu stegs-pa*, Skt. *īrthika*). Master Līlāvajra³⁵ claims that those of no understanding are the apathetic and those of wrong understanding the extremists, both eternalistic and nihilistic. Vimalamitra³⁶ has said:

The apathetic and materialists
Have no understanding,
The nihilistic and eternalistic extremists
Have wrong understanding.

Since a similar account also is found in the great master Padmasambhava's *Garland of Views: A Collection of Esoteric Instructions*, I shall adopt the same approach here.

Those of No Understanding

[12a.1-12a.4] Among those of no understanding and those of wrong understanding, the former are both interpreted and classified as follows. They are interpreted to be ordinary individuals whose attitudes have not been changed by a philosophical system. They are classified into two groups: the actual and the incidental.

The Apathetic

First, those who actually have no understanding, the mundane apathetic, are explained under three headings: essence, verbal definition and classification.

Their essence is that they are totally deluded because from the beginning they have not understood [the relationship] between the causes and results of deeds. The verbal definition is that they are called apathetic because they do not act in response to the existence or non-existence of doctrines concerning interdependent causes and results, and observe neither renunciation nor commitment. As the *Parkap Commentary [on the Secret Nucleus, Guhyagarbhamahātantrarājatīkā, P 4718]* says:

He who understands nothing at all
Is a mundane apathetic being.

Their classification is into an inferior type and a dubious type. The inferior type have a debased intellect which does not consider the attainment of positive attributes. The dubious type are both good and evil, and resemble those described below.

The Materialists

[12a.4-12b.4] Secondly, those who are incidentally classed with those of no understanding, the materialists, are also explained under three headings. Their essence is that without understanding the existence or non-existence of previous and future lives, they are inclined to achieve only the slight temporal and spiritual well-being of one lifetime. The verbal definition is that they are called materialists because, rejecting the future as remote, their achievements depend upon the mysterious expressions, oracles, dreams and calculations of mundane beings, such as those who are mighty and powerful in this life. Their classification is into two types: the cut-off and the perceptive. The former includes those cut off by nature and by conditions. Since [the view that there are cut-off beings] is not held by those who uphold the philosophy of the greater vehicle (*Mahāyāna*), they may be known in detail from other sources.³⁷ The perceptive type is fourfold. As a great sūtra (*mdo chen-po*) says:

The four perceptive types,
Known as the attached, the distracted,
The fearful, and the aspiring,
Appear as the field
Capable of retaining the seed [of enlightenment].

Respectively, these four are unable to resist lustful attachment to objects of desire, distracted by the duties of man-made laws in this life, successful in power and wealth through evil means, and the type which aspires to renounce the ten non-virtues and attain liberation.

Those of Wrong Understanding

[12b.4-16a.3] Secondly, those of wrong understanding are interpreted and classified as follows. They are interpreted to be any receptive individuals whose attitudes have been changed by wrong philosophy. They are classified as the five sophistic schools of the extremist masters of the past, who turn outwards rather than inwards.³⁸ Included among them are four schools of the eternalist view, the first being the Sāṃkhya.

Sāṃkhya

[12b.5-13a.3] During the age when living beings had a life-span of twenty thousand years,³⁹ the sage Kapila attained accomplishment through the austerities of the eternalistic extremists and composed many treatises. There were two students who upheld his philosophical system, Bharadvāja and Patañjali. Those who follow the tenet of Bharadvāja, that all that is knowable is divided into twenty-five categories, are the Sāṃkhya. Those based on the tenet of Patañjali, that the abiding nature of the twenty-five categories is empty, are the Followers of Kapila

[Kāpila, the Yoga School]. As the *Compendium of the Nucleus of Pristine Cognition* (*Īñānasārasamuccaya*, T 3851) says:

The Sāṃkhya speak of attributes;
The Followers of Kapila maintain they are empty.

So it is that they are called the Sāṃkhya, the Followers of Kapila and Adherents of the Three Attributes (*Traiguṇya*).

Aiśvara

[13a.3-13b.1] The second school holding an eternalistic view is that of the Followers of Īśvara [Śiva]. The god Īśvara, the teacher of many tantrapīṭaka, had two students who attained accomplishment, namely, Akṣapāda and Kaṇāda. The adherents of Nyāya (*Naiyāyika*) depend on the *View of Reason* (*Nyāyadarśana*) which was composed by Akṣapāda, while the Vaiśeṣika depend on the *Clear Distinction* (*bye-brag gsal-ba*, Skt. *Vaiśeṣikadarśana*) which was composed by Kaṇāda. This school holds that all the bondage and liberation of sentient beings is created by Īśvara:

Having no consciousness, these living creatures
Lack control over their own happiness and sorrow.
But when dispatched by Īśvara,
They become creatures who exclusively inhabit
The abyss [of evil existences]
Or the higher realms [of gods and humans].⁴⁰

Thus they are called Followers of Īśvara, Followers of the Owl (*Aulūkyā*)⁴¹ and Adherents of the Six Categories (*Ṣaḍpadārthavaiśeṣika*).

Vaiṣṇava

[13b.1-13b.6] The third school holding an eternalist view is the Vaiṣṇava. Viṣṇu composed the *Anthology of Vedic Treatises*. The four-faced Brahmā was born from the lotus of his navel, and, after emanating the entire world and its contents, he recollected the great *Four Veda*, namely, the *Rgveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, the *Yajurveda* and the *Atharvaveda*. Later his exegeses were compiled by the sages and the following five divisions emerged:⁴² the grammarians (*Vaiyākaraṇa*) who rely on Viṣṇu's treatise entitled *Light Rays of Grammatical Speech* (*brda'-sprod ngag-gi 'od-zer*); the logicians including Aviddhakarṇa⁴³ who rely on the ṛṣi Agni's *Weapons of Expression* (*smra-ba'i mtshon-cha*); the mystics among accomplished meditators who rely on the ṛṣi Satya's *Nine Cycles of the Meditational Sequence* (*bsgom-rim skor-dgu*); those proponents of textual exegesis who emphasise ritual, relying on the ṛṣi Bhṛgu's *Clear Judgement* (*rnam-dpyod gsal-ba*); and the followers of Caraka who are physicians relying on the *Anthology of Caraka* (*Carakasamhitā*), which

was composed by the ṛṣi Ātreya and others. All of these uphold the authenticity of the *Four Veda*. When classified, they are known as the Followers of Viṣṇu (*Vaiṣṇava*), the Followers of Brahmā and the Followers of the Veda.

Jainism

[13b.6-14a.2] The fourth school holding an eternalistic view is the Jaina (*rgyal-ba-pa*). In the *Ornamental Mirror of Categories* (*tshig-don rgyan-gyi snang-ba*)⁴⁴ it says:

The great god [Rṣabha], holiest of conquerors
 Ascertain that which is knowable
 In the following nine categories:
 Animate substance (*jīva*), inanimate substance
 (*ajīva*)⁴⁵ and commitments (*saṃvara*),
 Rejuvenation (*nirjara*), bondage (*bandha*) and deeds
 (*karmāsrava*),
 Evil (*pāpa*), virtue (*puṇya*) and liberation (*mokṣa*).

Consequently, it is held that liberation has form and colour, while trees are animate. They are called the Followers of the Conqueror (*Jaina*), Adherents of the Nine Categories and the Naked Ascetics (*Nirgrantha*).

Nihilism

[14a.2-14b.3] The fifth school is the only one which holds a nihilistic view. In Trayatṛiṃśa, the heaven of the Thirty-three Gods, Bṛhaspati, who had become the accomplished guru of the gods, composed the treatise entitled *Essence of the View which Negates Everything* (*thams-cad-la skur-pa 'debs-pa'i lta-ba'i snying-po*)⁴⁶ in order that the gods might develop enthusiasm for their struggle against the antigods. Later it was propagated in the human world by Vālmiki. The treatise negates past and future births, saying [cf. *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*, Ch.1, v.1]:

Act joyously, good lady,
 While you are not dead,
 For nothing is not in death's range.
 Even your body will vanish like powder.
 Where can there be rebirths?

It then negates the existence of invisible beings, saying:

As many creatures as there are,
 They exist solely
 Within the range of the senses.
 Alas, whatever the learned say
 Resembles the tracks of a deceiving wolf.

It goes on to negate buddhahood as the result of progress on the path, saying:

The intellect is the body's soul,
It is the body's fruit and the body's attribute;
Depending on three modes such as these
There is no possibility of progress [to enlightenment].

It negates logic, saying:

Because it exaggerates
There is no logic.

And it also negates causality, with the words [*Summation of the Real, Tattvasaṃgraha*, T 4266, vv.111-12ab]:

Who made the anthers of a lotus?
Who designed the markings of a peacock?
Who sharpened the point of a thorn?
All things emerge substantially without cause.

So it is that they are called the Followers of Bṛhaspati (*Bārhaspatya*), the materialists, hedonists,⁴⁷ and those who hold that mind emerges from space.

CONCLUSION

Since these four views of no understanding and wrong understanding exclusively originate from ignorance, they are mundane views. Such has been said in the *Garland of Views: A Collection of Esoteric Instructions* from the passage beginning:

The countless sūtras which gather together the erroneous views of sentient beings in the mundane realm fall within four categories, namely, the apathetic, the materialists, the nihilistic extremists and the eternalistic extremists.

down to:

All these are ignorant views.

Among these, the two which have no understanding represent no philosophical view. However, they are explained to be associated with [such a view] because they are subsumed within the status of the mind: The two which have wrong understanding do represent views which change the attitude through a philosophical system, but by clinging to extremes which exaggerate and depreciate the reality free from extremes, they have become erroneous. Therefore, they are not the means of liberation from saṃsāra. This applies not only to the nihilistic ex-

tremists who are the worst among those professing philosophy, but to the eternalistic extremists as well, because, maintaining a self, they are bound by clinging to a self, which is the root of saṃsāra. Accordingly, the *Exposition of Valid Cognition (Pramāṇavārttika, T 4210, Ch.1, v.193cd)* says:

As long as one actually clings to a self,
One will turn to saṃsāra.

And in the *Sequence of the Path*:

Anyone who inclines towards
The duality of eternalism and nihilism
Is said to deviate from the reality
Of the genuine essence.

On this occasion, I have not written about the texts and so forth which they individually uphold. One wishing to know them should look elsewhere. Some may well ask at this point whether it is not most inappropriate to explain the philosophical systems of the Outsiders,⁴⁸ etc., while analysing the Conqueror's transmitted precepts. Yet there is no fault, because having recognised the downfalls and things to be renounced on the path with reference to the eternalistic extremists who follow their own independent course, one has reason not to delay [in following] our own path, which is the supramundane vehicle. It says in the *Heruka Galpo*:

When the vehicle of the eternalistic extremists is well
ascertained,
It is explained to you so that
You will not practise but renounce it.

Furthermore, with reference to those eternalistic extremists who are [the buddhas'] emanations, [there is no fault] because in addition to that aforementioned reason [for pursuing the path of the supramundane vehicle], they are said to represent the enlightened activity of the conquerors who train each in accord with his or her needs. It is said in the *Rite which Ties by the Rope of Compassion of the Gathering of the Sugatas (bde'dus-kyi thugs-rje dpyang-thag gnas-kyi lung, P 4781)*, which was composed by the bodhisattva Vajradharma:

By the diverse inroads of compassion,
Training in whatever manner may be suitable,
The Teacher speaks of this [true doctrine]
And whatever appears therein
To the schools of the Outsiders.

In the very same way, one might well wonder how the development of such a negative view as that of the nihilistic extremists could appro-

privately be within the conquerors' skilful means, since it is an extremely terrible wrong view. None the less, it is appropriate because the nihilistic extremists, too, admit much that is reasonable. When one examines the scriptures or meets the arguments of those who established the pure Prāsaṅgika dialectic,⁴⁹ one is first of all sceptical, and subsequently having seen the pure proof to the contrary, one comes to develop the correct logic. Therefore [the nihilists] are nearer to developing the correct view than the fools who have never entertained philosophy.

Again, if one asks how these [views] are explained to form an ensuing discussion that is derived from the vehicle of gods and human beings, they are so called because the receptive individuals who make progress through the vehicle of gods and humans are both Outsiders and Insiders. With reference to the Outsiders, as Śūra says:

The beings who do not side with your teaching are blinded
by ignorance.
Though they have reached the summit of existence,
They will achieve a rebirth in which suffering re-emerges.

And with reference to the Insiders, even though they may hold to the refuge with a will to perform their duties on behalf of the Three Precious Jewels (*dkon-mchog gsum*), they are referred to as remaining only on the mundane path, unless their intellects aspire to liberation. As the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, v.19) says:

With reference to differing volitions,
The threefold refuge is laid down.

3 Doctrines of Nirvāṇa

[16a.3-17b.3] Secondly, the supramundane vehicle is explained in two parts: its superiority over [the vehicle of] the Outsiders and a detailed account of its own nature.

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SUPRAMUNDANE VEHICLE

The true doctrine of nirvāṇa,⁵⁰ which affords protection from the suffering of saṃsāra, is the best of all doctrines, supreme, perfect and more special than others. Therefore, it is expressed by the word “true”. Grasping the Three Precious Jewels as the focus of refuge, it admits to, or is included within, four seals indicative of the transmitted precepts which concern the view. By the study of the three correct trainings, it has a superior result because it can surpass the summit of existence. These [attributes] do not exist in the path of the Outsiders.

Among these [attributes], going for refuge must be the foundation and support of the path since that is the basis of the vows which support the aspiration for nirvāṇa. Therefore, one who has not gone for refuge does not develop the vows, and if one has not been bound by the vows, the correct path does not exist. The *Seventy Verses on Going for Refuge* (*Triśaraṇasaptati*, T 3971) says:

For the three kinds of layman,
Going for refuge is the root
Of [their] eight vows.

And:

Though one may keep all the vows,
None exist for one who has
Not gone for refuge.

The four seals are [the axioms that] all that is compounded is imper-

manent, all that is corrupt is suffering, all things are without self, and nirvāṇa is peace.

The three trainings are superior moral discipline, mind,⁵¹ and discriminative awareness, and it is the study of these through listening, reflection and meditation for which the doctrine is respectively termed “virtuous in the beginning, middle and end”. As the *Sun Commentary* (*Śrāmaṇerakārikāvṛttiprabhāvātī*, T 4125) says:

The learned realise that the Buddha’s speech
Teaches well the three trainings,
Is correctly endowed with the three seals,
And is virtuous in the beginning, middle and end.

The result, which can surpass the summit of existence, is described by Śūra as follows:

One who follows your teaching,
Even without obtaining the actual foundation of
concentration,
Opposes rebirths as if they were the vision of Māra.

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE SUPRAMUNDANE VEHICLE

The detailed account of the nature of this [supramundane vehicle] has two parts. Master Vasubandhu says [in the *Treasury of the Abhidharma*, *Abhidharmakośa*, T 4089, Ch.8, v.39ab]:

The two kinds of the Teacher’s true doctrine
Are transmission and realisation.

Accordingly, there is both the doctrine which realises his expressed meaning and the doctrine which transmits his expressive words.

Realisation of the True Doctrine

[17a.2-17b.3] The former, the doctrine of realisation, also has two parts. Firstly, there is that doctrine attained through the attributes of realisation, evenly absorbed in the expanse [of reality]. This is the truth of cessation to which the sublime beings have departed, the great nirvāṇa wherein all signs of dualistic appearance have vanished, which is beyond objects of conception and expression. Secondly, there is that doctrine which becomes the essence of realisation, the uncorrupted pristine cognition along with its concomitants. This is the truth of the path by which any [sublime being] departs, and which remedies the obscuration [covering] the naturally pure nucleus of inner radiance whose range must be realised by each one individually.

The first aspect is the desireless essence, or the unborn, pristine cognition in which the mind-streams of the four classes of sublime being have finished renouncing what must be renounced. And the second aspect is the natural expression of that pristine cognition or the antidote by which renunciation and desirelessness are achieved. As the sublime Ajita [in the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle*, Ch. 1, vv.10-11] has said:

The doctrine is that which is without thought,
Without duality and without ideas,
And which is pure, distinct and an antidote;
Thus it is both that which is and by which
There is freedom from desire,
Endowed with the characteristic of two truths.
The reality of freedom from desire is subsumed
By the truths of the cessation [of obscurations]
And of the [correct] path.

Transmission of the True Doctrine

Secondly, the doctrine which transmits the expressive words [concerning that realisation] also has two aspects: the transmitted precepts of [the Buddha's] excellent teaching and the treatises which comment upon their intention.