INSTRUCTIONS ON THE VIEW (LTA KHRIID) OF THE TWO TRUTHS:
PRAJñÁRAŚMI’S (1518-1584) BDEN GNYIS GSAL BA’I SGRON ME

Marc-Henri Deroche

Since the time of the Tibetan emperor Khri srong Id'e'u bstan (reign 755-ca. 800), the Mādhyamika position, originally taught by Nāgārjuna, has represented the supreme philosophical view (dṛṣṭi, lta ba) of Tibetan Buddhism. It is the keystone of Tibetan Buddhist doxographies (siddhānta, grub mtha’) that classify Indian Buddhist philosophical schools. One of the Mādhyamika School’s primary doctrines, the doctrine of the two truths (satya-dvaya, bden gnyis)—relative truth (saṃvritisatya, kun rdzob kyi bden pa) and absolute truth (paramārthasatya, don dam gyi bden pa)—represents the quintessence of the “middle path” (madhyamā pratipad, dbu ma'i lam) that avoids all extremes. Inspired by the Buddha’s teaching of a middle path that avoids both hedonism and asceticism, the Mādhyamika School articulates a metaphysical middle path that avoids both eternalism and nihilism.

As the correct Buddhist view par excellence, Madhyamaka defines both Tibetan Buddhist orthodoxy and orthopraxy. This is because the practical implementation of the two truths entails the conjunction of view (dṛṣṭi, lta ba, i.e. orthodoxy) and conduct (caryā, spyod pa, i.e. orthopraxy). The two truths, relative and absolute, form the “basis” (gzhi) of Tibetan Buddhist practice. The two collections (dvisaṁbhāra, tshogs gnyis) of merit (puṇya, bsod nams) and wisdom (jñāna, ye shes) correspond to the two truths, respectively, and form the “path” (lam) of Tibetan Buddhism. In a parallel way, the “fruit” (‘bras bu) or result of practice is constituted by the two kinds of Buddha-bodies: the form bodies (rūpakāya, gzugs kyi sku), corresponding to relative truth, and the absolute body (dharmakāya, chos kyi sku), corresponding to absolute truth.

1 I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Pr. Samten Karmay, Pr. Tsultrim Kalsang and Dr. Thubten Gawa for helping me to clarify passages of the text presented here, and to Pr. Matthew Kapstein and Pr. Fernand Meyer for their precious advices. I would like also to thank Dr. Seiji Kumagai for sharing his knowledge in this field, and to Joshua Schapiro (M.A.) for improving the English. Of course, all mistakes that might remain should be imputed to the sole author.

2 This threefold conception of the two truths into ground, path, and result, is articulated by the 3rd Karmapa Rang ‘byung rdo rje (1284-1339) in the famous Rje rang byung zhabs kyi msad pa'i nges don phyag rgya chen po'i smon lam 2006: 619.2-4. / rtags chad mtha’ bral bden gnyis gzhi yi don // sgro skur mtha’ bral tshogs gnyis lam mchog gis // srid zhi’i mtha’ bral don gnyis ‘bras thob pa'i // gol ’chugs med pa'i chos dang phrad par shog.
Because of its centrality to Mahāyāna soteriology, including Mantrayāna and its skillful means, interpretations of Madhyamaka have functioned as sectarian markers for the competing Buddhist orders in Tibet. For the same reason, Madhyamaka interpretations have also served as the ground for Buddhist eclectic syntheses. Such interpretations, often focusing on the two truths and the classification of Madhyamika sub-schools, have been the source for considerable creativity and polemic in Tibetan literature.

My goal is to present here one specific Tibetan treatise on the two truths, a treatise that focuses on the quest for truth along the yogin’s path: The Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths (Bden gyis gsai ba’i sgron me), hereafter named the Lamp, an instruction on the view (lta khrid) of the two truths of Madhyamaka, written by the eclectic sixteenth-century Tibetan author Prajñāraśmi.

Written during a period marked by an intensification of sectarian and scholastic disputes, this treatise chooses to go back to Indian and early Bka’ gdams pa sources with an emphasis on realization. It does so through a critical inquiry into the nature of knowledge itself. For these reasons, the Lamp is a valuable witness of contemplative Madhyamaka in Tibet during the period concluding the complete reception and assimilation of its Indian sources by Tibetan authors.

To this day, the text has remained an object of study for contemporary Tibetan Buddhist teachers like the late Dezhung Rinpoche (Sde gzhung rin po che, 1906-1987) and Nyichang Khentrul Rinpoche (Nyi lcang mkhan sprul rin po che, b. 1935). Joshua Schapiro also informed me about the insertion of most of Prajñāraśmi’s Lamp in one of Rdza Dpal sprul rin po che’s (1808-1887) work.

1. Presentation

1.1. Prajñāraśmi: Dge bshes, Gter ston, and “Ris med” Figure of 16th century Tibet

Prajñāraśmi, alias ’Phreng po gter ston Shes rab ’od zer (1518-1584), is remembered in the Rnying ma tradition as the founder of Dpal ri monastery in ‘Phyong rgyas, formerly one of the six main mother-monasteries (rtsa ba’i ma dgon chen mo) of the Rnying ma tradition.

4 Personal communication of Nyichang Khentrul Rinpoche himself, Kyōto, November 2009.
5 Theg chen lta khrid bden gyis rab tu gsal ba. There Dpal sprul copies and summarizes Prajñāraśmi’s Lamp without explicitly quoting it. He also includes other instructions, particularly on the nature of mind (sems nyid). Incidentally, Dpal sprul’s text has no colophon and no formal signature.
6 Formerly, the list of the six Rnying ma main mother-monasteries included three monasteries in upper Tibet (stod na): Rdo rje brag, Smin gro lling and Dpal ri, and three monasteries in lower Tibet (smad na): Kah thog, Rdzogs chen and Dpal yul. Nevertheless, Dpal ri declined in central Tibet during modern times while...
Dpal ri is where the great 'Jigs med gling pa (1729/1730-1798) was born and obtained the first revelation of the Klong chen snying thig. The name Prajñāraśmi is the Sanskrit equivalent of his Tibetan religious name Shes rab 'od zer and is the name that he used for himself in his own works. Prajñāraśmi was the original progenitor of the classification of the “Eight Great Chariots of the Lineages of Attainment” that 'Jam mgon Kong sprul (1813-1899) followed in his Gdams ngag mdzod, and which formed one of the central paradigms of the so-called Ris med movement.

According to his biographies, Prajñāraśmi had an eclectic itinerary at the very time of the intensification of sectarian conflicts between what Tucci called the “Reds and the Yellows.” He was first trained in the monastery of É waṃ in Thank skya, between Dga’ ldan and 'Bri gung, where he received numerous transmissions from Rdo rgyal ba, a disciple of Sakya mchog ldan (1428-1507). He also studied the teachings of the Dge lugs order (probably in the nearby monastery of Cha dkar) with Dge ‘dun bstan pa dar rgyas (1473-1568), who became the 22nd abbot of Dga’ ldan in 1565. Having mastered scholastic studies, Prajñāraśmi was awarded the title of dge bshes in both the Sa skya and Dge lugs traditions.

During the great dispute between Dga’ ldan and ‘Bri gung in 1535, Prajñāraśmi found refuge in ‘Bri gung, though his hagiography simply states that he was strongly attracted by the charisma of ‘Bri gung Rin chen phun tshogs (1509-1557). Once in ‘Bri gung, however, he did not escape the complex sectarian relations of his time. He was soon asked to make a public defense of the Dgongs Zhe chen flourished in Khams. The list thus evolved to include the following six monasteries: Rdo rje brag and Smin grol gling (stod na), Zhe chen and Rdzogs chen (bar na), Kah thog and Dpal yul (smad na). See Rdzogs chen chos 'byung 2004: 810-813. Aware of Dpal ri’s great significance, Nyichang Rinpoche is establishing a new Dpal ri theg mchog gling monastery in Kalimpong. The original Dpal ri monastery in Tibet has only a few monks at present. Nevertheless, it plays an important function by maintaining the Bang so dmar po, Srong btsan sgam po’s tomb in ‘Phyong rgyas. It also has close ties with the nunnery of Tshe ring ljongs founded by ‘Jigs med gling pa in the neighboring valley (fieldwork in ‘Phyong rgyas, May 2010).

8 For this reason, in this paper concerned with one of his works, the Lamp, we refer mainly to him as Prajñāraśmi.
9 According to this classification, the Eight Lineages of Attainment are: the Rnying ma pa, Bka’ gdams pa, Shangs pa bka’ brgyud, Lam ‘bras, Mar pa bka’ brgyud, Zhi byed (with Bcod yul), Sbyor drug (the Six Yogas of the Kālacakra tantra) and Rdo rje gsum gyi bsnyen grub.
10 Gdams ngag mdzod 1971: vol. 12, 645-646. This reference was first given in Kapstein 1996.
11 Deroche 2009.
geig, the doctrine of the 'Bri gung order's founder, 'Jig rten mgon po (1143-1217), against the critiques of Sa skyi pandita’s (1182-1251) Sdom gsun rab byed, an important work that the young dge bshes had certainly studied in his former Sa skyi monastery.

While at 'Bri gung, Prajñāraśmi received the whole transmission of Rin chen phun tshogs, which primarily were Bka’ bgyud and Rnying ma teachings. He fully embraced the strong contemplative spirit of these traditions and lived for a decade in the area of Gzho stod gter sgrom (associated with Padmasambhava and Ye shes mtsho rgyal). He eventually received a visionary revelation of the Grol thig dgongs pa rang grol and became a famous treasure revealer (gter ston). He likely remained most of his life in his hermitage in 'Phreng po, a small village inside Rdo rje brag’s domain—this before Byang bdag Bkra shis stobs rgyal (1550-1602) moved his contemplative community to what was later formally established as Rdo rje brag monastery.

Because of his vast aura, Prajñāraśmi was invited by the rulers of 'Phyong rgyas, ministers of the Phag mo gru pa sovereigns (gong ma), to establish a Rnying ma monastery in their land consecrated by the ancient emperors’ tombs. Prajñāraśmi established Dpal ri theg chen gling in 1571 and for the auspicious occasion made a revision of the Padma thang yig. This revision was later used by the 5th Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-1682) (himself born into the 'Phyong rgyas family).

Prajñāraśmi was thus trained within all four main orders of Tibetan Buddhism. Having directly encountered fierce sectarian quarrels, both in the political and scholastic spheres, he fully embraced the detached life of a contemplative hermit. Because he had been first trained as a scholar, he was honored with the title “Precious dge bshes gter ston Shes rab ‘od zer coming from 'Phreng po [or ‘Phrang sgo]” (‘phrang sgo nas dge bshes rin po che gter ston shes rab ‘od zer), the association of dge bshes and gter ston being a singular combination of the ideals of being a scholar and an accomplished yogin (mkhas grub).

1.2. Sources and Orientation of The Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths

When Prajñāraśmi was only a young dge bshes, it is said that he met Rin chen phun tshogs for the first time while the latter was giving a commentary on the three following verses of Śāntideva (ca. 685-763)’s Bodhicaryavatāra, from the famous ninth chapter on wisdom:

The Buddha taught that the goal
Of all these branches [of the five perfections] is wisdom.

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15 Sngags 'chang chen mo kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar 1980: 252.
16 Zhe chen chos 'byung 1994: 264-265; Rdzogs chen chos 'byung 2004: 831.
This is why those who aspire to pacify sufferings Must generate wisdom.

[As for the objects of wisdom,] two truths are distinguished: Relative truth and absolute truth. Absolute truth is not an object of the intellect’s (buddhi, blo) experience. Intellect is said to be relative truth.

Yogin and ordinary beings
See the world [which is relative truth] in two different ways. [The view of] the world possessed by ordinary beings Is severed by [the view of] the world possessed by yogin.  

These strophes are of decisive importance for understanding Prajñāraśmi’s intention in the Lamp. Having first established the central importance of wisdom in Buddhist soteriology, Śāntideva continues with an interpretation of the two truths wherein the intellect or conceptual mind belongs to relative truth. As Prajñāraśmi will argue, the two truths are not only a subject for virtuosi scholars. Serious reflection on the two truths is a method for radically changing one’s perspective and one’s mind. After a realization of the two truths, the yogin has a radically different vision of the world.

It is said that Rin chen phun tshogs elaborated his commentary on Śāntideva with the practical instructions of the Bka’ brgyud lineage. Having heard these explanations, Prajñāraśmi decided to emulate the yogin’s way of life himself. In the Lamp, Prajñāraśmi decides to avoid the scholastic disputes in order to emphasize the yogic realization. He also avoids any reference to later Tibetan schools or authors, preferring to go back to the roots of Madhyamaka in Tibet.

David Seyfort Ruegg describes four periods of Indian Madhyamaka’s reception and assimilation in Tibet. They are:

I. Preliminary assimilation (mainly in the 8th and 9th c.)
II. Full assimilation (end of the 10th to the 14th c.)

17 Bhattacharya (ed.) 1960: 185. inam pari karam sarvaṃ prajñārtham hi munir jagau / tasmād utpādayet prajñām dukkhanivṛttikāṅkṣāya // 1 yon laq ‘di dag thams cad ni // thub pa’i shes rab don du gsungs // de yi phyir na sṅug bṣngal dag / zhi bar ’dod pas shes rab bskyed // 1

III. Classical period (14th-16th c.)
IV. Scholastic period (16th c. onwards)

Our present text corresponds to the fourth period, a period marked by the repetition and classification of previous interpretations. The Lamp does repeat former statements about the two truths, though a look at his chosen sources is striking. Its sole sources are sūtras, quotations from the illustrious Indian masters, and works by early Bka’ gdams pa. The Lamp is thus a sixteenth century treatise based on sources up to the eleventh century only. It avoids any reference to later authors or to the Tibetan Buddhist orders that established their sectarian identities during Ruegg’s second phase (end of the 10th to the 14th centuries).

The following authors and their śāstra, quoted by Prajñāraṣṭrī, form the fundamental Madhyamaka sources for all Tibetan orders:

— Nāgārjuna (2nd-3rd c.), Mālamadhyamakakārikā (Dbu ma rtsa ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa shes rab);
— Śāntideva (7th-8th c.), Bodhicaryāvatāra (Byang chub sems dpa’i spyod pa la ’jug pa);
— Jñānagarbha (7th-9th c.), Satyadvayavibhaṅgakārikā (Bden pa gnyis rim par ’byed pa’i tshig le’ur byas pa);
— The tantric Nāgārjuna (9th-10th c.), Paṅcakrama (Rim pa lnga).
— Atīśa (980-1054), Satyadvayāvatāra (Bden pa gnyis la ’jug pa), a text which synthetizes all the sources mentioned above.
— ’Brom ston Rgyal ba’i ’byung gnas (1005-1064), the main Tibetan disciple of Atīśa;
— Spyan snga tshul khrims ’bar (1038-1103), one of ’Brom ston pa’s three main disciples (Sku mched gsum), and considered to be the origin of the transmission of Atīśa’s Introduction to the Two Truths.19

As an instruction on the view (lta khrid) of Madhyamaka, the Lamp does not belong to the doxographical (grub mtha’) genre. The Lamp focuses only on Madhyamaka and avoids any mention of Mādhyamika sub-schools. In other works, Prajñāraṣṭrī expresses his disapproval for discussions based on the Svātantrika-Prāṣāṅgika distinction.20 He also advocates that Maitreya, Asanga and Vasubandhu be considered Mādhyamikas, which allows him to make a

19 Bod kyi dbu ma’i lta ba’i ’chad nyam dar tshul blo gsal mig ’byed 2004: 124. Spyan snga bas jo bo’i “Bden gnyis la ’jug pa” zhes pa ’chad nyam rgya cher mtzad pa ; gang ltar skabs der je bo rje’i “Bden gnyis la ’jug pa” zhes pa’i bshad rgyun ches dar ba ni spyan snga ba’i bka’ drin las byung bar bshad do /.
20 Thos bsam ’chi med kyi bsud rtsi 1977: 239.4-5. / gsang chen rgyud dang dbu sems shing rta’i srol // khu sgrub dgongs pa thal rang srol gnyis khyi // legs par bskal ba’i bshad srol zla med pa // de dag phal cher ’khyog po’i lam du bskal /.
larger argument for a Gzhan stong interpretation of Madhyamaka. Nevertheless, we will see that the Great Madhyamaka propounded in the Lamp, as elsewhere in his corpus, is manifestly Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, even if the term Prāsaṅgika is not used. Ju Mi pham rnam rgyal rgya mtsho (1846-1912) was to later feature a similar exegesis for his Rnying ma audience.

From the time of Rje Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419), scholastic approaches to Madhyamaka developed greatly in Tibet. In his commentaries upon Candrakīrti, Tsong kha pa also made special interpretations that became central for the Dge lugs order. Tsong kha pa developed his exegesis by taking knowable objects (shes bya) to be the basis for dividing the two truths. In this line of thinking, every single phenomenon can be considered in its aspect of relative truth or in its aspect of absolute truth. These two aspects of each phenomenon are experienced by two different cognitions. One of Tsong kha pa’s contributions was to maintain the simultaneity of these two cognitions, even for Noble Ones (ārya, phags pa) or Buddhas, and not as two opposite cognitions like ordinary beings’ cognitions versus the Nobles’ cognitions.

In contradistinction to Tsong kha pa, Go rams pa bsod nams seng ge (1429-1489) opted for a subjective and gnoseological perspective on the two truths. Similarly, Prajñāraśmi’s Lamp first explains how all objects must be realized according the two truths, and then explains how the mode of being (gnas lugs) of knowledge itself must be realized according to the two truths. Prajñāraśmi, relying on the authority of the first Bka’ gdam pa, asserts that the two truths are only distinguished according to the two opposite perspectives of knowledge, correct and mistaken.

21 Id.: 234.4-5. / gangs ri'i khrod 'dir mi pham rgyal ba dang // thugs med mched kyi gzhang bzang ngo mtshar can / dbu sans so sor 'grel byed rnam mang yang // gang de dbu ma'i gzhang du gdon ma za //.

22 In the following extract, his propounded type of “Great Madhyamaka” proceeds by the refutation of any reification of wisdom. Sgom pa ‘chi med kyi bsdud rtsi 1977: 253.4-5. / gang shar rang sens mdo sens thun mong ba // gzang 'dzin 'gog pa rnam brdzun dbu ma'i lugs // gnyis med ye shes bden grub 'gog pa yis // lha ba'i rnam gzhang dbu ma chen por 'dod /.


24 Newland 1992: 49. “These distinctions are critical to the Ge-luk-pa philosophical project, the preservation of non-paradoxical compatibility between the two truths. The conventional mind that finds a table is not discredited by the ultimate mind that finds the emptiness of the table. The first is valid because the table (a conventional truth) does exist; the second is also valid because the table’s real nature is an eminence of inherent existence (an ultimate truth).”

25 Dbu ma spyi don nges don rab gsal 1969: 375b.1-2. dbu ma'i gzhang lugs 'dir ni yul rang rgo nas bden pa gnyis su byes med kyi snang ba'i dang po geig la'ang yul can brdzun pa mthong ba dang //yang dag mthong ba gnyis sam // khrul ma 'khrul gnyis sam / mnyung ma mnyung gnyis sam / phyin ci log ma log gnyis sam // tshad ma yin min gnyis kyi mthong tshul gyi sgo nas kun rdzob bden pa dang // don dam bden pa gnyis su phyi ba ste /. On the different perspectives of Tsong kha pa and Go rams pa on the two truths, see Takchoe 2007. See also Constance Kassor’s paper in the present volume, with particular reference to the text of Go rams pa here quoted.
Prajñāraśmi’s contemporary the 8th Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507-1554) undertook a vast commentary upon the works of Candrakīrti, wherein he refuted the positions of other scholars like Dol po pa, Śākya mchog ldan, Bo dong Phyogs las nam rgyal and Tsong kha pa. As David Seyfort Ruegg has shown,26 Mi bskyod rdo rje claimed to be the heir of three lineages of Madhyamaka: from Nāropa and Maitrīpada through the Bka’ brgyud lineage, from Atiśa through the Bka’ gdams pa lineage, and from Pa tshab lo tsā ba Nyima grags. Confronted by what he judged to be excessive sophistication,27 the 8th Karmapa intended to restore the Bka’ gdams pa lineage’s original contemplative approach.

Contrary to the 8th Karmapa, Prajñāraśmi’s Lamp avoids any polemics. He essentially propounds the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka’s presentation of the two truths according to the early Bka’ gdams pa. By doing so, he also emphasizes, in his own way, the contemplative approach of Atiśa’s lineage.

Having presented the historical context of the Lamp’s composition, we shall now examine the philosophical nature of its argument about the two truths.

1.3. Philosophical Argument

The Lamp resorts to dyads in order to show how the doctrine of the two truths can function as a means to realize non-dual truth. The first dyad emphasizes the contemplative approach through articulating the division of the teaching to be realized (rtogs par bya bu’i chos) and the teaching to be practiced (nyams su blang bu’i chos). The philosophical nature of the two truths is presented under the heading of the first, while the second deals with the soteriological progression of the path.

The other philosophical dyads that we will discuss are thus found in the section of the teaching to be realized, which deals with the view. There, one finds the distinction between the mode of being of general, knowable phenomena (shes bya spyi’i chos kyi gnas lugs) and the mode of being of knowledge itself (shes rang gi gnas lugs). The next dyad of the argument, applied to both objects and subjects, is the distinction of the two truths, and, in the ultimate sense, the inseparability of the two truths: their conjunction (yuganaddha, zung ’jug).

Concerning the subdivisions of relative truth, the author makes use of the two presentations of Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika, even if their names remain implicit. To build his argument, he quotes, in order, the first three masters of the Bka’ gdams pa lineage: Atiśa, ’Brom ston pa, and Spyan snga tshul khrims ’bar. Via a quotation from Atiśa, he divides relative truth into correct (tathya-samvyrti, yang

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27 Williams 1983.
dag pa’i kun rdzob) and mistaken (mithyā-samvṛti, log pa’i kun rdzob), primarily based on the principle of efficiency (arthakriyā-samartha, don byed nus pa). But he next quotes ‘Brom ston pa who states that all appearances perceived with attachment by ordinary beings belong only to mistaken knowledge. So, ultimately, the term “correct” can’t be applied to relative truth perceived by ordinary beings.

The correct and the mistaken relative truths distinguished by the Svātantrika-Madhyamaka are both only mistaken relative truth from the point of view of the “Great Middle Path,” the Prāśāṅgika-Madhyamaka. From this soteriological perspective, correct relative truth is constituted by the appearances perceived as illusions by the Noble Ones during their post-meditation. The Prāśāṅgika accept distinctions within the domain of the conventional perception of appearances by ordinary beings, but they do not use the term “correct” to qualify them, since all of these appearances are perceived by a deluded mind.\(^\text{28}\)

In agreement with this understanding of mistaken and correct relative truths, Prajñāraśmi equates mistaken relative truth with the ordinary vision of the world and its beings, and correct relative truth with their tantric transformation into divine palaces and gods. This prefigures the tantric theme of the conjunction (yuganaddha, zung ’jug) of the two truths, to be discussed further on.

Concerning absolute truth, Prajñāraśmi basically follows the principle expressed by Atīśa that there are neither divisions nor distinctions within the Dharmadhātu itself (nor between the two truths, themselves). But Prajñāraśmi does accept the distinction from the point of view of whether the Dharmadhātu is manifested by realization or not. In this sense, the author offers a set of distinctions about absolute truth that can be considered to be more or less equivalent. One such distinction is between absolute truth that is not an analytical category (rnam grangs ma yin pa) and absolute truth that is an analytical category (rnam grangs) of dialectics (mtshan ngyid). This is very similar to Bhāviveka’s approach, where one finds a subdivision of absolute truth into absolute truth without discursiveness (aprapañca, spros pa med pa) and absolute truth with discursiveness (saprapañca, spros pa dang bcas pa); or Jñānagarbha’s distinction between the non-dual (advaya, gnyis med) absolute or the absolute without discursiveness (aprapañca, spros pa med pa), and absolute truth which belongs to logic (nyāya, rigs pa).\(^\text{29}\) The basic idea here is to distinguish between absolute truth in itself and absolute

\(^{28}\) Dbus pa blo gsal (14th c.), for example, articulates a similar view. He argues that for the Prāśāṅgika, correct relative truth is only the Noble Ones’ relative truth (ārya-samvṛti, p thugs pa’i kun rdzob), or mere relative truth (samvṛti-nātra, kun rdzob tsem po) perceived as an illusion without reification. See Mimaki 1982: 158.99a5. de dag ’phags pa’i kun rdzob dang kun rdzob tsem po yang zer ro //

\(^{29}\) With reference to Atīśa, Bhāviveka and Jñānagarbha’s distinctions, see Kumagai 2011: 9-15.
truth as a mere concept. We might even say that absolute truth as a mere concept is only a *relative* absolute truth.

Prajñāraśmi relies on Spyan snga tshul khrims 'bar to equate the knowledge of ordinary, deluded beings with mistaken relative truth, the knowledge of the Noble Ones during post-meditation with correct relative truth, and the knowledge of the Buddhas with absolute truth. As different levels of truth, these three types of knowledge (mistaken relative, correct relative, absolute) represent a path from concealed truth to unconcealed truth, similar to the ascension from the cavern up to the direct vision of the sun in Plato’s famous allegory (*Republic*, VII, 514-519).30

We can now summarize the definition and relation of the two truths according to Prajñāraśmi as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No distinction of the two truths within the Dharmadhātu</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinction of the two truths as the two faces of knowledge: unmistaken and mistaken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute truth</th>
<th>Distinction of absolute truth</th>
<th>Manifested by realization</th>
<th>Not manifested by realization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No distinction of absolute truth within the Dharmadhātu</td>
<td>1. Knowledge of absolute truth (Buddhas)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Distinction of absolute truth</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not manifested by realization</td>
<td>Ø</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative truth</th>
<th>¥</th>
<th>[Svātantrika]</th>
<th>[Prāṣangika]</th>
<th>Mantrayāna</th>
<th>Ø</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Efficient, etc.</td>
<td>Appearances seen as illusions</td>
<td>Divine palace and gods</td>
<td>2. Knowledge of relative truth (Noble Ones)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistaken</td>
<td>Non efficient, etc.</td>
<td>Appearances seen as true31</td>
<td>Ordinary world and beings</td>
<td>3. Mistaken knowledge (ordinary beings)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inseparability of the two truths: conjunction (yuganaddha, zung ‘jug)**

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30 See Kapstein 2001 with insightful references to Heidegger’s reading of Plato.
31 Here are thus included both the categories of correct and mistaken relative as understood by the Svātantrika. They are both mistaken relative according to the Prāṣangika.
Malcom David Eckel has remarked that Jñānagarbha’s argument on the two truths was more circular and paradoxical than dialectical because Jñānagarbha moves first from the distinction of the two truths to their non-distinction, and then goes back to their distinction, without stating any reconciling synthesis between distinction and non-distinction.\footnote{Eckel 1987: 35-49.}

In a sense, Prajñārāśmi’s argument functions in a similar way to that of Jñānagarbha. He starts by saying that in the Dharmadhātu there are no distinctions between the two truths: they are only distinguished as the two perspectives of knowledge, for the benefit of deluded beings. Then, when Prajñārāśmi does define the two truths, he reaches the conclusion that absolute truth is the mere suchness of relative truth. Distinction leads to non-distinction. But the author then immediately reaffirms the need for the distinction of the two truths in soteriological terms. Here we see something similar to the paradoxical or circular quality of Jñānagarbha’s argument, as analyzed by Eckel.

The distinction and non-distinction of the two truths are all discussed in the Lamp’s section on the distinction of the two truths. But when the text moves to the inseparability of the two truths, the synthesis of distinction and non-distinction appears as their conjunction (yuganaddha, zung ‘jug). The dual perspectives of the two truths are unified in a non-dual realization. The double aspect of the two truths is integrated in the realization of the inseparability of the appearances and emptiness (snang stong dbyer med) concerning the objects, and the inseparability of the intelligence and emptiness (rig stong dbyer med) concerning knowledge.

This concept of conjunction is introduced with reference to the Yuganaddhakrama (Zung du ’jug pa’i rim pa), the fifth and last krama of the Pañcakrama, the famous commentary on the Guhyasamājatantra written by the tantric Nāgārjuna. The explanation of “conjunction” with reference to the Pañcakrama points back to the confluence of Madhyamaka and tantrism in India. Michael Broido has also shown the importance of the notions of conjunction (yuganaddha, zung du ‘jug pa) and “co-emergence” (sahaja, lhan cig skyes pa), both originated from tantric literature, in Tibetan interpretations of Madhyamaka, such as in the syntheses of Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje and ’Brug chen Padma dkar po (1527-1592).\footnote{Broido 1985.}

In Nāgārjuna’s thought, the notion of dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda, rten cing ‘brel bar ‘byung ba), articulated in MMK XXIV-18,\footnote{Saigusa (ed.) 1985: 766.} is the key to understanding the two truths. As such, this
famous strophe (as translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva), served for Zhiyi, the founder of the Tiantai School, as the basis of an original interpretation of the three truths (Chin. 圓融三三 yuanrong sandi, Jap. enyū santai): relative truth (Chin. 假 jiă, Jap. ketai), truth of emptiness (Chin. 空 kongdi, Jap. kūtai), and truth of the middle (Chin. 中 zhongdi, Jap. chūtai), the latter being the dialectical synthesis of the former two truths.

Tibetan authors like Prajñāraśmi only asserted two truths, not three. But for synthetic purposes, they did generally rely upon Tantric terminology to explain the meditative experiences that correlate with the two truths. Esotericism thus forms a means for integrating and transcending the conceptual oppositions created by scholastic categories. In the Lamp, Prajñāraśmi explicitly refers to the Mantrayāna context: tantric visualizations of divine palaces and deities correspond to correct relative truth: relative truth perceived without attachment. Like illusions, tantric visualizations are the conjunction of appearances and emptiness, diaphanous and transparent, we might say trans-apparent. The two tantric phases of creation (utpattikrama, bskyed rim) and perfection (nispannakrama, rdzogs rim) are methods for realizing this conjunction of appearance and emptiness. In the Ambrosia of Meditation, Prajñāraśmi even appeals to creation stage and perfection stage practices as explanations of how one can integrate the categories of Rang stong and Gzhan stong, two interpretations of emptiness that are unified amidst the tantric experience of conjunction.

A similar approach was elaborated upon in the conclusion to Kong sprul’s eclectic doxography on Madhyamaka, as found in his Shes bya mdzod.

To conclude this presentation, let me mention how the conjunction of appearances and emptiness are finally to be cultivated in the context of direct contemplative practice. In Prajñāraśmi’s Practice of Pacification and Higher Insight, a short text that draws inspiration from Mahāmudrā and Rdzogs chen, our author states:

Without falling into the unique direction of either so-called appearances or emptiness, one remains in emptiness as the own nature of appearances. But in Awareness (rig pa), the own nature of emptiness is clarity. The essence of Awareness (rig pa) can’t be expressed by any example. It can’t be the object of any expression. At the time of appearances: [it is] free (khrig ge ba) in emptiness. At the time of emptiness: [it is] lucid (lam me ba) in appearances. Similar to water and humidity, or fire and heat, [this is] the state of conjunction of
the original nature (Ye nas rang bzhin) and spontaneity (Lhun grub) [...] 39

2. Edition of the Tibetan Text 40

[A107, B54] 151


[B: Zhi lhag gi nyams len 1977: 503.1-3. snang bu' am stong pa zhes pa gcig gi phyogs su ma chad cing / snang ba'i rang bzhin stong nyid du bzang kyung / stong pa'i rang bzhin rig par gsal ba / rig pa'i nga bo la dpe gang gi kyang mi mtshen zhi/ brjod pa gang gi yang yul du ma gyur pa i / snang ba'i dus na stong par khti ge ba / stong pa'i dus na snang bar lam me pa gnyis / chu dang rian gsher 'am / me dang tsha ba bzhin du ye nas rang bzhin lhun grub tu zung du 'jug pa'i ngang [...]

B: I rely on two editions: A, from the collected works of Prajñāraśmi, which has the advantage of being an older version but the disadvantage of numerous misspellings; and B, a modern edition that is more clear but, inconveniently, sometimes changes the original text. I would like to thank very much Hideaki Inomoto, student of Nyichang Rinpoche, for offering me the latter version which helped a lot for the present purpose. Note that the subtitle added by B below, explicitly associates the Lamp with the Prāśāntika-Madhymakā. 41

B: 151
मुग्धिमईसमेतक्षेत्रकाईकािहिन्दुस्तानकेियांकििशक्तििसर सबैकाीसरकारका औरििसन्तकेेिर निश्चित रेियांकििशक्तििसर सबैकाीसरकारका औरििसन्तकेेिर

46 A: घरान; B: हिंद
47 B: अट्टिसिेिविसिेिवििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििरििর
[1. སྐུ་ེ wildlife: དེང་གནང་བར་སྦྱོར་]  
དངོས་པོ་བོད་ཡི་ཕྱིག་ལམ་མི་བྱེད་པའི་ོགས་པོ་  
མི་ལུས་དོན་[56]བོད་ལྕགས་  
མཛད་པ་[55]

[1.1. སྐུ་ེ wildlife: དེང་གནང་བར་སྦྱོར་]  
དངོས་པོ་བོད་ཡི་ཕྱིག་ལམ་མི་བྱེད་པའི་ོགས་པོ་  
མི་ལུས་དོན་[56]བོད་ལྕགས་  
མཛད་པ་[55]

55 B: ཨྲུ་  
56 B: ཨྲུ་  
57 B: ཨྲུ་  
58 B: ཨྲུ་  
59 B: ཨྲུ་  
60 B: ཨྲུ་  
61 A: སྐུ་ེ wildlife: དེང་གནང་བར་སྦྱོར་  
62 B: ཨྲུ་  
63 B: ཨྲུ་
[1.1.1.1. ༦༨ ཞེས་ཀྱི་མི་མ་བཞི་རྣམ་རྒྱ་གྱུར་མི་ཤེས་བྱ་བསོད་ནམས་ལྟ་སྐྱེས་པར་བྱེད་པ།]

[1.1.1.1.1. བ་ཞེས་ཞིང་སི་བདེན་པ་]
Instructions on the View

[B57] 72 B: ཐེག་
73 A: ཞེས།
74 A: ཞུན།
75 B omits ཉེ།
76 A: སྐབྱིགས།
77 A: ཞུན།
78 B: ཉེ།
79 B: བོད་
80 A: ཞུན།
81 B adds: [བདེན་བཅོམ་བཞིན་དེ་དེར་བཤད་]
82 A: ཞེས།
83 B: ཉེ།

[1.1.1.1.1. དེབ་པའི་གུ་ནི་ཟེ་བ། བདེན་པའི་གུ་ནི་ཟེ་བ།]
84 B: མ
85 B: བ
86 B: ལན་ཆེན
87 B adds མ
88 B: མ
89 A: སོ་ཉེན
90 B omits these two elements from the former note.
91 A: ཝི
92 B adds ཝི
93 A: ཝི
94 A: ཚ་གཅ
95 B: སྤྱ་ན
96 B adds ཞཔ
97 A: སྐད་ཀྱིན
98 A: ཝི
99 B: རྐྱབས་
Instructions on the View

100 A

101 B

102 A

103 B

104 A

105 B adds "

106 B

107 A

108 A

109 B inserts: "

110 B


[1.1.1.2. ་དུས་བོད་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་]

[111 B: ག']

[112 B: ཟགས་དབང་]

[113 B: ག']

[114 B adds ཚར']

[115 B: རྣམས་བུད

[116 B: ག']

[117 A: རྣམས་བུད

[118 A: ག']

[119 B adds ག']

[120 B adds ཚར']
Instructions on the View

[121] A: ༧

[122] B: ལྟ

[123] A: རུ

[124] B: བ

[125] B: ཟང་སྐད་ཀྱི་དོན་མི་ནམས་དམིགས།

[126] B: ཉོན་དོན་མི་འབྲེལ་ཞེས་་བོད་ཅེས་གྱིས།

[127] B: ཉོན་དོན་མི་འབྲེལ་ཞེས་་བོད་ཅེས་གྱིས།

[128] A: རུ

[129] A: རུ

[130] B: རུ

[131] A: རུ

[132] A: རུ

[133] A: རུ

132: བོད
133: བོད
134: བོད
135: བོད
136: བོད
137: བོད
138: B omits བོད
139: བོད
140: བོད
141: བོད
142: B adds བོད
143: བོད
144: བོད

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Instructions on the View

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* * *

145: A
146: A
147: A
148: A
149: B
150: B
151: B
152: A
153: B
154: B
155: A
156: A
157: B
158: A

B omits
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159 B omits
160 B omits
161 A: ཐོ
162 A: ང་སྒྲ
163 B: བསྒྲ
164 A: བོ
165 B: བློ
166 B: ༀ


167 B: নূৎনচর্চা

168 B: সমন্বিততা

169 B omits গুপ্তিমাল

170 B: স্বাধীন

171 A's notes re-established according to B.

172 B adds অ

173 B: স্নাতক

174 A's notes, re-established according to B.

175 A's notes, re-established according to B.

176 A: সংকলন

177 A's notes, re-established according to B.

178 B omits অন

179 A's notes, re-established according to B.

180 A's notes, re-established according to B.

181 B omits সত্ব


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A's notes, re-established according to B.

A: ་

B: ཤར

A: དབར་བཅོས་

B: ཤར་

A: དབར་བཅོས་

B: ཤར་

181: ཤཱཀེ་ཁི།

182: རག་ལི་བཞི་

183: རག་ལི་བཞི་

184: རག་ལི་བཞི་

185: རག་ལི་བཞི་

186: རག་ལི་བཞི།

187: རག་ལི་བཞི། [A114]

188: རག་ལི་བཞི།

189: རག་ལི་བཞི།

190: རག་ལི་བཞི།

191: རག་ལི་བཞི།

192: རག་ལི་བཞི།

193: རག་ལི་བཞི།

194: རག་ལི་བཞི།

195: རག་ལི་བཞི།
Instructions on the View

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[1.1.1.3. རུ་གུ་ཐོ'་དབང་ཕྲ་འཕྲུལ་]  

[1.1.1.2. རུ་གུ་ཐོ'་དབང་ཕྲ་འཕྲུལ་]  

196་མི་མེད་པ་ཨི་  
197་མི་མེད་པ་  
198་མི་མེད་པ་  
199་མི་མེད་པ་  
200་མི་མེད་པ་  
201་མི་མེད་པ་  
202་མི་མེད་པ་  
203་མི་མེད་པ་  

B: རེན་ལུས
A: རི
B: ལེག
B adds ལེ
B: ལེ
B: ལེ
B: ལེ

203 A’s notes, re-established according to B.


204 B adds མི་
205 B omits ༼བ༽
206 A: ངོ་
207 A’s notes, re-established according to B.
208 B: འན་ཐོབ་
209 A: བ།
210 A: བ།
211 B: བ།
212 A: བ།
213 A: མི་
Instructions on the View

[1.1.1.3. A's notes, re-established according to B.

214 A's notes, re-established according to B.
215 B: ཀར
216 B: གཞ
217 B: གཞ
218 B: གཞ
219 A's notes, re-established according to B.
220 A: གཞ
221 A: གཞ
222 B: གཞ
223 B: གཞ
224 A: གཞ
225: A: བོར

226: A: བོར

227: A: བོར

228: B: དེ་དུ་བོར

229: B: དེ་དུ་བོར

230: A: བོར

231: B: བོར

232: A: བོར

233: A: བོར

234: བོར

235: བོར

236: བོར

237: བོར

238: བོར

239: བོར

240: བོར

241: བོར

242: བོར

243: བོར

244: བོར

245: བོར

246: བོར
Instructions on the View

237 B omits " Kangyé".
238 A: " Kangyé".
239 B: " Kangyé".
240 B: " Kangyé".
241 B: " Kangyé".
242 A: " Kangyé".
243 A: " Kangyé".
244 B: " Kangyé".
245 B: " Kangyé".
246 B: " Kangyé".
247 B: " Kangyé".
248 B: " Kangyé".
249 A: " Kangyé"; B: " Kangyé".

B adds " Kangyé".

A: " Kangyé"; B: " Kangyé".
[1.1.2. མཚན་ལུགས་ཐོབ་སྟེང་སོགས་པོ་ཤེས་པ་བསམ་

བ།]

250 A: བརྩེ་བོད
251 B: ཆོག
252 B: བཀྲ་ཤི་སོགས།
253 A: ཆོག
254 A: ཆོག
255 B: ཀུན་མ།
256 B: རབ་
257 A: ཀྲ
258 B: ཐབས་
259 A: མི་
260 B: མི་
Instructions on the View

ལོག་དོན་གྱི་བོད་ཡིག་གི་སྣང་བ་སྤོད་དུ་བཟས་པའི་ལོག་དོན་གྱི་བོད་ཡིག

261 B: སུང་
262 B: བོ
263 B: བོ
264 A: བོ
265 B: བོ
266 A: བོ
267 B: བོ
268 B adds བོ
269 B adds བོ
270 B adds བོ
271 B: ཡ་


272: རི་
273: དེ།
274: བོད་མཛད་ལམ་ལོན་
275: རི་
276: རི་
277: རི་
278: སོ།
279: བོད་མཛད་ལམ་ལོན་
280: རི་
281: རི་

A: རི་
B: བོད་མཛད་ལམ་ལོན་

A: བོད་མཛད་ལམ་ལོན
B: རི་
Instructions on the View

_batches

B: མོ་

B omits མོ་

B adds མོ་

A: མོ་

B: མོ་

A: མོ

A: མོ

B: མོ

B: མོ

A: མོ

B adds མོ

A: མོ

B: མོ

A: མོ

B omits མོ
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293 B: นิช ไพบูลย์
294 B: นิช
295 B: นิสิตนนท์
296 B: ผุวุชชญาณ
297 B: นิช
298 B: นิช
299 B omits นิช
300 A: นิช
301 B: นิช
302 B: นิช
303 B: นิช
304 B: นิช
305 B: นิช
Instructions on the View

[1.2. རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་]  

312 རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་ རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  རྩེ་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཤེས་བསྟན་ཐོས་བས་བོ་  

304 B: ཉི་
305 B: གཞི་
306 A: འཐམས་
307 B: བོད་
308 B: བར་
309 B: བཞི་
310 B: མི་བ་བོད་
311 B adds ཟོར་
[1.2.1. A's notes, re-established according to B.
321 Omitted in B.
322 B omits ཚི་མོ]
Instructions on the View


323. B: ཡར་
324. B: འཇིག་
325. B adds སོགས་
326. B: མི་ཤེས་
327. B: ཁུ།
328. B: རྒྱང་
329. B: བོད།
330. B omits ཞེས་
331. B omits ཞེས་
332. B: ཆུ་བཞུགས་
333. སྣངས།
334. སྣངས་
335. སྣངས་
336. སྣངས་
মনোভাবসমূহের দিকে আলোক দিয়ে নির্দেশনা করা হলো।

138 মনোভাবসমূহের দিকে আলোক দিয়ে নির্দেশনা করা হলো।

নিম্নলিখিত নির্দেশনা করা হলো।

337 B: আ
338 A: বি
339 B: মুন
340 A: পিং
341 A: পিং
342 B: সিং
343 B: চুঠ
344 B: চুঠ
345 B: চুঠ
346 B: চুঠ
Instructions on the View

348. ཐོབ་སྟོང་ནི་རྒྱལ་349. ནུས་བོད་་མིན་350. འདེ་མ་ནི། མཆིག་ཅན་ང་351. དེ་བོ་སྐྱེད་། དེ་བཙུན་ཤིས་352. ིུལ་
འདེ།

353. ཡང་སྒུ་

354. དེ་བོ།

355. དབང་ཆེན་པ།

356. དབུགས་པོ་མཛད། དེ་བཙུན་པའི་[B70]་མི་
[1.2.2. སྣ་ཇེ་བྲ་བྱེད་གྱི་གཤེགས་པར་བོད་འགྲོ་བོད་བཟོ། རྟོགས་བཟོ་སྐྱེད་བཟོ་དུ་སོགས་པར་བོད་]

བཤིས་པའི་མི་འགྲུབ་ལྷན་པར་སློབ་དཔོན་དེ་གཉིས་པའི་ཞིང་བཅས་པ། 356-ང་བཟོ་སྐྱེད་
དུ་ཐོག་སྐབས་357-ད་དཔོན་པའི་358-ཐབས་བཟོ་དུ་ཐོག་སྐབས་359-ཐོག་སྐབས་360-སོགས་པ། རྗེས་361-གཤེགས་པའི་མི་ལྷན་པར་སློབ་དཔོན་དེ་359-བོད་ཐྲི་360-ཐོག་སྐབས་361-རྒྱ་མཚོ་
རྩོམ་སྐབས་པའི་8བར་363-ཐབས་མོང་འཛིན་པ། འོ་ཐོས་མཐོང་
དེ་བོད་པ་འཕད་བྱེད་བཟོ་དུ་སོགས་པར་364-འི་365-ཁྲི་བོད་པ་འཕད་བྱེད་
རྟོགས་བཟོ་སྐྱེད་བཟོ་དུ་སོགས་པར་365- ཐབས་366-རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྐབས་སོགས་

356 B: སྐྱེད།
357 B omits ད་
358 B omits ཕ་
359 B: སྗོང་
360 B: སྐྱེད།
361 B: འཇོག་
362 B: མི་མི་སྐྱེད།
363 B omits བར་
364 B: མི་མི་
365 B: སྐྱེད།
ཡིག་ཡིག་ཞེས་ཤེས་ཐེགས་པའི་ཐེགས་པ་བོད་ཀྱི་

[ཡོག 121]བོད་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པ་367 རྣམ་ཞིག་ཤེས་ཤེས་
ཐེགས་པའི་ཐེགས་པ་368 རྣམ་ཞིག་
བཤད་ལ་ཐོད་ གསུམ་བཞི་369 རྣམ་ཞིག་ 370 རྣམ་
ཐོད་ལ་ཐོད་ གསུམ་བཞི་371 རྣམ་ཞིག་
ཐོད་ལ་ཐོད་ གསུམ་བཞི་372 རྣམ་ཞིག་

བོད་ཀྱི་ཐེགས་པའི་ཐེགས་པ་373 རྣམ་ཞིག་

བོད་ཀྱི་ཐེགས་པ་374

366 B omits ཞེས་
367 B: མ་
368 B: ག་
369 B: མ་
370 B: ད་
371 A: ད་
372 B: བའི
373 B: བའི
374 B omits བ་
375 A: བའི་
[2. དེ་ལོག་པའི་འིར།]

[2.1.་དེ་ལོག་པའི་འིར།]

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376 B omits བ་
377 Verse added according to B.
378 A: བ་
379 A: བ་
380 B: གཉེན་དོན་བདེ་བདེས་བྱས་པ་བོད་པ་སྤྲེལ་དོན་
381 A: བ་
382 B: བ་
383 B: བ་
384 A: བ་
Instructions on the View

385 B: བོད་གསོལ་རབ་གཅུག

386 B: ཁད་

387 B: རོགས་

388 A: རྒྱུན

389 B: མ་ཅན

390 B omits ར

391 B: སྐབ་མཐོན

392 B: གི།

393 B: གི།

394 A: གི།

395 B: ཀ

396 B: འི།

397 B: འི།

398 B: འི།
[B72] 399: "[B72]

400: "[B72]

401: "[B72]

402: "[B72]

403: "[B72]

404: "[B72]

405: "[B72]

406: "[B72]

407: "[B72]

408: "[B72]

409: "[B72]

410: "[B72]

411: "[B72]

412: "[B72]

413: "[B72]
Instructions on the View

1. \[185\]

2. \[417\]

3. \[99\]

4. \[655\]
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[B73] 13~, 427-428

[A123] 13~ 428-429

426 B: འཇིག་

427 A: ཡི

428 A: རི

429 B: དཔར

430 B: རྒྱུད

431 A: རྒྱུད

432 B: རྒྱུད་པར

433 B: རྒྱུད་པར

434 B: རྒྱུད

435 B: རྒྱུད་པར

436 B: རྒྱུད་པར

437 B: རྒྱུད་པར

438 B: རྒྱུད་པར

439 B: རྒྱུད་པར

440 B: རྒྱུད་པར

441 B: རྒྱུད་པར

442 B: རྒྱུད་པར

443 B: རྒྱུད་པར

444 B: རྒྱུད་པར
Instructions on the View

[2.3. གཞ་པ་ནི་ི་པ་ེ་པ་ཤྱིས་ཀྱི་སྨན།]

[བོད་ཡིག་] 5

440 B: བ

441 A omits ཆ

442 A: ཀ

443 A: ཆ

444 B: བ

445 B: བ

446 B: བ

447 B: བ

448 B: བ

449 B: བ

450 B: བ

451 B: བ
磕

452: visión
453: 除此之外
454: 不是 caused by the means of
455: 新的 走
456: 希望
457: 是
458: 希望
459: 生
460: 走
461: 走
462: 但是
463: 走
464: 但是

465: B omits 以上
466: A: 走
467: B omits 之后
468: A: 走
བཀའ་ཡིག 465. ལག་ཐོས 466. བདེན་ལེགས་པའི་གནས་དབང་467. ང་སྦྱོར་
ུས་ཀྱི་ཆིང་གི 468. བཞུགས་པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་469. དབའི་
ང་མི་ཐོབ། ལེགས་པའི་མདོ་འོ་བདོ་470. བཞུགས་པའི
དོན་471. སྤྲོད་472. བཞུགས་པའི་གནས་དབང་473. བཞུགས་
པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་474. བཞུགས་པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་475. བཞུགས་
པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་476. བཞུགས་པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་477. བཞུགས་
པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་478. བཞུགས་པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་479. བཞུགས་
པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་480. བཞུགས་པའི་ཆོས་ཀིས་དབང་

465 A: སྐུ་
466 B: ཁ་ཐོས
467 B: རོ་
468 B: སྨི་རི
469 A: སྤེ་
470 B omits ར་གཞག
471 B: རེ་
472 B: སྨི་རི
473 A: སྤེ་
474 A: སྨི་རི
Instructions on the View

[Text in Tibetan]

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484 B: རྣམ་

485 A: ཤིན་

486 A: རྣམ་; omitted by B.

487 B: རྣམ་

488 B: རྣམ་

489 B: རྣམ་

490 B omits རྣམ་

491 B: རྣམ་

492 B: རྣམ་
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བོད་ཀྱི་དོན་དྲོད་བཟང་ན་མེད་པར་འཆད་ལས་མི་ཐོབ་རུབ་བཤད་པར་མཐུན་མ་

3. English Translation

The Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths

Sentient beings entered into the obscurity of ignorance are caught into the trap of clinging to objects as real. The *Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths* shows the path of liberation, and the sword of wisdom cuts the net of mistaken conceptions.

I bow to the feet of the masters who are emanations of the Victorious.

Generally, for a person, in order to obtain liberation and omniscience, it is necessary to possess the view, like an eye, which realizes the meaning of the emptiness of all phenomena, the mode of being of all external and internal things. If it is lacking, one is like a blind person along the other paths of generosity, and so forth.

Even if we were to engage them with effort, the state of a Buddha would not be obtained. The *Compendium* said:

How could a person born blind without a guide possibly enter into a city
Without knowing the path [among] myriads?
Similarly, the five perfections without the eye of wisdom
Are without a guide and cannot lead to the attainment of enlightenment.

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A: UMMYNGMI SHES GRONG KHYER 'JUG PAR GA LA 'GYUR // SHES RAB MED NA MIG MED PHA ROL PHYIN LINGA 'DI // DMNGS BU MED PAS BYANG CHUB REG PAR NUS MA YIN //
Thus, according to this instruction teaching the meaning of emptiness, [with regard to] the wisdom similar to the eye of all the [perfections’] paths, [we consider] two points:
1. The teaching to be realized (rtogs par bya ba chos)
2. The teaching to be practiced (nyams su blang ba’i chos)

[1. The teaching to be realized]
First, concerning the teaching to be realized, [we consider]:

1.1. The mode of being of general and knowable phenomena to be realized (shes bya spyi’i chos kyi gnas lugs rtogs par bya ba),
1.2. The own mode of being of knowledge to be realized (shes rang gi gnas lugs rtogs par bya ba).

[1.1. The mode of being of general and knowable phenomena to be realized]
First, all knowable phenomena are to be understood according to the two truths, and ultimately, the two truths are to be realized as inseparable.

[1.1.1. The realization of knowable phenomena according to the two truths]
First, [we consider] the realization of knowable phenomena according to the two truths. Generally, the nature of knowable things, the Dharmadātu, has been free from all elaborations (prapañca, spros pa) since the origin. Although there is not any basis of designation for terms like the two truths that could be established in it, beings do not recognize suchness. Thus, as a means for what is to be known, omniscience simply examines [the two truths] according to the points of view of the two faces of knowledge (shes ngo) and first distinguishes all knowable phenomena according to the two truths. The two truths are relative truth (sānvṛitisatya, kun rdzob kyi bden pa) and absolute truth (paramārthasatya, don dam gyi bden pa).

[1.1.1.1. Relative truth]
Accordingly, the essence of relative truth is the deluded mind and all objects appearing to it. Etymologically, “kun” [Skt. sam] signifies the totality of the deluded mind and all that appears to it. “Rdzob” [Skt. vṛt] means that all of these appearances are wrong, deceptive, vain, empty, pointless and without essence. “Rdzob” also means to cover up the correct meaning. It is called “truth” (satya, bden pa) because it appears as truth from the point of view of the deluded mind.

[1.1.1.1.1. The distinction of relative truth: mistaken and correct]

512 A’s notes: “the deluded knowledge and the knowledge without illusion.”
Concerning relative truth there are two divisions: mistaken relative (log pa’i kun rdzob) and correct relative (yang dag pa’i kun rdzob). For these two distinctions, most of the Tibetan teachers explain that what is endowed with efficiency in the field of appearances, like the moon in the sky, is correct relative [truth]; and what is not endowed with efficiency in the field of appearances, like the moon [reflected] in the water, is explained as mistaken relative [truth]. In order to summarize what concerns relative truth, it is only appearances from the deluded point of view of mundane people.

Then, correct relative [truth] has four characteristics: it is perceived accordingly, is efficient, is produced from causes and conditions, and is empty (dben pa) if it is examined. It is perceived accordingly: everyone, from scholars and pandita down to idiots and cowboys, perceive accordingly these appearances of the world and its living beings. It is efficient: this is the capacity of earth to support all beings and so forth, the proper efficiency of each and every substance. It is produced from causes and conditions: everything is produced from a variety of causes and conditions, the four elements and so forth. It is empty when examined: if this is examined according to the four great arguments of the Middle Path, it does not have any self nature.

It is said in the Introduction to the Two Truths of the Lord [Atīśa]:

Relative truth is presented according to two aspects:
Mistaken and correct.

The first is twofold: the moon [reflected in] the water
And the conceptions of wrong doctrinal systems.

The meaning of these [verses] is, according to other scriptural traditions of the Middle Path: what is efficient in the field of appearances, like the moon in the sky, is correct relative [truth]; what appears but is not efficient, like the moon [reflected] in the water, is mistaken relative [truth].

[1.1.1.1.2. The distinction of mistaken relative and correct relative according to the Great Middle Path]

There are generally five great arguments of the Middle Path, which is also confirmed by A’s note: “the argument of dependent origination, the vajra sliver, existence and nonexistence, arising and cessation, and the argument of unity and plurality.”

SDA, k. 2, Lindtner (ed.) 1982: 190. kun rdzob rnam pa gnyis su ’dod // log pa dang ni yang dag go // dang po gnyis te chu zla dang // grub mtha’ ngan pa’i rtog pa’o // /
Phenomena which appear and disappear,
Which satisfy only if not analyzed
And which are efficient,
Are said to be correct relative [truth].
According to the tradition of the Great Middle Path (dbu ma chen po) of the master Nāgārjuna, it is taught that all the mistaken conceptions of the philosophical systems up to the proponents of Mind Only (sems tsam pa) are mistaken relative [truth]. And the appearances perceived by the yogin515 who has realized the view of the Middle Path, are correct relative [truth]. Thus, considering these philosophical systems, ordinary people consider these appearances as their own mental continuum. Non-Buddhists consider them to be either eternal or annihilated. The Hearers516 consider the subject and the object to be entities (vastu, dngos po) that are indivisible. The proponents of Mind Only consider the knowledge devoid of the subject-object duality to be the absolute meaning. All of them hold as true [what are in fact] wrong and untrue philosophical systems, because of their own wrong and deluded conceptions, wrong masters, wrong treatises, and wrong friends. Because all of these517 are not efficient causes to abandoning cyclic existence and to obtaining liberation, they are only established as mistaken relative [truth].

Concerning correct relative [truth], the yogin who realizes the view of the Middle Path understands the own characteristic of appearances to be superficial, similar to the eight metaphors of illusion (asta-māyopāna, sgyu ma’i dpe brgyad).518 Thus, this is the definition of correct relative [truth]. Adhering to these four [formed by the wrong masters, wrong treatises, wrong philosophical systems and wrong friends], the definition of correct relative [truth] by Tibetan masters of the past was only a definition made by a mistaken knowledge.

The appearances collectively perceived according to this tradition [of the Great Middle Path] are as follows. For the yogins who have realized the view of the Middle Path, these appearances are similar to the eight metaphors of illusion, illusory appearances, because they do not exist but appear as accordingly perceived appearances. This [relative truth] is efficient: the knowledge that appearances are illusory is an efficient cause for abandoning cyclic existence and obtaining liberation. It is produced from causes and conditions: this realization of the illusory nature of appearances is produced by the causes and conditions of the master’s instructions and the accumulation of one’s own two accumulations (dvisambhāra, tshogs gnyis) [of merit (punya, bsod nams) and wisdom (jñāna, ye shes)]. It is empty if it is examined: in the absolute truth, the simple illusory appearances are empty if it is examined: in the absolute truth, the simple illusory appearances are not even established. All phenomena are empty of existence and of non-existence, truth or illusion, thus they are said to be empty.

515 B adds: “during post-meditative period.”
516 A’s notes: “Those who adhere to the philosophical systems of [the Hearers].”
517 A’s notes: “grasping at a substance.”
518 Dream (svapana, rmi lam), magical illusion (māya, sgyu ma), optical illusion (indrajāla, miṅ khrul), mirage (martić, smig sgyu), moon in the water (jalacandra, chu zla), echo (pratiśāba, sgra brnyan), the city of gandharva (gandharvanagara, dri za’i grong khyer), apparition (nirmāṇa, sprul pa).
Such is the intention of the Lord [Atīśa]. And according to the words of the spiritual friend 'Brom ston pa:\textsuperscript{519}

In the mind of ordinary beings up to those who reached the Supreme Dharma of the World (laukikāgradharma, ‘jig rten chos mchog),\textsuperscript{520} all appearances only proceed as mistaken relative [truth], because they are established by mistaken knowledge. Concerning the appearances [perceived by] mistaken knowledge, we do not make the twofold distinction of what is mistaken and what is correct. Both belong to mistaken relative [truth]. Since they are not suitable as the [correct] path, we do not use the term “correct”.

All appearances of the post-meditative period (prṣṭha-labdha, rjes thob), from the first stage [of bodhisattva] up to the higher ones, are known as correct relative [truth]. Because they are not interrupted in any mode, they belong to correct relative [truth]. These appearances are recognized as illusory by a direct perception (pratyakṣa, mngon gsum) \textsuperscript{521} Because this is suitable as the [correct] path, we call it correct relative [truth].

This is also in accord with the intention of the Lord [Atīśa]. If one asks: is this correct also concerning my mind? Generally, all appearances from those of the hell of unceasing suffering (avīci, mnar med) up to those of post-meditation at the level of the tenth stage [of Bodhisattva] are relative truth.\textsuperscript{522} Moreover, all of what is perceived by the mind of ordinary beings are appearances confused by the illusions of their own minds. And concerning the mind of ordinary beings and beginners [in the spiritual path], all of what is perceived is simply mistaken relative [truth]. So we do not follow the terms of mistaken relative [truth] and correct relative [truth] [at the level of ordinary beings].

Nevertheless, one might ask: aren’t there distinctions concerning the relative truth of the appearances perceived by the mind of ordinary people? [Yes] there are. Concerning appearances, there are what is efficient\textsuperscript{523} and what is not\textsuperscript{524}; the appearances due to vision’s faults\textsuperscript{525} and those without such faults; what remains a long time\textsuperscript{526}

\textsuperscript{519} Source not yet identified.
\textsuperscript{520} It is the higher state of cyclic existence corresponding to the fourth step of the path of application (prajogamārga, sbyor lam), itself the second of the five paths (piṭcogamārga, lam lnga).
\textsuperscript{521} A’s notes: “because it is an unmistaken perception...”
\textsuperscript{522} A’s notes: “the appearances [perceived by] Noble Ones during post-meditative periods are not included within relative truth by [former] Tibetan teachers [who did not follow the Praśangika school].”
\textsuperscript{523} A’s notes: “like the whiteness of the unique moon [not of its reflection] and the basis of the great element of earth.”
\textsuperscript{524} A’s notes: “like an optical illusion or the drawing of a lamp.”
\textsuperscript{525} A’s notes: “the appearance of a second moon, a [white] conch perceived as yellow, [the vision of] hairs in the sky.”
and what is of short duration; appearances which proceed by disappearing by themselves and those which proceed without disappearing by themselves. And so forth, there are divisions. Since all of these are only mistaken relative [truth], we do not use the term “correct.” For those who practice with faith, when the appearances are recognized by realization [as illusory], all of them are correct relative [truth]. When they are not recognized by realization, they are mistaken relative [truth].

From the attainment of the [first] stage [of Bodhisattva] up to the higher ones, all that is perceived is only correct relative [truth]. One might ask: if all the appearances of the world are produced by the mind’s illusions, then what produces these post-meditative appearances from the first stage up to the tenth? About these, since a past without beginning, strong imprints (vāsanā, bag chags) have existed in connection with the sense of grasping at a substantial reality. Whereas the former causes of passions, which appeared from grasping at a substantial reality, are eliminated by the force of meditation, their imprints are not eliminated. Then, they generate [appearances]. For example, this is similar to the fact that whereas one removes musk from a container the latter while empty still exhales the [musk’s] perfume. [But] for the Buddha who has eliminated imprints at their roots, there are no appearances at all. He remains only in the absolute truth free from elaborations.

[1.1.1.1.3. The perspective of the Mantrayāna]
From the point of view of mantras, as an antidote to this mistaken relative [truth] of grasping at a substantial reality in the world and ordinary living beings, we meditate by transforming the world and the living beings into a divine palace and pure gods, like illusions. Then they become correct relative [truth].

[1.1.1.2. Absolute truth]
The essence of absolute meaning (paramārtha, don dam pa) is the Dharmadhātu free from all elaborations (prapañca, spros pa). Concerning the word’s meaning, what is called “absolute meaning” is an unmistaken knowledge. Moreover, this is the goal which those aspiring to liberation try to reach, thus it is called “goal” (artha, don). Because it is not deceitful, it is called “absolute” [or “authentic”] (parama, dam pa). It is called “truth” (satya, bden) because this is truth from the point of view of an unmistaken knowledge.

We shall now consider] the divisions of absolute truth. Generally, from the point of view of the Dharmadhātu free from elaborations,

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526 A’s notes: “presently, the appearances of the world and its beings.”
527 A’s notes: “dream.”
528 A’s notes: “like an illusion.”
529 A’s notes: “not recognizing appearances as illusions is mistaken...”
530 A’s notes: “it is called correct because it is unmistaken.”
531 A’s notes: “Or, because it is not subjected to change in all times, it is truth.”
there is no distinction concerning the absolute meaning that is to be realized. Nevertheless, according to whether this is manifested by realization or not, we distinguish two elements: the absolute truth of the nature (gzhis) and the absolute truth of the realization of suchness. Otherwise there are the absolute truth of the elimination of imputations through study, reflection and meditation (thos bsam sgom), and the absolute truth experienced by yogins. Or, there are the absolute truth of the universal object (artha-sāmānyya, don spyi) [attained] through inference (anumāna, rjes dpag)\textsuperscript{532} by ordinary beings, and the absolute truth of the own characteristic (svalakṣaṇa, rang gi mtshan nyid) [attained] through direct perception (pratīkṣa, mgon sum) as the object of Noble Ones (ārya, phags pa). There are also the absolute truth as an analytical category (paryāva, rnam grangs) of dialectics (mtshan nyid) and the absolute truth that is not an analytical category.\textsuperscript{533} According to a sūtra, it is said:

The unsurpassable enlightenment is not changed into an analytical category.

\textbf{[1.1.1.3. The three aspects of the two truths]}

These two truths have three modes of manifestation. Appearances perceived as autonomous and objects of attachment at the level of ordinary beings are none other than what we call mistaken relative [truth]. Appearances realized as illusory, without any attachment conceived toward them at the level of the Noble Ones, are none other than what we call correct relative [truth]. The absence of judgment concerning whether there are appearances or not, with attachment or without, at the level of Buddhas, is none other than what we call absolute [truth].

About this, the example of magical illusion is given. The ordinary individuals who perceive appearances and are affected by attachment are similar to the spectators under the power of the magical illusion’s mantra. The Noble Ones who also perceive appearances but without attachment, are similar to the illusionist himself. Buddhas do not have any judgment concerning whether if there are appearances or not, with attachment or without. They are similar to men who are not under the power of the magical illusion’s mantra.

In reference to this, Dge bshes Spyan snga ba has defined three categories (literally “decisions,” khā tshon) of knowledge: mistaken knowledge (log pa’i shes pa), knowledge which knows relative [truth] (kun rdzob shes pa’i shes pa) and knowledge which knows absolute [truth] (don dam shes pa’i shes pa).

Concerning mistaken knowledge, from time without beginning, mind has been deluded by the power of habituation to the imprints [that arise] from grasping at a substantial reality, that are taken as the substance of the phenomena of appearances and sounds. [Mind] proceeds with this grasping according to the duality of existence

\textsuperscript{532} A’s notes: “inference which aims at eliminating imputations.”

\textsuperscript{533} A’s notes: “the nature to know, the Buddha’s intention.”
and nonexistence, eternity and annihilation, true and false, good and bad, and so forth. This is wrong knowledge, erroneous knowledge, mistaken knowledge, knowledge that has not realized [absolute truth].

Concerning the knowledge of relative [truth], the mind being corrected by the holy master’s instructions, all the phenomena of appearances and sounds are perceived but understood according to the eight metaphors of illusion as being devoid of their own nature. In the same respect, the knowledge of relative [truth] possessed by ordinary beings is dependent on intellectual investigation. The Noble Ones do not depend on intellectual investigation but they have a direct perception.

Concerning the knowledge of absolute [truth], this is to realize that the mode of being of all phenomena is the Dharmadhātu free from all elaborations of existence and nonexistence, eternity and annihilation, truth and illusion. In [the Dharmadhātu], there is no term to designate knowing or not knowing. For the sake of understanding, we talk about the absolute but this is a mere superimposition. In the same regard [we make the distinction between] knowledge of ordinary beings that cognizes the universal object, and knowledge belonging to the meditative experience from the first stage [of a bodhisattva] up to the higher ones, which cognizes the own characteristic of the object by direct perception. Moreover, the meditative experiences from the first stage up to the higher ones are explained not to differ from the wisdom (jñāna, ye shes) of the Buddha.

Thus, this is merely how all knowable phenomena are first to be realized according to the two truths.

[1.1.2. The realization that ultimately the two truths are inseparable]

Second, [we shall explain] the realization that ultimately the two truths are inseparable. From the point of view of ignorant people who conceive the essence of the two truths as different, [the two truths] are similar to the two horns of a goat. Having made relative truth, they grasp it as really existent (yod yod po). Having made absolute truth, they grasp [relative truth] as totally nonexistent (med med po). The knowledge which conceives existence and inexistence as dual will not suit the view of the Middle Path. According to the master Nāgārjuna:

The notion of existence [implies] grasping to permanence,
And the notion of inexistence [implies] the view of annihilation.
This is why the wise does not dwell
Either in existence or in nonexistence.\textsuperscript{534}

So, not dwelling in any extreme whatsoever, existence or nonexistence, eternity or annihilation, is expressed by the term “Middle Path.” At the very moment when one realizes that absolute truth and relative truth have the same fundamental nature (\textit{rtan ma}), free from the extremes of existence and inexistence, eternity and annihilation, the [two] truths melt together inseparably.

According to the \textit{Mother}\textsuperscript{535}:

Oh Subhūti, although the relative truth of the world is other,

Absolute truth as such is not other.

Whatever relative truth is itself is the suchness (\textit{tathatā}, \textit{de kho na nyid}) of absolute truth.

According to the \textit{Two Truths of the Middle Path}:

What is relative truth itself?

We accept it as absolute truth itself.\textsuperscript{536}

In the absolute truth—the Buddha’s intention, \textit{Dharmadhātu}—there is no consideration of any substance or any non-substantial entity belonging to existence or nonexistence, eternity or annihilation.

According to Śāntideva:

When substances (\textit{vastu}, \textit{dngos po}) and non-substantial entities (\textit{avastu}, \textit{dngos med})

Do not dwell in the mind,

Because there are then no other appearances,

In the absence of any consideration, there is complete pacification.\textsuperscript{537}

But if one were to say that there is no need for the distinction of the two truths, [this would not be correct]. Although the basis of designation of the two truths is not established in the nature of the knowable, the two perspectives of knowledge (\textit{shes ngo}) are opposites, so we apply the terms of the two truths only as an easily understood means for the benefit of those who do not understand suchness. Moreover, from the point of view of deluded knowledge,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{534}MMK, XV, k. 10, Saigusa (ed.) 1985: 420. \textit{astīti sāśvatagāho nāstityucchedaśāsanam / tasmādastītvanāstite nāśṛetya vicāśanah //}
\item \textsuperscript{535}Not identified.
\item \textsuperscript{536}SDV, D: Tohoku n° 3881, D2b2. \textit{kun rdzob de bzhin nyid gang yin / de nyid dam pa’i don phyir bzhed //}.
\item \textsuperscript{537}BCA, IX, k. 35, Bhattacharya (ed.) 1969: 194. \textit{yadā na bhāteo niḥśātevo mateḥ samcitihate pariḥ / tadvicayatābhāvena nitrālamḥ prāśāmyata //}
\end{itemize}
appearances manifest in the form of various substances, so we apply the term relative truth. From the point of view of knowledge in which illusion is exhausted, there do not exist any substances, not even an atom, nothing is considered in itself, so we apply the term absolute truth.

In reality, in the ultimate knowable—the great Dharmadhātu free from elaborations—there is no distinction of the two truths. Ultimately, in the Buddha’s intention, there is no more distinction of the two truths.

And even concerning the illusory appearances that are present, the two truths are not established to be different like the goat’s horns. Remaining in the inseparability of appearances and emptiness (snang stong dbyer med) and the inseparability of cognition and emptiness (rig stong dbyer med),538 realizing this completely and fully assimilating it, is the non-dual wisdom (jñāna, ye shes) of the nature of reality, absolute truth, the Buddha’s intention.

According to the Lord [Atīśa]:
Concerning what appears as relative truth,
If one analyzes it by reasoning, nothing is found.
What was not found is absolute truth,
The nature of reality dwelling from the beginning.539

According to the Five Stages of the [tantric] master Nāgārjuna:
Relative truth and absolute truth:
Knowing the part of each,
They have perfectly melted.
This is explained as the conjunction (yuganaddha, zung du ’jug pa).540
The non-dual wisdom of this itself
Is the non-dwelling nirvāṇa.541

This explains the mode of being of general knowable [phenomena].

[1.2. The realization of the mode of being of knowledge itself]
Now, [we shall explain] the mode of being of knowledge itself, that is to be realized. Although one may have realized the mode of being

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538 B mentions the “inseparability of cognition and appearances” (rig snang dbyer med).
539 SDA, k. 21, op. cit.: 192. / kun rdzob ji ltar snang ba ’di // rigs pas brtags na ’ga’ mi rnyed // ma rnyed pa nyid don dam yin / ye nas gnas pa’i chos nyid do /.
540 Pañcakrama, Yuganaddhakrama, k. 13, Mimaki and Tomabechi (eds) 1994: 51. samyrtim paramārtham ca prthug jñātva vibhāgtah / samunānām bhaved yatra yuganaddham tad ucye /.
   kun rdzob dang ni don dam dag // so so’i char ni shes gyur pa // gang du ‘yang dag ’dres gyur pa // zung du ’jug par de bshad do //.
541 Pañcakrama, Yoganaddhakrama, k. 25.1, op. cit.: 53. etad evādvaya-jñānam apratiśṭhita-nirvṛtthi / de nyid gnyis med ye shes te // mi gnas mya ngan ’das pa yin //.
of general knowable objects (yul), if one has not realized the mode of being of the subject (yul can)’s knowledge itself, in regard to the knowable objects of all phenomena, the antidote to the passions and karma will not be effective. After this [partial] realization, pride and vanity will arise. It is necessary to understand the own mode of being of the intellect (buddhi, blo), mind (citta, sems) or mental consciousness (mano-vijñāna, yid kyi rnam shes), the knowing subject whose object of knowing roughly (rags su) constitutes the self of the person. Thus, one has to realize the own mode of being of mind or knowledge.

The own mode of being of mind or knowledge is to be realized through two [aspects]. First, it is to be realized as the two truths. Ultimately, it is to be realized as the inseparability of the two truths.

[1.2.1. The realization of the own mode of being of knowledge as the two truths]
The mode of being of general knowable [phenomena], concerning the appearances of relative truth, is realized as devoid of any own nature, like an illusion. In absolute truth, the categories of existence and inexistence are not at all established, like space. [But] this mind or consciousness that conceives [conceptually] what is ultimately the inseparability of the two truths, the Dharmadhātu, as the Great Middle Path free from all elaborations of extremes, is itself relative truth.

According to the master Śaṇṭideva:

Absolute truth is not an object of the intellect (buddhi, blo)’s experience.

Intelect is said to be relative truth.542

One who has such a conceptual intellect (rtog pa’i blo) has pride and vanity. Because there is pride and vanity, there are the actions of Māra. Thus it proceeds as a mistaken knowledge.

According to the Sūtra revealing the inconceivable field of Buddha:

What is called “attainment” is only deception.

What is called “manifest realization” is only vanity.

To those who possess higher pride arise the discursive thoughts:

“I obtained,” “I [have] manifest realization.”543

542 BCA, IX, k. 2, op. cit.: 185. buddheragocaras tat tvam buddhīḥ samvyturucyat //
don dam blo yi sphyod yul min // blo ni kun rdzob yin par brjod //.

543 Aṛya-acintya-buddhaviśaya-nirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, ‘Phags pa sangs rgyas kyi yul bsam gyis mi khyab pa bston pa shes bya ba thig pa chen po’i mdo, P. Otani n° 760-35, vol. 24, 114-123 (Ratnakūta, Dkon brtsegs, Zi), 281a1-302a5; extract, 117, 288b2-3. thob pa zhes bya ba de ni g.yo ba nyid de // mngon par rtogs pa zhes bya ba de ni rnom sengs nyid do // g.yo ba damg rnom sengs gang yin pa de ni bdud kyi las so // thag pa’i nga rgyal can dag ni bdag gis thob bo // bdag gis mngon par rtogs so zhes ’di lta bu ’di dag gi ’ishul du rnam par rtog par ’gyur ro //.'
[In reality] the own nature of this conceptual mind is [in itself] absolute truth. One observes within oneself that this conceptual thought, mind or knowledge, is not established as anything substantial. Since the origin, empty of existence and inexistence, empty of arising and cessation, empty of going and coming, empty of eternity and annihilation, empty of the three times, the nature of reality, absolute truth is said to be empty.

According to the Question of Kāśyapa:
Oh Kāśyapa, mind is not inside, it is not outside, neither is it in both, it is not observed.\(^{544}\)

According to the Question of Maitreya:
Mind has no form, no inside, no place, it is like space.\(^{545}\)

1.2.2. The realization of the own mode of being of knowledge as the inseparability of the two truths

The mind’s mode of being dwells ultimately in the inseparability of the two truths. They are a unique [truth]. Although we apply the designation of the two truths, what was first applied then dissolves. In the Dharmadātu, mind (citta, sems) does not exit, thus the basis of designation of the two truths is not established. At the level of the fruit, and the Buddha’s intention also, mind does not exist, thus there is no designation such as the two truths. In the deluded beings’ nature of mind that is clarity and emptiness, [the two truths] are not further grasped. Remaining in the empty cognition (rig stong), empty clarity (gsal stong), one will realize the inseparability of the two truths. Then, one might object that the division of the two truths is not necessary, but it is necessary. It is necessary to realize the meaning of the inseparability of the two truths, and to realize [this] on the basis of the knowledge of the two truths’ characteristics.

In this way, the mode of being of knowable [phenomena], free from elaborations, and the mode of being of knowledge, free from elaborations, melt inseparably into one taste (ekarasa, ro gcig). Phenomena and the person being empty, all phenomena, external and internal, are devoid of any elaboration of existence and nonexistence, truth and illusion, eternity and annihilation, and are similar to uncompounded space. There is no object seen or subject seeing (mthong bya mthong byed med). The realization in which there

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\(^{544}\) Ārya-kāśyapa-parivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, ‘Phags pa ‘od srung gi le’u shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo, P: Otani n° 760-43, 188-203 (Ratnakāta, Dkon brtsegs, Zi), 100b3-138a6, extract, 197, 123a4-5. /’od srung sens ni nang na yang med / phyi rol na yang med / gnyig med pa la yang mi drigs so/.

\(^{545}\) Ārya-maitreya-paripṛccha-parivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, ‘Phags pa byams pas shus pa le’u shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo (P: Otani n° 760-41); or another text of the same name: Ārya-maitreya-paripṛccha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, ‘Phags pa byams pas shus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo (P: Otani n° 760-42, n°816). Extract not identified.
is no object to realize or subject realizing (rtogs bya rtogs byed med pa) is unmistaken realization.

According to the Sūtra of the Girl Concerning Nirvāṇa:

We call realizing non-discursively

“Not seeing phenomena.”

Seeing is taken as a synonym [of realizing].546

Also, according to the short [treatise] of the [Two] Truths of the Lord [Atiśā]:

We apply the expression “realizing emptiness”

To seeing without seeing.547

[2. The teaching to be practiced]

The exposition of the teaching to be practiced has two aspects. Those of sharp faculties practice immediately. Those of lower faculties practice progressively.

[2.1. The immediate practice of those with sharp faculties]

For the fortunate ones with higher faculties who experience the results of their karma as a great and deep blessing together with the former accumulation of two collections [of merit and wisdom], the realization arises immediately from the simple exposition of the two truths’ instruction, and they are able to remain in the state itself of this realization. Moreover, this experience is empty of the duality of knowledge and knowable. They meditate on non-self in the state free from elaborations concerning the two truths, like the sky. Meditating accordingly, when bad discursive thoughts arise, they come and disappear without being rejected, and the intellect (buddhi, blo) is not established [coercively] in this good wisdom (jñāna, ye shes).

According to the protector Maitreya548 and the master Nāgārjuna:549

Here, there is nothing to be eliminated.

And there is not the slightest thing to establish.

Seeing correctly the authentic nature,

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547 SDA, k. 6, op. cit.: 190. / rtogs med thsal gyis rtogs pa na // stong ngyid mthong zhes tha snyad gtags //. Thus it differs from the author’s quotation. The terms “realizing” (rtogs) and “seeing” (mthong) are reversed, and taken as synonyms according to the other quotation above.

548 Mahāyānottaratantrānāṣṭāstra, ‘Thig pa chen po rgyud bla ma’i bstan bcos, D: Tohoku n° 4024, D61b6. ‘di la bsal bya ci yang med // gzhag par bya ba cung zad med // yang dag ngyid la yang dag lta // yang dag mthong na rnam par grol //.’

549 Kāyatrayaṣṭātra-nāma-vivarana, Sku gsam la bstd pa shes bya ba’i rnam par ‘grel pa, D: Tohoku n° 1124, D72a3. ‘di la bsal bya ci yang med // gzhul bar bya ba gang yang med // yang dag ngyid la yang dag lta // yang dag mthong na rnam par grol //.’
Seeing it correctly is complete liberation.

Then, whatever might be appearances appear but do not have any own nature. One remains in the state similar to the illusion of dreams: conjunction of the two truths. In this way, one will develop, like a simple illusion, love, compassion, the enlightened mind toward the illusions that are all beings who have not obtained realization, and one will make vast wishes for the sake of beings.

[2.2. The progressive practice of those with lower faculties]

For those with lower faculties, having formerly accumulated little [merit and wisdom], the deep realization does not arise simply by means of the sole expression of the universal objects’ general terms. In order to experience suchness, mind is trained progressively according to the paths of the three [types of] persons. The higher stages are based upon the lower ones. They meditate progressively on the lower methods, then the higher ones, [and focus] on precious human life, death and impermanence, the law of cause and effect, the imperfection of cyclic existence, the enlightened mind, and finally the meaning of the two truths. They meditate on relative truth’s appearances, whatever they are, according to the examples of the eight metaphors of illusion. Mind acquiring certainty [about this], they meditate on the own nature of relative truth as being absolute truth, empty, like uncompounded space. Mind having acquiring certainty [about this], they meditate on the conjunction of the two truths, the absolute truth of the Middle Path free from elaborations. Meditating accordingly, peace and happiness arise in the mind: this is the pacification (śamatha, zhi gnas). Then, realizing that the object of meditation, the subject meditating and the action of meditating do not have any own nature: this is the higher insight (vipaśyanā, lhag mthong). Then training [in this] together with the diligent conduct that accomplishes the accumulation of merit for the sake of beings, the realization of the five paths (pañca-marga, lam lnga) and the [Bodhisattva’s] ten stages (daśa-bhūmi, sa bcu) will arise progressively.

According to the Lord [Atīśa]:

Thus, if the view is without ignorance,
And the conduct is completely purified,
One will not go into a mistaken path.
One will go into the realm of Akaniṣṭha.550

550 SDA, k. 24, op. cit.: 192. / de ltar lta ba ma mongs zhi shing // spyod pa shin tu dag gyar na // gol ba'i lam du mi 'gro zhi shing // 'og min gnas su 'gro bar gyer /: Akaniṣṭha (“Below none” or “Unexcelled”) is the fourth level of the form realm (rupadhātu, gzugs khang) and the place where a bodhisattva is said to attain the state of a perfect Buddha.
[2.3. The signs of the attainment of definite knowledge]
Thus, one realizes without errors the meaning of emptiness. The signs of the attainment of definite knowledge are as follows. The attachment to all external and internal things’ reality is reversed. All appearances proceed as if they were evanescent (ban bun) and equal (lang long). The absence of attachment arises towards any of the variety of things. All knowledge, whatever it might be, proceeds continuously without obstruction. The stream of consciousness is pacified. There is joy, and mind functions comfortably. Regrets concerning the past and anxious apprehensions concerning the future are abandoned. Courage (pratibhāna, spobs pa) towards all phenomena arises without obstructions. From the bottom of one’s heart arises the wisdom which liberates all doubts of oneself and others. Causes and consequences of karma are completely avoided. Love, compassion, and the enlightened mind toward beings arise greatly. With the exception of conduct [acting] for the sake of beings, one’s own conduct differs from all those of the world. One acquires certainty while remaining in the profound view and the vast conduct, completely stable. “Profound:” were one hundred scholars to attain the meaning of the nature of reality, even if they were questioned, they could not evaluate [the view in terms of] a philosophical system. “Vast:” one will be an expert at teaching the definition of various subjects (dharmin,chos can) and one will make an effort to train with full devotion in all the Bodhisattvas’ disciplines for the sake of beings who are [in reality like] simple illusions.

Concerning the teaching, demons, extremists, Hearers and Solitary Buddhas have mistaken view and conduct. These lower individuals do not move (’gul ba) from the non-self of person and phenomena. [But later] the persons endowed by these circumstantial signs will enter into the path of non-return. Having meditated on suchness, having seen without discontinuity the truth of the nature of reality’s meaning via direct perception, one will become expert in the means of traversing the path of the Dharmadhātu. One will acquire powers, courage, excellence and the complete gathering together of all the Buddha’s teachings. Having fully completed the six perfections, undefiled generosity and so forth, and having quickly obtained the unsurpassable enlightenment, one will dedicate oneself to the welfare of all beings.

According to the Sūtra Revealing the Nobles’ Armor:
If one perfectly practices with perseverance and diligence this teaching of emptiness, which is not arising, not ceasing, very profound, then one will quickly become expert in the means of the way of the Bodhisattvas’ Dharmadhātu. One will obtain powers, courage, excellence, and the reunion of all the unsurpassable teachings. One will be praised by the Buddhas and the Victorious Ones, and one will be fully endowed with the requirements for the Dharma. One will accomplish gene-
rosity, remain in a perfectly pure discipline, and obtain perfectly pure patience, unsurpassable diligence, meditation without object and the great wisdom. Then, remaining in the heart of enlightenment, the four great kings (caturmahārāja, rgyal po chen po bzhi)\(^{551}\) holding banners will pray to one to turn the Dharma wheel. Manifesting a great appearance to gods and humans, one will establish oneself in the perfect and unsurpassable enlightenment.\(^{552}\)

Moreover, if one practices with great diligence the teaching of the profound meaning of emptiness, then at the time of leaving this body, one will exit like the newborn garuḍa exits from the egg. Having obtained the supreme accomplishment, one will be endowed with magical powers [and travel] without obstruction in all of the Buddhas’ pure fields.

According to the Sūtra of the Crown’s Prominence:

While remaining blissfully in the wisdom of all phenomena’s absence of characteristics, at the time of leaving this body, one will remember the unsurpassable enlightenment. At the time of the separation of body and mind, one will exit like the bird exits from the egg. One will attain the unsurpassable enlightenment with a human body, and endowed with a mental body, comings and goings will be without obstructions.\(^{553}\)

Prajñāraśmi has composed this text entitled the Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths. For the time being, it is finished.

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#### 1. Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Tibetan Canon, Sde dge Edition</td>
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<td>JIABS</td>
<td>Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies</td>
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<td>JIP</td>
<td>Journal of Indian Philosophy</td>
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\(^{551}\) According to Buddhist cosmology, the four kings, or the four guardians (lokapāla, 'jig rten skyong ba) of the universe, dwell in the four directions of the Mount Meru. They are: Drtriṇastra (Yul ‘khor brsun) in the East, Virūdhaka (‘Phags skyes po) in the South, Virūpakṣa (Mig mi bzung) in the West, and Vaisravana (Rnam thos sras) in the North.

\(^{552}\) Ārya-varmacāḷa-nīrdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, 'Phags pa go cha'i bkod pa bstan pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, P: Otani n° 760-7, vol. 22, 160-191, 80a6-158a1.

\(^{553}\) Considering the large number of sūtras quoted here which belong to the same collection (Ratnakīṭa, Dkon brtsegs, P: Otani n° 760), it is probably the Ārya-ratnacāḷa-paścyācāṇa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, 'Phags pa gtsug na rin po ches shes pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, P: Otani n°760-47, vol. 24, 229-251, 204a1-257a8. Extract not identified.
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