

# THE TWO TRUTHS

From Tsong-kha-pa Lo-sang-drak-pa's

*Extensive Explanation of (Chandrakīrti's)*

*"Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle'"*:

*Illumination of the Thought*

Commenting on chapter six of Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's)*

*"Treatise on the Middle,"* stanzas 23-29



# 1. What the World Invalidates

## General Presentation of the Two Truths

This section has four parts: (1) stating that because phenomena are divided into two truths, phenomena each have two natures, (2) indicating other presentations of the two truths, (3) explaining the divisions of obscurational truths in relation to the world, and (4) showing that the conceived object, with respect to which [a wrong consciousness] is mistaken, does not exist even in conventional terms.

### *Stating that because phenomena are divided into two truths, phenomena each have two natures*

Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"*<sup>a</sup> says (see also *Insight*, 114):<sup>b</sup>

[Buddha] said that all things have two natures,  
Those found by perceptions of reality and of falsities—

Concerning this, the Supramundane Victors, who non-erroneously know the natures of the two truths, teach that the entities of all things—internal things such as the compositional factor of intention and external things such as sprouts—are twofold. What are these? An entity that is an obscurational truth and an entity that is an ultimate truth.

This indicates that when the entities of one thing, such as a sprout, are divided, there are two entities, [one] fraudulent and [the other] ultimate, but this does not at all indicate that just the single entity of a sprout is the two truths in relation to common beings and Superiors [respectively].<sup>c</sup> Taken that way, since there is no occurrence of a phenomenon lacking an entity, whatever are established bases [that is, are existents] do not pass beyond being either one entity or different entities, and although entities are asserted to exist, it is not contradictory

<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa does not cite Chandrakīrti's root text; the stanzas have been added in double indent for the sake of clarity.

<sup>b</sup> VI.23ab; Toh. 3861, vol. 'a, 205a.5-205a.6; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 102.8-102.9; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 299.

<sup>c</sup> That is, this does not at all indicate that just the single entity of a sprout is an obscurational truth in relation to common beings and is an ultimate truth in relation to Superiors.

that an inherently established entity does not exist.

With respect to this, the ultimate entity of things such as sprouts and so forth gains its own entity<sup>a</sup> through being the object itself of a specific pristine wisdom of those who directly see the meaning of reality [that is, emptiness]; it is not established by way of its own selfness.<sup>b</sup> This is one of the two entities being explained.

[An ultimate truth] is not found by just any pristine wisdom of a Superior; rather, [it is found by] a “specific pristine wisdom” which is to be taken as a specific type, or a particular type, of pristine wisdom. It is found, moreover, by a pristine wisdom comprehending the mode [of being of phenomena, emptiness.]

When [Chandrakīrti] indicates that [an ultimate truth] is found, or established, by that pristine wisdom, it might be held that if there is something established by that pristine wisdom, it is truly established. To refute that, he says, “It is not established by way of its own selfness.” Hence, those who propound that it is the system of this master that if a pristine wisdom of meditative equipoise comprehended an ultimate truth, [the ultimate] would be truly established and that, therefore, [the ultimate] is not an object of knowledge<sup>c</sup> have not at all realized the meaning of [Chandrakīrti’s] explanation that although [ultimate truth] is found by [a consciousness in] meditative equipoise, it is not truly established. Not realizing such, they cause the degeneration of a wise being’s system.

The entity of the conventional,<sup>d</sup> which is other than the ultimate, gains the existence of its own entity through the force of perceptions of falsities by common beings whose mental eyes are completely covered over by the darkening cataracts<sup>e</sup> of ignorance. Its own entity does not exist in accordance with how it appears to be established by way of its own character as an object seen by childish beings. This is one of the two entities.

[Chandrakīrti’s] statement thus that, as regards the finding of ultimate truths, the finders are Superiors [that is, beings on the path of seeing or above] is made in consideration that the **main** [of those who realize ultimate truths] are Superiors. However, he is not asserting that [ultimate truths] are not found also by common beings who possess the

<sup>a</sup> *bdag gi rang gi ngo bo.*

<sup>b</sup> *rang gi bdag nyid kyi ma grub pa.*

<sup>c</sup> The opponent here is not Dol-po-pa, who holds that the ultimate is an object of knowledge and, being the ultimate, must also be ultimately established.

<sup>d</sup> *kun rdzob*; this could also be translated as “the fraudulent.”

<sup>e</sup> *rab rib kyi ling tog.*

Middle Way view in their [mental] continuums.<sup>a</sup>

Also, as regards the finding of conventionalities, [Chandrakīrti's] statement that the finders are ordinary<sup>b</sup> common beings is made in consideration that they are the **main** perceivers of external and internal things—illustrations of conventionalities—through being under the other-influence of ignorance. He is not asserting that these things are not found by conventional valid cognitions in the continuums of Superiors.<sup>c</sup>

The finding [that is, realization] of pots and so forth, which are illustrations of obscurational truths, does indeed occur among those who have not found the view of the Middle Way; however, in order to find with valid cognition that something is an obscurational truth [that is, to recognize it as an obscurational truth], one definitely must have first found the view of the Middle Way. This is because if something is established as an obscurational truth, it must be established as a falsity, and actually to establish that something is a falsity, it is necessary first to refute with valid cognition that it is truly established. Therefore, with respect to [Chandrakīrti's saying that "The entity of the conventional, which is other than the ultimate, gains the existence of its own entity] through the force of the perceptions of falsities [by common beings]," although those ordinary persons see falsities, they do not necessarily establish them as falsities. This is just like the fact, for example, that when an audience at a magic show sees an illusory horse or elephant, although they see falsities, they do not necessarily establish that those appearances **are** falsities. Therefore, to be found by a perceiver of falsities that posits it as an obscurational truth means to be found by a conventional valid cognition that comprehends a false object of knowledge—a deceptive object [but does not necessarily realize that it is a falsity].

Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* continues (see also *Insight*, 114):<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> A conceptual cognition of emptiness while still a common being—that is to say, while on the path of accumulation and path of preparation or even prior to any of the five paths—is also a finding, or realization, of emptiness.

<sup>b</sup> *rang dga' ba*.

<sup>c</sup> This and the previous paragraph counter Dol-po-pa's statement (below, 277):

The *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* says that those having and not having special insight have good and bad appearances [respectively] and that what appear to those without special insight do not appear to those with special insight...

<sup>d</sup> VI.23cd; Toh. 3861, vol. 'a, 205a.6; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 102.10-102.11; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 299.

Objects of perceptions of reality are suchnesses,  
[And] objects of perceptions of falsities are obscura-  
tional truths.

Furthermore, from between those two natures, or entities, explained above, an object found by a rational consciousness perceiving, that is, comprehending, the meaning of reality is a suchness, an ultimate truth. This will be explained [below in stanza VI.29] at the point of “by the force of cataracts” and so forth. [An object] found by a conventional valid cognition perceiving a false object of knowledge is an obscurational truth. That is what the Teacher [Buddha] said; he spoke of an ultimate and a conventionality as two separate bases [that is, objects] that are found [by their respective valid cognitions]. It is not that there are two ways of finding a single [object].

### *Indicating other points about the two truths*

#### [Basis of division]

Although there indeed are many different ways of asserting what the basis of division of the two truths is,<sup>a</sup> here it is taken to be objects of knowledge.<sup>b</sup> The *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*,<sup>c</sup> cited in Shāntideva’s *Compendium of Instructions*, says (see also *Insight*, 104):<sup>d</sup>

It is thus: Ones-Gone-Thus thoroughly understand the two, obscurationals and ultimates. Furthermore, objects of knowledge<sup>e</sup> are exhausted as these obscurational truths and ultimate truths. Moreover, because Ones-Gone-Thus have thoroughly perceived, known, and actualized well [these] as [having the aspect of]<sup>f</sup> emptiness, they are called “omniscient.”

<sup>a</sup> That is to say, what is being divided into the two truths. For Jam-yang-shay-pa’s list of six incorrect assertions on the basis of division, see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 894.

<sup>b</sup> *shes bya, jñeya*.

<sup>c</sup> *yab dang sras mjal ba’i mdo, pitāputrasamāgamasūtra*; P760.16, vol. 23; Toh. 60, vol. *nga* (*dkon brtsegs*), 60b.4–60b.5.

<sup>d</sup> *bslab pa kun las btus pa, śikṣāsamuccaya*; Toh. 3940, vol. *khi*, 142b.3–142b.4; Sanskrit text, which leaves out the first sentence, in Bendall, *Çikshāsamuccaya*, 256: *etāvaccaitat jñeyam / yaduta saṃvṛtiḥ paramārthaśca / tacca bhagavatā śūnyataḥ sudṛṣṭaṃ suviditaṃ susākṣāt-kṛtaṃ / tena sa sarvajña ityucyate /*. English translation in Bendall and Rouse, *Śikṣā Samuccaya*, 236.

<sup>e</sup> *shes par bya ba*; or “those that are to be known.”

<sup>f</sup> The bracketed addition is taken from Tsong-kha-pa’s commentary below (223). Without the addition, the passage seems to say that a Buddha is called omniscient only because of having thoroughly realized emptiness; by taking the word emptiness as a

Because [the sūtra] says “Furthermore, objects of knowledge,” objects of knowledge are the basis of division [into the two truths], and because it says “are exhausted as these,” the number is limited to the two truths. Also, because Ones-Gone-Thus thoroughly understand both truths, they are indicated as being omniscient. Therefore, it is wrong to explain that the thought of Shāntideva’s *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* is that ultimate truths are not objects of knowledge and that they are not realized by any mind.<sup>a</sup>

### [The divisions]

The twofold division into obscurational truths and ultimate truths comprises the entities into which [objects of knowledge] are divided.<sup>b</sup>

### [Relationship of the two divisions]

Although there are also many different [opinions] regarding the meaning of the division [that is, the relationship of the two divisions], here both [obscurational truths and ultimate truths] have entities, and since there is nothing that is not either one entity or different entities and since if phenomena<sup>c</sup> were different entities from [their respective] emptinesses of true existence, they would be truly established, [the two truths] are one entity but different isolates<sup>d</sup> [that is, one entity but conceptually isolatable], like product and impermanent thing. Nāgārjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* says (see also *Insight*, 107):<sup>e</sup>

Suchness is not observed

As a different [entity] from conventionalities,

Conventionalities are described as emptiness [that is, as empty  
of inherent existence]

And just emptiness is [posited with respect to] the conventional

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*bahuvr̥hi* compound meaning “those which have emptiness” or “those having the aspect of emptiness” the term comes to refer to all those that are empty and thus all obscurational truths and ultimate truths. The addition does indeed seem strained, but the sūtra itself, just above, speaks of both truths.

<sup>a</sup> See below, 222.

<sup>b</sup> For Jam-yang-shay-pa’s explanation on how a third category is eliminated, see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 895.

<sup>c</sup> *chos can*, which literally is “those possessing the attribute [of emptiness],” that is to say, the substrata of emptiness, all phenomena.

<sup>d</sup> *ngo bo gcig la ldog pa tha dad pa*.

<sup>e</sup> Stanzas 67cd-68; Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 54.

Because of the definiteness that [the one] would not occur  
without [the other],  
Like product and impermanent thing.

The meaning of the first four lines is that suchnesses do not exist as different entities from conventionalities because conventionalities are empty of true [existence] and because emptinesses of true [existence] also are posited with respect to conventionalities, which are [their] bases. The next two lines indicate that:

- it is thus, and the relationship that if the one does not exist, the other does not occur is definite
- and moreover since this is a relationship of one nature, [the two truths] are the same entity like product and impermanent thing.<sup>a</sup>

### [Identifying the individual divisions]

The identifications of the individual divisions are, as set forth earlier in their individual definitions, that they are found by the two [types of] valid cognition.<sup>b</sup>

*Question:* If you are explaining this [work by Chandrakīrti] and Shāntideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* as in agreement, then how do you explain this statement in Shāntideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*:<sup>c</sup>

Conventionalities and ultimates,  
These are asserted as the two truths.  
The ultimate is not an object of activity of an awareness.  
Awarenesses are said to be conventionalities.

*Answer:* In that, the first two lines indicate the divisions of the two truths, and [then] when identifying the entities of the individual divisions, [Shāntideva] indicates an identification of ultimate truths by one [line beginning with] “The ultimate,” and an identification of obscurational truths by one [line having] “conventionalities” [in it]. The assertion<sup>d</sup> that [from between those two lines] the former [“The ultimate is

<sup>a</sup> For Jam-yang-shay-pa's and Nga-wang-pel-den's treatment of other assertions about the relationship of the two truths, see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 896-902.

<sup>b</sup> For refinements about the two definitions see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 902-903.

<sup>c</sup> Stanza IX.2; Toh. 3871, *dbu ma*, vol. *la*, 31a.1; Sanskrit in Swami Dwarika Das Shastri, *Bodhicaryāvatāra of Ārya Śāntideva with the Commentary Pañjikā of Shri Prajñākaramati* (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 1988), 267: *saṃvṛtīḥ paramārthaśca satyadvayamidam matam / buddheragocarastattvaṃ buddhiḥ saṃvṛtirucyate //*.

<sup>d</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of the Middle* (Newland, unpublished manuscript,



not an object of activity of an awareness”] sets the thesis that an ultimate truth is not an object of an awareness and that the latter line [“Awarenesses are said to be conventionalities”] proves this thesis does not at all appear to be the meaning of those passages.<sup>a</sup>

Therefore, with respect to this identification of the two truths, Shāntideva is stating in his *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* the meaning of a statement in the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*<sup>b</sup> that he quoted in his *Compendium of Instructions*:<sup>c</sup>

The One-Gone-Thus sees conventionalities as in the province of the world. That which is ultimate is inexpressible, is not an object of knowledge, is not an object of individual consciousness, is not an object of thorough knowledge, is undemonstrable....

Concerning that, the meaning of the explanation that the ultimate truth is not an object of knowledge is that it is not an object of an awareness in the manner of the meaning of a passage [that Chandrakīrti] cites from the *Introduction to the Two Truths Sūtra* which is explained below (260).<sup>d</sup>

If the meaning of [Shāntideva’s statement that the ultimate is not an object of an awareness] is not posited that way but instead [is taken to mean that the ultimate] is not an object of any awareness, this would contradict the explanation [in the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra* cited above] that a Conqueror is posited as omniscient because of having actualized all that have the aspect of emptiness,<sup>e</sup> conventionalities and ultimates. This will also be explained more below.

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40-43) identifies one such scholar as Tö-lung-gya-mar (*stod lung rgya dmar ba byang chub grags*, eleventh-twelfth century; he was one of Cha-pa Chö-kyi-seng-gay’s (*phya pa chos kyi seng ge*; 1109-1169) teachers of the Middle Way School and of logic and epistemology.

<sup>a</sup> Rather, the first two lines of the stanza indicate the two truths in a general way, and then the last two lines identify what they are.

<sup>b</sup> *yab dang sras mjal ba’i mdo, pitāputrasamāgamasūtra*, P760.16, vol. 23; Toh. 60, vol. *nga* (*dkon brtsegs*), 60b.5.

<sup>c</sup> Toh. 3940, *dbu ma*, vol. *khi*, 142b.4-142b.5; Sanskrit in Bendall, *Çikshāsamuccaya*, 256.5: *tatra samvrtīrlokapracāratastathāgatena dṛṣṭā / yaḥ punaḥ paramārthaḥ so ’nabhilāpyaḥ / anāñṇeyo ’vijñeyo ’deśīto ’prakāśīto*. English translation in Bendall and Rouse, *Śikṣā Samuccaya*, 236.

<sup>d</sup> As Nga-wang-pel-den (*Explanation of the Obscurational and the Ultimate in the Four Systems of Tenets*, 111.6/56a.6) encapsulates this:

[Shāntideva] is saying that an ultimate truth is a phenomenon that is not an object of activity of a directly perceiving awareness involving dualistic appearance and that a phenomenon that is an object of activity of directly perceiving awareness involving dualistic appearance is an obscurational truth.

<sup>e</sup> *stong pa nyid kyi rnam pa can thams cad*.

[Shāntideva's] identification of obscurational truths does not mean that only awarenesses are posited as obscurational truths; rather, they are **objects** of awarenesses. Moreover, since [the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*] speaks of those [objects of awarenesses] as the province of the world, they are objects found within the province, that is, as objects of activity, of worldly, that is, conventional, consciousnesses comprehending falsities. Hence, the meaning of [Shāntideva's] assertion that objects of awarenesses are conventionalities is to be taken in that way.

### [Definite enumeration as only two truths]

The division of objects of knowledge into the two truths indicates that objects of knowledge are limited to those two. Scriptural sources for this are the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*, quoted earlier (220), and also the *Superior Sūtra of the Meditative Stabilization Definitely Revealing Suchness* which clearly says (see also *Insight*, 148):<sup>a</sup>

The conventional and likewise the ultimate—  
There is not at all a third truth.

and Chandrakīrti's *Autocommentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle'"* also says that all the many with the name "truth" that are mentioned in the *Sūtra on the Ten Grounds* are included in the two truths:<sup>b</sup>

Similarly, any other truth that exists at all is also to be ascertained as only included within the two truths.

and he explains that the truth of differentiated realization mentioned there [in the *Sūtra on the Ten Grounds*] is the presentation of the aggregates, constituents, and sense-spheres. Therefore, this master [Chandrakīrti] also asserts that [objects of knowledge] are limited to the two truths.

The reasoning [why there are only two truths] is that if a certain base [that is, an object] is—on the positive side—distinguished as a falsity, a deceptive object, then on the exclusionary side it must be

<sup>a</sup> *de kho na nyid nges par bstan pa'i ting nge 'dzin, tattvanirdeśasamādhi*. Cited in Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle,'"* commenting on stanza VI.80; Toh. 3682, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 243a.4; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 175.11-175.12; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 356.

<sup>b</sup> In his commentary on stanza V.1cd; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 243b.1; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 71.5-71.7; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 8 (1907): 313.

eliminated that it is a non-deceptive suchness, due to which the deceptive and the non-deceptive are dichotomous explicit contradictories. Since whatever is [a dichotomous pair] covers all objects of knowledge, a further category that is both and a further category that is neither are eliminated. It is as Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* says:<sup>a</sup>

Phenomena<sup>b</sup> that have the character of being a dichotomy are such that if something is refuted to be the one and it is not established to be the other, then it does not exist. Therefore, it also is not reasonable to think of it as in a class that is neither of those two.

and:

Two that are such that something does not exist if it is neither [of them]<sup>c</sup> have the character of being a dichotomy. Those that have the character of being a dichotomy cover all aspects [that is, whatever exists is either one or the other]. Those that cover all aspects eliminate other categories. Examples are, for instance, particular [pairs] such as the physical and the non-physical,<sup>d</sup> and so forth.

This is also to be understood with respect to all other explicit contradictories [that is, dichotomies].

If there were no such things as dichotomies that exclude a third category, there would be no way to make a refutation with analysis that limits the possibilities to two—[asking] whether it is asserted that something exists or does not exist, or is one or many, and so forth. If there are [dichotomies that exclude a third category], then when something is refuted as being one side of a dichotomy and it is not established as the other, it does not exist. Therefore, to say that there are no explicit contradictories in the Middle Way Consequence School is a case of not having formed [understanding of] the presentation of refutation and establishment<sup>e</sup> [in this system]. The Middle Way Autonomy School and the Middle Way Consequence School do not differ with respect to [asserting] that [within existents] if something is eliminated as being one side of a dichotomy, it must be established as the other and that if

<sup>a</sup> Toh. 3887, *dbu ma*, vol. *sa*, 191a.4–191a.5 and 219a.1–219a.2.

<sup>b</sup> *chos dag*; in this the *dag* ending could be dual since this is its strict usage, in which case the translation should read “two phenomena.”

<sup>c</sup> *gang zhig yongs su gcod pa gang rnam par bcad pa med na med pa de gnyis*; the translation is loose.

<sup>d</sup> *lus can dang lus can ma yin pa*.

<sup>e</sup> *dgag gzhag gi rnam gzhag*.

one is refuted, the other is established.

### *Explaining the divisions of obscurational truths in relation to the world*

Among conventionalities there are two [types], objects and subjects, and initially [Chandrakīrti] indicates that in relation to worldly consciousnesses,<sup>a</sup> subjects are twofold, right and wrong.<sup>b</sup>

Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* says:<sup>c</sup>

Also, those that perceive falsities are asserted to be of two types—  
 Those with clear sense powers and those having defective sense powers.  
 Consciousnesses of those having defective sense powers are asserted  
 To be wrong in relation to those having good sense powers.

Not only are objects of knowledge divided into the two truths, but also subjects perceiving falsities are asserted as twofold, right and wrong:

1. clear sense powers, that is to say, sense powers that are not polluted by superficial causes of mistake<sup>d</sup> and the consciousnesses that depend on them
2. defective sense powers, that is to say, subjects [consciousnesses] that are polluted by superficial causes of mistake.

Concerning those, polluted consciousnesses of those having defective sense powers are asserted to be wrong consciousnesses in relation to consciousnesses having good sense powers, that is, not polluted by superficial causes of mistake. The former [that is, those with clear sense powers] are asserted to apprehend non-erroneous objects. Moreover, those two distinctions are not the Middle Way system but are in

<sup>a</sup> 'jig rten pa'i shes pa la ltos nas.

<sup>b</sup> yang dag pa dang log pa. With regard to subjects I translate these terms as "right and wrong," and with regard to objects, as "real and unreal." For interesting distinctions on these topics, see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 907-911.

<sup>c</sup> Stanza VI.24; Toh. 3861, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 205a.6-205a.7; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 103.11-103.14; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 300.

<sup>d</sup> See the note above, 191.

relation to worldly consciousnesses.

[Chandrakīrti] indicates that just as subjects are divided into two, erroneous and non-erroneous, so objects also are.

Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* (see also *Insight*, 119) says:<sup>a</sup>

Objects realized by the world that are apprehended  
By [the consciousnesses of] the six sense powers un-  
impaired [by superficial causes of mistake]  
Are true [or real] just [relative] to the world [because of  
being phenomena that prior to realizing emptiness  
cannot be realized to be a combination of appearing  
to be inherently existent but being empty of such].  
The rest [that is, those apprehended by sense con-  
sciousnesses impaired by superficial causes of mis-  
take such as reflections, echoes and so forth] are pos-  
ited as unreal just [relative] to the world.

Objects realized by the world that are apprehended by the consciousnesses of the six sense powers unimpaired by superficial causes of mistake are true, that is, real, from just<sup>b</sup>—that is to say, only<sup>c</sup>—[the viewpoint of] the world. It is not that those objects are posited as true and real in relation to a Superior. Here “Superior” and “Middle Way system” [in the last sentence of the previous paragraph] have similar meanings.

The rest—that is to say, reflections and so forth—which appear as objects when sense powers are impaired are posited as being unreal in relation to just the world. The word “just”<sup>d</sup> indicates that just a conventional valid cognition is sufficient to posit those consciousnesses as mistaken; such does not rely on a rational consciousness [realizing emptiness].

About that, internal conditions that impair the sense powers are

<sup>a</sup> Stanza VI.25; Tōh. 3861, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 205a.7; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 104.4-104.7; La Vallée Poussin, “Introduction au traité du milieu,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 301. The Sanskrit, as cited from Prajñākaramati's *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Shānti-deva's) "Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds"* in Khangkar and Yorihito, 211 note 245, reads: *vinopaghātena yad indriyānām saññām api grāhyam avaiti lokah/ satyaṃ hi tal loyata evaṃ śeṣaṃ vikalpitaṃ lokata eva mithyā//*. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 314.5. Cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 167.

<sup>b</sup> *nyid*.

<sup>c</sup> *kho na*.

<sup>d</sup> *nyid*.

cataracts,<sup>a</sup> jaundice,<sup>b</sup> and so forth as well as having eaten *da du ra*<sup>c</sup> and so forth. *Da du ra* is thorn-apple;<sup>d</sup> when its fruit has been eaten, all appears to be golden. “And so forth” includes contagion and the like. External conditions that impair the sense powers are mirrors, sounds spoken from within caves, the rays of the summer<sup>e</sup> sun being proximate to white sand, and so forth; even though there might be no internal conditions impairing the sense powers, those serve as causes for apprehending, respectively, reflections, echoes, water in mirages, and so forth. Mantras and medicines<sup>f</sup> used by magicians and so forth also should be understood similarly [as cases of external causes of mistake].

Impairments to the mental sense power are those mantras, medicines, and so forth as well as wrong tenets, quasi-reasons,<sup>g</sup> sleep, and so forth. Since [Chandrakīrti] says that sleep impairs the mind<sup>h</sup> from among the six sense powers, it is hugely wrong to explain that this master asserts that sense consciousnesses exist in dreams. [Chandrakīrti describes the superficial causes of mistake that impair the mental consciousness this way, and] thus the impairment of being polluted by the ignorance consisting of the two apprehensions of self, which have operated beginninglessly, and so forth is not held to be a cause of impairment in this context. Rather, the superficial causes of mistake that impair sense powers as explained above are to be held [as the causes of impairment].

The positing of a conventional object—apprehended by [any of] the six consciousnesses without such impairment—as real and the positing of an object opposite to that as unreal is done in relation only to worldly consciousnesses because those [respectively] are not damaged and are damaged by worldly consciousnesses with respect to those existing as objects in accordance with how they appear. [Conventional

<sup>a</sup> *rab rib*.

<sup>b</sup> *mig ser*.

<sup>c</sup> La Vallée Poussin, “Introduction au traité du milieu,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 301, n.3, questions the reading, saying that M. Max Walleser suggests *dardura*. Tsong-kha-pa glosses *da du ra* as *thang phrom*, which is also spelled *khrom*. The latter is identified as *dhūstūra* in Sarat Chandra Das’s *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, 568.

<sup>d</sup> *thang phrom*.

<sup>e</sup> *sos ka*; this is variously translated as “spring” or “summer”; the reference is to the hot season before the summer rains descend.

<sup>f</sup> Kensur Lekden identified this medicine as a salve that a magician puts on a stick or pebble that serves as the basis of conjuring and which, upon the casting of a mantra, then appears to be an elephant, and so forth.

<sup>g</sup> *gtan tshigs ltar snang*.

<sup>h</sup> *yid*.

objects] are not [posited] as the two, real and unreal, in relation to Superiors because just as reflections and so forth do not exist as objects in accordance with how they appear, so although blue and so forth appear to be established by way of their own character to those who have ignorance, they do not exist as objects in accordance with how they appear. Therefore, these two consciousnesses [that is, a consciousness of a reflection and a consciousness to which blue appears to be established by way of its own character] cannot be divided even in terms of being mistaken or not mistaken [since both are mistaken with respect to their appearing objects].

*Objection:* Even an ordinary worldly awareness realizes that:

- due to the physical senses having superficial impairment objects appear wrongly, and
- due to the mental consciousness having superficial impairment by sleep and so forth
  - regarding appearances as humans and so forth in dreams there is erroneous apprehension of humans and so forth, and
  - when awake there is erroneous apprehension of horses and elephants in magical illusions of horses and elephants as well as erroneous apprehension of water in mirage-appearances as water.

However, an ordinary worldly awareness does not realize that objects—apprehended wrongly due to the mind having impairment by bad tenets—are erroneous. Therefore, how are these posited as wrong from just [the viewpoint of] the world [as Chandrakīrti says]?

*Answer:* Here the impairment that is analyzed as to whether or not there is impairment is not taken to be impairment by **innate** erroneous apprehension. Therefore, those that are imputed by bad tenets [and are realized to be wrong by a worldly consciousness do not include the inherent existence that is innately misapprehended but] are the principal<sup>a</sup> and so forth, which are wrongly imputed **only** by those whose awarenesses have been affected by tenets. Although those are not realized to be erroneous by an ordinary worldly awareness, they are realized to be so by conventional valid cognition that is not directed toward suchness, in which case they are realized to be wrong by a worldly consciousness.

The likes of objects that are apprehended by the two innate

<sup>a</sup> *gtso bo, pradhāna*; also called the fundamental nature (*rang bzhin, prakṛti*) in the Sāṃkhya system.

apprehensions of self are “objects apprehended by unimpaired sense powers” [since they are apprehended by a mind impaired not by superficial but by deep causes of mistake]. However, although these are real, or true, in relation to ordinary worldly thought, they do not exist even in conventional terms.

*Objection:* Since you do not assert real conventionalities, you do not divide [conventionalities] into real and unreal, but why do you not posit objects and subjects polluted by ignorance as unreal conventionalities?

*Answer:* It is because conventionalities must be posited by conventional valid cognition, and, therefore, if when unreal conventionalities are posited, they have to be posited in relation to those [conventional valid cognitions, objects and subjects] polluted by the predispositions of ignorance are not established by conventional valid cognitions to be mistaken.<sup>a</sup>

### *Showing that the conceived object, with respect to which [a wrong consciousness] is mistaken, does not exist even in conventional terms*

[Chandrakīrti] has indicated in general that, due to impairment of the mind as just explained, [certain mental consciousnesses] are mistaken with respect to their conceived objects. Now, he indicates just that meaning in the manner of taking specific illustrations as examples.

Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle”* (see also *Insight*, 127) says:<sup>b</sup>

Entities [such as a permanent self, principal, and so forth] as they are imputed by [the assertions of] For-  
 ders [driven by bad tenets and quasi-reasons],  
 Strongly affected by the sleep of ignorance,

<sup>a</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa explains this passage as meaning that objects and subjects affected by predispositions of ignorance and apprehended by consciousnesses that are not impaired by superficial causes of mistake “are not conventionalities that are unreal in relation to the perspective of the worldly consciousness **that is explicitly indicated in this context**” even though they are indeed unreal conventionalities, since all conventionalities are wrong in the sense that they appear one way and exist another. See Guy Newland, *The Two Truths* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1992), 89-90.

<sup>b</sup> Stanza VI.26; Toh. 3861, *dbu ma*, vol. ‘a, 205b.1; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 105.9-105.12; La Vallée Poussin, “*Introduction au traité du milieu*,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 302. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 343.1. Cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 178.



And [those horses and elephants, water, and so forth]  
 imputed to magical illusions, mirages, and so forth  
 Are just non-existent even in [the conventions of ] the  
 world.

These [non-Buddhist] Forders, whose minds are strongly affected by the sleep of ignorance—their minds being impaired by erroneous bad tenets and quasi-reasons—want to enter into suchness. Hence, they do not hold onto the non-erroneous production, disintegration, and so forth that are renowned to untrained persons such as herders, women, and so forth on up but instead wish to rise above worldly beings. They thereby plunge into chasms of bad views with great pain like, for example, someone who, in climbing a tree, releases the lower branch without having grasped a higher one. Since they are bereft of good perception of the two truths, they will not attain the fruit, liberation. Therefore, entities such as the three qualities<sup>a</sup> as they are imputed by these Forders<sup>b</sup> in their respective texts do not exist even as worldly conventionalities. This refutes well the statement that what exists in the perspective of a mistaken awareness is posited as conventionally existing by this system.

Similarly, the horse or elephant that is imputed to a magical illusion, the water that is imputed to a mirage, the face that is imputed to a reflection, and so forth also just do not exist even from [the viewpoint of ] worldly conventions. In that way, for something to exist in conventional terms, it must be established by valid cognition.

Although the conceived objects of such [wrong consciousnesses] do not exist even in conventional terms, such is not asserted with regard to their appearing objects. Since the appearance, in that way, of the five [sense objects]—forms, sounds, and so forth—to sense consciousnesses now as if they are established by way of their own character is polluted by ignorance, those consciousnesses and sense consciousnesses to which reflections, echoes, and the like appear, except for [a difference in] mere subtlety and coarseness, do not differ as to whether they are mistaken or non-mistaken with respect to their appearing objects [since both are mistaken]. Also, blue and so forth that are established by way of their own character and the existence of a reflection as a face do not occur, but just as a reflection, which does not exist as a face, exists, so although blue and so forth are not established by way of their

<sup>a</sup> *yon tan gsum, triguṇa*. These are mental potency (*snying stobs, sattva*), activity (*rdul, rajās*), and darkness (*mun pa, tamas*); for a brief exposition of the Sāṃkhya system see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, chapter three.

<sup>b</sup> Such as in the Sāṃkhya system.

own character, they must exist. Furthermore, just as [blue and so forth] exist as external objects, so reflections also are asserted as form-sense spheres [that is, as forms that are objects of apprehension by an eye consciousness]. Below,<sup>a</sup> [Chandrakīrti] also says that a reflection generates the sense consciousness to which it appears. Those facts also should be understood with respect to magical illusions in which there is an appearance as a horse or an elephant to the eye as well as with respect to echoes, and so forth. These are uncommon presentations by this excellent system.

## Applying this to the meaning at this point

Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* says:<sup>b</sup>

Just as the observations of an eye with cataracts  
Do not invalidate a consciousness of one without cata-  
racts,  
An undefiled awareness is not invalidated  
By an awareness of one who has forsaken the undefiled  
pristine wisdom.

Because the meaning of suchness is not posited by a conventional consciousness, the refutation of production from other is not done within abiding in only the world's views. Rather, it is refuted ultimately within having asserted the perception of suchness by Superiors. When it is the case that the qualification "ultimately" is affixed to this refutation of production from other, then just as the observations of falling hairs and so forth by a consciousness of one whose eyes have cataracts do not damage [that is, invalidate] the non-appearance of falling hairs and so forth to a consciousness that is not polluted with cataracts, so a common being's awareness, polluted by ignorance, that has forsaken—that is, is devoid of—undefiled uncontaminated pristine wisdom does not damage an undefiled uncontaminated awareness that is not polluted with ignorance. Therefore, even if it were allowed that [production from other] is established in the perspective of the world, [the world]

<sup>a</sup> *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle,"* stanza VI.37cd; Toh. 3861, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 206a.1-206a.2; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 123.13-123.14; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 315-316.

<sup>b</sup> Stanza VI.27; Toh. 3861, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 205b.1-205b.2; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 106.3-106.6; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 302-303.

would not damage [that production from other is refuted ultimately].<sup>a</sup> This being so, the other side [that is, the non-Buddhists who give up what is validly held in the world in order to rise above worldly beings but plunge into chasms of bad views]<sup>b</sup> are fit to be laughed at by the excellent wise ones.

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<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa says “even if it were allowed” because Chandrakīrti in fact does not assert that the world uses designations such as production from other.

<sup>b</sup> See above, 231.



## 2. Obscurational Truths

### Explaining the individual natures of the two truths

This section has two parts: description of obscurational truths and description of ultimate truths.

#### *Description of obscurational truths*

This section has three parts: (1) the obscuring [consciousness] in the perspective of which these are truths and those [persons] in the perspective of whom these are not truths, (2) the ways in which mere conventionalities do and do not appear to the three types of persons, and (3) how there come to be ultimates and conventionalities relative to Superiors and common beings.

#### The obscuring [consciousness] in the perspective of which these are truths and those [persons] in the perspective of whom these are not truths

This section has two parts: the actual meaning and an explanation of [the Consequence School's] unique presentation of afflictive emotions.

#### *Actual meaning of the obscuring [consciousness] in the perspective of which these are truths and those [persons] in whose perspective these are not truths*

Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* (see also *Insight*, 110) says:<sup>a</sup>

The Subduer said that because bewilderment [that is, the apprehension of inherent existence] obscures

<sup>a</sup> VI.28; Toh. 3861, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 205b.2-205b.3; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 107.1-107.4; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 303. The Sanskrit, as cited from Prajñākaramati's *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Shānti-deva's) "Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds"* in Khangkar and Yorihito, 211 note 245, reads: *mohaḥ svabhāvāvataṇād dhi saṃvṛtiḥ satyaṃ tayā khyāti yad eva kṛtrimam/ jagād tat saṃvṛtisatyam ity asau muniḥ padārthaṃ kṛtakaṃ ca saṃvṛtim//*. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 356.5. The first three lines cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 182.

[direct perception of] the nature [of the mode of subsistence of phenomena],  
 [This ignorance] is all-obscuring (*kun rdzob*)<sup>a</sup> and he said that those fabrications appearing  
 To be true due to this [ignorance] are obscurational truths (*kun rdzob bden*) [because of being true in the perspective of the obscurational apprehension of inherent existence].  
 Things that are fabrications [exist] conventionally (*kun rdzob tu*).

Because, through it, sentient beings are obstructed, that is to say, beclouded, with respect to viewing the nature that is how things abide, it is [called] bewilderment.<sup>b</sup> Bewilderment, or ignorance,<sup>c</sup> which has an essence of obstructing<sup>d</sup> the perception of the nature that is the mode of being [of phenomena through] superimposing inherent existence on the entities of things that do not inherently exist, is the obscurer (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*). This is an identification of the obscuring [consciousness] (*kun rdzob / kun rdzob pa, saṃvṛti*) in the perspective of which truth in [the term] “obscurational truth” is posited; it is not an identification of *kun rdzob pa (saṃvṛti)* in general [which means “conventionality” or “conventional consciousness”].

Furthermore, that identification [in Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement*] is the meaning of the statement in the *Descent into Lañkā Sūtra* [above, 189] that an awareness making the mistake that what ultimately lacks inherent existence exists inherently is an obscurational (*kun rdzob pa*):<sup>e</sup>

The production of things [exists] conventionally (*kun rdzob tu, saṃvṛtyā*);

<sup>a</sup> The *Four Interwoven Annotations* (357.1) gives an etymology of *kun rdzob*:

*Kun* means “all of the nature of the mode of subsistence of phenomena” (*chos kyi gnas lugs kyi rang bzhin kun*), and *rdzob* means “obstructing” (*sgrib pa*) and “covering/veiling” (*gebs pa*).

<sup>b</sup> *gti mug, moha*. Although Sanskrit dictionaries gloss *moha* by “delusion,” this text does not describe it in these terms but as obstructing, or obscuring, and thus I translate the term as “bewilderment.”

<sup>c</sup> *ma rig pa, avidyā*.

<sup>d</sup> *sgrib pa*.

<sup>e</sup> *lang kar gshegs pa'i mdo, lañkāvatārasūtra*, stanza X.429; Sanskrit in Bunyiu Nanjio, *Lañkāvatāra Sūtra*, 319: *bhāvā vidyanti saṃvṛtyā paramārthe na bhāvakāḥ / niḥsvabhāveṣu yā bhrāntistatsatyam saṃvṛtirbhavet //*. This sūtra passage is given above (189), from Kamalashīla’s citation of it, in elucidating the Autonomy School’s understanding of true existence.

Ultimately it lacks inherent existence.

That [consciousness] mistaken with regard to the lack of inherent existence

Is asserted as the obscurer of reality (*yang dag kun rdzob, satyaṃ saṃvṛti*).

Since the Sanskrit original for “obscurer” (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*) [does not just mean “convention” but] is also used for “obstructor” (*sgrib byed*), this obscurer (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*) [in the final line] is an obstructor. What does it obstruct? Since [the sūtra] says that it is “the obscurer of reality (*yang dag kun rdzob, satyaṃ saṃvṛti*),” it says that since it obstructs [perception of] the meaning of reality, it is asserted as an obscurer, or obstructor. It is not indicating that it is a right conventional-ity (*yang dag kun rdzob, tathya-saṃvṛti*) from between the two [categories of conventionalities], right and wrong [conventionalities].<sup>a</sup>

The [*kun rdzob (saṃvṛti)* translated as] “conventionally” indicated in the first line and the [*kun rdzob (saṃvṛti)* translated as] “obscurer” indicated in the last line should not be construed to be identical. For, the first is the conventional way in which we ourselves assert things to be produced and so forth, whereas the latter is the obscurer—[a consciousness] apprehending true existence—in the perspective of which things are true [that is, a consciousness taking things to exist the way they appear to inherently exist].

Through the force of that obstructing [consciousness] apprehending true existence, fabricated phenomena such as blue and so forth—which, although lacking inherent establishment, are fabricated to appear to be inherently established and which appear to sentient beings to be true—are true in the perspective of the worldly, erroneous, obscuring [consciousness] described above. Hence, they are worldly obscurational truths. The Subduer said such; the way he said this is what is set forth in the above sūtra [that is, the *Descent into Lanḱā Sūtra*].

Those fabricated things—which [even though they do not inherently exist] are fabricated by thought [to appear to be inherently

<sup>a</sup> Conventionalities, or conventional phenomena, are of two types relative to worldly consciousnesses—right/real conventionalities (*yang dag kun rdzob*) and unreal/wrong conventionalities (*log pa'i kun rdzob*). Unable to find a single, evocative translation equivalent of *yang dag kun rdzob* that would apply to both consciousnesses and objects, I use “right conventionality” and “wrong conventionality” for consciousnesses and “real conventionality” and “unreal conventionality” for objects. Since the Tibetan for “right conventionality” or “real conventionality” is *yang dag kun rdzob* and the Tibetan for “obscurer of reality” is also *yang dag kun rdzob*, the two can be confused, and thus Tsong-kha-pa is pointing out that here in the *Descent into Lanḱā Sūtra* the term *yang dag kun rdzob* means “obscurer of reality.”

existent] and which are not truths in the perspective of the three persons [that is, Hearer Foe Destroyers, Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers, and Bodhisattvas on the eighth, ninth, and tenth grounds, called the three pure grounds]—are not truths in the perspective of **their own** obscuring [consciousnesses since they are beyond such ignorance], and hence those [phenomena] are called “mere conventionalities” (*kun rdzob tsam, saṃvṛtimātra*).

To explain the meaning [of Chandrakīrti’s statement in his *Autocommentary* cited here in paraphrase]:<sup>a</sup>

A few dependent-arisings such as reflections, echoes, and so forth appear to be false even to those who have ignorance, whereas a few [dependent-arisings] such as forms (blue and so forth), minds, feelings, and so forth appear to be true. The nature that is the mode of being of phenomena does not appear in any way to those having ignorance. Therefore, that nature and those that are false even conventionally are not obscurational truths.

In that, “a few” (*cung zad cig*) is rendered better in accordance with Nak-tso’s<sup>b</sup> translation as “some” (*’ga’ zhig*). That reflections and so forth, though false, appear is [the coarse form of] false appearance [to which Chandrakīrti is referring when he says, “Some dependent-arisings such as reflections, echoes, and so forth, appear to be false even to those who have ignorance.”] Since [a reflection of a face] is a falsity that is a composite of the two—appearing to be a face and [being] empty of that [face]—its emptiness of truth [to which Chandrakīrti is referring] is its emptiness of truth as a face and does not have the meaning of a reflection’s being empty of truth in the sense of its not being established by way of its own character. Therefore, a reflection is a thing such that although it is established as being empty of being a face, there is no contradiction at all in its being true in the perspective of an

<sup>a</sup> La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 107.11-107.17. For Chandrakīrti’s *rang bzhin*, Tsong-kha-pa (101.2-101.3) reads *chos mams kyi yin lugs kyi rang bzhin*, and for Chandrakīrti’s *de* Tsong-kha-pa reads *rang bzhin de*; the changes make the passage easier to read, without distorting it. Tsong-kha-pa frequently does such with citations to improve on the reading of a translation.

<sup>b</sup> *nag tsho lo tsa ba tshul khrims rgyal ba* (b.1011) made the original translation of Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement* from Sanskrit into Tibetan, working with the Indian Kṛṣṇapaṇḍita. This translation, which survives in the Peking and Narthang Translation of the Treatises (*bstan ’gyur*), was gradually replaced by that of *pa tshab lo tsa ba nyi ma grags*. Nak-tso’s translation was the basis for the commentary on Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement* written by one of Tsong-kha-pa’s teachers, Ren-da-wa Shön-nu-lo-drö (*red mda’ ba gzhon nu blo gros*, 1349-1412).



obscuring (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*) [consciousness] apprehending it to be established by way of its own character. Hence, a reflection is an obscurational truth [despite Chandrakīrti's seeming to say that it is not, because his reference is to its not being a truth **as a face** for those who know about mirrors].

Therefore, [Chandrakīrti's] statement that a reflection is not an obscurational truth is in consideration that concerning a reflection of a face, for instance, its being a face is false in the perspective of a conventional (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*)<sup>a</sup> [consciousness] of worldly [persons] trained in language and hence is not an obscurational truth relative to that [that is, a reflection of a face is not a truth as a face in the perspective of that consciousness].<sup>b</sup> How could it be that [a reflection] is not posited as an obscurational truth described in “objects of perceptions of the false are obscurational truths”!<sup>c</sup>

Otherwise, if it were contradictory for something to be an obscurational truth if it does not exist as a truth for a conventional (*kun rdzob, saṃvṛti*) [consciousness], this would contradict:

- [Chandrakīrti's] statement that establishment [of an object] by way of its own character does not exist even in conventional terms (*tha snyad du yang med pa*),<sup>d</sup> and
- all presentations done in conventional terms (*tha snyad du byed pa'i rnam gzhaq thams cad*) [including] all refutations of true establishment and proofs of no true existence.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa is unpacking the two meanings of *kun rdzob/ saṃvṛti*—as “obscuring consciousness” and as “conventional consciousness.” See below.

<sup>b</sup> Those persons do not have the gross level of ignorance apprehending a reflection of a face to exist the way it appears to be a face.

<sup>c</sup> VI.23d. In the Dharmśāla edition (101.8) and Varanasi edition (187.9), read *brdzun pa* for *brdzun pa'i* in accordance with La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, (102.11).

<sup>d</sup> As Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* (VI.36) says:

Through that reasoning through which [it is seen] on the occasion of analyzing suchness

That production from self and other are not reasonable,

[It is seen] that [production] is not reasonable even in conventional terms.

If so, through what [reasoning] would your production be [established]?

<sup>e</sup> If it were contradictory for something to be an obscurational truth if it does not exist as a truth for an obscuring consciousness, this would mean that all obscurational truths must be truths for an obscuring consciousness, and in the absence of any criterion for removing any of these that are truths for an obscuring consciousness from the class of obscurational truths this would amount to saying that whatever exists for an obscuring consciousness is an obscurational truth. Since ignorance, an obscuring consciousness, takes the establishment of objects by way of their own character to exist, such establishment would have to be an obscurational truth. Similarly, if inherent existence ex-

Therefore, [claims] stating that objects such as reflections, which even ordinary worldly consciousnesses understand to be mistaken, are not obscurational truths but are mere conventionalities [when in fact they are both] appear to be the talk of those who have not formed understanding concerning:

- the definite enumeration of two truths
- truth and falsity relative to the world and truth and falsity posited by Proponents of the Middle Way.

Also, [Chandrakīrti's] statement that "The nature [emptiness] does not appear in any way to those having ignorance" is in consideration that [emptiness] does not appear to **consciousnesses** polluted with ignorance [and is not in consideration of **persons** having ignorance], since he asserts that Superiors [on the first through seventh grounds] who have not [fully] abandoned ignorance directly realize suchness [emptiness]. Also, because a Learner Superior's pristine wisdom subsequent to meditative equipoise and a common being's viewing consciousness of suchness are polluted with ignorance and its predispositions, [emptiness] does not **directly**<sup>a</sup> appear [to those consciousnesses], but it must be asserted that, in general, ultimate truth [emptiness] does appear [to those consciousnesses].<sup>b</sup>

[Immediately after that, Chandrakīrti] says (see also *Insight*, 111):<sup>c</sup>

In that way, respectively, obscurational truths are posited through the force of the afflictive ignorance that is included within the [twelve] links [of a dependent-arising] of cyclic existence.

Hence, he asserts that the ignorance apprehending phenomena to be truly [established]—renowned as [a consciousness] apprehending a self of persons and of phenomena—is the ignorance [that is the first] of the twelve links [of dependent-arising], and, therefore, he does not assert

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isted conventionally, it would be impossible to say that the refutation of inherent existence and the proof of its opposite are done conventionally.

<sup>a</sup> *mngon sum du*.

<sup>b</sup> There are conceptual consciousnesses explicitly realizing emptiness among a Learner Superior's pristine wisdom subsequent to meditative equipoise; also, a common being's viewing consciousnesses of suchness is necessarily a conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing emptiness. The basic rule is that any object explicitly understood must appear to that consciousness.

<sup>c</sup> Commenting on VI.28; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 255a.1; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 107.17-107.19; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 304.

that it is an obstruction to omniscience [but is an afflictive obstruction. His] saying that obscurational truths are posited through the force of ignorance apprehending true existence indicates the mode of positing the obscuring [consciousness] in the perspective of which truth [that is, concordance between appearance and fact] is posited. He is not saying that pots, woolen cloth, and so forth, which are obscurational truths, are posited by that consciousness apprehending true existence because he asserts that what is posited by a consciousness apprehending true existence does not exist even in conventional terms. Therefore, it appears that, because of the similarity of name between the *saṃvṛti* [obscuring consciousness] in the perspective of which the truth that is part of *saṃvṛtisatya* [obscurational truth] is posited and the *saṃvṛti* [conventionality or conventional consciousness] in the positing of pots and so forth as existing conventionally, many cases of mistaking these even to have the same meaning have arisen; therefore, these should be differentiated well.

*Question:* Then, are these pots and so forth truths in the perspective of obscuring [consciousnesses] of all persons who have not become Buddhafied? Or, are there cases of these also not being truths in the perspective of some persons' obscuring [consciousnesses]?

*Answer:* Let us explain the meaning of [Chandrakīrti's] statement:<sup>a</sup>

Moreover, for Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Bodhisattvas who have abandoned afflictive ignorance and who see compositional phenomena as like reflections and so forth those forms, sounds, and so forth, which are posited as obscurational truths, have a fabricated nature and are not truths because they have no conceit of true existence.<sup>b</sup>

There are three types of persons in the perspective of whom these are not truths [that is, do not exist the way they appear—these being

<sup>a</sup> Commenting on stanza VI.28; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 255a.2-255a.3; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 107.19-108.3; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 304.

<sup>b</sup> Again, Tsong-kha-pa is paraphrasing Chandrakīrti, not quoting the text exactly as it is. Though some contemporary Ge-luk-pa scholars explain this discrepancy by claiming that Tsong-kha-pa was quoting from memory, it strikes me that Tsong-kha-pa was deliberately trying to make the passage clearer by lifting it above mere literal translation into a more fluid rendering. Chandrakīrti actually says:

Moreover, for Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Bodhisattvas who have abandoned afflictive ignorance and who see compositional phenomena as just being like the existence of reflections and so forth, those [compositional phenomena] have a fabricated nature and are not truths because they have no conceit of true existence.

Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Bodhisattvas]. Furthermore, because [Chandrakīrti] does not take these to be just any Hearers, Solitary Realizers, or Bodhisattvas, he mentions qualifications [“who have abandoned afflictive ignorance and who see compositional phenomena as like reflections and so forth”]. One qualification is the direct realization that all compounded phenomena are empty of inherent existence but appear to be inherently existent, like reflections. Since even Bodhisattvas on the seventh ground and below as well as Hearers and Solitary Realizers who are Learner Superiors [that is, who have reached the path of seeing but not the path of no more learning] have merely this [direct realization], in order to eliminate them [Chandrakīrti] says of the three persons that they “have abandoned ignorance.” Hence, the three persons are to be taken as Bodhisattvas on the pure grounds [that is, on the eighth, ninth, and tenth grounds] and the two types of Foe Destroyers, Hearer and Solitary Realizer. [These pots and so forth] are not truths in the perspective of those three.

The reason why these are not truths [in their perspective] is that they have no conceit of true existence,<sup>a</sup> that is, they do not have the conception of true existence;<sup>b</sup> this is because they have extinguished the ignorance apprehending true existence.<sup>c</sup> Hence, it is proven that external and internal phenomena are not established as truths in the perspective of obscuring [consciousnesses] of those three types of persons [because they do not have such ignorance]. Through commenting in that way, [Chandrakīrti] has not at all proven that [external and internal phenomena] are not obscurational truths in their perspective but has proven that these are not truths [in their perspective]. Those who, despite this, hold that [Chandrakīrti’s commentary] has proven that these are not obscurational truths [in the perspective of those three types of persons] have a bad mode of explanation, having contaminated the master [Chandrakīrti’s] thought with the defilements of their own minds due to the very great coarseness of the operation of their minds.

[His] proving such also is not for the sake of those three types of persons. That [external and internal phenomena] are not truths in the perspective of those three is being proved for other persons such as ourselves.

Because lesser beings<sup>d</sup> who are not [included in] those three types

<sup>a</sup> *bden par rlom pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *bden par zhen pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *bden ’dzin gyi ma rig pa.*

<sup>d</sup> That is to say, Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Bodhisattvas who have directly real-

of persons have innate [consciousnesses] apprehending true existence, it cannot be proven that in the perspective of all whatsoever of their conventional [consciousnesses] these [forms, sounds, and so forth] are not truly established [because such ignorance occurs among certain of their conventional consciousnesses even if they have directly realized emptiness].

If, in contrast to the above explanation, [Chandrakīrti] were proving that [external and internal phenomena] are not obscurational truths in the perspective of those [three types of persons, the reason that he stated, “because they have no conceit of true existence,”] would be an extremely unrelated proof because for a base [that is, an object] to be established as an obscurational truth in the perspective of a certain awareness, that base must be established as a falsity, and hence stating as the reason [why external and internal phenomena are not obscurational truths in the perspective of those three types of persons] that they do not have apprehension of true existence would be a source of laughter.<sup>a</sup> In order to establish for a certain awareness that a base [that is, an object] is an obscurational truth, [that object] must be established [for that awareness] as a falsity. The reason for this is by way of the essential that if it is seen that when positing the truth that is part of the term “obscurational truth” with respect to pots and so forth, it must be posited—from between an awareness and fact—as a truth in the perspective of just an obscuring [consciousness] that apprehends true existence and is not posited as a truth in fact, it must be seen that if that distinction [of being in the perspective of an obscuring consciousness] is not applied, it is not established as a truth and is a falsity.

### *Explanation of [the Consequence School’s] unique presentation of afflictive emotions*

This system [of the Consequence School] has a unique identification of afflictive emotions that does not accord with the upper and lower

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ized emptiness but have not completed abandonment of afflictive ignorance. These are Hearers and Solitary Realizers on the paths of seeing and of meditation as well as Bodhisattvas on the first through seventh Bodhisattva grounds.

<sup>a</sup> That these beings do not have consciousnesses apprehending inherent existence indicates that they understand that external and internal phenomena are obscurational truths—objects that seem to exist the way they appear only for an ignorant consciousness. They can understand this because they no longer have such ignorance. Thus it would be ridiculous to indicate that these persons who understand that forms and so forth are falsities do not understand that these are obscurational truths.

Manifest Knowledges,<sup>a</sup> and since understanding it appears to be very important, let us explain it. Consciousnesses apprehending that things truly exist are of two types, those apprehending persons to truly exist and those apprehending [other] phenomena to truly exist. It has already been explained that just these are considered to be the two apprehensions of self. Both Chandrakīrti's *Autocommentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle'"* and his *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* explain that this consciousness apprehending true existence is an afflictive ignorance and explain that Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers have abandoned this ignorance,<sup>b</sup> and Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* explains that Bodhisattvas who have attained forbearance with respect to the doctrine of no production [this being at the beginning of the eighth Bodhisattva ground] have abandoned it. Therefore, afflictive ignorance is the faction discordant with knowledge of the suchness of selflessness, and, furthermore, afflictive ignorance is not to be taken as merely an absence of that knowledge [of selflessness] or as merely other than it but is the discordant faction that is the contrary [of knowledge of selflessness]—a superimposition that persons and [other] phenomena are inherently established.

Taken that way, [the Consequence School's] positing that a [consciousness] superimposing a self of phenomena is an afflictive ignorance and its positing that the two apprehensions—that "I" and "mine" are established by way of their own character—are views of the transitory collection<sup>c</sup> do not accord with the Proponents of Manifest Knowledge.<sup>d</sup> The systems of the Proponents of Manifest Knowledge, as is explained in the ninth chapter of Vasubandhu's *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge,"*<sup>e</sup> posit a [consciousness] apprehending

<sup>a</sup> These are the *abhidharmas* that are primarily set forth, respectively, in Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge* (*chos mngon pa kun btus, abhidharmasamuccaya*; P5550, vol. 112) and in Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* (*chos mngon pa'i mdzod, abhidharma-kośa*; P5590, vol. 115).

<sup>b</sup> Chandrakīrti's *Autocommentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle'"* explains that Hearers and Solitary Realizers know that all phenomena lack inherent existence; see Hopkins, *Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism*, 150-160; and La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 19.17ff; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 8 (1907): 268.

<sup>c</sup> 'jig tshogs la lta ba, satkāyaḍṣṭi.

<sup>d</sup> mngon pa ba, \*ābhidharmika.

<sup>e</sup> *chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi bshad pa, abhidharmakośabhāṣya*; P5591, vol. 115. The passage at the very beginning of the ninth chapter may be what Tsong-kha-pa refers to (Pruden trans., p. 1313): "There is no liberation outside of this teaching, because other doctrines are corrupted by a false conception of a soul. The word as other doctrines conceive it is

that a person substantially exists in the sense of being self-sufficient<sup>a</sup> to be a view of the transitory collection that is a [mis]apprehension of “I,” and they posit a [consciousness] apprehending that the “mine” are objects controlled by that substantially existent person to be a view of the transitory collection that is a [mis]apprehension of “mine.” These are greatly at variance [with the Consequence School’s presentation].

Apprehension that persons substantially exist in the sense of being self-sufficient also exists among those whose awarenesses are not affected by tenets,<sup>b</sup> but [according to the Consequence School] apprehension that persons exist as other than the [mental and physical] aggregates in the sense of having a character discordant with them does not exist among those whose awarenesses are not affected by tenets. Thus, views holding to extremes also are of two types [innate and artificial].

*Question:* How does one prove to those whose position is that persons and phenomena are established by way of their own character that those apprehensions are afflictive ignorance and the two apprehensions of self?

*Answer:* The inherent establishment of persons and [other] phenomena is negated by the reasonings refuting this, and at that time it is established that a consciousness apprehending such is a consciousness apprehending true existence that is mistaken with respect to its conceived object. Also, when this is established, it is established that the apprehensions of the two, persons and [other] phenomena, as truly established are the two apprehensions of self. When those are established, it is established that this apprehension of true existence is the discordant faction that is the contrary of knowledge of suchness, whereby it is established that this is ignorance. Because it can be proven that until this is extinguished, the view of the transitory [as inherently existent “I” and “mine”] is also not extinguished, it is established that [these apprehensions of persons and other phenomena as truly existent] are afflictive ignorance. Hence, it is very important to know how to posit the [Consequentialists’] unique presentation of afflictive emotions.

With respect to how other afflictive emotions such as desire and so forth also operate from the bewilderment that is a consciousness apprehending true existence, let us explain this in accordance with

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not a metaphoric expression for a series of skandhas. By the power of their belief in this soul as a substantial entity, there arises clinging to the soul, the defilements are generated, and liberation is impossible.”

<sup>a</sup> *gang zag rang rkya thub pa'i rdzas su yod par 'dzin pa.*

<sup>b</sup> For more on this see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 650-654.

Chandrakīrti's commentary on the statement in Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* (see also *Insight* 45; *Illumination*, 212):<sup>a</sup>

Just as the body sense power [pervades] the body,  
Bewilderment abides in all [afflictive emotions as their basis].

Chandrakīrti says (see also *Insight*, 51):<sup>b</sup>

Bewilderment, due to being beclouded with respect to those [objects] from considering them to be true [that is, truly established], enters into the superimposition that things have their own true entities. Also, desire and so forth operate within the superimposition of features, such as beauty and ugliness, on just the inherent nature of things imputed by bewilderment. Hence, they operate non-separately from bewilderment and also depend on bewilderment, because bewilderment is just chief.

[The first sentence] “Bewilderment, due to being beclouded [with respect to things] from considering them to be true, enters into the superimposition that things have their own true entities” indicates that bewilderment is a [consciousness] apprehending true existence. That desire and so forth operate non-separately from bewilderment [means] that they operate in association with bewilderment; they do not operate separate from it. The reason for this is that they “operate within the superimposition of features, such as beauty and ugliness, on just the inherent nature of things imputed by bewilderment.” Concerning this, [a consciousness] superimposing attractiveness or unattractiveness on objects is improper mental application, which is the cause producing the two, desire and hatred; therefore, [this passage] does not indicate the mode of apprehension of the two, desire and hatred.<sup>c</sup> Therefore,

<sup>a</sup> Stanza VI.10ab; stanzas VI.10-11; Toh. 3846, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsha*, 7b.2-7b.3; Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka*, 66; Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 156-157. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 421.5. Cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 207.

<sup>b</sup> Toh. 3865, *dbu ma*, vol. *ya*, 112b.7-113a.2. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 421.6. Cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 207.

<sup>c</sup> The Tibetan could wrongly be read as, “Also, desire and so forth **engage in superimposing** features, such as beauty and ugliness, on just the inherent nature of things imputed by bewilderment.” Tsong-kha-pa is saying that the passage should not be read this way, for then the mode of apprehension of desire and hatred would be to superimpose a sense of inherently existent beauty and ugliness, whereas that is the mode of apprehension of improper mental application. First ignorance superimposes inherent existence on the object; then improper mental application superimposes inherently existent beauty or ugliness, after which desire and hatred are generated.



“desire and so forth operate within the superimposition of features, such as beauty and ugliness, on just the inherent nature of things imputed by bewilderment” says that the two, desire and hatred, operate in dependence upon the superimposition of only inherently established attractiveness or unattractiveness [superimposed by improper mental application].

[Chandrakīrti] is not indicating that just true establishment imputed by bewilderment is the object of observation [of desire and hatred] from between the two, the object of observation and the subjective aspect of desire and so forth. This is because—from between the two, the object of observation and the subjective aspect—the objects of observation of both innate [consciousnesses] apprehending self are established bases [that is, they are existent, whereas truly established objects do not exist at all], and desire and so forth have the same object of observation as bewilderment, since even they are in similar association with it.

[Consciousnesses] induced by those two improper mental applications [superimposing attractiveness or unattractiveness on the object] and that have the aspect of desiring the object or of not desiring—that is to say, turning away from—the object come to be desire and hatred. Hence, [in the Consequence School] mere [consciousnesses] that are induced by the apprehension of a person as substantially existent in the sense of being self-sufficient and that have the aspects of desiring or not desiring are not posited as [encompassing all] desire and hatred. Therefore, even the modes of positing the two, desire and hatred, are different [in the Consequence School from how these are posited in the other schools.

That desire and hatred] “also depend on bewilderment” means that desire and so forth are induced by bewilderment that apprehends [objects] to be established by way of their own character and that precedes them.

The example [from the *Four Hundred* quoted above,] that “the body sense power [pervades] the body” means that just as the other four sense powers do not have a base posited separately from the body sense power, so all the other afflictive emotions operate in dependence upon bewilderment and operate without being separated from it. Therefore, all afflictive emotions are overcome through just overcoming bewilderment, and hence it is said that one should be intent on just discourse about its antidote—dependent-arising, the emptiness of inherent establishment.

Nāgārjuna's *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness*<sup>a</sup> says that this apprehension of things as truly existent is the ignorance that is the root of cyclic existence. Also, Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:<sup>b</sup>

If any base [that is, an inherently existent object] is found,  
One is seized by the winding snake of the afflictive emotions.  
Whoever's mind is without [such] a base  
Is not seized [by the afflictive emotions].

He says that if one finds a base that is any focus of observation of [a consciousness] apprehending true existence, [one's mind] is seized by the snake of the afflictive emotions. Also, right after that [Nāgārjuna (see also *Insight*, 51) says]:<sup>c</sup>

Why would the great poisonous afflictive emotions not arise  
In those whose minds have a basis [an inherently existent object]?

Therefore, this [tenet that the ignorance apprehending inherent existence is the root of cyclic existence] is the excellent assertion of the Superior [Nāgārjuna].

As transitional [commentary] before those latter two lines, [Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning"*] says:<sup>d</sup>

In order to indicate that an abandonment of afflictive emotions does not occur in those who although they apprehend an inherent nature [that is, inherent existence] of forms and so forth, want to abandon the afflictive emotions, [the text] says...

and his commentary following [those two lines] says:

If one apprehends things to be truly existent,<sup>e</sup> myriad

<sup>a</sup> *stong pa nyid bdun cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa, śūnyatāsaptatikārikā*, stanza 64:

That which apprehends things produced  
From causes and conditions to be real  
Was said by the Teacher to be ignorance.  
From it the twelve links arise.

Toh. 3827, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 26b.3; Tibetan text edited and translated by Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 114; Tibetan text, English translation, and contemporary commentary in Komito, *Seventy Stanzas*, 175.

<sup>b</sup> Stanza 51; Toh. 3825, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 22a.6-22a.7; Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 88.

<sup>c</sup> Stanza 52; Toh. 3825, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 22a.7; Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 88.

<sup>d</sup> Toh. 3864, *dbu ma*, vol. *ya*, 28a.5-28a.6; Scherrer-Schaub, *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti*, 90-91.

<sup>e</sup> *dnḡos por dmigs pa yin na ni*; here *dnḡos po* is taken as meaning "true existence" and not just "thing."

irreversible afflictive emotions, such as desire, definitely arise. How? Respectively, if the thing is agreeable to the mind, it is difficult to overcome desire for it. If it is disagreeable, it is difficult to overcome aggravation<sup>a</sup> and irritation<sup>b</sup> toward it.

[Chandrakīrti's] commentary says that even if the object is neither attractive nor unattractive, ignorance is generated. [Thus] it is asserted that when a consciousness apprehending an object as established by way of its own character is operating in [one's mental] continuum, either desire or hatred is generated, and even if those two are not, a similar type of bewilderment operates. Moreover, Shāntideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:<sup>c</sup>

[As long as] minds involved with apprehension [of inherent existence]  
Remain [manifestly] in some [persons' continuums, the manifest attachment induced by such minds will not be overcome].  
Though [manifest afflictive emotions] are [temporarily] halted in a mind lacking [realization of] emptiness,  
[Manifest afflictive emotions] are again produced,  
As in the case of [abiding in] the absorption of non-discrimination.

With respect to this position, the three—these two masters [Chandrakīrti and Shāntideva] as well as Buddhapālita—do not differ in how they comment on the thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna].

<sup>a</sup> *khong khro ba*; I often translate this as “belligerence.”

<sup>b</sup> *tshig pa za ba*.

<sup>c</sup> Stanza IX.48c-49c. The bracketed additions are from Gyel-tsap's *Explanation of (Shāntideva's) "Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds," Entrance for Conqueror Children (byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad rgyal sras 'jug ngog)* (Sarnath: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Printing Press, 1973), 236.19-237.4. For further discussion of this topic from an earlier chapter of Tsong-kha-pa's *Illumination of the Thought*, see Hopkins, *Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism*, 150-171, and 157 in particular:

If one lacks cognition of emptiness, then even though afflicted minds are temporarily halted through cultivating other paths, they cannot be totally overcome. Manifest afflictions are again produced, and thereby wandering in cyclic existence under the power of contaminated actions is not eliminated. That afflicted minds can be halted temporarily means, as was explained before, that manifest afflictions can be temporarily abandoned.

The Sanskrit is in Shastri, *Bodhicaryāvatāra of Ārya Śāntideva*, 319-320: *sāmbanena cittena sthātavyaṃ yatra tatra vā // vinā sūnyatayā cittaṃ baddhamutpadyate punaḥ / yathāsamjñīsamāpattau*.

Due to this essential, [Buddha's] explanation that one [can] pass away from sorrow merely through the paths of the sixteen [attributes of the four noble truths], impermanence and so forth,<sup>a</sup> has a thought behind it.<sup>b</sup> Furthermore, the identifications of afflictive emotions in terms of those paths [is incomplete and thus requires] more [in order to identify them on a subtler level].

In dependence upon those [points], pride and so forth also should be understood [as having coarse and subtle forms]. It should be known that the uncommon ignorance, the view of the transitory collection, and extreme views also have both artificial and innate forms. Fearing that such would take too many words, I will not write more.

Likewise, you should know that the treatment—of conceptual consciousnesses apprehending phenomena to be truly established—as nine levels of objects ([three sets each of] great, medium, and small) to be abandoned by the path of meditation and thereupon the association of these with nine levels of the path of meditation ([three sets each of] small, medium, and great) as antidotes [as is done in the Autonomy School] also requires interpretation, being something spoken with respect to certain trainees who temporarily are not able to realize fully both selflessnesses, coarse and subtle. This is like the fact that the [Mind-Only School's] treatment of conceptual consciousnesses apprehending apprehended object and apprehending subject as different substantial entities as nine levels of objects to be abandoned (great, medium, and small) by the path of meditation and thereupon the association of these with nine levels of the path of meditation [requires interpretation].

## Ways in which mere conventionalities do and do not appear to the three types of persons

Furthermore, these things, whereas they do not inherently exist, appear to childish beings to inherently exist, thereby deceiving them.

<sup>a</sup> The sixteen aspects of the four noble truths are:

*Suffering*: impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness

*Origins*: cause, origin, strong production, condition

*Cessation*: cessation, pacification, auspiciousness, definite emergence

*Path*: path, suitability, achievement, and deliverance.

For Gung-tang's presentation of how to meditate on these, see Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 285-296.

<sup>b</sup> Or "has an intention," meaning that when Buddha taught such, he had something else in mind but could not teach it due to the inadequacies of the listeners and thus taught something else that though literally unacceptable, was helpful to his listeners.

However, to the three types of persons, described earlier, who are other than them, these things become mere conventionalities due to being just dependent-arising of fabricated things and do not become truths. Moreover, because [those three types of beings] partake of the mere non-afflictive ignorance that has the character of being an obstruction to omniscience, [these mere conventionalities] appear to Superiors abiding in subsequent realization [that is, outside of meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness] which has objects of activity that are involved with appearances polluted by ignorance and its predispositions; they do not appear to Superiors abiding in meditative equipoise who have dominion over the object of activity [that is, emptiness] that has no appearance [polluted by ignorance and the predispositions of ignorance].

*Question:* What does this system take to be the obstructions to omniscience?

*Answer:* They are as Chandrakīrti says in his *Autocommentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"*:<sup>a</sup>

Concerning that, the predispositions of ignorance are obstacles to thoroughly distinguishing [all] objects of knowledge [simultaneously]. Existent predispositions of desire and so forth are also causes of such acts of body and speech. The predispositions of ignorance and also of desire and so forth are reversed only in knowledge-of-all-aspects<sup>b</sup> and Buddhahood, not for others.

The "acts of body and speech" [to which Chandrakīrti refers] are assumptions of bad states of body and speech that exist in Foe Destroyers, such as [uncontrollably] jumping like a monkey and calling another "bitch";<sup>c</sup> although the Teacher [Buddha] prohibited such, they have not been overcome.

[Chandrakīrti's saying] "also" [in "The existent predispositions of desire and so forth are **also** causes of such acts of body and speech"] indicates that the predispositions of desire and so forth are also obstacles to distinguishing [all] objects of knowledge [simultaneously]; therefore, predispositions [established by] afflictive emotions are obstructions to omniscience. Furthermore, all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance, which are fruits of those [predispositions], are included in those [obstructions to omniscience]. Among the seeds [established

<sup>a</sup> Commenting on XII.31; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 342b.6-343a.1; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 393.17-394.3.

<sup>b</sup> *rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa, sarvākārajñāna*.

<sup>c</sup> *rmangs mo*; perhaps for *dmangs mo*, which means "woman of low caste."

by] afflictive emotions, there are two types, those deposited as predispositions [for afflictive emotions] and predispositions that are not seeds of afflictive emotions; from between these two, those assigned as obstructions to omniscience are the latter. Through extinguishing all seeds of afflictive emotions, consciousnesses apprehending true existence are not generated, but due to being polluted with predispositions, awarenesses mistaken with respect to their appearing objects [in that their appearing objects seem to inherently exist] are generated.

Since Superiors who have not been Buddhafied have not abandoned the ignorance that is an obstruction to omniscience, they have an alternation between conceptuality involving the appearance [of inherent existence and/or conventional phenomena] in states subsequent to meditative equipoise and the absence of [such] appearance in meditative equipoise. Buddhas, on the other hand, have completely, that is, entirely, become enlightened, that is, have realized actualization of the ultimate and conventional aspects of all phenomena; hence, all movements of conceptual minds and mental factors have utterly vanished, due to which they have no alternation between having or not having the conceptuality involving appearance [of inherent existence and/or conventional phenomena] in meditative equipoise and in states subsequent to meditative equipoise.

[Chandrakīrti's saying] "utterly" indicates that for other Superiors the vanishing [of the movement of conceptuality] in meditative equipoise is temporary; therefore, [for them] meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment [that is, states subsequent to meditative equipoise] alternate. Hence, [Chandrakīrti's saying] "because [those three types of beings] partake of the ignorance that is an obstruction to omniscience" is not a reason for their having appearance,<sup>a</sup> but is a proof for the alternating occurrence of the existence and non-existence of appearance in meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment.

The "movement of minds and mental factors" is asserted to be conceptuality, [since] Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* (see also *Insight*, 132) explains:<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> If the reason for their perceiving mere appearances outside of meditative equipoise were that they had obstructions to omniscience, then when those obstructions were removed, they would no longer perceive appearances. To avoid saying this, Tsong-kha-pa explains Chandrakīrti's reason as being why they must **alternate** between meditative equipoise and a subsequent state in which they perceive appearances.

<sup>b</sup> Commenting on stanza XVIII.9; Toh. 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 120a.3-120a.4; La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā, 374.1-374.2: vikalpaścittapracāraḥ / tadrahitatvāttattatvaṃ nirvikalpaṃ // yathoktaṃ sūtre / paramārthasatyam katamat / yatra jñānasyāpyapracāraḥ kaḥ punarvādo 'kṣarāṇāmīti /*

If conceptuality is the movement of the mind, due to being devoid of it suchness is non-conceptual. Sūtra says, “What is ultimate truth? If it is without even the movement of the mind, what need is there to mention letters?”

## How there come to be ultimates and conventionalities relative to superiors and common beings

[Chandrakīrti says (see also *Insight*, 115):]<sup>a</sup>

Regarding this, those which are ultimates for common beings are mere conventionalities for Superiors acting on objects involving appearance [outside of meditative equipoise]. That which is the nature of those [objects]—emptiness—is the ultimate for them.

With respect to the meaning of the former [sentence], it indicates that just those pots and so forth that are held by common beings to be ultimately established are mere conventionalities for the three types of Superiors, described earlier, who, having risen from meditative equipoise, are in states of subsequent attainment that involve appearances. Therefore, Chandrakīrti is only eliminating that [pots and so forth] are truths in their perspective; he is not eliminating that these are obscurational truths [in their perspective. Also, he] is not indicating that the conceived objects of common beings’ [mis]apprehensions of pots and so forth as being ultimately established are conventionalities for Superiors because such does not occur [that is, ultimately established pots and so forth do not exist].

With respect to the meaning of the latter sentence [“That which is their nature, emptiness, is the ultimate for them,”] it indicates that the nature, the noumenon,<sup>b</sup> of conventional dependent-arising is the ultimate for Superiors. Hence, to propound opposite to [Chandrakīrti’s] text that just one base, such as a pot, is an obscurational [truth] in relation to common beings and an ultimate [truth] in relation to Superiors is the talk of someone who does not know that in the perspective of an awareness for which something is an obscurational truth, it must be negated that [that object] is a truth.

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Tibetan in de Jong, *Cinq chapitres de la Prasannapadā*, 104-105; his French translation is on p.30.

<sup>a</sup> Commenting on VI.28; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. ’a, 255a.5; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 108.13-108.16; La Vallée Poussin, “Introduction au traité du milieu,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 305.

<sup>b</sup> *chos nyid, dharmatā*.

[Chandrakīrti says:]<sup>a</sup>

The ultimate for Buddhas is just the nature, and it moreover is just non-deceptive, due to which it is the ultimate truth. It is that which is known by them by themselves individually.

The term “just” in “just the nature” is a delineator. With respect to what it eliminates, [the ultimate for Buddhas] is not the ultimate of other Superiors that alternates, for instance, between the nature that is without appearance in meditative equipoise and the nature that involves appearance in states subsequent to meditative equipoise; rather, it is the noumenon, the nature in which [a Buddha] is always set in meditative equipoise.

With respect to the meaning of “it moreover is just non-deceptive, due to which it is the ultimate truth,” [Chandrakīrti] is explaining that abiding non-deceptively in the perspective of perceiving suchness is the meaning of “truth,” asserting that the “truth” of “ultimate truth” does not indicate true establishment.

<sup>a</sup> Commenting on VI.28; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 255a.5-255a.6; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 108.16-108.19; La Vallée Poussin, “Introduction au traité du milieu,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 305.



### 3. Ultimate Truth

#### *Description of ultimate truth*

This section has two parts: an explanation of the meaning of the root text and a dispelling of objections to that.

#### Explanation of the meaning of the root text

[Chandrakīrti's *Autocommentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle'"*] says:<sup>a</sup>

Due to wishing to teach ultimate truth and due to the fact that the ultimate truth cannot be taught directly because of being inexpressible by terms and because of just not being objects of consciousnesses that follow upon terms, [the root text] sets forth an example experienced by common beings<sup>b</sup> themselves for the sake of clarifying the nature of that [ultimate truth] for those wishing to listen.

In this, the meaning of [ultimate truth] not being an object of consciousness and verbalization is, as [Chandrakīrti] says, that it "cannot be taught directly"; moreover, Nak-tso's translation reads, "cannot be manifestly taught."<sup>c</sup> Regarding the meaning of that, Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*, commenting on [Nāgārjuna's] statement that the meaning of suchness is not something known from another, says:<sup>d</sup>

When those with cataracts see mistaken entities such as falling hairs and so forth, even though someone without cataracts has shown them, they cannot realize what is to be realized, exactly

<sup>a</sup> Introducing stanza VI.29; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 255a.6-255a.7; La Vallée Poussin, *Mādhyamakāvatāra*, 109.1-109.5; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 11 (1910): 305.

<sup>b</sup> Tsong-kha-pa adds the term "common beings" (so *skyes*) to Chandrakīrti's commentary (Poussin, 109.4) for the sake of clarity.

<sup>c</sup> Nak-tso's translation reads *mngon sum du bstan par mi nus* rather than *dnagos su bstan par mi nus*. On Nak-tso, see 238 note b.

<sup>d</sup> Commenting on stanza XVIII.9; Toh. 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 119b.5; La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā*, 373.2-373.4: *yathā hi taimirikā vitatham keśamaśakamakṣikādirūpaṃ paśyanto vitimiropadeśenāpi na śaknuvanti keśānām yathāvadavasthitaṃ svarūpamadārśananyāyenādhiḡantavyamataimirikā ivādhigantum* /. Tibetan in de Jong, *Cinq chapitres de la Prasannapadā*, 104; his French translation is on p. 29.

as it is, in the manner of not seeing the entities themselves of the falling hairs and so forth as those without cataracts do.

[Chandrakīrti] says that even though one without cataracts indicates to those with cataracts, “There are no falling hairs,” they do not realize the non-existence of falling hairs in the way that such is seen by the one without cataracts. Hence, even though those listeners [having cataracts] do not realize such that way, it is not that they do not realize the non-existence of falling hairs.

Taking this as an example, [Chandrakīrti] is asserting that when suchness is taught, even though [listeners] do not realize it as it is seen by one who lacks the pollution of the cataracts of ignorance, it is not that in general they do not realize suchness. Therefore, it is not that ultimate truth cannot be expressed by definitive scriptures having the profound meaning [of emptiness] and by speech teaching such, and it is not that ultimate truth cannot be realized even by an awareness following upon those. You also should understand similarly all statements that the meaning of suchness is not an object of consciousness and verbalization.

Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle”* says (see also *Insight*, 124):<sup>a</sup>

Where just those unreal entities such as falling hairs  
and so forth  
Are imputed through the force of cataracts,  
What is seen by one with clear eyes is the suchness [of  
those falling hairs].  
Understand it similarly here.

Though the force of his or her eyes being affected by cataracts, a person with cataracts sees falling hairs as well as bees and so on—which are [included] within [Chandrakīrti’s] “and so forth”—inside a vessel for food and drink, such as rhinoceros horn and so forth, which is in the hand. Seeing these, the person wishes to clean away the erroneous entities that he or she has imputed to be falling hairs, bees, and so forth and thereupon gets the difficulties of again and again turning the vessel upside down. Someone without cataracts, whose eyes are clear, realizes this and approaches the person, whereupon even though the person without cataracts aims his or her sight to that place where the one with cataracts sees the entities of those falling hairs and so forth, he or

<sup>a</sup> Toh. 3861, vol. 'a, 205b.3; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 109.6-109.9; La Vallée Poussin, “Introduction au traité du milieu,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 305.

she does not observe those aspects of falling hairs and does not conceptualize anything having falling hairs as their substratum, that is to say, does not conceptualize any attributes of falling hairs.

Moreover, when the one with cataracts reveals his or her thought to the one without cataracts, saying, “[I] see falling hairs,” the one without cataracts—wishing to clear up the idea of the one with cataracts—takes cognizance of his or her perspective and speaks words intent on negation, saying, “There are no falling hairs here,” but the speaker has no deprecatory denial of falling hairs. The suchness of the falling hairs that are seen by the one with cataracts is what is seen by the one without cataracts; it is not what is seen by the one with cataracts. Understand the meaning at this point in accordance with these two examples.

With respect to how this is to be understood, the entities of the aggregates, constituents, sense spheres, and so forth observed by those who do not see suchness because their minds are damaged, that is, polluted, by the cataracts of ignorance are the conventional entities of those aggregates and so forth, like the hairs observed by those with cataracts. That object—which is observed by not seeing those very aggregates and so forth and which the Buddhas, being free from the predispositions of ignorance, the obstructions to omniscience, perceive as the nature of the aggregates and so forth in the way that the eyes of one without cataracts do not see falling hairs—is the ultimate truth of those Buddhas.

## Dispelling objections to that

*Objection:* Just as the eyes of those without cataracts do not perceive even an appearance of falling hairs, so if a Buddha does not perceive conventionalities, such as aggregates and so forth, which appear to awarenesses polluted by ignorance, then those would not exist because if something exists, it must be perceived by a Buddha. If conventionalities such as aggregates do not exist, then even the attainment of Buddhahood would not exist because a person who initially generates a mind [of altruistic aspiration to Buddhahood] is one who is polluted by ignorance.

*Answer:* Let us explain how this fallacy does not occur. There are two ways that a Buddha’s pristine wisdom knows objects of knowledge—a mode of knowing all objects of knowledge that are ultimate truths and a mode of knowing all objects of knowledge that are obscurational truths. Concerning those, the first is knowledge of the

suchness of the aggregates and so forth in the manner of not perceiving their conventional appearances. The second is knowledge [of those aggregates and so forth] in the perspective of the pristine wisdom knowing the diversity [of phenomena] in the manner of dualistic appearance as object and subject; this is because it is not suitable to posit that a Buddha has implicit realization in which something is realized even though it does not appear and hence [everything] must be known upon its appearing.<sup>a</sup>

Although with respect to a Buddha's knowledge of the diversity the aggregates and so forth do not appear upon its being polluted by the predispositions of ignorance, what appears to the consciousnesses of other persons that are polluted with ignorance must appear to a Buddha. This is because it is not suitable for those appearances to be non-existent, and if a conventionality exists, it must be observed by [a Buddha's] knowledge of the diversity. Although the falling hairs that appear to one with cataracts do not appear to the eye consciousness of one free from cataracts, those **appearances** do not need to be non-existent; therefore, they are unlike [the situation with] a Buddha [wherein if a conventionality exists, it must appear to a Buddha, and if something does not appear to a Buddha, it must not exist].

Until the predispositions for mistaken dualistic appearance have been extinguished, the two direct comprehensions (1) of the mode of being [of phenomena] and (2) of the diversity [of phenomena] cannot be generated in one entity, due to which these must be comprehended within an alternation between meditative equipoise and states subsequent to meditative equipoise, and, therefore, comprehension of these two does not come within a single instant of pristine wisdom. When the predispositions for mistakenness have been completely abandoned, the generation of the two pristine wisdoms within each instant of pristine wisdom is continuous; hence, alternation between directly comprehending and not comprehending the two types of objects of knowledge at one time is not necessary. For this reason, [our presentation] also does not contradict the statement:

A single instant of exalted knowledge  
Pervades the full circle of objects of knowledge.

That although the two pristine wisdoms are one entity, there is not even the slightest contradiction in there coming to be two different modes of knowledge in relation to two [types of] objects is an attribute

<sup>a</sup> This counters Dol-po-pa's notion that a Buddha only implicitly knows obscurational truths; see below, 275ff.

solely of a Buddha, a Supramundane Victor. Whereas that is the case, those who take only the mode of knowledge of suchness as the mode of a Buddha's mode of knowledge and thereupon say that knowledge of the diversity [of phenomena] does not exist in a Buddha's mental continuum but instead is included within the continuums of trainees are deprecating a Buddha's knowledge of the diversity. Also, some [other scholars] appear to deprecate both pristine wisdoms, saying that even knowledge of the mode [of being of phenomena] does not exist in a Buddha's mental continuum. Some remaining topics concerning this will be explained on the occasion of [explaining the eleventh ground,] the fruit.

*Objection:* Would a nature with such an aspect of the vanishing of dualistic appearance not be unseen? Therefore, how do those Buddhas perceive it?

*Answer:* Since dualistic appearance has vanished in the perspective of perceiving suchness, it is true that it is not perceived in a dualistic manner, but it is said that they perceive in the manner of non-perception.

How this serves as an answer to the objection is:

- because that knowledge of the mode [of being of phenomena] directly perceives the suchness of the aggregates and so forth, and
- because the non-establishment of the aggregates and so forth in the perspective of that perception is their suchness, and
- because the suchness of the aggregates and so forth must be perceived in the manner of not perceiving them.

Chandrakīrti's *Autocommentary on the "Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle'"* (see also *Insight*, 132) says:<sup>a</sup>

Without contacting produced things, it actualizes solely the nature,<sup>b</sup> whereby suchness is understood; therefore, [a being who possesses such knowledge] is called "Buddha."

Thus, Chandrakīrti says that a Buddha's pristine wisdom knowing the ultimate realizes only the noumenon without contacting the substrata. This has the same meaning as the statement that the suchness of the aggregates and so forth is seen in the manner of not seeing them.

Also, with respect to the meaning of the statement (see also *Insight*,

<sup>a</sup> Commenting on VI.97; Toh. 3862, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 283a.2; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 201.17-201.19; La Vallée Poussin, "Introduction au traité du milieu," *Muséon* 12 (1911): 255.

<sup>b</sup> *rang bzhin, svabhāva*. This is not the object of negation in emptiness, but the final nature of phenomena.

130) that “Non-seeing is the ultimate seeing,” it is not being asserted that not seeing anything is to see. Rather, as explained earlier, not seeing the proliferations [of inherent existence and of conventionalities] is posited as seeing what is devoid of proliferations; therefore, the seen and the unseen do not refer to the same base. Moreover, in that way the *Verse Summary of the Perfection of Wisdom* (see also *Insight*, 130) says:<sup>a</sup>

The One-Gone-Thus teaches that one who does not see forms,  
Does not see feelings, does not see discriminations,  
Does not see intentions, does not see  
Consciousness, mind, or sentience sees the *dharmā*.<sup>b</sup>

Analyze how space is seen as in the expression  
By sentient beings in words, “Space is seen.”  
The One-Gone-Thus teaches that seeing the *dharmā* is also like  
that.

The seeing cannot be expressed by another example.

This says that the unseen is the aggregates, and the seen is the *dharmā*,<sup>c</sup> which means suchness,<sup>d</sup> as in the statement, “Whoever sees dependent-arising sees the *dharmā*.”

Furthermore, it is like, for example, the fact that space is a mere elimination of the obstructive objects of touch, and that seeing it—or realizing it—is taken as not seeing the preventive obstruction that is the object of negation and is suitable to be observed if it were present. In that [example], the seen is space, and the unseen is preventive obstruction. The last [two] lines refute that suchness is seen while seeing blue [for instance], which would be not to see in accordance with the example [of seeing space].

As a source for seeing in the manner of not seeing, [Chandrakīrti] cites the *Introduction to the Two Truths Sūtra*:<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *sañcayagāthāprajñāpāramitā, shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa*, stanzas XII.9-10; Toh. 13, vol. ka (*shes rab sna tshogs*); Sanskrit and Tibetan texts edited by Yuyama, *Samcaya-gāthā*, 52 and 171. For the Sanskrit, see the footnote on 260. English translation in Conze, *Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, 32.

<sup>b</sup> *chos*, which here means *chos nyid (dharmatā)*, as Tsong-kha-pa says just below when he equates it with suchness.

<sup>c</sup> *chos*.

<sup>d</sup> *de kho na nyid, tathatā*.

<sup>e</sup> *bden pa gnyis la 'jug pa / bden pa po'i le'u, satyakaparivarta*; P813, vol. 32. This passage is cited by Chandrakīrti in his *Commentary on the “Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) ‘Treatise on the Middle,’”* commenting on VI.29; Toh. 3862, vol. 'a, 256a.2; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, 111.1-111.4; La Vallée Poussin, “*Introduction au traité du milieu*,” *Muséon* 11 (1910): 306-307.

Devaputras, ultimately if the ultimate truth were of the nature of an object of body, of speech, or of mind, it would not be counted as an “ultimate truth”; it would be just an obscurational truth. However, Devaputras, ultimately the ultimate truth is passed beyond all conventions; it is not particularized, not produced, not ceasing, and devoid [of the duality] of object propounded and propounder as well as object known and consciousness.

The meaning of this first part of that sūtra passage is:

If it were that the ultimate truth is not—in the perspective of seeing the ultimate—seen in the manner of not seeing conventionalities such as the aggregates and so forth, but is an object in the way that the aggregates and so forth become objects of body, of speech, and of mind, then since it would not be free from proliferations in the perspective of directly seeing suchness, it would not be the ultimate truth but would be a conventional proliferation.

Taken that way, [the first part of Chandrakīrti’s citation] serves as a source for seeing in the manner of not seeing.

With respect to the meaning of the second part of that sūtra passage, that in the perspective of directly seeing the ultimate the ultimate truth “is not particularized,” the meaning is that it is without many different features. The other three are easy to understand. That in the perspective of this perception it is devoid of the objects and agents of propositions is easy [to understand]. That it is not contradictory that although this pristine wisdom directly seeing suchness can be posited as a knower of the ultimate and ultimate truth can be posited as its object known, in the perspective of that pristine wisdom those two—agent and object—are absent is because agent and object are posited only in the perspective of conventional awarenesses. It is like the fact that, for example, although an inferential rational consciousness can be posited as a subject<sup>a</sup> and ultimate truth can be posited as [its] object, the two—the agentness and objectness of subject and object—are not posited in the perspective of the rational consciousness.

Then [Chandrakīrti’s citation (see also *Insight*, 130 and 131) continues]:

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<sup>a</sup> *yul can*.

Devaputras, the ultimate truth is beyond [the objects of all consciousnesses] ranging right through the objects of omniscient pristine wisdoms endowed with the supreme of all aspects; it is not as expressed in the phrase “ultimate truth.” All phenomena are false; they are deceptive phenomena.

The meaning of this citation is as follows:

- The first clause indicates that the ultimate truth is beyond the objects of omniscient pristine wisdoms.
- “It is not as expressed in the phrase ‘ultimate truth’” indicates how it is beyond the objects of that [wisdom consciousness]. It is beyond the objects of the knowledge of the mode [of being of phenomena] by an omniscient consciousness in the sense of appearing in accordance with the individual dualistic appearance of separate subject and object to a conceptual consciousness induced by the expression “This is ultimate truth.”
- Since all dualistically appearing phenomena are false, deceptive phenomena, those do not exist in the perspective of the perception of the solely non-delusive suchness.

All those [statements] are sources for the non-appearance of conventionalities, such as the aggregates, in the perspective of directly perceiving suchness.

Therefore, none of the proliferations of dualistic phenomena such as effective thing, non-effective thing, and so forth occur in the perspective of directly perceiving suchness because the entities of those proliferations are not observed in that [perspective]. In that case, in actuality only Superiors are valid with respect to contemplating<sup>a</sup> suchness; non-Superiors are not actually valid. Hence, the world does not damage [that is, invalidate] the refutation of production from other in the perspective of a Superior’s perception of suchness.

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<sup>a</sup> *bsam pa*.