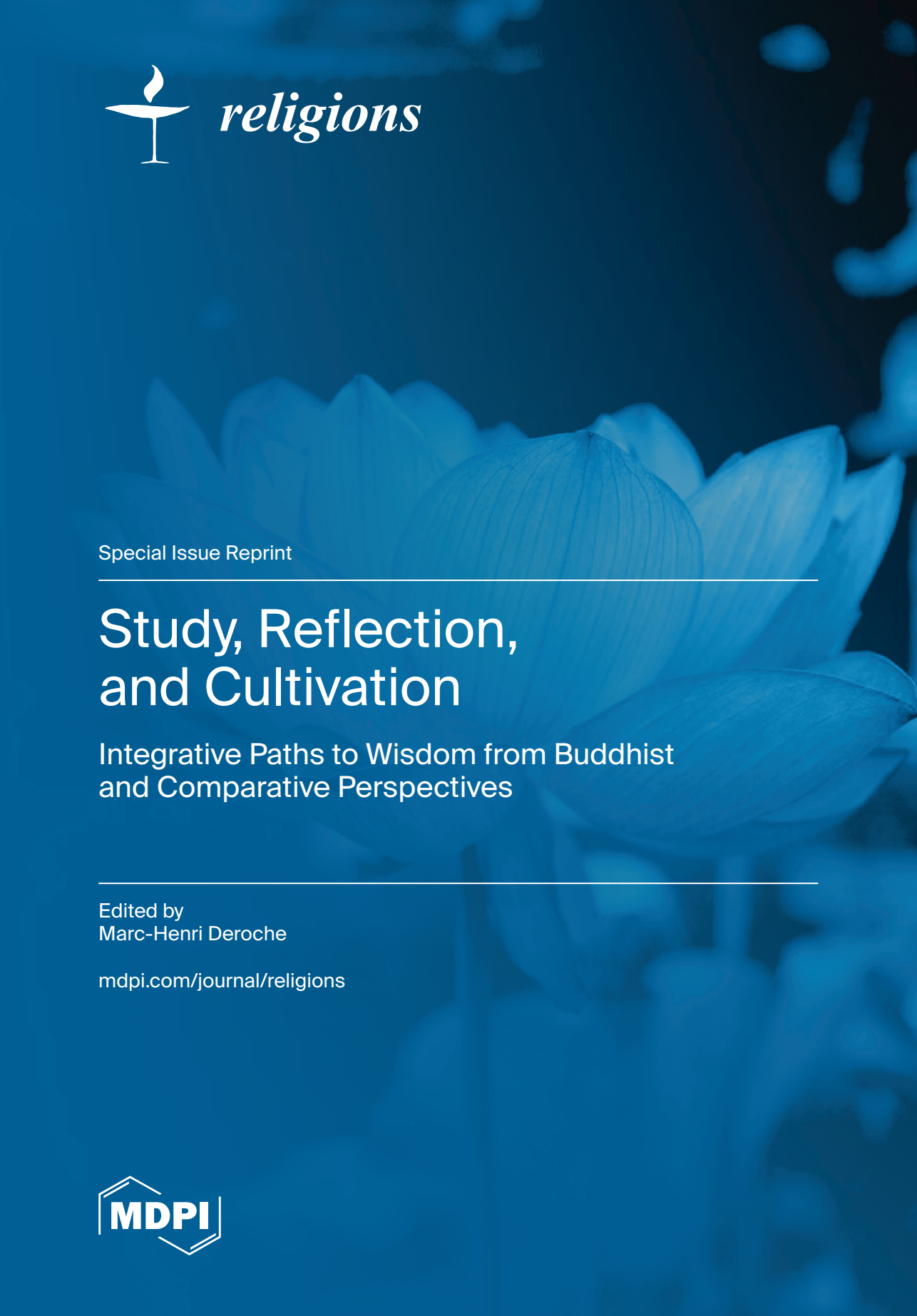

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Special Issue Reprint

Study, Reflection, and Cultivation

Integrative Paths to Wisdom from Buddhist and Comparative Perspectives

Edited by
Marc-Henri Deroche

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Study, Reflection, and Cultivation: Integrative Paths to Wisdom from Buddhist and Comparative Perspectives

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Guest Editor

Marc-Henri Deroche

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Lotus flower in the garden of Mimurotoji Temple, Uji City, Kyoto Prefecture

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About the Editor

Marc-Henri Deroche

Marc-Henri Deroche is an Associate Professor at Kyoto University, Japan, where he teaches Buddhist and Tibetan studies and supervises the transdisciplinary Mindful Living Research Group at the crossroads of religious studies, philosophy, and psychology. His research investigates mindfulness according to theories and manuals of meditation with a specialization in Dzogchen texts and traditions. He obtained his PhD in East Asian Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris). His publications include a monograph, *Une quête tibétaine de la sagesse: Prajñāraśmi (1518–1584) et les sources de l'attitude impartiale* (ris med) (Brepols, 2023), an edited special issue of the journal *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie, Approaching the High Plateau from the Archipelago: Tibetan Studies in Japan* (2024), and articles appearing in journals such as *Revue d'Études Tibétaines, Bulletin of Tibetology, Asian Philosophy, Philosophy East and West, Eidos, Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, and others. He has also trained as a teacher in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy with the University of Oxford's Mindfulness Research Centre and Oxford Mindfulness Foundation and is a fellow of the Mind and Life Institute (USA). He has lived in Kyoto since 2008 and has traveled extensively in the Tibetan and Himalayan cultural world.

Preface

The following Special Issue intends to elucidate the tensions between discourse and experience according to the threefold construct of wisdom, as elaborated in the various sources and traditions of India—with an emphasis on Buddhism and its diffusion across Asia—in comparison with Western philosophical and religious systems and, ultimately, with relevance to contemporary and scientific contexts. In Buddhism, wisdom, as the "right view," represents the eye or guiding principle of the path that was taught by the Buddha Śākyamuni. In itself, wisdom (Pāli: *paññā*; Sanskrit: *prajñā*) is conceived from early Buddhist sources and, especially in the later exegeses of Mahāyāna, according to three progressive stages: (1) born from "study" (or "learning"; literally: "listening") (*suta/śruta*); (2) born from "reflection" (or "thinking," "reasoning") (*cintā*); and (3) born from "cultivation" (or "meditation," "practice") (*bhāvanā*). Rather than opposing statically conceptuality and non-conceptuality, this threefold wisdom paradigm articulates them dynamically along the developmental process of self-transformation. Relying first on tradition, then on reason, and finally on direct perception, it links intergenerational transmission with personal rediscovery, offering possibly a middle path between cultural relativism and transcendentalism.

We thus aimed to create, for the first time, a collection of research articles on this threefold wisdom paradigm and related sets of categories, starting from the larger context of Indian traditions in which this wisdom model has also emerged (in the *Upaniṣad*-s, classical *Yoga*, *Vedānta*, etc.), and then specially focused on Buddhism from early to later Indian sources, and, following its diffusion, the evolution into various canonical languages (Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, etc.) and creative developments in South and South-East Asia, central Asia and the Silk Road, East Asia, the Tibetan plateau, and the Himalayas. For traditions such as *Chan/Zen* 禪, Mahāmudrā, and Dzogchen (*rdzogs chen*), it focuses especially on how the longstanding opposition between gradual versus sudden awakening may be articulated according to this threefold wisdom paradigm and the interrelated framework of view, meditation, conduct, and fruit.

In recent years, the works of Pierre Hadot have been celebrated for his redefinition of ancient *philosophia* as a "spiritual exercise," transforming the subject, and as being integrated *as a way of life*. As a philologist of Greek and Latin philosophical texts, Hadot's approach ultimately proposed the possibility of re-actualizing this ancient ideal of the *love of wisdom* in the contemporary world. But to this end, he warned his readers of two major pitfalls: (1) to limit oneself to philosophical discourse, or, to the contrary, and even more dangerously, (2) to assume that philosophical reflection is unnecessary. It can be said here that the threefold wisdom model represents the Asian cultural resource *par excellence* for overcoming those two extremes in search of an integrated quest of wisdom. The overall orientation toward praxis or cultivation serves as an antidote to the first pitfalls, which consists of being satisfied solely with philosophical discourse (and not being concerned with actually living it, or "walking the talk"). But the two previous steps of study and reflection save us from the second pitfall, the most perilous for Hadot, which is defined as the bypassing of philosophical reflection (and being potentially misguided in, or deluded by, meditative experiences). The idea of *philosophy as a way of life*, proposed by Hadot, may thus be further researched and developed according to

the Asian/Buddhist model of the threefold wisdom. It is thus a major goal of this book to contribute to such a development by providing precise research results on its origins and various forms across civilizations. In this way, we may find fertile ground for authentic dialogue among cultures, allowing thereby a cosmopolitan philosophy to emerge, with wisdom as its central idea, or compass, to navigate the complexities of our globalized world.

But in this East–West philosophical exchange, it must also be clear that the Asian and Buddhist threefold wisdom model conveys a contemplative orientation that is endowed with an extraordinarily rich lore of meditative or yogic exercises. Such heritage may, in terms of actual evidence, find no equivalent in the history of the West. Even if Latin Christianity, for example, offers the analogous progressive model of the *lectio divina* (through *lectio, meditatio, oratio, contemplatio*), or if ascesis in Greek Christianity is firmly rooted in the notions of attentiveness and vigilance (*prosokhe* and *nepsis*), with a considerable concern for bodily posture and breath, the exceptional Asian development of psychophysiological techniques has attracted considerable interest in the modern West, especially during the 20th century. Thus, the East–West encounter has also taken the form of the emerging transdisciplinary field of "contemplative studies," mainly guided by the research project of scientifically studying meditation practices. In particular, so-called mindfulness-based programs have been researched and developed at the crossroads of Buddhist meditation, modern medicine (physiology of stress), and cognitive–behavioral psychology. Mindfulness (*sati/smṛti*) was originally a central concept in the soteriology of Indian and Buddhist philosophies. But if on the one hand, the East–West dialogue in purely philosophical terms tends to be limited to academic discourse, on the other hand, Buddhism–science hybridization has been rightly criticized for instrumentalizing mindfulness meditation according to a set of cultural and ethical assumptions that, when properly examined, could be seen as highly questionable, or even radically problematic. Hadot's warnings of banality or aberration may also well apply to some commodified versions of meditation that have become part of a market of services in a very individualistic, if not narcissist, fashion. Thus, in this regard, another goal of the present Special Issue is to rebalance the practice of meditation with a deeper historical awareness of its larger contexts and original purposes and to ensure more philosophically informed translations and potentially more ethical adaptations to the contemporary world. It may thus also serve the project of a "philosophy of meditation".

Ultimately, both the East–West transcultural and humanities–sciences transdisciplinary dimensions of contemporary research may also be creatively encapsulated in the threefold wisdom model when used as a meta-concept for academia. (1) The philological and historical studies of ancient sources, classics, and traditions of both East and West can be framed as the wisdom born from study; (2) philosophy, understood more fundamentally as the very exercise of the reflexivity of awareness, can be seen as the wisdom born from reflection; and (3) clinical and cognitive sciences, with their evidence-based methods and concrete applications in real life, can be envisioned as the wisdom born from cultivation. It is thus hoped that the precise references provided in this Special Issue may also inform and inspire more innovative uses of the threefold wisdom model such as this one, in compassionate response to our existential situation.

The present Special Issue is thus addressed to scholars and students in classical humanities, religious studies, philosophy, and Asian studies, as well as to those in social, clinical, and cognitive sciences who have an interest in research on meditation and who wish to become more aware of the larger ramifications, implications, and paradigms of such contemplative practices

across civilizations. By gathering contributions ranging from ancient India to contemporary education and elucidating critically important Buddhist traditions for the formation of the modern "mindful movement" (in particular: early Buddhism, Theravāda, Japanese Zen, Tibetan Buddhism, Mahāmudrā, and Dzogchen), the present Special Issue can also offer an overall framework gathering major sources in these different domains and thus constitute a reference book for further research.

The authors include leading scholars in their fields, as well as mid-career researchers and some talented graduate students who have thus contributed in this way to advance knowledge in their respective disciplines. The two first contributions on the threefold wisdom model start with the Indian context. Bhikkhu Anālayo, an internationally acclaimed Buddhist monk–scholar, has provided a fascinating contribution to this Special Issue on relating the three types of wisdom to mindfulness, showing that mindfulness is considered by Buddhist texts to be useful in all contexts, as it is applied flexibly and decisively across the spectrum from theory to practice, thus challenging our modern dichotomy relating to those two terms. His philological research shows the different interpretations in various sources and by different authors of the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda traditions. Vasubandhu's definition of the essence of the application of mindfulness as being the threefold wisdom serves to articulate the overall discussion. I am personally deeply grateful to Bhikkhu Anālayo for having provided robust philological evidence in order to support a more philosophical project that intends to redefine mindfulness according to the threefold wisdom model and, in this way, integrate its various facets, which are sometimes perceived as contradictory: memory (the etymological meaning of *sati*/*smṛti*), the discipline of judgment (including ethical considerations), attentiveness, and bare awareness.

David Vincent Fiordalis, who has also previously considered the connection between the threefold wisdom model in Vasubandhu and Hadot's redefinition of the ancient love of wisdom in the West, focuses herein on how two major eighth-century Indian philosophers, Śaṅkara for Advaita Vedānta and Kamalaśīla for Mahāyāna Buddhism, have treated the threefold wisdom scheme in what he calls their "spiritual path philosophies." These authors differ most in their institutional backgrounds (caste Brahmanism versus Buddhist monasticism) and ontological commitments (assertion versus negation of a "self" or *ātman*). But Fiordalis shows that both offer an in-depth inquiry into the necessity of meditation to acquire truly transformative knowledge. The consideration of the relationship between discursive conception and direct perception also has major ramifications in the debate around progressive versus sudden awakening in which Kamalaśīla has been most influential in Tibet, as is also discussed in two other articles focusing on Buddhist theories of meditation in Tibet, as presented below.

Then, Romaric Jannel investigates how the threefold wisdom model has been transmitted from India to China. He focuses on the Chinese translations of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu's works that show the most matured form of the threefold wisdom model in classical Indian Buddhism. He especially approaches them through their remarkable synthesis that is found in the *Discourse on the Realization of Consciousness-Only*, written by the famous Chinese translator Xuanzang (602–664) who had studied in India. Jannel thus provides us with the formation of the threefold model within the Yogācāra school, literally that of "those who practice yoga (i.e., meditation)," and whose doctrine is centered on the epistemological primacy of consciousness, as the light of meditative experience is considered to reveal. This tradition has also offered to East Asia a

monumental scholastic system and sophisticated theory of the entire path of Mahāyāna.

Ryotaro Kusumoto's contribution then focuses on the threefold wisdom as an educational paradigm in the Japanese school of Tendai according to its founder, Saichō (766/7-822). This major figure was the vehicle through which the vast and complex Mahāyāna tradition, translated and systematized in China within the Tiantai school (read Tendai in the Japanese context), came to be firmly established during the Heian period of Japanese history. Its monastic seat on Mount Hiei, in the north-east of Kyoto, thus became a center of both scholarly study and meditative practice. Kusumoto shows how Saichō used the threefold wisdom model to organize the monastic curriculum that he elaborated in this institution and for forming Buddhist teachers and ritualists to be appointed in the entire country. It is particularly significant to consider how the threefold wisdom model was thus at the heart of training on Mount Hiei, since the latter is often considered to be the matrix of Japanese Buddhism. The founders of the major schools emerging in the Kamakura period (which are still predominant in our times), Zen, Pure Land, and Lotus Sūtra, were initially instructed there.

This was notably the case for Dōgen (1200–1253), whose *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye* is the main topic of the next contribution. In this article, Masaki Nomura examines the presence of the threefold wisdom model in this renowned Zen work. The Japanese Zen school, including its Sōtō branch that Dōgen established when returning from China to Japan, is often conceived as an anti-intellectual approach. But a closer reading of Dōgen's very erudite, philosophical, and poetic work reveals a different picture. Nomura also uses the framework of the threefold wisdom to organize and make sense of the various meanings of the Sino-Japanese *nen* 念, translating the Sanskrit *smṛti* (generally rendered in English as "mindfulness"), among other Sanskrit terms that are being closely examined. In this way, a Zen philosophy of mindfulness is elucidated, eventually with the instantaneous experience of awakening to transcend the temporal sequence of study, reflection, and cultivation.

The next three articles included in the present Special Issue are dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism. Lobsang Tshultrim Gnon-na shows that the literary genre of meditation manuals, or spiritual instructions, serve to facilitate the transition from scholarship to practice. Gnon-Na thus inquires into the theory and practice of calm or tranquil abiding (Sanskrit: *śamatha*) meditation by focusing on a guide written by the Geluk monk–scholar Yeshe Gyaltsen (1713–1793), in the Ganden tradition of Mahāmudrā, with its sources and predecessors, entitled *Bright Lamp of the Excellent Path of Oral Transmission: An Instruction Manual of Ganden Great Seal*. This system shows a very analytical psychology, with the study of mind and mental factors, discerning the hindrances and their antidotes in the process of cultivating meditative concentration and absorption. But the particularity of Mahāmudrā is ultimately to reach a non-dual state (beyond the subject–object dichotomy). Thus, this manual's section on tranquil abiding, the focus of Gnon-Na's article, also presents a unique feature: taking the luminous nature of mind as a meditative object. Nevertheless, in the progressive framework of Ganden's tradition, and according to the two truths theory, this practice is interpreted as only revealing the so-called "conventional" nature of the mind, while its "absolute" nature is to be realized through insight (*vipaśyanā*) meditation.

Marc-Henri Deroche and Michael R. Sheehy further explore theories and manuals of meditation in 18th century Tibet by researching Dzogchen instructions on mindfulness by the Nyingma adept Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798). In two advice texts, *Ocean of Qualities: Advice on*

Mindfulness and *Cudgel to Discern the Real: Advice that Shines from Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness*, the latter being translated into English for the first time, Jigme Lingpa exposes a twofold typology of mindfulness. The first type, deliberate or conditioned mindfulness, is the one that is applied on the gradual path of the development of threefold wisdom. The second, inseparable from non-dual awareness (*rig pa*), is the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen. This level transcends the duality of the stages of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. As naked awareness, or instantaneous presence, to be sustained in all circumstances, it is beyond an object to meditate upon, but without distraction as well. Mindfulness thus appears as the very crux of the debate between gradual versus simultaneous methods. However, the two types of mindfulness are both considered by Jigme Lingpa to be indispensable for spiritual progress; they are clearly distinguished in theory and practically combined on the path.

Catherine Hardie and Nicholas S. Hobhouse's contribution turns to a contemporary revival of Jigme Lingpa's tradition in Eastern Tibet, with the establishment after the Cultural Revolution of Larung Gar by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok (1933–2004). The flourishing of this vast monastic complex represents an excellent case study of the cultural survival and revival of Tibetan Buddhism in communist China. The authors especially concentrate on one of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's main disciples and Larung Gar's vice-principal, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (1962-). They demonstrate that the threefold wisdom model (*thos bsam sgom gsum* in Tibetan) is central to his reformist discourse and activities in terms of monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations. Indeed, the threefold wisdom model represents the very process of the re-actualization of tradition by a new generation. Literally, such *re-generation* requires the three steps of the assimilation of its sources through study, of personally making sense of its meaning through self-reflection, and the personal embodiment of its values through meditative cultivation. Thus, for Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, all Buddhist teachings can be summarized and realized through the scheme of the threefold wisdom.

Thereafter, Philippe Turenne's article examines the significance of the threefold wisdom model for the academic discipline of Buddhist studies, or Buddhist philosophy, and for facilitating a dialogue with other disciplines and traditions. He explores the threefold wisdom model as a "practical hermeneutic," a method of interpretation that, being based upon a practical notion of understanding, can potentially overcome the major difficulties related to such a model, especially the impossibility of objectivity, or of recovering authorial intent. He carefully delineates study or listening from reflection but equally considers the fundamental importance of scriptures as vital resources for proper reflection. Ultimately, the question of cultivation leads to the consideration of a radically different type of understanding. Thus, Turenne's contribution sheds new light on the issues of reading and understanding according to Buddhist traditions and opens a path to comparative or cross-cultural philosophical study.

John Michael Chase, a former student of Pierre Hadot in Paris and the celebrated translator of his works into English, has offered a significant contribution to this volume, exploring contemplative practices in early Greco-Latin philosophy and thus investigating the articulation between philosophy and meditation in this context. To do so, he first examines the neurophysiology of focused and open meditation (the scientific terms for Buddhist *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, respectively) and then attempts to find traces of similar gestures in the figure of Socrates, as he is depicted by Plato in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedo*, and by Aristophanes. I personally see a parallel between these two main forms of meditation

and Hadot's twofold typology of spiritual exercises: (1) concentration of the self (including self-care and self-examination) and (2) expansion of the self (reaching cosmic consciousness). As Chase observes, the notion of gathering the soul from all the parts of the body was central for self-knowledge, and for spiritual ascent up to the One or God, in later Neoplatonism. This approach culminated in Byzantine Hesychasm of the 13th–14th centuries, with a greater emphasis on bodily postures and breathing techniques that, themselves, may be due to influences from the East, although in this regard, Chase rather emphasizes the universality of the human condition and cognitive apparatus.

In the last article included in the present Special Issue, Kamala Klebanova explores the potentialities of the threefold wisdom model for contemporary and secular education, especially when it is applied to the implementation of mindfulness-based programs. She thus analyses what she labels as the "threefold model of mindful wisdom" (TMMW) and shows its relevance in terms of contemporary pedagogy, due to its emphasis on the cognitive faculties that are fundamental to education: memory, judgment, attention, and self-awareness. She also acknowledges the Buddhist origins of this model and thus the further need to articulate this model with a scientific approach and to integrate it better into the settings of secular or cosmopolitan education. To do so, Klebanova turns to the "Theory of Mental Interference" (TMI), which is methodically linked to individual learners' needs and originally developed at the University of Hamburg. Her sophisticated work in the scientific psychology of education thus perfectly concludes this Special Issue by exploring the relevance of the ancient model of threefold wisdom to address, lucidly and skillfully, the modern challenges of education.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to all the contributors to this Special Issue. Owing to their excellent scholarship and expertise in different disciplines and traditions, may this Special Issue serve to illuminate the three critical steps toward the achievement of wisdom. Approached here from diverse historical times and geographical places, this threefold structure may appear both timeless and very timely, as we constantly need to reinvent them, in search of the good life. In our digital or Artificial Intelligence (AI) age, I have come to consider the vital significance of the threefold wisdom scheme as formulating the mindful way from selecting and retaining vital *information* from the mass of data (through the wisdom born from study), to organizing such information into proper *knowledge* (through the wisdom born from reflection), and to embodying this knowledge into *wisdom* per se, as a personal virtue (through the wisdom born from cultivation).

I would also like to thank the great team of the journal *Religions* and its Academic Editors and in-house editors for their considerable care and effort in publishing this Special Issue, first online and now as a precious book that is available in our hands.

Marc-Henri Deroche
Guest Editor

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Article

Hearing, Reflection, and Cultivation: Relating the Three Types of Wisdom to Mindfulness

Bhikkhu Anālayo [1,2]

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Abstract: A text-historical perspective on the Buddhist scheme of three types of wisdom, acquired by hearing, reflection, and cultivation, shows that a bare listing in the earliest textual strata has led to somewhat differing perspectives in later exegesis of the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda traditions, the former apparently being influenced by what appears to be an error in oral transmission. The more convincing position taken in Sarvāstivāda exegesis sees these three types of wisdom as interrelated activities that can rely on mindfulness, thereby testifying to the flexibility and broad compass of mindfulness in Buddhist thought as something not limited to a rigid division between theory and practice.

Keywords: cultivation; hearing; learning; reflection; theory and practice; three types of wisdom; wisdom

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1. Introduction

A quality of central importance in the Buddhist traditions is the development of wisdom. One particular mode of analysis of this quality presents a threefold distinction of wisdom according to its sources.[1] These could be "hearing," which in the ancient oral setting was the main means to acquire learning, "reflection," and meditative "cultivation."

Perhaps at first sight somewhat unexpectedly, each of these three kinds of wisdom can involve the cultivation of mindfulness. Before examining the perspective on mindfulness that emerges in this way, however, a closer look at these three types of wisdom is required, starting off with the early discourses and proceeding from these to early canonical Abhidharma and later exegetical works.

2. The Saṅgīti-Sutta

Among Pāli discourses, the three kinds of wisdom feature only once, in a discourse titled *Saṅgīti-sutta*. The relevant passage has a counterpart in Sanskrit fragments. The two versions proceed as follows:

> Three [kinds of] wisdom: wisdom produced by reflection, wisdom produced by hearing, and wisdom produced by cultivation (DN 33).[2]

> Three [kinds of] wisdom: wisdom produced by hearing, wisdom produced by reflection, and wisdom produced by cultivation (Sanskrit fragment).[3]

The main difference between the two presentations is a matter of sequence, in that the two types of wisdom produced by hearing and by reflection occur in the opposite order. Variations in sequence between lists transmitted by different reciter lineages, which otherwise have preserved the same content, are a fairly frequent occurrence in the early discourses, reflecting the vagaries of oral transmission (Anālayo 2011, pp. 873–76). Although such variations are often not of much significance, in the present case, this difference can lead to somewhat differing perspectives on the relationship between these three, a topic to be explored in more detail below.

Another noteworthy point is that two extant Chinese parallels to the *Saṅgīti-sutta* do not refer to these three types of wisdom.[4] This difference can best be appreciated by turning to the function and apparent development of the discourse in question.

The introductory narration of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* refers to quarreling that had broken out among the Jains after the death of their teacher. In order to forestall possible disagreements arising among the followers of the Buddha, his chief disciple Sāriputta reportedly presented a sort of inventory of key doctrines and terms, listed in numerical order. The assembled monastics were to recite these together as an expression of communal harmony and agreement on these teachings. Tilakaratne (2000, p. 186) explained:

> The sutta is meant to contain the entire teaching of the Buddha in a condensed form. It makes available the teaching in one piece so that everyone knows what its content is, thereby removing any possible room for doubt.

Comparative study of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* in the light of its parallels points to a gradual process of textual growth where, based on a common set of doctrines as their starting point, different reciter traditions appear to have incorporated other textual items that were deemed to deserve the honor of inclusion in this discourse. Rhys Davids (1921, p. 199) commented on the *Saṅgīti-sutta* (and the subsequent discourse in the same *Dīgha-nikāya*, which is of a similar nature) that "they contain here and there matter which suggests that they took their present shape at a later date than the bulk of the rest of the Dīgha[-nikāya]," as a result of which "they become practically Abhidhamma rather than Sutta Piṭaka."

Against the background of this function served by the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its parallels, and of the process of development this discourse underwent, it seems fair to conclude that the three kinds of wisdom were not a central element of early Buddhist thought. Although recognition of the respective sources of knowledge as such is, of course, not an innovation, classifying them in the above manner probably results from a process of evolution evident in the different versions of the *Saṅgīti-sutta*.

3. Abhidharma Perspectives

Further information on these three kinds of wisdom, enumerated in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its Sanskrit fragment parallel, can be found in the corresponding early canonical Abhidharma texts of the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda traditions, namely in the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Saṅgītiparyāya* (T 1536). Here are their respective presentations which, for the purpose of facilitating comparison, are taken up together according to each of the three types of wisdom. For the case of hearing, the expositions given in the *Vibhaṅga* (translated first) and then in the *Saṅgītiparyāya* proceed in this manner:

> Herein, what is wisdom produced by hearing? . . . it is the acceptance, view, liking, intelligence, consideration, penchant for accepting the teaching, which is of the type that [affirms] ownership of karma or is in conformity with the truth, or with the impermanence of material form, or with the impermanence of feeling tone, or with the impermanence of perception, or with the impermanence of formations, or with the impermanence of consciousness, being gained by having heard it from another: this is called wisdom produced by hearing (Vibh).[5]

> What is wisdom accomplished by hearing? The answer is: In dependence on hearing, in reliance on hearing, due to being established in hearing, in one way or another one has the strength to gain on one's own correct and pervasive penetration. How is this matter? Suppose a monastic has either memorized the discourses, or memorized the Vinaya, or memorized the Abhidharma, or heard what the preceptor said, or heard what the teacher said, or heard what has been said in the textual collections that have been successively transmitted, or heard what has been said according to someone who is correct; this is called 'being heard.' Because in dependence on such hearing, in reliance on such hearing, due to being established in such hearing, in one way or another one has the strength

> to gain on one's own correct and pervasive penetration, this is called 'wisdom accomplished by hearing' (T 1536).[6]

The two explanations can be seen to agree on placing an emphasis on the role played by someone else from whom one hears what will give rise to wisdom. The *Vibhaṅga* provides some indications of the content of what is heard, which could be related to karma, truth, or the impermanent nature of the five aggregates. The part elided in the above translation additionally establishes a relationship to different settings in which such hearing could occur, such as in relation to some work or craft, etc. The understanding gained in this way finds expression in a series of terms beginning with "acceptance."

The *Saṅgītiparyāya* is not concerned with the content of what is heard or in what setting this may happen; instead, it lists different potential sources for hearing. These could be one's own memorization (obviously based on having heard it previously) or the words spoken by authoritative persons.

Before turning to the next type of wisdom, it needs be noted that the *Vibhaṅga* follows the sequence of the Pāli version of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* by taking up reasoning first and only then turning to hearing. In other words, the passage translated above on hearing covers the second type of wisdom in its treatment, whereas the one that comes below (which only differs from the one already translated in speaking of "*not* having heard") is the first one in its presentation:

> Herein, what is wisdom produced by reflection? . . . it is the acceptance, view, liking, intelligence, consideration, penchant for understanding things, being of the type that is in conformity with ownership of karma, or in conformity with the truth, or with the impermanence of material form, or with the impermanence of feeling tone, or with the impermanence of perception, or with the impermanence of formations, or with the impermanence of consciousness, on being gained by not having heard it from another: this is called wisdom produced by reflection (Vibh).[7]

> What is wisdom accomplished by reflection? The answer is: In dependence on reflection, in reliance on reflection, due to being established in reflection, in one way or another one has the strength to gain on one's own correct and pervasive penetration. How is this matter? That is, for instance, if there is correct reflection, writing, calculation, and confirming, or else what accords with work that is to be undertaken step by step, this is called 'being reflected on.' Because in dependence on such reflection, in reliance on such reflection, due to being established in such reflection, in one way or another one has the strength to gain on one's own correct and pervasive penetration, this is called 'wisdom accomplished by reflection' (T 1536).[8]

As already mentioned earlier, when introducing the above translated passages, the presentation of wisdom produced by reflection in the *Vibhaṅga* differs from the case of wisdom produced by hearing only in replacing "having heard it from another" with "not having heard it from another." The *Saṅgītiparyāya* instead presents a new perspective, as it describes various instances of reasoning.

The third and last type of wisdom receives the following explanations:

> And all wisdom of one who has attained is wisdom produced by cultivation (Vibh).[9]

> What is wisdom accomplished by cultivation? The answer is: In dependence on cultivation, in reliance on cultivation, due to being established in cultivation, in one way or another one has the strength to gain on one's own correct and pervasive penetration. How is this matter? That is, suppose with skillful means and with one's own effort one cultivates the path to complete seclusion from defilements. Because of such cultivation of the path to seclusion from defilements, and being secluded from sensual desires and bad and unwholesome states, with application and sustaining, with joy and happiness born of seclusion, one dwells

> accomplished in entry into the first absorption . . . (to be spoken in full up to) . . . dwells accomplished in entry into the fourth absorption, this is called 'being cultivated.' Because in dependence on such cultivation, in reliance on such cultivation, due to being established in such cultivation, in one way or another one has the strength to gain on one's own correct and pervasive penetration, this is called 'wisdom accomplished by cultivation' (T 1536).[10]

The explanation given in the *Vibhaṅga* just briefly refers to what has been "attained." The reference in the *Saṅgītiparyāya* to the four absorptions could be taken as an illustration of such attainment. Attaining the four absorptions could indeed produce wisdom, as long as it is part of a cultivation aimed at complete freedom from defilements, whereas absorption on its own is not necessarily able to fulfil this function (Anālayo 2020).

In sum, with these two early canonical Abhidharma works, the implications of each of the three types of wisdom can be fleshed out with more detail. Combining and simplifying the indications provided in this way, the relevant type of hearing concerns topics productive of wisdom (such as karma, truth, and impermanence), which could be taught by an authoritative teacher or be reproduced by one's own memorization. For reflection to lead to wisdom, it should proceed similarly to how one reasons when writing, calculating, or planning some work. The third type of wisdom relies on meditative attainment, an example of which would be the cultivation of the four absorptions (as long as this takes part under the overarching goal of liberation from defilements).

A difference of further consequence for the present exploration is that the *Vibhaṅga* explicitly indicates that the wisdom produced from reflection (which in its presentation is the first of the three) arises upon *not* having heard it from another.

4. A Perspective from Later Exegesis: Buddhaghosa

The three kinds of wisdom occur in a broad range of later texts, a comprehensive survey of which will not be possible within the confines of the present exploration. Instead, keeping in line with the two Abhidharma works already taken up, just the perspectives offered by exegetical treatises of the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda traditions will have to suffice. Representative of the former is Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga.* Whereas the Pāli commentary on the *Saṅgīti-sutta* just quotes the explanation given in the *Vibhaṅga*,[11] the *Visuddhimagga* precedes the same with an additional explanation:

> Wisdom gained without having heard from another, accomplished by the power of one's own reasoning, is 'produced by reflection.' Wisdom gained on having heard from another, accomplished by the power of hearing, is 'produced by hearing.' Wisdom accomplished by the power of cultivation in one way or another, the attainment of absorption, is 'produced by cultivation.'[12]

A similar position can be seen in the *Vimuttimagga* (T 1648), a path manual extant in Chinese that appears to have set a precedent for Buddhaghosa's compilation of the *Visuddhimagga* (Anālayo 2009a). After listing the three types of wisdom in the order of reflection, hearing, and cultivation, the relevant passage proceeds as follows:

> Herein, what one has not heard from another, if it is produced by one's own discriminating knowledge, if it is gained by following knowledge associated with the characteristic of truth, being in the sphere of skill and understanding, is reckoned wisdom of reflection. In this case, what is wisdom gained by hearing from another is reckoned wisdom of hearing. If one enters concentration and that wisdom is completely developed, it is wisdom of cultivation.[13]

In this way, the *Vimuttimagga* and the *Visuddhimagga* continue the pattern established in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* of listing reflection first. They also follow the *Vibhaṅga* in presenting the three types of wisdom as somewhat discrete, which is particularly evident in the specification that wisdom produced from reflection is gained without having heard from another. According to Jayatilleke ([1963] 1980, p. 302), "this classification is based on a strictly dichotomous division, which is implied rather than stated." That is, wisdom derives

either from meditative attainment or not, and the latter is either from hearing or from reflection.

This mode of understanding is in itself a possible interpretation of the adjective *maya* appended to each of the three sources that make up the three kinds of wisdom. This adjective can convey different nuances (Hamilton 1996, p. 138). One sense of *maya* is being "produced from," an example being the description of a certain supernormal ability of directing the mind to the creation of a body that is "produced by the mind."[14] Of more frequent occurrence, however, is another sense of *maya* as indicative of what something is "made of." Examples are references to material things that could be "made of iron,"[15] "made of [a certain type of] grass,"[16] or "made of all [kinds of] jewels."[17]

The interpretation adopted in the *Vibhaṅga* and *Visuddhimagga* appears to follow this alternative meaning, understanding the three types of wisdom to be "made of" reflection, hearing, and cultivation in the sense of what constitutes them. For this reason, in the translations provided of these texts, it would have been more appropriate to employ the rendering "made of" instead of "produced by," which has only been used to maintain consistency of translation terminology throughout this study. On adopting this alternative sense of being "made of", the three types of wisdom can be neatly set apart from each other, such as considering the one made of reasoning to be independent of having heard from another.

In the context of the three kinds of wisdom, however, the other understanding of *maya* would be considerably more compelling in the sense that, in this setting, *maya* would be intending to convey that wisdom is "produced by" these three, a perspective that facilitates seeing their interrelation. The essential interrelatedness of the three types of wisdom can be illustrated with the help of an explanation given by Balagangadhara (2005, p. 1006), according to whom the second phase involves the "internalization" of the answer(s) one had previously received through hearing, and the third phase then requires that one "contemplates the insight achieved and observes its impact on experience." Deroche (2019, p. 283) presents the same basic process in the following manner:

> Listening to a teacher or studying texts can be seen as the first input of relevant information from outside, which begins to reorient one's own priorities, interests, and attention through learning from the wisdom accumulated by past generations, especially the Buddha. Nevertheless, there is then the need to go from the words to the meaning … This is the role of personal reflection … bringing a deeper sense of conversion, unification, and conviction. But such result, still unstable, is then to be fully achieved through cultivation. By its function of repeated training with embodied methods, cultivation is said to overcome the mechanistic reactivity of our karmic imprints, subconscious tendencies, passions and create new virtuous habits and states of being.

Paraphrasing a position taken in the *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra*, Deleanu (2019, p. 18) explains that, based on the literal understanding gained through hearing and the revelation of the true intent of the words through reflection, "meditative cultivation … attains the real cognition of the object itself by … non-conceptual modes made possible by the contemplative act."

The comparatively less compelling position taken in the *Vibhaṅga* and *Visuddhimagga* appears to be a consequence of the sequence in which the three types of wisdom are listed in the *Saṅgīti-sutta*, with reflection coming before hearing. Such a mode of presentation does not encourage viewing the three as involving a natural progression. This would in turn have encouraged reading *maya* in line with the examples of something being made of iron, grass, or jewels. On this assumption, the sequence found in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* would have eventually resulted in viewing each type of wisdom as somewhat discrete.

5. A Different Perspective within the Theravāda Tradition

As was already noted by Gethin (1992, p. 222) and Skilling (2020, p. 93), within the same Theravāda tradition a different perspective can be found. This emerges in two

manuals for exegetical methodology that can be situated at a time substantially later than the closure of the canonical Abhidharma collection but still before Buddhaghosa's compilation of the *Visuddhimagga* and Pāli commentaries. One of these two manuals is the *Peṭakopadesa*, which lists the three types of wisdom by placing the one produced from hearing first:

> Monastics, there are these three [types of] wisdom: produced from hearing, produced from reflection, and produced from cultivation.[18]

The other manual is the *Nettippakaraṇa*, which offers an interesting perspective on how the wisdom produced from hearing relates to that produced from reflection:

> The teacher or some companion in the holy life, who takes the standing of a teacher, teaches someone the Dharma. Having heard this Dharma, one gains confidence. Herein, any investigation, application, gauging, and examining is wisdom produced from hearing. In reliance on having heard, any investigation, application, gauging, and examining is wisdom produced from reflection.[19]

This passage brings out the intrinsic interrelationship between these two types of wisdom, explicitly indicating that the wisdom produced from reflection takes place "in reliance on having heard." Such indication marks a significant difference compared with the presentation in the *Vibhaṅga*, *Vimuttimagga*, and *Visuddhimagga*. The *Nettippakaraṇa* continues after the above quote by showing that the third type of wisdom takes place by way of cultivation based on the groundwork laid by the other types of wisdom. In this way, the natural interrelation between the three types of wisdom becomes fully evident.

Notably, the presentation in the *Peṭakopadesa*, mentioned earlier, takes the form of a canonical quotation. Ñāṇamoli ([1964] 1979, pp. 92, 382) related this to the *Saṅgīti-sutta*, at the same time noting that the quote does not match the source exactly. This is indeed the case, as the *Peṭakopadesa* and the *Nettippakaraṇa* do not follow the order adopted in the Theravāda version of the *Saṅgīti-sutta*. This gives the impression that these two works were based on a different version of this discourse, which had the three types of wisdom in the order found in the Sanskrit fragment parallel to the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and in the *Saṅgītiparyāya*.

The reliance on originals that differ or are even unknown in the received Theravāda canon appears to be a recurrent trait of these two manuals. Ñāṇamoli ([1964] 1979, p. xxiv) counts "211 traced quotations and 42 untraced" in the *Peṭakopadesa* and "200 traced and 65 untraced quotations" in the *Nettippakaraṇa* (Ñāṇamoli 1962, p. lv). This shows that both works were based on collections of discourses that differed from those now extant in Pāli. In fact, Zacchetti (2002) found close similarities between the sixth chapter of the *Peṭakopadesa* and a text translated by An Shigao, and Bechert (1961, p. 81) identified a Mūlasarvāstivāda source for one particular *Nettippakaraṇa* quote. In this way, as noted by von Hinüber ([1996] 1997, p. 82), it is "likely that Nett[ippakaraṇa] and Peṭ[akopadesa] intruded from outside into the Theravāda as handbooks to understand and to explain the Suttantas".

The precedent set in this way by the departure from the Theravāda norm in the *Peṭakopadesa* and the *Nettippakaraṇa* appears to have, in turn, influenced Dhammapāla's commentary on the *Udāna*, as he adopts the sequence beginning with wisdom produced from hearing:

> And mundane wisdom is produced from hearing, produced from reflection, and produced from cultivation.[20]

The resultant variations have inspired the eminent Thai scholar-monk Phra Payutto (2017, p. 84) to attempt an explanation as follows:

> The discrepancy between having either *sutamaya-paññā* or *cintāmaya-paññā* as the first of the three factors depends on whether the focus is primarily on exceptional individuals, or whether it is on the practice by general, ordinary individuals. In the case where *cintāmaya-paññā* is placed first, the examination begins with . . . the

> Buddha (or with a 'Silent Buddha'—*paccekabuddha*). Such a person has discovered and revealed the truth without relying on the instructions and teachings by others.

The reasonable attempt to harmonize the two different sequences of presentation by assuming that the one which places reflection first refers to those who reach awakening on their own, without having received any teachings, is not fully convincing. The problem is that in such a case, this type of listing should not mention wisdom produced from hearing at all. As the venerable author himself notes, based on reflection, such an exceptional individual "moves directly to *bhāvanāmaya-paññā* (he needs not rely at all on *sutamaya-paññā*)" (p. 84).

From a text-historical perspective, it seems instead that an apparent error during the oral transmission of the *Saṅgīti-sūtta* led to a change in the sequence of listing the three types of wisdom, which in turn influenced the interpretations adopted in Theravāda Abhidharma and exegesis. Thanks to the input received from outside of the Theravāda tradition by way of the *Peṭakopadesa* and the *Nettippakaraṇa*, the more convincing sequence of the three types of wisdom was also able to make itself heard within the same Theravāda tradition.

6. A Perspective from Later Exegesis: Vasubandhu

Due to the sequence adopted in the Sanskrit fragment version and the *Saṅgītiparyāya*, the interrelationship between the three types of wisdom is more easily discerned. This is therefore naturally evident in the following explanation offered by Vasubandhu in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (VI 5a):

> Having heard, one reflects; having reflected correctly, one engages in cultivation.[21]

As was already noted by Adam (2006, p. 83), the "account given by Vasubandhu regards the three kinds of wisdom as progressive," each building on the preceding one(s).[22] Besides clarifying the progressive and interrelated nature of the three kinds of wisdom, however, Vasubandhu has still more to offer (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* VI 15a):

> The establishment of mindfulness has wisdom as its innate nature. What kind of wisdom? The wisdom produced by hearing, etc., [that is, wisdom] produced by hearing, produced by reflection, and produced by cultivation.[23]

At first sight, this presentation may be unexpected, as the establishments of mindfulness would naturally seem to fit under the header of "cultivation." The Pāli discourses regularly speak of their "cultivation," *bhāvanā*, or of someone who "cultivates" them, *bhāveti*, which relates the establishments of mindfulness to the third category of wisdom. Yet, as Fiordalis (2018, p. 283) points out, the position taken by Vasubandhu implies the following:

> By identifying wisdom as their common basis, Vasubandhu suggests how the discursive practices of learning the Dharma and reasoning about it might belong on a continuum of practices alongside the cultivation of mindfulness.

The perspective that emerges in this way has considerable ramifications for understanding mindfulness practice in turn. Deroche (2021, p. 19) reasons that

> mindfulness plays a critical role at each of these steps, forming the common thread joining them together. Beyond opposing statically the mnemonic, conceptual, and attentional dimensions of mindfulness, this threefold paradigm of 'mindful wisdom' can serve to articulate them dynamically within the context of the path.

7. The Relationship to Mindfulness

The relevance of hearing and reflection to the cultivation of the establishments of mindfulness could be illustrated with the help of an instruction given in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its two parallels under the header of "contemplation of the body." The last of the exercises concerned with the body takes as its object the corpse of another person. The parallel versions describe in much detail different stages of decay a dead body would go

through if it were left out in the open, from being bloated and livid via being eaten by various animals and decomposing to the eventual crumbling to pieces of its bones. The practitioner's task is to bring to mind, or perhaps visualize, one of these stages and then engage in the following mode of practice:

> As though one were to see a corpse thrown away in a charnel ground . . . one compares this same body with it: 'This body too is of the same nature, it will be like that, it is not exempt from that fate' (MN 10).[24]

> One contemplates another's corpse . . . having seen it, one compares oneself to it: 'This body of mine now is also like this, it is of the same nature, and in the end cannot escape [this fate]' (MĀ 98).[25]

> One contemplates a corpse . . . one contemplates that one's own body is not different from that: 'My body will not escape from this calamity' (EĀ 12.1).[26]

This mindfulness exercise clearly involves a form of reflection, which serves to relate the condition of the dead body of another to the nature of one's own body, and it is based on such reflection that the actual cultivation takes off. Moreover, the actual reflection to be used for this exercise is something the practitioner must have heard previously, when receiving instructions. Still, in all three versions, this is a mindfulness practice, it belongs to the first "establishment of mindfulness" (*satipaṭṭhāna*, *smṛtyupasthāna*, 念處, *dran pa nye bar gzhag pa*).

In addition to this corroboration of the relationship of hearing and reflection to the actual practice of an establishment of mindfulness, a complementary perspective would be the relevance of mindfulness to hearing and reflection (as long as these are of the type that can produce wisdom). In order to appreciate this perspective, the oral setting of ancient India is of relevance. In such a setting, any instruction or teaching has to be memorized right away in order to be of any use. Not listening properly or getting distracted means that the instruction has irretrievably been lost. In the absence of any written or digital recording, there is simply no way of keeping the teaching alive unless it has been memorized.

The need to give full attention can be illustrated with the Buddha's rebuke of a recalcitrant monk for not paying proper attention (with the slight difference that in the first version, the rebuke refers to the culprit in the third-person singular, whereas the second version directly addresses him in the second-person singular):

> And this foolish person, while the Dharma is being taught by me, does not heed it, does not pay attention, does not engage with the whole mind, and does not hear the Dharma with ready ear (MN 65).[27]

> You certainly did not listen single-mindedly, not having the proper regard, and not paying attention mindfully (MĀ 194).[28]

As stated explicitly in the second version translated above, which can safely be considered implicit in the first, there is a need for mindfulness at the time a teaching is given, lest it be lost. The role of mindfulness in relation to hearing (and by implication in relation to reflection as well) goes beyond merely ensuring proper retention in memory. This can be seen from a passage that relates the arousing of the awakening factors to the situation of hearing a teaching:

> Having heard the teaching, one dwells withdrawn by two kinds of withdrawal: by bodily withdrawal and mental withdrawal. Dwelling withdrawn in this way, one recollects that teaching and reflects on it. Monastics, whenever a monastic, dwelling withdrawn in this way, recollects that teaching and reflects on it, at that time the awakening factor of mindfulness is aroused in the monastic, at that time the monastic cultivates the awakening factor of mindfulness, at that time the awakening factor of mindfulness comes to be accomplished in the monastic by cultivation. Dwelling mindfully in this way, one discerns, investigates, and makes an examination of that state with wisdom. Monastics, whenever a monastic dwelling mindfully in this way discerns, investigates, and makes an examination

> of that state with wisdom, at that time the awakening factor of investigation-of-dharmas is aroused in the monastic, at that time the monastic cultivates the awakening factor of investigation-of-dharmas, at that time the awakening factor of investigation-of-dharmas comes to be accomplished in the monastic by cultivation (SN 46.3).[29]

> From time to time one gets to hear profound and sublime teachings. Having heard profound teachings, one accomplishes the twofold proper behavior, bodily propriety and mental propriety. At that time, one cultivates the awakening factor of mindfulness. Having cultivated the awakening factor of mindfulness, the awakening factor of mindfulness becomes fulfilled. The awakening factor of mindfulness having been fulfilled, one investigates the teaching, analyzes the teaching, and examines the teaching. At that time, one diligently cultivates the awakening factor of investigation-of-dharmas (SĀ 723).[30]

A Sanskrit fragment has preserved several parts of a corresponding presentation.[31] Although the Pāli version is more detailed than its Chinese counterpart (and what has been preserved in Sanskrit fragments), the basic message given in the parallel versions remains the same: Hearing teachings and reflecting on them can become an occasion for cultivating the awakening factors. The parallels continue by indicating that the development described in the excerpts translated above can lead to bringing the other awakening factors to fulfilment as well. In this way, a "cultivation" (*bhāvanā*) of the awakening factors, those mental qualities singled out in early Buddhist soteriology as the key requirements for the breakthrough to awakening, can rely on "hearing" and subsequent "reflection."

That the breakthrough to awakening need not take place only when meditating is also evident from a survey of different occasions for liberation, recognized in the early discourses (Anālayo 2009b; Pāsādika 2017). Aside from meditation, these include the occasion of listening to a teaching and the occasion of reflecting on it. Each of these can result in the breakthrough to awakening.

8. Conclusions

The above exploration, taking off from the three kinds of wisdom and then relating these to the cultivation of mindfulness, can help to broaden the perspective on the range of applicability and compass of Buddhist meditation practice. Fiordalis (2018, p. 278) comments:

> Among the many assumptions embedded in our contemporary discourse is the idea that "practice" differs, somehow basically, from "theory." By these terms, we usually mean something rather vague: "doing" something, rather than "thinking" or "talking" or "writing" about it.

Yet, such a strong contrast between practice and theory does not do justice to the ancient Indian perspective. The early discourses concord with the position taken by Vasubandhu who:

> places "thinking" (*cintā*) and "cultivation" (*bhāvanā*) along a continuum of different practices rather than in strict opposition. While they are distinctive forms of practice, they build upon one another and work together to instill wisdom in the practitioner. Classifying reasoning as theory and cultivation as practice, and then opposing them as we are apt to do, can lead to misunderstanding their nature and scope. As is typical among Indian Buddhist writers of his ilk, Vasubandhu classifies as "cultivation" many meditative practices that are discursive or conceptual in nature or at least begin as discursive or conceptual practices. Thus, theoretical reflection shifts to meditative cultivation more gradually than we might assume (p. 279).

In line with what has emerged from the above survey, the presentation of the three kinds of wisdom in their relationship to mindfulness "challenges the reader to understand these different practices of wisdom on a continuum of development, resisting the urge

to draw sharp oppositions between . . . 'discursive' and 'nondiscursive' practices of self-cultivation" (p. 286).

Stepping out of the limitations that can come from excessive reliance on a sharp opposition between theory and practice toward instead viewing these as interrelated dimensions of mindfulness practice would also do better justice to the statement, made particularly in the context of the awakening factors, that mindfulness is always useful:

> I say that mindfulness is always useful (SN 46.53).[32]
>
> The mindfulness awakening factor is always of use (SĀ 714).[33]
>
> I say that mindfulness is to be cultivated at all times (Up 7003).[34]

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Abbreviations

AN	*Aṅguttara-nikāya*
D	Derge edition
DĀ	*Dīrgha-āgama* (T 1)
DN	*Dīgha-nikāya*
EĀ	*Ekottarika-āgama* (T 125)
MĀ	*Madhyama-āgama* (T 26)
MN	*Majjhima-nikāya*
Nett	*Nettippakaraṇa*
P	Peking edition
Peṭ	*Peṭakopadesa*
SĀ	*Saṃyukta-āgama* (T 99)
SN	*Saṃyutta-nikāya*
Sn	*Suttanipāta*
Sv	*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*
T	Taishō edition
Ud-a	*Paramatthadīpanī*
Up	*Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā*
Vibh	*Vibhaṅga*
Vism	*Visuddhimagga*

Notes

1 See, e.g., *Mahāvyutpatti* entry no. 75, Sakaki (1916, p. 124).

2 DN 33 at DN III 219: *tisso paññā: cintāmayā paññā, sutamayā paññā, bhāvanāmayā paññā.*

3 Stache-Rosen (1968, p. 84): *(tisrāḥ prajñāḥ: śrutamayī prajñā cintāmayī praj)ñā bhā(vanāmayī prajñā).*

4 DĀ 9 and T 12.

5 Vibh 325: *tattha katamā sutamayā paññā? . . . kammassakataṃ vā saccānulomikaṃ vā rūpaṃ aniccan ti vā, vedanā aniccā ti vā, saññā aniccā ti vā, saṅkhārā aniccā ti vā, viññāṇaṃ aniccan ti vā, yaṃ evarūpiṃ anulomikaṃ khantiṃ diṭṭhiṃ ruciṃ mutiṃ pekkhaṃ dhammanijjhānakkhantiṃ parato sutvā paṭilabhati: ayaṃ vuccati sutamayā paññā.*

6 TXXVI 387c: 聞所成慧云何? 答: 因聞, 依聞, 由聞建立, 於彼彼處有勢力得自在正遍通達. 其事如何? 如有苾芻或受持素呾纜, 或受持毘奈耶, 或受持阿毘達磨, 或聞親教師說, 或聞軌範師說, 或聞展轉傳授藏說, 或聞隨一如理者說, 是名為聞. 因此聞, 依此聞, 由此聞建立故, 於彼彼處有勢力得自在正遍通達, 是名聞所成慧.

7 Vibh 324: *tattha katamā cintāmayā paññā? . . . kammassakataṃ vā saccānulomikaṃ vā rūpaṃ aniccan ti vā, vedanā aniccā ti vā, saññā aniccā ti vā, saṅkhārā aniccā ti vā, viññāṇaṃ aniccan ti vā, yaṃ evarūpiṃ anulomikaṃ khantiṃ diṭṭhiṃ ruciṃ mutiṃ pekkhaṃ dhammanijjhānakkhantiṃ parato assutvā paṭilabhati: ayaṃ vuccati cintāmayā paññā.*

8 TXXVI 387c: 思所成慧云何? 答: 因思, 依思, 由思建立, 於彼彼處有勢力得自在正遍通達. 其事如何? 謂如有一如理思惟書數算印, 或隨一一所作事業, 是名為思. 因此思, 依此思, 由此思建立故, 於彼彼處有勢力得自在正遍通達, 是名思所成慧.

[9] Vibh 325: *sabbā pi samāpannassa paññā bhāvanāmayā paññā.*

[10] TXXVI 387c: 修所成慧云何? 答: 因修, 依修, 由修建立, 於彼彼處有勢力得自在正遍通達. 其事如何? 謂如有一方便善巧自勤修習諸離染道, 由此所修離染道故, 離欲惡不善法, 有尋有伺離生喜樂入初靜慮具足住, 廣說乃至入第四靜慮具足住, 是名為修. 因此修, 依此修, 由此修建立故, 於彼彼處有勢力得自在正遍通達, 是名修所成慧 (here, 有尋有伺 functions as a counterpart to the absorption factors *vitakka/vitarka* and *vicāra*).

[11] Sv III 1002.

[12] Vism 439: *parato assutvā paṭiladdhapaññā attano cintāvasena nipphannattā cintāmayā. parato sutvā paṭiladdhapaññā sutavasena nipphannattā sutamayā. yathā tathā vā bhāvanāvasena nipphannā appanāppattā paññā bhāvanāmayā.*

[13] T XXXII 445a: 於是不從他聞, 若自作業智, 若得隨諦相應智, 於功及明處, 此謂思慧. 於此處從他聞得慧, 此謂聞慧. 若入三昧彼慧悉修, 是修慧; adopting the variant 及 instead of 乃.

[14] DN 2 at DN I 77: *manomayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimmināya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti.* For a critical evaluation of the interpretation of this type of supernormal feat proposed by Shulman (2021), see Anālayo (2021).

[15] AN 3.35 at AN I 142: *ayomayā bhūmi.*

[16] Sn 28: *dāmā muñjamayā.*

[17] DN 17 at DN II 170: *sabbaratanamayo.*

[18] Peṭ 72: *tisso imā, bhikkhave, paññā: sutamayī, cintāmayī, bhāvanāmayī*; note the shift from *-mayā* to *-mayī.*

[19] Nett 8: *yassa satthā vā dhammaṃ desayati aññataro vā garuṭṭhānīyo sabrahmacārī. so taṃ dhammaṃ sutvā saddhaṃ paṭilabhati. tattha yā vīmaṃsā ussāhanā tulanā upaparikkhā, ayaṃ sutamayī paññā. tathā sutena nissayena yā vīmaṃsā tulanā upaparikkhā manasānupekkhaṇā, ayaṃ cintāmayī paññā.*

[20] Ud-a 69: *paññā pi lokiyā sutamayā, cintāmayā, bhāvanāmayā.*

[21] Pradhan (1967, p. 334): *śrutvā cintayati, aviparītaṃ cintayitvā bhāvanāyāṃ prayujyate.*

[22] On wisdom produced by reflection in particular see also Eltschinger ([2010] 2016).

[23] Pradhan (1967, p. 341): *svabhāvasmṛtyupasthānam prajñā. kīdṛśī prajñā? śrutādimayī . . . śrutamayī cintāmayī bhāvanāmayī ca.*

[24] MN I 58: *seyyathā pi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ . . . so imam eva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ayam pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī etaṃ anatīto ti.*

[25] T I 583b: 觀彼死屍 . . . 見已自比: 今我此身亦復如是, 俱有此法, 終不得離.

[26] T II 568b: 觀死屍 . . . 自觀身與彼無異: 吾身不免此患.

[27] MN I 445: *na cāyaṃ moghapuriso mayā dhamme desiyamāne aṭṭhikatvā manasikatvā sabbacetaso samannāharitvā ohitasoto dhammaṃ suṇātī ti.*

[28] T I 749b: 汝必不一心, 不善恭敬, 不思念聽.

[29] SN V 67: *dhammaṃ sutvā dvayena vūpakāsena vūpakaṭṭho viharati, kāyavūpakāsena ca cittavūpakāsena* ca. *so tathā vūpakaṭṭho viharanto taṃ dhammaṃ anussarati anuvitakketi. yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu tathā vūpakaṭṭho viharanto taṃ dhammaṃ anussarati anuvitakketi, satisambojjhaṅgo tasmiṃ samaye tassa bhikkhuno āraddho hoti, satisambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmiṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, satisambojjhaṅgo tasmiṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati. so tathā sato viharanto taṃ dhammaṃ paññāya pavicinati pavicarati parivīmaṃsam āpajjati. yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu tathā sato viharanto taṃ dhammaṃ paññāya pavicinati pavicarati parivīmaṃsam āpajjati, dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo tasmiṃ samaye tassa bhikkhuno āraddho hoti, dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmiṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo tasmiṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.*

[30] T II 195a: 時時得聞深妙之法. 聞深法已, 二正事成就, 身正及心正. 爾時修念覺分. 修念覺分已, 念覺分滿足. 念覺滿足已, 於法選擇, 分別於法, 思量於法. 爾時方便修擇法覺; the parallel to SN 46.3 is actually SĀ 724, which has the relevant passage in abbreviation; hence, the corresponding part from SĀ 723 has been translated above.

[31] Sanskrit fragment SHT I 533, folio 106V5–6, Bechert and Wille (1989, p. 215): *gaṃbhīragaṃbhīrāṃ dhārmīṃ kathāṃ śr[ā] . . . [da] . . . ṃ dharma[ṃ] śrutvā dv[ay](e)[na] vyapakarṣena . . . ca smṛtisaṃbodhyaṃgam-asya tasmi[ṃ] samaye ārabdhaṃ bhavat[i] smṛti[saṃbodhyaṅga](sya) bhā[va](ya)[taḥ]*; and folio 106V2: *[rita]rkkayati parimīmāṃsām-āpad[ya] . . . [tasmi](ṃ) . . . maye ārabdhaṃ bha[va]ti dharmavicayasaṃ.*

[32] SN V 115: *satim ca khvāhaṃ . . . sabbatthikaṃ vadāmi.*

[33] T II 192a: 念覺分者一切兼助.

[34] D 4094 *nyu* 53a or P 5595 *thu* 94a: *dran pa ni thams cad du 'gro ba'o zhes nga smra'o.*

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One or None? Truth and Self-Transformation for Śaṅkara and Kamalaśīla

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Abstract: This article explores how two influential 8th-century Indian philosophers, Śaṅkara and Kamalaśīla, treat the threefold scheme of learning, reasoning, and meditation in their spiritual path philosophies. They have differing institutional and ontological commitments: the former, who helped establish Advaita Vedānta as the religious philosophy of an elite Hindu monastic tradition, affirms an unchanging "self" (ātman) identical to the "world-essence" (brahman); the latter, who played a significant role in the development of Buddhist monasticism in Tibet, denies both self and essence. Yet, they share a concern with questions of truth and the means by which someone could gain access to it, such as what, if anything, meditation contributes to knowledge and its acquisition. By exploring their answers to this and related questions, including how discursive and conceptual practices like learning, reasoning, and meditation could generate nonconceptual knowledge or knowledge of the nonconceptual, this essay shows the difficulty of separating "philosophical" problems of truth from those related to self-transformation or "spirituality," as Michel Foucault defines the terms. It also reassesses, as a framework for comparison, the well-known contrast between "gradual" and "sudden" approaches to the achievement of liberating knowledge and highlights them as tensions we still struggle to resolve today.

Keywords: comparative philosophy; classical Indian philosophy; Advaita Vedānta; Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy; sudden and gradual debates; meditation theories; epistemological theories; models of the spiritual path

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1. Introduction: Truth and Self-Transformation in Comparative Perspective

For much of the intellectual history of "the West," epistemological or "philosophical" matters, as Michel Foucault describes them—questions about "the conditions and limits of the subject's access to the truth"—were bound together with what Foucault calls "spirituality" (*spiritualité*): "the search, the practice, the experience by which the subject operates the transformations upon himself necessary to gain access to the truth."[1] In the opening of his 1981–1982 lectures, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault distinguishes between "philosophy" and "spirituality" in order to decenter modern philosophy's central concern with knowledge (or self-knowledge, knowing oneself), that is, with epistemology. He argues instead for the centrality of "self-care" (*souci de soi*) or technologies of self-transformation for understanding the relationship between subjectivity and truth. Having made the distinction, however, Foucault immediately grants that "philosophical" and "spiritual" matters were rarely, if ever, separated in Greek and Roman antiquity. For Foucault, the turning point was what he calls "the Cartesian moment," but before then "philosophical thinking," as defined above, was subsumed within "spirituality" as one of its modes of practice. Foucault's primary example is Gnosticism, though he says the same is true of the Stoics, the Epicureans, the Platonists, the Neoplatonists, and in antiquity in general; his sole exception is Aristotle.[2] Scholarship has now begun to show even more that the situation in classical India is similar. One may find exceptions—this is still a topic of debate—but as a question of historical record there appear to be many more examples in classical India than exceptions, just as there are in Western antiquity.

We can still, like Foucault, try to decenter epistemological questions in order to focus on the "spiritual techniques" of self-transformation, the "regimens of truth," and see how they are integrated and explained in the path philosophies that justify and enact them. There is value in doing so, and indeed, Foucault's notion of "spiritual" technique as a practice or mode of self-transformation gives much needed specificity to a term often so vague as to be virtually devoid of meaning.[3] Yet, the epistemological questions do not disappear when we shift our focus to "spiritual exercises." Foucault may have believed that the philosophers of antiquity were all wrong about the universality of the truths to which their spiritual techniques ostensibly led them.[4] The classical philosophers of India, like philosophers elsewhere, were themselves deeply concerned about questions of truth, which they tied to questions about how a person can gain access to the truth, what happens when a person sees the truth, and so on. One aim of this essay will be to show that this is the case by looking at how roughly contemporaneous philosophers from two different religious traditions of India, Advaita Vedānta and Mahāyāna Buddhism, treat a shared framework of practice: the threefold scheme of learning (or hearing), thinking (or reasoning), and meditative cultivation.

The threefold scheme of learning, reasoning, and meditation has been said to support a particular type of spiritual path philosophy and epistemology. In recent years, a number of scholars (Tillemans 2013, revised in 2016; Adam 2016; Kellner 2020) have shown how the Indian Buddhist philosopher, Kamalaśīla (circa 8th century), deploys the threefold scheme to explain a "gradualist" position on the attainment of the goal and to argue for a "continuity" thesis between reasoning and meditation.[5] The term, "gradualism," points here to a graduated, step-by-step process of achieving the goal of the path. It is based on the assumption of regular causation; as Kamalaśīla says at the beginning of his second *Bhāvanākrama* (*The Stages of Cultivation*): "[I]t cannot be that all-knowledge could arise without causes . . . Therefore, if one wishes to obtain the fruit, one should practice the appropriate causes and conditions to their full extent."[6] The "continuity" thesis holds that there is a basic epistemological consistency among learning, reasoning, and meditation, even for those meditative states said to be free from conceptual thought. The three practices all reveal the same basic truth. Recent scholarship has focused on how Kamalaśīla explains the transition from conceptual to nonconceptual knowledge, and whether or not he holds that meditative cultivation adds any epistemic weight to the knowledge derived from learning and reasoning.

Placing Kamalaśīla's arguments in the context of the famous Samye debate, scholars have typically contrasted his gradualism with the idea of "suddenness" or "spontaneity" (the "subitist" or "all-at-once" nature) of attainment: on this latter view, the goal of the path comes upon one abruptly or immediately, as though without any cause or effort. Here, too, Kamalaśīla's epistemic continuity thesis has been contrasted with an "independence" thesis, connected to the "subitist" position, whereby meditation provides a new, fundamentally different, and discontinuous insight into the nature of reality from what learning and reasoning can provide. Importantly it is also thought to be a better, more direct, more powerful, truly liberating insight; an insight opposed to conceptuality, one that conceptual thought only disguises or obscures. The subitist position has often been connected to a nondualist ontology, as expressed in the famous poem attributed to Huineng in the *Platform Sūtra*:

> From the beginning enlightenment has no tree,
>
> And the bright mirror has no stand.
>
> Buddha-nature is always pure.
>
> Where could dust settle?

Huineng's verse does not speak of a sudden or gradual path, per se, but expresses a nondual perspective that undermines or at least throws into question several of the basic assumptions upon which a gradualist path philosophy is built: causation, effort, duality. Yet, one of the most important points made by Luis Gómez in his analysis of these issues is

that the subitist's nondualist ontology and rejection of the path "only makes sense in the context of a community *already committed*" to the goal and the path.[7] This is a point we must continually bear in mind: Context matters, and the institutional context here for an ostensibly epistemological debate about the implications of nondualism and the means of knowing it—continuity or independence—gives voice to a central concern about spiritual path theory.

Now, it may or may not be historically accurate to say that Kamalaśīla wrote three treatises, each called *The Stages of Cultivation* (*Bhāvanākrama*), while living in Tibet and engaged in an officially sanctioned debate or a series of written correspondences with representatives of a nondualist Chan Buddhist tradition from China.[8] It is certainly the case that Kamalaśīla was the product of a long tradition in India where related questions of epistemology, ontology, and spiritual path theory were still being debated. This becomes obvious when we trace the broader history and context for some of the concepts and arguments on which Kamalaśīla relies, such as the threefold scheme and nonconceptual meditation.[9]

Adam (2006, pp. 82–83) points out that the threefold scheme used by Kamalaśīla throughout these treatises is not uniquely Buddhist; in fact, it is a broader Indian framework for conceptualizing practices upon a path of self-cultivation.[10] Despite its ubiquity in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, it is perhaps better known throughout India from its presence in the mainstream Indian tradition of Vedānta (or Uttara-mīmāṃsā), its scriptural basis therein being two nearly identical passages from the *Great Forest Upaniṣad* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*).[11] One wonders if the threefold scheme were not imported into the Buddhist tradition by scholar-monks (Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, circa 3rd to 4th century?) already familiar with the similar framework in the Veda. On the other hand, we will see below that making the link between the passages in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* and the standard threefold scheme as it appears in later Buddhist and Vedānta systematic thought requires some interpretative work. Given the purported impact of Buddhist thought upon the early Vedānta interpretive systems (Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara, if not Bhartṛprapañca and Maṇḍanamiśra, approximately 6th to 8th century?), the direction of influence may well have gone both ways.[12] Setting aside these historical speculations, we have a situation in which comparable Indian philosophers discuss comparable techniques as comparable solutions to comparable problems.

It is also worth noting at the outset that comparable frameworks for conceptualizing a series of interlinking practices can be found well beyond India. In the opening of his 1980–1981 lectures, *Subjectivity and Truth*, Foucault (2017, p. 32ff) identifies the typology of *mathēsis* (learning, teaching), *meletē* (reflection, meditation, thinking), and *askēsis* (exercises, ascetic practices), a framework he claims to be that of Epictetus but theorized more generally by the Stoics and implicit "in all the great arts of living" of the Hellenistic world.[13] Foucault's discussion of this framework provides the context for an introduction in those lectures to the concept of "technologies of self" (*techniques de soi*): "thought out, elaborated, systematized procedures taught to individuals in such a way that, through the management of their own life, through the control and transformation of self by self, they can attain a certain mode of being" (p. 35). His description of such practices fits well with the path philosophies of classical India that concern us here. The historical proximity between Śaṅkara (the most famous proponent of early Vedānta) and Kamalaśīla—the fact that both know and discuss a similar typology of practice—lends further credibility to the project of comparing them first as a basis for broader comparison and analysis. Since Kamalaśīla's use of the threefold scheme has been the subject of recent scholarly analysis, I will discuss him more briefly and mainly as a foil to highlight certain resonances and tensions with Śaṅkara and the early Vedānta tradition, which will receive the more detailed treatment here.[14] As we will see, the comparison raises difficult questions that still resonate today.

2. Comparing Kamalaśīla with Śaṅkara and Early Vedānta

Typically, we rely on dualities for comparison, and the "sudden/gradual" dichotomy has been proposed as a comparative framework in this case, too. In his groundbreaking

essay on the metaphor, THE MIND IS A MIRROR, Paul Demiéville describes Śaṅkara as someone who "leaned toward 'subitism'." Demiéville asserts that for Śaṅkara:

> [L]iberation . . . does not admit of any active effort on our part. It is a matter of knowledge, not of works . . . Liberation is inherent in our *ātman* . . . [I]t would be wrong to think that it could be revealed through purifying the *ātman* by our own effort . . . In fact the *ātman* can never be the object of any activity, for all activity directed toward an object implies a modification of that object—but the *ātman* is eternally unalterable.[15]

Demiéville depends on Deussen (1912), and therefore gives us a fairly reliable description of the main thrust of Śaṅkara's nondualism and how it informs his passivism,[16] but Gómez (1987, p. 128) cautiously reminds us that "Śaṅkara . . . spawned three lines of disciples—only one of which took a 'leap-philosophy' position (to borrow K. H. Potter's terminology)."[17]

Modern scholarship has shown that the sudden/gradual dichotomy is more "ideal-typical" than actual.[18] It does not correspond in reality to a single duality, but gestures toward a number of different but related dichotomies that may concatenate in complex ways in particular cases. These dichotomies include the active and passive, the innate and acquired, the expressible and inexpressible, the conceptual (*savikalpa*) and nonconceptual (*nirvikalpa*), the dual and nondual. Gómez (1987, p. 132) concludes, "One would like to suggest that the various polarities associated with the sudden-gradual controversies respond somehow to one single duality, but that is not the case. Clusters of dualities, however, do overlap." "Sudden" and "gradual" cover a variety of tensions, which coexist or combine in complex ways, but often are reduced and then exploited for the purposes of polemical argumentation and identity formation. This recognition reduces or at least problematizes the usefulness of the dichotomy as a neutral typology for modern doxographical description, but it can still be helpful as a framing hypothesis because of the productive questions it raises for us.

Demiéville also describes Śaṅkara as a "systematizer," and Gómez has this to say about systems and their relation to the various dualities that comprise the sudden/gradual complex:

> [R]eligious systems often are dynamic attempts to solve all of these admittedly real and universal oppositions. The dichotomies are inherent to human thought, not constructed by philosophers or mystics, although religious effort and ideology often can be described as a resolution, or rather a balancing, of the tension between the two poles. (Gómez 1987, p. 132)

The point here is that we misunderstand the nature of systematic thought and practice if we do not also recognize and respect the intractability of the tensions that such systems try to resolve. For instance, whether we label them subitist or gradualist, we can find a natural tension within spiritual path philosophies that attempt somehow to account for and describe a process of change, progression, or improvement that can seem fast at times and slow or stagnant at others. We do well to read systematic thought and polemical debates with such tensions in mind.

In order to put Kamalaśīla into conversation with Śaṅkara and early Vedānta, we can also begin by identifying some basic assumptions shared by them. Both address the same basic problem of human dissatisfaction, and both are concerned with the question of how one can achieve liberation from it. That may be obvious to anyone who knows anything about them, but the point underscores that both are working within the framework of spiritual path theory. Among the three characteristics of "spirituality" identified by Foucault are, first, that the truth is not simply given to the subject as such, and second, that accessing the truth requires a certain modification of the subject, a type of conversion, which can take different forms, but means that the subject must always be "torn away" from his or her present condition. It involves a transformation of the subject. Foucault calls it "a job" (*un travail*) and a "progressive transformation," a movement by which "the truth comes to him and illuminates him" (*la vérité vient à lui et l'illumine*).[19]

Both Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara begin from the assumption that there is something unstable or unfulfilling about our everyday lives—we find ourselves caught in patterns of behavior that we believe will bring happiness, but ultimately leave us dissatisfied—but it seems that each of us must begin the path by deciding for ourselves whether this is a fair description of our lives. For those unconvinced by such a characterization, Śaṅkara says, even the scriptures will not sway them.[20] For those who are ready to hear it, however, Śaṅkara and Kamalaśīla will identify the same basic cause of the problem and the same basic solution. Ignorance causes our dissatisfaction, ignorance about the nature of the world and ourselves in relation to it, and thus liberation requires replacing ignorance with knowledge.

However, the two philosophers differ on the content of this liberating knowledge and the means of achieving it. Śaṅkara is committed to the claim that the *ātman*, the self, is identical to *brahman*, the essence of reality, and that the diverse world of our everyday experience is therefore illusory; Kamalaśīla agrees that our everyday experience misleads us, but he holds the view that neither *ātman* nor *brahman* ultimately exists; everything is empty of essential reality, including human beings; we, like everything else, arise in dependence on other things, which for him undermines the apparent solidity or reality of our everyday world. Thus, the two philosophers agree on the illusory nature of everyday experience, but disagree on the ontological characterization of ultimate truth. We will see how they differ on the means of achieving such liberating knowledge when we look at how they treat the threefold scheme.

Śaṅkara's and Kamalaśīla's basic difference regarding the content and means of liberating knowledge, however, belies another important similarity between them. In Vedānta and Buddhist thought, the goal may be called "liberation" (*mukti*, *mokṣa*) or "cessation" (*nirvāṇa*); in either case, however, this goal is comprised largely by knowledge of or insight into the true nature of reality. Common terms are *yathābhūtajñāna* ("knowledge of reality as it is"), *samyagjñāna* ("perfect knowledge"), or *samyagdarśana* ("perfect seeing or insight"); the Buddhist tradition also speaks of "seeing and knowing things as they really are" (Pāli: *yathābhūtañānadassana*). We see here the application in both systems of the widespread conceptual metaphor, KNOWING IS SEEING.[21] Moreover, such knowledge or insight has power; it is thought to be liberating. Such liberating knowledge is not merely a state of knowing certain information about the world. Again, this attitude toward the truth conforms to what Foucault says about spirituality. Its third characteristic for Foucault is that knowing the truth produces certain consequences for the knowing subject beyond the mere result of the steps taken to access it. He writes, "Truth is what illumines the subject; truth is what gives him 'supreme bliss' (*béatitude*); truth is what gives him tranquility of the soul."[22]

Now, understanding how these Vedānta and Buddhist philosophers differ on the nature and means of liberation requires that we engage several interrelated problems of ontology, epistemology, and path theory. Consider the following questions about Śaṅkara in particular: How can he be both subitist and systematizer? How can he advocate for the spontaneity of liberation while at the same time upholding an epistemic continuity thesis with regard to learning, reasoning, and meditation? How can he be a subitist while discounting the importance of meditation, nonconceptual or otherwise? How does he manage the tension between the progressive method implied by the threefold scheme and his subitist tendencies? If he ultimately affirms that reality is inherently nondual, how can the various means of achieving knowledge of reality, such as the threefold scheme of learning and so on, which employ concepts rooted in difference, ever produce such knowledge? With respect to Kamalaśīla, even though he can be described as a gradualist, it is fruitful to consider how he uses the threefold scheme to argue for an epistemic continuity thesis while at the same time incorporating nonconceptual meditation into his path system. Such questions arise from applying the sudden/gradual dichotomy and the distinction between continuity and independence theses as interpretive tools in this comparative exercise.

These are complicated questions, and a more straightforward, interpretative one could help orient us at this point: how do Śaṅkara and Kamalaśīla treat the threefold scheme in their respective works? Here is a preliminary hypothesis: the threefold scheme helps Kamalaśīla articulate his gradualist system, while Śaṅkara treats it with some ambivalence. Kamalaśīla uses it to explain key junctures in his system and as a descriptive framework for the gradual path, whereas Śaṅkara accepts the authenticity of the scheme, given its basis in his scriptural corpus, but deemphasizes its applicability or reinterprets its meaning in some contexts.

Why this difference between them? Here again, the answer becomes more complex, but one reason may be the differing importance each philosopher gives to meditative practice on the spiritual path and more specifically to "nonconceptual" meditation or knowledge (*nirvikalpa-samādhi* or *jñāna*) as a step on this path. Nonconceptual meditation plays a crucial role in Kamalaśīla's path philosophy, whereas it does not seem to be given much, if any, importance in Śaṅkara's writings, at least not as a stage on the path. Arguably, for Śaṅkara, the knowledge of the nonconceptual, that is, the highest, nondual *brahman*—which knowledge may itself be described as nonconceptual—may be defined as the goal of the path, but meditation is not the primary means to such knowledge. Śaṅkara repeatedly emphasizes that scripture is the sole means of knowing the true nature of reality. This deemphasis on meditation and concurrent emphasis on scripture and hermeneutics may well demonstrate Śaṅkara's indebtedness to the orthodox Mīmāṃsā tradition and his special contribution to the Vedānta tradition.[23] Both these reasons for Śaṅkara's ambivalence also concern his reputed subitism.

We could say that Śaṅkara's subitism makes him distrust gradualism, and while this statement may be vague given Gómez's comments about the value of these terms as descriptions of actual philosophers' positions, it is still meaningful and suggestive of more specific claims, such as the following: His nondualist ontology, one in which the liberated state is innate within us, shapes his epistemological position, and his epistemological position, which emphasizes the revelatory nature of scripture, makes him distrust gradualism. His nondualist ontology also shapes his path theory, which treats knowledge as a mental state of passive receptivity, and his emphasis on passivity and nondualism makes him distrust causal schemes in general. At the same time, however, systematicity breeds gradualism and a teaching system requires it. More specifically, a reliable teaching strategy requires that there is regularity of causation, or at least a possible relation of cause and effect between actions and consequences. Otherwise, teaching and learning become theoretically impossible. So, Śaṅkara inherits the threefold scheme and cites it affirmatively in certain contexts, but he also argues against its use in other contexts. At times he defends the idea of immediate liberation, even though he also makes concessions to gradualism—just as Gómez tells us all subitist philosophers must do at one point or another because of the basic theoretical problems inherent in subitism.

3. The Threefold Scheme and the Epistemic Continuity Thesis

What, if anything, does meditation contribute to knowledge and its acquisition? What is the epistemic value of meditation practice? These questions can form the basis for comparing Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara's use of the threefold scheme, while helping to confirm that both of them uphold an epistemic continuity thesis with regard to the relationship among learning, reasoning, and meditation. These questions raise others, such as what one means by knowledge, not to mention what is meant by meditation. Given that there are numerous types of meditation, from visual to verbal, kinetic to conceptual and possibly even nonconceptual meditation, is knowledge any easier to define? Can we say, for instance, that knowledge is "justified, true belief," as many 20th-century analytic philosophers have defined it, or is it something more or even less?[24] Perhaps knowledge requires no justification, no special cognitive process, but assuming we wish to retain the notion that knowledge requires some kind of "safety condition," here is another way of asking the question: Does meditation (of whatever kind) contribute anything uniquely

necessary to justifying a belief as true? Independence theorists could say "yes," assuming they are willing to grant that justification is possible at all; continuity theorists might say "yes" or "no," depending on what they mean by justification.

Kamalaśīla's answer to the above questions has been a topic of recent scholarly discussion, and indeed the distinction between continuity and independence theses has arisen from these discussions. Thus, it makes sense to begin with Kamalaśīla and quickly rehearse the nature of the debate. Tillemans (2013, 2016) makes the distinction while arguing that for Kamalaśīla, "yogic perception would not provide any new *information* from what had been given by philosophy. Kamalaśīla's yogic perception, in effect, appears to be . . . a type of amplification or integration of the contents of philosophical thought. Philosophy would be doing the significant epistemic work of discovering truths."[25] Here, we can understand yogic perception as another way of referring to the kind of understanding gained in meditation practice, which is said to align with the practice of reason or what Tillemans calls "philosophy." Adam (2016, p. 370) takes issue with Tillemans' characterization of Kamalaśīla's position and offers a different point of view:

> While Tillemans is certainly correct in stating that meditative understanding conforms to the conclusions reached through philosophy according to Kamalaśīla, this position is not inconsistent with one that holds meditative understanding to provide a kind of experiential verification of those conclusions.

Adam also suggests that for Kamalaśīla, "meditation plays an indispensable role in the quest for liberating knowledge, contributing insights that are unattainable by studying and thinking alone" (p. 354). Adam may well be right, but we can see multiple issues at play here. One is the transformative efficacy of meditation, its necessity for achieving liberating knowledge. Another is its epistemic value.

In responding to Adam, Kellner (2020, pp. 69–70) makes the distinction between epistemic value and transformative efficacy while arguing that Adam's claim that meditative cultivation provides "experiential corroboration" for conclusions reached through conceptual reasoning misrepresents Kamalaśīla's epistemology:

> . . . there is no indication that Kamalaśīla would consider the certainty obtained by reasoning to be insufficient evidence when compared to evidence provided by perceptual awareness. Conceptual certainty is not regarded as sufficiently strong to remove deep-seated misconceptions in the mind, but this is more like a psychological or phenomenological insufficiency, not one of strength of evidence.

Kellner thus makes a distinction between epistemic strength and transformative efficacy, a distinction that is perhaps less clearly made by Adam in his objections to Tillemans' interpretation of Kamalaśīla's position, but one wonders whether Kamalaśīla himself draws the distinction quite so clearly. The debate raises questions about the nature of truth and its relationship to the knowing subject in the context of spiritual path philosophy. Can conceptual knowledge provide sufficient evidence for certainty about the world, or does knowledge require a more intimate relationship between the knowing subject and the object known? What justification, if any, does knowledge require? And what should we make of the concept of a powerful, liberating knowledge? Is it the same knowledge we gain from ordinary perception or inference? One thing is clear: when we speak about liberating knowledge in the context of Buddhism, or Vedānta for that matter, we are not simply referring to information about the nature of the world but to a state of knowledge that results from and is a significant transformation of the way the knowing subject sees, thinks about, and acts in the world.

A key passage from the first *Bhāvanākrama* will suffice to demonstrate Kamalaśīla's use of the threefold scheme and his adherence to the continuity thesis. It also suggests how he seeks to integrate nonconceptual meditation into his path system:

> Regarding the three types of wisdom, that is, the wisdom arising from learning, reasoning, and cultivation, one should first of all generate the wisdom arising from learning, because with it one first determines the meaning of the scriptures.

> After that, by means of the wisdom arising from reasoning, one understands the meaning of the scriptures in terms of whether it is definitive or provisional. After that, once one has thereby generated certitude, one should cultivate the real object {true meaning} (*bhūtam arthaṃ*) and not a false {unreal} one (*abhūtam*). For otherwise perfect knowledge (*samyagjñāna*) would not arise, because one might cultivate false objects, too (*viparītasyāpi bhāvanād*), and doubt would not disappear. And then cultivation would be entirely meaningless {useless} (*vyarthaiva*), like that of the non-Buddhists. As the Blessed One [the Buddha] has said in the *King of Samādhis Scripture* (*Samādhirāja*):
>
> > If one analyzes the factors of existence that are without self {essence} (*nairātmyadharmān*),
> >
> > And if, after analyzing them, one would practice cultivation,
> >
> > It would be the cause of obtaining the fruit of cessation (*nirvāṇa*).
> >
> > There is no other cause that would bring peace.
>
> Therefore, after one has analyzed with the wisdom arising from reasoning, that is, though both logic and scripture, one should cultivate only the truly real nature of things (*bhūtam eva vastusvarūpam*). And the real nature of things has been certified by scripture and reasoning to be their absolute non-origination from the standpoint of ultimate reality {truth} (*paramārthataḥ*).[26]

In this passage, Kamalaśīla makes a number of points that are relevant to the current discussion. For one thing, he outlines the threefold scheme as a logical or temporal sequence of practices. One begins by learning the scriptures, and then proceeds by reasoning to determine their correct meaning, before finally engaging in the practice of meditative cultivation on the true nature of reality, which for Kamalaśīla is the fact that all things are selfless: they arise in dependence on other things, and therefore from an ultimate standpoint do not arise at all. Such a process will give rise to "perfect knowledge" (*samyagjñāna*), the goal of the path. So, we have here something like an analysis of knowledge and its acquisition, but Kamalaśīla gives voice to the concern that one's meditation practice must at some point take an "unreal" object, that is, an imaginary or conceptual object, as its focus. For, as Kellner (2020, p. 53) says, "the yogi has to engage in reificatory practices in order to remove reification." This process will also involve the cultivation of nonconceptual knowledge (*nirvikalpajñāna*), which Kamalaśīla describes as "seeing the highest reality" (*paramatattvadarśana*) (Kellner 2020, p. 63).

Kamalaśīla shows an awareness of the epistemological problem that rival, non-Buddhist philosophers disagree on the nature of reality even while they may also advocate for meditation practice as a means of attaining knowledge of it. Given the possibility, the necessity even, of reifying ultimately "false" objects, meditation can lead one astray. Kamalaśīla tries to allay concern by appealing to the epistemic authority of learning and reasoning, and here he expresses the continuity thesis most clearly. He says that learning and reasoning provide the certitude with which one can engage effectively in meditation practice. However, he seems to equivocate insofar as he also grants that meditation practice upon the "wrong" object will not destroy doubt, which seems to assume that meditation practice on the "right" object does play a role in dispelling it. It is as if the certitude provided by learning and reasoning still contains an element of uncertainty, but Kamalaśīla does not say this outright. Instead, he proceeds to emphasize the epistemic authority of scripture. He does so, one should note, by explicitly quoting it, but we should also note that the scriptural passage itself emphasizes the transformative efficacy of meditative cultivation on the true nature of reality. Kamalaśīla then restates his position that scripture and reasoning certify the true nature of reality, and that the true nature of reality is emptiness, the fact that things do not ultimately arise at all. Upon such a truth one should meditate, he says, and thereby begins to articulate an answer to the difficult question of how one can use concepts to eliminate conceptuality.[27]

Śaṅkara's answer to the question of meditation's contribution to knowledge and its acquisition has also been a subject of scholarly debate. Many modern interpreters, most seeming to follow later or competing Vedānta exegetical traditions, have argued that Śaṅkara holds that meditative experience possesses special epistemic value over and above learning the scriptures and reasoning about them; meditative experience somehow confirms the truth of the scriptures and is their ultimate source. According to Rambachan (1991), however, these modern interpreters have mostly misunderstood Śaṅkara's main epistemological position that "scripture" (*śruti*)—the *Upaniṣads* or *Vedānta-vākya*s, "the statements of Vedānta," as Śaṅkara calls them—is the sole valid means of knowing *brahman*, and that scripture is intrinsically valid (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*) as a means of such knowledge. Rambachan would argue that Śaṅkara's answer is therefore negative: meditation has no independent epistemic value apart from learning and reasoning. With Śaṅkara's emphasis on scripture as the only valid means of knowing *brahman*, even the "spiritual" value of meditation, that is, its value as a method of bringing about liberation, is called into question.

We will explore these issues in more detail below, but here we will look at just a single passage from Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, the scriptural source for the threefold scheme in Vedānta. This comment occurs in a brief transitional passage that concludes the section in which the threefold scheme is first mentioned and introduces the next section. It shows that Śaṅkara also asserts a "continuity" thesis with respect to the relationship among learning, reasoning, and meditation. Here is the comment:

> In all cases, however, since consideration through reasoning should be done only in accordance with what is ascertained by scripture, and since meditation should be done only in accordance with what is considered through reasoning, that is, through what has been certified by scripture and reasoning, a specific prescription for meditation is without purpose.[28]

While the remark comes in response to a hermeneutical question, the point could not be clearer: scripture provides the epistemological basis for proper reasoning about the nature of reality, and scripture supported by reasoning provides the epistemological basis for meditation. Meditation by itself, and even reasoning if detached from scripture, serves no independent purpose and therefore requires no separate prescription. Meditation accords with scripture and reasoning. When compared to Kamalaśīla, Śaṅkara makes an even stronger claim because, while Kamalaśīla still argues for the soteriological (or transformative) necessity of meditation practice, here Śaṅkara even seems ambivalent about its soteriological value. The question arises whether or how much Śaṅkara even advocates for the threefold scheme as an accurate description of the path. Now, we will turn to Śaṅkara and the place of the threefold scheme in early Vedānta.

4. Śaṅkara and the Threefold Scheme in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*

In the preface to his translation of Śaṅkara's *Upadeśasāhasrī*, Mayeda (1979, p. xiii) states, "In the Vedānta school there are three stages in the attainment of final release: (a) hearing (*śravaṇa*), (b) thinking (*manana*), and (c) meditation (*nididhyāsana*)." This neutral statement masks a broader tension within Vedānta concerning the nature and purpose of meditation, including "nonconceptual meditation" (*nirvikalpasamādhi*), and the "spiritual" efficacy of the scriptures (*śruti*, "what is heard") and their ability to liberate the person directly. The tension can also be characterized as one between "gradual" and "immediate liberation" (*krama-* and *akrama-mukti*). Finally, the importance of the threefold scheme in Vedānta can be connected to the question of the epistemological status of scripture apart from its spiritual efficacy: is scripture inherently valid as a source of knowledge of reality, or must it be validated or confirmed by another means of knowledge, such as meditative experience or reasoning? Vedānta philosophers, Śaṅkara among them, debated these issues among themselves and with philosophers from rival Indian traditions.

According to Rambachan (1991, p. 10), "[Modern] writers who argue for *anubhava* [experience] as the true *pramāṇa* [valid means of knowledge] of *brahmajñāna* [knowledge of *brahman*] generally treat the process of knowledge in Śaṅkara as progressing through three

different phases." The first two phases are "viewed as preliminary and intellectual. It is only the experience which contemplation (*nididhyāsana*) affords that conclusively informs us about *brahman*." (Rambachan 1991, p. 14) Moreover, as Rambachan explains, such writers often equate experience with nonconceptual meditation. Rambachan himself argues that such a position fails to represent Śaṅkara's own views, as expressed in his commentaries on the principal *Upaniṣad*s, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Brahmasūtra*. He instead argues that scripture is, for Śaṅkara, "the singular and exclusive means of knowledge about brahman," and concludes that "it is not possible to reconcile Śaṅkara's views with this seemingly well-ordered system," that is, with the threefold scheme. (Rambachan 1991, p. 97)

For his part, Mayeda (1979, p. xv), following Hacker (1949, pp. 8–9), notes that the three stages, of hearing, thinking, and meditation, "appear to correspond to the first, second, and third chapters, respectively, of the Prose Part" of the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, which scholars generally maintain to be a legitimate work by Śaṅkara and perhaps his only non-commentarial work.[29] The correspondence is indeed striking, but there do not appear to be any direct references to the threefold list in the *Upadeśasāhasrī* itself. Furthermore, as Comans (1996) argues, chapter eighteen of the verse portion of the work can be read both as a defense of the claim that hearing the scriptures alone can liberate a person immediately, and an argument against the necessity of so-called "repetitive contemplation" (*prasaṅkhyāna*) as a means of securing and stabilizing liberating knowledge. Advocacy for *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation is traditionally associated with the Vedānta philosopher, Maṇḍanamiśra, author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, who may have been a contemporary of Śaṅkara and whose position on the threefold scheme will be assessed later in the essay.[30] Mayeda (1979, p. 254, note 1) thus raises the question: if Śaṅkara rejects the necessity of *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation, what should we make of the fact that the third chapter of the prose portion of the *Upadeśasāhasrī* appears to prescribe an ostensibly similar style of meditation called "meditative rehearsal" (*parisaṃkhyāna*)? Clearly the place of meditation and of the threefold scheme in early Vedānta and in Śaṅkara's thinking in particular is a matter of some debate.

Most modern scholars who mention the threefold scheme in Vedānta point to one (or both) of two nearly identical passages from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, 2.4.5 and 4.5.6, which appear to provide a scriptural basis for the scheme.[31] To get a sense for how Śaṅkara treats the threefold scheme, we can begin with his comments on these passages. The context for both is a dialogue between the famous sage, Yājñavalkya, and one of his two wives, Maitreyī. Yājñavalkya is preparing to leave home and become an ascetic, and he wishes to settle his affairs with his wives. The *Upaniṣad* tells us that, while his other wife, Kātyayanī, concerned herself only with "women's wisdom" (*strīprajñā*), Maitreyī liked to discuss "religious topics" (*brahmavādinī*). She questions Yājñavalkya about the benefits of possessing "the whole world and its wealth" when it will not bring one immortality. She asks him to tell her what he knows.[32]

Yājñavalkya agrees but instructs her to "concentrate" as he is speaking—the word he uses is *nididhyāsasva*, the imperative form of the same term typically translated as "meditation" in the threefold scheme. He then explains that "the self" (*ātman*) is the ultimate reason why people value things in the world, such as one's husband, wife, children, wealth, power, and so forth. The self is the ultimate ground of all things, he tells her. In the key passage that concerns us, Yājñavalkya states:

> You see, Maitreyī—it is the self (*ātmā*) that one should see (*draśtavyaḥ*); it is the self that one should hear (*śrotravyaḥ*); it is the self that one should consider (*mantavyaḥ*); it is the self on which one should concentrate (*nididhyāsitavyaḥ*). For by seeing the self, by hearing it, by considering it, and by knowing it (*vijñānena*), all this is known (*idaṃ sarvaṃ viditam*).

It is noteworthy that Yājñavalkya actually speaks of four actions, not three, which prompts an interpretive question about the notion of "seeing" (*darśana*) implied here, as well as how sight relates to the other three actions mentioned in the passage. If the passage speaks of four actions, why do commentators speak of a threefold process? A look at Śaṅkara's

commentary can help us understand how, retrospectively, commentators saw three in four. Śaṅkara begins his commentary on this passage as follows:

> Therefore [Yājñavalkya says], "you see, it is the self that should be seen;" [that is,] it is worthy of seeing, it should be made into an object of seeing. "It should be heard," [that is,] previously (*pūrvam*) from the spiritual teacher or scripture. Next (*paścāt*) "it should be considered," [that is,] with reasoning (*tarka*, logic). After that (*tataḥ*), "it should be concentrated on," [that is,] it should be meditated on (*dhyātavyaḥ*) with conviction (*niścayena*). For in this way [the self] becomes something seen by completing the efficient causes/practices (*sādhana*s) of hearing, considering, and concentration. When these [efficient causes/practices] are obtained as a unity, then "perfect seeing" (*samyagdarśana*),[33] which has unity with *brahman* as its object, becomes clear (*prasīdati*),[34] and not otherwise, such as by hearing alone.[35]

While the scriptural passage only offers a list and does not make clear that seeing is meant to be the outcome of the other three actions, the commentary interprets it to mean that learning, reasoning, and concentration are stages of a sequential process with "perfect seeing" or knowledge of *brahman* as its goal. The terms, "previously," "next," and "after that," introduce either temporal or logical stages of a sequence. The goal is apparent from the way the commentary interprets the concept of seeing. However, the commentary also speaks of the three practices being obtained as a unity, suggesting that they could be understood as elements of a singular practice with the same goal. The scriptural passage seems clear that the four actions of seeing and so forth have complete knowledge as their result, but it is worth emphasizing the description of the goal in the commentary as a "complete seeing." This is a key concept in Śaṅkara's path philosophy, equivalent to the liberating knowledge of *brahman* (*brahmajñāna*), the goal of the path: KNOWING IS SEEING.

The passage prompts further consideration not only about the relationship between seeing and knowing, but also between "meditation" (or "concentration," *nididhyāsana*) and knowledge.[36] One may note the subtle shift in terminology in the second sentence of the scriptural passage whereby "knowledge" (*vijñāna*) replaces "concentration" (*nidhyāsana*).[37] Again and again in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, Śaṅkara distinguishes knowledge from action. He argues further that meditation is a type of action, thus distinguishing it sharply from knowledge—as we will see when we look at some key passages. What should we make of the claim made above that "hearing alone" does not produce "perfect seeing?" The claim would seem to support the gradualist idea that the three practices are all necessary for the attainment of perfect seeing, but this statement seems at variance with Śaṅkara's claims in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, *Upadeśasāhasrī*, and elsewhere that scripture is the only valid means of knowing *brahman*, and that hearing scripture can immediately produce such knowledge.[38]

It can do so, Śaṅkara tells us elsewhere, because knowledge of *brahman*, being our own self-awareness, is already directly available to us. Scripture tells us something we already know, but we know it imperfectly or incorrectly. Therefore, scripture removes our mistaken understanding, our ignorance, which allows the truth to shine forth, like the sun on a cloudless day. Śaṅkara says in the *Upadeśasāhasrī*: "As the sun has light as its nature, it has neither day nor night. In like manner I have neither knowledge nor ignorance since I have Pure Consciousness as my nature, without distinctions."[39] While metaphors like this one express the kind of nondualist sentiment that scholars associate with "subitism," when we try to understand such statements within the context in Śaṅkara's whole path philosophy, we can see the tension therein between "sudden" and "gradual" approaches to liberation.

Śaṅkara concludes his comments on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5 with a remark on the final sentence of the scriptural passage, which speaks to relationship between the goal of the path and the means of achieving it:

> When the scripture says, "For when the self is seen, heard, considered, and known, oh, Maitreyī, then all this is known (*viditaṃ*)," that is, it is truly known (*vijñāta*), the intent (*artha*, object/meaning) is the destruction of that, namely, the mental object of the belief caused by ignorance (*avidyāpratyayaviṣaya*), which consists in the effects of action upon the doer; and is the object of the belief that is a superimposition of ignorance upon the self; and has as its characteristic the castes and estates of life (*varṇāśrama*) and so forth; and is the cause of karma, namely, of priestly power, royal power, and so forth; and is like the belief that a rope is a snake.[40]

Recall that Maitreyī had asked about the benefits of possessing "the whole world and its wealth." This passage asserts that "all this" (*idaṃ sarvaṃ*), which according to Śaṅkara refers to all dualistic appearances, is in fact only a mental object constructed by ignorance. In fact, "all this" is identical to our nondual essence. One could interpret him to say that the threefold process, with perfect seeing as its result, removes ignorance and enables one to know the self. When one knows the self, one knows everything as it truly is. For there is nothing other than the self.

Śaṅkara restates several of the same points in the short commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 4.5.6, a scriptural passage nearly identical to 2.4.5. Here is his entire comment on 4.5.6:

> When Yājñavalkya says, "For, oh Maitreyī, when the self is seen . . . ," he says the following in response to the question of how the self is seen: "When it is heard," [that is,] previously (*pūrvaṃ*) from a teacher and scripture; once again (*punas*) "when it is considered," [that is,] when it is investigated (*vicārite*) by reasoning (*tarka*), [that is,] by argumentation (*upapatti*)—but hearing is by scripture alone—when it is considered by argumentation, afterwards (*paścād*) "when it is known" (*vijñāte*), [that is,] when it is ascertained (*nirdhārite*) that it is so and not otherwise. What happens (*kiṃ bhavati*)? Yājñavalkya says, "This becomes known." "All this" (*idaṃ sarvam*) means what is other than self, because nothing exists that is different from the self.[41]

Again, the threefold scheme refers to a sequential process with seeing or knowing as its outcome. We are told here that the threefold scheme explains how the self may be seen. The comment, "but hearing is by scripture alone" (*śravaṇaṃ tu āgamamātreṇa*), which seems inserted into the middle of the passage, suggests that Śaṅkara views the practice of hearing or learning as a specific one distinct from reasoning, an interpretation that seems confirmed by looking at more evidence from Śaṅkara's body of work. The commentary also highlights what happens when the self is known, and repeats the idea that knowing the self brings knowledge of "all this," that is, knowledge of the nondual nature of reality.

Śaṅkara's commentary on the scriptural passages from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* suggests that he accepts a gradualist path philosophy, and that the threefold scheme provides one way of conceptualizing its structure, but it remains to be seen whether this hypothesis is consistent with a broader survey of Śaṅkara's works. The evidence from the *Upadeśasāhasrī* seems inconclusive given that the text does not explicitly refer to the threefold scheme and includes both "gradualist" and "subitist" elements. What further textual evidence can shed light on the place of the threefold scheme in Śaṅkara's path philosophy? The *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* holds a preeminent place among Śaṅkara's works. Mayeda (1979, p. 6) calls it "the yardstick against which to measure the authenticity of other works ascribed to him." When we look at the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, however, Śaṅkara's attitude toward gradualism and the threefold scheme appears rather more ambivalent.[42]

5. The Threefold Scheme and Knowledge as Experience in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*

Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* contains approximately ten passages that cite one of the two key passages from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*. These references are given either by the opponent (*pūrvapakṣin*) or the authoritative voice (*siddhāntin*). When *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5 is cited by the opponent, as it is on four occasions in the

Brahmasūtrabhāṣya (1.1.4, 2.1.3, 2.3.39, and 3.4.51), it is given in support of the argument that scripture enjoins or requires certain practices, such as meditation, in order to know *brahman*, and in support of the general causal relationship between the process and the goal. This is true of the citation in the commentary on 1.1.4. It is also true of the citation in the commentary on 2.1.3, which discusses whether or not the *Upaniṣad*s enjoin the practice of yoga as a means of obtaining "perfect seeing" (*samyagdarśana*). It is also true of the citation in the commentary on 2.3.39, where it occurs in the midst of an argument that the *ātman* is an agent and the action of meditation can bring realization of the self. The same is true of the passage at 3.4.51, where the opponent makes the axiomatic statement: "Knowledge has at its antecedent cause learning and so on" (*śravaṇādipūrvikā hi vidyā*). The opponent draws the parallel between ritual action and its relation to the fruits of ritual and the three practices of learning, reasoning, and meditation as the means of producing knowledge.

In these instances, Śaṅkara challenges the idea that scripture enjoins or requires anything at all. He argues for scripture as the sole means of knowing *brahman* and against the idea that meditation is necessary for achieving the goal of liberating knowledge. More generally, he questions whether a causal relationship of any kind can be said to pertain between the process and the goal of liberation. Liberating knowledge, he repeatedly says, is not an action. In his response to the opponent's argument at 3.4.51, Śaṅkara's view of the relationship between the means of knowledge and knowledge as its product is that the means of knowledge remove the obstacles to knowledge; they do not produce knowledge. This is consistent with the instances in the commentarial passages on 1.1.4 and 3.2.21 in which the authoritative voice (*siddhāntin*) offers an alternative interpretation of the intent behind *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5. The basic idea is that the passage is meant to draw the practitioner's attention away from objects of the world and towards the self. It is not meant to require any actions or draw a direct relation of cause and effect between particular actions and liberating knowledge.

When *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5 or 4.5.6 is cited by the authoritative voice, on three occasions it is given in the context of clarifying that the object under discussion is the highest *brahman* or the highest self. This is true of the commentarial passages on 1.4.19, 2.1.22, and 2.3.6. The other passages in which Śaṅkara cites *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5 in the authoritative voice are 1.1.2 and 4.1.1-2. The first instance, at 1.1.2, refers to the passage in order to support the idea that reasoning depends on the scriptures. The other citation occurs at 4.1.1-2, at the beginning of a short section on the means of liberating knowledge. This is an important section given what Śaṅkara repeatedly says about the relationship among the means of knowledge and their relationship to knowledge of *brahman*, and I will conclude the discussion of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* by analyzing it, but we will begin with first passage.

The first reference in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* to the key passage from *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5 is found in the commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.2. It is cited in support of the complementarity of scripture and reasoning when the latter is based on the former: "Understanding *brahman* is accomplished by determination, through analysis, of the meaning of the statements in the Vedānta [that is, the *Upaniṣad*s], and not by any other valid means of knowledge, such as inference and so on." Then, the point is made: "Moreover, scripture even allows for reasoning as a support, because such passages as '[The self] should be heard; it should be considered . . . ' make evident that the human intellect is an assistant for [knowing] the self."[43]. No mention is made of meditation at all. Śaṅkara puts the epistemological and soteriological weight firmly on scripture, with reasoning providing support for the process of inquiry into *brahman* (*brahmajijñāsa*). The above remarks are part of a larger argument at the beginning of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* justifying the *śāstra*, that is, the *Brahmasūtra* itself, as a model for and enactment of the inquiry into *brahman*.

Just afterwards comes a key passage the meaning of which has been a source of debate. Rambachan tells us that it has frequently been cited as the "proof text" that Śaṅkara claims experience (*anubhava*) to be a valid means of knowing *brahman*. The passage reads as follows:

> Unlike in the case of the inquiry into religious duty (*dharmajijñāsa*), scripture and so on are not the only valid means in the case of the inquiry into *brahman*. Rather scripture and so on as well as experience (*anubhava*) and so on are in this case, in accordance with their nature, valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), because knowledge of *brahman* culminates in experience (*anubhavāvasānatva*) and because it takes as its object a truly existent thing (*bhūtavastuviṣayatva*).[44]

Rambachan maintains that it would not be appropriate to regard this isolated passage as justification for the strong claim that experience must validate scripture, or that scripture is merely an indirect means of knowing *brahman*. The passage is framed by comments that scripture is, in fact, the sole means of knowing *brahman*. When seen in context, the above-cited passage suggests that perception, inference, and other valid means of knowledge can play a role in supporting the inquiry into *brahman* alongside scripture and reasoning based on it.

Comans (2000, p. 308) notes, however, that the passage also suggests that knowledge of *brahman* is itself an experience or culminates in one. We can add that it also says that knowledge of *brahman* takes as its object a "truly existent thing" (*bhūtavastu*). This second point reflects the argument Śaṅkara makes elsewhere to the effect that knowledge of *brahman* relies for its truth on the object itself, and not on any human agency, because knowledge is not an action. This is an argument we will discuss when we look at the second passage in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* that mentions the threefold scheme from *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5. However, Comans's first point raises a separate question about the status of knowledge of *brahman*. If it culminates in an experience, is this experience "conceptual" or "nonconceptual"?

The general assumption among modern writers seems to be that Śaṅkara thinks of knowledge of *brahman* as a "nondual" experience akin to "nonconceptual meditation" (*nirvikalpasamādhi*). Consider the recent statement in Duerlinger et al. (2020, p. 38): "Knowledge of the Self takes the form of an immediate intuition (*anubhava*) that transcends the subject-object duality." Rambachan (1991, p. 11ff) offers many more examples of this interpretive stance, and against such an interpretation he says:

> It is exceedingly important to note that Śaṅkara all along sees *brahmajñāna* [knowledge of *brahman*] as a mental process occurring in the mind and not transcending it. *Brahmajñāna* is of the nature of an *antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti* [a mental state] coinciding with the nature of *brahman* and produced by its authoritative *pramāṇa* [valid means of knowledge], the *śruti* [the scriptures]. (Rambachan 1991, p. 109)

Rambachan emphasizes here that Śaṅkara sees knowledge of *brahman* as a state of mind, but one may ask, if Śaṅkara says that knowledge conforms to its object, and he also says that *brahman* is nondual, undifferentiated, and free from conceptualization (*nirvikalpa*), as he does on several occasions in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*,[45] then would not knowledge of *brahman* as a mental state also be nonconceptual or at least give rise to a nonconceptual experience?[46] If so, and since the scriptures, which have words as their nature, are conceptual, then it becomes possible to ask the question: How, for Śaṅkara, do concepts give rise to a nonconceptual experience of knowledge?

Rambachan (1991, p. 110) continues:

> Śaṅkara accepts that this *vṛtti* [mental state], produced in the mind by the *Vedānta-vākya*s [the statements found in the *Upaniṣad*s], does not enjoy the status of absolute reality (*pāramārthika sattā* [sic]). Its reality would be the same as the world, the *Veda*s, and the *antaḥkaraṇa* [the mind]. He sees no difficulty, however, in its capacity to negate ignorance and effect the knowledge of the absolutely real. He willingly concedes that once *brahmajñāna* is effected, the absolute reality of the *Veda*s is also negated. The *Vedānta-vākya*s, having negated from *brahman* all *upādhi*s [mistaken attributions], eventually negate themselves.

Rambachan reads Śaṅkara as saying that knowledge of *brahman* is a conventional, conceptual state of mind. Given this interpretation, Rambachan (1991, p. 68ff) explains how

Śaṅkara can maintain that scripture, limited as it is by its linguistic nature, can still reveal the limitless. If we grant further that the absolutely real is itself beyond conceptuality, then Rambachan's explanation may begin to suggest Śaṅkara's possible answer to the question of how conceptual knowledge practices can give rise to knowledge of the nonconceptual.[47]

Comans points out a couple more passages in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* in which Śaṅkara speaks of the knowledge of *brahman* producing an effect that is "present to experience" (*anubhāvārūḍha*) and "made perceptible" (*pratyakṣīkṛta*),[48] such as the following remarks on 3.3.32:

> Because knowledge [of *brahman*] has a perception as its effect, it is not reasonable to have doubt about the absence of its effect. In the case of the effects of action (*karma*, i.e., ritual action), however, such as heaven and so on, which are not present to experience, there could be a doubt as to whether the result will occur or not, but the result of knowledge [of *brahman*] is present to experience, as it says in the scriptures, "That *brahman*, which is direct and immediate . . . " and "You are that (*tat tvam asi*)," which instructs one that [the effect of knowledge of *brahman*] is already accomplished. The statement, "You are that," cannot be interpreted to mean, "You will be that after you have died." Furthermore, another scriptural passage indicates that one will perceive the fruit of perfect seeing (*samyagdarśana*), namely [the understanding] that everything is the self, precisely at the moment of perfect seeing: "Seeing that this [self] is that [*brahman*], the seer, Vāmadeva, understood, 'I was Manu and the sun.'"[49]

Śaṅkara makes several important claims here. One we will discuss more below: knowledge is distinct from action. This claim recurs when he discusses the difference between knowledge and meditation. Meditation, he will claim, is an action like ritual action. He also says that knowledge of *brahman* is immediately available to experience because it is something we already possess. One is reminded here of many passages in Śaṅkara's writings, including the analogy of the sun cited above from the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, which suggest that *brahman* is awareness itself. Insofar as we are already aware that we are aware, we already possess knowledge of *brahman*. While the scriptures may be said to remove the apparent ignorance that makes us identify ourselves with our mind/body complex, they cannot remove or grant us our awareness of ourselves. Rather, scripture simply enables our awareness to know itself. Apparently, it must do more than this, however, because it also informs us of the identity, the nonduality, of self and world. Whether this knowledge is also directly available to experience would seem to depend on whether such an experience of knowledge is conceptual or nonconceptual.

6. Śaṅkara on Meditation and Its Difference from Knowledge

The second reference in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* to *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5 is made by the opponent in the commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.4. Śaṅkara's opponent argues that the scriptures enjoin certain actions like hearing, reasoning, and meditation as the means by which one achieves the goal of knowing *brahman*. So, for the opponent, scripture would be a valid means of knowing *brahman* only insofar as it prescribes certain actions that result in such knowledge.[50] Śaṅkara rejects this argument, arguing instead that scripture is the only valid source of knowing *brahman*, and furthermore that scripture only makes *brahman* known. It does not prescribe any action, because knowledge of *brahman* cannot be an action. If liberating knowledge were based on an action, Śaṅkara argues, then its object, *brahman*, would be subject to change, but *brahman* is not an object, properly speaking, and thus liberating knowledge cannot be an action. The opponent even uses the gradualist metaphor of wiping clean the mirror to describe the spiritual path, and this metaphor is rejected by Śaṅkara, because, again, the self, which is identical to *brahman*, cannot be the object of any action.[51]

Śaṅkara distinguishes knowledge of *brahman* from reasoning and meditation. The latter he classifies as types of mental action while knowledge, by contrast, depends on the object known, and not on any human effort:

> Meditation (*dhyāna*) and thinking (*cintana*) are, indeed, mental in the sense that a person has the ability to do them, or not to do them, or to do them differently, because they are dependent on the person. Knowledge (*jñāna*), however, is born from a valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇajanya*), and a valid means of knowledge takes as its object something that is truly existent. Knowledge is entirely dependent on the object alone. It is not dependent on a rule. It is not even dependent on a person. Therefore, even though it is mental, knowledge differs greatly [from meditation and the like].[52]

So, for Śaṅkara, the intent of the passage at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5, which appears to the opponent to prescribe certain actions, is simply to divert one's attention away from the sense objects of the world and towards the self.[53] It does not require any action from us. It simply directs the mind toward inquiry into *brahman*. It certainly does not provide anything like a complete map of the spiritual path. Śaṅkara offers the same interpretation again in the commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 3.2.21: "Even those scriptural passages such as '[the self] should be seen' and so on, which speak of the duty to know the highest *brahman*, have as their principal purpose to bring one face to face with reality (*tattvābhimukhīkaraṇapradhānā*) and not to require that one realize reality."[54] Such passages can only direct one's attention to reality. They are prompts, not rules. They literally bring one "face to face" with the knowledge of *brahman*, but they cannot cause or enjoin it because such knowledge is not something one can cause or effect. In fact, we already possess it.

There is obviously a tension here between Śaṅkara's desire, on the one hand, to emphasize the effortlessness or passivity (the lack of agency) with which the practitioner knows the liberating knowledge of reality, and his need on the other hand to provide a set of instructions or some kind of description of a regular process by means of which one realizes that one already possesses such knowledge. This tension is present whenever the subitist attempts to provide instructions while remaining true to the implications of spontaneously achieving a goal that is thought to be innate.

7. On "Perfect Seeing" and the Sudden/Gradual Dichotomy in the *Brahmasūtra-Bhāṣya*

We have seen that Śaṅkara draws a parallel between seeing and knowing, and that he distinguishes knowledge from meditation. He does so again and again. Another instance is found in the first explicit reference in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* to the important concept of "perfect seeing" (*samyagdarśana*). For Śaṅkara it is tantamount to the liberating knowledge of *brahman*, as we have already seen in his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*. The passage is found in the commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.3.13, the context of which is the assertion that the object of a particular meditation is, in fact, the highest *brahman*. To distinguish knowledge from meditation, Śaṅkara notes that meditation can take an unreal or imaginary thing for its object, whereas knowing, like seeing, requires a real object:

> In this case, an act of meditation can also take an unreal thing as its object, as, for instance, the merely imaginary object of a wish. But an act of seeing can only take a real thing as its object, as we know from experience in the world; we therefore conclude that in the passage last quoted only the highest self, which is the real object of perfect seeing (*samyagdarśana*), is indicated as the object of sight.[55]

Śaṅkara, like Kamalaśīla, is sensitive to the concern that one can meditate upon unreal objects and that meditation can thereby become ineffective or misleading. In responding to this concern, Śaṅkara draws upon the conceptual metaphor that KNOWING IS SEEING in order to distinguish knowledge from meditation. He wants to ensure the reality of the object of knowledge. However, the conclusion to the commentary on this verse suggests a kind of gradualism that seems to accept that meditation can play a preparatory role in the attainment of liberating knowledge:

> With reference to the objection that a fruit confined to a certain place is not an appropriate reward for him who meditates on the highest self, we finally remark that the objection is removed if we understand the passage to refer to liberation

> by stages (*kramamukti*). He who meditates on the highest self by means of the syllable Aum, consisting of three *mātrā*s, obtains for his reward the world of Brahma and afterwards gradually "complete seeing" (*samyagdarśana*).[56]

Śaṅkara makes a noteworthy concession here. Elsewhere in the *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, he is adamant that liberation itself can have no degrees and neither can knowledge of *brahman*: "For all the scriptures assert that the state of liberation has only one form. For the state of liberation is nothing but *brahman*, and *brahman* is not connected with different forms because it has the character of being one."[57] However, Śaṅkara admits that knowledge of *brahman* may arise after a longer or shorter period of time, depending on the strength of the means employed and the qualifications of the individual practitioner. So, here again we see a manifestation of the tension between immediacy and progression, as well as between spontaneity and regularity of causation.

These tensions come to the foreground in a short sequence of twelve verses at the beginning of the fourth and final chapter of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.[58] In the commentary on 4.1.1, Śaṅkara explains that these twelve verses constitute an "extra discussion" (*vicāraśeṣa*) of the means of knowledge (*sādhana*). He then immediately quotes from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5: "Verily, it is the self that should be seen; it is the self that should be heard; it is the self that should be considered; it is the self on which one should concentrate." The question at issue is whether one needs to do these mental practices "repeatedly" (*āvṛtti*), or do them "suddenly, immediately, all at once" (*sakṛt*).[59] Interestingly, Śaṅkara has the opponent argue here that one should do them only once and the authoritative voice then counters that they should be done repeatedly. He further argues that knowledge and meditation are often used synonymously in the scriptures, and that this implies repeated practice. The commentary on 4.1.7 even gives a definition of meditation as "the activity of extending a single train of thought."[60] Throughout these verses, a variety of different meditations are accepted by Śaṅkara as valid forms of practice for the practitioner who seeks to know *brahman*.

Śaṅkara does grant the possibility of a person experiencing liberating knowledge of *brahman* from hearing the scriptural passage, "You are that" (*tattvamasi*), only once. For those who are "slow-witted" (*mandamati*), however, and do not have such spontaneous experience, repetition is useful. Śaṅkara thus introduces another kind of gradualism here by appealing to the distinction—one might call it a duality—between those who are "slow-witted" and those who are "quick-witted" (*nipuṇamati*). This distinction echoes comments at the beginning of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on the four *sādhanas* or qualifications for inquiry into *brahman*. One must possess (1) the ability to discern (*viveka*) the difference between the permanent (i.e., *brahman*) and the impermanent; (2) dispassion (*vairāgya*) towards the fruits of one's actions; (3) mental quietude (*śama*), restraint (*dama*), inwardness (*uparati*), patient acceptance (*titikṣā*), single-mindedness (*samādhanā*), and faith (*śraddhā*); and (4) a desire for liberation (*mumukṣutva*). Several of these same qualifications are also found at the beginning of the prose portion of the *Upadeśasāhasrī*.[61]

Thus, even if Śaṅkara asserts, as he repeatedly does, that scripture is the only valid means of knowing reality, and that knowledge is not an action, and that the highest *brahman* admits no distinctions, we must nevertheless understand these broader epistemological and ontological claims within the context of Śaṅkara's overall path philosophy. The passages cited above make clear that the knowledge of reality arising from inquiry into *brahman* is dependent on the transformation of the person, and such a transformation implies both path and goal. The practitioner must be properly prepared for the kind of inquiry Śaṅkara envisions and enacts in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* itself, and such inquiry occurs within a specific social context. In the commentary on 4.1.12, the final verse of the short section on the means (*sādhana*), he acknowledges once again that some meditations have as their purpose the attainment of perfect seeing:

> The first section of the present chapter has established that one should practice repetition of all meditations. With respect to those meditations that have "perfect seeing" (*samyagdarśana*) as their goal, however, a distinction is made that such

> meditations terminate when their effect is accomplished, just as one stops beating rice when the husks are separated from the grains. For as soon as the effect, that is, perfect seeing, is attained, no further effort can be enjoined, since scriptural injunctions do not apply to one who knows *brahman*, which is not the object of any injunction, as his own self.[62]

Śaṅkara states here that some meditation practices have liberating knowledge of *brahman* as their goal. He even employs a metaphor of repeated effort to describe the process. However, he does not say that such practices will actually produce liberating knowledge. It seems the best we can do is improve the conditions for liberation by removing the obstacles to knowledge in our minds. We do this primarily through the prerequisites to knowledge, preparing ourselves for study, thought, and meditation upon the scriptures under the guidance of the authoritative teacher; but we still cannot thereby bring about our liberation, since in truth we are already liberated.

Śaṅkara's subitist impulses, arising perhaps from his nondualist ontology, also sometimes bring ethical implications, as we see in the above passage when he states that nothing can be required of the liberated person who knows *brahman*. Such a claim, of course, must be understood within the context of a path philosophy in which access to liberating knowledge has certain prerequisites. While one can see the apparent contradiction here, it is important to bear in mind that misunderstandings often arise when we juxtapose ostensibly contradictory claims without respecting the place of each claim within the overall system. Here, we are dealing with the difference between what Kellner (2020), following Siderits, calls "entry" and "exit" rules. For Śaṅkara, however, there is a basic consistency between them because knowledge of *brahman*, being innate within us, cannot be caused, nor can it require anything of us.

8. An Alternative Voice from Early Vedānta: Maṇḍanamiśra on the Threefold Scheme and Using Conceptuality to Attain Knowledge of the Nonconceptual

Śaṅkara probably had in mind Bhartṛprapañca or an interpretive tradition he represented when he made his criticisms of meditation and the threefold scheme in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. It seems that Maṇḍanamiśra may have had Śaṅkara's criticisms in mind when he defended Bhartṛprapañca's views in his *Brahmasiddhi*. Recall that representatives of this alternative tradition upheld the practice of *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation, which Śaṅkara appears to criticize in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* and *Upadeśasāhasrī*, and they used the scriptural passages on the threefold scheme as a justification for the claim that meditation practice can help one acquire knowledge of *brahman*. Thus, Maṇḍana's *Brahmasiddhi* contains an unambiguous statement that the threefold scheme describes the means by which one destroys ignorance:

> Again, by what means is ignorance ended? It is by the repeated practice of learning, thinking, and meditation (*dhyāna*), and by the religious life (*brahmacarya*) and so forth, which are the different means (*sādhanabheda*) stated in the treatises (*śāstra*s). How? The person who previously practices learning and thinking and then repeatedly practices meditation on the entire diffusion of differences that is denied with respect to the self—"It is not this, not this"—such a person, opposed to seeing difference, clearly causes it to end.[63]

Maṇḍana goes on to explain how the practices of learning, thinking, and meditation, though conceptual, can eliminate both ignorance and conceptuality at the same time, leaving only the "pure, transparent nature" of self-awareness. Toward the end of the same passage, he raises the question explicitly: "How can one destroy difference with difference itself (*kathaṃ bhedenaiva bhedaḥ pratisaṃhriyate*)?" Maṇḍana responds, "because of its being the antidote of difference, like powder eliminates powder" (*yathā rajasā rajaḥ*). He explains the analogy here by referring to a method by which a powdered substance is introduced into water dirtied by another substance. The introduction of the powder causes a chemical reaction whereby both substances are precipitated, leaving the water pure. He then offers two more analogies:

> The repeated practices of learning, thinking, and meditation on *brahman*, which is beyond difference, are clearly the antidote to seeing difference, even though they are connected with ignorance, just like stomach fluid digests fluid and is itself digested or poison destroys another poison and is itself destroyed.[64]

Maṇḍana thus addresses the question of how a practice that depends on conceptuality and duality could give rise to a nondual and nonconceptual experience.

The *Brahmasiddhi* also contains a citation from *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5, "It is the self that one should consider; it is the self on which one should concentrate (*mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*)," which is given in support of the view that repeated practice of meditation, ritual action, and so forth is necessary even after a correct vision of reality has arisen, because it helps to eliminate any regression toward seeing difference and makes a correct vision of reality continuous and stable.[65] The repetition of meditation and other practices is necessary, according to Maṇḍana, because:

> False appearances (*mithyāvabhāsa*) persist even for a person who has understood the true nature of the self from the scriptures, about which there is no doubt, because of the strength of latent dispositions that have power due to the accumulation of repeated false perceptions from beginningless time . . . Therefore, even if a vision of reality has arisen from a valid source of knowledge, it is thought that repetition of the vision of reality serves to overpower or destroy the latent dispositions made firm by having arisen through the repetition of false views from beginningless time. Thus it is said, "It is the self that one should consider; it is the self on which one should concentrate" (*mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*), and there are the regulations (*vidhāna*) on the qualifications (*sādhana*) of mental quietude (*śama*), restraint (*dama*), living the religious life (*brahmacarya*), ritual action (*yajña*), and so forth. Otherwise, what is the purpose of teaching them?[66]

We can see how Maṇḍana understands and interprets the key passage from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*. He, like Śaṅkara, walks a fine line between enjoining a series of practices and emphasizing the singular power of the scriptures to reveal the true nature of reality. Interestingly, the comments above immediately lead to another question, namely, whether the scriptures can give rise to knowledge of reality only with the support of such methods as living the religious life. Maṇḍana quickly responds, just as Śaṅkara does, that hearing the scriptures can by itself give rise to knowledge of reality; the supporting qualifications are not necessary for acquiring such a vision of the truth. Maṇḍana argues that hearing the scriptures brings "certitude" (*niścaya*), but he also admits that one can fall back into error. Thus, repetition is said to be useful for the purpose of stabilizing the correct vision of reality and destroying false views.

Kellner (2020, p. 58) writes of Kamalaśīla:

> On the path to liberation, a perceptual awareness of reality was regarded as necessary for the particular reason that only this kind of awareness, when preceded by a gradual process of acquiring insight, has the power of removing the afflictive and epistemic obscurations. Ascertainment by inference alone is simply not powerful enough to effect this kind of fundamental transformation of consciousness.

The problem that the repetition of meditation and other such practices, including the performance of Vedic ritual, is meant to solve for Maṇḍana is the same problem that, on Kellner's reading, motivates Kamalaśīla's arguments for the necessity of cultivating nonconceptual meditation on the gradual path. We also see here that Maṇḍana makes a distinction between epistemic certainty and spiritual efficacy similar to the one Kellner finds in Kamalaśīla. More broadly, this example reminds us of the importance of looking carefully at immediate context: both Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara were involved in debates within their respective traditions as much as, if not more than, between them.[67] Yet, it also suggests the value of broader comparisons for what Foucault (1998) calls "the history of

thought," which he describes as distinct from both "the history of ideas" and "the history of mentalities," because the history of thought focuses on "problems" or "problematizations.[68]

9. Different Types of Meditation and the Addition of Nonconceptual Meditation to the Threefold Scheme in Post-Śaṅkara Vedānta

The nature and purpose of meditation and its relationship to various discursive practices, such as philosophical reasoning, have been among the central problems raised in this essay, but of course meditation is a rather vague term. It has various specific names, types, and definitions, some of which we have already encountered: *bhāvanā*, *nididhyāsana*, *dhyāna*, *upāsana*, *prasaṅkhyāna*, *parisaṅkhyāna*, and *samādhi*, not to mention *vidyā* and *jñāna*. Now, it would seem that by the time of Śaṅkara and Maṇḍanamiśra (circa 8th century) a gradual threefold process of learning, reasoning, and "meditation" (*nididhyāsana*, *upāsana*, *dhyāna*), culminating in the state of "perfect seeing" or liberating knowledge, either had become or was in the process of becoming an established doctrine in Vedānta. At some point, a fourth stage, *samādhi*, "meditative absorption" or "concentration," was added to these three practices. For example, Mayeda (1979, p. xv) draws our attention to the much later example of the *Vedāntasāra* of Sadānanda (circa 15th or 16th century?), which includes *samādhi* after the threefold scheme.[69] An earlier example of the threefold scheme being augmented by a fourth stage involving nonconceptual meditation (*nirvikalpasamādhi*) is the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, but how much earlier is unclear: the verse text's attribution to Śaṅkara has been the subject of ongoing debate.[70] In the midst of a striking series of verses (361–365ff) in which we also find the "gradualist" metaphor of purifying gold,[71] we find the following statement: "The virtue of thinking (*manana*) should be considered a hundred times greater than learning (*śruti*), and meditation (*nididhyāsa*) has a virtue one hundred thousand times greater even than thinking, while [the virtue of] nonconceptual meditation (*nirvikalpaka*) is limitless."[72] The next verse then clearly states that nonconceptual meditation is the means by which one comes to know the reality of *brahman* (*brahmatattva*).

The addition of this fourth stage called *samādhi* suggests several things. For one thing, it points to the general popularity in Indian thought of the idea that meditation defined somehow is necessary for liberation. Insofar as *samādhi* here stands primarily for *nirvikalpasamādhi*, nonconceptual meditation, the addition of a fourth stage may be seen as further evidence of the growing popularity of the notion of *nonconceptual* meditation among the path systems of classical India at the time. Additionally, and quite significantly, the addition of a fourth stage called *samādhi* suggests how the earlier Vedānta tradition, including Śaṅkara and Maṇḍanamiśra, understood the concept of *nididhyāsana* or *dhyāna* itself. The tradition could have simply reinterpreted the concept of *nididhyāsana* to include *samādhi* and even *nirvikalpasamādhi*. The fact that it did not seems to suggest that *nididhyāsana* was understood primarily as a conceptual meditative practice, for instance, a practice involving repeatedly fixing one's mind upon the "great sayings" (*mahāvākya*s) of the *Upaniṣad*s, such as "You are that" (*tat tvam asi*), which are, of course, discursive and conceptual.

Whether the experience of liberating knowledge to which the conceptual practices of learning, reasoning, and meditation pave the way was thought to be nonconceptual, and if so, then how such conceptual practices as these ones could lead to nonconceptual experience: these remain, for me, questions worthy of discussion. In this respect, it would be interesting to engage in a more detailed comparison of the meditation practices described by Śaṅkara and Maṇḍanamiśra, particularly the practices of "repetitive contemplation" (*prasaṅkhyāna*) and "contemplative rehearsal" (*parisaṅkhyāna*). In fact, after composing the musings and questions above in the process of completing the penultimate draft of this essay, I became aware of Uskokov (2018), which engages in precisely such an investigation. He concludes, in short, that the difference between *prasaṅkhyāna* and *parisaṅkhyāna* meditation is akin to the older distinction between *yoga* and *sāṅkhya*, respectively.[73] His analysis makes for compelling reading and could form a solid basis, alongside works like Kellner (2020) and Adam (2016), for pursuing a broader comparison of these meditation methods in early Advaita Vedānta with Buddhist conceptions of meditation, such as Ka-

malaśīla's description of the "contemplation of the real" (*bhūtapratyavekṣā*) as a method of "analytical" (*vipaśyanā*) meditation, and how all these meditation practices relate to and emerge from practices of reason in their respective traditions.[74] Whether or not they give nonconceptual meditation or knowledge a prominent place in their path philosophies, it seems that all three philosophers mentioned above place an emphasis on the conceptual and discursive nature of meditation practice.

10. Conclusions

Although focused on a common scheme or model of acquiring knowledge, this essay has highlighted some significant epistemological questions arising from basic differences in the final ontology of the two philosophical traditions under discussion. Advaita Vedānta claims that each person possesses an essential nature, the self or *ātman*, which is both numerically and qualitatively identical to the essence of all things, *brahman*. Kamalaśīla denies that self and essence exist. Instead, according to him, everything arises in dependence on other things; that is, everything is selfless, empty of essential nature. While the philosophers under analysis agree that our ordinary experiences mislead us, they hold seemingly contradictory positions about the ultimate nature of things. If we apply the traditional formula, we get four possibilities:

(1) Śaṅkara is right and Kamalaśīla is wrong.
(2) Kamalaśīla is right and Śaṅkara is wrong.
(3) Both of them are right (in some way).
(4) Both of them are wrong (in some way).

The first and second options most closely parallel traditional polemics. Both Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara are committed to the truth of their respective positions and the corollary that its truth entails the falsity of the opposing view. The third option could lead us down the road toward perennialism, the idea that all religious philosophies ultimately express the same truth, but we need not take it so far. Perhaps there is something in what both are saying that could point toward the truth. For example, they seem to agree that some kind of conscious awareness remains present even in ostensibly nonconceptual or nondual states of mind. I take this to be the import of Kamalaśīla's characteristic doctrine of "reflexive awareness" (*svasaṃvedanā*),[75] while for Śaṅkara it is a basic implication of the conscious nature of *brahman*. The fourth option opens the door to entirely different ways of conceptualizing reality. Perhaps both final ontologies overdetermine the empirical evidence that experimentation can provide. In any case the basic epistemological question remains: how can one determine the truth of the situation?

Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara appear to agree that meditation will not help one solve the problem. As "continuity" theorists, both argue that effective and epistemically valid meditation practice must follow from correct reasoning and correct reasoning follows from and issues in a correct understanding of scripture, one likely developed in close contact with a teacher or community of practitioners. Neither would go so far as to accept the possibility of a scenario in which an experienced practitioner of his tradition, who had been devoted wholeheartedly to its teachings and practices, might discover on the basis of advanced meditation experience that his own tradition is wrong and the rival's tradition is right.[76] Each philosopher is committed to a particular body of knowledge that he seeks to defend. Yet, the continuity thesis gives rise to a challenging epistemological question: if the truths accessible through meditation merely conform to those already available through learning and reasoning, how do we know that we are not simply fooling ourselves into believing that our meditation practice gives us access to the truth? In other words, how do we overcome the problem of "autosuggestion" or even "confirmation bias" in our meditation practice?[77]

For Śaṅkara, the answer to this question could be as simple as saying that scripture tells us the truth. It has intrinsic validity. Scripture removes ignorance, whereas knowledge is not an action. The concern with autosuggestion arises only from the perspective of a skeptical application of reason detached from belief in scripture. Such skepticism

generates an infinite regress whereby no knowledge can ever be validated. According to Tillemans (2016, p. 191), Kamalaśīla's answer is to say that meditation must be validated by reasoning, but one wonders whether this answer entirely solves the problem and if Tillemans has adequately represented his position. Kamalaśīla deserves further attention on this question. Does not valid reasoning for a Buddhist philosopher like him also require some foundation in empirical investigation in order to grant access to the truth? On the other hand, when Kamalaśīla speaks about the nature of reality, he relies heavily on the authority of scripture, the Buddha's words. It is commonly said that for Buddhist philosophy the validity of the Buddhist scriptures derives from the Buddha's own personal experimentation, his own direct insight into the nature of reality after having rejected alternatives. That is fair. The traditional narratives of the Buddha's attainment of liberating knowledge do not characterize him as accepting one among existing alternatives. Instead, he rejects all of them, forges his own path to the truth, and subsequently establishes his own institution. The situation is quite different with Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara, however. Both are defenders of established institutions as well as rationalist philosophers working from within centuries-old traditions. Most traditional Indian narratives of religious conversion likewise feature philosophical debate or the performance of wonder-working or both, contests waged between already well-established positions.[78] That said, it would be valuable to explore classical Indian narrative literature to see if there are any traditional stories of religious conversion or liberation that lend support for an independence theory, and if so, how.

Independence theorists face some equally challenging epistemological questions of their own. For example, if the independence theorist argues for the unique epistemic value of nonconceptual meditation, a mental state in which all discursivity or conceptual thought has stopped, then how could nonconceptual meditation provide any information at all? We have not dealt with actual independence theories in this essay, but it would be valuable to do so.[79] If we grant for the sake of argument that something like nonconceptual experience is possible, then it stands to reason that nonconceptual meditation must be available to conceptualization in something like the same way that, for Kamalaśīla and Śaṅkara, conceptual or theoretical knowledge can give rise to and become available for nonconceptual experience. Beyond that, we might ask whether the independence theorist, as someone who appears committed to the claim that all conceptual constructions distort reality, would find any value in working out a theory of epistemic independence at all.

I began this essay with the observation that epistemological or philosophical questions, as Foucault defines them, do not go away simply by decentering the concern with truth in order to focus on the transformative techniques of traditional path philosophies. We have seen that Śaṅkara and Kamalaśīla were deeply concerned with questions of truth and falsehood. We have also seen how this concern motivates some of their uses and critiques of the threefold scheme. I want to conclude by emphasizing once again the importance of understanding their engagement with epistemological questions within the broader context of their spiritual path philosophies. We are not dealing here with detached speculations on the nature of reality but with committed articulations of particular strategies of self-transformation. Śaṅkara and Kamalaśīla were equally, if not more, concerned with techniques of "spiritual" efficacy. This does not mean they were "pragmatists" concerned only with what works, or that they upheld a pragmatic theory of truth, but that they saw epistemology, ontology, and path philosophy as mutually implicating areas of concern. It remains an open question, at least for me, how best to compare their situation with the one in which we find ourselves today. Although many people in modern times have run from truth, albeit in several different directions, the framework of the threefold scheme and the conceptual metaphor of liberating knowledge as a form of perception point to a concern some still share with understanding the nature of knowledge, the process whereby a person comes into relationship with knowledge, and the effect of knowledge upon the knowing individual. Such a concern brings us face to face with the aporias of truth and self-transformation: why must we transform ourselves to access a truth we possess in-

nately? On the other hand, if we do not already possess a certain knowledge, how could we acquire it without ourselves being changed in some way? We cannot easily disentangle epistemological questions from problems of path philosophy.

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Notes

1 Foucault (2001, p. 16). My translation. See also Collins (2020, pp. xxxi–ii).

2 Pierre Hadot had reached a somewhat similar conclusion, although he developed a reading of Aristotle that emphasized theory as a form of practice. See, for instance, Hadot (2002), especially chapter six, and the comments of Kapstein (2001, p. 9).

3 Foucault uses the term "spiritual technique" in the 1978 interview published as "The Theatre of Philosophy" (*La scène de la philosophie*) on which see Collins (2020, pp. 89–90). As is now well-known, Foucault developed his notion of "technologies of self" in dialogue with the work of Pierre Hadot and his notion of "spiritual exercises" (*exercices spirituels*). On the use of Hadot (and Foucault) in exercises of comparison with Buddhism and non-western traditions, see Collins (2020) as well as the essays collected in Fiordalis (2018a) and the references therein.

4 On Foucault's skepticism, see the passing remark of Collins (2020, p. xxxv).

5 Fiordalis (2018b) looks at the use of the threefold scheme in Asaṅga and Vasubandhu (circa 4th century) and argues that the "continuity" thesis also gives us an accurate description of Vasubandhu's position on the relationship between reasoning and meditation.

6 Gómez (2015, pp. 1125–26). The above is Gómez's translation. The concept of "all-knowledge" or "omniscience" (*sarvajñā*) indicates the goal of the path. For more on this concept in the works of Kamalaśīla, see McClintock (2010).

7 Gómez (1987, pp. 77–78), italics in the original. The translation of Huineng's poem is also from Gómez (1987, p. 73).

8 A great deal has been written on the so-called Samye (bSam yas) debate. In the introduction to his edition of the first *Bhāvanākrama*, Tucci ([1956–1958] 1986, pp. 316, 348–51, 393) discusses some of the Tibetan sources that link the composition of the three *Bhāvanākrama* treatises to a formal debate. On the nature of the debate itself and whether it was actually a series of written correspondences, see the secondary sources by Demiéville and Ueyama cited in Kellner (2020, p. 41), footnote 5. See also Higgins (2016) for a bibliography of other relevant studies.

9 In this respect, we could also consider the materials selected and studied in Gómez (1983a).

10 For evidence, Adam cites Balagangadhara (2005, p. 105ff), which actually makes only a somewhat cursory reference to the threefold scheme, but Adam also cites an unpublished masters thesis by Christine Fillion from McGill University on the threefold scheme in Śaṅkara's *Upadeśasāhasrī*. On that basis he refers to the two passages in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* that will concern us in this article, especially when we look at the threefold scheme in Śaṅkara and early Vedānta. Kapstein (2001, p. 25), footnote 29, also includes a brief reference to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* and notes the similarity of its progression with the Buddhist scheme. By contrast, no mention is made of this broader non-Buddhist context in Eltschinger (2010), an excellent article focused on the development in Buddhist thought of the concept of wisdom arising from reasoning and a commonly cited source on the threefold scheme. Fiordalis (2018b, p. 255) makes only a passing reference to Adam (2006) and Balagangadhara (2005).

11 Rambachan (1991) gives many concrete examples in the introductory chapter of his work from which it becomes abundantly clear that the threefold scheme is well-known in Indian religious philosophy from its presence in the Vedānta tradition. A casual, if well-informed, search of the internet reveals the same thing. Ramana Maharshi would be an interesting modern figure to consider, but there is no space to do so in this article.

12 Scholars debate the dating of and historical relationships among these important early Vedānta figures, but we can be reasonably certain that Gauḍapāda and Bhartṛprapañca preceded Śaṅkara and Maṇḍanamiśra, who may have been contemporaries. On the vexed figure of Gauḍapāda, see Potter (1981, pp. 103–5). On Bhartṛprapañca, who wrote a now lost commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, see Hiriyanna (1957, pp. 79–94) and more recently Andrijanić (2015) and Uskokov (2018). On Maṇḍanamiśra and the question of his relationship to Śaṅkara, see Thrasher (1979) and Tola (1989). See Harimoto (2006) for a discussion of the dating of Śaṅkara. On the apparent influence of Buddhism on Śaṅkara (and Gauḍapāda) see, for instance, Whaling (1979), which also discusses the view that Śaṅkara introduced into the Hindu tradition a monastic organizational structure on par with and influenced by Buddhist monasticism. Regarding Bhartṛprapañca and Maṇḍanamiśra, it seems clear that they were influenced by the Yoga tradition, and if so, then they were also influenced by Buddhism, albeit indirectly, as Buddhism probably had a strong influence on development of the Yoga tradition.

13 Foucault apparently misidentifies the relevant chapter from Epictetus' *Dialogues*, but the editor points the reader toward book 1, chapter 4, "Of progress or improvement." For a translation, see Long (1890, pp. 13–17). There is also a question about the Greek terminology. In his French translation of Plato's *Republic*, Leroux (2002, p. 585), note 128, comments on a passage from Book III, section 407b–d: "Plato distinguishes here between study (*mathēsis*), activities of reflection (*ennoēseis*), and concentration on oneself (*melétas pròs heautòn*) . . . this list puts us in the presence of the three registers of philosophical exercise . . . " My translation of the French. In their English translation of the relevant passage from the *Republic*, Grube and Reeve give " . . . learning, thought, or private meditation . . . " (Cooper 1997, p. 1043). At issue is the distinction between the practices of "thinking" or "reflection" (*ennoēseis*) and "concentration" or "meditation" (*meletē*), and the conceptual question of whether *meletē* and indeed all these practices should be classified as types of *askēsis* or not. A note of thanks to Marc-Henri Deroche for drawing my attention to this noteworthy passage from the *Republic*.

14 I became aware of Aleksandar Uskokov's dissertation, Uskokov (2018), only at the final stage of revising this article for publication, thanks to a comment from one of the anonymous reviewers for the journal. Uskokov's work includes a thorough discussion of the threefold scheme in Śaṅkara and early Advaita Vedānta and explores a number of questions raised in this article. In fact, it is precisely the recent study I wish I had known earlier because it would have made my research easier and allowed me to do more with this article. Rather than revising my entire article in light of his research, however, I have chosen to keep it intact, making only a few references to his dissertation here and there, and I would encourage interested readers to consult it and compare our interpretations.

15 Demiéville (1987, p. 16), noting Deussen (1912, p. 403).

16 The terms "passivism" and "passivity" will be used here to refer primarily to the distinction Śaṅkara draws between knowledge as a state of passive receptivity and a more "active" sense of acquiring knowledge or liberation. It is thus distinct from "quietism," at least as Tillemans (2016, p. 3) defines the term: "reasoned disengagement from all philosophical theses and hence debates (*vivāda*) about them." Gómez (1987, p. 128) notes that Zaehner considered Śaṅkara a "quietist," but I leave open the question of whether Śaṅkara's position has any similarities with the "quietism" of the Spanish mystic, Miguel de Molinos, and other Christian "quietists." We should bear in mind that "quietism" and "passivism" (as distinct from "pacifism") have been given various pejorative connotations which should not be imported unconsciously into this context but considered critically alongside the positions described here and below.

17 Gómez refers to the well-known classifications found in Potter (1963).

18 Gómez (1983a, 1983b, 1987) is exemplary in this respect.

19 Foucault (2001, p. 17). My translation.

20 See the clear statement by Śaṅkara in the commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* cited and translated by Rambachan (1991, pp. 66–67). Consider also Uskokov (2018, p. 441ff), and chapter seven, on the key role played by the desire for liberation in this path system.

21 This conceptual metaphor is identified and discussed in Lakoff and Johnson (1980, pp. 48, 103–5). See also Lakoff and Turner (1989, pp. 48, 158, 190–91, 206). Following them, I capitalize key metaphors for the sake of clarity and emphasis. KNOWING IS SEEING seems related to, but distinct from, the conceptual metaphor, SEEING IS BELIEVING, which is only half of a quote from the 17th-century English clergyman, Thomas Fuller: "Seeing's believing, but feeling's the truth." There is clearly a productive tension to be considered further between seeing as belief and seeing as knowledge, both in general and in the history of Indian thought. In this respect and others, it would be useful to consider Bouthillette (2020) more fully than I have been able to do in this article.

22 Foucault (2001, p. 18). My translation.

23 For an overview of the influential Mīmāṃsā philosopher, Kumārila's position on the differing epistemic values of scripture and meditation (or yogic perception), see McCrea (2009). On the special contribution of Śaṅkara to the Vedānta tradition, consider Uskokov (2018).

24 Few specialists today seem to feel these conditions are sufficient for describing knowledge, but most still agree that they are either necessary for or even largely constitutive of knowledge. For a lucid discussion, see Ichikawa and Steup (2018).

25 Tillemans (2016, p. 191). Italics in original.

26 Tucci (1958, p. 198): *tatra prathamaṃ tāvat śrutamayī prajñotpādanīyā | tayā hi tāvad āgamārtham avadhārayati | tataś cintāmayyā prajñayā nītaneyārthaṃ {Ms: nītaneyārthatayā} nirvedhayati | tatas tayā niścitya bhūtam arthaṃ bhāvayen nābhūtam | anyathā hi viparītasyāpi bhāvanād vicikitsāyāś cāvyapagamāt samyagjñānodayo na syāt | tataś ca vyarthaiva bhāvanā syāt | yathā tīrthikānām | uktaṃ ca bhagavatā samādhirāje | nairātmyadharmān yadi pratyavekṣate | tān pratyavekṣya yadi bhāvayeta | sa hetur nirvāṇaphalasya prāptaye | yo anyahetu na sa bhoti śāntaye | iti | tasmāc cintāmayyā prajñayā yuktyāgamābhyāṃ pratyavekṣya bhūtam eva vastusvarūpam bhāvanīyam | vastūnāṃ svarūpaṃ ca paramārthato 'nutpāda evāgamato yuktitaś ca niścitam*. The translation above is my own, but the passage is also cited and mostly translated in Kellner (2020, pp. 55–56), and I have benefitted from her reading and translation as well as that of Adam (2002, p. 128). Another translation is found in Beyer (1974, pp. 104–5).

27 Kellner (2020) explores Kamalaśīla's answer to this question in more detail.

28 Śaṅkara (1964, p. 770): *sarvathāpi tu yathā āgamenāvadhāritaṃ tarkatastathaiva mantavyam | yathā tarkato mataṃ tasya tarkāgamābhyāṃ niścitasya tathaiva nididhyāsanaṃ kriyata iti pṛthaṅnididhyāsanavidhiranarthaka eva*. The editor's name is not provided in my copy of

this edition. This edition and indeed the editions of all the Vedānta works cited in this article can be compared with the online editions of these texts available on the Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (GRETIL). All the translations from Sanskrit here and below are my own unless otherwise noted.

29 See Mayeda (1979, p. xv), note 8. In the introduction to his Sanskrit edition of the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, Mayeda (1973, pp. 66–67) makes the same suggestion while discussing the formation of the text: that the content of the three chapters of the prose part appears to illustrate "respectively the stage of hearing (*śravaṇa*), the stage of thinking (*manana*), and the stage of meditation (*nididhyāsana*), which constitute the three *Vedāntic* stages to attainment of final release (*mokṣa*)." Again, citing the same pages from Hacker (1949), Mayeda concludes that the prose part "constitutes the whole which is complete both in content and in form," and that "the three *prakaraṇas* of the Prose Part were written at one time after the composition of at least the 15th *prakaraṇa* of the Metrical Part," and "that the three *prakaraṇas* originally constituted a work independent of the Metrical Part." Mayeda describes the prose text as "a handy 'Guide' for teachers while the Metrical Part is, at it were, a 'Text Book' for students."

30 Uskokov (2018) further demonstrates that Bhartṛprapañca (circa mid 6th century) also supported *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation, and that the practice likely had its origins in the yoga tradition. See especially chapter five of his dissertation, which explores the topic in detail. Therein Uskokov (2018, p. 236) describes Bhartṛprapañca as being "along with Kumārila, Śaṅkara's main foil," which suggests the significant influence he had on Śaṅkara's thinking.

31 See Mayeda (1979, p. xv), note 7. Rambachan (1991, pp. 1–14), especially 10ff, offers a useful survey of views; in chapter five, Rambachan (1991, pp. 97–116) goes into a more detailed analysis of the threefold scheme and attempts to reconcile it with his previous arguments about Śaṅkara's epistemology and soteriology. See also Uskokov (2018) for a thorough treatment.

32 For the Sanskrit of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* itself, I have mainly followed the edition in Olivelle (1998, p. 66ff).

33 This concept seems key in Śaṅkara's thought. We will look at its presence in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* more below. The first occurrence of the term therein is found in the commentary on 1.3.13, a translation of which is found below, but for the whole passage one can also look at Thibaut (1890, p. 172) and also consider his footnote 2.

34 That is, the mind becomes settled down or calm and therefore clear, like pure, still water. This state of mental clarity would seem to be the precondition for experiencing oneness with *brahman*. The verb used here is related to the Buddhist concept of *prasāda*, "faith or trust."

35 Śaṅkara (1964, p. 760): *tasmād ātmā vai are draṣṭavyo darśanārho darśanaviṣayamāpādayitavaḥ | śrotavyaḥ pūrvamācāryata āgamataśca | paścānmantavyastarkataḥ | tato nididhyāsitavyo niścayena dhyātavyaḥ | evaṃ hyasau dṛṣṭo bhavati śravaṇamanananididhyāsana-sādhanair nirvartitaiḥ | yadaikatvametānyupagatāni tadā samyagdarśanaṃ brahmaikatvaviṣayaṃ prasīdati nānyathā śravaṇamātrena.*

36 *Nididhyāsana* must derive from *ni-dhyai*, which puts it in the same etymological stemma as *dhyāna*, which also derives from *dhyai*. Another key term for meditation in the writings of Śaṅkara, that is, in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* and his commentaries on the *Upaniṣad*s, is *upāsana*. *Samādhi* is not commonly used therein. According to Comans (1993, pp. 23–24), it is found only three times in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* and never prominently as a feature of the authoritative (*siddhānta*) viewpoint. For instance, in *Brahmasūtra* 2.3.39 and commentary it is found in close proximity to a reference to *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 2.4.5, but the commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 2.3.40 makes it clear that these verses are considered by Śaṅkara to be arguments of an opposing viewpoint.

37 Rambachan (1991, p. 157), note 62, sees this change as significant, perhaps as a basis for arguing that *nididhyāsana* can be seen as equivalent to knowledge and thus distinct from meditation. Rambachan also prefers "contemplation" to meditation as a translation for *nididhyāsana*. However, the work of Uskokov (2018, pp. 191, 204ff), especially chapter three, suggests to me a different possibility, as he argues for the general equivalency of knowledge (*vidyā*) and meditation (*upāsana*) in the doctrine of the *Upaniṣad*s and in early Vedānta, that is, in Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahma-sūtra* itself, and for the importance of meditation as the primary means to liberation therein.

38 For the first claim, see, for example, the comment on *Brahmasūtra* 2.1.3: "Knowledge of reality, however, arises only from the Vedānta texts alone" (*tattvajñānaṃ tu vedāntavākyebhya eva bhavati*). Rambachan (1991, pp. 46, 140), note 89, also cites this passage. On the second claim that hearing scripture can produce immediate knowledge of *brahman*, see particularly Comans (2000, pp. 300–3), where he cites and discusses Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 4.1.2 and the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, chapter 18, verses 104 and 192; see also the discussion in Comans (1996).

39 Part 1, chapter 17, verse 66. The translation is from Mayeda (1979, p. 166). Following Mayeda (1973, p. 141), the Sanskrit reads: *bhārūpatvād yathā bhānor nāhorātre tathaiva tu | jñānājñāne na me syātāṃ cidrūpatvāviśeṣataḥ.*

40 Śaṅkara (1964, p. 760): *yadbrahmakṣatrādi karmanimittaṃ varṇāśramādilakṣaṇaṃ ātmany avidyādhyāropita-pratyayaviṣayaṃ kriyākāraka phalātmakaṃ avidyāpratyayaviṣayaṃ rajjvām iva sarpapratyayaḥ tadupamardanārtha āha—ātmani khalv are maitreyi dṛṣṭe śrute mate vijñāte idaṃ sarvaṃ viditaṃ vijñātaṃ bhavati.* The comment here also suggests that Śaṅkara reads the second sentence of the scriptural passage in the same way it appears at 4.5.6.

41 Śaṅkara (1964, p. 941): *ātmani khalv are maitreyi dṛṣṭe | kathaṃ dṛṣṭa ātmanīti ucyate—pūrvam ācāryāgamābhyāṃ śrute punas tarkeṇopapattayā mate vicārite | śravaṇaṃ tvāgamamātreṇa mata upapattyā paścādvijñāta evametan nānyatheti nirdhārite | kiṃ bhavatīty ucyata idaṃ viditaṃ bhavati | idaṃ sarvam iti yadātmano 'nyat | ātmavyatirekeṇābhāvāt.* The final sentence of the received scriptural passage differs here slightly from the previous passage at 2.4.5. The second sentence of 4.5.6 reads as follows: "For, oh Maitreyī,

when the self is seen (*dṛṣṭe*), heard (*śrute*), considered (*mate*), and known (*vijñāte*), all this is known." This reading coincides with the passage as quoted in the final sentence of Śaṅkara's commentary on 2.4.5.

42 The discussion that follows can be usefully compared with chapter nine of Uskokov (2018, p. 438ff). For one thing, he offers therein an interpretation of the three prose chapters of the *Upadeśasāhasrī* from the perspective of the threefold scheme (pp. 459–77).

43 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 88–89): *vākyārthavicāraṇādhyavasānanirvṛttā hi brahmāvagatiḥ nānumānādipramāṇāntaranirvṛttā . . . śrutyaiva ca sahāyatvena tarkasyābhyupetatvāt | tathāhi 'śrotavyo mantavyaḥ' iti śrutiḥ . . . puruṣabuddhisāhāyyam ātmāno darśayati*.

44 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 89): *na dharmajijñāsāyāmiva śrutyādaya eva pramāṇaṃ brahmajijñāsāyām kiṃtu śrutyādayo 'nubhavādayaśca yathāsaṃbhavamiha pramāṇaṃ anubhavāvasānatvādbhūtavastuviṣayatvācca brahmajñānasya*. Rambachan (1991, pp. 113–15) discusses this key passage; so does Comans (2000, p. 308); so does Uskokov (2018, p. 447ff).

45 The word *nirvikalpa* does not appear at all in the commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, and as Comans (1993) points out, the word *samādhi* is virtually absent from the ten principal *upaniṣad*s. However, although the word *nirvikalpa* appears only three times in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* and never in connection with *samādhi* or *jñāna*, Śaṅkara does use it as an adjective describing *brahman*, where it seems synonymous with the terms *abheda*, "nondual," and *nirviśeṣa*, "without description." See the commentary on 3.2.11–12 and 3.2.21. We find there the statement, "*brahman* is free from conceptualization" (*nirvikalpam eva brahma*).

46 In the present context, Rambachan (1991, p. 155), note 42, includes the comment: "The mental modification which destroys *avidyā* is sometimes conceived as a final thought or *vṛtti*, the crystallization of *brahmajñāna*. As such it is termed as *brahmākāravṛtti* (a thought coinciding with the nature of *brahman*) or *akhandākāra cittavṛtti* (a mental modification centered on nonduality)." However, I cannot find these latter terms used in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* or *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad-bhāṣya*. They may be later Vedānta technical terms.

47 Consider also in this same light the evocative language used by Uskokov (2018, p. 522) in the final few paragraphs of his dissertation, beginning with the following comment: "While the pursuit of liberation had to terminate in personal experience, this 'intuitus' or 'dawning of insight' or 'vision' precisely *had to be reasoned out*, by means of the two forms of reasoning, theological or scriptural exegesis (*śravaṇa*) and philosophical reflection (*manana*) based on analogy (*sāmānyato-dṛṣṭa*) . . . " Italics in original.

48 One may note besides that Kamalaśīla also speaks of "making the true nature of reality perceptible" (*pratyakṣī-kṛ*), using similar terminology to Śaṅkara, but he speaks of meditation as the mechanism by which one does so. See Adam (2016, p. 364), for the relevant passage from the first *Bhāvanākrama*.

49 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 818): *pratyakṣaphalatvācca jñānasya phalavirahāśaṅkānupapattiḥ | karmaphale hi svargādav anubhānārūḍhe syādāśaṅkā bhāved vā na veti | anubhavārūḍhaṃ tu jñānaphalam 'yatsākṣādaparokṣabrahma' iti śruteḥ 'tattvamasi' iti siddhivadupadeśāt | na hi 'tattvamasi' ityasya vākyasyārthas tattvam mṛto bhaviṣyasīty evaṃ pariṇetuṃ sakyaḥ | 'taddhaitatpaśyannṛṣir vāmadevaḥ pratipede 'ham manurabhaṃ sūryaśca iti ca samyagdarśanakālam eva tatphalaṃ sarvātmatvaṃ darśayati*. Comans (2000, p. 309) translates and discusses the same passage above. See also the commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 3.4.15, which is also mentioned by Comans.

50 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 113): *'śrotravyo mantavyo nididhyāsitvayaḥ' iti ca śravaṇottarakālayor manananididhyāsanayor vidhidarśanāt*. See the alternate translation in Thibaut (1890, p. 26).

51 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 126–28). See the translation in Thibaut (1890, pp. 28–29, 33–34). See also Rambachan (1991, pp. 59–60), where the relevant passage is translated as well.

52 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 129): *dhyānam cintanaṃ yadyapi mānasaṃ tathāpi puruṣeṇa kartumakartumanyathā vā kartuṃ sakyaṃ puruṣatantratvāt jñānaṃ tu pramāṇajanyam | pramāṇaṃ ca yathābhūtavastuviṣayam | kevalaṃ vastutantrameva tat | na codanātantram | nāpi puruṣatantram | tasmān mānasatve 'pi jñānasya mahadvailakṣaṇyam*. Alternate translation in Thibaut (1890, p. 35).

53 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 129–30): *kimarthāni tarhi 'ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ' ityādīni vidhicchāyāni vacanāni? Svābhāvika-pravṛttiviṣayavi mukhīkaraṇārthānīti brumaḥ*. Alternate translation in Thibaut (1890, p. 35), and see also Thibaut (1890, pp. 36–44) for the continuation of the discussion, which includes a series of statements that refer to the three practices and argue again for the priority of scripture over reasoning and meditation, up to the end of the long commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.4.

54 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 713–14): *draṣṭavyādisabdā api paravidyādhikārapaṭhitāstattvābhimukhīkaraṇapradhānā na tattvāvabodhividhi-pradhānā bhavanti*. See Thibaut (1896, p. 164).

55 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 287–88): *tatrābhidhyāyateratathābhūtamapi vastu karma bhavati; manorathakalpitasyāpy abhidhyāyatikarmatvāt | īkṣatestu tathābhūtameva vastu loke karma dṛṣṭamityataḥ paramātmaivāyaṃ samyagdarśanaviṣayabhūta īkṣatikarmatvena vyapadiṣṭa iti gamyate*.

56 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 289): *atha yaduktaṃ – paramātmābhidhyāyino na deśaparicchinnaphalaṃ yujyata iti | atrocyate—trimātreṇoṃkāreṇālambanena paramātmānamabhidhyāyataḥ phalaṃ brahmalokaprāptiḥ, krameṇa ca samyagdarśanotpattiriti kramamuktyabhiprāyametadbhaviṣyatītyadoṣaḥ*.

57 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 926): *muktyavasthā hi sarvavedāntavākeṣv ekarūpaivāvadhāryate | brahmaiva hi muktyavasthā na ca brahmaṇo 'nekākārayogo 'sti ekaliṅgatvāvadhāraṇāt*.

58 Uskokov (2018, pp. 185–87, 197–207, 443) has an illuminating discussion of this section of the Brahmasūtra.

59 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 928–29): *'ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ . . . ' iti caivamādiśravaṇeṣu saṁśayaḥ – kiṃ sakṛtpratyayaḥ kartavyaḥ āhosvidāvṛttyeti*.

60 Śāṣṭrī (1938, p. 949): *upāsanaṃ nāma samānapratyayapravāhakaraṇaṃ*.

61 See Śaṅkara's comments on *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.1 and Rambachan (1991, p. 87ff). See also the beginning of the prose portion of the *Upadeśasāhasrī* in Mayeda (1979).

62 Śāṣṭrī (1938, pp. 950–51): *āvṛttiḥ sarvopāsaneṣvādartavyeti sthitamādhye 'dhikaraṇe | tatra yāni tāvatsamyagdarśanārthāny upāsanāni tānyavaghātādivatkāryaparyavasānānīti jñātamevaiṣāmāvṛttipariṇam | na hi samyagdarśane kārye niṣpanne yatnāntaraṃ kiṃcicchāsituṃ sakyam; aniyojyabrahmātmatvapratipatteḥ śāstrasyāviṣayatvāt*.

63 Śāstrī ([1937] 1984, p. 12): *kena punarupāyenāvidyā nivartate? Śravaṇamananadhyānābhyāsair brahmacaryādibhiśca sādhanabhedaih śāstroktaiḥ | katham? Yo 'yam śravaṇamananapūrvako dhyānābhyāsaḥ pratiṣiddhākhilabhedaprapañce "sa eṣa neti neti" ātmani, sa vyaktam eva bhedadarśanapratiyogī tannivartayati*.

64 Śāstrī ([1937] 1984, pp. 12–13): *vyaktameva bhedātītabrahmaṇi śravaṇamananadhyānābhyāsānāṃ bhedadarśanapratipakṣatvam avidyānubandhe 'pi | yathā payaḥ payo jarayati svayaṃ ca jīryati, yathā ca viṣaṃ viṣāntaraṃ śamayati svayaṃ ca śāmyati*. See also the brief summary in Potter (1981, pp. 353–54).

65 Śāstrī ([1937] 1984, p. 35); Potter (1981, p. 370). The *Brahmasiddhi* contains three more citations of the word *nididhyāsitavyaḥ*, including one that reads *draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ*. See Śāstrī ([1937] 1984, pp. 153–55).

66 Śāstrī ([1937] 1984, p. 35): *nirvicikitsādāmnāyād avagatātmatattvasyānādimithyādarśanābhyāsopacitabalavatsaṃskārasāmar thyān mithyāvabhāsānuvṛttiḥ... tasmājjāte 'pi pramāṇāttattvadarśane anādimithyādarśanābhyāsaparinispannasya draḍhīyasaḥ saṃskārasyāb hibhavāyocchedāya vā tattvadarśanābhyāsaṃ manyante | tathā ca 'mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ' ityucyate | śamadamabrahmacaryayajñādisād hanavidhānam ca | anyathā kastad upadeśārthaḥ*? See also Comans (2000, p. 383) and Comans (1996, p. 50), where the early part of the passage is translated at somewhat greater length, but not the latter part. For the French translation of the whole passage, see Biardeau (1969, p. 186).

67 Ingalls (1952, p. 13), quoted in Uskokov (2018, p. 9), reminds us that Śaṅkara's "novelty and original synthesis" were "directed not so much against Buddhism, which is the traditional claim, as against the Mīmāṁsā and against schools of a more realistic Vedānta such as the Bhedābheda which flourished in Śaṃkara's time." See also Uskokov (2018, p. 4) for a similar statement.

68 For the full passage by Foucault with an insightful analysis that explains its application to comparative studies like the present article, see Charles Hallisey's afterword in Collins (2020, pp. 197–98).

69 See verses 19 and 181ff in Nikhilananda (1931), which is an edition and translation of the *Vedāntasāra*. Verse 19 says only "learning, etc." (*śravaṇādi*) but verse 181 gives the list of four practices as follows: *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhyāsana*, and *samādhi*. These four terms are defined in the verses that follow. For instance, in verses 191ff, Sadānanda attempts to distinguish between "reflection" (*manana*), "meditation" (*nididhyāsana*), and "absorption with or without conceptualization" (*savikalpa-* or *nirvikalpa-samādhi*).

70 See Potter (1981, p. 335); see also Grimes (2004, pp. 13–14). Uskokov (2018, p. 16), note 23, concludes on the basis of terminology that it is later than Śaṅkara, but he does not say how much later.

71 On this metaphor in a Buddhist context see Gómez (1987), which focuses on it in detail.

72 Madhavananda (1921, p.161); Grimes (2004, p. 209): *śruteḥ śataguṇaṃ vidyānmananaṃ mananādapi | nididhyāsaṃ lakṣaguṇam anantaṃ nirvikalpakam*. The verse is numbered 364 in the former and 365 in the latter.

73 See Uskokov (2018, p. 480) for a clear statement to this effect. He also demonstrates the strong influence of the Yoga tradition upon the development of *prasaṅkhyāna*, and shows how the roots of *parisaṅkhyāna* can be found not only in the Mīmāṁsā tradition but also in the *Mahābhārata*. The story he tells is of the centrality of meditation in the *Upaniṣad*s, the *Brahma-sūtra*, and pre-Śaṅkara Advaita Vedānta, and for its recovery as a central practice in the work of Vācaspatimiśra (circa 9–10th century), who was responsible for synthesizing the philosophies of Śaṅkara and Maṇḍanamiśra. The window for Śaṅkara's rationalism appears narrow indeed.

74 It would also be interesting to consider further the place of the threefold scheme in the Yoga tradition, more broadly, and how Yoga path philosophers account for the shift from conceptual practices to nonconceptual meditation. Note, for instance, that the *Yogasūtra*, book 1, verses 48–50, mentions the concept of "truth-bearing wisdom" (*ṛtambharā prajñā*), which seemingly arises from a type of *samādhi*, and contrasts it with wisdom that derives from learning (*śruta*) and inference (*anumāna*).

75 For a brief discussion of this concept, see Kellner (2020, pp. 65–67). For fuller treatments, see Williams (1998) and Arnold (2010).

76 See Adam (2016, p. 372), note 37, for his take on Kamalaśīla's position here.

77 This concern is raised in Tillemans (2013, 2016).

78 For an overview of Buddhist debate narratives, see Cabezón (2008, pp. 71–92).

79 Tillemans (2016, pp. 193–94) identifies the 14th-century Tibetan Buddhist philosopher, Longchenpa (Klong chen Rab 'byams pa), as a good candidate, and indeed a comparison between him and Śaṅkara could be fruitful. In the process, it may be that the distinction between "continuity" and "independence" theses will need to be rethought along with, of course, the one between "subitism" and "gradualism."

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Article

Xuanzang and the Three Types of Wisdom: Learning, Reasoning, and Cultivating in *Yogācāra* Thought

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Abstract: Xuanzang (602–664) is famous for his legendary life, his important translation works, and also his *Discourse on the Realisation of Consciousness-Only* (*Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi*, 成唯識論). This text, which is considered as a synthesis of *Yogācāra* thought, has been diversely interpreted by modern scholars and is still discussed, in particular about the status of external things. Nevertheless, this issue seems to be of little interest for *Yogācāra* thinkers compared to other topics such as the Noble Path, or else the three types of wisdom (*trividhā prajñā*, 三慧): learning (*śruta*, 聞), reasoning (*cintā*, 思), and cultivating (*bhāvanā*, 修). As emphasized in recent research, this topic represents a major issue for Buddhist practitioners. In an attempt to analyse it in Xuanzang's *Discourse*, and more generally in *Yogācāra* thought, this paper will first discuss Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's thought on the three types of wisdom. Secondly, since it is important to replace the three types of wisdom in the general argumentation of Xuanzang's *Discourse*, we will present the structure of his text which is modelled on a "path" leading progressively to Supreme Awakening. Then, we will present the main elements of the Noble Path and situate the three types of wisdom into it. Finally, we will explain that Xuanzang follows Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's conceptions and eventually confirm the importance of the three types of wisdom in *Yogācāra* thought.

Keywords: Buddhism; Noble Path; wisdom; practice; awakening; Yogācāra; Xuanzang; Asaṅga; Vasubandhu

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1. Introduction

The *Yogācāra* School seems to have appeared in the 1st or 2nd century. Nevertheless, it is only in the 4th century that it was presented in a systematic way. Its purpose was to pursue previous reflections on Buddhist psycho-physiological practices. This mental training, which was supposed to be put into practice in every aspect of (monastery) daily life, was elaborated as a thorough analysis of mental functions and activities that usually result in ignorance, delusion, and pain, in order to achieve their suppression. In other words, the *Yogācāra* School considers the understanding of cognitive functions and activities as a way to attain Buddhahood.

What characterized *Yogācāra* scriptures was the complexity of their doctrines, which included explanations on "Consciousness-Only" (an idealistic[1] standpoint that explains why we misunderstand the nature of things), "the eight [regions of] consciousness" (that result, among others, in a misunderstanding of the nature of the self), the doctrine of the "three natures" (which is central to explain the idealistic nature of things as "Consciousness-Only") and the "transmutation of the support" (which refers to the transformation of the "store consciousness" (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*, Chin. 阿賴耶識＝藏識)[2], the destruction of seeds of delusion, and the nourishment of seeds of enlightenment).

The conceptual approach and the profound insights that characterized *Yogācāra* thought are some of the elements that explain the interest of scholars from diverse backgrounds. If a philological approach was at first a necessity to present, describe, and translate such Buddhist scriptures[3], an important part of current research deals with psychology[4] or philosophy[5]. Actually, the philosophical interest induced by *Yogācāra* thought is nothing

new. For instance, in the 20th century, Japanese authors like Yamauchi Tokuryū 山内得立 (1890–1982)[6] and Izutsu Toshihiko 井筒俊彦 (1914–1993)[7] already referred to *Yogācāra* thought in order to discuss philosophical issues.

Recently, a debate emerged between two distinctive hermeneutical approaches concerning *Yogācāra* thought. One of the questions raised concerns the status of external things: according to this approach, do things exist outside of the mind or are they nothing else than "seeds" located in the mind? If things also exist outside of the mind, then *Yogācāra* Buddhism may have something to do with Western modern phenomenology; if they do not, it is nothing else than a radical idealistic approach of the mind. According to Buddhologist Dan Lusthaus, *Yogācāra* Buddhism should be considered as a "Buddhist Phenomenology" similar, in many ways, to Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenologies (Lusthaus 2002). To support his thesis, he refers to some important texts from *Yogācāra* scriptures, and essentially to Xuanzang's (玄奘, 602–664) *Discourse on the Realization of Consciousness-Only* (*Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi*, 成唯識論).

Lusthaus' understanding has been criticized from a philological and linguistic standpoint by another Buddhologist, Lambert Schmithausen, who aims to demonstrate that Lusthaus does not perfectly render *Yogācāra* scriptures into English (Schmithausen 2015)[8]. Lusthaus' and Schmithausen's works are important and discuss one of *Yogācāra*'s major issues in modern scholarly context. The readers of Xuanzang's seminal work could wonder whether the status of things in his thought, and more generally in *Yogācāra* doctrines, is truly something that we could consider as a metaphysical matter. Even if the questions discussed by Buddhist thought can interest contemporary philosophy, it is a hermeneutical jump to assume that Buddhist thinkers themselves aim to establish a metaphysical standpoint. Such an approach could be considered as disrespectful towards the particularities of Buddhist thought and, more generally, towards the Buddhist quest itself[9].

Recent research on Buddhist studies highlights the importance, notably in Indian and Tibetan traditions, of the "three [types of] wisdom" (*trividhā prajñā*, 三慧)—which are learning (*śruta*, 聞), reasoning (*cintā*, 思), and cultivating (*bhāvanā*, 修)—in Buddhist discourse. Some authors insist on the fact that such conceptions may be considered as both a key to interpret any other Buddhist conception and an efficient way to compare Buddhist thought with Western philosophy (Kapstein 2001; Fiordalis 2018; Deroche 2019).

For instance, in his paper entitled "Learning, Reasoning, Cultivating: The Practice of Wisdom and the *Treasury of Abhidharma*", Fiordalis offers a clear analysis of the three types of wisdom in some of Vasubandhu's texts and *Yogācāra* scriptures (Fiordalis 2018). Fiordalis' study focuses on the *Abhidharmakośakārikā* 阿毘達磨倶舎論本頌 and its commentary—the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* 阿毘達磨倶舎論—, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* 大乘莊嚴經論, and the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra* 解深密經. However, only the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* and the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra* are considered as representative of *Yogācāra* thought and, thus, we can ask ourselves if these explanations allow us to give an exhaustive analysis of the three types of wisdom as they are presented in *Yogācāra* thought.

Xuanzang's *Discourse on the Realization of Consciousness-Only* was written in Chinese in the 7th century to sum up *Yogācāra* conceptions. This text, which comments on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only* (*Triṃśikā-vijñapti-mātratā*, 唯識三十頌), is considered by specialists as one of the most important works of *Yogācāra* Buddhism. Since it was well known in ancient times in Korea and Japan, it can prove to be invaluable to understand the influence of *Yogācāra* Buddhism on Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Buddhist Schools.

Even if Xuanzang's *Discourse* is a Chinese text which is not a "canonical scripture" (*sūtra*, 經), we personally consider it as an outstanding synthesis of *Yogācāra* thought. The fact that this text, which constitutes a global "commentary" (論) of Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* based on ten commentaries from other authors, was written in Chinese is of importance. Indeed, in order to write it in this language, Xuanzang must have deepened—through a conceptual analysis aiming to render *Yogācāra* Sanskrit terminology into Chinese—his own reflection about *Yogācāra* thought.

If Xuanzang's *Discourse* is without any doubt an important scripture of *Yogācāra* thought, it is also clear that he wanted at first to restore in China the core teaching and practice of Indian Buddhism, considered by him as more original than Buddhism as it had developed and evolved in China. He focused an important part of his work on *Yogācāra* scriptures with this aim. Xuanzang's work on *Yogācāra* thought follows Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's works, and the elucidation of his thought must be done comparatively with, and to a certain extent referring to, these previous *Yogācāra* thinkers.

This paper will explore Xuanzang's thought—and more generally *Yogācāra* thought—about the three types of wisdom based on his *Discourse*, but also on Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's scriptures. We will first analyse Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's scriptures to understand the meaning, function, and link between the three types of wisdom as described in their texts, as this will give us valuable guidance for the study of the three types of wisdom in Xuanzang's *Discourse*. After that, we will try to put this topic in the context of the general argumentation of Xuanzang's *Discourse*. That is why we will secondly present the structure of Xuanzang's *Discourse* and explain that this structure, which follows the one of Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*, represents a "path" that starts with the question of the nature of both the self and phenomena, and progressively leads to Supreme Awakening. Then, we will present what probably constitutes, for a Buddhist practitioner like Xuanzang, the major development of the *Discourse*: the description of the Noble Path[10]. In this part, we will learn that despite the fact that the expression "three types of wisdom" 三慧 is not common in Xuanzang's *Discourse*, this topic represents an important element of the Noble Path and a structural condition to attain Awakening[11]. Then, we will elucidate the meaning, function, and link between the three types of wisdom in Xuanzang's *Discourse*[12].

2. The Three Types of Wisdom in Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's Thoughts

The three types of wisdom have been discussed in Buddhist scriptures long before Xuanzang's work; among the *Yogācāra* scriptures, the highest number of references to "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" 聞思修 appears in the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* 瑜伽師地論—one of the major scriptures of *Yogācāra* Buddhism. The attribution of this scripture, associated with the name of both the bodhisattva Maitreya and the monk Asaṅga—Vasubandhu's older brother—remains unclear. It is commonly considered by modern scholars as a composite work. Xuanzang, who seemed to consider it as a "Yogācāra encyclopedia" (Lusthaus 2002, p. 557), translated this text and re-used some of its explanations in his *Discourse*. His translation was based on a Sanskrit version that has been partially lost. The influence of the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* in the following *Mahāyāna* scriptures, especially in India, East-Asia, and Tibet, has been well-documented (Kragh 2013).

In this scripture, the three types of wisdom—learning, reasoning, and cultivating—are analyzed separately in specific sections. However, considered as a whole, one of the first interesting developments concerns the "contemplation of characteristics" 觀相. It is explained that the contemplation of characteristics refers to the action of thinking about the "characteristics of diverse phenomena" 諸法相 based on "the wisdoms of learning, reasoning, and cultivating" 聞思修慧[13]. Besides, the Chinese 諸法—translated as "diverse phenomena" in the present paper—means "every phenomena" in a Buddhist context. Thus, "learning, reasoning, and cultivating wisdom" seems to constitute a way to think about the characteristics of any phenomenon. This suggests that the function of the three types of wisdom is to be a fundamental way to help grasp reality in a supreme sense. It also strengthens the idea that the three types of wisdom represent a fundamental educational approach in *Yogācāra* Buddhism.

In another section of the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*, it is suggested that the implementation of the three types of wisdom, that consists of the development of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating", needs to be practiced with "assiduity" 精進 to be completely fruitful[14]. Such a position implies that "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" do not necessarily constitute three kinds of wisdom. They are, for human beings, capabilities that must be developed. In this context, these capabilities seem to be considered as wisdoms (*prajñā*, 慧) with two

different meanings: (1) They are metaphorically called wisdoms as a wise method that must be developed and implemented in daily life to progress on the Buddhist Path. (2) They are called wisdoms with the true and plenary meaning of *prajñā* when their implementation is complete, and it remains no obstacle to disturb the progression of the practitioner[15]. In other words, for Asaṅga, "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" are human capabilities that need to be developed with "assiduity" to become full-fledged wisdom[16].

However, there is another complementary requirement to achieve the correct implementation of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating". Indeed, later in the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*, it is hinted that "wisdom" 智慧 is engendered through the correct practice of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" 聞思修 with "no guilt" 無罪[17]. Consequently, the moral and psychological dimensions that encompass guilt seem to represent an obstacle to the correct practice of learning, reasoning, and cultivating that is needed in order to become full-fledged wisdom. To sum up, bad behaviors imply the apparition of bad karmic seeds in consciousness. On the contrary, when there is no guilt, the moral and psychological dimensions constitute the favorable ground that supports and makes learning, reasoning, and cultivating effective. Thus, the practitioner needs at first to practice moral restraints and, on this basis, learning, reasoning, and cultivating can be developed and become effective as full-fledged wisdom.

Moreover, when the three types of wisdom are discussed separately, they are usually comprehended as "learning" 聞 first, then "reasoning" 思, and finally "cultivating" 修[18]. This tends to confirm the progressing aspects of the three types of wisdom. Such an analysis allows us to grasp the three types of wisdom as a pyramidal process. This process starts with moral restraints, continues through learning, reasoning, and cultivating practiced with assiduity, and progressively leads to Supreme Awakening. Of course, such a pyramidal description does not mean that the practitioner experiences a linear progression from learning to cultivating. Based on moral restraints, his training is composed of different phases[19]. These phases alternate between learning, reasoning, and cultivating, depending on his needs. They allow him to progress and help him reach Supreme Awakening[20].

The three types of wisdom were discussed in Buddhist scriptures during a long time, even after Asaṅga's work. For instance, Fiordalis' study demonstrates that the three types of wisdom constitute a recurrent topic in Vasubandhu's scriptures (Fiordalis 2018). His analysis, which consists of studying the "deployment" and the "usefulness" of the three types of wisdom, focuses on Vasubandhu's texts, such as the *Abhidharmakośakārikā*, and its commentary, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Fiordalis also comments on the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* and the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*. Based on these scriptures, he was able to explain the links between the three types of wisdom as they are usually described by Vasubandhu and, to a certain extent, in *Yogācāra* thought.

For instance, he notes that in the second paragraph of the *Abhidharmakośakārikā*, Vasubandhu defines the concept of *abhidharma* as "pure wisdom (*amalā prajñā*), along with its accompaniments"[21]. In an attempt to explain this statement, Fiordalis naturally discusses the term of *prajñā*. He shows that Vasubandhu understands *prajñā* as the discernment of *dharmas* and refers to the meaning of *abhidharma* in its ultimate sense, mostly synonymous with Supreme Awakening; as such, there are many steps to take before *abhidharma*.

The first ones relate to "conventional wisdom or discernment", which can emerge from "three interrelated processes or stages of practice": learning, reasoning, and cultivating. These processes are "generated through practice" (*prayogajā*). Fiordalis mentions the existence of ten practices—as explained in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*—"associated with the Dharma": copying (*lekhanā*), worshipping (*pūjanā*), gifting (*dānam*), hearing (*śravaṇam*), speaking (*vācanam*), memorizing (*udgrahaṇam*), clarifying (*prakāśanā*), reciting (*svādhyāyanam*), reflecting (*cintanā*), and cultivating (*bhāvanā*). This list is explicitly linked to the three types of wisdom in the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*. According to Fiordalis, it suggests that the list of ten practices may have been elaborated based on the list of the three types of wisdom.

Fiordalis also shows that in the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*, Vasubandhu insists on the need of practicing, at first, "moral restraints" (*sīla*); this constitutes a prerequisite to wisdom. Such an analysis is in line with Asaṅga's explanation in the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*. Furthermore, in Fiordalis' analysis—which follows Vasubandhu's explanation—the three types of wisdom are also described in a pyramidal way[22]. Moral restraints and the three types of wisdom are ultimately the ground to attain the ultimate truth, and eventually, Supreme Awakening. On this basis, we can consider Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's understandings of the three types of wisdom—learning, reasoning, and cultivating—as globally equivalent.

Among the scriptures mobilized by Fiordalis, only the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* and the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra* are considered as representative of *Yogācāra* thought. Thus, we can ask ourselves if these explanations are able to render exhaustively the meaning, function, and link between the three types of wisdom in *Yogācāra* thought. Xuanzang's *Discourse* constitutes another major *Yogācāra* scripture, written a few centuries after Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's works. By analyzing Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's views about the three types of wisdom as they are presented in Xuanzang's *Discourse*, it may be possible to confirm to what extent Xuanzang is referring to the same conceptions. It may also help us highlight the relationship between the three types of wisdom and the Noble Path in *Yogācāra* thought.

3. The Structure of Xuanzang's *Discourse on the Realisation of Consciousness-Only*

Xuanzang's *Discourse* presents a detailed analysis of Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*. This analysis is notably based on ten of its commentaries written by Dharmapāla, Sthiramati, Nanda, Citrabhānu, Guṇamati, Jñānamitra, Jñānacandra, Bandhuśrī, Śuddhacandra, and Jinaputra. The writing of the *Discourse* must be placed in the context of Xuanzang's life and understood as a major contribution to his lifework.

Xuanzang was born in China in 602. He began to study the *Classic of Filial Piety* 孝經 when he was ten and recited Buddhist scriptures, such as the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra* 維摩經 or *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* 法華經, at the age of eleven. As a Buddhist monk, he was reportedly unsatisfied with Buddhist doctrine as it was presented in China and made the decision to travel into India. His journey started in 629; he visited numerous temples and monasteries from mainstream and *Mahāyāna* Buddhisms. In 633, he entered the Buddhist University of Nālandā to learn *Yogācāra* Buddhism from Śīlabhadra (529–645). There, Xuanzang found Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*, as well as its ten commentaries. Back in China in 645, he started to write his famous *Discourse*[23].

According to Frédéric Girard, Xuanzang appeared in the history of Buddhist ideas when a debate emerged about the existence (or non-existence) of an absolute nature—supposed by concepts such as "immaculate consciousness" (*amalavijñāna*, 阿摩羅識) and "embryo of *tathāgata*" (*tathāgatagarbha*, 如來藏)—which completes the Buddhist analysis of the mind in different regions of consciousness. On this basis, he considers that Xuanzang's research can be understood as a will to address this issue by putting an emphasis on the Buddhist notion of emptiness (Girard 2016, p. 114).

This presumption seems like a key to understand Xuanzang's decision to begin his *Discourse* with the following explanation (attributed to Sthiramati): Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* were aimed at the people who have an erroneous understanding of the "two [kinds of] emptinesses" 二空, namely, the "emptiness of ego" 我空 and the "emptiness of phenomena" 法空. The purpose of the *Discourse* was to convince Buddhist practitioners about the accuracy of a fundamental Buddhist idea: both ego and phenomena are, in themselves, empty. They result from some activities of the mind that tend to objectify all things, and eventually, conduct to misleadingly grasp ego and phenomena as objective beings. In other words, ego and phenomena are, according to *Yogācāra* thought, nothing else than unexamined mental constructions[24].

Nevertheless, why does it seem so important to teach Buddhist practitioners the two emptinesses? The reason is presented just after the mention of the two emptinesses in the beginning of Xuanzang's *Discourse*. The goal is to obtain a correct understanding of

the nature of both the self and phenomena, which is needed to eliminate the two "heavy obstacles" or "heavy barriers" 重障. These two heavy obstacles are the "obstacle of passions" 煩惱障 and the "obstacle of the known" 所知障. The first one has to be eliminated to stop rebirth and the second one to attain the "Great Awakening" 大菩提.

Consequently, it is necessary to understand the two emptinesses, which means the empty nature of the self and phenomena, to attain Buddhahood itself; Xuanzang's *Discourse*, as well as Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*, aim to present the *Yogācāra* approach for this purpose.

After this explanation borrowed from Sthiramati, the introduction to the *Discourse* mentions the purpose of Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* according, notably, to Citrabhānu. In line with this interpretation, Xuanzang insists that this text was written to help understand the two emptinesses, as well as to provide a better understanding of the central idea of "Consciousness-Only" 唯識 (*vijñapti-mātra*).

In order to define the meaning of this idea, Xuanzang refers to Dharmapāla's interpretation of Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*. It allows Xuanzang to reject four types of doctrinal interpretations:

1. The doctrines that consider "external objects" 外境 as "not nonbeing" 非無 (which means understanding them similarly to consciousness).
2. The doctrines that consider "internal consciousness" 內識 as "not being" 非有 (which means understanding it similarly to external objects).
3. The doctrines that grasp "different [regions of] consciousness" 諸識 as being the same in "substance" 體.
4. The doctrines that consider that there are no separate "mental functions" 心所 apart from the "mind" 心.

Starting from that, the reader is invited to understand that Consciousness-Only means that external objects are "not being", contrary to internal consciousness which "is"[25]. Moreover, consciousness is composed of regions that must be distinguished.

The introduction emphasizes two linked ideas: the concept of emptiness and the notion of Consciousness-Only. After this explanation, Xuanzang's *Discourse* focuses on how main *Yogācāra* conceptions have been falsely interpreted and should be understood. He criticizes the attachment to the concepts of the "self" 我 and "phenomena" 法 (a criticism which also puts the emphasis on the two emptinesses).

Then, the body of the text is divided into successive parts that describe the "modifications of consciousness" 變識, the eight regions of consciousness (starting from the "store consciousness"), the idea of "Consciousness-Only", the "conditions" 緣 and "causes" 因 of consciousness, the "habitual forces" 習氣 that ensure the continuity of the existence despite transmigration, and the "three natures" 三性 (or 三自性, which describe the perspective from which objects are grasped).

The overwhelming majority of modern studies conducted on the *Discourse* mainly focus on these conceptual developments that constitute the core ideas of the text. The importance of these conceptions in the history of Buddhist ideas explains scholars' interest in such topics. This conceptual ground also represents a tool to help practitioners attain Buddhahood. That is why Xuanzang continues his explanations, addressing the issue of the "Noble Path" 聖道. Following the structure of Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*, he places his commentary into a practical Buddhist perspective[26]. The *Discourse* also offers an explanation about the aim of *Yogācāra* thought and practices, namely, "*Nirvāṇa*" 涅槃.

From a general viewpoint, it seems possible to understand the *Discourse* as reflecting the three types of wisdom: learning, reasoning, and cultivating. Indeed, Xuanzang's major text offers a series of Buddhist doctrines that the practitioner can helpfully learn. These explanations contain numerous concepts that lead him to wonder about himself, his surrounding world, and the Buddhist Path. Then, he can start cultivating a state of mind and a set of practices that will allow him to grasp the profound meaning of Consciousness-Only's theories, and to progress further on the Buddhist Path. Such an explanation also suggests that understanding learning, reasoning, and cultivating should be grasped as a pyramidal process. Of course, as explained above, such a pyramidal description does not

mean that the practitioner experiences a linear progression from learning to cultivating. During phases of cultivation, he can stop his practice to read again some extracts of Xuanzang's *Discourse* and think about their meaning. When he returns to the cultivation phases, he can repeat the learning and reasoning phases as many times as necessary; thus, he can progress in his quest.

Finally, the conclusion of Xuanzang's Discourse is composed of verses that remind the reader of the goal of the text, which is to help practitioners attain "Supreme Awakening" 無上覺:

> *Based on the Noble Teaching and Correct Reasoning,*
>
> *The meaning of the nature and characteristics of Consciousness-Only have been distinguished.*
>
> *The merit I have acquired is provided for all living beings.*
>
> *May that together, we shall rapidly attain Supreme Awakening*.[27]

4. The Noble Path and the Three Types of Wisdom in Xuanzang's *Discourse*

For a Buddhist practitioner, the three types of wisdom represent invaluable human capabilities that must be developed to progress on the Noble Path, which aim to attain the end of ignorance, delusion, and pain. In this respect, learning, reasoning, and cultivating are mentioned by Xuanzang in his explanation about the different stages of the Noble Path. In order to identify the placement of the three types of wisdom on the Noble Path, it is useful to describe these stages.

The first sentence of Xuanzang's description concerning the Noble Path constitutes an emphasis on the fact that the conceptual clarification offered by the *Discourse* aims to express the "characteristics" 相 and "nature" 性 of "Consciousness-Only" 唯識, which is understood as the way to attain Buddhahood. In other words, it seems that for Xuanzang, a perfect understanding and practice of Consciousness-Only leads to "Supreme Awakening".

According to the *Discourse*, Consciousness-Only can be understood by those who are endowed with "two kinds of seeds" 二種種姓: the "innate seeds" 本性住種姓 (which refers to the seeds that are in the "store consciousness" from birth as the result of the activities of their prior lives) and the "seeds developed by habits" 習所成種姓 (which refers to the seeds that are cultivated during their current lives). Understanding Consciousness-Only does not mean that one grasps it in an exclusive and theoretical way; rather, it means that one understands it theoretically and practices it effectively. Thus, in line with Buddhist scriptures, Xuanzang distinguishes five stages in the practice of Consciousness-Only:

1. The stage of accumulation 資糧位 (*saṃbhārāvasthā*). To explain it, Xuanzang comments on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* (stanza 26):

> *As long as I have not attained the [level of] consciousness*
>
> *Which seeks to abide in the nature of Consciousness-Only,*
>
> *I am still into the latencies of the twofold grasping*[28]
>
> *And I am still not yet able to subdue and eliminate them.*[29]

At this stage, the practitioner has a profound faith in Buddhism. He cultivates mundane virtue and increases his understanding of consciousness. A better understanding of consciousness can lead to a reduction or disappearance of suffering for the practitioner. As he accumulates both merits and knowledge, he progressively gets close to the "path of seeing"見道. Nevertheless, he does not fully master the profound meaning of the two emptinesses and his understanding of Consciousness-Only is uncomplete.

2. The stage of applied practice 加行位 (*prayogāvasthā*). To explain it, Xuanzang comments on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* (stanza 27):

> *When before me is standing a little thing,*
>
> *Saying that this is the nature of Consciousness-Only*
>
> *Because there is still something that is acquired [grasped],*

I am not really abiding in Consciousness-Only.[30]

At this stage, the practitioner is able to gradually understand, control, and suppress his attachment to the "grasped" 所取 and to the "grasper" 能取—the twofold grasping—, in other words to the object and subject of cognition. We can consider that the stage of applied practice consists of the exercising of the two emptinesses, notably through meditation practices. Nevertheless, this practice seems incomplete since the practitioner does not fully understand the nature of Consciousness-Only.

3. The stage of proficiency 通達位 (*prativedhāvasthā*). To explain it, Xuanzang comments on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* (stanza 28):

Whenever, regarding among the conditioned objects,

Knowledge is completely devoid of something acquired [grasped].

Then, I am abiding in Consciousness-Only,

Because separated from the characteristics of the twofold grasping.[31]

At this stage, the practitioner attains a level of insight similar to "Bodhisattva" 菩薩. Such a practitioner completely understands both the attachment to the twofold grasping and the nature of Consciousness-Only. Since he knows that both the grasped and the grasper result from the activity of imagination, he was able to free himself from his attachment to them. Thus, the practitioner understands the illusory nature of the "discursive thought" 戲論. The stage of proficiency is also called the "path of seeing"見道.

Two kinds of "path of seeing" can be distinguished: the "path of seeing the truth" 眞見道 and the "path of seeing the characteristics" 相見道. The path of seeing the truth consists of the complete understanding of the "nature" 性 of Consciousness-Only; whereas the path of seeing the characteristics refers to the complete understanding of the "characteristics" 相 of Consciousness-Only.

4. The stage of cultivation 修習位 (*bhāvanāvasthā*). To explain it, Xuanzang comments on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* (stanza 29):

Not obtained and not conceived,

There is knowledge beyond this mundane world.

As a result of throwing the two obstacles,

Is directly acquired the transformation of the support.[32]

At this stage, the practitioner has a level of practice similar to a Bodhisattva. Since he has a complete understanding and an effective practice of Consciousness-Only, he progressively eliminates the remaining obstacles; thus, he can get rid of the whole "obstacle of passions" 煩惱障 and the whole "obstacle of the known" 所知障. Since it consists of a "non-distinctive knowledge" 無分別智, it is free from any attachment to the twofold grasping. It is a "supramundane non-distinctive knowledge" 出世間無分別智.

As a result, the support of all accumulated seeds—namely, the "store consciousness"—changes. Such a modification is called the "transformation of the support" 轉依. It is composed of two dimensions: the elimination of the obstacle of passions, which paves the way to the "Great Awakening" 大涅槃, and the elimination of the obstacles of the known, which leads to "Supreme Awakening" 無上覺.

The resulting knowledge is described as "non-obtention" 無得 because it is free from the illusion that constitutes the "discursive thought" 戲論. The resulting knowledge is also said to be "non-conception" 不思議 because its "sublime function" 妙用 is difficult to fathom.

5. The stage of culmination 究竟位 (*niṣṭhāvasthā*). To explain it, Xuanzang comments on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses* (stanza 30):

It is the untainted dimension,

Unconceivable, good, permanent,

Blissful and body of liberation,

Which in the Great Sage is named the Law.[33]

At this stage, the practitioner attains the highest level of practice. There are no remaining obstacles. He has attained the "Supreme level of Awakening" 無上正等菩提 and has a complete understanding of both the characteristics and the nature of Consciousness-Only. In other words, there is no possibility for further improvement.

The stage of culmination represents the highest point in the transformation of the support. The "untainted dimension" 無漏界 refers to a perfectly untainted "store consciousness". It is said to be "untainted" because it is completely and definitively free from impurity, from impure seeds. It is defined as "unconceivable" because it transcends the possibilities of understanding based on thought or discursive practices. It is called the "body of liberation" 解脱身 because, as a result of the transformation of the support, it is free from the two obstacles. In such a context, the word "Great Sage" 大牟尼 refers to the "Great-Awakened-World-Honored[-One]" 大覺世尊 (Śākyamuni).

Xuanzang's explanation about the five stages refers to various levels of knowledge and practice, and raises the question of the three types of wisdom. However, the direct reference to the three types of wisdom is not common in Xuanzang's *Discourse*, and the Chinese word 三慧 only appears twice in his explanation about the stage of cultivation.

At first, Xuanzang states that "there are three [kinds of] learning [through] wisdom" 慧學[34]. This expression refers, according to the Buddhist tradition, to the third element that composes the "three studies" 三學: (1) "learning [through] moral precepts" 戒學, (2) "learning [through] meditative concentration" 定學, and (3) "learning [through] wisdom" 慧學. According to Xuanzang, the three kinds of "learning [through] wisdom" 慧學 are: "applied non-discriminating wisdom" 加行無分別慧, "fundamental non-discriminating wisdom" 根本無分別慧, and "post-awakening non-discriminating wisdom" 後得無分別慧. Also, he refers to these three kinds of "learning [through] wisdom" with the Chinese word 三慧, which suggests the polysemy of this expression in Chinese Buddhist scriptures.

The second occurrence of the Chinese word 三慧 is directly linked to the topic of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating". As explained before, Buddhist practice, which consists of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" 聞思修, contributes to overcoming the obstacles to Awakening[35]. However, this practice can be disturbed by the "obstacle of dullness" 闇鈍障—which is one constituent of the "obstacle of the known" 所知障—and leads to "forgetting" 忘 and "losing" 失 the benefits of Buddhist teaching acquired by the very practice of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating"[36]. Thus, even if learning, reasoning, and cultivating are three complementary activities that could contribute to overcome both the "obstacle of passions" and the "obstacle of the known", and correlatively, the "obstacle of dullness", the effects of these activities can be disturbed by dullness itself. To overcome such a difficulty and successfully progress on the Buddhist Path, a positive and voluntary mindset is needed.

Moreover, in line with this explanation, it seems that the practice and development of "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" apply to the first three stages of the Noble Path: the stage of accumulation, the stage of applied practice, and the stage of proficiency. The practice of these capabilities can always be disturbed by the obstacles to Awakening, and it is only after the complete elimination of these obstacles—during the stage of cultivation—that "learning, reasoning, and cultivating" become full-fledged wisdom. Before this elimination, assiduity is necessary. Whereas from the fourth stage (the stage of cultivation), since all the obstacles to Awakening are suppressed, the three types of wisdom become full-fledged wisdom. This point explains why these explanations appeared in Xuanzang's *Discourse* after his presentation of the fourth stage and before his exposition of the fifth one.

The three types of wisdom are based on moral restraints[37]. Learning, reasoning, and cultivating—which are human capabilities—appear as essential on the Noble Path. They help the practitioner progress in his journey, and when they become full-fledged wisdom, the characteristics and nature of Consciousness-Only are elucidated, and Supreme Awakening eventually appears as attainable.

According to Xuanzang's *Discourse*, the Buddhist Path consists of clarifying the idea of Consciousness-Only with the aim to help practitioners attain a level of consciousness free from impurity, free from anything that constitutes a representation—even a representation of external things or matters—and could prevent them from attaining Supreme Awakening. Xuanzang explains in the conclusion of his *Discourse*: "Therefore, it is named *Discourse on the Realisation of Consciousness-Only*, but we also refer to it by the name of *Purification of Consciousness-Only*, because by revealing the principle of Consciousness-Only, it becomes extremely clear and pure"[38]. During this process, the role of learning, reasoning, and cultivating appears as essential. Indeed, these phases constitute educational practices that are efficient to master the principle of Consciousness-Only and help the practitioner purify his consciousness. On such a basis, he will progress on the Noble Path, and even may be able to reach Supreme Awakening.

5. Conclusions

In line with previous Buddhist doctrines, the "three [types of] wisdom" (*trividhā prajñā*, 三慧)—which are defined as learning (*śruta*, 聞), reasoning (*cintā*, 思), and cultivating (*bhāvanā*, 修)—constitute in *Yogācāra* Buddhism an educational basis for the practitioner engaged with the Path. In this respect, *Yogācāra* Buddhism is conceptualized as a way to attain Supreme Awakening in accordance with previous Buddhist Schools on many aspects.

From Asaṅga to Xuanzang, the three types of wisdom are described in a pyramidal way, starting from moral restraints, and progressively leading to Supreme Awakening. If learning, reasoning, and cultivating are essential in Buddhist practice, they do not necessarily constitute three kinds of wisdom. They require assiduity to be developed into full-fledged wisdom.

In other words, learning, reasoning, and cultivating are human capabilities. Humans can use them to progress in many practices that encompass both theoretical and practical dimensions, even in activities that are not related to the Buddhist quest. Mobilized in the context of the Buddhist Path, these capabilities seem to be considered as wisdoms (*prajñā*, 慧) with two different meanings. (1) They are metaphorically called wisdoms as a wise method that must be developed and implemented in daily life to progress on the Buddhist Path. (2) They are called wisdoms with the true and plenary meaning of *prajñā* when their implementation is complete, and it remains no obstacle to disturb the progression of the practitioner.

Thus, according to Xuanzang's *Discourse*, the three types of wisdom seem to constitute full-fledged wisdom from the fourth stage of the Noble Path: the stage of cultivation. For him, to practice the three types of wisdom in accordance with the precepts of the *Yogācāra* School means to progress in the understanding and practice of both the characteristics and the nature of Consciousness-Only; eventually, this will open the door to Supreme Awakening.

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Notes

1 The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* indicates that "idealism" can refer to "two fundamental conceptions": (1) "something mental (mind, spirit, reason, will) is the ultimate foundation of all reality, or even exhaustive of reality"; and (2) "although the existence of something independent of the mind is conceded, everything that we can know about this mind-independent 'reality' is held to be so permeated by the creative, formative, or constructive activities of the mind (of some kind or other) that all claims to knowledge must be considered, in some sense, to be a form of self-knowledge" (Guyer and Horstmann 2021). Even if the idealistic aspect of *Yogācāra* thought is debated, it could seem difficult to deny the idealistic dimension, at least according to the second definition mentioned by Guyer and Horstmann, of the concept of "Consciousness-Only", which represents the core concept of Xuanzang's *Discourse*.

2 To obtain more information about this topic, one can read, for instance: Waldron (2003).

3 The French philologist school largely contributed to the research about *Yogācāra* with the work of scholars such as Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1869–1938), Sylvain Lévi (1863–1935), and Étienne Lamotte (1903–1983).

4 To obtain more information about this topic, one can read, for instance: Jiang (2006).

5 See notably: Lusthaus (2002).

6 In his major book published in 1974, *Logos and Lemma* 『ロゴスとレンマ』, Yamauchi commented on various Buddhist thinkers and used some Yogācāra conceptions from a philosophical point of view (Yamauchi 1974). This book has never been translated into English, but a French translation was published in 2020. See: Yamauchi (2020).

7 One can consult (in English) Izutsu's collected papers from his "Eranos lectures": Izutsu (2008).

8 This whole study from Schmithausen constitutes a criticism of Lusthaus' interpretation.

9 Schmithausen refrains from discussing Lusthaus' philosophical approach, with the argument that he is not a philosopher, and decides to keep a philological analysis (Schmithausen 2015, p. 11). The contradictory aspect of an expression such as "Buddhist philosophy" has been explained by Matthew T. Kapstein, who seems to be aware of both the difficulty and the opportunity resulting from such philosophical, metaphysical, or logical approaches (Kapstein 2001).

10 The tradition used to divide Xuanzang's *Discourse* into 10 "books". The "Noble Path" is mainly explained in books 9 and 10.

11 The expression "three types of wisdom" 三慧 only appears twice in Xuanzang's Discourse. It does not mean that it is a topic of little importance for him. As we will see in this paper, the three types of wisdom constitute the fundamental educational process of *Yogācāra* Buddhism. We consider that Xuanzang does not need to refer more explicitly to the three types of wisdom because they represent an obvious educational process for any *Yogācāra* practitioner. Our point seems confirmed by the fact that Xuanzang sometimes uses expressions such as "hearing et cetera" 聞等. See for instance: T1579_31.0028a22, T1579_31.0041b16 and T1579_31.0055b23.

12 We consulted diverse studies and commentaries during the writing of this paper: Cook (1999), Deroche (2019, 2021), Girard (2016), Katō et al. (1989 Or. 1935), La Vallée Poussin (La Vallée Poussin 1928–1929), Lévi (1932), Nagasawa (1998), Ōta (1977, 2005), Saigusa (2004), Takasaki (2018), Takemura (2009), and Yokoyama (1979). We also referred to the following dictionaries: Girard (2008), Buswell and Lopez (2014), and Nakamura et al. (2014).

13 T1579_30.0334c19: 云何觀相 謂聞思修慧所思惟諸法相.

14 T1579_30.0485b23-24: 若依精進習聞思修所成三慧.

15 The authors of *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* give a definition of the three types of wisdom that seems compatible with our views when they explain: "Three specific types of wisdom are set forth, including the wisdom generated by learning (ŚRUTA-MAYĪPRAJÑĀ), an intellectual understanding gained through listening to teachings or reading texts; the wisdom generated by reflection (CINTĀMAYĪPRAJÑĀ), which includes conceptual insights derived from one's own personal reflection on those teachings and from meditation at a low level of concentration; and the wisdom generated by cultivation (BHĀVANĀMAYĪPRAJÑĀ), which is a product of more advanced stages in meditation" (Buswell and Lopez 2014, p. 655).

16 In the intellectual history, there are many examples of capabilities considered as common to every human, but of which the accurate practice is not. One of the most famous examples in European philosophy is probably Descartes' "good sense" (*bon sens*). At the beginning of his *Discours de la méthode*, he explains that the good sense—which is the capacity to distinguish the true from the false—is the most evenly distributed thing in the world, but that the most important thing—and the difficulty—is to apply it correctly. See: Descartes (2009, pp. 81–82; AT VI: 1–2).

17 T1579_30.0653b24: 受用無罪正聞思修所成智慧.

18 We explained above that, in the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*, the three types of wisdom are analyzed separately in three distinguished sections. These sections appear in the following order: (1) learning 聞; (2) reasoning 思; (3) cultivating 修.

19 In the present paper, we refer to "practitioners" through masculine pronouns. Historically, practitioners were (mostly) male monastics. Of course, notably through the development of the Buddhist practice outside Asia, the situation has changed. The use of masculine pronouns reflects a historical reality. It does not mean that Buddhist practice is or should be restricted to males.

20 The shift from one phase to another takes place depending on the needs of a practitioner's practice. Deroche suggests a model in which the practitioner can, for instance, return to a theoretical study after practicing. Furthermore, once a practitioner masters the

three types of wisdom, he can teach and, by this mean, help other practitioners in their own progressions. For these reasons, Deroche talks about an "intergenerational transmission of wisdom" (Deroche 2021, p. 22).

21 Concerning the definition of *abidharma* as "pure wisdom, along with its accompaniments", Xuanzang's Chinese translation is noted in T1558_29.0001b02: 淨慧隨行.

22 Fiordalis does not use such an expression, but it may help the reader understand the link between the three types of wisdom. Based on Vasubandhu's scriptures, he writes: "Vasubandhu affirms the sequence of the three types of wisdom and their dependence upon one another. Each proceeds in reliance upon the previous one; all of them depend upon the foundation of moral restraint; and their goal is seeing the truths" (Fiordalis 2018, p. 271). Such a description suggests that for Vasubandhu, learning constitutes a prerequisite to reasoning and reasoning a prerequisite to cultivating. Indeed, for him, the three types of wisdom appear as a progressive way according to which it would not make sense for the practitioner to try to "cultivate" something that was not learnt or thought of. In this respect, cultivating appears as an upper level of implementation compared with learning and reasoning. Nevertheless, it does not necessary mean that the practitioner does not have to return to the phases of learning and reasoning from time to time, if only to reactivate what he has previously learnt and thought of.

23 This summary of Xuanzang's early life and long travel is based on: Nagasawa (1998, pp. 279–317) and Girard (2016, pp. 112–13).

24 These unexamined mental constructions consist of compulsive identifications.

25 In this explanation, Xuanzang opposes two words: 非有 and 非無. We decided to translate them "not being" and "not nonbeing". The translation of such expressions represents an important philosophical issue. Translations such as "not existent" and "not non-existent" also seem possible. But from a philosophical standpoint, the term "existence" mainly refers to the being of a limited kind of individual, such as human beings. Other translations such as "not something" and "not nothing" could be possible too, but the word "thing" encompasses many connotations—for instance, a material aspect—that are also problematic. Since Xuanzang's explanations concern "internal consciousness" and "external object", it seems clearer to render 非有 and 非無 as "not being" and "not nonbeing".

26 This does not mean that the conceptions in relation to the "Noble Path" (*ārya mārga* 聖道) were absent in the previous parts of the *Discourse*, but rather that this new development represents a turning point in the general structure of the text.

27 T1585_31.0059a22-23: 已依聖教及正理/分別唯識性相義/所獲功德施群生/願共速登無上覺.

28 The "twofold grasping" refers to the attachment to the "grasped" 所取 and to the "grasper" 能取.

29 T1585_31.0048b22-23: 乃至未起識/求住唯識性/於二取隨眠/猶未能伏滅.

30 T1585_31.0049a23-24: 現前立少物/謂是唯識性/以有所得故/非實住唯識.

31 T1585_31.0049c16-17: 若時於所緣/智都無所得/爾時住唯識/離二取相故.

32 T1585_31.0050c19-20: 無得不思議/是出世間智/捨二麁重故/便證得轉依.

33 T1585_31.0057a11-12: 此即無漏界/不思議善常/安樂解脫身/大牟尼名法.

34 T1585_31.0052a18-19: 慧學有三.

35 As we explained before, the obstacles to Awakening are the "obstacle of passions" 煩惱障 and the "obstacle of the known" 所知障.

36 We deduced these elements from T1585_.31.0052c27-29.

37 Like Vasubandhu, Xuanzang insists on the importance of moral restraints in many parts of his *Discourse*.

38 T1585_31.0059a18-19: 是故說爲成唯識論/亦說此論名淨唯識/顯唯識理極明淨故.

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Article

Sources of Japanese Buddhist Philosophy of Education: Saichō (最澄, 766/7–822) on Study, Reflection, and Cultivation

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Abstract: Recent studies on the Buddhist threefold wisdom model and its suggested potentialities have warranted a rediscovery of the model in different historical and cultural contexts. Saichō (最澄, 766/7–822), founder of Japanese Tendai Buddhism, references the three wisdoms in his documents outlining the Tendai monastic education curriculum. Through modification of translation and analysis of related original texts by Saichō, and an interview with the current dean of the Tendai monastic education institution, this paper aims to (1) uncover Sino-Japanese history of expressions of threefold wisdom and Buddhist education, (2) clarify the content of Saichō's curriculum, and (3) examine the role of compassion in said curriculum. This paper argues that the threefold wisdom served as a foundational framework of Saichō's education; he envisioned that his graduates would develop into religious leaders of the nation who would benefit all sentient beings through their own training, preaching the Dharma, and contributing to social work. At the same time, it became clear that compassionate attitudes were considered to be fundamental to all practices of the three wisdoms at Mount Hiei, which makes Saichō's curriculum a captivating case of a theological application of the threefold wisdom.

Keywords: Saichō; threefold wisdom; education; compassion; Tendai School

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1. Introduction

Saichō 最澄 (766/7–822), posthumously known as Dengyō Daishi 伝教大師, is popularly known for establishing the Japanese Tendai School of Buddhism and thereby is considered one of the main pillars of Heian Buddhism. The school he founded had a major impact on later Japanese Buddhism and culture, and still thrives today as a living tradition, with its head temple, Enryakuji 延暦寺, nestled at Mount Hiei. Saichō and his school are especially known for their radical split from traditional Nara Buddhist institutions. Paul Groner's (2000) study on Saichō, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School*, thoroughly illustrates the institutional difference by focusing on the establishment of the Tendai ordination system and the school's own understanding of the precepts, and thus it has served as a foundational study in the Anglo-American scholarship. Within the book, Groner translates a collection of petitions sent to the Heian court authored by Saichō, known as the *Sange gakushōshiki* 山家学生式. The petitions are seen as concise expressions of Saichō's educational thought and guidelines for the detailed applications of his curriculum (Mori 1971, p. 138). Although Groner extensively translates and discusses the petitions and other related documents, his discussions focus mainly on Saichō's efforts to establish Tendai's own ordination system. Certainly, Groner's contributions to the study of Japanese Tendai and its doctrinal issues are immense. Yet, for our concerns, he has not dealt extensively with the educational component of Saichō's thought. The significance of Saichō's educational thought has been discussed in a number of Japanese literature but has been less observed in English literature; along with Groner, Hazama Jikō (1987, pp. 111–12) introduces us to *Sange gakushōshiki*, but does not discuss its significance further.

Upon exploration of the *Sange gakushōshiki*, we see that Saichō strictly constructed his curriculum based on the threefold wisdom model, a Buddhist model for the development of wisdom. Buddhist traditions have articulated the threefold model of (1) study (or listening), (2) reflection, and (3) cultivation as a "paradigmatic model" that integrates logical reasoning and lived experience; in the recent recontextualization of the model by Deroche (2021b), the potentiality of the model in the context of modern education has been persuasively argued. By rediscovering Saichō's pedagogical scheme, we resituate the threefold model of wisdom development as a Buddhist philosophy of education, one that dynamically integrates study and practice for the purpose of realizing wisdom and benefiting the common populace.

There are three aims I intend to accomplish in this article: (1) rediscovering and providing a general overview of the historic expression of the threefold wisdom model in Sino-Japanese history, and situating the integrative pedagogy of study and practice as central to Japanese education; (2) illustrating the educational thought of Saichō detailed in *Sange gakushōshiki*, with emphasis on his reference to the threefold development of wisdom; and (3) elucidating the attitudinal role of compassion in the curriculum. By first providing a general overview, I demonstrate the unique nature of Saichō's holistic curriculum in the context of Japanese history of education in latter sections. Analysis (including some retranslations) of primary sources by Saichō reveals that the three wisdoms were applied as the central educational framework in Saichō's curriculum, and that compassion for others and for the nation was the fundamental attitude and motivation of practices in the curriculum. Inputs from a personal interview with Kuwatani Yūken 桑谷祐顕, current Dean of Eizan Gakuin (head institution for Tendai monastic education), informs and supports these arguments.

For the texts written in *kanbun* (literary Chinese) of Saichō, I relied on transcriptions published in *Dengyō Daishi zenshū* (DDZ). Although extensive translation of Saichō's work is done by Groner (2000), I have also added modifications to his translations with the help of modern Japanese translations in Ōkubo (2021), Ando and Sonoda (1991), and Mibu (1967). Ōkubo (2021) and Ando and Sonoda (1991) offer different interpretations of some terms as compared to Groner (2000). Thus, the two works are referred to present alternate versions of the translations.

2. Expressions of the Threefold Wisdom and Pedagogies Integrating Study and Practice in Japanese History of Buddhist Education

2.1. From India to Kamakura Japan, Expressions of the Threefold Wisdom

By exploring some expressions of threefold wisdom in Sino-Japanese history, we trace how the model integrating conceptual knowledge and experiential knowledge has been diffused to Japan. Kapstein (2001), Fiordalis (2018), Anālayo (2021), and Deroche (2021b) each introduce different scriptural references to the threefold wisdom. Deroche (2021b, p. 21), introduces an expression in *Saṅgārava Sutta*, in which the threefold wisdom can be seen in parallel to Buddha Śākyamuni's description of the "three teachers". Fiordalis (2018) discusses the three wisdoms that appears in Vasubandhu's (fl. 4th to 5th century CE) *Abhidharmakośa* (*Treasury of Abhidharma*). In the early Buddhist educations of India, monasteries functioned as educational institutions both for the monastics and for the laypeople. Similarly, monastic education in China became of crucial importance, especially in the first eight centuries of the Common Era in which "the dominant trend of thinking was Buddhism" (Lee 2000, p. 6). The three wisdoms became a central aspect of Mahayānā texts, and in China, they were found especially in the translation of Yogācāra texts (Deroche 2021a, p. 221). These translations were then transmitted to Japan, studied extensively by scholar monks such as those in the Hossō 法相 school. Of course, the reference to the three wisdoms in Chinese texts are not limited to the Yogācāra tradition. Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597), a Chinese Buddhist philosopher known as the *de facto* founder of Chinese Tendai (or "Tiantai") school (Groner 2000, p. 7), cites the three wisdoms in his commentaries to

the Lotus Sūtra, especially in *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra* (PMLS) 妙法蓮華経玄義:

> 今説一實之道。從聞悟解法身得生。從佛口生。是聞慧中法身生。從法化生是思慧中法身生。得佛法分。是修慧中法身生。三慧成就是眞佛子。
>
> (Zhiyi, PMLS Vol. 6, in Taishō Tripiṭaka Vol. 33, p. 755b-c)
>
> Now, the path of one-vehicle will be explained. By hearing the teaching, one can understand it and the "body of reality" (*dharmakāya*) will arise. By "arises from the mouth of the Buddha" it means *dharmakāya* will arise in wisdom born from listening. By "being born from the Dharma", it means *dharmakāya* will arise in wisdom born from reflection. By "earn part of the Dharma", it means *dharmakāya* will arise in wisdom born from cultivation. When the three wisdoms are achieved, one is a true bodhisattva.
>
> (translated by author)[1]

Given the diffusion of Yogācāra tradition in Japan and the influential nature of Zhiyi's teaching to Chinese and Japanese Buddhism—especially in the context of this article, to Saichō—we can see how the model was disseminated to later Japanese Buddhism. At the same time, detailed examination of Zhiyi's expression of threefold wisdom may be warranted to understand its role in the Tiantai founder's philosophy.

Buddhism in Japan gained prominence after the Nara Period, when Buddhism was established as a state religion. The six schools of Nara Buddhism[2] each studied massive numbers of Chinese Buddhist texts, and at the same time conducted various state-sponsored rituals for the protection of the country. Some argue that Japan at this time "remained by and large in a phase of burrowing and assimilating with limited creative reflection and cultivation" (Heisig et al. 2011, p. 7). Nevertheless, this assimilation of knowledge allowed for later creative thought. Philosophical breakthrough came in the early Heian period by Saichō and Kūkai 空海 (774–835). Within the process of establishing the Tendai school, Saichō constructed a formalized educational curriculum based on the three wisdoms, which I will discuss extensively in later sections.

As social turbulence and natural disasters swept across Japan in the turn of the Kamakura period, philosophers believed that such trying times called for more focused practice. Almost all the spiritual traditions from the Kamakura period adopted simplified forms of practice. One example of such turn is that of Pure Land School (Jōdo shū) and True Pure Land School (Jōdo Shinshū). The philosophical starting point for Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212), founder of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism who also studied at Mount Hiei, was the self-realization that he will not be able to develop his Buddha-nature through the traditional "threefold training" (*śīla*, *samādhi*, *prajñā*; ethical discipline, concentration, wisdom) (Nagai 1993, p. 134). Thus, he had to rely on the "other power" *tariki* 他力 whom represents the ultimate self, Amida 阿弥陀 (Amitābha). Mirroring the self to Amida by "keeping it in mind" and chanting the name of Amida (*nenbutsu* 念仏) constituted Pure Land main practice. For Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1263), the focus became "having complete faith in the 'other power' of Amida" (Deal and Ruppert 2015, p. 118). This complete faith was synonymous with having the attitude of listening and reflecting on the "primal vow" *hongan* 本願 of Amida, which vowed to free all sentient beings (Yoshikawa 1975, p. 462). Referring to the "words of truth" of Amida, Shinran advices us in his *Kyōgyōshinshō* 教行信証: "Hear and reflect; be careful not to hesitate too long [to have faith]" (Shinran 2003, p. 4).

Faith is empowered by listening (and vice versa), which in turn brings forth the *nenbutsu* which is the practice of cultivation (Yoshikawa 1975); thus, hearing and reflection is unified with practice. Here we can identify the threefold wisdom but with certain primacy attributed to listening, especially for Shinran's True Pure Land School. The diffusion of threefold wisdom from India to Japan had a prominent impact on

Japanese Buddhist thinkers such as Saichō and Shinran, and such didactical focus on both study and practice is observed even outside of monastic education.

2.2. Training of Arts and Buddhist Education in Edo

If we consider education as methodologies of self-cultivation, we see that Japanese arts also introduce us to another mode of training that does not specifically mention the threefold wisdom, but nevertheless articulates the unification of study (memorization of form) and embodied practice. Nishihira (2012, 2019; Nishihira and Rappleye 2021) introduces us to the ideas of self-cultivation by Zeami Motokiyo 世阿弥元清 (1363–1443), a progenitor of Noh theater and a renowned actor/play-write. The philosophy of training for Zeami, in simple terms, is the training of radical emptiness. There are four states of cultivation in this model. The first is the state of immaturity, in which the student is not yet learned. Next, after some study and mimicry according to the *kata* (mold, form), the set knowledge becomes embodied, and students master the skills according to form. During this phase, students are expected to practice intentionally with self-awareness so as to learn the skills carefully. Once the skills are mastered, however, the students are expected to reflect and acknowledge that they have been "entrapped" in the memorized skills. Therefore, they drop-off and unlearn all intentionality and awareness, thus detaching oneself from the skills. In this state of "no-mind" (*mushin* 無心), new kinds of skills, intention, and awareness emerge, which Zeami calls "Double-Eyes" (*niju no ken* 二重の見). What stands out in Zeami's model is the complete emptying or forgetting of the self. This stands in contrast with the threefold wisdom articulated by Deroche (2021b, p. 25); in the threefold wisdom model, the "retentive function of mindfulness" is held throughout the practices, which allows for conceptual clarity that refine their moment-to-moment experiences. When we cultivate direct perception through practice, conceptual categories still play a central role.

Nevertheless, it is critical to emphasize here that true mastery was achieved only when conscious and conceptual mimicry/memorization and subsequent non-conceptual embodied practice were unified. Similar concepts on memorization of *kata* and embodied practice is prominent throughout Japanese arts, with some arguing that they are a form of cultural pedagogies that illuminate Japanese views on learning (Matsunobu 2011). In the periods after Zeami, especially in the Edo period, education for the masses became more profound. These schools, usually referred to as the *terakoya* 寺子屋 (literally "temple hut"), were born out of extension of Buddhist monasteries' lay education (Saito 1993, p. 285), but expanded into a more practical form of education system due to societal demands. Thus, 17th to 18th century *terakoya* were not necessarily placed in a temple. The main objective of these schools were to prepare children for their hereditary occupation within the Tokugawa feudal system (Dore 2011, p. 252). Education at the *terakoya* was predominated by teachings of basic skills such as writing, reading, and arithmetic. At the same time, Saito (1993) illustrates how the *terakoya* was very much still heavily influenced by Buddhism. Much of the *terakoya* teachers were monks, and popular textbooks for reading largely included Buddhist materials. Although the pedagogical framework was largely focused on individual study, ethical literacy was also an important aspect of the program, designed to be practiced in everyday life. Lay education during the Tokugawa period was informed by Buddhism, especially in its emphasis on "the indication that practice and study, discipline and education [were] to be unified" (Saito 1993, p. 290).

The subsequent Meiji Restoration in 1868 marked an enormous setback for Buddhism, and especially Buddhist education. In an effort to rediscover the "pure" Japanese elements of Shintō, the Meiji government forcefully disentangled Buddhism from Shintoism (Deal and Ruppert 2015, p. 213). This caused a significant decrease in Buddhist influence, and thus Buddhism was pushed aside. According to Saito (1993, pp. 290–91), Buddhist education during early Meiji period was not able to establish its own didactical position in the new system. At the same time, as a reaction to this new change,

the Japanese Buddhist community in the late 19th to early 20th century underwent a dynamic reform movement. For Buddhism, "the return to its origins and the reform of current conditions were two sides of the same coin" (Okuyama 2008, p. 214); this movement was no exception, for it was driven by a return to the original Sanskrit texts and countless efforts by the Japanese Buddhists to visit China, India, and Tibet. The movement also included adaptation of the Western model of Indian and Buddhist studies. It is in this context that new Buddhist schools such as Tetsugaku-kan 哲学館 (modern day Tōyō University 東洋大学) and Futsū Kyōkō 普通教校 (modern day Ryūkoku University 龍谷大学) were established. Nevertheless, as Saito (1993) points out, Buddhism was not able to penetrate general education since modernization and secularization hit Japanese education.

In this section, I have provided an overview of influential educational thought in Sino-Japanese history. All the examples listed above have either acknowledged the three wisdoms as vital for the development of wisdom or have at least articulated the centrality of education via study (listening) and practice, thus showing the general trend of Japanese Buddhist theories of education. However, none have articulated an official curriculum founded on the three wisdoms, and thus leaves us in search for such example. In the next section, I introduce Saichō's educational views and his curriculum, which illuminate us to a systematic integration of three wisdoms into a pedagogical system.

3. Saichō's Curriculum and Its Expression of the Threefold Wisdom

3.1. The Motivation for Writing Sange Gakushōshiki

Saichō is best known for his establishment of the Japanese Tendai School on Mount Hiei. The Tendai school and its education on Mount Hiei is equally famous for its profound influence on later sects of Japanese Buddhism, so much so that Hiei is often referred to as the "matrix" of Japanese Buddhism: founders of Kamakura Buddhism such as Hōnen (Jōdo Shū), Shinran (Jōdo Shinshū), Eisai 栄西 (Rinzai School), Dōgen 道元 (Sōtō School), and Nichiren 日蓮 (Nichiren School) all studied in Hiei at some point in their lives. Thus, many Japanese scholars, such as Mibu (1967, p. 1), are led to argue that Saichō's "extraordinary knowledge and insight, along with his persistent effort . . . had profound influence on Japanese culture in general". In an effort to rediscover Japan's traditional educational thought, it is critical to illustrate the character of such influential educational philosophy from its founder. Among many of Saichō's works, *Sange gakushōshiki* 山家学生式 concisely introduces us to his education and his most detailed description of the curriculum.

The *Sange gakushōshiki* is a series of petitions written between 818 and 819 submitted to the Heian court by Saichō. The three petitions are: *Regulations for Tendai-Hokke School Annually Allotted Students* 天台法華宗年分學生式 (or commonly known as *Rokujōshiki*, Regulations in Six Articles), *Regulations to Encourage Tendai School Yearly Ordinand Students* 勸奬天台宗年分學生式 (or *Hachijōshiki*, Regulations in Eight Articles), and *Regulations for Tendai-Hokke School Yearly Ordinands and for Those Who Wish to Turn Away from Hīnayāna Teachings Towards Mahāyāna Teachings* 天台法華宗年分度者回小向大式 (or *Shijōshiki*, Regulations in Four Articles). The main concern for Saichō at this time was to obtain permission to ordain Tendai monks with Mahāyāna "Brahma Net Precepts" 梵網戒 instead of the more complex Hīnayāna *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* 四分律 at Mount Hiei. The goals for Saichō upon submitting the petitions were twofold: (1) obtaining government approval for rejecting Hīnayāna precepts and studying Mahāyāna precepts, and (2) establishing an educational and legal system which would obviate a need for Hīnayāna precepts (Groner 2000, p. 115–16). These petitions were understandably met with strong resistance from the Buddhist establishments in Nara. Ordaining monks solely with Mahāyāna precepts and establishing a formalized training program in mountains were both unprecedented at the time, not only in Japan but also in China and India (Uehara 1999). *Sange*

gakushōshiki and his later work *Kenkairon* 顯戒論 represent the Tendai founder's persistent effort to win debates against Nara scholar monks and convince the Heian court. At the same time, Saichō's ultimate motivation, as seen in the *Rokujōshiki*, was to educate "bodhisattva monks" and cultivate leaders of the nation who can lead the common populace to awakening of their respective buddha-nature. Japanese Buddhism at the time was heavily tied with the state; under the "regulations for monks and nuns" (*sōniryō*), monks were seen as government bureaucrats who study Buddhist doctrines and perform rituals for the protection and prosperity of the nation (Deal and Ruppert 2015, p. 55). As state Buddhism, more attention was paid to participating in rituals rather than directly teaching the Buddhadharma to ordinary people. In Saichō's view, monks were expected to not only perform rituals for the nation, but to spread the Dharma and work for the common populace. In his petitions, Saichō argued that such religious leaders should be cultivated by following the Mahāyāna precepts and completing the Tendai curriculum on Mount Hiei. Although the petitions called for Tendai's structural independence from Nara Buddhism, it was still determined to operate within state management and commit to the duty of "national Buddhism" (Shinkawa 2008).

3.2. Education for Intermediate Students

The *Sange gakushōshiki* is a clear expression of Saichō's ideal educational system that would develop the "treasure of the nation" based on Mahāyāna precepts. In the petitions, we see that Saichō conceptualized his Buddhist curriculum on the Buddhist threefold wisdom of study, reflection, and cultivation. As we will see later, the foundational understanding of Saichō was that the "study of bodhisattva" can only be completed in the dialectical integration of the three wisdoms. The core descriptions of his curriculum are spread out among his first two petitions; his first, *Rokujōshiki*, was submitted to the Heian court in the fifth month of 818, and after hearing very little back about his petition, he submitted the second, *Hachijōshiki* in the eighth month of 818. *Hachijōshiki* was a more detailed description of the curriculum introduced in his first petition and it is in this second petition in which the threefold wisdom is mentioned.

In the *Hachijōshiki*, we first see that Saichō envisioned a Buddhist curriculum not only for ordained students 得度學生 but also for what he calls the intermediate students 得業學生.

> 凡天台宗。得業學生。數定一十二人者。六年爲期。一年闕二人。即可補二人。其試得業生者。天台宗學衆。俱集會學堂。試法華。金光明。二部經訓。若六年成業。預試業例。若不成業。不預試業例
>
> (Saichō, DDZ 1, pp. 7–8)

> There will be twelve intermediate students, and their period of study will be set at six years. Two student positions will become vacant each year, so two can be supplemented each year. In order to test the intermediate students, Tendai scholar monks will all gather in the study hall and examine the students on their understanding of the Lotus Sūtra and [Golden Light Sūtra] (*Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra*) . . . Once they fulfill the six year requirement, they will be given the qualification to take the exam. If they do not fulfill the requirements, they will not be given the qualification to take the exam. (Groner 2000, p. 131 modified by author)

By the edict of the court, Tendai at this time was allowed two yearly ordained monks (*nenbudosha*) (Groner 2000, p. 75). Thus, the maximum number of intermediate students were set at twelve, each expected to reach requirements for ordination by the sixth year. More detail is given in *Regulations for Intermediate Students of the Tendai-Lotus Hall on Mount Hiei* (RIS) 比叡山天台法華院得業學生式, a memorial written a week after his submission of *Rokujōshiki*. Although not regarded as part of *Sange*

gakushōshiki, Kiuchi (1975) argues that this memorial makes a pair with *Rokujōshiki*, and should be considered to fully understand the backdrop of *Hachijōshiki*. Saichō states in the memorial that those with aspiration for awakening who are fifteen years or older, and believers who are twenty-five years or younger can become intermediate students (Saichō, DDZ 4, p. 737). Thus, we can see that the prerequisite for becoming a student was strong intention and aspiration, which would be held throughout his studies. This emphasis on aspiration is understandable because Saichō himself entered and trained in Mount Hiei for 12 years, exemplifying himself such strong aspiration and motivation.

3.3. The Curriculum for Ordained Students: Pedagogical Framework of Threefold Wisdom

In the latter article of the *Hachijōshiki*, Saichō goes into the description of the curriculum expected for ordained students. After their initial six years as intermediate students, the curriculum for ordained students were twelve years long. During these twelve years, student-monks could not leave the boundaries of the mountain. Again, Saichō himself spent twelve years in Mount Hiei studying and practicing. It may be that from his own experience, Saichō believed completion of study and training cannot be accomplished in short-term. At the same time, we should also consider that Saichō's curriculum was intended for a selected few: at maximum, there were only 24 ordained students (twelve years, two students per year) and 12 intermediate students. Contrary to the massification of modern education, Saichō's curriculum envisioned a complete and intense holistic education for the few. However, this does not mean that Saichō's curriculum only affected the few, since these students were expected to become teachers for future monks and lay people.

But what was the content of such twelve-year curriculum, and how were the students supposed to study them? In the fourth article of *Hachijōsiki*, Saichō describes:

> 初六年聞慧爲正。思修爲傍。一日之中。二分内學。一分外學。長講爲行。法施爲業。後六年思修爲正。聞慧爲傍。止觀業。具令修習四種三昧。遮那業。具令修習三部念誦
>
> (Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 8)
>
> For the first six years, ordained students will mainly learn through study and memorization. Reflection and cultivation will be of secondary importance. They will learn Buddhism for two-thirds of the day and learn non-Buddhist subjects for one-third of the day. Extensive lecturing of the sūtras for others will be their training. Preaching of the Dharma will be their activity. In the last six years, students will mainly learn through reflection and cultivation. Study and memorization will be of secondary importance. Those in *shikangō* will thoroughly practice the "four types of samādhis". Those in *shanagō* will thoroughly practice chanting and meditation of the three esoteric texts[3].
>
> (translated by author)

This section is at the heart of our discussion not only for its expression of the three wisdoms, but also for its concise description of the general curriculum. The text suggests that there were four general subjects in this curriculum: Buddhist studies, other subjects, extensive lectures, and preaching. Buddhist studies were separated into two selective courses: *shikangō* 止観業 (*śamatha-vipaśyanā*[4] Course) and *shanagō* 遮那業 (Esoteric Course). The name *shikangō* shows the heavy influence of aforementioned Tiantai master Zhiyi's works, especially his *Makashikan* 魔訶止観[5]. *Shanagō* is derived from *Vairocana's Perfect Awakening Sūtra* (*Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sūtra*), or *Dainichi-kyō* 大日経 , which was considered a central text to this esoteric course. According to the RIS, those in *shikangō* were expected to study extensively the *Lotus Sūtra* (Sanskrit: *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra*, Japanese: *Hokke-kyō* 法華経), *Golden Light Sūtra*

(Sanskrit: *Suvarṇa-prabhāsa Sūtra*, Japanese: *Konkoumyō-kyō* 金剛明経), *Humane King Sūtra* (Japanese: *Ninnō-gyō* 仁王経), and other sūtras daily (Saichō, DDZ 4, p. 737). These three texts were popular since the Nara period because of their political importance for state rituals, but Saichō was the first to have combined them as a uniform course of study. From the selection of texts, along with Hazama's (1987, p. 111) labeling of *shikangō* as "Tendai proper", we see that *shikangō* was the main course in the curriculum. *Shanagō* was included because the court edict allowing Tendai school two yearly ordained monks stated that the two monks should be separated into *shikangō* and *shanagō*; this was not in Saichō's original intention when he submitted the proposal to grant him yearly ordinands, and thus some argue that the Esoteric Course was added at the emperor's insistence (Nakao 1973).

"Other subjects" in this context are most often interpreted as study of Chinese classics such as Confucian and Taoist texts, which Saichō himself studied in his youth (Yoshikawa 1970; Groner 2000). The "extensive lectures" *chōkō* 長講 here refers to the lectures and discussions of the central texts by the students themselves. Elsewhere, in the RIS, we see a remark on "extensive turning and lecture" 長転長講 of the core texts for those in *shikangō* (Saichō, DDZ 4, p. 737), in which turning refers to reading aloud the sūtras (Yoshikawa 1970, p. 241). Thus, it is fair to assume that "extensive lecturing" in *Hachijōshiki* also included extensive reading, especially since reading and comprehension are fundamental for lecture and discussion. The importance of "preaching as activity" is understandable given that Saichō himself set out in trips to spread the Dharma, and it was a central aspect of training as a bodhisattva monk. At the same time, the extent at which the preaching was done is questionable since students could not leave the mountain during their study.

The last section of the excerpt refers to the specific training of each course. Those in the Esoteric Course were expected to chant and meditate on the three sūtras they were instructed to study. Those in *shikangō*, on the other hand, were to practice the "four samādhis" 四種三昧. The four samādhis are one of the major meditation systems compiled and presented in *Makashikan* by Zhiyi, and consists of "cultivating samādhi through constant sitting" 常坐三昧, "cultivating samādhi through constant walking" 常行三昧, "cultivating samādhi through part walking and part sitting" 半行半座三昧, and "cultivating samādhi through neither walking nor sitting" 非行非座三昧. The last practice of "neither walking or sitting" refers to observing the mind not only during formal practices (like walking or sitting) but also during everyday life.

3.4. The Threefold Wisdom as Pedagogical Framework of Curriculum

If the subjects and training represented the curricular contents of Saichō's education, the threefold wisdom mentioned in *Hachijōshiki* represents the pedagogical approach, or the framework of the curriculum. Broad subjects and training methods are tied together in a single thread through the three wisdoms. As a general approach of learning Buddhist studies and Chinese classics, the first six years of the twelve-year curriculum primarily focused on "wisdom born from study" 聞所成慧 (*śrutamayī prajñā*), and the latter focused on "wisdom born from reflection" 思所成慧 (*cintāmayī prajñā*) and "wisdom born from cultivation" 修所成慧 (*bhāvanāmayī prajñā*)[6]. At the same time, this did not equate to complete disregard of contemplation and meditation in the first six years, nor to disregard of study in the latter six years. This leads us to recognize that Saichō understood the threefold wisdom not only as a successive development of wisdom, but also as a dialectical transition; each step is integrated to the next, and at the same time is transcended. An interview by Kuwatani (2021) highlighted this aspect clearly: he argued that in the curriculum at Mount Hiei, wisdom is developed by integrating study into thinking, thinking into practice, and mistaken practices will be clarified and corrected by studying. Therefore, reflection and cultivation in the latter six years of Saichō's curriculum is not devoid of study, but in fact are made clear by the memorized contents. One of Saichō's main arguments, which

caused a huge debate with the Hossō school of Nara Buddhism, was that all beings held buddha-nature and were thus able to attain Buddhahood. Thus, Saichō's education was a formalized curriculum in which he invited anyone with aspiration for awakening to achieve Buddhahood through the threefold wisdom.

By referring to the current studies on threefold wisdom, I have offered an alternative translation of the above section of the *Hachijōshiki* to that by Groner (2000, p. 133). In his book, Groner translated 初六年聞慧爲正 as "For the first six years, they will learn mainly through lectures". While listening to lectures by teachers is a crucial aspect of the first wisdom, we know that heavy emphasis was undoubtedly placed on memorization of the sūtras, for intermediate students were tested on their knowledge of the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Golden Light Sūtra*. Also, because readings of the sūtras were coupled with lectures in other sources, translating *mon'e* 聞慧 as "lectures" seems inadequate. The word "study" in my translation is thus used as an overarching concept that integrates listening to lectures and readings, both for the purpose of memorizing the teachings by heart. Considering other texts of Saichō and recognizing that this step of the threefold wisdom relies heavily on the cognitive faculty of memory (Deroche 2021b), this alternative translation may be closer to what Saichō had in mind. Another aspect of *mon'e* was placing faith in the teachers and sūtras. This was especially true for Tendai, for their main text, *Lotus Sūtra*, was believed to be the "final teaching of the Buddha, complete and sufficient for salvation" (Williams 2009, p. 149). Saichō often referred to the *Lotus Sūtra* as "complete teachings" *engyō* 円教, which would take people to the "direct path" of enlightenment. The faith in this "direct path" is what drives the students to study and train.

Although Saichō does not describe specific instructions for reflection in his petitions, it was a central aspect of the Tendai debate systems. As Groner illustrates, strict debate systems were often stressed and revived throughout the history of the Tendai School (Groner 1995, 2002), with its origins in Saichō. Along with intense reading and memorization of key texts, monks on Mount Hiei "would train for the major examination . . . by participating in a series of lesser debates and tests" (Groner 1995, p. 55). Both memorization and debates were essential aspects of integrating and interpreting Buddhist teachings. Furthermore, the *Hachijōshjiki* mentions "extensive lectures" as the students' "training". In these lectures, students lecture on their readings and interpretation of the sūtras, which then are discussed by their peers and teachers. Readings and lectures of the sūtras were expected to be conducted every day. Thus, we can infer that individual reflection/appropriation of teachings and texts was an everyday task for the student monks. Their study of the teachings promotes further understanding, which then is embodied through cultivation. As we have seen, cultivation referred to practicing the four samādhis for *shikangō* and chanting/meditating on the three texts for *shanagō*. The other aspect of practice here was preaching of the Dharma for the common populace. Especially considering how Nara Buddhism "severely lacked" this aspect, Yoshikawa (1970) applauds Saichō for formally including it as part of the curriculum.

Through the translations and descriptions of the *Hachijōshiki*, we have seen that the threefold wisdom played a central role in Saichō's envisioned curriculum. In the Appendix A, I have translated the summary table detailing Saichō's curriculum constructed by Yoshikawa (1970, p. 240) (Table A1). I have also constructed another table which organizes the curriculum in accordance with the threefold wisdom (Table A2). Together, the two tables should illustrate visually what was described in the *Sange gakushōshiki*.

Uehara (1999, p. 63) states that the path toward the ultimate goal of Tendai can be followed by realizing the Buddha-nature. "Ultimate Buddha" knows the ultimate reality of each and every thing and recognizes the self, which has no boundaries with such ultimate reality. It is disclosed to us when we embody wisdom; such wisdom, additionally, is what leads others to realization. Therefore, recognition of the inter-

relation between the self and others is crucial, and thus the two wheels of wisdom and compassion are cultivated. In the *Sange gakushōshiki*, integrated curriculum of the threefold wisdom is presented as the curriculum which develops such realization, one in which benefits "the nation [and] draw sentient beings to the true teachings" (Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 10).

3.5. The Goal of Saichō's Education: The Treasure of the Nation

The key characteristic of *Sange gakushōshiki* is not just in its detailed illustration of Tendai curriculum. It also illustrates how the graduates of his curriculum were to serve and engage with society. In the *Rokujōshiki*, Saichō states how he envisions his students should act and be of use to the nation; in the first article, he introduces the differentiation among "treasure of the nation" *kokuhō* 國寶, "teacher to the nation" *kokushi* 國師, and "asset to the nation" *kokuyō* 國用:

> 國寶何物。寶道心也。有道心人。名爲國寶。故古人言。徑寸十枚。非是國寶。照千一隅。此則國寶。古哲又云。能言不能行。國之師也。能行不能言。國之用也。能行能言。國之寶也。三品之内。唯不能言不能行。爲國之賊。(Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 5)

> What is the treasure of the nation? It is our aspiration for the path of enlightenment[7]. Thus those who have this aspiration for awakening are the treasures of the nation. Long ago a man said, "Ten large pearls do not constitute the nation's treasure, but he who guards his corner and sheds light over a thousand *li*".[8] A philosopher of the old said, "He who can speak but not act is a teacher to the nation. He who can act but not speak is an asset to the nation. He who can both act and speak is a treasure to the nation. Aside from these three, he who neither can speak nor act is a traitor to the nation." (Groner 2000, pp. 116–17 modified by author)

Saichō claimed that after his twelve-year curriculum, three types of monks will emerge, and he differentiated them based on their respective ability to act and speak. Hazama (1987) alternatively translates 能行能言 in Groner (2000, pp. 116–17), "He who can both act and speak" as "those who are good with words and good in deeds". In this context, we can infer that "speak" meant scholarly mastery and "act" meant mastery of practices and diligent obedience to Mahāyāna precepts. Although obviously "treasure of the nation" is more complete and preferred, the order of which the three are introduced (teacher, asset, treasure) does not necessarily represent the rank of these monks, especially in terms of how they were to be of use to society (Mibu 1967, p. 105). Rather, the distinctions represent how Saichō understood that certain people were suited for certain roles, based on their inclination and ability. If all who have "aspiration for awakening" is treasure of nation (as the first line of the quote above states), then essentially "teachers" and "assets" are also "treasures". Hazama (1987, p. 111) thus distinguishes those who can both act and speak as "true" treasures. It is also important to note that Saichō compares materialistic and mundane treasures like "large pearls" with people with "aspiration for awakening". The worth of nations does not rely on the amount of material wealth accumulated but is defined by the quality of persons inhabiting the nation. For Saichō, this quality was the aspiration for enlightenment.

In his interview, Kuwatani (2021) mentioned that although monks before Saichō such as Gyōki 行基 (668–749) preached the Dharma to the common populace and engaged in social works (Deal and Ruppert 2015, p. 63), Saichō was the first to formally establish a system that would allow such monks to be officially appointed in provincial temples. In articles five and six of *Rokujōshiki*, he lists specifically how each should benefit society.

> 凡兩業學生。一十二年。所修所學。隨業任用。能行能言。常住山中。爲衆之首。爲國之寶。

> 凡國師國用。依官符旨。差任傳法及國講師。其國講師。一任之内。每年安居法服施料。印便收納當國官舍。國司郡司。相對檢校。將用國裏。修池修溝。耕荒理崩。造橋造船。殖樹殖苧。蒔麻蒔草。穿井引水。利國利人。
>
> (Saichō, DDZ 1, pp. 6–7)
>
> After twelve years, the students of the two courses shall receive appointments in accordance with their achievements in study and practice. Those who can both speak and act shall remain permanently on Mount Hiei to head the order; they are treasures of the nation … As is specified in the Chancellor's directive, the teachers of the nation and those of use to the nation shall spread the Dharma and be appointed as lecturers in the provinces. During their term of office, the provincial lecturers and teachers shall have the robes for their annual summer retreat paid for with funds deposited in the provincial offices. By repairing reservoirs and irrigation ditches, reclaiming uncultivated land, restoring fallen levees, making bridges and boats, planting trees and ramie, sowing hemp and grasses, digging wells and drawing water, they are to benefit the nation and its people.
>
> (Groner 2000, p. 122, modified by author)

This details Saichō's views on how his monks should spread the Dharma and benefit the common populace with a compassionate attitude. The true "treasure of the nation" leads the religious community on Mount Hiei, while "teacher of the nation" and "asset to the nation" leads the regional lay community. The "lecturers" detailed here was an official position appointed by the *Sōgō* or Office of Monastic Affairs, and at the time their duties were limited to teaching the sūtras (Groner 2000, p. 122n). Saichō thus reimagined the position by making them responsible for social welfare works; additionally, according to Kuwatani (2021), "lecturers" and "assets" of the nation were to fund these social works. Saichō himself has worked throughout his lifetime for the benefit of the common people. For example, between 814 to 816, Saichō traveled to the provinces to the east (modern day Gifu, Gunma, etc.) and to the west (modern day Kyūshū) to lecture, copy sutras, construct temples, and provide social welfare works (Watanabe 1993, pp. 232–33). Such attitudes and action were expected for treasures of the nation, and thus Saichō was determined that the establishment of this curriculum will help protect the country. Saichō's core argument was that if the *Rokujōshiki* were to be accepted by the court, "sentient beings will be led to the Mahāyāna way through the gate of compassion" (Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 7).

Thus, through the reading of Saichō's *Rokujōshiki*, we are able to see two aspects of what was expected for graduates of the curriculum. The first was that "true" treasures of the nation should be able to both speak and act. Although for Saichō these personnel were to stay in Mount Hiei to lead the monastic community, this is so because Saichō's vision for leaders of the nation was that they should be religious leaders. Nevertheless, we see at full length that for Saichō, the overall ability to both learn and act was critical. To this day, Eizan Gakuin upholds "training through both study and practice" *gegyōsōshū* 解行双修 as their central educational identity. The curriculum at Mount Hiei is therefore an example of pedagogy integrating study and practice, but uniquely through the threefold wisdom model. The second aspect that was expected for graduates was the compassionate attitude (or bodhicitta) that drives action for the populace, to serve as the "treasure" who would protect the nation once they graduate. At the same time, compassionate attitudes were also expected for students. In the section below, I demonstrate through references from an interview with Kuwatani Yūken and original texts that these compassionate attitudes were expected to be developed within the curriculum at Mount Hiei.

4. Loving-Kindness and Compassion as Fundamental Attitude for All Practices

Kuwatani Yūken (2021), a Tendai monk and Dean at Eizan Gakuin, argued in his interview that the education at Mount Hiei instructs "how to live in a world where self and 'others' co-exists," and thus "loving-kindness and compassion are necessary for each study and practice". As a curriculum intended to develop bodhisattva monks, it is natural to observe the primacy Saichō attributed to loving-kindness (*maitrī*) and compassion (*karuṇā*). For example, in the *Rokujōshiki*, Saichō states:

惡事向己。好事與他。忘己利他。慈悲之極。

(Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 5)

[Bodhisattvas] take the bad upon themselves and give the good to others. This is the highest point of loving-kindness and compassion. (translated by author)

Here, as Kagawa (1993, p. 120) states, we can see Saichō's expression of Mahāyāna views in most simple terms. His regulations for the graduates are thus empowered by such views. The ultimate goal of Tendai teaching is the attainment of Buddhahood by all sentient beings, and thus all practice must be conducted with this attitude in mind.

We see inferences to such compassionate attitude expected for the students in a number of Saichō's writings, in which I will detail a couple. First, we see in *Kenkairon* how Saichō valued practices in Mount Hiei, and how he believed that they had power to protect the nation in itself:

明知。念誦及轉讀。衛國之良將也。誠願。大日本國天台兩業授菩薩戒。以爲國寶 . . .

摩訶止觀業。置四三昧院。修練止觀行。常爲國轉經。亦爲國講般若。

(Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 121)

Clearly know that chanting and turning of the sutras are good commander for protecting the nation. I sincerely request to ordain the students in both courses of great Japanese Tendai with bodhisattva precepts, making them treasure of the nation. Then, . . . those in *Makashikangō* will practice *śamatha-vipaśyanā* in Four Samādhi Halls, constantly read the sutras for the nation, and provide lectures on wisdom (*prajñā*) for the nation. (translated by author)

While these practices (especially the lectures and preaches) may be directly helpful for the people and the nation, Uehara (2004, p. 132) acknowledges that practices by both *shikangō* and *shanagō* were believed to be the roots of magical powers that can protect the nation. Since these practices are expected to be done *for* the nation, we can expect that the attitudinal dimension of loving-kindness and compassion was held during practices. The primacy of the attitude of compassion in practices are also found in Saichō's *Ganmon* 願文, or *Vows*, which he penned during his own twelve-year training in Mount Hiei. Describing himself as the "most foolish among the foolish" (DDZ 1, p. 2). Saichō pledged his five vows:

我自未得六根相似位以還不出假〈其一〉

自未得照理心以還不才藝〈其二〉

自未得具足淨戒以還不預檀主法會〈其三〉

自未得般若心以還不著世間人事緣務。除相似位〈其四〉

三際中間。所修功德。獨不受己身。普回施有識。悉皆令得無上菩提〈其五〉

(Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 3)

(1) So long as I have not attained the stage where my six faculties are pure, I will not venture out into the world.

> (2) So long as I have not attained the mind that illuminates absolute, I will not acquire any special skills or arts (such as medicine, divination, and calligraphy).
>
> (3) So long as I have not kept all of the precepts purely, I will not participate in any lay donor's Buddhist meeting.
>
> (4) So long as I have not attained wisdom (*prajñā*), I will not participate in constraining worldly affairs unless my six faculties are pure and it is to benefit others.
>
> (5) May any merit from my practice in the present[9] be given not to me, but to all sentient beings so that they may attain supreme enlightenment. (Groner 2000, pp. 28–29 modified by author)

In the fifth vow, we see that Saichō wished that all his merits attained during his training (and beyond) in Mount Hiei be given to all sentient beings. With such a strict promise, it is understandable that Saichō expected the same attitude of his students in the threefold wisdom curriculum. Such spirit seems to live on to this day in Tendai school, as the "word of the year" for 2022 published by Hieizan Enryakuji was *daihimangyō* 大悲万行, or "every action founded on Great Compassion" (Hieizan Enryakuji 2022). At the same time, the vows also present us with the significance of both wisdom and compassion. In the Mahāyāna teachings, "Bodhisattva's deeds and attitude are all sealed with the perfection of *prajñā*" (Williams 2009, p. 56). We see in *Ganmon* a careful balance between self-cultivation and acts of compassion, which corresponds with his way back and forth between retreat and engagement with society. Saichō clearly stressed the importance of cultivating both aspects for his students. Elsewhere, in the RIS, Saichō writes:

> 大悲之根。今晨可芽。菩提之心。盍發今日。是故。吾堂法式。夢裏永定。遠期後際。開斯法泉。
>
> (Saichō, DDZ 4, p. 737)
>
> The roots of Great Compassion may begin to grow this morning. The aspiration to attain enlightenment may arise this very day. Thus we must permanently establish regulations for our halls which are in this dream-like world. By forever establishing these regulations, we shall open the sources of the Dharma.
>
> (Groner 2000, p. 127)

Thus, through analysis of Saichō's own text and the supporting personal interview, we can observe that loving-kindness and compassion (or Great Compassion) were placed at the fundamental attitude, motivation, and approach during their own training, and not only when they make their training useful to others. What this implies is that each practice of study, reflection, and cultivation under Tendai's Buddhist education each was supported by these attitudinal dimensions, therefore providing a fascinating insight into the discussions on the threefold wisdom model.

5. Conclusions

The *sange gakushōahiki* is a concise culmination of Saichō's ideas on Buddhist education, especially since it was written in his last years. In his interview, Kuwatani (2021) mentioned that Saichō points us to the "Mahāyāna Bodhisattva way of life" throughout his writings; the threefold curriculum detailed in *Sange gakushōshiki* thus serves as a compass that points to this particular way of life. In their seminal works, Kapstein (2001, p. 14) and Fiordalis (2018, p. 253) have articulated the relationship of the Buddhist threefold wisdom to Pierre Hadot's (2002) "philosophy as a way of life" and "spiritual exercise". The "formation of the person" and the development of wisdom is attained through a dialectical path of study, reflection, and cultivation. Saichō expresses similar views: (1) memorization and study of scriptures (especially the *Lotus Sūtra*), (2) self-reflection that

illuminates one's own self-understanding which at the same time is challenged through lectures and debates, and (3) cultivation through practices such as the four samādhis are done to deepen and embody the teachings. Additionally, Kuwatani (2021) insisted that wisdom is only attained when study is integrated into thinking and thinking is integrated into practice; the framework prevents mistaken practice as it will be corrected by continuous study. "Training through both study and practice" for enlightenment of all sentient beings is at the heart of Tendai teachings. Kapstein (2001, p. 15) stated that according to Śāntarakṣita, the "self-transcending project" of a merging concept and being is "oriented toward that omniscient being who, as the very self of compassion, is oriented to benefit all beings". The parallel is clear, and thus may be characterized as a shared trait of the "Mahāyāna way of life".

This article intended to accomplish three aims: (1) discuss expressions of threefold wisdom and pedagogy of study and practice in Japanese history to uncover Japanese Buddhist education, (2) illustrate an overview of Saichō's curriculum in *Sange gakushōshiki* with emphasis on the threefold wisdom, and (3) analyze and elucidate the role of compassion in the curriculum. Through textual study of Saichō and other related texts, I demonstrated how Saichō placed the threefold wisdom as the fundamental framework of education and developed a curriculum that integrates both study and practice. The interview with Kuwatani (2021) confirmed this argument and also provided a discussion on the role of compassionate attitudes in Saichō's education. Influential Japanese thinkers and pedagogies articulated in Section 2 all stressed both study and practice, but Saichō uniquely integrated them through the threefold wisdom, and established it as an official curriculum for the Japanese Tendai School.

The interview with Kuwatani (2021) also highlighted that even in the modern curriculum at Eizan Gakuin, each step of the threefold wisdom plays a crucial role. Although each component is not necessarily literally emphasized, study, reflection, and cultivation are practiced in an integrated manner; students take classes on Buddhist studies (e.g., Buddhist history, Buddhist culture, and Tendai teachings) and put their understanding into practice through practice-oriented classes (e.g., *śamatha-vipaśyanā*, calligraphy, and preaching), which inform and enhance each other. In other words, the pedagogy of learning the content, relating it to oneself, and embodying the teachings is indeed a living tradition of human formation that breathes in and around Mount Hiei.

This work is a humble contribution to the studies on Saichō and Japanese Tendai school, along with the studies on Buddhist threefold wisdom. Education at Mount Hiei was unique in its own historical context, not only because of Saichō's understanding of precepts but also because of his curricular framework and contents. His Buddhist education of the "bodhisattva monk" inspired countless important Buddhist figures and was thus profoundly influential in Japanese culture. The rediscovery of such education and its central framework of study, reflection, and cultivation contributes fundamental insight into studies on the Japanese Buddhist philosophy of education. The threefold wisdom model, which dynamically integrates study and practice, can inform modern didactical practices. As the Buddhist scholars in Meiji period did, examination into historical sources enlighten us to new possibilities for contemporary contexts; Saicho's expression of threefold wisdom and compassion offers us a practical case of holistic ways of learning that benefits the self and others.

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Abbreviation

DDZ: 1912. *Dengyō Daishi zenshū* 傳教大師全集 *[Collected Works of Saichō]*, edited by Tendaishū Shūten Kankōkai 天台宗宗典刊行会 [Tendai Scriptures Publication Association]. Tokyo: Tendaishū Shūten Kankōkai.

Appendix A

Table A1. Table summarizing contents of curriculum (translated from Yoshikawa 1970, p. 240).

Subjects	Courses	Contents	Allotted Time (Fraction of Day)	Class Type
Buddhist Studies	*Shikangō*	Lotus, Golden Light, Humane King, etc. Four Samādhis	2/3	Elective
	Shanagō	Dainichi-kyō 大日経 (Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sūtra), Daikujakumyō-ō-kyō 大孔雀明王経 (Mahāmāyūrī Vidyārājñī sūtra), etc. Chanting/meditating on three texts		
Other Subjects		Confucianism, Daoism, Way of Ying and Yang, etc.	1/3	Mandatory
Lectures and Readings			Regularly	Mandatory
Preaching			Regularly	Mandatory

Table A2. Table organizing the curriculum according to three wisdoms.

Threefold Wisdom	Buddhist Studies	Fundamental Attitude/Motivation
Study	"Extensive reading" of sūtras, faith in texts and teachers	Great Compassion
Reflection	"Extensive Lecture" and discussion of sūtras	
Cultivation	For *Shikangō*, Four Samādhis; For *Shanagō*, chanting and meditating on three texts; For all, Preaching the Dharma	

Notes

1 With reference to translation to modern Japanese by Sugano (Zhiyi 2018, p. 82)

2 Six schools of Nara Buddhism, otherwise known as *Nanbu Rokushū* 南部六宗: (1) *Hossō* 法相宗 (Yogācāra), textual focus on Dharmapāla's *Vijñaptimātratā siddhi*, which states that reality is mental ideations; (2) *Kegon* 華厳宗 (Avataṃsaka), textual focus on the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* which states the interpenetration of all things; (3) *Ritsu* 律宗 (Vinaya), focus onethical and monastic rules; (4) *Sanron* 三論宗 (Madhyamaka), focus on idea of "emptiness" especially with regard to texts such as Nāgārjūna's *Madhyamaka Śāstra*; (5) *Kusha* 倶舎宗 (Abhidharmakośa), doctrinal foundations based on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* which teaches that the "constituent elements of existence" are all interdependently caused; (6) *Jōjitsu* 成実宗 (Satyasiddhi), textual focus on Harivarman's *Satyasiddhi śāstra*, which denies the existence of mind and matter (Deal and Ruppert 2015, p. 56–57)

[3] What Saichō referred to here as *sanbu* 三部 is unclear, and has various interpretations. Mibu (1967, p. 120) interprets and translates it as the three divisions of the "Womb Realm", but Ando and Sonoda (1991, p. 198) and (Ōkubo 2021, p. 205) argue that it could be referring to the three sūtras assigned to the *shanagō* students. Here it is translated as referring to the three texts.

[4] *Śamatha* (calm, peace, tranquility) and *vipaśyanā* (insight) are both practices needed for awakening. According to (Harvey 2015, p. 120), "if *śamatha* is cultivated, the heart/mind (*chitta*) is developed, which leads to the abandonment of attachment/lusting after (*raga*); if *vipaśyanā* is cultivated, wisdom (*prajñā*) is developed, which leads to abandonment of spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*)".

[5] In his other works, Saichō refers to *śamatha-vipaśyanā* Course as *Makashikangō* 魔訶止觀業 (Saichō, DDZ 1, p. 121). *Makashikan* has been fully translated in to English by Paul Swanson (2017).

[6] In the *Hachijōshiki*, they are each written as 聞慧 思慧 修慧.

[7] In Groner's translation, *dōshin* 道心 is translated as "religious nature". Referring to Ando and Sonoda (1991, p. 194), which defines *dōshin* as 菩提心"bodhicitta" or 真実の道を求める心"mind aspiring for the path of truth", I have added my own redefinition.

[8] As noted by Groner (2000, p. 116n), there is a long standing debate in the reading of this section. A more traditional reading is "shed light over a corner of the country" *shōuichigū* 照于一隅, but scholars such as Ando and Sonoda (1991, p. 427) and Ōkubo (2021, pp. 196–97) have argued that the handwriting rather shows that "guards his corner and sheds light over thousand *li*" *shōsenichigū* 照千一隅 is the correct reading. Although Tendai school has made *shōuichigū* as their official reading in 1974 ("Ichigū wo terasu undō" 2019, p. 11), there has not been conclusive evidence that supports either readings. I have chosen to translate this section according to Ando and Sonoda's (1991) reading to offer an alternative reading to Groner's translation.

[9] In Groner (2000, pp. 28–29), this section is translated as "May any merit from my practice in the past, present and future be given not to me . . . " The difference here probably relies on the understanding of *sansai chūgen* 三際中間. According to Ando and Sonoda (1991, p. 288), *sansai* means the three world of past, present, and future, and *chūgen* means "middle of". Therefore, Ando and Sonoda understands this as meaning "present".

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Article

Zen Philosophy of Mindfulness: *Nen* 念 according to Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to holistically comprehend the concept of *nen* 念 in the Zen philosophy of Dōgen (道元 1200–1253), which is one of the origins of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, in relation to his principal concepts. This article specifically investigates its usages in his masterpiece, *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye* (*Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼蔵), according to each step of the threefold wisdom (*san-e* 三慧); for mindfulness is a common thread among them and he presents the concept of "*monshishū-shō* 聞思修證", of which *shō* 證 stands for "awakening". It is revealed that Dōgen considers "study" (*mon* 聞) and "reflection" (*shi* 思) to be essential on the Buddhist path, as well as "practice" (*shū* 修), and that *nen* 念 in Dōgen's philosophy is the self beyond the sense of body-mind or time, which can be attained after long cultivation. Also, the connections among *nen* 念 and his critical concepts such as "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落), and "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等) are elucidated.

Keywords: Zen; mindfulness; Dōgen; *Shōbōgenzō*; threefold wisdom

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1. Introduction

The concept of "mindfulness" (Pāli: *sati*, Sanskrit: *smṛti*, Chinese: *nian* 念, Japanese: *nen* 念) has been gathering more and more attention in diverse fields year by year. Along with this trend of the mindfulness movement, many studies have addressed and explained its origin and history so far. It should be noted in this context that Jon Kabat-Zinn, who has played a significant role in initiating and accelerating this movement by establishing Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), often states that one of the sources of his method derives from the Sōtō School (*sōtō shū* 曹洞宗) of Zen founded by Dōgen (道元 1200–1253) (Kabat-Zinn 2011, p. 289)[1].

On the other hand, Fujita Isshō (藤田一照 1954-), the former Head Director of the Sōtō Zen Buddhism International Center, states his concern over this mindfulness movement and points out the potential of the tradition of Japanese Zen philosophy as below (Fujita 2014, p. 1). Please note that the author translated all the Japanese texts in this paper, including Dōgen's original texts, into English.

> アメリカのマインドフルネスはもともとは仏教のコンセプトであるサティ（パーリ語）由来するものだが，「現在の瞬間に対する，判断を入れない注意のスキル」としてあまりにも仏教の文脈から切り離され，世俗化・メソッド化されてしまったために，サティが本来持っていた広がりと深さが失われているように思われる．たとえばそれは「思い出す」という重要な働きや，戒や他の修行法との密接な関連性であり，主客二元を超えた無我行への深まりの方向性である．日本が今後マインドフルネス・ムーヴメントに貢献できるとすれば，あらためてマインドフルネスを仏教の中にもどしてとらえなおし，より広がりと深さを備えた新しいマインドフルネスとして更新していくことではないだろうか．

Mindfulness in the U.S. is derived originally from the Buddhist concept *sati* (Pāli). It seems that the width and the depth of *sati* have been lost because it got separated

> far away from the context of Buddhism when it was secularized and defined as "skill of paying attention to the very present moment non-judgmentally". For example, that is the significant function of "recalling", its close connections with precepts or other forms of training, or the attitude towards the depth of the state of no-self beyond the dichotomy of subject and object. If there is a way for Japan to contribute to the mindfulness movement from now on, it might be to put mindfulness back into Buddhism and then grasp it again and to update it as new mindfulness with further width and depth.

Indeed, few studies have focused on the original usages of *nen* 念 in Dōgen. To be more precise, there certainly exist studies that dig into *nian/nen* 念, or mindfulness, from the perspectives of: (1) the emergence of Chan in the medieval period and its meditation techniques (Sharf 2014); (2) the difference in the interpretations of *nian* 念 between the Northern and Southern Schools of Chan Buddhism (Rošker 2016); (3) the history of the spread of so-called secular mindfulness-based interventions, not the origin of the concept itself, in modern Japan (Fujii 2017); (4) a very brief and general overview of the usage of the Chinese character of *nen* 念 in the Zen tradition without specific references to the works of Zen masters (Koga 1973). While Chihara Tadashi (茅原 正 1949-) refers to several passages of Dōgen with *nen* 念 to argue that *zazen* in Dōgen should be regarded as "mindlessness" rather than "mindfulness" (Chihara 2018, 2019), the focus of these studies is put not on the concept of *nen* 念 itself but on the comparison between *zazen* according to Dōgen and the method of meditation in mindfulness-based interventions, which, according to him, puts a higher priority on awareness. There is still much room for directly and holistically addressing and revealing the width and depth of this concept itself and its position in Dōgen's philosophy, with further reference to Dōgen's original texts.

Therefore, based on these points, this paper sheds light specifically on the significances of *nen* 念 in *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye* (*Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼蔵, hereafter SBGZ), the masterpiece of Dōgen, who has been considered as "the first writer to use the Japanese language in a truly philosophical way" (Kasulis 1978, p. 357), to reveal how he ponders and uses the concept of *nen* 念 and its compounds. In other words, this paper aims to present new insights into the traditional interpretations of Dōgen's philosophy from the perspective of *nen* 念, or mindfulness, and related concepts, believing that this approach can offer us an opportunity to comprehend the width and the depth of Dōgen's philosophy further, which is very often interpreted within the category of paradox (Garfield and Priest 2021, p. 122)[2].

This paper first briefly reviews, in Section 2, the history of the journey of the concept of "mindfulness", from *sati* in Pāli and *smṛti* in Sanskrit, to *nen* 念 in Japanese, by way of *nian* 念 in Chinese, and then gives an overview of the various significances of *nen* 念 in the tradition of Japanese Buddhism with reference to *The Great Dictionary of Buddhist Terms (Bukkyōgo-daijiten* 佛教語大辞典*)* (Nakamura 1975) compiled by Nakamura Hajime (中村 元 1912–1999) to digest the width of *nen* 念.

Then, Section 3 specifically investigates several compounds of *nen* 念in SBGZ and classifies them according to each step of the "threefold wisdom" (*san-e* 三慧), the components of which are "study" (*mon* 聞), "reflection" (*shi* 思), and "practice" (*shū* 修); for "mindfulness plays a critical role at each of these three levels, and may actually be considered as the common thread linking them" (Deroche 2021, p. 20).

It is also remarkable that Dōgen directly uses the term "*monshishū* 聞思修" two times in SBGZ, and both appear in one passage; the former one appears in the form of "*monshishū-shō* 聞思修證", of which the last Chinese character, *shō* 證, stands for "awakening". Dōgen, when explaining one of the eight means towards awakening, uses this term as follows, as follows (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 7, p. 273):

七者修智患。起聞思修證爲智患。[3]

> The seventh means to awakening is attaining wisdom. Wisdom is the realization of "study" (*mon* 聞), "reflection" (*shi* 思), "practice" (*shū* 修), and "awakening" (*shō* 證).

On the other hand, Dōgen also directly quotes a passage from *The Sūtra of Buddha's Last Instruction*, which includes the term *monshishū-e* 聞思修慧 (Ibid.); in Japanese, *e* 慧 means "wisdom", and thus the term itself refers to wisdom obtained in each step of *monshishū* 聞思修. Therefore, it is naturally assumed that Dōgen knows the primary form of this concept, which is "study-reflection-practice" (*monshishū* 聞思修), and then uses "monshishū-shō 聞思修證" on purpose.

Based on this perspective, Section 4 introduces and addresses three critical concepts in Dogen's philosophy, interpreting the concept of *nen* 念 in relation to them: "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等), "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), and "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落). In this way, by comprehending the concept of *nen* 念 within the context of Dōgen's exposition of the entire path, this part eventually aims, in Fujita's terms quoted above, to "update it as new mindfulness with further width and depth."

2. *Nen* 念 in the Traditions of Japanese Buddhism after *Smṛti* and *Nian* 念

2.1. Nian 念 and Mindfulness

It is generally admitted that Rhys Davids (1843–1922) was the first person who translated the Buddhist term *sati* into the English term "mindfulness" in the late 19th century (Brown et al. 2015, p. 9)[4]. More than 100 years later, mainly in the early 21st century, Japan gradually imported the English term and MBSR from the United States (Fujii 2017, pp. 69–71)[5].

Originally, mindfulness, when turning to its early definitions as a mental faculty, is related to "the ability to remember what has been done or said long ago", while there is another definition that "outlines its actual application" (Anālayo 2019, p. 12)[6]. Also, the etymology of the word *sati* derives from the Old Indic word *smṛti*: "remembrance", and "memory" (Levman 2017, p. 122)[7]. We can, in fact, find the usages of *sati* that are related to "memory" in the early Buddhist scriptures (Anālayo 2010, p. 46)[8].

As is well known, in China, the word *smṛti* had been mainly translated by the Chinese character 念. We can find the original meaning of *nian* 念, which is similar to the ones mentioned above, in *Shuō Wén Jiě Zì* (Chinese: 说文解字), the oldest Chinese dictionary, edited in 100 CE as follows (Rošker 2016, p. 44):

> 念: 常思也. 從心今聲.
>
> *Nian*: Have in mind, constantly think of someone or something. Compiled from the heart-mind and the present.

Buddhist scriptures were translated into Chinese mainly from the middle of the second century to the early ninth century and from the end of the tenth century to the early eleventh century (Funayama 2013, p. 48). During the period, Kumārajīva (鳩摩羅什 344–413) and Xuanzang (玄奘 602–664), who are both "the representative translators of Buddhist scriptures" (Ibid., p. 21), and other Buddhist monks contributed to the spread of Buddhism in China. It is naturally assumed that within this process the Sanskrit term *smṛti* came to be translated into the Chinese term *nian* 念, the original significances of which were explained earlier.

Also, there has historically been another main significance of *nian* 念 in *Guang yun* (Chinese: 廣韻), the Chinese retheme dictionary compiled in the early eleventh century as below (Rošker 2016, p. 44):

> 念: 思也. 又姓西魏太傅念賢.
>
> *Nian*: Think of, think. Also the pronunciation of the surname Xian.

Namely, just as Rošker articulates, it is certain that "the word *nian* was obviously understood (and used) in the sense 'to have (something or someone)' or 'to remember'". (Ibid., p. 45).

2.2. Nen 念 in the Traditions of Japanese Buddhism

It is said that Buddhism became rooted in Japan from India by way of China and the Korean Peninsula in the sixth century. Since then, Buddhist monks and government officials who studied in China played significant roles in its diffusion. In the Kamakura period (1185–1333), several Japanese original Buddhist schools were established, and in the meantime, Japanese Zen schools were formed based on Chinese Chan schools[9].

According to *The Great Dictionary of Buddhist Terms*, *nen* 念 in the Japanese Buddhism tradition has had 16 significances as general usages (Nakamura 1975, pp. 1078–79). Herein, I would like to briefly explain them in English as follows:

i. Remembering. Memorizing. The function of memory. Functions of memorizing and keeping an object in mind. The mental function of memorizing and keeping something in mind. Recollection. Recalling and thinking back to the past.
[P] *sati*, [S] *smṛti*, [S] *smṛti*, [S] *ālambana-asaṃpramoṣa*, [S] *smaraṇa*, [S] *saṃ-√smṛ*

ii. Focusing on something. One of the virtues.
[P] *sati*

iii. Saying something into oneself (often without speaking out).
[S] *manasi-kāra*, [P] *samanāhāro hoti*

iv. Conceiving.
[P] *so evaṃ pajānāti*, [P] *cetaso parivitakka*, [S] *atarkika*, [P] *dhammavicaya* (one of *satta bojjhaṅgā*)

v. Wisdom that is observing.

vi. Correcting one's thoughts in mind.

vii. Function of memory as one of *mahā-bhūmika dharma*.
[S] *smṛti*

viii. In *Vijñānavāda*, memory as one of five mental factors of *vibhāvanā*. Not losing or forgetting something acquired.
[S] *smṛti*, [T] *dran(pa)*

ix. The function of intention.
[P] *cetanā*

x. Mind.
[P] *manas*

xi. Feelings. Mind longing for something.
[S] *citta*

xii. Delusion

xiii. An ultimately short moment. [S] *kṣaṇa*

xiv. *Nenbutsu* 念仏
[S] *buddhānusmṛti*.

xv. Enduring.

xvi. Secondary scriptures in Brahmanism, compared to [S] *Śruti*, the revealed texts.

As shown above, even only in the traditions of Japanese Buddhism, the significances of *nen* 念 are highly diverse. Apparently, the scope of the concept of *nen* 念 seems to include the following four categories: *smṛti*/*sati*-related ones, *citta*/*manas*-related ones, *kṣaṇa*-related ones, and others. It is true that some seem to be original Japanese ones, some seem to be overlapped with each other, and some cannot necessarily be explained in accordance with a specific Sanskrit or Pāli term. We must not simply assume that the concept of *nen* 念 in the traditions of Japanese Buddhism corresponds equally to terms or concepts such as *sati*, *smṛti*, mindfulness, or others. This is why we must take a closer look at the actual contexts in which *nen* 念 is used and at the worldview or philosophy of the author, which is Dōgen in this paper.

3. *Nen* 念 in SBGZ, according to Each Step of the Threefold Wisdom

This chapter specifically reviews the various usages of *nen* 念 in SBGZ in accordance with each step of the "threefold wisdom" (*san-e* 三慧): "study" (*mon* 聞), "reflection" (*shi* 思), and "practice" (*shū* 修); for, as mentioned in the introduction, not only is mindfulness deeply connected with all these steps of the threefold wisdom, but Dōgen's original concept of *monshishū-shō* 聞思修證, of which "*shō* 證" means "awakening", can also play a significant role when we try to comprehend his philosophy and worldview holistically along with one of his main teachings, "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等), as is argued in detail in the next chapter.

Before addressing SBGZ, I would like to share its overview briefly. Originally, as a general term, *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼蔵 means "the correct way of observing the world or the truth in awakening" (Nakamura 1975, p. 704). Dōgen spent over 20 years until the year of his death, writing this masterpiece. He aimed to diffuse the correct teachings of Buddha not only among Buddhist monks but also among lay people. This is why he wrote SBGZ not only with Chinese characters, which had been the standard among Buddhist monks until that time, but also in combination with Japanese kana characters. While there have been arguments about the range of SBGZ as separate versions with different numbers of fascicles, this study addresses *Bendōwa* 辨道話, the older 75-fascicle, and the later 12-fascicle version, as Mizuno Yaoko (水野 弥穂子 1921–2010) edited it (Dōgen 道元 1990–1993, vol. 4, p. 509). In these fascicles of SBGZ, there appear 42 usages of *nen* 念 in the forms of compounds with other Chinese characters.

From now on, I would like to take a closer look at the actual usages of *nen* 念 in accordance with the threefold-wisdom framework. Upon selecting them, I referred to the existing framework that succeeded in organizing each step of the threefold wisdom in relation to the epistemic sources and cognitive faculties (Deroche 2021, p. 29): (1) "study", tradition, and memory; (2) "reflection", reason, and judgment; (3) "cultivation", intuition, and attention.

The interpretation offered in this paper is weaved mainly based on the semantic context in which the term is used, according to the modern Japanese translations with commentaries by Masutani Fumio (増谷 文雄 1902–1987) (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005), as well as on *The Great Dictionary of Buddhist Terms* and the commentaries written by Mizuno (Dōgen 道元 1990–1993). The original Japanese texts of Dōgen are also cited from this series of Masutani, and they have been translated into English by the author with reference to the existing English translations (Dōgen 道元 1975–1983, 2021), the modern Japanese translation and commentary by Masutani, and the commentary by Mizuno.

3.1. "Study" and Nen 念 in SBGZ: The Teachings and Traditions Buddhist Monks Should Keep in Mind

This group includes not only the teachings or traditional rules that a Buddhist monk should always keep in mind but also the first thought of starting life as a renouncer and *bodhisattva*, as well as the attitude to be observed in life as such; for a person becomes a Buddhist monk, being affected by the memory or recollection of the Buddhist tradition, or teachings that the one has listened to before.

A good example of the latter is *shoichi nen* 初一念, which directly means "the first thought" of renouncing a secular life and becoming a Buddhist monk. *Sho* 初 represents "first", and *ichi* 一 refers to "one", and thus, *shoichi nen* 初一念 means the thought at the start of life as a Buddhist monk. Dōgen explains, in the following passage (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 3, p. 237), the essence of Buddhism lies in *shoichi nen* 初一念 as well as in the ultimate state of awakening (*kukyō-i* 究竟位), while he also argues, in his typical paradoxical way (Garfield and Priest 2021), awakening or the truth does exist but, at the same time, does not; therefore, the essence of Buddhism, awakening, or the truth cannot be attained or grasped:

> しるべし、佛法は初一念にも大意あり、究竟位にも大意あり。その大意は不得なり。發心修行取證はなきにあらず、不得なり。その大意は不知なり。修證は

> 無にあらず、修證は有にあらず、不知なり、不得なり。またその大意は、不得不知なり。聖諦修證なきにあらず、不得不知なり。聖諦修證あるにあらず、不得不知なり

> You should understand that the essence of Buddhism lies in **the first thought of starting life as a Buddhist monk** as well as the ultimate state of awakening. You cannot attain the essence. Although there exists (the steps of) this determination, practice, and awakening, you cannot attain the essence. The essence cannot be grasped. Practice-awakening is not nothingness; it is not existence, it cannot be grasped, and it cannot be attained. And the essence cannot be grasped or attained. Although there exist Noble truths and practice-awakening, they cannot be grasped or attained. There do not exist Noble truths and practice-awakening, and they cannot be grasped or attained.

Another compound of *nen* 念 is used to refer to the attitude and mindset as a Buddhist monk after starting a new life as a renouncer: *dōnen* 道念, which means "the mind to pursue the path to awakening". *Dō* 道 generally represents "a path", and it often specifically means "the path to awakening" in the tradition of Buddhism in Japan. Dōgen clearly mentions that he is writing *Bendōwa* (辨道話), one of the most famous fascicles for a person with this *dōnen* 道念 (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 8, p. 266):

> (. . .) しばらく雲遊萍寄して、まさに先哲の風をきこえむとす。ただし、おのずから名利にかかはらず、道念をさきとせん眞實の參學あらむか。いたづらに邪師にまどはされて、みだりに正解をおほひ、むなしく自狂にゑうて、ひさしく迷にしづまん。(. . .)これをあはれむゆゑに、まのあたり大宋國にして禪林の風規を見聞し、知識の玄旨を稟持せしを、しるしあつめて、參學閑道の人にのこして、佛家の正法をしらしめんとす。これ眞訣ならむかも。

> (. . .) I was aiming to leave myself free from everything like a drifting cloud and just listen to the winds of the legacy of ancient wisdom. However, even a person who, regardless of fame or profit, aspires after a genuine study based on **the mind to pursue the path to awakening** is to be taught incorrectly by a wrong mentor, to lose correct interpretations of Buddhism teachings, to be self-satisfied in vain, and to be lost for a long time. (. . .) As I feel pity for this, I gather and articulate the atmosphere and rules of the Zen tradition that I saw and listened to in the Song dynasty and the essence of knowledge that I was given and have maintained, in order to leave these for the people studying Buddhism as renouncers and let them grasp the true Dharma of Buddhism. I believe these must be the genuine essence of Buddhism.

We can clearly see in the passage above that Dōgen believes "study", the first step of the threefold wisdom, is also very important as well as "practice", the importance of which is emphasized very often in Dōgen's philosophy, and that this is why he writes SBGZ for people with *dōnen* 道念: to enable them to study Buddhism correctly.

Meanwhile, other compounds of *nen* 念 are also used more directly in the context related to what I mentioned at the beginning of this subsection: to explain and emphasize the importance of studying and memorizing the traditional teachings or rules of Buddhism. A typical example is *okunen* 憶念, which means "remembering or keeping something in mind all the time". *Oku* 憶 represents "memory", "remembrance", or "recalling something". Dōgen mentions that Śākyamuni Buddha told Samantabhadra the importance of keeping *sūtra* correctly in mind as below (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 6, p. 88):

> 釈迦牟尼佛、告普賢菩薩言、若有受持読誦正憶念修習書写是法華経者、当知是人則見釈迦牟尼仏如従仏口聞此経典[10]。

> Śākyamuni Buddha told Samantabhadra "If one receives and maintains this *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra*, reads it aloud, **remembers it in mind all the time correctly**, practices it, and transcripts it, you should just know that this person then sees Buddha just as if listening to this *Sūtra* from the mouth of Buddha".

It is also intriguing that, in this passage in which Dōgen directly cites the words of Śākyamuni Buddha from the *sūtra*, which explains the importance of "remembering", the fruit of various efforts as a Buddhist monk is described with the term "listening" (*mon* 聞), the very first step of the threefold wisdom (*monshishū* 聞思修).

While it is widely known that Dōgen emphasizes the importance of practice (of *zazen*) with the term "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), Dōgen, as we have seen so far in this subsection with several examples, also recognizes and actually teaches the importance of "study": remembering the traditional teachings correctly and referring to them accordingly. Additionally, as the following subsection argues, "reflection" is also regarded as an important quality.

3.2. "Reflection" and Nen 念 in SBGZ: Mental Traps to Be Avoided

A typical usage of this group is something related to self-reflection; for example, *jinen* 自念 means "reflecting on oneself" or "self-reflection", of which 自 represents "oneself" or "by oneself". This term appears in an anecdote of a Buddhist monk. The monk, who had been born into a royal family but then aimed to renounce it, was reflecting on himself (*jinen* 自念), and on how he would be able to live a genuine life as a Buddhist monk, regardless of his origin. Dōgen admires this monk in that he lastly managed to renounce his royal pedigree after long and profound 自念 as follows (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 7, p. 371):

> 父母固止之。遂終日不食。乃許其在家出家、號僧伽難提、復命沙門禪利多、爲之師。積十九載、未曾退倦。尊者毎自念言、身居王宮、胡爲出家。[11]
>
> His parents held back this (his becoming a Buddhist monk) firmly. Then, he did not eat anything all day long. Therefore, they permitted him to become a Buddhist monk at their home. They named him Samghanandi, and ordered the Śramaṇa Dhyanalita to become his mentor. Nineteen years after, he did not get fed up. He always **reflected on himself** and said to himself, "I am living in a royal palace. How can I regard this as a renouncer's life?"

While the term *jinen* 自念 above is used in the specific anecdote, Dōgen also uses other compounds of *nen* 念 when explaining the general attitude as a Buddhist monk. A good example of this is *shiryō nentaku* 思量念度: "thinking and assuming various things at the mercy of mental functions". *Shi* 思 represents "thinking", *ryō* 量 refers to "assuming" or "imagining", *taku* 度 means "passing through" or "wandering", which means the same as the Chinese character 渡, and thus *nentaku* 念度 stands for "mind-wandering". In the passage below, Dōgen teaches that spending time for only *shiryō nentaku* 思量念度 will not lead a Buddhist monk to awakening (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 8, p. 282):

> 又、讀經念佛等のつとめにうるところの功德を、なんぢしるやいなや。ただしたをうごかし、こゑをあぐるを、佛事功德とおもへる、いとはかなし。佛法に擬するにうたたとほく、いよいよはるかなり。又、經書をひらくことは、ほとけ頓漸修行の儀則ををしへおけるを、あきらめしり、教のごとく修行すれば、かならず證をとらしめむとなり。いたづらに思量念度をつひやして、菩提をうる功德に擬せんとにはあらぬなり。
>
> Also, do you know or not what the virtue you can attain is through devoting yourself to reading *sūtra* aloud and remembering Buddha. It is very superficial to regard just moving your tongue and reading *sūtra* aloud as Buddhis practice and to believe you can attain virtue through this. These are very far from the essence of Buddhism. Also, studying *sūtra* is clarifying and grasping the teachings of Buddha about rules towards both sudden awakening and gradual awakening, and if you practice just based on the teachings you will surely attain awakening. It is not a correct way to regard **thinking and assuming various things at the mercy of your mental functions** in vain as the virtue leading to attaining *bodhi*.

Dōgen here again mentions, as we reviewed in the last subsection, the importance of studying the correct teachings of Buddha and the traditional rules when a Buddhist monk

practices in order to attain awakening, and he then warns that a Buddhist monk should avoid just thinking and assuming various things at the mercy of one's mental functions. Actually, Dōgen often uses compounds of *nen* 念 to explain the mental state to be avoided in this way. We can see this clearly from the following passage that contains the compound *tannen* 但念, which means "thinking about just one thing". *Tan* 但 represents "only". Dōgen criticizes Buddhist monks who do not study and contemplate the teachings of Buddha by implying that they are just like animals, only thinking about waterweeds to eat (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 3, pp. 34–35):

> しばらく功夫すべし、この四生衆類のなかに、生はありて死なきものあるべしや。又、死のみ單傳にして、生を單傳せざるありや。單生單死の類の有無、かならず參學すべし。わづかに無生の言句をききてあきらむることなく、身心の功夫をさしおくがごとくするものあり。これ愚鈍のはなはだしきなり。(. . .)いたづらに水草の但念なるがゆゑなり。
>
> You should contemplate for a while whether there is even just one that has birth but not death among these four types of living things (all types of living things), or, whether there is one that you hear only about its death but do not about its birth. You have to study whether this is the case or not, for sure. Some people do not clarify the significance of teachings about no-birth or pause digging into this question through exerting their body and mind. This is such a stupid case. (. . .). This is because they are **just thinking about** their waterweeds in vain.

It is clear that Dōgen here uses the term *tannen* 但念 in a negative context as he uses *shiryō nentaku* 思量念度 in this passage: to criticize those who just think about their daily lives or routines including food, without contemplating by themselves essential questions that can be naturally derived from Buddhism teachings, which is a matter of life and death here.

It is also worth exploring Dōgen's use of the terms *janen* 邪念 and *inen* 異念. *Janen* 邪念 means "a disturbing thought or image", of which *ja* 邪 usually represents "wicked", but can also mean "wrong". Dōgen teaches that it is a wrong thought for Buddhist monks to want to be praised for their efforts and that a Buddhist monk should try not to be known for one's own efforts but instead practice to avoid delusion (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 1, p. 201).

> いまの人は、貫をもとむることまれなるによりて、身に行なく、こころにさとりなくとも、他人のほむることありて、行解相應せりといはん人をもとむるがごとし。迷中又迷、すなはちこれなり。この邪念、すみやかに抛捨すべし。
>
> Since it is rare for people today to seek for the truth, it is as if they want to be praised as a person whose practice and understandings correspond entirely, even if they do not practice physically or attain awakening in their mind. That is, they are lost within delusion. You should throw away this **disturbing thought**.

Also, *inen* 異念, "a disturbed mind", refers to a similar thing. *I* 異 represents "strange" or "different from the standard or the correct thing". Thus, *inen* 異念 means "a wrong thought far away from the correct state". This term appears in the anecdote of a man who found himself having *inen* 異念 when rebuked by others, even after having thought he had become arhat. Dōgen teaches the importance of reflecting on oneself as the man did (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 8, p. 143).

> 曾聞、有人自謂成佛。待天不曉、謂爲魔障。曉已不見梵王請説、自知非佛。自謂是阿羅漢。又被他人罵之、心生異念、自知非是阿羅漢。乃謂是第三果也。又見女人起欲想、知非聖人。此亦良由知教相故、乃如是也。それ佛法をしれるは、かくのごとくみづからが非を覺知し、はやくそのあやまりをなげすつ。しらざるともがらは、一生むなしく愚蒙のなかにあり。生より生を受くるも、またかくのごとくなるべし。

> I have heard one story. A person thought he had become Buddha. But the sun did not rise, although he waited for a long time. Then he knew this was due to a devil. Brahma did not appear to pray for preaching at dawn, and he thought he had not become Buddha but Arhat. Then his mind produced **a wrong thought** when he was rebuked, and he knew he had not become Arhat. Then he thought his state was the third one. However, when he was aroused by seeing a woman, he knew he was not a saint. He realized it by himself as he knew the teachings of Buddha. That is, attaining Dharma is perceiving one's own drawbacks by oneself like this and throw them away promptly. Those who do not know (the teachings of Buddha) would be in ignorance for a lifetime in vain. Even after receiving birth after birth, life would be just like this again.

So, as we have seen in this subsection so far, Dōgen indeed teaches the importance of, as well as that of "study" reviewed in the last subsection, "reflection", which is the attitude to reflect on oneself without becoming trapped by a wrong thought, or by mental functions that lead one to dispersed awareness in vain.

3.3. "Practice" and Nen 念 in SBGZ: Towards Awakening through Zazen

This group includes the terms that explain the attitudes on cultivating oneself as a Buddhist monk after studying the traditional teachings and rules and contemplating and digesting them at the deepest level. A good example is *nenbutsu* 念仏, which refers to *buddhānusmṛti* in Sanskrit. In Dōgen, this term very often appears in the form of *dokkyō nenbutsu* 読経念仏, which means "reading *sūtra* aloud and recollecting the Buddha". *Dok(u)* 読 represents "reading (aloud, in many cases)", and *kyō* 経 refers to "*sūtra*". As shown in the explanation of *shiryō nentaku* 思量念度 in the last subsection, Dōgen emphasizes that one can attain the virtue if one practices *dokkyō nenbutsu* 読経念仏 correctly based on studying and clarifying *sūtra*.

On the other hand, Dōgen also directly teaches the importance of "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), as follows (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 8, p. 271):

> 宗門の正傳にいはく、この單傳正直の佛法は、最上のなかに最上なり、參見知識のはじめより、さらに燒香禮拜念佛修懺看經をもちゐず、ただし打坐して身心脫落することをえよ。

> The correct tradition of our school says: "This Dharma, succeeded directly and correctly since Buddha, is the best among the best. Immediately after grasping the true knowledge, do not practice thurification (burning incense), praying, remembering Buddha, confessing, or reading *sūtra*. **Just do *zazen*** and reach the state of dropping off body-mind".

Apparently, in the passage above, Dōgen denies the meanings of any forms of "practice" aside from doing *zazen*. However, as we have seen so far in accordance with the threefold-wisdom model, it is evident that Dōgen recognizes and thus actually explains the high importance of studying the traditional teachings and rules correctly and reflecting upon them by oneself before "practice".

Herein, his original philosophy of "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等) helps us to digest this paradox. According to Dōgen, "practice" itself is awakening, and vice versa: genuine "practice" (of *zazen*) necessarily leads a Buddhist monk to awakening, that is, what he calls the state of "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脫落), and conversely, *zazen* that does not lead a monk to awakening is not genuine "practice". This vital point is the foundation of *monshishū-shō* 聞思修證, and the connections among these concepts are to be argued in detail in Section 4.

In relation to Dōgen's concept of awakening described above, the concept of *ichinen* 一念 is essential. While the compounds of *nen* 念 shown in this chapter so far should be regarded, of course not wholly, as Chinese terms connected to *sati*, *smṛti*, or other related terms, those of *ichinen* 一念 should be understood as related to *kṣaṇa*. *Ichi* 一 generally represents "one" or "only", and *nen* 念 here means "an instant". Then, *ichinen* 一念 in

Dōgen means an ultimately short instant of this present moment. We can directly see Dōgen's worldview in these compounds: the following usage of *ichinen ninen* 一念二念, which means "moment by moment", or simply "every extremely short instant", as 二 means "second" or "following", is a good example (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 4, p. 174):

> 一念二念は一山河大地なり、二山河大地なり。山河大地等、これ有無にあらざれば大小にあらず、得不得にあらず、識不識にあらず、通不通にあらず、悟不悟に變ぜず。
>
> **Moment by moment**, there exists one mountain-river-earth and two (or all) mountains-rivers-earths. Mountains-rivers-earths-others are not existence or nothingness, big or small, attained or not, grasped or not, or connected or not. This would not change even before and after awakening.

As described in the passage above, in Dōgen's worldview, everything is in every ultimately short instant. He also explains this truth from another angle with the term *ichinen fushō* 一念不生. *Fu* 不 represents "not", and *shō* 生 means "emergence", and thus *fushō* 不生 stands for "unborn" and thus "deathless"; Buddha nature is not born and will not die. It is what transcends *saṃsāra* (*rin-ne* 輪廻), the blind succession of births and deaths. Therefore, *ichinen fushō* 一念不生 means "the truth that *ichinen* 一念, an ultimately short instant, which contains eternity or everything, is unborn". Dōgen explains this as follows (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 4, p. 321):

> 念念一一なり。これはかならず不生なり、これ全體全現なり。このゆゑに一念不生と道取す。
>
> Every single moment is one thing. Every single moment is necessarily eternal and absolute, and everything appears entirely in every single moment. Therefore, I have grasped **the truth that an ultimately short instant is unborn**.

While Dōgen's emphasis on "practice" is broadly known especially with his main teaching of "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), we can certainly grasp his worldview more deeply by shedding light on the concept of *ichinen* 一念, as we have reviewed in this subsection: through "practice" of genuine *zazen* after "study" and "reflection", one can transcend the sense of time and comprehend the truth that everything exists in *ichinen* 一念.

Also, this worldview around *ichinen* 一念 is closely connected with Dōgen's key concepts of "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等) and "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落). The coming chapter digs into these concepts to reveal the connections among them and the position of the concept of *nen* 念 according to Dōgen.

4. Nen 念, "Oneness of Practice and Awakening", "Just Sitting", and "Dropping off Body-Mind"

As we reviewed in the introduction, Dōgen presents the concept of "*monshishū-shō* 聞思修證", although he knows its basic form: "*monshishū* 聞思修". He actually mentions the basic form as "*monshishū-e* 聞思修慧", citing a passage directly from *The Sūtra of Buddha's Last Instruction*. *Shō* 證, the Chinese character added to the basic form, means "awakening", and thus, it is obvious that this concept is deeply connected with his basic philosophy: "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等).

Also in this context, it seems that his two famous teachings, "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐) and "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落), have strong ties, respectively, with "practice" (*shū* 修) or with "awakening" (*shō* 證), or with both.

Therefore, this chapter aims to investigate these terms closely and reveal the connections among them and the concept of *nen* 念, and to comprehend its position within the overall worldview and philosophy of Dōgen.

Firstly, when it comes to "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等), of which *ichi* 一 represents "one(ness)" and *tō* 等 refers to "equal(ness)" or "same(ness)",

this concept is directly explained by Dōgen as follows (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 8, p. 299):

> それ、修證は一つにあらずとおもへる、すなはち外道の見なり。佛法には修證これ一等なり。
>
> That is, if you believe that **practice and awakening are** not **one thing**, that is a heretical comprehension. In Buddhism, practice and awakening are one thing.

The passage above shows the reason why Dōgen uses the term "*monshishū-shō* 聞思修證"; in his philosophy, "awakening" (shō 證) and the third step of the threefold-wisdom, practice (*shū* 修), are one thing and are thus not separatable (Davis 2019, p. 206[12]; Tsunoda 1995, pp. 127–28[13]). Here we can see the reason why he emphasizes again and again the importance of the practice of *zazen*: as is broadly known, Dōgen teaches that one should devote all of oneself to the practice of *zazen* with the term *shikan taza* 祇管打坐/只管打坐, which is generally translated into "just sitting". *Shi* 祇 or只 represents "just" or "only", *kan* 管 usually refers to "a tube", but sometimes "narrowly" as in this term, *ta* 打 means "striking something", but here adds the nuance of "doing something firmly", and *za* 坐 represents "being seated".

The term "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐) is quite often used with the concept of "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落 or *datsuraku shinjin* 脱落身心) (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 5, p. 208[14]; vol. 6, pp. 135[15], 259[16], 346[17]; vol. 8, p. 275[18]). This term represents the ultimate state of "awakening" in Dōgen's philosophy, of which *shin* 身 means "body", *jin* 心 refers to "mind", *datsu* 脱/脫 represents "escaping" or "leaving", and *raku* 落 stands for "falling out". Dōgen directly explains this term and "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐) in one passage as below (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 6, p. 259):

> 弄精魂とは、祇管打坐、脱落身心なり。佛祖となり祖となるを精弄魂といふ、著衣喫飯を弄精魂といふなり。
>
> Devoting all of oneself to practice (*rōshōkon* 弄精魂) is just sitting (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), and is dropping off body-mind (*datsuraku shinjin* 脱落身心). Becoming Buddha is devoting all of oneself to practice (*rōshōkon* 弄精魂), and wearing clothes and eating food is (also) devoting all of oneself to practice (*rōshōkon* 弄精魂).

Also in addition to the passage above, Dōgen mentions the concept of "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落) in a paradoxical but thus highly implicative way as follows (Ibid., p. 346):

> (. . .) 心の打坐あり、身の打坐とおなじからず。身の打坐あり、心の打坐とおなじからず。身心脱落の打坐あり、身心脱落の打坐とおなじからず。得恁麼ならん、佛祖の行解相應なり。(. . .)
>
> (. . .) there is the *zazen* of mind, which is not the same as the *zazen* of body. There is the *zazen* of body, which is not the same as the *zazen* of mind. There is the *zazen* of **dropping off body-mind**, which is not the same as the *zazen* of **dropping off body-mind**. But if one has already attained the state like this, the practice and the theory that Buddha teaches would completely correspond to each other. (. . .)

While there is an argument that "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐) merely means "focus on *zazen* completely while doing it" and does not emphasize the importance of *zazen* itself (Putney 1996, p. 527[19]), it is obvious that Dōgen puts a very high priority on the practice of *zazen* itself judging from the actual contexts above, in which the two terms of "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐) and "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落) are used together.

So, from now on, I would like to argue that reviewing the usages of *nen* 念 in SBGZ in light of the connections among the three concepts reviewed so far in this chapter, "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一 等), "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), and

"dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落), enables us to holistically deepen our comprehensions of Dōgen's philosophy and worldview.

Dōgen directly describes the nature of *nen* 念when he explains the five faculties (Pali: *pañc' indriyāni*) in the fascicle of "Thirty-seven Factors of Awakening" (*Sanjūshichihon bodai bunpō* 三十七品菩提分法) as below (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 6, p. 387):

> 摸索當の自己、これ念なり。有身のときの念あり、無心のときも念あり。有心の念あり、無身の念あり。
>
> The self that one finally finds after long seeking for is mindfulness (*nen* 念). Mindfulness (*nen* 念) exists when body exists, and mindfulness (*nen* 念) also exists in (the state of) no-mind. Mindfulness (*nen* 念) exists when mind exists, and mindfulness (*nen* 念) also exists in (the state of) no-body.

According to the passage above, mindfulness (*nen* 念) is the self that exists beyond the existence/nonexistence of the body/mind. This can be understood as the very state of "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落), which is to be pursued through the practice of *zazen*.

Then, after the passage above, Dōgen explains what the correct mindfulness (*shōnen* 正念) is in the same fascicle as follows (Ibid., p. 433):

> 正念道支は、被自瞞の八九成なり。念よりさらに發智すると學するは捨父逃逝なり。念中發智と學するは、纏縛之甚なり。無念はこれ正念といふは外道なり。また地水火風の精靈を念とすべからず、心意識の顛倒を念と稱ぜず。まさに汝得吾皮肉骨髓、すなはち正念道支なり。
>
> The branch of the path to **the correct mindfulness** is to be eighty/nighty-percent attained while being deceived by oneself. Studying that wisdom emerges from mindfulness (*nen* 念) again is (a wrong idea just like) abandoning one's father and running away (from a threat). Studying that wisdom emerges within mindfulness (*nen* 念) is an extremely prejudiced idea. Regarding the state of no-mind (*munen* 無念) as correct mindfulness is a heresy. Also, you must not regard spirits of earth, water, fire, and wind as mindfulness (*nen* 念), and must not call the state of mind and consciousness with the wrong comprehension about the truth (*tentō* 顛倒) mindfulness (*nen* 念). (Just as Bodhidharma told his four disciples), when one attains my skin, muscle, bone, and marrow (*hiniku kotsuzui* 皮肉骨髓), that is the correct mindfulness.

According to Masutani's interpretation of this passage, *nen* 念 and wisdom are one thing (Ibid., pp. 434–35[20]). This is persuasive because Dōgen here denies that "wisdom emerges from mindfulness (*nen* 念) again"; the Japanese term in the original text (*sarani* さらに) generally means "further" or "more", and it should here be interpreted as "again". That is, "*nen* 念 is wisdom and wisdom is *nen* 念" (Ibid.), which can be ensured by the last sentence in the passage above: the words of *nyotokugo hiniku kotsuzui* 汝得吾皮肉骨髓, which is quoted from the episode of Bodhidharma right before leaving China for India. He told his four main disciples that each of them attained one of his four body parts (skin, muscle, bone, and marrow), which are, of course, the metaphors of the essence of his Zen teaching, after long practice (Dōgen 道元 1990–1993, vol. 1, p. 73[21]). There is no superiority or inferiority among these four parts (Hareyama 1997, p. 93[22]), and for Dōgen, the correct mindfulness is the state with all these essences, or, in other words, with wisdom or *nen* 念.

Importantly, this state can be "eighty or nighty percent attained while being deceived by oneself" according to the passage above. That is, one cannot reach this state dependent on one's own mental functions or intention; rather, one reaches the state without realizing it and can know this attainment only when one has already done so. Mizuno briefly explains the teaching in the commentary on this first sentence of the passage: "you are the only one who can cultivate yourself" (Dōgen 道元 1990–1993, vol. 3, p. 308). Wisdom or *nen* 念 is not something to be attained on one's purpose, and thus, the only thing one can do is devoting all of oneself to cultivation. This coincides with the passage in which

Dōgen directly describes *nen* 念: "The self that one finally finds after long seeking for is mindfulness (*nen* 念)" (Dōgen 道元 2004–2005, vol. 6, p. 387).

Herein, I would like to recapitulate the overall picture as shown in the figure below, reflecting the perspective of the framework that succeeded in connecting the threefold wisdom, the epistemic sources, and the cognitive faculties (Deroche 2021, p. 29), and what I argued over the usages of *nen* 念 in accordance with each step of the threefold wisdom in the last chapter. As shown in Figure 1, rereading SBGZ from the perspective of *nen* 念 has enabled us to comprehend Dōgen's worldview and philosophy, such as "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落), and "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等). In the meantime, the concept of *nen* 念, or mindfulness, in Dōgen, is positioned in relation to these concepts.

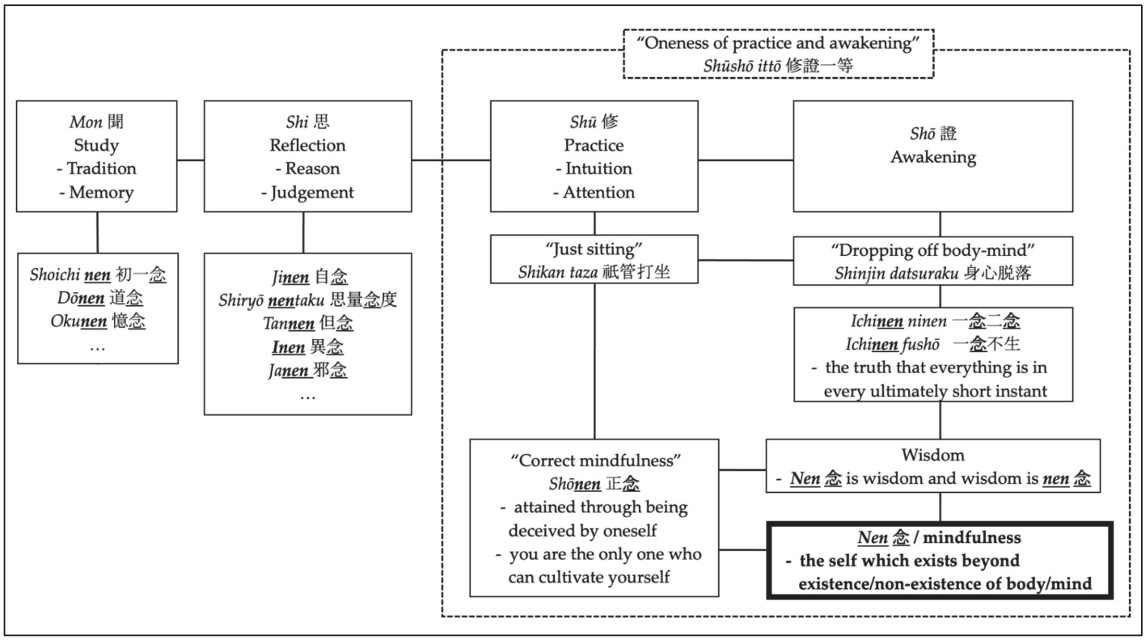

Figure 1. The overall picture of threefold wisdom, *nen* 念, and key concepts in SBGZ.

5. Conclusions

This paper attempted to reread Dōgen's masterpiece SBGZ from the perspective of *nen* 念, or mindfulness, which is one of the origins of contemporary mindfulness-based interventions, in order to comprehend its significances and position in Dōgen's philosophy and worldview with further width and depth as Fujita Isshō points out.

While the original meanings of the Sanskrit word *smṛti* include "remembrance" and "memory" according to *The Great Dictionary of Buddhist Terms*, the significances of *nen* 念 in the tradition of Japanese Buddhism are so diverse that we must not assume that the concept can be simply interpreted as or translated into *smṛti*/*sati*-related terms, *citta*/*manas*-related ones, or others. This is why this study investigated the usages of the compounds of *nen* 念 in the actual contexts, especially in accordance with each step of threefold wisdom; for mindfulness is the common thread linking them and Dōgen represents the concept of *monshishū-shō* 聞思修證.

Although it is widely known that Dōgen puts a high priority on "practice", the third step of threefold wisdom, just as represented by his famous teaching of "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐), it was shown that he also regards the former two steps, "study" and "reflection", as essential qualities. For instance, he clearly states that he was writing

Bendōwa 辨道話 for Buddhist monks with *dōnen* 道念 to study the Buddhism tradition correctly, admires a Buddhist monk with self-reflection (*jinen* 自念), and warns not to be trapped by a disturbing thought (*janen* 邪念). Also, we reviewed Dōgen's worldview that one in the state of "awakening" can comprehend the truth that an ultimately short instant contains eternity and everything, by shedding light on the usages of the compounds of *ichinen* 一念, the Sanskrit equivalent of which is not *smṛti* but *kṣaṇa*.

In the passages of *Shōbōgenzō* that we have seen, Dōgen describes the ultimate state, or "awakening" (*shō* 證), in other direct words as "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落). By addressing his original texts in detail, it was revealed that this state is nothing but *nen* 念 in Dōgen, which is "the self that one finally finds after long seeking for" that exists beyond the existence/nonexistence of the body/mind. Also, we addressed his worldview that "*nen* 念 is wisdom and wisdom is *nen* 念". In relation to this, we reviewed that, "practice" and "awakening" are one thing and are thus inseparable in his philosophy as represented by his "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等), and this is why he emphasizes the importance of the practice of "just sitting" (*shikan taza* 祇管打坐) and presents the concept of "*monshishū-shō* 聞思修證".

As a whole, it is revealed that the concept of *nen* 念 in Dōgen's philosophy is not limited by the original meanings of the Sanskrit word *smṛti* that are related to "remembrance" and "memory"; remarkably, the concept is often used to teach the importance of "practice" towards the state of "awakening", or in other words, "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落). In this context, it should be remembered that he explains that *nen* 念 is the self beyond the sense of body-mind or time, which can be attained after long cultivation. This uniqueness should deserve special attention when we try to contemplate "mindfulness" in today's society.

Just as Fujita implies, we certainly saw that Dōgen's philosophy, such as "dropping off body-mind" (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落), "oneness of practice and awakening" (*shūshō ittō* 修證一等), and *nen* 念, represent the very attitude of being beyond dichotomy (Davis 2019, p. 208[23]). After this study digging into the concept of *nen* 念 in Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*, there will be further research directly addressing the affinity and similarity between this attitude and the philosophers of the Kyōto school ranging from Nishida Kitarō (西田 幾多郎 1870–1945), the founder of the school who coincided with and expanded Dōgen's philosophy (Kopf 2012, p. xiii[24]), to others such as Watsuji Teturō (和辻 哲郎 1889–1960) or Keiji Nishitani (西谷 啓治 1900–1990) (Heisig et al. 2011, p. 142[25]), which are typically represented by the following passage of Hisamatsu Shinnichi (久松 真一 1889–1980) (Hisamatsu 2003, pp. 225–26), who is also famous as a master of the Japanese tea ceremony (*sadō* 茶道) with practical experience for over 40 years:

> 諸藝にしましても、よく藝に成り切れというようなことをいいます。剣道、柔道にしましても、スポーツにしましても、本当に上達するためには成り切らなければならない。お茶の方でもお茶になり切るということがお茶の道に達するということの大事な条件でもあり、お茶のなかに入り込んでいるということの大事な条件でもあるわけです。以上のことから、「主客合一」ということの意味の見当がおつきだろうと思います。
>
> When it comes to any form of Japanese traditional arts (*gei* 藝), it is often said that one must become an art thoroughly. When it comes to Japanese fencing (*kendō* 剣道), Judō (柔道), or other sports, one must become an art thoroughly in order to progress genuinely. In Japanese Tea ceremony, it is an important condition to become tea thoroughly, for attaining the ultimate path of Japanese Tea ceremony; integrating (oneself) into tea is an important condition for that (ultimate path). From the above, you may grasp the meaning of **"the unification of subject and object phenomena" (*shukyaku gōitsu*主客合一)**.

Also, it is known that philosophers outside the school, including Izutsu Toshihiko (井筒 俊彦 1914–1993) and Yuasa Yasuo (湯浅 康雄 1925–2005) in fact paid special attention to this state (Ibid., pp. 913[26], 142[27]). There should still be much room for integrating this

etymology of Zen philosophy into today's mindfulness in order to give "further width and depth" to it; for, just as Izutsu directly argues when addressing Dōgen's philosophy, "*zazen* is the only or otherwise the best potential to reach the unification of body-mind" (Izutsu 2014, p. 42[28]), which should be the very state of awakening (*shō* 證), or *nen* 念, in Dōgen's philosophy.

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Notes

1 Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn recollects the origin of MBSR in the article entitled "Some reflections on the origins of MBSR the skillful means, and the trouble with maps" as follows: "The early papers on MBSR cited not just its Theravada roots (Kornfield 1977; Nyanaponika 1962), but also its Mahayana roots within both the **Soto** (Suzuki 1970) and Rinzai (Kapleau 1965) Zen traditions (and by lineage, the earlier Chinese and Korean streams), as well as certain currents from the yogic traditions (Thakar 1977) including Vedanta (Nisargadatta 1973), and the teachings of J Krishnamurti (Krishnamurti 1969, 1979) and Ramana Maharshi (Maharshi 1959). My own primary Zen teacher, Seung Sahn, was Korean, and taught both **Soto** and Rinzai approaches, including the broad use and value of *koans* and *koan*-based 'Dharma combat' exchanges between teacher and student (Seung Sahn 1976)".

2 This succeeded in articulating the nature of Dōgen's paradox as follows: "Dōgen, unlike Laozi, Zhuangzi, or even his Chinese Buddhist predecessors, argues that not only is reality inconsistent, issuing in paradoxes of ontology, and not only is it impossible to characterize reality discursively, leading to paradoxes of expressibility, but that our experience itself is paradoxical".

3 Following this passage, Dōgen directly quotes Chapter 15 of *The Sūtra of Buddha's Last Instruction* (*Butsu yuikyō gyō* 仏遺教経): 汝等比丘 若有智慧 則無貪著 常自省察 不令有失 是則於我法中 能得解脱 若不爾者 既非道人 又非白衣 無所名也. 実智慧者 則是度老病死海 堅牢船也 亦是無明闇黒 大明燈也 一切病苦之良薬也 伐煩悩樹之利斧也 是故汝等 當以聞思修慧 而自增益 若人有智慧之照 雖是肉眼 而是明見人也 是為智慧.

4 "It seems to have been T. W. Rhys Davids (1881), one of the pioneers of the Western study of Pāli texts, who first translated the Buddhist technical term *sati* by the English word mindfulness".

5 This article historically explains how MBSR has played a significant role in diffusing the concept of mindfulness (Japanese: マインドフルネス) in Japan: a variety of religious traditions and medical approaches were gradually integrated into what is called マインドフルネス today. On the other hand, we should be careful about the usage of this *katakana* マインドフルネス; Deroche (2018) explains this point as follows: "In Japan (and elsewhere as well), we shall avoid talking about "mindfulness" in *katakana* マインドフルネス by implying the sense of a new tradition or method, as opposed to traditional Buddhism. The reason is that "mindfulness" is the now commonly accepted English translation for the Pāli *sati*. It refers thus to a core term for all Buddhist traditions, including for Japanese Buddhism (following the classical Chinese *nian*/*nen* 念, which translated –among different terms- the Sanskrit *smṛti*, equivalent of the Pāli *sati*). So if by mindfulness in *katakana* マインドフルネス, we intend to refer to scientific and secularized programs, we shall then be more explicit, and refer to them as 'mindfulness-based interventions,' and as much as possible try to specify which protocol, since there are now many".

6 "The need to supplement a particular definition of mindfulness with an exploration of its actual function requires shifting from the question 'What is mindfulness?' to 'What does mindfulness do?'. The need for such a shift can be illustrated by turning to early Buddhist definitions of mindfulness as a mental faculty (Pāli *indriya*, Sanskrit *indriya*, Chinese 根, Tibetan *dbang po*). One of these definitions relates mindfulness to the ability to remember what has been done or said long ago. Another definition mentions the four establishments of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*, *smṛtyupasthāna*, 念處, *dran pa nye bar gzhag pa*). Thus, the first definition describes a quality of mindfulness; the second outlines its actual application".

7 "It is quite common today for the word *sati* to be translated as 'mindfulness', despite the fact that its pedigree derives from the Old Indic (OI) word *smṛti*, 'remembrance', 'memory', 'the whole body of sacred tradition or what is remembered by human teachers (distinguished from *śruti*, or what is directly heard) (MW)'".

8 The author offers some examples, such as *sati pamuṭṭhā* in *Majjhima Nikāya* I 329, meaning "forgotten", and *sati udapādi* in *Dīgha Nikāya* I 180, meaning "remembering".

9 For further reference, see *Nihon Bukkyō Shi* 日本仏教史 (*History of Buddhism in Japan*) (Minowa 2015).

10 Dōgen directly cites this teaching of Śākyamuni Buddha from Chapter 28 of *Hokke kyō* 法華経 (*Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra*): "Encouragement of Samantabhadra".

11 Dōgen directly cites this passage from *Keitoku dentō roku* 景徳傳燈録 (*The Jingde Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*), vol. 2.

12 "Dōgen speaks of this 'forgetting' most radically in terms of his own enlightenment experience of 'dropping off the body-mind' (*shinjin-datsuraku* 信心脱落). Note that Dōgen does not speak dualistically of freeing the mind from the body. In fact, he explicitly rejects the mind–body dualism of the so-called Senika heresy and speaks of the. 'oneness of body-mind' (*shinjin ichinyo* 身心一如) along with the nonduality of the 'one mind' with the entire cosmos". Please note that "信心脱落" should actually be written as "身心脱落" based on Dōgen's original texts, just as in this paper.

13 修行(坐禅)と証り(身心脱落)はひとつであり、(...) 修行のところに証りが現れており、修行の他に証りはない、と言えるのである。 "Practice (*zazen*) and enlightenment (dropping off body-mind) is one thing, (...), it can be said that enlightenment is to be embodied in practice, and there is no enlightenment other than practice".

14 祇管打坐、辨道功夫、身心脱落。"Just sitting, devoting all of yourself to Buddhism and contemplating, and then (you will reach the state of) dropping off body-mind".

15 遍参はただ祇管打坐、身心脱落なり。"Traveling to study Buddhism is nothing but just sitting, and thus dropping off body-mind".

16 たとひ春風ふかく桃花をにくむとも、桃花おちて身心脱落せん。 "Even if you detest a peach blossom in a embracing spring wind, you will attain dropping off body-mind after it falls".

17 See the second quoted passage in p. 12.

18 See the first quoted passage in p. 10.

19 Putney explains as follows: "(...), *shikan taza* is not 'just sitting in meditation to the exclusion of other Buddhist practice,' but rather 'when meditating throw your whole 'self,' body and mind, into Zazen'".

20 念が智であり、智が念なのである。 "*Nen* 念 is wisdom, and wisdom is *nen* 念".

21 Mizuno explains this concept of *nyotokugo hiniku kotsuzui* 汝得吾皮肉骨髄 in the commentary as follows: 汝と呼ばれる誰もが、達磨と同じ皮肉骨髄を自己としている。"Everyone who is called thou forms the self with the same body parts of Bodhidharma". This means that everyone has the potential to attain the awakening as Bodhidharma did, for everyone has the same body parts as Bodhidharma; therefore, the only thing one should do towards awakening is devoting all of oneself to self-cultivation and practice.

22 仏法の前では四人は等価値なる存在ではなかろうか。 "It seems that the four are just equal existences in front of dharma, doesn't it?".

23 See Footnote 12.

24 "Nishida develops a philosophical system and, more concretely, a philosophy of self which is not only based on Zen notions such as satori, 'no-self' (Jap.: *muga*), 'no-mind' (Jap.: *mushin*), etc. but, furthermore, either coincides with or expands on Dōgen's notions of selfhood, alterity, continuity, and temporality".

25 "In Japanese philosophy of the twentieth century Dōgen seemed finally to have found his audience. Several major thinkers such as Watsuji Tetsurō, Tanabe Hajime, Nishitani Keiji, Ueda Shizuteru, and Yuasa Yasuo wrote significant works about Dōgen, citing him as a major philosopher of premodern Japan".

26 "Although his principal reference points are Linji and Dōgen, he draws on numerous Chinese and Japanese Zen writings to offer an overview of Zen philosophy that includes its epistemology, ontology, linguistic theory, and aesthetics".

27 See Footnote 22.

28 純粋で絶対的な主体性の状態にある自己を実現するためには、単にそれを"知る"代わりに、それに"なる"ことが必要なのである。しかし、これに達するためには、"身心"が前述の同元の表現が示すように"脱落"しなければならない。"坐禅"は、禅が考えているように、まず"身心"の統一へと達し、それから統一そのものが"脱落"するところへと達するための、唯一の、あるいはそうでなければ最良の可能性なのである。 "In order to realize the self in a state of pure and absolute subjectivity, it is necessary 'becoming' it, instead of merely 'comprehending' it. But, in order to reach this state, the 'body-mind' must—as the above-mentioned expression of Dogen indicates—"drop off". '*Zazen*,' as Zen philosophy sees it, is the only or otherwise the best possibility to reach the unification of body-mind first, and then the 'dropping off' of this unification itself".

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Theory and Practice of Tranquil Abiding Meditation in Tibet: The Pith Instructions of Yeshe Gyaltsen (1713–1793) and His Predecessors

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Abstract: Tranquil Abiding is an advanced meditative state of mind that is attained through gradual meditative training focusing on the cultivation of mindfulness and meta-awareness. This paper will focus on the eighteenth-century Tibetan scholar Yeshe Gyaltsen's manual on Tranquil Abiding. It involves introduction and analysis of the themes of Tranquil Abiding, such as the significance and objects of Tranquil Abiding, its relevance to Special Insight, mental hindrances, and factors which counter them. Illustrated will be how Yeshe Gyaltsen's point of view, which he calls the Ganden tradition, is influenced by exceptional Indian Mahāyāna masters such as Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Śāntideva, Kamalaśīla, Atīśa Dipaṃkaraśrijñāna, and Tsongkhapa. Included will be a discussion of his understanding of amanasikāra.

Keywords: Tranquil Abiding; Special Insight; mindfulness; meta-awareness; luminous nature of mind; focal object; discursive thought; amanasikāra

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"The way to cultivate proper meditative concentration is to practice mindfulness".

-Yeshe Gyaltsen

1. Introduction

In Tibet, religious doctrine training is structured in three successive aspects: listening, reflection, and meditative cultivation, the last being the deepest integration of the meaning understood via the first two. A more condensed classification could be made into two aspects: study and practice, with study including both listening (and reading), and reflection. (See Table 1 on page 2). In either case, textbooks related to the subjects are instrumental in progressing from one aspect of learning to the next. Typically, a student of religious discipline will first listen to a lecture to understand the content of a textbook, then reflect on the meaning with reasoned analysis, and finally try to cultivate an inner experience based on repeated internalization of their conceptual knowledge.

Generally speaking, theoretical textbooks are extensive and not easy to comprehend. However, meditation manuals are usually more succinct and accessible to understanding. That is why it is meditational manuals that are often instrumental in advancing from one aspect of learning to the next. Among many examples, here I present Yeshe Gyaltsen's (Ye shes rgyal mtshan) manual on Tranquil Abiding (Tib. *zhi gnas*, Skt. *śamatha*) meditation. It is evident from Yeshe Gyaltsen's long biography that he was not only a scholar, but also a veteran meditator, and the latter for long periods of time. As testimony to that, his meditational manual is in fact a synthesis combining explanation of his study (Tib. *bshad pa*) and practice (Tib. *sgrub pa*). In addition, his manual incorporates many pith instructions from historic Indian and Tibetan scholars presenting ideas from Buddhist sūtra and tantra. Thus, his manual provides a crucial link in the transition between learning through listening and reflection, to learning through meditative cultivation.

Table 1. Summarizing Buddhist doctrine training as union of Study and Practice as quoted from Vasubandhu's (320–400 A.D.) Abhidharmakośa.[1]

Stages of Training in Buddhist Doctrine	(a.) Listening (*thos pa*)	Study (*bshad pa*)
	(b.) Reflection (*bsam pa*)	
	(c.) Meditative cultivation (*sgom pa*)	Practice of Meditative cultivation (*sgrub pa*)

Tranquil Abiding[2] is a highly focused meditative experience developed through training in single pointed meditative concentration[3] (Tib. *ting nge 'dzin*) which originated in ancient India. According to Asaṅga, Kamalaśīla, Tsongkhapa, and Yeshe Gyaltsen, this meditative state is an emergent experience that arises only after cultivating all nine levels of meditative concentration as a method for stilling the mind (Tib. *sems gnas thabs kyi ting nge 'dzin dgu*). Thus, Tranquil Abiding is an optimal result attained by progression through nine levels of meditative concentration. Although Asaṅga in *Compendium of Abhidharma*[4] presented all these nine levels of concentration as classifications of Tranquil Abiding[5], they cannot be equated with Tranquil Abiding.

In the context of Ganden[6] (*dGa' ldan*) mahāmudrā (hereafter; Great Seal) practice, the goal of cultivating Tranquil Abiding is to attain the realization of Great Seal, i.e., realization of emptiness[7], which is synonymous with Special Insight[8] (Tib. *lhag thong*; Skt. *vipaśyanā*). We can understand that Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight share a cause-effect relationship by Yeshe Gyaltsen's description of Special Insight. He says that once Tranquil Abiding is achieved, within that firm meditative stability, analytical wisdom is developed to sustain intellectual analysis. When the power of this analysis induces pliancy, such level of analytical wisdom is called Special Insight[9]. This description of Special Insight illustrates that the prior development of Tranquil Abiding supports one's mind in retaining a state of the meditative stillness wherein Special Insight is later developed. All Ganden scholars including Yeshe Gyaltsen[10] assert that it is not possible to attain such Special Insight without prior development of Tranquil Abiding.

It should be pointed out that, as Roger Jackson (2019) has discussed, and as Michael Sheehy (2022) further draws attention to in his review of the book, Special Insight is not a single, monolithic practice. The Gelug presentation of Special Insight adheres to a specifically Middle Way (Skt. *Madhyamaka*) Prāsaṅgika mode of analysis among the various types of Special Insight practice which exist. This is a complex topic in itself, worthy of consideration for future research.

For more detail about the significance and nature of Tranquil Abiding, see the following discussion on 'significance of Tranquil Abiding' and 'the nature of Tranquil Abiding'. To understand the relationship between Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight through an analogy, see the description of 'the relevance of Tranquil Abiding to Insight,' in which Kamalaśīla provides his explanation.

After the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet in the seventh century it was systematically established by the eighth century under the royal patronage of Tibetan emperor, Trisong Detsen (*Khri srong lde btsan*). Over the centuries up to the present Tranquil Abiding meditation based on Tibetan texts has been taught and practiced throughout Asia. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, many in Western countries which are historically Judeo-Christian have also begun to pay serious attention to the practice of Tranquil Abiding, as much as to any other form of meditative training.

Masters throughout history from the 'four major lineages' of Tibetan Buddhism, Nyingma (*rNying ma*), Sakya (*Sa skya*), Kagyu (*bKa' rgyud*), and Gelug (*dGe lugs*), have written manuals on the cultivation of Tranquil Abiding. Yeshe Gyaltsen is of the Gelug lineage, most recent of the four.

Although modern works (Jackson 2019, p. 644) on Yeshe Gyaltsen (1713–1793) vary in naming his birthplace, according to a typeset edition based on original wooden printing

blocks, he was born in the town of Zar,[11] under the jurisdiction of the Tingkye (*sTing skyes*)[12] district of Tsang (*gTsang*). He received novice monastic vows from Paṇ chen Lobsang Yeshe (*Blo bzang ye shes*, 1663–1737)[13] along with the name, Yeshe Gyaltsen, 'Victory Banner of Transcendent Wisdom'. In his early twenties he received full monastic ordination from Drubwang Lobsang Namgyal (*Grub dbang Blo bzang rnam rgyal*, 1670–1741).[14] Initially, he lived a modest monastic lifestyle in the central and south-western regions of Tibet, ütsang (*dbus gtsang*). Academically trained in Tashi Lhunpo (*bKra shis lhun po*) monastery under the guidance of teachers such as Yeshe Tokmey (*Ye shes thogs med*), Tseten Gyaltsen (*Tshe brtan rgyal mtshan*), and Drubwang Lobsang Namgyal, his fame as a scholar spread beyond his own monastic community. In addition to study, he engaged in long solitary meditation retreats from an early age; this influenced many people throughout Tibet. At the age of forty-four,[15] in 1756, he established the monastery hermitage of Tashi Samten Ling (*bKra shis bsam gtan gling*) in the Kyirong area of south-west Tibet near the border with Nepal. He traveled twice to Nepal and explored its pilgrimage sites.[16] From the age of sixty-nine to eighty (1782–1793) he took the position of teacher to the eighth Dalai Lama, despite favoring living in modesty and solitude, himself. At the age of seventy-seven, in 1790, he was requested by the Eighth Dalai Lama to be the spiritual head for the Lhasa area Tsechok Tashi Samten Ling (*Tshe mchog bKra shis gsam gtan gling*) monastery. Although initially he refused the position, later he accepted it after repeated requests.[17] He made vast contributions to the religious studies, philosophy, and yogic practice of Tibet and is regarded as one of the important custodians[18] of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism of the eighteenth century.

Yeshe Gyaltsen wrote on more than two hundred topics[19] in twenty-five volumes of collected works. His work on the *dGa' ldan phyag rgya chen po'i khrid yig snyan brgyud lam bzang gsal ba'i sgron me*[20] (hereafter, *GPLG*) *Bright Lamp of the Excellent Path of Oral Transmission: An Instruction Manual of Ganden Great Seal*[21], is in volume twenty-two; it has a hundred and twenty-two folios. His manual on Tranquil Abiding is a part of his Great Seal meditation manual, which consists of twenty folios, 49b–69b. The original Tibetan woodblock print of his entire collected works can be found at the website of the Buddhist Digital Resource Center.[22]

Although there are numerous manuals on the cultivation of Tranquil Abiding written by Indian and Tibetan masters, we shall explore the work of Yeshe Gyaltsen that focuses on certain themes of Tranquil Abiding meditation. Yeshe Gyaltsen's Tranquil Abiding manual in *GPLG* indicates reducing reliance upon pre-Ganden Tibetan masters' descriptions, while his own predecessor, Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen's (*Paṇ chen Blo bsang chos kyi rgyal mtshan* 1570–1662)[23] manual quoted many Kagyu masters' texts. Yeshe Gyaltsen,[24] in fact, particularly aligns with the texts of Nāgārjuna (c. l50–250 A.D.), Asaṅga (c. 310–390), Śāntideva (c. 650–750), Kamalaśīla (c. 740–795), Atīśa Dipaṃkaraśrijñāna (c. 982), and other key Indian scholars of the classical period as clarified by Tsongkhapa (1357–1419) in *Lam rim chen mo*[25] (hereafter, *LRC*). As Jackson (2019, p. 278) points out,[26] Yeshe Gyaltsen typically describes Tranquil Abiding meditation according to the traditional stages, obstacles, and antidotes established by Asaṅga and endorsed by Tsongkhapa in *LRC*.

Yeshe Gyaltsen, in *GPLG*, unlike *LRC*, suggests 'luminous nature of mind' as a meditative object of Tranquil Abiding. He praises it in his manual[27] as a method for attaining mental placement, along with the 'six ways of settling the mind' as taught by Saraha and other great adepts. He says that there is a method of integrating the nine levels of meditative concentration with the six ways of settling the mind, but this must be received directly from a master's instructions in accordance with the needs of the individual trainee. This topic will be further discussed in one of my forthcoming papers.

Unlike Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen, Yeshe Gyaltsen explicitly calls[28] for integrating Great Seal with Tsongkhapa's instructions on the stages of the path in *LRC*. According to Yeshe Gyaltsen, one feature of integrating these two is a placement of emphasis on the above-mentioned Indian scholars' intentions. Why would Yeshe Gyaltsen

emphasize relying on mainstream Indian scholars? He says that if the source of an instruction is not rooted in Buddha's Words, it is seen as less beneficial to the overall doctrine. Thus, he emphasizes relying on a master who gives instructions that have been passed down in succession from Buddha himself.[29] He quotes Tsongkhapa:

> In general, in Tibet there are currently limitless instructions of secret mantra and dialectics. All these teachings are transmitted through buddhas and bodhisattvas. If one makes assertions based solely on a meditational deity's words, however, without other sources, it may be suited to thought processes of the listener at that moment, but there will be no means by which to correctly ascertain whether it is an unerring path. For this reason, if an objective person wishes to seek a faultless path the instruction should not contradict valid teachings of sūtra and tantra. Even instructions which reference undisputed teachings should be correctly distinguished as to whether they are provisional or definitive instructions by following one of the intellectual systems of the great trailblazers. It is indispensable for the instructions not to be disproved by logical reasoning, so that the instructions do not lead to alternate conclusions [which makes them provisional and not definitive].

Thus, Yeshe Gyaltsen's insistence that the Great Seal instructions be practiced in the context of the entire path including Tranquil Abiding relies heavily on the key Indian masters. Given this, our research here focuses on the following:

How is Yeshe Gyaltsen's perspective on Tranquil Abiding influenced by Indian scholars of the classical period; and by Tsongkhapa? What are the points that Yeshe Gyaltsen emphasizes? What are some of the challenges to the attainment of Tranquil Abiding? The questions begin with central queries and proceed to subsidiary ones. In exploring Yeshe Gyaltsen's manual we shall consider the following list of themes to give the reader a glimpse of the paper's contents before going on to the discussion:

1. 2. the significance of Tranquil Abiding
   3. the nature of Tranquil Abiding
   4. the relevance of Tranquil Abiding to Insight
   5. focal objects in Tranquil Abiding
   6. luminous nature of mind as a meditative object
   7. the first mental fault and its countering factors
   8. identifying and establishing the focal object
   9. the second mental fault and its countering factors
   10. other countering factors: the six settlings of mind
   11. challenges of Tranquil Abiding training

2. The Significance of Tranquil Abiding

Before discussing Tranquil Abiding let us first look at the traditional sources and what they attribute to Tranquil Abiding. Tsongkhapa quotes the following line from the *Ārya-saṃdhi-nirmocana-sūtra*:[30]

> Maitreya, you should know that all mundane and supramundane virtuous qualities, whether of śrāvakas, bodhisattvas, or tathāgatas, are the result of Tranquil Abiding and Insight [31]

Although the above passage is quoted from a sūtra attributed to Buddha it is not literally acceptable, as Tsongkhapa has stated in *LRC*. Hypothetically speaking, if this were literally true, all virtuous mental qualities would result from the state of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight. This implies that any virtuous mental quality possessed by anyone presupposes attainment of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight. Then everyone endowed with a virtuous mental quality would have attained advanced stages of meditation. This is because, as Tsongkhapa claims, Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight are mental qualities derived from a higher state of meditation. Therefore, all virtuous mental qualities are not a result of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight.[32]

In *Great Treatise on Stages of Path to Awakening*, *(hereafter GTSP)*, Tsongkhapa clarifies the underlying intent of the passage, by saying that *all virtuous qualities* refers to the meditative concentrations [one set of virtuous qualities] developed from single pointed mind focusing upon a virtuous object, which are subsumed within the category of Tranquil Abiding; and to the virtuous wisdoms [another set of virtuous qualities] which analyze the meaning of relative and ultimate reality, which are, respectively, subsumed within the category of Special Insight. In this context, the sūtra statement that all virtuous qualities developed on the path of the three vehicles result from Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight is *not* a false statement.[33]

The sūtra quotation implies the scope of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight. This is indicated by Tsongkapa's interpretation of the sūtra: that all single pointedly focused meditative concentrations depend on training in Tranquil Abiding and training in Special Insight (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 14).[34] How does Tsongkhapa's interpretation illustrate the scope of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight? Tranquil Abiding meditation is a bigger category of focus training which includes all other subsidiary meditative focus skills, and not vice versa. The same is true for training in Special Insight because it subsumes all virtuous wisdoms that analytically discern relative or ultimate truth, inclusive of all subsidiary analytic skills. This can be understood from another passage in *GTSP*:

> Thus, you must achieve all good qualities of the two vehicles through both (1) sustained analysis with discerning wisdom and (2) one-pointed focus on the object of meditation. You do not achieve them through one-sided practice of either analytical meditation or stabilizing meditation (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 14).[35]

Furthermore, Kamalaśīla[36] in *Bhāvanākrama*[37] *II* (hereafter, *BK*) has also said:

> Since those two [Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight] include all states of meditative concentration, all yogis should at all times definitely rely upon Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight. [38]

In addition, Atīśa mentioned in *Bodhipathapradīpa* (hereafter, *BPP*):

> Just as bird without wings,
> Cannot fly through the sky.
> One without power of higher perception,
> Cannot accomplish the welfare of sentient beings.
> etc.
> One not accomplished in Tranquil Abiding,
> Will not attain the higher perception.
> Therefore, Tranquil Abiding must be developed,
> Put forth the effort again and again (Atīśa Dipaṃkaraśrijñāna 1800).[39]

While the above Indian masters mention the significance of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight, Tsongkhapa emphasizes them by presenting the analogy of a tree. In *GTSP*:

> The branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit of a tree are limitless, yet the core point at which they all come together is the root. Likewise, Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight are the sublime core at which gathers all that Buddha says about the limitless states of meditative concentration in Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 15).[40]
>
> The *Ārya-saṃdhi-nirmocana-sūtra* states:
>
> Know that Serenity [Tranquil Abiding] and Insight [Special Insight] include all of the many aspects of the states of meditative concentration which I have taught for śrāvakas, bodhisattvas and tathāgatas (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 15).[41]

In emphasizing the significance of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight, Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* states that the main goal of cultivating Tranquil Abiding is to eliminate the root of cyclic existence. His text presents two ways to do this: (a) seeking an understanding of view[42] and, once it is found, cultivating meditative stability focusing on that understanding;

and (b) cultivating meditative stability first, and then seeking an understanding of the view. Yeshe Gyaltsen does not comment on the first way, and Tsongkhapa rejects it in *LRC* (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 548).[43] The following explains why Yeshe Gyaltsen chooses the second way, endorsing cultivation of meditative stability before seeking an understanding of the view.

With regard to the viability of first seeking an understanding of the view and then cultivating meditative stability,[44] Tsongkhapa does assert that one need not have attained fully qualified Tranquil Abiding in order to develop some understanding of the view; and even without Tranquil Abiding one can be transformed by this view through repeated analysis performed by discerning wisdom (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 548). However, Tsongkhapa, in *LRC*, raises the question, 'If one could first develop understanding of the view and then cultivate stability, it should be possible to cultivate both simultaneously. Then, why is it said to first seek Tranquil Abiding and then cultivate Special Insight?'

The reason is that Tranquil Abiding is a prerequisite for *fully qualified* Special Insight. The way in which Tranquil Abiding precedes Special Insight is as follows: Without Tranquil Abiding, no amount of analysis by discerning wisdom can give rise to the physical and mental pliancy intrinsic to the actual realization of Special Insight. Paṇchen Sonam Drakpa (*Paṇ chen Bsod rnam grags pa* 1478–1554) in *Lamp Illuminating Meaning of the Great Mother* (*Yum don gsal ba'i sgron me*)[45] says:

> When Bodhisattvas who have not previously traversed Śrāvaka or Pratyekabuddha paths, who are abiding on the highest stage of the path of accumulation, attain Special Insight focused on emptiness, they simultaneously ascend to the heat stage [the first stage] of the path of preparation. Achievement of Special Insight focused on emptiness must be preceded by attainment of Tranquil Abiding focused on emptiness. [46]

Hence, Tranquil Abiding is required as a cause of Special Insight. And Special Insight involves inducing a pliancy[47] within discursive analysis of the view. Inducing pliancy is not possible within a state of analysis without Tranquil Abiding as a precondition (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 549).[48] Yeshe Gyaltsen says that no matter how much one engages in discursive analysis of the view, without Tranquil Abiding, analysis will not be able to induce pliancy by its own power. Furthermore, he says that once meditative stability of Tranquil Abiding is developed, one can sustain discursive analysis coupled with pliancy, and that is the moment actual Special Insight is generated (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, 49b-50a).[49]

Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* points out that development of the Middle Way view requires understanding the meaning of the view after carefully seeking it. To achieve this one must put effort into accumulating merit in preliminary stages of training. The firm faith and determination to pursue this arises from being captivated by seeing the qualities of the Middle Way. One first contemplates the benefits of realizing the actual way things exist.[50] Here, Special Insight is understood as the profound view, clearly indicating the Middle Way view. The process of seeking such a view begins with an intellectual inquiry into the ontological status of the self.

Through the Middle Way Special Insight one may eliminate the root of cyclic existence. Yeshe Gyaltsen cites Tsongkhapa's verses from the *Lam rim nyams mgur ma*;[51] (hereafter, *LRG*):

> I do not see that the root of cyclic existence can be severed
> by engaging in single-pointed meditation alone.
> Neither will wisdom, without realization of Tranquil Abiding,
> eliminate delusion, no matter how much analysis is applied.
> Yet, wisdom that has thoroughly cognized the nature of existence,
> mounted upon the horse of unmoving Tranquil Abiding,
> with the sharp weapon of Middle Way reasoning, free from extremes,
> destroys all fixations conceiving of extreme views.
> By examining properly with expansive wisdom,

> May intelligence cognizing reality grow and flourish! (Tsongkhapa 1979–1981, f. 3b [p. 68])[52]

In brief, the above discussion reveals the significance of Tranquil Abiding to Special Insight, and how these two share a cause-and-effect relationship. This entails that without cultivating Tranquil Abiding there is no way to sever the root of cyclic existence and all its suffering.

3. What Is the Nature of Tranquil Abiding?

When describing the meaning of Tranquil Abiding Tsongkhapa quotes the following passage from the *BK*:[53]

> It is an 'extremely pliant' (Tib. *shin tu sbyangs pa dang ldan pa'i sems*) and 'blissful mind' (Tib. *dga' ba'i sems*) which naturally and continuously engages an internal object of meditation, after having quelled distraction to outside [all other] objects. This is an etymological meaning of Tranquil Abiding but not the standard definition. It does, however, reveal three components of Tranquil Abiding. These are: (1) having pliancy and bliss; (2) continuously engaging an internal object; and (3) having quelled distraction to outside objects. (Kamalaśila 2011)[54]

This statement describing Tranquil Abiding is not a standard definition[55] because the description is too narrow to characterize the defined object,[56] Tranquil Abiding. We could say that it describes the nature of Tranquil Abiding but does not define it. In Buddhist epistemology, a definition and definiendum must 'overlap' each other completely; they must be coextensive. This description does not cover the entire meaning of Tranquil Abiding sufficiently to be considered a definition; the proposed meaning is narrower than Tranquil Abiding itself. All Tranquil Abiding does not necessarily entail the above description.[57] For example, since the description has a component called 'blissful and extremely pliant,' this implies that all Tranquil Abiding must be blissful, which is not true. In the Buddhist cosmology 'higher realms or worlds' (Tib. *mkhams gong ma*) are of eight types, four of which have form and four of which are formless. All of them are attributed to Tranquil Abiding. Beings who abide in these realms are characterized by their respective states of concentration. The first of these states (Skt. *dhyāna*) is of two varieties. One is endowed with bliss, but the other is not; it is endowed with mere equipoise, a neutral sensation, and Tranquil Abiding. It is called the 'first actual concentration with extraordinary equipoise'.[58]

In the following we shall see how various definitions of 'actual concentration' compare with the extraordinary actual concentration mentioned above; and we shall refute that the above description could be its definition, proving that it does not apply to all cases of Tranquil Abiding. The discussion also illustrates that Tranquil Abiding is accessed, not only in the human realm, but in multiple higher dimensions as well.

As said in the first chapter analysis in Paṇchen Sonam Drakpa's *Re-Illuminating the Lamp of Meaning of the Great Mother*:[59]

> In our own system, from objects and branches: the definition of an actual concentration equipoise is a type of virtue which transcends the level below it (i.e., the desire realm level). An equipoise of actual concentration distinguished by being completely free of desire realm attachment is the definition of the first actual concentration equipoise. When divided there are two types: a first actual concentration equipoise of a type with feeling of mental pleasure, which is the definition of an ordinary first actual concentration equipoise; and a first actual concentration equipoise of a type with neutral feeling, which is the definition of an extraordinary first actual concentration equipoise (Paṇchen 2015b, pp. 336–337).[60]

This description of Tranquil Abiding, quoted from *Bhāvanākrama II*, does hold true for attributes of meditative concentration (Tib. *ting nge 'dzin*; Skt. *samādhi*) in the human realm of existence.

According to Asaṅga and Kamalaśīla the process of cultivating Tranquil Abiding involves development through nine stages of mental placement.[61] Beginning with the first stage of mental placement, progress is made through the rest of the stages. At each stage, mental placement addresses hindrances to attaining the next higher stage until the ninth stage is reached. When mental placement transcends the ninth stage, to reach the post-stage mental placement, it first induces physical pliancy and then mental pliancy. The moment mental pliancy is induced Tranquil Abiding has been attained. This informs us that, even having reached the ninth stage of mental placement with meditative concentration effortlessly focused on its object, having abandoned both laxity and excitement, the pliant and blissful mind of Tranquil Abiding has still not been attained. Hence, although the process of developing Tranquil Abiding involves perfecting attention on a focal object, it also involves the impact of that attention on our being. Among the three components of Tranquil Abiding in Kamalaśīla's description, (1) being endowed with pliancy and bliss is a major factor which determines whether one's meditative concentration has reached the level of Tranquil Abiding or not.

(2) 'Being continuously engaged in an internal object' is included in the meaning of Tranquil Abiding because it removes speculation that an external object could be used. It is clearly mentioned in Yeshe Gyaltsen's *GPLG* and in the work of his predecessors such as Tsongkhapa's *GTSP* that meditative concentration cannot be developed by engaging external objects because meditative concentration is generated in the mind. Mental factors generated in the mind will not directly engage an external object. Yeshe Gyaltsen says:

> Thus, the object we shall meditate upon here is our own mind. We can cultivate meditative concentration and it has a special purpose. Furthermore, we must seek an object that is not just for stilling or stabilizing the mind. Not understanding this essential point, focusing on a stone or piece of wood, clearly illustrates that one is ignorant of the instructions in the scriptures of Buddha or the great trailblazers[62] of the Mahāyāna. Putting a piece of wood in front of you and visually meditating on it shows a lack of understanding of what meditative concentration is. Mental concentration[63] is one of the five types of ascertaining or determining mental factors; it is generated through internal familiarization within mental consciousness; it is not generated in sense consciousness. [64]

Tsongkhapa also says:

> Some set a statue or image of Buddha before themselves and do gazing meditation, staring at it. The master Yeshe De's (*Ye shes sde*) rejection of this practice is excellent. He says that concentration is not achieved in the sensory consciousnesses, but in the mental consciousness; thus, the actual object of meditation of a concentration is the actual object of a mental consciousness. Therefore, you must pay attention to this. He also states what I explained above: that you must focus your mind on the appearance of the actual concept, or mental image, of the object of meditation. [65]

Since external objects are only accessed by sensory consciousnesses, this entails that mental consciousness cannot engage an external object directly. Hypothetically speaking if mental concentration could engage an external object, then visual cognition, while absorbed in its object should be able to evolve into a factor of mental consciousness. If this were possible it would mean that sensory cognition could become a mental factor, which contradicts the dynamics of mind and mental factors taught in Buddhist psychology. A sensory consciousness cannot become a factor of mental consciousness because sensory and mental consciousness do not share the same substrata. Buddhist psychology asserts that sensory consciousness engages the world by associating with a real object, while mental consciousness engages the world by associating with a mental image. Thus, external objects or objects of the real world cannot be directly engaged to train in meditative concentration. This discussion may be relevant to contemporary mindfulness training as well, if that training is to go beyond a gross, rudimentary level. The claim being made, and taken as

an axiom in Ganden, is that an object of sensory consciousness cannot be the object of fully qualified Tranquil Abiding. While sensory consciousness can provide data about the nature of an object to be engaged, the direct engagement with that object in fully qualified Tranquil Abiding is solely through mental consciousness, and the object, solely an object of mental consciousness; only images or concepts held in the 'mind's eye' are appropriate. Some lineages of Tranquil Abiding training start by utilizing sense objects, but Ganden lineage emphasizes training with an object of mental consciousness from the beginning, with concentration being refined in relation to that object of mental consciousness. While mental consciousness is ordinarily conceptual, as progress is made towards single-pointed concentration it transforms into direct perception of its object.

(3) 'Having quelled distraction to external objects' is the third component in the meaning of Tranquil Abiding. This has already been discussed in the context of the second component. There does exist meditation with a straight-forward direct gaze (Tib. *har sgom*). If such gaze involves looking at an external object, it will seem to contradict the second and third component of Tranquil Abiding according to Kamalaśīla. Learning about these components can contextualize our understanding of basic tools for meditation. It can also help us to learn what constitutes Tranquil Abiding in a traditional practice setting.

Next, we have the standard definition of Tranquil Abiding. Paṇchen Sonam Drakpa says:

> In our system [the definition of Tranquil Abiding is] a meditative concentration which engages its object effortlessly and spontaneously, sustained by extreme pliancy. Why is it called Tranquil Abiding? Because the mind abides on an internal object, having quelled mental engagement with external objects. For this reason, it is called Tranquil Abiding. (Paṇchen 2015b, p. 330)[66]

The Tibetan word for Tranquil Abiding is *zhi gnas*. *Zhi* has two connotations: peace or tranquility; and quelled or eliminated. *Gnas* means abiding. For this reason, Paṇchen Sonam Drakpa describes Tranquil Abiding as a mind which abides on an internal object, having eliminated a mind engaged in external objects. The definition he has asserted can be applied to all levels of Tranquil Abiding. This description is coextensive with Tranquil Abiding; it overlaps it completely. Hence, it is a standard definition for Tranquil Abiding.

What is the significance of knowing the definition of a concept? The definition can help us understand the role of the concept and how it impacts other experiences when there is a correlation between them. Every concept has its limits or boundaries. Establishing the definition of a concept can help us understand the fullest scope of the concept, and what is contrary to it; what its limits or boundaries are. Having discussed an etymological description of Tranquil Abiding and its standard definition, we will now discuss its relevance to Great Seal.

4. What Is the Relevance of Tranquil Abiding to Insight?

In the soteriological dimension, achieving freedom from unenlightened existence has always been the vital impetus behind the Indo-Tibetan philosophical traditions (Jinpa 2002, p. ix). Here we see Yeshe Gyaltsen describe what Tranquil Abiding can do for a person. He says:

> If Tranquil Abiding is accomplished, one's body and mind will be pervaded by bliss of pliancy which will abide in all phenomena one sees. One will have control of one's own mind; if placed on an object it remains like a mountain. (53a1) When used it can engage any desired virtuous object at will. In particular, by analyzing ultimate reality from a state of stable Tranquil Abiding one will attain Special Insight and be able to swiftly abandon affliction. And by meditating on suchness[67] with skillful means, even the predisposition for dualistic appearances can be eliminated; and so on, the qualities are inconceivable. [68]

This makes it obvious that achievement of Tranquil Abiding accounts for a process in which mental concentration is developed to get a desired result. Concentration is a mental

factor whose role is to retain single pointedness on a chosen focal object. In the following citation we will understand the benefit of mastering mental concentration. Tsongkhapa writes in *LRG:*

> Contemplation is the king that rules the mind;
> When settled it is like the king of mountains, unmoving;
> When released it engages all objects of virtue;
> inducing great bliss of serviceability of body and mind.
> Knowing this the powerful yogis always
> destroy the enemy, distraction, and remain in meditative concentration.
> I, a yogi, have practiced like that.
> You who seek liberation, please do likewise! (Tsongkhapa 1979–1981, f. 3a [p. 67])[69]

From Yeshe Gyaltsen's above quote we understand how effective Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight can be for eliminating the ignorance (Tib. *ma rig pa;* Skt. *avidyā*) which Āryadeva, in *Catuḥśataka*,[70] calls the root of afflictive emotions (Tib. *nyon mongs;* Skt. *kleśa*). This is where Tranquil Abiding functions as single pointed concentration helping the mind to maintain a stable focus. After attaining Tranquil Abiding, within that state of stable focus, the mind analyzes ultimate reality, finally inducing actual Special Insight. Tranquil Abiding serves to provide undisturbed focus, while Special Insight serves as the wisdom which dispels the darkness of ignorance, source of all afflictions. Tsong kha pa says:

> If you light an oil-lamp for the purpose of viewing a picture in the middle of the night, you will see the depictions very clearly if the lamp is both very bright and undisturbed by wind. If the lamp is not bright, or is bright but flickering in the wind, then you will not see the images clearly. Likewise, when looking for the profound meaning, you will clearly see reality if you have both the wisdom that unerringly discerns the meaning of reality and an unmoving attention that stays at will on the object of meditation. However, if you do not have wisdom that knows how things are—even if you have a non-discursive concentration in which your mind is stable and does not scatter to other objects—then you lack the eyes which see reality (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 19).[71]

We can understand that the wisdom developed in Special Insight is for discerning the meaning of reality—the nature of things and events, wisdom of which dispels misconceptions about reality. These misconceptions are generated in the minds of untrained or ordinary beings under the impact of how things and events appear to them: as if they existed intrinsically, in their own right. This misconception is innately synced with the untrained mind when it perceives objects. The wisdom cultivated in Special Insight sees how things and events actually exist, which contradicts and eventually overrides misconceptions. Special Insight is a view which realizes everything is empty by nature. There is no objective essence in things and events. When one realizes this there is nothing to grasp. When grasping ceases, clinging ceases. This is fundamental to understanding the Middle Way philosophy regarding how deluded mind is brought to an end.

This absence of objective essence in things is sūtra-based Great Seal; the ultimate truth of phenomena. Realizing this ultimate attribute of all phenomena and strengthening that realization requires an undistracted state of mind. Thus, Tranquil Abiding is necessary to generating the highest levels of meditative concentration. Next, I will discuss the focal objects for Tranquil Abiding presented in Indian and Tibetan classical texts; and what Yeshe Gyaltsen has to say about it.

5. Focal Objects for Tranquil Abiding Meditation

In first discussing types and characteristics of meditative objects, a difference of opinion should be noted: Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (*Dwags po Bkra shis rnam gyal*, 1513–1587) in *Phyag chen zla ba'i 'od zer*[72] asserts that the object of Tranquil Abiding meditation is related with both sensorial and mental consciousness, whereas others assert that the object

of Tranquil Abiding is only related to mental consciousness. Tsongkhapa strongly asserts the latter view, making it a key point that the actual object of meditative concentration must be a direct object of mental consciousness. According to this, Tranquil Abiding practice must focus on a direct object of mental consciousness, implying that the object be a mental image or idea. Wallace, too, argues (Wallace 2005, p. 216) that to attain Tranquil Abiding it is necessary for mindfulness to be focused on a mental object; that meditative concentration is accomplished with mental, not sensory consciousness. In addition, in the above discussion of the nature of Tranquil Abiding, the citation from Kamalaśīla's *BK* indicates that one of the three components of Tranquil Abiding is 'continuously engaging an internal object'. Given that, Dakpo and Tsongkhapa have apparently contradictory opinions on whether a sensory object can be taken as an object of Tranquil Abiding. In my view, Dakpo's presentation, that sensory objects may be taken as objects of Tranquil Abiding, could be suitable during preliminary sessions of meditation but not during actual Tranquil Abiding training. Tsongkhapa and Kamalaśīla both assert that sensory objects like pebbles and twigs are not to be taken as objects of Tranquil Abiding during its actual training. Thus, in Ganden tradition, during actual Tranquil Abiding training, only mental objects are taken as focal objects, although objects of sense consciousness are perhaps not rejected as objects that could be used during preliminary sessions.

Apart from 'luminous nature of mind' being taken as an object of Tranquil Abiding in the context of Great Seal meditation, mainstream Indian Mahāyāna exegesis[73] presents various focal objects in four categories. Tsongkhapa and Yeshe Gyaltsen present these as well (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 560; Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f. 54a6).[74] They are (1) pervasive objects for meditation, (2) objects of meditation for purifying behavior, (3) objects of meditation for expertise, and (4) objects of meditation for purifying mental afflictions. Yeshe Gyaltsen says the first one is pervasive because it includes all meditative objects. The first category of meditative objects for Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight are universal because their subjective agent can take any object as their meditative object (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, 54ba).[75] Next, ugliness, loving-kindness and dependent-arising are examples of objects of meditation for purifying behavior because focusing on these can purify attachment, hatred, and pride.[76] The third category of objects involves expertise in the aggregates, constituents, sources, twelve links of dependent origination, and cause-effect relationships (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 561–63).[77] Fourthly, objects of meditation for purifying mental afflictions are divided into two: one for reducing the strength of the seeds of the afflictions and the other for eradicating the seeds of the afflictions. An example of the former is when a person of the desire realm views his or her realm as unpleasant and the higher realm as pleasant. This reduces attachment to the desire realm but does not eradicate it from its seeds. The latter case is when a person focuses on impermanence and all sixteen aspects of the Four Noble Truths. This can eradicate afflictions from their seeds (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 563–564).[78] Tsongkhapa further says that he has explained the purpose of the various types of objects and advises us to be skilled in choosing.[79] The fact that there is a variety of objects for cultivating meditative concentration implies and confirms that there is no single object that suits all meditators. For this reason, Kamalaśīla in his *BK*, says:

> There is not one definite object for [cultivating] Tranquil Abiding [80]

While quoting Kamalaśīla and agreeing that there is not just one fixed object for Tranquil Abiding meditation, Tsongkhapa in fact emphasizes the importance of choosing just one object to cultivate Tranquil Abiding. Tsongkhapa cites [Ārya-Śūra[81]'s] *Pāramitā-samāsa*:

> Solidify your mind's reflection
>
> By being firm on one object of meditation;
>
> Letting it flow to many objects
>
> Leads to a mind disturbed by afflictions (Asvaghosa 1982–1985).[82]

Tsongkhapa also quotes Atīśa's *BPP*[83] which states:

Settle your mind in virtue

On any single object of meditation (Atīśa Dipaṃkaraśrijñāna 1800).[84]

These indicate that, although there are many varied objects of meditation, we need to settle on a single one. Tsongkhapa makes the point with his phrase 'on any single object of meditation,' so that we will not make the mistake of shifting from one focal object to another when attempting to practice Tranquil Abiding. Zahler, referencing Gedun Lodro, (Zahler 2009, p. 84) says that Atiśa's quote given above is sometimes mistranslated as "any comfortable object of meditation is suitable", which leads to erroneous interpretations.[85] In carefully reading Tsongkhapa's comments on Atīśa's statement, he is not suggesting that we should randomly select any object.[86] Rather, he means that we should not just shift from one object to another. Another reading of Atīśa's statement implies that when choosing a meditative object, we ought to have an extraordinary reason; not just to cultivate meditative concentration.

As for extraordinary reasons for choosing a meditative object, in the following discussion Asaṅga presents a categorization of four types of individuals determined by whether they are more affected by attachment, hatred, or ignorance, or by all three equally. Based on these differing dispositions he then recommends what type of object to meditate upon. Asaṅga's *Śrāvaka Bhūmi* (hereafter, *ŚB*) also cites Buddha's response to a question of Revata in *Nam gru'i zhus pa'i mdo*.[87]

> Revata, if attachment uniquely dominates the behavior of a monk-yogi, a practitioner of yoga, then he focuses his mind on the object of meditation of ugliness[88]. If hatred dominates his behavior, he meditates on love; if ignorance dominates his behavior, then he meditates on the dependent arising of this condition; if pride dominates his behavior, he focuses his mind on the differentiation of the constituents. And: If discursiveness uniquely dominates his behavior, then he focuses his mind on an awareness of the exhalation and inhalation of the breath. In this way, he focuses his mind on an appropriate object of meditation (Aśanga 1724).[89]

Tsongkhapa in *GTSP* also cites Asaṅga, aligning with choosing the object of meditation based on a person's emotional and mental disposition.

Now, from among the many objects of meditation I have explained, on which object of meditation should you base yourself so as to achieve Tranquil Abiding? As stated in the sūtra passage cited above, there is no single, definite object; individuals require their particular object of meditation. Specifically, if you are determined to achieve Tranquil Abiding at the least, and if your behavior is dominated by attachment or another affliction, then you need to use a certain type of object of meditation (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 42).[90]

Zahler, on how to choose an object of meditation, also discusses the significance of dealing with the five predominant afflictive emotions—desire, hatred, obscuration, pride, and discursiveness. She says (Zahler 2009, p. 85) that one must pacify the predominant afflictive emotion; otherwise, one will not be able to use any other object of meditation.[91] This suggests that, to sustain our main focal object of meditation, we must first address the distracting factor that stems from our predominant afflictive emotion and then bring attention to our main object. Such an explanation aligns with the instructions of the Indian and Tibetan masters. By working with a meditative object that counters our predominant afflictive emotion we cultivate meditative concentration and are aided in abandoning that afflictive emotion as well; this is one special reason for choosing such an object.

The above-mentioned quotes by Asaṅga, Kamalaśīla, and Atīśa also indicate that choosing one definite object for all types of people is not possible. Tsongkhapa and Yeshe Gyaltsen both give similar explanations of the four categories of meditative objects, and both maintain that there should be an extraordinary reason for the choice of object. Given all this, Tsongkhapa nevertheless recommends a mental image of Buddha as an object of meditation. He thinks this is an appropriate focal object for a beginning meditator and explains the special reasons in *GTSP*:

> In this regard, to keep your attention on the physical form of the Buddha is to recall the Buddha, so it gives rise to limitless merit. When your image of that body is clear and firm, then there is a special intensification of your meditative focus on the field in relation to which you amass merit through prostration, offering, aspirational prayer, etc., as well as on the field in relation to which you purify obscurations through confession, restraint, etc. This kind of meditation serves many purposes. As stated earlier in the extract from the *King of Concentrations Sūtra*, it has advantages such as you are not losing your mindfulness of the Buddha as you die. And when you cultivate the mantra path, it heightens deity yoga, etc. *The Sūtra on the Concentration Which Perceives the Buddha of the Present Face to Face* gives a very clear and detailed treatment of these benefits, as well as the method for directing your mind toward the Buddha. Therefore, you should definitely come to know them from there, as Kamalasīla states in his *Stages of Meditation III*. Fearing verbosity, I do not write of them here. Consequently, it is skill in means when you seek an object of meditation by which you achieve concentration and also fulfill, along the way, some other special purpose (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 43).[92]

Tsongkhapa's recommendation of the mental image of a Buddha as the focal object for a 'beginning meditator,' means something quite different from the 'beginning meditator' of modern times. A current-day beginner might come from any background or walk-of-life, whereas Tsongkhapa's audience was predominantly monastic and lay people who were thoroughly steeped in Buddhist principles of karma, interdependence, non-violence, compassion and so on, and who had already developed admiration and devotion towards those teachings and towards their teacher, Buddha. For such a person, sustaining the image of a Buddha could raise their devotion higher, as well as strengthen their focus. Such a visualization might also be sustained during practices of taking refuge, bowing in homage, making offerings, confessing, rejoicing, and so on, amplifying an 'accumulation of merit' in the presence of a 'merit field,' as a visualized Buddha or an assembly of awakened beings is known. In *LRC*, Tsongkhapa says that such merit is a factor in accomplishing the physical body of an awakened being, whereas accumulation of wisdom is a factor in accomplishing the liberated mental body of an awakened being. Candrakīrti in his *Madhyamakāvatāra*[93] (hereafter, *MA*) says:

> Enthusiastic effort precedes all mental qualities.
>
> Merit and wisdom are causes of the two bodies. [94]

For Buddhist practitioners, or someone inclined towards Buddhism, visualizing a Buddha increases positive energy. It is considered 'virtuous' because it creates causes of happiness, peace, fulfillment, etc. A further precision in identifying Tsongkhapa's 'beginning meditator' is that they are probably a practitioner who does not as yet have experience of more advanced meditative techniques such as those involved in generation and completion stage meditation of Highest Yoga Tantra. Such meditation would ideally be based on prior fundamental knowledge of the sūtra aspects of meditation such as that found in Tranquil Abiding practice.

A modern day 'beginning meditator,' on the other hand, might not have as much enthusiasm for holding and sustaining a visualized image of a Buddha. Such a person might want to focus on another object that brings them positive energy. They might also choose a neutral object, for example, an orb of light; such an object would probably not be considered virtuous or non-virtuous, for either Buddhists or non-Buddhists. Thus, the term 'beginning meditator,' while frequently used in both classical and contemporary meditation instructions, means something different in the two contexts. This, in turn, could influence the advisability of using an image of Buddha as the focal object of Tranquil Abiding training.

Yeshe Gyaltsen, in *GPLG*, recommends the 'luminous nature of mind' as the focal object for other special reasons. Before we discuss this, let us speculate a bit as to why there are both flexible and restrictive presentations in historical texts regarding choosing an object

of meditation. In my view, Asaṅga and Kamalaśīla are more flexible in giving objects for cultivation of Tranquil Abiding—varying from neutral to virtuous. Perhaps this flexibility can serve the interests of both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. Atiśa, in his *BPP*[95] restricts the choice to virtuous objects. He advises looking carefully for the virtuous qualities in an object of meditation and allowing the mind to rest in virtue as one starts to focus on it. Tsongkhapa in *GTSP*, although presenting the varied range of objects, recommends Buddha's image, a virtuous object for someone inclined towards a specifically Buddhist practice.

Zahler does not explicitly say why there are flexible and restrictive presentations with regard to choosing a meditative object, but she describes (Zahler 2009, p. 84) a multitude of meditative objects that the meditator may investigate among various objects such as a Buddha image to see what works well. The meditator may read texts to see what objects of observation are recommended and try them out; or seek the advice of a virtuous spiritual friend (Tib. *dge ba'i bshes gnyen*, Skt. *kalyāṇamitra*). In suggesting how to choose a meditative object she cites Gedun Lodro, a scholar who she consults throughout her text. According to him, although meditators of sharp faculties can choose an object of observation by studying the texts and trying out the objects of observation set forth in them, most people need to rely on a teacher. She further describes the purpose of the meditative object from the point of view of Gelugpa (*dGe lugs pa*).[96] She says that Gelugpa reject the idea that any object of observation that seems easy or comfortable will do. Rather, the object of observation has to be one that will pacify the mind. Therefore, an object that arouses attachment or hatred is not suitable. This assertion places a certain restriction on the choice of meditative object; that it should be an object which pacifies or calms the mind rather than one which disturbs it. After consulting texts or a spiritual guide, one chooses an object which serves the purpose of the meditation.

Wallace presents a parallel discussion of this topic. He lays out (Wallace 2005, p. 146) a presentation of meditative objects, appropriate objects for specific individuals, and settling on an object. He asks, (Wallace 2005, p. 149) "on the basis of which object is quiescence [Tranquil Abiding] practiced in this context?" In response, he begins with the general list of meditative objects for various individuals as previously explained. He diverges, however, by recommending (ibid., p. 149) that people who are dominated by ideation [*rnam rtog*, discursive thought] should meditate on inhalation and exhalation of the breath. Then, referring to the classical texts, *Pratyupanna-buddha-sammukhāvasthita-sūtra*, the *Samādhirājasūtra*, and the middle and final *Bhāvanākrama*, he notes that these texts promote the practice of meditation focusing on a mental image of Buddha's body. He further refers to Bodhibhadra's instructions, as quoted by Atiśa in *BPP*, saying that this master also promotes meditation focusing on a Buddha's body. Wallace similarly indicates that, in spite of the presentation of various objects, the consensus among scholars is that a single object should be chosen.

6. Taking Luminous Nature of Mind as a Meditative Object

Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* recommends the 'luminous nature of mind' as the focal object for Tranquil Abiding; this is in the context of Great Seal meditation. He says, "We must seek an object that is not just for stilling or stabilizing the mind". Why is luminous nature of mind taken as a focal object, what is the nature of that object, and how does mind take it as an object of meditation? He declares:

> (55a1) There is an extremely important reason to take our own mind as the object of meditative concentration. We have been controlled by our mind since beginningless time. Not being able to control our own mind, it leads us everywhere, wandering without choice in the three realms of cyclic existence[97] (Skt. *saṃsāra*), controlled by mental afflictions and experiencing ceaseless suffering. If we want to free ourselves from this sea of suffering, we must get control of our own mind. Therefore, it is very important to identify the nature of our mind, focus on it, and meditate on it with single-pointed concentration.

He also cites the Mahāyāna philosopher, Nāgārjuna, in his *Suhṛllekha*,[98] as to why, according to Buddha, luminous nature of mind is taken as a focal object, which says that it is for the purpose of subduing one's own mind, Buddha has proclaimed that mind as the basis for transformation. Furthermore, Yeshe Gyaltsen quotes Śāntideva in *Bodhicaryāvatāra*[99] (55b1) as to why mind is the root of transformation. This citation consists of twenty-five lines in Tibetan, grouped in five main themes: (1) The first four lines use the image of a mad elephant to illustrate an untamed mind; mind that is not under ones own control. He asserts that there is no enemy worse than an unsubdued mind because it can harm us during this life and cause us to suffer in future lives; this is much more damage than a mad elephant can do. (2) The second four lines correspond to a tamed elephant, illustrating a subdued mind. The image is that of a wild elephant subdued by the rope of mindfulness. Once mind is subdued, fear comes to an end, and all virtue, or positive factors, come into one's hand. This verse indicates what subdues the mind, as well as the benefits of doing so. (3) The next six lines correspond to images of different kinds of animals and spirits that could potentially disturb us. This symbolizes harm created, essentially, by our own mind's labelling. The assertion is that all fear and external harm is caused by the labelling done by an unsubdued mind. (4) The next six lines explain that when one's mind is subdued, all outer sources of fear and harm are subdued. Thus, he points out Buddha's assertion that all fear and sufferings derive from one's own mind, and that mind is also the source for the transcendence of suffering. (5) The following five lines inform us that, if we do not understand the mode of being of our mind, we shall not be able to accomplish our wish to achieve happiness and avoid suffering; and we will be lost in wandering. The implication is that we must handle our mind properly and carefully protect it. In conclusion, the significance of knowing the mode of being of our mind is that this will enable us to protect ourselves from misery and aimless wandering. These citations explain why mind is taken as the object of meditative concentration for cultivating Tranquil Abiding in the practice of Great Seal.

From a sūtra point of view, taking luminous nature of mind as an object of meditation helps us to cognize the mind's lack of material form. It is a first stage towards gradually helping us see how we grasp mind's inherent existence and consequently synthesize a self-grasping sense of 'I'. According to Buddhist Mahāyāna philosophical doctrine, until we see how this grasping takes hold and eliminate it, there is no other means to remove the source of beginningless suffering. Therefore, although there is no difference in subtlety between emptiness of self and external phenomena, Candrakīrti, in *MA*, recommends first meditating on the emptiness of our inner self rather than the emptiness of external phenomena.

> Wisdom realizes that all faults and afflictions
> arise from this view of a transitory collection;
> and realizing that self is the object of those [incorrect] projections,
> the yogi [first] puts a stop to the view of self. [100]

It is easier to identify our grasping of self at first, than it is to recognize our grasping of external phenomena. One reason for this is that the attribution of self is singular and does not change, whereas the attribution of external phenomena is plural and keeps changing.

Identifying how the mind grasps for inherent existence of self and external phenomena must precede realization of the emptiness of self and external phenomena. Focusing on the luminous nature of mind is key to realizing that mind is empty of shape, color, all physicality, and conceptual thought. This meditation is meant to develop to a second stage, wherein one realizes that not only is the mind empty of the above-mentioned attributes, but is empty of something more subtle: an imagined inherent existence to which the untrained mind desperately clings.

In the following we will explore the nature of this object and how the mind takes it as the object of meditation. Yeshe Gyaltsen says:

> First identify the nature of the gross mind, focus on it, single-pointedly and bring it under control. Having done that, once it is serviceable to focus on any object one wishes, seek the profound view, and get experience of suchness. Once one has this experience, within a state of stable Deity yoga, one should penetrate the vital points of the subtle body and strive in the methods to bring the extremely subtle wind-mind under control. When the extremely subtle wind-mind manifests and is controlled, the subtle concepts and their moving winds automatically stop and the transcendent wisdom of innate clear light dawns. That [timeless] wisdom is the cause of omniscience, like a fertile seed. Without having to gather accumulations over countless eons of lifetimes, based on this single clear light mind, the accumulations can be quickly completed. This is the ultimate swift path to awakening; you should understand the ultimate meaning of these profound instructions (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f. 55b6).[101]

GPLG being a treatise that combines sūtra and mantra systems, there is reference to both gross and subtle minds, the latter being elucidated exclusively in the mantra system. The terms relate to the gross and subtle wind-energies which are co-operating factors of those minds, whose function influences those minds. Just as gross minds and wind-energies operate in conjunction with each other, so do subtle minds and winds. In fact, they are of one nature. According to the mantra system only gross minds and wind-energies operate while a person is alive and awake, while subtle minds and energies manifest during sleep and during the death process. Attributes of gross and subtle minds are taught extensively in Nāgārjuna's *Pañcakrama*;[102] Āryadeva's *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*;[103] and Nāropā's *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprabhāva*.[104] In sūtra context, although there is no explicit description of gross and subtle minds in terms of their associated wind energies, they are distinguished in relation to sense and mental consciousnesses, the former being grosser than the latter. Then, within mental consciousness, degrees of subtlety are distinguished in terms of how well the mind can focus single-pointedly on its object; focus improves as the mind becomes subtler.

Yeshe Gyaltsen calls the conceptual, language-based mind, gross mind, and asks us to cease all thoughts of past and future. When all thought ceases, we find an absence of thought fluctuation, just the empty space of our mind without conceptual content. In this empty space all thoughts arise and dissolve. When we recognize this state free of concepts and movement of thought we see the nature of gross mind. This is how the conventional, luminous nature of mind is understood. We will further discuss how to meditate on it.

Holding this empty state of mind single pointedly, we keep the mind from conceptual elaboration. When we control fluctuating thoughts of the gross mind, we can bring mind under our own control: mind becomes malleable and serviceable to our wishes. Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* explains how to begin this meditation.

> When you have identified the focal object and begin to meditate on it, adjust your physical posture well. Make prayers to your master with faith and devotion so strong that tears come to your eyes and you get goosebumps, as explained above. After that the master dissolves into you. Firmly feeling that the master's mind and your mind have mixed together inseparably, meditate on your mind's clear and knowing nature, totally empty like space, without any form at all. With sharp awareness identifying whatever appearance is arising, with strong aspiration, think, "I shall mentally hold this object, and hold it single-pointedly" (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.56b3).[105]

At this time, Yeshe Gyaltsen says to mentally hold just that focal object, no activities of the past, present, or future, no hopes or fears. Not letting yourself be carried away by any thought whatsoever, he says to focus on your mind's clear and knowing nature, holding it single-pointedly (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57a1).[106]

Gungthang Tenpai Drönmé (*Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me*, 1762–1823), in his *Notes on Great Seal*, poses the following query and quotes the response of Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen:[107]

> Query: As a result, what happens after having meditated [primarily with the means to settling the mind]?
>
> Response: In meditative equipoise the nature of the mind is seen to be empty, vivid, and clear. (Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen n.d. a, f.73a5)

Gungthang further explains that the nature of mind is not obscured by any thought. It must be vivid and clear, as if it can reflect all the particles in a wall. While focusing on the object, the mind should be in a completely wakeful state such that it can hold the different aspects of the object; there is nothing the mind could not perceive regarding its object. Seen with such a state of mind directly, mind is seen to be empty of any shape, form, or color: this is a recognition of the nature of the mind,[108] its conventional reality; and a method to obtain a settling of the mind. It is praised as an unexcelled instruction which places awakening in our hands as easily as giving a glass of beer to another person.

In the system of Ganden scholars such as Gungthang Tenpai Drönmé, when Tranquil Abiding is attained using luminous nature of mind as the object, what is recognized is the conventional nature of the mind; however, the Tranquil Abiding thus attained is identified as being extraordinary compared to Tranquil Abiding attained focusing on other objects. Gungthang Tenpai Drönmé says,

> In our system, this amounts to seeing the conventional nature of the mind and is a system for developing mental stability. Even so, if one develops fully qualified mental stability on the nature of mind, it is the basis for development of all qualities of Tranquil Abiding and Special Insight including the actual concentrations and approaches to the concentrations; it is therefore very important. Thus, these instructions on how to cultivate Tranquil Abiding on the luminous nature of mind are not just for acquiring knowledge of others' systems. Luminous-nature-of-mind-based Tranquil Abiding is the basis for easily realizing the ultimate nature of the mind, which is the *next* topic to be discussed. In order to develop Special Insight [into the ultimate nature of mind], one must first cultivate extraordinary Tranquil Abiding [focused on the conventional nature of the mind]. [109]

This statement clearly reveals why mind is taken as the focal object for cultivating Tranquil Abiding. Gungthang Tenpai Drönmé says that it makes it easier to realize the ultimate nature of the mind, which is sūtra-based Great Seal. Changkya Rölpai Dorjé (*Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdor rje*, 1717–1786) also describes why recognizing the nature of mind and focusing on it is significant. Gungthang cites Changkya Rölpai Dorjé in *Notes on Great Seal*.

> Thus, it is something ineffable yet, if mind is left in its normal state without analysis, all sorts of things appear. It is the creator of all that is pleasant or painful, good, or faulty, from the peak of cyclic existence to the worst hell. Up to now we have been under our mind's control. Now we need to make it something we control. That is the reason recognizing and focusing on mind is given primary emphasis. [110]

Thus, we have discussed the significance of taking a Buddha's image as the focal object according to Tsongkhapa and taking mind as the focal object according to Yeshe Gyaltsen and Gungthang Tenpai Drönmé in the context of Great Seal practice. Next, we will discuss some of the mental faults that prevent cultivation of meditative concentration.

7. Analyzing the First Mental Fault and Its Countering Factors

In both sūtra and tantra tradition, as a general structure, teachings on meditative concentration identify nine stages of mental placement leading to Tranquil Abiding. During the training eight antidotes are applied to counteract five faults. Tsongkapa quotes the *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkāra*[111] and *Madhyānta-vibhāga-kārikā*:[112]

> Maitreya, as well, taught nine stages of mental placement and eight applications for abandoning mental faults. [113]

The general structure of meditative concentration mentioned in the great scriptures is very consistent with that mentioned in the mantra system. In particular, regarding meditative concentration, five faults and how to eliminate them is explained in great detail in the teachings of the sūtra piṭaka.[114]

Tsongkhapa also states:

> Where cultivating stages of meditation is concerned, most texts on *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* teach cultivation of Tranquil Abiding according to *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*. Such descriptions involve cultivating Tranquil Abiding by means of eight antidotes to five faults. [115]

Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG*[116] says that the three *Great Mother Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* and the Anuttarayoga Tantras are the authoritative sources for Great Seal. The *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* have two aspects of knowledge: a wisdom aspect and a conduct aspect. Both were passed down through a successive line of masters. While the explicit content of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* is the philosophy of emptiness, its implicit or hidden content, the conduct aspect, is the 'stages of realization' to full awakening. According to Paṇchen Sonam Drakpa, the only two trailblazers of Buddha's doctrine are Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga. To establish the emptiness teachings of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, Nāgārjuna composed *Rigs tshogs drug;*[117] and to establish the stages of realization to full awakening taught in the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, Maitreya composed *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*[118] and so forth. Buddha prophesied that Asaṅga would systematize the mind-only philosophy and clarify the meaning of the conduct aspect of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* in this world. Akya Yongzin Lobsang Dondrub (*A kya' yongs 'dzin blo bzang don grub* 1740–1827) cites the Great Commentary[119] of *Manjuśrī-mūla-tantra*[120] in his *Shing rta'i srol byed kyi rnam gzhag skal bzang mgul rgyan* (1971a, p. 557):[121]

> After my passing away,
> nine hundred years later,
> an ordained monk named Asaṅga
> will become expert on the meaning of the treatises.
> He will delineate the definitive meaning
> and the interpretive meaning of the sūtras in many ways.
> He is one whose true nature is to teach insight in the world
> and he will be one who has realized the knowledge of the treatises.
> The one who realizes this is called Śāladhūti [122]

Tsongkhapa, Paṇchen Sonam Drakpa, Akya Yongzin Lobsang Dondrub and many other Ganden masters do not seem to agree on Maitreya being a trailblazer of the Buddha's doctrine. Jetsün Chökyi Gyaltsen (*Rje btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan*, 1469–1544)[123] asserts[124] that Maitreya trailblazed the meaning of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* in Tuṣita. Akya Yongzin responds to this by clarifying that Maitreya, by composing *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and other treatises in Tuśita, did indeed clarify the hidden meaning of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, but that he was not its trailblazer because (a) the system elucidating the hidden meaning of the Sūtra predates Maitreya, so he did not trailblaze it; (b) trailblazers of the Buddha's doctrine must be a human, which excludes celestial beings such as Maitreya; and (c) Maitreya, was not prophesied by Buddha as a trailblazer of his doctrine.

This is the context in which we find that Maitreya was not a trailblazer. However, according to traditional sources, Buddha did pass the hidden meaning, the conduct aspect of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, first to Maitreya; and then Maitreya transmitted it to Asaṅga. It is maintained that an unbroken line of masters carried the instructions from Asaṅga up to the present day. Hence, Tibetan classical authors such as Yeshe Gyaltsen quote Maitreya and Asaṅga and their successors to support the presentation of Ganden Great Seal Tranquil Abiding training, thus aligning themselves with what they consider to be authoritative

sources. The attribution of *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and the other four treatises' authorship to Maitreya is disputed in the academic world where authorship tends to be attributed to Asaṅga.

It is evident that Yeshe Gyaltsen also aligns himself with Tsongkhapa regarding application of eight antidotes to counteract five mental faults and he cites the same sources that Tsongkhapa does. Yeshe Gyaltsen says, if one wishes to cultivate meditative concentration correctly one must cultivate eight antidotes to remove the five faults just as taught by Maitreya.[125] See Table 2. for the corresponding link between five mental faults and their eight antidotes.

Table 2. Five mental faults and their eight antidotes described in Tsongkhapa's *LRC* (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 600–2) quoting Asaṅga, Maitreya and Kamalaśīla's texts.

1. Laziness (mental sloth)	1. Faith
	2. Aspiration
	3. Enthusiasm
	4. Pliancy
2. Forgetting instruction	5. Mindfulness
3. Mental excitement and Laxity	6. Meta-awareness
4. Not applying antidote when mental fault arises	7. Application which involves concerted effort
5. Applying antidote when mental fault does not arise	8. Application of Equanimity

Yeshe Gyaltsen identifies the following five faults: (1) laziness[126] [mental sloth], (2) forgetfulness of instruction,[127] (3) laxity and mental excitement,[128] (4) non-application,[129] (5) and [over] application.[130]

Out of these five, laziness prevents engaging in concentration training and hinders engagement in the training. Thus, it is described as an impediment during the preliminary stage of training. The two main elements of laziness in this context are not being enthusiastic to engage in the training; and being enthusiastic to engage in activities that go against the training. If we are not capable of eliminating laziness it will not allow us to engage in the training from the very start. Or, although we start, we cannot sustain it so that our training easily declines.

Therefore, both Yeshe Gyaltsen and Tsongkhapa emphasize countering laziness first. To eliminate laziness, they prescribe internalizing the benefits of meditative concentration and developing enthusiasm based on firm conviction in those benefits. Then, inspiration for developing meditative concentration will arise from within, and this will help to develop concentration more quickly. In addition, both authors have pointed to the sequential process for removing laziness.[131] Yeshe Gyaltsen outlines it in reverse order: If one attains the bliss-endowed mental and physical pliancies and a controlled functionality of the mind, laziness is reversed from the root. To attain this one must be able to take delight in making continuous effort. For this to happen one must have a great liking for meditative concentration without any hesitation. For that to happen one must develop a strong aspiration seeking to attain meditative concentration. For that to happen one must develop a stable faith captivated by seeing the qualities of meditative concentration. Therefore, one should first train in faith by contemplating the good qualities of meditative concentration.

Regarding how to develop yearning for meditative concentration, Tsongkhapa quotes *Madhyānta-vibhāga-kārikā*.[132]

The basis and what is based upon it

Are the cause and its result.

The basis is yearning which is the source of effort. That which is based upon it is perseverance. The cause of yearning aspiration is faith convinced of the beneficial qualities [of concentration]. The result of effort is pliancy. The benefits of meditative concentration-

based[133] meditation are as follows. If Tranquil Abiding is accomplished mental joy and physical bliss increase so one immediately becomes very comfortable; and finding extreme pliancy of body and mind, mind can be applied just as one wishes to any virtuous object. Involuntary distraction to mistaken objects is eliminated so that faulty conduct does not much occur; and virtuous conduct undertaken becomes more powerful. Realized qualities of higher perceptions and miraculous abilities can be attained in dependence upon Tranquil Abiding. By realizing Special Insight of the view in dependence upon Tranquil Abiding one may swiftly sever *saṃsāra*[134] from the root. Thinking about such qualities increases ones enthusiasm for meditative concentration. This will make it easier to accomplish and, once accomplished, to cultivate repeatedly, making it difficult for it to degenerate.[135] Once one has addressed laziness and procrastination, in the actual training one needs to identify and establish the focal object.

8. Identifying and Establishing the Focal Object of Tranquil Abiding

In this context the focal object is the pure sphere of awareness of one's own mind. Once the focal object is identified, all thoughts of past and future are reduced. Without forgetting the focal object, one pays attention to the current state of pure consciousness, focusing on it for some time without losing it. Yeshe Gyaltsen already explained above in *GPLG* how to begin this meditation. Now, let us see what Yeshe Gyaltsen has said about identifying the focal object.

> At this time mentally hold just that focal object; (57a1) no activities of the past, present, or future, no hopes or fears. Not letting yourself be carried away by any thought whatsoever, focus on your mind's clear and knowing nature, holding it single-pointedly. Not making it very long at first, still your mind for a little while (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57a1).[136]

Next, we will discuss the criterion for determining that the focal object has been found. Here, Maitreya and Kamalaśīla's instructions on the nine stages of mental placement become relevant. At the first stage of mental placement, one must attempt to focus on the focal object only vaguely; not clearly in all its detail. This is because one must start with what short-term memory is capable of holding. As a beginner, one should not make the sessions of meditation too long, but shorter and more frequent. This is asserted by both Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* and Tsongkhapa in *GTSP*. Thus, when this focal object vaguely appears to one's mind one identifies it, thinking, 'This is the focal object'. At this point one has established the focal object.

Yeshe Gyaltsen mentions in *GPLG* that when one focuses on the image of the pure sphere of consciousness all gross conceptual thought ceases; but this does not mean one goes into a sleep-like state. If one goes into a sleep-like state without gross conceptual thought, but without identifying the focal object or remembering it, and without the necessary mental monitoring, it does not align with the components of Tranquil Abiding training taught by Maitreya, Asaṅga and Kamalaśīla. The skills of identifying, remembering, and monitoring will be explained below.

We will now look at what Yeshe Gyaltsen further says about the focal object in his text *GPLG*.

> Even if your object does not appear very clearly and precisely as the master has introduced it, if it is only partial or general, be satisfied with that and think, "This is the object, I must hold it". Otherwise, striving to meditate and visualize, hoping for the object to immediately appear very clearly just as the master introduced it is the completely wrong approach; it shows a lack of understanding of the instructions on meditative concentration (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57a1-4).[137]

Such intensive effort can clear the mind slightly but does not help to develop meditative concentration; moreover, it causes mental excitement and big obstacles in developing meditative concentration. In that case the mind quickly becomes hardened and irritated, and apprehensive to meditate again. It is said that you can even become nauseous just

from seeing the meditation cushion! With these points in mind, Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gylatsen states:

> One should settle in meditative equipoise for short durations (Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen n.d. a, f.72b6).[138]

At this time, (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57b1) when the mind fastens on its object, the first mental placement is reached. With regard to this meaning, Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gylatsen states:

> With the object vaguely appearing
> without altering it at all,
> without thoughts, such as of hope or fear,
> briefly settle in equipoise, unmoving (Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen n.d. a, f.72b5).[139]

9. Analyzing the Second Mental Fault and Its Countering Factors

Once the mind can establish the focal object it is then held by one's memory or mindfulness. However, due to its limited capacity, the mind cannot hold the focal object for very long. When one loses the object from one's mind this is the second fault to be countered in Tranquil Abiding training.

In the general Tranquil Abiding training of the sūtra-based system there are two primary causes of losing the focal object: laxity and excitement. In the tantra system of Great Seal Tranquil Abiding, in addition to these two, mental wandering is also considered a hindrance to remembering the focal object. This implies that the tantra-based system also offers extraordinary means for counteracting these faults. There are, indeed, skills that are attributes of Tranquil Abiding training in the tantra-based system that are noted to be far more effective than the sūtra-based training. Gungthang asserts:

> In the context of cultivating mental stability, the sūtra system does not eliminate subtle discursive thought; but the mantra system does. This essential point makes the tantra system more powerful for accomplishing Tranquil Abiding and so forth. [140]

We now know that laxity, gross movement of thought, and mental excitement can hinder holding of the focal object. Therefore, Ganden Great Seal system emphasizes mindfulness, a mental factor that can remember a phenomenon and remain undistracted while it focuses on its object. In addition, in James Apple's article (Apple 2015, p. 24) on mindfulness and meta-awareness in Tsongkhapa's *GTSP*, he describes mindfulness as the foundation of cultivating concentration, and that it primarily means not forgetting the object of meditation, and not becoming distracted while one is meditating. He further states that one apprehends an object of meditation with one's attention and stabilizes the attention on the object without analyzing anything new.

Also introduced at this point is meta-awareness, a mental factor that monitors whether mindfulness has lost its object or not; whether it is about to wander from its focal object or not.

The implementation of these mental factors is to sustain attention to the focal object, so that meditative concentration is enhanced to gradually become genuine Tranquil Abiding. Regarding these mental factors, Yeshe Gyaltsen quotes Asaṅga on the nature of mindfulness (Tib. *dran pa*; Skt. *smṛti)* from his *Abhidharma-samuccaya*:

> What is mindfulness? Non-forgetfulness of an object with which the mind is familiar, which functions to prevent wandering (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57b5).[141]

In addition to its nature, both Tsongkhapa in *GTSP* and Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* emphasize three characteristics of mindfulness: (a) The object characteristic: It must be a familiar object, that very object pointed out by the teacher's instructions. Familiarize oneself with it again and again. (b) The cognitive characteristic: This is cultivating just that object without forgetting it. As for this non-forgetfulness, it is not sufficient just to be able

to remember it when someone asks you about it or when you think about it. It must be focused on single-pointedly, without losing it even slightly, remembering it uninterruptedly. (c) The function characteristic: Once there is such a cognitive characteristic there will be no distraction to anything other than the object (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57b6).[142]

The key to such extraordinary mindfulness lies in keeping the flow of focus uninterruptedly on the object, like water streaming uninterruptedly through a pipe. It is not just remembering the object when someone asks about it, rather it is keeping a flow of the memory of that object; this is a second characteristic of mindfulness.

Next, we will discuss the role of meta-awareness (Tib. *shes bzhin;* Skt. *saṃprajanya*) in Tranquil Abiding training. Meta-awareness arises as a result of sustaining mindfulness. Yeshe Gyaltsen also points out that, without sustaining mindfulness, cultivating an agent to monitor it is not possible.

> Since meta-awareness arises as a result of mindfulness, there is no way to sustain meta-awareness without knowing the key points for sustaining mindfulness (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.57b4).[143]

Another key point that both Tsongkhapa and Yeshe Gyaltsen emphasize is that there is no way to cultivate genuine meditative concentration other than by cultivating and sustaining mindfulness. Yeshe Gyatsen quotes Mañjuśrī's instruction to Tsongkhapa:

> Having meditated on renunciation and bodhicitta,
> in the presence of the great flame of mindfulness, unceasing,
> the kindling of the six objects is definitely burnt up (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, 58a6).[144]

What Tsongkhapa says regarding maintaining focus on the object is that there is a method for the mind not to wander from its object; and another method to recognize whether the mind is wandering or about to wander, or not. The former is the function of mindfulness, and the latter is the function of meta-awareness. Tsongkha pa quotes the following lines from Vasubandhu's *Mahāyāna-sutrālaṃkāra-bhāṣya*.[145]

> Mindfulness and meta-awareness bring about close mental focus because the former prevents your attention from wandering from its focal object; and the latter clearly recognizes if your attention is wandering. [146]

The role of meta-awareness is to monitor whether attention, while fastened to its focal object, is wandering to other objects or not. Having noted this, application of meta-awareness and how it arises from mindfulness will now be explained. Yeshe Gyaltsen says that meta-awareness is intermittently applied, checking up on one's focus without losing mindfulness single-pointedly focused on the object; it checks if attention has wandered from the focal object or not; checks whether laxity, mental excitement and so forth have interfered or not. He clearly asserts that, if meta-awareness is performed in separation from a state of mindfulness, one has not understood how to train in focusing the mind. In fact, practicing meta-awareness independent of the flowing focus of mindfulness will ruin the training. Yeshe Gyaltsen says:

> As for meta-awareness, it is within a state of not losing the mode of apprehension of mindfulness holding its object single-pointedly that meta-awareness checks whether the mind is remaining on its object or not; whether obstacles such as mental excitement and laxity are occurring or not. Furthermore, after releasing hold on an object, if a new watchful mind is generated, this is an example of the fault of not knowing how to meditate [in Tranquil Abiding]. Checking like that with a new watchful mind will not help to develop meditative concentration; furthermore, it will harm it greatly. [147]

The above description of the role of meta-awareness suggests that meta-awareness must be generated while mindfulness is focused on the object. While mindful cognitive awareness is flowing uninterruptedly, a part of the mind gently checks. As an analogy Yeshe Gyaltsen describes two friends strolling along together. Both are aware of the street

ahead and simultaneously aware of the behavior of their friend out of the corner of their eye. This is how meta-awareness must be cultivated while in the state of mindfulness. Meta-awareness arises as a result of mindfulness and requires a sustained flow of mindfulness, not just an instant of short-lived mindfulness. Therefore, Yeshe Gyaltsen says one needs to check whether laxity or mental excitement has interfered, while not wandering from the focal object.

There are two methods to cultivate meta-awareness. One way is to keep the mind single pointedly focused on the focal object with a continuous flow of mindfulness. This is the main cause of generating meta-awareness. He quotes from *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*:[148]

> When mindfulness guards
> the gate of the mind,
> Meta-awareness arrives;
> Even if it is gone, it will return. [149]

Another way of cultivating meta-awareness is, *while* in a state of sustained attention to the focal object, checking intermittently whether laxity or excitement has occurred, or is on the verge of occurring. He again quotes *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra:*

> Examining repeatedly
> the state of one's body and mind.
> This alone is, in brief,
> the definition of guarding meta-awareness. [150]

Thus, meta-awareness arises within a state of sustained mindfulness; not by cultivating meta-awareness after the focal object has been lost. Mindfulness and meta-awareness share a cause-effect relationship like a crop growing in a field. Both mindfulness and meta-awareness function to guard the mind by directing attention to the desired object. Yeshe Gyaltsen says that a person's skill in training the mind is a matter of how well he or she masters mindfulness and meta-awareness.

Before concluding this section, let us look at some points other contemporary authors have made about mindfulness and meta-awareness. Apple (2015, p. 31) asserts that one cannot be sure that one's meditative session is free of laxity and excitement until one develops a potent level of meta-awareness that recognizes when subtle laxity and excitement are about to take place. Wallace (2005, p. 171) also attributes to meta-awareness[151] the ability to recognize laxity and excitation as soon as they arise, as well as to recognize when they are on the verge of occurring. Dunne (2015, p. 252) presents a chart for traditional sources of mindfulness, based on geographical origin. He classifies the sources into two main categories, namely (a) classical and (b) non-dual. He says that (a) classical mindfulness is drawn from the following practices: (1) vipassanā practice emerging from mainstream Theravāda in Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka; (2) śamatha[152] and (3) Mind Training;[153] whereas (b) non-dual mindfulness is drawn from the following practices: Chan (China), Zen (Japan), Seon (Korea), Mahāmudrā (Tibetan), Dzogchen (Tibetan), and Thai Forest Tradition.[154] Dunne states that according to abhidharma, mindfulness is a mental factor that prevents the mind from losing track of its object; and that it occurs in the context of subject-object duality. He says that this duality is the source of delusion, and that mindfulness based in this duality can be a source of delusion. Furthermore, he asserts that those who cultivate non-dual experience should not seek to cultivate 'mindfulness,' but instead should cultivate 'non-mindfulness' which he says is, 'often conceptualized as an objectless mindfulness of mere non-distraction' (Tib. *ma yengs tsam gyi dran pa*). Likewise, Deroche (2021, p. 875), regarding mindfulness in Dzogchen, discusses another classification of mindfulness: 'deliberate mindfulness' (Tib. *'jur dran*), which he describes as effortful mindfulness; a second type related to 'open-expanse' (Tib. *klong*) which he describes as 'effortless mindfulness;' and a third type, 'non-mindfulness' (Tib. *dran med*), described as 'forming the level of fruit'. These terms which Dunne and Deroche employ in decription of mindfulness: mindfulness of mere non-distraction, effortful mindfulness, and effortless

mindfulness; were employed in pre-Ganden texts but not in the Ganden tradition. However, even though these terms are not used by Tsongkhapa, Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen, and Yeshe Gyaltsen, roughly equivalent roles of mindfulness are, in fact, presented in the Ganden Tranquil Abiding manuals.[155]

These three progressive stages of mindfulness are presented in the following verse by Patrul Ugyen Jigmé Chökyi Wangpo (*dPal sprul O rgyan 'Jigs med Chos kyi dbang po* 1808–1887):

> Mindfulness is the only base
> Of all the means to taming the mind
> First, it is deliberate mindfulness and then it is open expanse
> Finally, it is non-mindfulness within the clear light
> Only mindfulness abandons all moral wrong doing [156]

A mental factor with the role of remembering anything, events, places, persons, etc, seems similar in meaning to deliberate mindfulness ('*jur dran*') if not identical. The role of such mindfulness is frequently mentioned in the Ganden manuals. For example, those manuals say that one must first address one's laziness toward Tranquil Abiding training, which is described as a lack of enthusiasm or a will to meditate. The countermeasures involve generating enthusiasm by learning and then repeatedly contemplating many benefits of meditative concentration. This gives rise to a deliberate intention to practice mindfulness.

Roles similar to the latter two kinds of mindfulness are often associated with mindfulness in the practice of Tantra in the Ganden tradition. The term, mindfulness of 'open-expanse' (*klong*), might be compared to Ganden manual instructions regarding the experience of mind's space-like emptiness of inherent existence. The term '*dran med*' may correspond with clear light training of anuttarayoga tantra (Tib. *rnal 'byor bla med kyi rgyud*) in the Ganden tradition. In that training, no gross mindfulness can be sustained; only a subtle mindfulness which might suggest a 'mindfulness of mere non-distraction'. In the state of clear light, gross levels of subject-object conceptuality have dissolved. Meditation on emptiness at that level is known as equipoise in clear light. According to the Ganden master, A kya Yongzin Lobsang Dondrub, there are two types of clear light: 1. Objective clear light, which is the subtle level of emptiness and 2. Subjective clear light which is wisdom realizing the subtle level of emptiness. Another term used is clear light of death (Tib. *'chi ba'i 'od gsal*), which refers to the primordial mind (*gnyug ma'i sems*), also called mother clear light (Tib. *ma'i 'od gsal*), that naturally manifests in beings at the end of the dissolution process of death. This is not a qualified clear light, yet it is called clear light because at that moment any gross level of subject-object duality has ceased. When a practitioner on the path trains in clear light meditation during the waking and sleep states, this is called child clear light (Tib. *bu'i 'od gsal*). This training in the child clear light enables the practitioner to recognize the mother clear light. Untrained individuals experience the primordial mind of mother clear light, but they do not ascertain or recognize it. When, based on their practice of child clear light, the practitioner recognizes mother clear light, this is called mixing of the clear lights and leads to qualified clear light realization (A kya Yongzin 1971b, pp. 314–15).[157] One might call this *dran med* or *ma yengs tsam gi dran pa*, in which 'deliberate mindfulness' is no longer operative.

10. Other Countering Factors: Six Settlings of Mind

Yeshe Gyaltsen in *GPLG* briefly lists Six Settlings of Mind. He says that trainees of his day could more easily attain the stages of Tranquil Abiding if they were to practice by means of six modes of settling: (1) Settling like the sun free from clouds. (2) Settling like a great condor sailing through the sky. (3) Settling like an ocean free of waves. (4) Settling like a young child looking at the temple. (5) Settling like the tracks of a bird in space. (6) Settling like soft wool spreading out. These come from the teachings of many great adepts such as Saraha. Their individual meanings are explained in the *Extended Bright*

Lamp by Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen, so Yeshe Gyaltsen does not set them forth in *GPLG*.[158] However, he points out that "settling like a young child looking at the temple" is an especially good precept for beginners and is repeatedly praised by the great adepts of India. Milarepa (*Mi la ras pa*) highly praised the practice of the essential points of the Six Settlings. In my view, the reason these Six Settling of mind are praised is that they include instructions on dealing with the presence of distracting thoughts during Tranquil Abiding training; whereas in mainstream Tranquil Abiding training the main focus is on counteracting such thoughts immediately once they are detected by meta-awareness. In *GPLG*, Yeshe Gyaltsen simply advises that, while thus focusing single-pointedly on the object, if, although one tries, one is unable to stop the proliferation of thought, then, within a state of mindfulness not wandering from single-pointed focus, look directly at the face of whatever thought arises. To what object does thought wander? In what manner does it wander? One need to check.[159]

11. Some Challenges of Tranquil Abiding Meditation

Both types of training manuals, whether based on luminous nature of mind or other meditative objects, describe the same prerequisites and application of eight factors to counter five faults, and may require the same level of knowledge and effort for attainment of fully qualified Tranquil Abiding. However, the recommendations of Kamalaśīla, Āryaśūra, and Atiśa to choose an appropriate meditative object based on one's mental disposition; and Asaṅga's instruction to choose a meditative object based on ones predominate afflictive emotion, may make it easier to achieve Tranquil Abiding.

One challenge with regard to Tranquil Abiding focused on luminous nature of mind is that there have been various interpretations of assertions made by past adepts about the Sanskrit term amanasikāra (Tib. *yid la mi byed pa*). Jackson has variably translated the term as 'non-mentation,' 'non-mental engagement,' 'inattention,' and 'mental non-engagement.[160] It is generally agreed by scholars that the term is not meant to be taken literally. This leads to questions of how it has been interpreted, some aspects of which will emerge in the following discussion.

First, as to the historical setting, Higgins ([2006] 2008) has written that the *sBa bzhed* records amanasikāra as being associated with a debate that probably took place in Tibet during the eighth century, also known as the *bSam yas* debate, named after the first monastery, established in Tibet under the patronage of King Trisong Detsen. Higgins notes that, in that context, amanasikāra is seen as representative of the instantaneous doctrine,[161] attributed to the Chinese Ch'an Buddhist, Hva shang. In opposition was the Indian Buddhist, Kamalaśīla, who represented the gradualist doctrine (*rim gyis pa*). Karmay, Samten, in his book, *The Great Perfection* (*rDzogs chen*) says that the debate lasted three years, from 792 through 794, and that historians are not sure which side 'won,' but that Tibetan tradition claims it ended in favor of the Indian Buddhism (Karmay 1988).[162] Higgins (2016) lists writings by historical Tibetan authors contesting this claim, and suggests that the reality is more nuanced.[163]

One of the central points of debate was amanasikāra. In his survey of interpretations of the term, Higgins summarizes Kamalaśīla's position in *BK*:

> The gist of his [Kamaśīla's] critique is that amanasikāra does not imply the suppression or cessation of mental activity but rather its progressive refinement through the gradual elimination of subjective distortions (Higgins [2006] 2008).[164]

Yeshe Gyaltsen also advises against taking the term literally, and gives his interpretation as follows:

> Some scriptures speak of 'not paying attention to anything,' 'not thinking of anything,' being 'non-discursive'; the scriptures of the great adepts, in particular, have many words to that effect. Some who are deceived by this, teach that you must cease all mental activity and go unconscious. They are making a huge mistake and do not understand Tranquil Abiding practice even partially; those

> with intelligence should not trust such advice. (59b1) What these scriptures are saying is that when practicing Tranquil Abiding one's mind must not move to anything *other* than the focal object. This is extremely important. [165]

Thus, Yeshe Gyaltsen, in his discussion of amanasikāra, asserts that a cessation of all mental activity is not the desired goal. He cautions against taking amanasikāra in its literal sense of thoughtlessness because thought, including meta-awareness, is useful in countering laxity and mental wandering.

Tsongkhapa in *LRC* also criticized taking amanasikāra literally, asserting that there are untenable consequences of holding such a view (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 394–395).[166] Tsongkhapa put Hva shang's assertions as follows: If thought is involved, let alone bad thoughts, good thoughts will also bind us to uncontrolled cyclic suffering. For instance, whether someone is bound by a golden chain or a rope they are still bound; whether the sky is obscured by white or dark clouds they still block the sky; whether one is bit by a black dog or a white dog, they do not differ in producing pain. Therefore, placing the mind in thoughtlessness is the path to awakening. Once the definitive meaning is realized, engaging in other training such as moral ethics is like demoting a king to the status of an ordinary citizen; or like searching for a bull's footprint after having already found the bull itself! These other trainings are only meant for dull-minded people who cannot meditate on the definitive meaning.

Tsongkhapa makes his rebuttal, saying that once one has generated an altruistic heart of bodhicitta, one must first understand the necessity of practicing the six perfections.[167] Then, he points out that, in order to do that, wisdom and skillful means must not be practiced singly, but that both are needed for attainment of awakening. Finally, having understood these points, one must know the order in which to practice the six perfections and train accordingly. Tsongkhapa asserts that Hva shang's position undermines the training in generosity, moral ethics and so forth. Tsongkhapa maintains that such assertions deny that relative conventions, including all aspects of skillful means, are a part of a genuine path of awakening; and that they reject discerning wisdom's investigation into selflessness, which is the essence of Buddha's teachings. Tsongkhapa does mention that Hva shang has eighty different sources from Sūtra in praise of amanasikāra to support his position. He also admits that Hva shang's standpoint is slightly similar to the practice of Tranquil Abiding, in which one settles without discursive thought; (Tib. *sems tsom 'jog*) but that to hold this to be the highest path of awakening is one of the worst wrong views. Tsongkhapa notes that Kamalaśīla rejects it through reasoning and scriptural citation.

Another aspect of this challenge is that Yeshe Gyaltsen makes restrictions in relation to tantra-based Great Seal training, saying, 'in particular, only those who have received the four highest yoga tantra initiations, who comply with its related ethical rules[168] should be taught to identify the ultimate subjective [clear light] mind, and focus on it single pointedly. Otherwise, they should be given the common instructions on luminous nature of mind' (Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977, f.55b).[169] Thus, in the Ganden tradition, access to the complete instructions of Great Seal is not a simple matter; this can present another challenge to aspirants.

Conclusion

I have discussed the main themes of Yeshe Gyaltsen's Tranquil Abiding manual, drawing from exegetical sources of prominent Indian and Tibetan philosophers that offer clarity. I have noted that Tranquil Abiding training is not a uniformly identical practice but rather a personalized training which must be suited to an individual's mental disposition and predominate mental affliction. It is not just a technique for stilling the mind; it is meant to facilitate the development of liberating insight leading to an elimination of mental affliction.

Yeshe Gyaltsen is influenced by Tsongkhapa's approach to Tranquil Abiding in keeping his views aligned with the highly regarded Indian scriptural masters, only occasionally quoting some great adepts[170] such as in the case of the 'six settlings of mind'. For beginners

focusing on the mind as their meditative object, Yeshe Gyaltsen praised the fourth settling of the mind, 'like a young child looking at a temple'. He quotes Saraha a few times but does not cite as many pre-Ganden Tibetan masters as his predecessor, Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen, did.

It would seem that Yeshe Gyaltsen wanted his text on Great Seal to reveal a synthesis of the views of Indian mainstream masters with the instructions of Tsongkhapa and Paṇchen Lobsang Chokyi Gyaltsen. First, just by reading the author's title to the text, *Bright Lamp of the Excellent Path of Oral Transmission: An Instruction Manual of Ganden Great Seal*, he wanted it to be just that, a guide to Great Seal in the Ganden lineage. Next, when he lays out his thesis, he says that he will not align with all the instructions of the great adepts because those instructions, taught in specific individual contexts, may not be universally applicable. He mentions the use of words like *gang yang yid la mi byed pa*, (amanasikāra) which can cause confusion and be a basis for mistaken views. Third, he often directs his instruction to a larger audience, especially beginners. Thus, he avoids using words that are ambiguous or difficult for a beginner to penetrate. Finally, he sets the course of his approach, aligning with Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga who, in Mahāyāna Buddhism, were predicted by Buddha himself to be trailblazers of his teachings after his passing. In brief, I think Yeshe Gyaltsen's treatment of this contemplative training was done to make it accessible to his audience, while avoiding some citations from great adepts that were meant for more advanced practitioners.

I have attempted to highlight some of Yeshe Gyaltsen's themes pertaining to Tranquil Abiding and how they align with Tsongkhapa and the Indian Mahāyāna masters and have centered my discussion on the description of mindfulness, meta-awareness, and focal objects, attempting to define them as clearly as possible. In particular I have noted how mindfulness works in connection with intermittent application of meta-awareness in order to focus one's mind on a meditative object. In this way, a person who aspires to learn about mindfulness and meta-awareness may first get an intellectual understanding of the roles that these mental factors play.

Learning to regulate one's everyday cognitive processes may contribute to better human wellbeing. Soteriologically speaking, the shared aim of all Buddhists is freedom from suffering. To free oneself from all aspects of suffering one follows an ethical lifestyle in order to have a foundation for mental development. For this, all the great historical masters, including Yeshe Gyaltsen, have emphasized strengthening mindfulness and meta-awareness so that these mental factors can direct one's faculties in order to arrive at cognitive, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. As Yeshe Gyaltsen said, 'The way to cultivate proper meditative concentration is to practice mindfulness, this is very important'.

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Abbreviations

BK	(Kamalaśila 2011), *Bhāvanākrama*
BPP	(Atīśa Dipaṃkaraśrijñāna 1800), *Bodhipathapradīpa*
GPLG	(Yeshe Gyaltsen 1974–1977), *dGa' ldan phyag rgya chen po'i khrid yig snyan brgyud lam bzang gsal ba'i sgron me*
GTSP	(Tsongkhapa 2002), *Great Treatise on the Stages of Path to Awakening*
MA	(Candrakīrti n.d.) *Madhyamakāvatāra*
PCZL	(Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen n.d. a), *dGe ldan bka' brgyud rin po che' phyag chen rtsa ba rgyal ba'i gzhung lam*
LRC	(Tsongkhapa 2015), *Lam rim chen mo*
LRG	(Tsongkhapa 1979–1981), *Lam rim nyam mgur ma*
ŚB	(Aśanga 1724), *Śrāvaka-bhūmi*
YSGM	(Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen n.d. b), *dGe ldan bka' brgyud rin po che'i bka' srol phyag rgya chen po'i rtsa ba rgyas par*

Notes

1 See Vasubandhu (1987, p. 249): *de 'dzin byed dang smra byed pa / sgrub pa byed pa kho na yin /*; "The Buddha's doctrine is upheld only by means of study and practice".

2 Tib. *zhi gnas*; Skt. *śamatha*; Eng. Tranquil abiding. An advanced meditative state in which the meditator has attained a physical and mental pliancy derived from focusing the mind. It is characterized by stable single-pointed attention to a chosen object with all mental distractions calmed (Jinpa 2006, p. 663).

3 I have here translated the Tibetan term, *ting nge 'dzin*, as meditative concentration, meaning one-pointed mind deriving from meditation. In the context of its broader role in all cognitive states in general, it is listed as one of the five object-ascertaining mental factors; in that context I translate it as 'mental' concentration.

4 Skt. *Abhidharma-samuccaya*.

5 Namgyal (2005, p. 54): *Kun las btus las/zhi gnas gang zhe na / 'di lta ste / nang nyid la sems 'jog pa dang/rgyun du 'jog pa dang/blan te 'jog pa dang/nye bar 'jog pa dang/'dul bar byed pa dang/zhi bar byed pa dang/rnam par zhi bar byed pa dang/rtse gcig tu byed pa dang/mnyam par 'jog pa'o//zhes sems dgu bshad la/de dag gi ngos 'dzin ni zhi gnas kyi skabs su bshad do//.*

6 Here, the term, Ganden (*dGa' ldan*) Geden, and Gelug (dGe lugs) refers to one of the four Buddhist lineages of Tibet which were established by Tsongkhapa.

7 According to Panchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen, sūtra-based Great Seal, emptiness of inherent existence, and ultimate nature of reality are interchangeable in their meaning (Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen n.d. b, p. 273).

8 In this context of Great Seal, Special Insight is a realization that is cognizant of emptiness.

9 *GPLG* (50a1): *de yang lhag thong ni zhi gnas grub zin pa'i rjes su gnas cha brtan po de'i ngang nas so sor rtog pa'i shes rab kyis dpyad cing bskangs pas shin sbyangs 'dren thub pa zhig yin la/.*

10 *GPLG* (50a1): *zhi gnas sngon du ma song bar lhag mthong skye ba mi srid pas so//.*

11 Jackson (2019, p. 257) and Buddhist Digital Resource Center, and Skrun sku bod rig pa dpe skrun khang (2011, pp. 7–9) mentioned that Yeshe Gyaltsen is a native of Kyirong (*sKyid grong*). However, Yeshe Gyaltsen's long biography authored by the Gyalwang Jampal Gyatso quotes the direct statement of Yeshe Gyaltsen: "My birthplace is Zar, located in Tingkye (*sTing skyes*)", which is far away from Kyirong (Gyatso 2009, p. 6).

12 Willis (1995, p. 127) asserts that Yeshe Gyaltsen was born the illegitimate son of an outcast father and a village woman of Tingkye.

13 Jackson (2019, p. 644) mentioned birth and death year of Paṇchen Lobsang Yeshe (1663–1737) and Drubwang Lobsang Namgyal (1670–1741).

14 (Ibid.)

15 Gyatso (2009, p. 83) wrote details about the establisment of the monastery including funding source for the construction of the monastery.

16 Willis (1995, p. 127) says, he [Yeshe Gyaltsen] remained primarily in Nepal from 1751 to 1782.

17 My reading of Yeshe Gyaltsen's biography says that the Dalai Lama made several requests to convince his teacher, Yeshe Gyaltsen, to be the spiritual head of the monastic institution which was to be built. When his teacher accepted the position, the Dalai Lama provided major funding towards the construction of this institution along with other donors including Yeshe Gyaltsen himself (Gyatso 2009, pp. 345–48). Willis (1995, p. 127) says, to please his new tutor, [Gyalwang Jampal Gyatso] and to ensure that he would comfortably remain in Lhasa, the Dalai Lama had a new monastery constructed in 1790. 1789, a different construction year of the monastery, is recorded in (Krang dbyi sun 1985, p. 3284).

[18] Yeshe Gyaltsen is regarded as a lineage master of uncommon Gelug Oral Instruction. Visionary teachings received by Tsongkhapa from Lord Mañjuśrī were passed down by Tsongkhapa to his successive disciples, including Yeshe Gyaltsen (Jackson 2019, p. 644).

[19] (Buddhist Digital Resource Center, and Skrun sku bod rig pa dpe skrun khang 2011, p. 9): *lam rim bla brgyud sogs chos tshan nyis brgya lhag yod*.

[20] This Gelug Great Seal text is entitled, Tib. *dGa' ldan phyag rgya chen po'i khrid yig snyan rgyud lam bzang gsal ba'i sgron me*/It is originally preserved in Tsechok Ling woodblock print, catalogued in Derge edition. Text number is D6217. Cf. TOH 6127 (Tsa, ff. 122).

[21] This is an English translation of the Tibetan title; however, there is no available English translation of the entire text so far. I have translated the Tranquil Abiding meditation manual section to English. It is my plan to publish the meditation manual in my Ph.D. dissertation.

[22] For Yeshe Gyaltsen's collected works, visit the following site. http://purl.bdrc.io/resource/MW1022. [BDRC bdr:MW1022]. Last Accessed 21 August 2022. Original publication, n.d. Reprint 1974–1977, 25 vols. See also *GPLG* in the reference list.

[23] Paṇchen wrote his manual (*Highway of Victorious Ones: Root text of Precious Lineage of Geden Great Seal*) much earlier than Yeshe Gyaltsen's manual. Yeshe Gyaltsen was born fifty-one years after Paṇchen's death.

[24] *GPLG* (52.a3): *de ltar sbyor ba'i rim pa sngon du btang nas/dngos gzhi la ting nge 'dzin rnam par dag pa zhig bsgom na/mgon po byams pas/nyes pa lnga spong 'du byed brgyad// bsten pa'i rgyu las byung ba'o// zhes gsungs ba'o// zhes gsungs pa ltar/nyes pa lnga spong ba'i gnyen po 'du byed brgyad kyi sgo nas bsgrub dgos so//*.

[25] English title, *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Awakening*.

[26] See (Jackson 2019, p. 278).

[27] *GPLG* (52.a3): *gzhan yang deng sang gi gdul bya rnams kyis sems gzhag thabs drugs kyi sgo nas bskyangs na sems gnas 'grub sla bar gsungs* . . .

[28] *GPLG* (22a3): *byang chub lam rim la mi ltos pa'i gdams ngag logs par go na rje'i bstan pa'i snying po stor bar 'gyur bas/lam rim gyi steng du gdams ngag 'd'i khrid byed pa yin no// gdams ngag 'di rang la yang lam rim gyi gnad rnams tsang bar byed dgos* . . . / (50a6): *zhib par ni zhi lhag so so'i ngo bo dang/go rims dang/rgyud la skye tshul sogs mtha' dag par 'jig rten gsum gyi sgron me gcig pu byang chub lam gyi rim pa las shes par bya'o//*.

[29] *GPLG* (5a1).

[30] *The Sūtra Unraveling the Intended Meaning*.

[31] (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 534): *'phags pa dgongs pa nges 'grel las/byams pa/yang nyan thos rnams kyi'am/byang chub sems pda' rnams kyi'am/de bzhin gshegs pa rnams kyi zhi gnas dang lhag mthong gi 'bras bu yin par rig par bya'o/zhes gsungs pa'i phyir ro//* (Ibid.): *gzhi gnas dang lhag mthong ni bsgoms byung thob pa'i rgyud kyi yon tan ma yin nam/yon tan de thams cad de gnyis kyi 'bras bur ji ltar 'thad snyam na/gzhi gnas dang lhag mthong dngos ni 'chad par 'gyur pa ltar/bsgoms byung thob pa'i rgyud kyi yon tan yin pas/theg pa che chung gi yon tan thams cad de gnyis kyi 'bras bu ma yin kyang/* For translation, see (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 14).

[32] (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 534–35): *dge ba'i dmigs pa la sems rtse gcig pa yan chad kyi ting nge 'dzin rnams zhi gnas kyi phyogs su 'du la/ji lta ba'am ji snyed pa'i don so sor 'byed pa'i shes rab dge ba rnams lhag mthong gi phyogs su 'du bas/de la dgongs nas theg pa gsum gyi yon tan thams cad zhi lhag gi 'bras bur gsungs pas 'gal ba med do/*.

[33] (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 534–35): *dge ba'i dmigs pa la sems rtse gcig pa yan chad kyi ting nge 'dzin rnams zhi gnas kyi phyogs su 'du la/ji lta ba'm ji snyed pa'i don so sor 'byed pa'i shes rab dge ba rnams lhag mthong gi phyogs su 'du bas/de la dgongs nas theg pa gsum gyi yon tan thams cad zhi lhag gi 'bras bur gsungs pas 'gal ba med do/*.

[34] (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 14).

[35] (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 14).

[36] The eighth century Indian philosopher, who is said to have visited Tibet and authored the *Stages of Meditation*.

[37] *Middle Bhāvanākrama*.

[38] (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 536): *de gnyis kyis ting nge 'dzin thams cad bsdus pa'i phyir/rnal 'byor pa thams cad kyi dus thams cad du nges par zhi gnas dang lhag mthong bsten par bya ste/*.

[39] *BPP* (p. 8 line 4): *ji ltar 'dab shog ma skyes pa'i/bya ni mkha la 'phur mi nus/de bzhin mgon shes stobs bral bas/sems can don byed nus ma yin/* . . . (p. 8 line 5):/*zhi gnas grub pa ma yin pas//mngon shes 'byung bar mi 'gyur la//de phyir zhi gnas bsgrub pa'i phyir/yang dang yang du 'bad bar bya*/See also *GPLG* (53b).

[40] (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 15).

[41] (Ibid.)

[42] Tib. *lta ba*; Skt. *dṛṣṭi*.

[43] For English translation, see (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 24).

[44] (Ibid.).

[45] *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of the Great Mother*. The 'mother' here is used as a literary device to illustrate the 'three exalted realizations', (Tib. *mkhyen pa gsum*) which are taken as objects of salutation in composing the text, *Ornament of Realizations* (Skt. *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*) attributed to Maitreya-Asaṅga. The 'three exalted realizations' are the omniscient state of Buddha (Tib. *rnam*

mkhyen), the exalted realization to be developed by Bodhisattvas (Tib. *lam shes*), and the exalted realization (Tib. *gzhi shes*) mainly developed by 'Hearers', (Tib. *nyan thos*; Skt. *śrāvaka*) and 'Solitary Realizers' (Tib. *rang rgyal*; Skt. *Pratyekabuddha*). See (Paṇchen 2015a, p. 15): *skabs 'dir dngos su bstan pa'i mchod brjod yul du 'gyur pa'i yum la mkyen pa gsum du grangs nges te*/The following are three reasons why the 'three exalted realizations' are called 'mother': (a) they give birth to the three types of exalted beings, (b) they nurture the exalted beings by increasing their knowledge, and (c) they provide support such as by leading them to the state of pacification of suffering and so forth. See also (Ibid., p. 16): *mchod brjod yul du 'gyur pa'i yum 'dis sras 'phags pa bzhi ci rigs par skyed par byed/yon tan gong du spel ba'i sgo nas gso bar yang byed/nyer gzhir 'khrid pa sogs kyi phan 'dogs par yang byed pas yum du 'jog par byed pa . . .)* Panchen Sonam Drakpa was a tutor to the fourth Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso (*Bsod nams rgya mtsho*).

46 (Paṇchen 2015a, p. 436): *dman lam sngon du ma song ba'i byang sems kyi tshogs lam chen po ba stong nyid la dmigs pa'i lhag mthong thob pa dang//theg chen gyi sbyor lam drod du 'phos pa dus mnyam pa gang zhig//stong nyid la dmigs pa'i lhag mthong thob pa la//de la dmigs pa'i zhi gnas thob pa sngon du 'gro dgos pa'i phyir ro/.*

47 Tib. *shin tu sbyangs pa*; Skt. *praśrabdhi*. The physical and mental pliancy are serviceability of body and mind to wholesome action which is free from body and mind dysfunction. (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 614): . . . *lus dang sems shin tu sbyang pa ni/lus sems kyi gnas nges len gnyis dang bral bas lus dang sems dge ba'i bya ba la bkol ba la shin tu las su rung ba'o//.*

48 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 549).

49 *GPLG* (49b-50a).

50 *GPLG* (69b): *zab mo dbu ma'i lta ba rgyud la skye ba la sngon du de legs par btsal nas rnyed pa zhig dgos/de 'ong ba la sngon 'gro'i rgyu tshogs tshang ba la 'bad dgos/zab mo dbu'i lta ba rnyed pa'i thabs sngon 'gro'i rgyu tshogs la brtson pa chen pos 'bad pa zhig yong ba la sngon du de'i yon tan mthong bas yid phrogs pa'i dad pa brtan po zhig dgos pas/thog mar gnas lugs rtogs pa'i yon tan rnams bsam par bya 'o/*

51 Full title of the text: *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i nyams len bsdus don gyi tshigs su bcad pa*. In English, *Spiritual Song of Gradual Path to Awakening*.

52 See also, *GPLG* (1969, f. 50a).

53 *BK* line quoted in (Tsongkhapa 2002, pp. 17–18): After you have quelled the distraction of external objects, you rest in a delighted and pliant mind which naturally and continuously engages an internal object of meditation. This is called meditative serenity. While you remain in serenity, any analysis of that very object is called insight.

54 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 540): *sGom rim bar pa las kyang/phyi rol gyi yul la rnam par g.yeng ba zhi nas/nang du dmigs pa la rgyun du rang gyi ngang gis 'jug pa la dga' ba dang shin du sbyangs ba dang ldan pa'i sems nyid la gnas pa ni zhi gnas zhes bya'o//zhi gnas de nyid la gnas pa'i tshe de kho na la rnam par dpyod pa gang yin pa de ni lhag mthong yin . . . /*. See also, *BK* (Kamalaśila 2011, p. 117).

55 Definiens, Tib. *msthan nyid*.

56 Definiendum, Tib. *mtshon bya*.

57 However, it is probably true that this description refers to Tranquil Abiding, which is first time attained in a human form.

58 Tib. *gsam gtan dang po'i dngos gzhi snyoms 'jug kyad par can*.

59 Tib. *Yum don yang gsal dron me*.

60 See *Yum don yang gsal sgron me/skabs dang po'i mtha' dpyod*: *rang lugs ni/dmigs pa dang yan lag gnyis las yan lag gi sgo nas rang gi 'og sa ['dod pa'i sa'am mkhams] las 'das pa'i dge ba'i rig pa/gsam gtan gyi dngos gzhi snyoms 'jug gi mtshan nyid/bsam gtan gyi dngos gzhi snyoms gang zhig/'dod pa la 'dod chags dang bral ba'i rab tu phye ba'i rigs can/bsam gtan dang po'i dngos gzhi snyoms 'jug gyi mtshan nyid/de la dbye na gnyis yod pa las/bsam gtan dang po'i dngos gzhi snyoms gang zhig/tshor ba yid bde'i sa pa'i rigs su gnas pa/bsam gtan dang po'i dngos gzhi snyoms 'jug tsham po pa'i mtshan nyid//bsam gtan dang po'i dngos gzhi snyoms gang zhig/tshor ba btang snyoms ka yi sa pa'i rigs su gnas pa/bsam gtan dang po'i dngos gzhi snyoms 'jug kyad par can gyi mtshan nyid/.*

61 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 557): *rje btsun byams pas kyang mdo sde'i rgyan dang/dbus mthar sems gnas pa'i thabs dgu dang spong pa'i 'du byed brgyad gsungs la/de rnams kyi rjes su 'brangs nas slob dpon seng ge bzang po dang ka ma la shī la dang shān ti pa la sogs pa'i rgya gar gyi mkhas pa rnams kyis kyang ting nge 'dzin bsgrub pa'i rim pa mang du mdzad . . . /*The venerable Maitreya discusses the methods of the nine mental states [placement] and the eight antidotes in his *Ornament for the Māhāyana Sūtras* and *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*. Following them, Haribhadra, Kamalaśīla, and Ratnākaraśānti wrote much about the process of achieving meditative concentration. See also (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 75): The names of the nine mental abidings are in accord with the lines in Kamalaśīla's *First Stages of Meditation*: "This path of meditative serenity is explained in the *Perfection of Wisdom sūtras* and so on . . . ".

62 Asaṅga and Nāgārjuna.

63 For description of *ting nge 'dzin* or *Samādhi*, See (Walpola and Boin-Webb 2001, p. 9).

64 *GPLG* (54b6): *des na skabs 'dir bsgom par bya ba'i ting nge 'dzin gyi dmigs pa ni rang gi sems yin no/de yang ting nge 'dzin kyang 'grub la/dgos pa khyad par can gzhan yang yod pa'i dmigs rten zhig (55a1)'tshol dgos pa yin gyi/sems gnas pa gcig pus mi chog go/de'i gnad ma shes par rde'u dang shing bu sogs la dmigs nas sgom pa ni rgyal ba'i gsung rab dang shing rta chen po'i gzhung gi man ngag mi shes par gsal zhing/yang shing bu sogs mdun du bzhag ste/de la mig bltas te sgom par byed pa ni ting nge 'dzin gang la zer ma shes pas nongs te/ting nge 'dzin ni sems byung yul nges lnga'i nang tshan zhig yin pas nang du yid la bsgoms pas skye ba yin gyi/dbang shes la ting nge 'dzin mi skye'o/.*

65 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 572): *dmigs rten yang bris sku dang lugs ma sogs kyi rnam pa mi bya bar sangs rgyas ngos kyi rnam pa can du 'char ba la bslab bo//kha cig sku gzugs mdun du bzhag pa la mig gis bltas nas har sgom byed pa/slob dpon ye shes sdes bkag pa ni shin tu legs te/ting*

nge 'dzin dbang po'i shes pa la mi bsgrub kyi yid kyi shes pa la bsgrub pa yin pas/ting nge 'dzin gyi dgos kyi dmigs pa ni yid kyi shes pa'i dgos kyi yul yin pas/de la sems bzung dgos pa yin pa'i phyir dang/sngar bshad pa ltar dmigs yul dgos kyi don spyi'am gzugs brnyan (p. 573 byang chung lam rim chen mo) shar ba la dmigs dgos par gsungs pa'i phyir ro/. For English translation, see (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 44).

66 *Yum don yang gsal sgron me/skabs dang po'i mtha' dpyod/*: *rang gi lugs ni/shin sbyangs kyis zin pas sgo nas rang gis dmigs pa la 'bad mad lhun grub tu 'jug pa'i ting nge 'dzin/zhi gnas kyi mtshan nyid/ci' phyir zhi gnas zhes bya zhe na/sems phyi rol gyi yul la 'jug pa de zhi nas/nang du dmigs pa la gnas pa na de skad ces bya'o/.*

67 (Skt. *tattva*; *tathatā*; Eng. Reality). These two words have the same meaning; thus, they are synonyms.

68 *GPLG* (52b6): *zhi gnas grub na lus sems shin sbyangs kyi bde bas khyab pas mthong chos la bde bar gnas pa dang/rang sems dbang du 'dus te bzhag na ri ltar gnas shing/btang na dge ba'i (f. 53a1) dmigs pa gang la' ci 'dod du 'jug pa dang/lhag par zhi gnas brtan po'i ngang nas gnas lugs kyi don la dpyad pas lhag mthong thob ste nyon mongs myur du spong nus pa dang/de nyid thabs dang bcas par bsgoms pas gnyis snang 'khrul pa'i bag chags kyang sbyong nus pa sogs phan yon bsam gyis mi khyab ste/.*

69 See (Tsongkhapa 1979–1981, f. 3a [p. 67]): *bsam gtan sems la dbang bsgyur rgyal po ste//bzhag na g.yo med ri yi dbang po bzhin//btang na dge ba'i dmigs pa kun la 'jug/lus sems las su rung ba'i bde chen 'dren//de ltar shes nas rnal 'byor dbang po rnams//rnam gyeng dgra 'joms ting 'dzin rgyun du bsten//rnal 'byor ngas kyang nyams len de ltar bgyis//thar 'dod khyed kyang de bzhin bskyang 'tshal lo//.*

70 The following two verses indicate that ignorance is the root of all afflictions, and why realization of interdependent origination is necessary for the removal of all afflictions. 'Just as the body has the body faculty, ignorance abides in all afflictions. Therefore, by overcoming ignorance, all afflictions are destroyed as well. If interdependent origination is seen, ignorance will not arise. Therefore, with all your effort rely on just those teachings' (Āryadeva n.d., pp. 1–24). It is said that realization of interdependent origination precedes realization of sūtra-based Great Seal.

71 (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 19).

72 (Namgyal 2005, pp. 184–85). English title, *Moonbeams of Mahāmudra*.

73 Exegesis by Asaṅga, Bhāviveka, Kamalaśīla, Atiśa, Ratnākaraśānti (also known as Śāntipa), etc.

74 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 560) and see *GPLG* (f. 54a6).

75 *GPLG* (54ba).

76 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 561): *spyad pa rnam par sbyong ba ni/'dod chags sogs la shas cher spyad pa rnam par sbyong ba'i dmigs pa ste/.*

77 (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 561–63).

78 (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 563–64).

79 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 566): *des na ting ting nge 'dzin bsgrub pa'i gzhung che ba rnams nas dmigs pa mang du bshad la/de dag gi dgos pa'ang sngar bshad pa ltar yin pas/sems 'jog pa'i dmigs rten la mkhas par bya'o/.*

80 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 566): *sgom rim las/zhi gnas kyi dmigs pa la nges pa med par bshad la*/Quoted by Tsongkhapa in *LRC*.

81 Tsongkhapa in *LRC* only mentions the author's name (Tib. *'phags pa dpa' bo*) and cites the verse, but not the title of the text. In *GTSP* Vol 3. (2002, p. 45) the title of text, *Compendium of the Perfections*. Skt. *Pāramitā-samāsa* is added. Ruegg (1981, p. 119) recognizes Ārya-Śūra as the author of the text, *Pāramitā-samāsa*. See also, (Apple 2017, p. 6).

82 See (Asvaghosa 1982–1985) for the text, sher phyin bsdus pa, which is tibetan translation of *Pāramitā-samāsa*. Asvaghosa and Ārya-Śūra are different names, but maybe they are names of same person. See also (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 573): *dmigs pa gcig la brtan thsul du//yid ki bsam pa brtan par bya//dmigs pa mang po brgyud pa las//yid ni nyon mongs 'khrugs par 'gyur//.*

83 Tib. *Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma*.

84 *BPP* (4b): *de phyir ting 'dzin tshogs le'u las//gsungs pa'i yan lag la legs gnas//] dmigs pa gang rung gcig dag la//yid ni dge la bzhag par bya*//Additionally, see (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 573). For English translation, see (Rinchen 1997): "Thus maintaining well the conditions mentioned in the *Collection for Meditative Stabilization Chapter*, place the mind on any one, virtuous focal object".

85 (Zahler 2009, p. 84).

86 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 566): *zhes gsungs pa ni dmigs pa bye brag pa zhig nges gzung du mi dgos zhes pa'i don yin gyi/dmigs pa gang 'dug tsad la ston pa min no//.*

87 English title, *The Buddha's Discourse with Revata*.

88 In this context, there are few English terms used for describing the Tibetan term "*mi sdug pa*", for example, "ugliness", and "impurity". I choose to use "ugliness" because the Tibetan term "*mi sdug pa*" refers to the unpleasant experience of the mind, while "impurity" refers to the object of unpleasant experience that consists of physically impure substances. The term for "*impurity*" used in Tibetan is "*mi gtsang ba*". Therefore, in Tibetan "impurity" and "ugliness" carry different meanings, so they are not interchangeable. Some translate "*mi tsang ba*" as "perishables".

89 See (Aṡanga 1724, f. 93): *nam gru/gal te dge slong rnal 'byor spyod pa de 'dod chags spyad pa kho na zhig yin na ni/dmigs pa mi sdug pa la sems nye bar gtod par byed do//zhe sdang spyad pa zhig yin na ni/byams pa la'o/gti mug spyad pa zhig yin na ni/rkyen 'di nyid kyi rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba la'o//nga rgyal syad pa zhig yin na ni/khams kyi rab tu dbye ba la sems nye bar gtod par byed do/zhes dang/nam gru/gal te dge slong rnal 'byor pa/rnal 'byor spyad pa de/rnam par rtog pa spyod pa kho na yin na ni/dbugs rngub dang/dbubs 'byungs ba dran pa la sems nye bar gtod par byed do//.*

90 (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 42).

91 (Zahler 2009, p. 85).

92 (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 43).

93 See Tibetan version of the text, *dBu ma 'jug pa*. English title, *Entering the Middle Way* in (Candrakīrti n.d., p. 63).

94 The two awakened bodies of a Buddha: *rūpakāya*, the perfected physical body of an awakened being, and *dharmakāya*, the perfected 'truth body' of an awakened being.

95 For Tibetan version of the text *Bodhipathapradīpa*, See *BPP* (p. 8).

96 Gelugpa, a proponent of Tsongkhapa's school.

97 Sentient beings take birth in the three realms of cyclic existence propelled by their karma and mental afflictions.

98 For Tibetan version of *Suhṛllekha*; *Letter to a Friend*, see (Nāgārjuna 2004, p. 19 line 8): *khyod kyi thugs dul mdzod cig bcom ldan 'das//sems ni chos kyi rtsa ba lags par gsungs*/English translation follows. "Subdue your mind! Buddha has proclaimed: Mind is the root of Dharma. Additionally, see (*GPLG* f. 55a.)

99 For Tibetan version of *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, *Guide to the Bodhisattva Conduct*, see (Śāntideva n.d., pp. 3–70). Related verse lines are quoted by Yeshe Gyaltsen in (*GPLG* f. 55b1).

100 For Tibetan version of *MA* or *Entering the Middle Way*, see (Candrakīrti n.d., p. 93): *nyon mongs skyon rnams ma lus 'jig tshogs la//lta las byung bar blo yis mthong 'gyur cing//bdag ni 'di yis yul du rtogs byas nas//rnal 'byor pa yis bdag ni 'gog par byed//*

101 *GPLG* (f. 55b6).

102 Tib. *rim lnga;* Eng. *Five Stages*.

103 Tib. *spyod bsdus sgron me*; Eng. *Lamp that Integrates the Practices*.

104 Tib. *rim pa lnga bsdus pa gsal ba* Eng. *Compendium of Five Stages*.

105 *GPLG* (56b3).

106 *GPLG* (57a1).

107 *PCZL* (73a5).

108 See (Gungthang 2000, f.22a6). Title of the text, *phyag chen khrid kyi zin bris zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs phreng/*. English title, *Garland of Nectar Drops: Notes on an Oral Instruction on Mahāmudrā*.

109 (Gungthang 2000, f.22b3): *des na 'dir de lta bu'i gzhi gnas sgrub tshul gsungs pa'ang gzhan lugs shes pa tsam zhig min gyis/'og tu 'chad rgyu'i sems kyis don dam pa'i ngo bo nyid la 'jug sla ba dang/de 'dra'i lhag mthong 'grub pa'i zhi'i zhi gnas khyad par can sngon tu grub pa'i phyir yin no//*.

110 (Gungthang 2000, f.24b4): *de ltar ngos bzung med pa zhig yin yang/rang 'gar ma brtags ma dpyad par bzhag na mi 'char dgu 'char pa/srid rtse nas mnar med kyi bar gyi bde sdug legs nyes thams cad kyi byed pa po yin pas/sngon chad rang cag phar sems kyi dbang du song ba yin/da ni sems de tshur rang gi dbang du 'dus pa zhig byed dgos pas/sems ngo sprod pa dang sems la dmigs pa zhes 'di nyid gtso bor rtsal du 'don pa'i rgyu mtshan yang de yin/*.

111 In English, *Adornment of Mahāyāna Sūtras*. According to Tibetan Buddhist Scholasticism, this text is one of the five works of Maitreya; however, modern scholars like D.S. Ruegg and S.K. Hookham find the authorship disputable.

112 In English, *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*. According to Tibetan Buddhist Scholasticism, this text is one of the five works of Maitreya; however, modern scholars like D.S. Ruegg and S.K. Hookham find the authorship disputable.

113 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 557): *rje btsun byams pas kyang mdo sde'i rgyan dang dbus mthar sems gnas pa'i thabs dgu dang spong pa'i 'du byed brgyad gsungs la/*.

114 These sūtras are one of the three sets of the Buddha's teachings. See (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 557): *ting nge 'dzin gyi spyi'i khog rnams ni/sngar gyi gzhung chen mo de dag nas bshad pa dang sngags nas bshad pa rnams shin tu mthun la/khyad par du ting nge 'dzin gyi nyes pa lnga la sogs pa'i skyon rnam dang de rnams ji ltar sel ba'i tshul rnams ni mdo sde'i phyogs rnams shin tu rgyas par snang ngo/*.

115 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 556): *bsgom pa'i rim pa nyid bshad pa ni/lam rim phal mo cher dbus mtha' nas gsungs pa'i nyes pa lnga spong pa'i 'du byed brgyad ka'i sgo nas zhi gnas bsgrub par gsungs la/*.

116 *GPLG* (3b5): *des na gdams ngag 'di gang nas bshad pa'i khungs mthar mthug pa ni yum rgyas 'bring bsdus gsum dang/bla med kyi rgyud sde rin po che rnams yin no/*.

117 *Six Collections of Middle Way Reasonings*.

118 *Ornament of Realizations*.

119 Authored by the historical Chinese abbot, Wen tseg (*Rgya yi mkhan po Wen tseg*).

120 Attributed to Buddha.

121 English title, *Necklace of the Fortunate: Establishing the System of the Trailblazers*. A kya Yongzin (1971a, p. 557) says that, in other treatises, instead of nine years later, six hundred years later. In the encyclopedia of Sera Je Monastery (*se ra byes rig mdzod cen mo las*) it is stated that the above prophecy is cited in the *Great Commentary of Saṃdhi Nirmocana-Sūtra*. Bu ston, however, says that the first two lines are not mentioned in the *Saṃdhi Nirmocana-Sūtra* itself, but were later added by the Chinese abbot, Dzog sel (*rdzogs gsal*) in his commentary to *Saṃdhi Nirmocana-Sūtra*.

122 I added my own translation, making slight changes to Sparham's translation. (Sparham 1993, p. 46): *Dgongs 'grel gyi grel chen du drangs pa las/nga ni mya ngan 'das pa las//lo ni dgu brgya lon pa na//thogs med ces bya'i dge slong ni//bstan bcos de ni don la mkhas//mdo sde nges don grang ba'i don//rnam pa mang po rab tu 'byed//'jig rten rig pa ston bdag nyid//gzhung byed ngang tshul can du 'gyur//de yi rig pa grub pa ni//sā la'i pho nya zhes brjod////.*

123 This author is also called Jetsün Chökyi Gyaltsen (*rje tsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan*). He composed monastic curriculum textbooks, mostly studied by the monastic members of dGa' ldan jang rtse and Se ra byes monastic colleges. In 1511, he became the abbot of Sera Je monastery and in 1537, he was appointed the abbot of Sera monastery. This is not Paṇchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen (1469–1544) who was tutor of the 5th Dalai Lama.

124 In *Shing rta'i srol byed kyi rnam gzhag skal bzang mgul rgyan* See (A kya Yongzin 1971a, p. 534).

125 *GPLG* (52a3): *de ltar sbyor ba'i rim pa sngon du btang nas/dngos gzhi la ting nge 'dzin rnam par dag pa zhig bsgom na/nyes pa lnga spong 'du byed brgyad//bsten pa'i rgyu las byung ba'o//zhes gsungs pa ltar/nyes pa lnga spong ba'i gnyen po 'du byed brgyad kyi sgo nas bsgrub dgos so//*Following is English translation: Having begun with the preliminaries mentioned above, with regard to the actual practice for development of meditative concentration, Protector Maitreya [or Asaṅga] in *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*, states that it arises from the causes: abandoning the five faults by relying upon the eight antidotes.

126 Skt. *kauśīdya*; Tib. *le lo* Eng. Laziness [mental sloth]. Here, I use the term "laziness" in the sense of mental sloth which lacks enthusiastic attitude toward a relevant action or goal. Thus, the term "laziness" here takes two elements into consideration: (a) not being enthusiastic of performing the relevant act, and (b) being enthusiastic of doing irrelevant acts that hinder doing the relevant action. Laziness essentially points out what keeps someone away from the relevant virtuous goal or activity. Tsongkhapa (2015, p. 558) asserts, *dang po ni/ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa mi spro zhing de'i mi mthun phyogs la dga' ba'i le lo 'gog ma nus na//dang po nas ting nge 'dzin la 'jug tu mi ster zhing/lan cig thob kyang rgyun tu mi nus pas myur du nyams par 'gyur ro//de'i thog mar le lo 'gog par gnad du che'o//*English translation follows: (a) What to do prior to focusing the attention on an object of meditation: If you cannot stop the laziness of being disinclined to cultivate concentration and of enjoying things that are not conducive to it, from the outset you will not gain entry into concentration; even if you do attain it once, you will be unable to sustain it, so it will quickly deteriorate. Therefore, it is most crucial to stop laziness in the beginning . . . (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 33). Wallace (2005, p. 140) says, "In terms of the immediate preparations for cultivating quiescence [Tranquil Abiding], Tsongkhapa first addresses the obstacle of spiritual sloth". He claims that the notion of spiritual sloth is directly related to the practice of Dharma, it is thus misleading to render this term, Skt. *kauśīdya;* Tib. *le lo* simply as '1aziness'.

127 Skt. *avavādasammoṣa;* Tib. *gdams ngag brjed pa.* Although the Tibetan term is literally translated as "forgetfulness of instruction", it essentially means "forgetfulness of focal object" of meditative concentration.

128 Skt. *laya*, Tib. *bying ba* and Skt. *auddhatya*; Tib. *rgod pa*.

129 Skt. *anabhisaṃskāra*; Tib. *'du mi-byed pa*.

130 Skt. *abhisaṃskāra*; Tib. *'du byed-pa*.

131 (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 33) Additionally, see *GPLG* (52a6).

132 English title, *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*.

133 Stable and single-pointed focus.

134 Cycle of suffering states effected by one's own action and afflictive emotion.

135 (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 559–60): *dbus mtha' las/gnas dang de la gnas pa dang//rgyu dang 'bras bu nyid du'o//de la gnas ni 'dun pa ste rtsol ba'i gnas so//gnas pa ni rtsol pa'am brtson 'grus so//'dun pa'i rgyu ni yon tan la yid ches pa'i dad pa'o//rtsol ba'i 'bras bu ni shin tu sbyangs pa'o//'dir sgom par bya ba'i ting nge 'dzin gyi yon ton ni/zhi gnas grub na sems la dga' ba dang lus la bde ba rgyas pas mthong chos la bde bar gnas pa dang/lus sems shin tu sbyangs pa rnyed pas sems dge ba'i dmigs pa la gang 'dod du bkol du rung ba dang/rang dbang med par phyin ci log gyi yul g.yeng ba zhi bas nyes spyod mang po mi 'byung zhing dge ba gang byed stobs che ba dang/zhi gnas la brten nas mngon shes dang rdzu 'phrul la sogs kyi yon tan rnam sgrub nus pa dang/khyad par du de la brten nas ji lta ba rtogs pa'i lhag mthong gi rtogs pa skyes bas 'khor ba'i rtsa ba myur du gcod nus sogs kyi yon tan gang bsams na ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa la spro shugs 'phel bar 'gyur bar rnams shes par byas la bsgom ste/'di skyes na nang nas ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa la rgyun du bskul bas ting nge 'dzin thob par sla zhing thob zin nas kyang yang yang bsgom pa la 'jug pas nyams par dka' ba yin no//.* For English translation, see (Tsongkhapa 2002, p. 34).

136 *GPLG* (57a1).

137 *GPLG* (57a1-4).

138 *PCZL* (72b6).

139 *PCZL* (72b5).

140 (Gungthang 2000, f.23a6): *sems gnas sgrub pa'i skabs 'dir mdo lugs kyis rnam rtog phra mo mi 'gog kyang/sngag lugs la de 'gog pa'i gnad kyis zhi gnas sgrub pa sogs la nus pa che ba yin zhes yongs 'dzin gsung/.*

141 *GPLG* (57b5): dran pa gang zhe na/'dris pa'i dgos po la sems kyi brjed pa med pa ste rnam par mi gyeng pa'i las can no//.

142 *GPLG* (57b6).

143 *GPLG* (57b4).

144 *GPLG* (58a6).

145 Tib. *mdo sde rgyan gyi 'grel ba* Eng. *Commentary on the Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras*.

146 (Tsongkhapa 2015, p. 577): *sems rtsa ba'i dmigs pa gang yin pa de la g.yeng bar mi byed pa'i thabs gcig dang/g.yengs mi g.yengs dang g.yeng bar 'gyur mi 'gyur ji lta ba bzhin shes pa gnyis dgos pa'i dang po ni/dran pa dang gnyis pa ni shes bzhin yin te/mdo sde rgyan gyi 'grel pa las/dran pa dang shes bzhin ni nye bar gtod par byed pa ste/gcig gis sems dmigs pa las mi 'phtro bar byed pa'i phyir dang/gnyis pas sems 'phro ba rab tu shes pa'i phyir ro/.*

147 *GPLG* (58b1-3): *shes bzhin ni sems dmigs pa la rtse gcig tu 'dzin pa'i dran pa'i 'dzin stangs ma shor ba'i ngang nas dmigs pa de la gnas mi gnas dang/bying rgod sogs kyi gegs byung ma byung bya ra byed pa'o/de yang dmigs pa la sems 'dzin pa btang nas bya ra byed pa'i blo gsar pa zhig bskyed na ni skyong tshul mi shes pa'i skyon yin/de ltar bltas pas ting nge 'dzin la mi phan par ma mdzad gnod pa chen po byed do//.*

148 English title, *Guide to the Bodhisattva conduct*.

149 (Śāntideva n.d., f9b). Additionally, see *GPLG* (f. 65a4-6): *de yang dran pa ma yengs pa'i ngang nas sems la bying rgod byung ma byung rtog pa'i shes bzhin gyi bya ra 'jog dgos la/shes bzhin de bskyed pa'i thabs gnyis yod pa'i thabs gcig ni dmigs rten la sems rtse gcig tu dmigs nas dran pa thu re 'jog pa shes bzhin skye pa'i rgyu'i tso bo yin te/spyod 'jug las/gang tse dran pa yid sgo nas//bsrung ba'i don la gnas gyur pa//de tse shes bzhin 'ong 'gyur zhing//song ba'i dag kyang phyir 'ong gyur//zhes gsungs/.*

150 (Śāntideva n.d., f.12a6). Additionally, see *GPLG* (f. 65a6): *lus dang sems kyi gnas skabs la//yang dang yang du brtag bya ba//de de kho na mdor na ni//shes bzhin bsrung ba'i mtshan nyid do//.*

151 Wallace chooses the term introspection instead of meta-awareness for Tibetan term, *shes bzhin*.

152 Tibetan; especially Gelugpa approach.

153 Tibetan; as a formal practice.

154 Thailand; Nondual with classical features.

155 For further discussion of the relationship between mindfulness and meta-awareness, see (Deroche and Sheehy 2022).

156 (Wangpo 2003, pp. 272–89): *sems kyi 'dul thabs thams cad kyi//rtsa ba dran pa kho na ste//dang po 'jur dran bar du klong//tha ma dran med 'od gsal ngang//dran pa kho nas sdig kun spong//*The translation of the verse is slightly revised, based on Deroche 2021.

157 *gzhi'i sku gsum gyi rnam gzhag rab gsal sgron me zhes bya ba bzgugs so*/English title, *Brilliant Lamp: A Presentation of the Three Bodies of the Basic State*. See (A kya Yongzin 1971b, pp. 314–15).

158 *GPLG* (63a3): *gzhan yang deng sang gi gdul bya rnams kyis sems kyi gzhag thabs drug gi sgo nas bskyang na sems gnas 'grub sla bar gsungs te/drug ni/nyi ma sprin dang bral ba lta bur bzhag pa dang/khyung chen nam mkha' la lding ba bzhin du bzhag pa dang/rgya mthso rlabs dang bral ba bzhin du bzhag pa dang/bu chung lha khang blta ba bzin du bzhag pa dang/bya nam mkha' la 'phur ba'i rjes bzhin du bzhag pa dang/ras bal brdal ba bzhin du bzhag pa rnams so//de dag ni sa ra ha la sogs pa'i grub chen gyi gzhung mang po las 'byung zhing/de dag gi nang nas kyang bu chung lha khang blta ba lta bur gzhag pa 'di las dang po pa la gnad shin tu che zhing/rgya gar grub chen rnams kyis kyang yang yang bsngags la/skyong tshul gyi gnad de dag la rje mi las kyang bsngags pa che bar mdzad do//de dag so so'i don ni yang gsal sgron mer gsungs zin pas 'dir ma bkod la/.*

159 *GPLG* (61b). *de ltar dmigs pa la sems rtse gcig tu 'dzin pa'i tshe rnam rtog 'phro ba bkag kyang mi thub par yang yang 'phro na/dmigs rten la rtse gcig tu dmigs pa'i dran pa ma g.yengs ngang nas/'phro ba'i rnam rtog gang dang gang skyes pa des ngo la cer gyis blta zhing/yul gang du 'phro/tshul ji ltar 'phro blta bar bya 'o/.*

160 Jackson (2019, p. 8) recounts: 'Very late in the history of Indian Buddhism, figures like Maītrepa's disciple Vajrapāni (b. 1017) began to group together different sets of texts that supposedly pertained to mahāmudrā, including the Seven Attainments Texts written by various mahāsiddhas and tantric commentators, three *Dohā* Treasuries attributed to Saraha, twenty-five texts on nonmentation associated with Maītrepa, and a number of other collections mostly drawn from the writings of Saraha and Maītrepa.' This citation mentions twenty-five texts associated with Maītrepa,. that were, at that time, grouped as pertaining to nonmentation. Higgins ([2006] 2008, pp. 255–303) notes that these are known in Tibet as the 'corpus of twenty-five texts' on non-mentation (*Yid la mi byed pa'i chos skor nyi shu rtsa lnga*). Most of these texts are available in Sanskrit in the *Advayavajrasaṅgraha* which forms the main textual basis for this Great Seal tradition.

161 I would use the term 'simultaneist' for the Tibetan term *cig car ba*.

162 See (Karmay 1988).

163 See (Higgins 2016).

164 See (Higgins [2006] 2008).

165 *GPLG* (59a4): *gsung rab rnams nas gang yang yid la mi bya ba dang/cir yang mi bsam pa dang/rnam par mi rtog pa zhes gsungs pa dang/lhag par grub chen gyi gzhung mang po las de rigs kyi tshig mang du 'byung ba rnams kyis 'khrul gzhi byas nas yid byed thams cad bkag nas dran pa med par gnas dgos zhes smra ba ni rgyal bas gsung pa'i gzhi gnas sgrub tshul gyi phyogs tsam yang ma mthong ba'i nor ba chen po yin pas blo gros dang ldan pa rnams kyis yid brtan mi bya'o//gsung rab rnams las de ltar gsungs pa ni zhi gnas sgrub pa'i tshe gang la dmigs rten de las gzhan du yul gang la yang sems ma 'phros par byed dgos pa'i don yin te/de ni shin tu gal che'o/.*

166 (Tsongkhapa 2015, pp. 394–95).

167 1. generosity, 2. moral ethics, 3. perseverance, 4. patience, 5. contemplation, and 6. wisdom.

168 Mantra and tantra are used here as interchangeable terms.

169 *GPLG* (55b).

170 Tib. grub chen; Skt. mahāsiddha.

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Article

The Distinctive Mindfulness of Dzogchen: Jigme Lingpa's Advice on Meta-Awareness and Nondual Meditation

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Abstract: For Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan successors, the faculty of "mindfulness" (Skt. *smṛti*, Tib. *dran pa*) has been interpreted as the foundation of the threefold development of wisdom (study, reflection, cultivation). Such a model was, in Tibet, the hallmark of the gradual approach to awakening, whereas in the simultaneous approach, the state beyond ordinary mindfulness was emphasized. The complementarity of both approaches has been an essential issue, especially for the Nyingma tradition, which holds the direct teaching of Dzogchen to be the penultimate. To elucidate the operations of mindfulness in this context, this paper analyzes two guidance texts on mindfulness by Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa (1730–1798), *Ocean of Qualities: Advice on Mindfulness* and *Cudgel to Discern the Real: Advice that Shines from Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness*, the latter translated into English for the first time in this paper. As this study shows, Jigme Lingpa articulates a twofold typology of mindfulness, first a mindfulness that is effortful and conditioned, and secondarily the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen that is inseparable from pure awareness or *rigpa* (*rig pa*). Jigme Lingpa thus applies mindfulness to integrate Buddhist teachings and make sense of alternative modes of practice along the Dzogchen path.

Keywords: Buddhism; Tibet; Nyingma; Dzogchen; Jigme Lingpa; mindfulness; meta-awareness; meditation; nondual; wisdom

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> "Mindfulness that is equivalent to pure awareness is like a unique medicine for a hundred diseases."
>
> –Jigme Lingpa

1. Introduction

The present paper focuses on the faculties of mindfulness (Skt. *smṛti*, Tib. *dran pa*) and meta-awareness (*saṃprajanya*, *shes bzhin*) interpreted as the very thread of the threefold wisdom, the three steps of study, reflection, and cultivation that lead to a liberative insight beyond self-grasping, as well as the crux of the debate opposing gradual versus simultaneous awakening approaches, with a focus on the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. The main sources analyzed belong to the literary genre of spoken advice or spiritual instructions (*zhal gdams*) (Sheehy 2017, pp. 172–74) on the contemplative life, given by a teacher to a small audience of qualified students, and that can arguably be understood as forming the bridge between the content of exegesis (*bshad*), including study and reflection (*thos bsam*), and the application of practice (*sgrub*, that is, cultivation, *sgom*). We give attention to two brief but remarkable texts on mindfulness by Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa Khyentse Ozer (*rig 'dzin 'jigs med gling pa mkhyen brtse'i 'od zer*) (1730–1798), texts 56 and 57 among the *Collection of Advice* (*gtam tshogs*) located in his *Collected Works*.[1] Jigme Lingpa is responsible for a major revival of the Nyingma tradition in eighteenth century Tibet, particularly with his revelation (*gter ma*) of the *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse* (*klong chen snying thig*) (Goodman 1992). This revelation was largely diffused throughout eastern Tibet

and has remained the most widely practiced system of Dzogchen or the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*), considered the penultimate spiritual vehicle in the Nyingma tradition.

There are only a few texts in the Dzogchen system devoted entirely to mindfulness and its closely associated faculty, meta-awareness.[2] Jigme Lingpa's two writings studied here comprise his advice that originated in oral discourses before they were formalized in written documents, and were directed to students who were learned and trained in sūtra and tantra. These two texts, *Ocean of Qualities: Advice on Mindfulness*[3] and *Cudgel to Discern the Real: Advice that Shines from Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness*,[4] which are the focus of this paper, explicitly articulate different levels and stages of progress toward perfect awakening according to the application and refinement of the faculty of mindfulness, highlighting different styles of mindfulness according to sūtra, tantra, and Dzogchen. These texts by Jigme Lingpa use the concept of mindfulness in the context of Dzogchen practice to envision a "distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen" (*rdzogs chen gyi khyad chos dran pa*). Deroche (2021b) has analyzed the different occurrences and levels of mindfulness (*dran pa* and *dran-* derivatives) in the *Trilogy of Being at Ease* (*ngal gso skor gsum*) by Longchen Rabjam Drimé Ozer (*klong chen rab 'byams dri med 'od zer*) (1308–1363), the compiler and synthesizer of the *Heart Essence*. Compared to Longchenpa's *Trilogy of Being at Ease*, which restricts mindfulness to a mental factor (*caitasa/caitasika/caitta, sems las 'byung ba*) and thus to the dualistic mind (*citta, sems*) that is to be progressively purified by lower vehicles, Jigme Lingpa's presentation on mindfulness is in the context of Dzogchen practices on the direct recognition, stabilization, and integration of the nature of mind (*sems nyid*) or pure awareness (*rig pa*).

Issues regarding the nuances of mindfulness meditation are not new. As Jigme Lingpa wrote in *Cudgel to Discern the Real* more than two hundred years ago:

> Now, the Dharma terms 'mindfulness, mindfulness'[5] are the topic of conversation by ignorant people about their stupid meditation.[6]

These two texts by Jigme Lingpa and their creative language are thus important for understanding intricacies of two distinct styles of mindfulness practice, what Dunne (2015) has dubbed "Classical Mindfulness" and "Nondual Mindfulness". Specifically, Jigme Lingpa's advice to meditators details Nondual Mindfulness, which Dunne (2011) has discussed in reference to Mahāmudrā, a tradition historically in dialogue with Dzogchen. Through interpretation of Jigme Lingpa's texts along with a full translation of *Cudgel to Discern the Real*, this paper discusses the constructs of mindfulness in Tibetan Buddhist discourses on meditation, especially within the Nyingma tradition, that articulate diverse modes of practice. To do so, we introduce mindfulness and meta-awareness in the context of the discourse on mindfulness in the Indian and Tibetan Buddhist contemplative literature, and the gradual versus simultaneous dichotomy which undergirds Jigme Lingpa's advice. To situate Jigme Lingpa's advice on mindfulness within the broader discourse on meditation, we highlight the tensions of effortful versus effortless practices in Tibetan meditation manuals. We consider the structure and key points of Jigme Lingpa's two advice texts on mindfulness, synthesizing contents of each, to reveal Jigme Lingpa's typology of mindfulness styles. To contextualize Jigme Lingpa's advice, we analyze excerpts of *Cudgel to Discern the Real* with special attention to the interoperational dynamics of mindfulness and meta-awareness, and the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen. We conclude with thoughts on Jigme Lingpa's typology and possible interdisciplinary pathways to advance the study of effortless and nondual meditation practices in the contemplative sciences. A translation of *Cudgel to Discern the Real* is included as an Appendix A.

2. Frameworks in Tibetan Meditation Manuals

2.1. Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness in Buddhist Meditation

In Tibetan Buddhist phenomenological and contemplative literature, namely, the extensive commentarial writings on the Abhidharma and meditation manuals, mindfulness is understood to be a discrete factor of the dualistic mind. While contemplative tradi-

tions, such as Dzogchen and Mahāmudrā, historically developed concepts and practices along their own trajectories in Tibet, meditation manuals employ and grapple with the technical vocabulary of the Abhidharma (Dunne 2011, pp. 73–75). Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* classifies mindfulness as one of the ten general concomitant mental factors (*citta-saṃprayukta-saṃskāra*); the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* classifies mindfulness as one of five object-determined mental factors (*viṣayaniyatā*), along with intention (*chanda, 'dun pa*), interest (*adhimokṣa, mos pa*), concentration (*samādhi*, *ting nge 'dzin*), and the discerning faculty of wisdom (*prajñā*, *shes rab*) (Guenther and Kawamura 1975, pp. 32–35). In the Abhidharma, object-determined mental factors are cognitive operations that apprehend phenomena, stay cognitively attuned to phenomenal objects, and make given objects explicit to consciousness. In the context of meditation manuals that detail instructions on the practices of calm-abiding meditation (*śamatha, zhi gnas*) and insight meditation (*vipaśyanā, lhag mthong*), mindfulness is coupled with the faculty of meta-awareness. Alternatively translated as "alertness" or "vigilance" or "clear comprehension", meta-awareness is the capacity to monitor the ongoing processes within the body and mind, both interoceptive and exteroceptive. Meta-awareness is awareness of the contents of experiential consciousness, is considered a facet of the factor of discernment (*samprajñāna/saṃprajña*), and operates as an expression of wisdom to monitor and evaluate during the practice of mindfulness.[7] Within the context of cultivating and balancing focused attention in meditation, meta-awareness is the degree of self-referential awareness that enables the recognition of a distractor and returns the mind to its chosen object (Apple 2015, pp. 251, 260). Operating synchronously with mindfulness, which is the capacity to retain attention on a chosen object, the dyad of mindfulness and meta-awareness function in sync to the extent that these two faculties are semantically expressed as a compound (*dran shes*). While mindfulness is the cognitive ability to stay focused on a chosen object, meta-awareness is the ability to observe the interruption of a distractor and attentively return to the object of focus (Guenther 1976, pp. 85, 124; Goodman 2020, pp. 110, 153–54). Oscillating back and forth, mindfulness and meta-awareness operate to balance attention, which iteratively calms the mind.

The canonical source that many Tibetan authors routinely cite in their discussions on meta-awareness, and which Jigme Lingpa references, is chapter V of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*,[8] titled "Guarding Meta-Awareness" (*shes bzhin bsrung ba*).[9] In the opening stanzas (V, 1–3), Śāntideva states that those who do not guard their mind have no discipline, and without maintaining discipline, the mind is like a wild elephant (Śāntideva 1995, p. 34). The metaphor of the mind being like a wild elephant is employed throughout early Indian Buddhist literature and is eventually adapted in visual diagrams as an illustration of calm-abiding meditation (*zhi gnas dpe ris*). To illustrate the nine stages of calm-abiding (*sems gnas dgu*), a wild elephant represents an untamed mind that is tamed by an elephant trainer who uses the rope of mindfulness (*dran pa'i thag pa*) and the iron-hook of meta-awareness to progressively train the elephant-mind (*sems kyi glang chen*) along the precipitous meditative path up a mountain.[10] The implication by Śāntideva is that without the tactful application of mindfulness and meta-awareness, the mind runs wild like an elephant causing all kinds of ethical, social, and emotional destruction. For Śāntideva, the application of mindfulness and meta-awareness acts like a guard that protects the mind but also ensures an ethical concern, thereby guarding the practitioner's precepts, and restraining the actions of one's body and speech. As he pleads his Buddhist readers, what is critical is to guard the mind. As stated in *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 23),

> To those who wish to guard their mind,
>
> With every effort,
>
> Guard mindfulness and meta-awareness.
>
> In this way, I plead with my palms together.[11]

In *Cudgel to Discern the Real*, Jigme Lingpa quotes three stanzas from chapter V of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 25, 27, 33).

2.2. Effortful versus Effortless Mindfulness in Tibetan Meditation Manuals

Applications of effort or release into effortlessness represent a pervasive tension that is thematized throughout Tibetan contemplative literature, and, in many respects, is an extension of the gradual versus simultaneous dichotomy. While presented as a binary, this tension between effortful and effortless is more a descriptive framework for a spectrum of contemplative dynamics that unfold during meditative experiences, and which can be intentionally enacted by different practices. A classic way that this tension is articulated in meditation manuals is in discussions of laxity versus excitation in instructions on calm-abiding meditation. For instance, in the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Awakening*, Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa (*tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa*) (1357–1419) provides a detailed exegesis on the definitions and applications of mindfulness and meta-awareness in the context of calm-abiding meditation with an emphasis on balancing the tension of laxity versus excitation (Tsong-kha-pa 2002, pp. 48, 57–71; Apple 2015, pp. 258–60). Tsongkhapa regards excitement (*rgod pa*) and laxity (*bying ba*) to be the two major faults that impede the cultivation of meditative concentration, and that the antidotes to excitement and laxity are mindfulness and meta-awareness (Tsong-kha-pa 2002, pp. 62–66). As Tsongkhapa makes explicit in his introduction to calm-abiding meditation, his approach of progressive stages of the path (*lam rim*) is based on the Kadampa (*bka' gdams pa*) tradition of achieving the meditative quiescence of calm-abiding through the application of antidotes (Tsong-kha-pa 2002, pp. 31–32). This antidotal approach is precisely what Jigme Lingpa references in his discussion of the exertion required for mindfulness to cultivate a skill, which he calls "antidotal mindfulness" (*gnyen po'i dran pa*). In the context of instructions on calm-abiding meditation, and Tsongkhapa's *Great Exposition* explicates this in detail, excitement is when the mind deviates from the object of meditation due to a distractor; in contrast, laxity is when the mind does not apprehend the object of meditation with vividness, resulting in a limpid mental state. In his explanation, Tsongkhapa emphasizes that laxity is not to be conflated with slackness or dullness (*zhum pa*), nor with lethargy (*rmugs pa*), which he understands to be a derivative of delusion and the cause of laxity (Tsong-kha-pa 2002, pp. 58–60). The art of the practice is to balance the tension between attentiveness that is neither too tense nor too loose, parallel to tensions between effortfulness and effortlessness. For Tsongkhapa, following Śāntideva's classic presentation, mindfulness is the faculty that focuses on the meditative object while meta-awareness monitors the mind that is focused on the meditative object. He stresses the importance of distinguishing these two facets—mindfulness and meta-awareness—stating that if these two are confused, the result will be a confused state of meditative concentration (*ting nge 'dzin*) (Tsong-kha-pa 2002, pp. 61–62). While these two facets are necessary to focus the mind on its object of meditation, mindfulness must initially be cultivated to sustain attentional balance and achieve calm-abiding equipoise (Apple 2015, p. 256). In the approach presented in the *Great Exposition*, meta-awareness is only fully operationalized if mindfulness is stabilized without distraction, and therefore, a sustained flow of mindfulness is critical for meta-awareness. However, once mindfulness is stabilized, meta-awareness can detect with more granular nuance the subtleties of laxity and excitement, which indicates another level of refinement that meta-awareness has in contrast to mindfulness. This linear process of mindfulness being the cause and meta-awareness the result is the "conditioned mindfulness" (*'du byed kyi dran pa*) that Jigme Lingpa contextualizes in *Cudgel to Discern the Real*.

The causal relationship of mindfulness and meta-awareness is reiterated throughout contemplative instructions on calm-abiding meditation. For instance, while the practice of insight meditation was effectually restyled as a Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka technique of analysis in the Ganden Hearing Transmission (*dga' ldan snyan brgyud*) of Geluk Mahāmudrā, this causal approach remained the normative presentation in calm-abiding instructions.[12]

Following Tsongkhapa's *Great Exposition*, Paṇchen Lama Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (*paṇ chen bla ma blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan*) (1570–1662), who was the first author to write down and publicize Ganden Mahāmudrā (*dga' ldan phyag rgya chen po*), emphasized this causal dynamic between mindfulness and meta-awareness in his commentary *Lamp So Bright*.[13] Kagyü Mahāmudrā instructions also emphasize a conditioned mindfulness for beginner practitioners, resembling Jigme Lingpa's advice. In his textbook meditation manual, *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā*, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (*dwags po bkra shis rnam rgyal*) (1513–1587) introduces mindfulness as the capacity of the mind to not forget a familiar object, and again following Śāntideva, defines meta-awareness to be the capacity to guard and monitor the contents of consciousness.[14] For beginners, the approach is again antidotal—apply mindfulness when the mind deviates from the object of meditation while meta-awareness monitors, recognizes distractors, and rejoins the mind to its object. Antidotal mindfulness is prescribed to abandon faults and apply remedies to the binaries of laxity and excitement or tenseness and looseness to achieve meditative equipoise.[15] Once a practitioner is familiar with the nature of mind and has stabilized meditative equipoise, the practice shifts to sustaining Mahāmudrā meditation. While the definitions of these faculties remain the same, both mindfulness and meta-awareness are understood to operate with heighted salience. Because, at this point, the mind is refined by the practice of calm-abiding, distractors are diminished, and meditative experience is characterized by an appreciative acuteness to the phenomenal movements of mind.[16]

Reiterating the importance of mindfulness to the process of listening, reflecting, and meditating, and emphasizing the binary tension of effort within meditation, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal formulates a twofold typology of mindfulness, which he describes in two pairs: (1) mindfulness that induces mindfulness (*dran pa 'dren par byed pa'i dran pa*) and a mindfulness that focuses on mindfulness (*dran pa la dmigs pa'i dran pa*); and (2) an effortful mindfulness (*rtsol bcas kyi dran pa*) and an effortless mindfulness (*rtsol med kyi dran pa*).[17] In a manner resembling the language of a "spy of mindfulness" (*dran pa'i so pa*) employed by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje (*dbang phyug rdo rje*) (1556–1603), in his *Ocean of Definitive Meaning* manual on Mahāmudrā to articulate meta-awareness, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal's twofold typology evokes the mindfulness of mere non-distraction (*ma yengs tsam gyi dran pa*) (Dunne 2011, pp. 83–84; Dorje 2006, p. 95). The first pair captures the intention to be mindful of the flow of mindfulness, and while in that flow, the mindfulness that is not distracted from being attentive.[18] Dakpo Tashi Namgyal reiterates that, for a beginner, the former may be slightly more prevalent than the latter; however, after familiarization and eventual automatization, the two emerge in unison.[19] On the second pair, he explains how the pervasive tension between the effortful and effortless in meditative traditions is expressed through mindfulness,

> Furthermore, the practice lineage explains two styles: effortful mindfulness and effortless mindfulness. The former is a mindfulness that instantiates, a deliberate mindfulness, and a mindfulness that apprehends emptiness or mindfulness that recognizes [emptiness]. The latter is a perfected mindfulness or mindfulness of coalescence, which free from cognition, is a mindfulness that transcends cognition.[20]

As Dakpo Tashi Namgyal points out, effortful mindfulness is synonymous with "deliberate mindfulness" (*'jur dran*), the same technical phrase that Jigme Lingpa references in *Cudgel to Discern the Real* as being involved with deliberate reappraisal about distractions—that is, remembering "I must not be distracted". Dakpo Tashi Namgyal makes clear that deliberate mindfulness involves cognitive effort to remember the instructions, refocus the mind on the object of meditation, and recognize emptiness. He describes this as the "mindfulness that apprehends emptiness" (*stong nyid kyi bzung dran*). In contrast, what Dakpo Tashi Namgyal terms "perfected mindfulness" (*yang dag gi dran pa*) is free from cognition, which resonates with Jigme Lingpa's explanation that the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen is beyond cognition and its object.

The Nyingma scholar Sogdogpa Lodro Gyaltsen (*sog zlog pa blo gros rgyal mtshan*) (1552–1624), a contemporary with the Ninth Karmapa, picks up on some of these themes and tensions prevalent in meditation manuals that concern effortful mindfulness. In his *Instruction Manual on the Mind Section of Dzogchen According to the Nyang Tradition*, he remarks on the dialectic between these styles of mindfulness practice with special attention to the language of mindfulness in Dakpo Kagyü manuals,

> According to the Dakpo Kagyü, this is called 'collapsing the barriers between abiding and movement.' In essence, this meditation is a cognitive construct. Since it requires that this not be divorced from mindfulness that recognizes [emptiness], the Kagyü call this 'mindfulness that apprehends emptiness.' By sustaining this flow and familiarizing with it, this apprehending mindfulness (*gzung dran*) becomes intrinsically lucid mindfulness. So, if you practice this without distraction, there will be observable progress. After only a month, you will be able to mingle [this mindfulness] with appearances while awake.[21]

The context of Sogdogpa's comment is his discussion on the integration of calm-abiding and insight (*zhi lhag zung 'brel*), in which he is instructing on the practice of recognizing the essence of thoughts while observing thoughts fade, which he equates with being singular with abiding reality. He emphasizes that, in the Dakpo Kagyü tradition, which is clearly a reference to Dakpo Tashi Namgyal's *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā*, this dynamic is known as collapsing or erasing the barriers that prevent the singularity of abiding and movement of mind. He makes the point, which Jigme Lingpa later recapitulates, that mindfulness that apprehends emptiness necessarily involves effortful cognitive processes.[22] With this reference to Mahāmudrā instructions in his work on Dzogchen, Sogdogpa spotlights the importance of sustaining mindfulness that apprehends emptiness, even though it involves cognitive effort, because eventually this practice will yield progress. In this way, the creative tension between the application of effort and release into effortlessness are made explicit for the practitioner, revealing how this tension is operative even at the subtlest levels of practice. Sogdogpa foregrounds the dialectic in these meditation manuals by instructing, "With your recognition of a prior meditative equipoise of calm-abiding, there is the process of the integration of calm-abiding and insight meditation, which is called 'Mahāmudrā' or 'Dzogchen.'"[23]

3. Jigme Lingpa's Advice on Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness

3.1. The Gradual Threefold Wisdom versus the Simultaneous Approach

Gethin (2015, p. 33) identified three areas of tension in Buddhist definitions of mindfulness: (1) memory, (2) conceptual and discursive types of thinking, and (3) ethical action. Jigme Lingpa's texts deal precisely with each of these areas in an organized fashion. Definitions of mindfulness as covering aspects of memory, judgment, and ethics, as detailed in Abhidharma and Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* for example, are generally in opposition with an understanding of mindfulness as mere or "bare awareness", as emphasized in some Pāli scriptures (Anālayo 2003, pp. 112–17, 229–32), in Chan/Zen traditions that understand the mind as a mirror (Sharf 2014), and with Mahāmudrā and Dzogchen that teach liberation through "bare pure awareness" (*rig pa gcer bu*). Scientific and secularized mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs), implicitly rely upon these sources and mix them to different degrees, popularizing an operational definition of mindfulness as a non-judgmental awareness of the present moment (Dreyfus 2011; Bishop et al. 2004, p. 232). In this regard, Jigme Lingpa's texts on mindfulness present an indigenous voice from 18th century Tibet that articulates various styles of mindfulness along a single progression. The path starts with an effortful and conceptual approach, but the nature of mind is then directly presented by the teacher as pure awareness. Its full experience is to deepen and expand on the Dzogchen path with the instruction according to which "meditating within this mindfulness of the present moment is sufficient".[24]

The different definitions of mindfulness depend, thus, on the categories of gradual (*rim gyis pa*) versus simultaneous (*cig car ba*) approaches to awakening that have structured contemplative life in Tibet since the semi-legendary yet foundational debate at Samye Monastery. The exemplars of this debate were the Indian Buddhist monk Kamalaśīla who represented the gradual approach and the Chinese Chan monk Heshang Moheyan who represented the simultaneous approach.[25] In addition, van Schaik (2004) has studied in detail the relation between gradual and simultaneous methods in Jigme Lingpa's revelatory works, the *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse*. Arguably, the definition of the faculty of mindfulness represents the crux of the gradual versus simultaneous awakening debate, which is reiteratively framed throughout discourses in Tibetan meditation manuals. Jigme Lingpa makes clear distinctions between two styles of mindfulness—a gradual mindfulness and simultaneous mindfulness—while showing how they are concretely articulated on the path, in terms of an individual's capacity, corresponding to stages of spiritual development and relevant methods of cultivation.

To introduce the model of progression on the Dzogchen path that articulates the gradual and simultaneous methods, chapter XII of Jigme Lingpa's *Treasury of Precious Qualities (yon tan rin po che'i mdzod)* is a useful embarkation point.[26] Distinguishing the usual three levels of capacity and the corresponding stages for a practitioner (low, medium, high), lowest being the most gradual and highest being the most simultaneous, this model is summarized according to the Table 1.

Table 1. Levels of Dzogchen practice according to the *Treasury of Qualities*, XII.

<table>
<tr><td>High</td><td colspan="4">Natural settling: no need for antidotes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Medium</td><td colspan="4">Union of calm-abiding and insight (śamatha and vipaśyanā)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Low</td><td rowspan="6">First,
calm-abiding;
then,
insight</td><td rowspan="2">Spiritual
instructions
approach</td><td colspan="2">Insight:
recognition of thought movement</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Calm-abiding:
absence of thought movement</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Threefold
wisdom
approach</td><td rowspan="2">(3) Cultivation</td><td>(3.2) Insight</td></tr>
<tr><td>(3.1) Calm-abiding</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">(2) Reflection</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">(1) Study</td></tr>
</table>

Calm-abiding and insight are the twofold Buddhist techniques of meditative cultivation. The threefold wisdom model that forms the lowest and thus foundational level is the hallmark of the gradual approach presented by Kamalaśīla in his *Bhāvanākrama* or *Stages of Meditation* (Adam 2016). Jigme Lingpa adopts this scheme as the unmistaken path; as he writes in chapter IX of the *Treasury of Qualities*, study is the foundation for unerring reflection and cultivation,

Therefore, if one at the level of an ordinary being

Does not rely upon the wisdom born from study,

The qualities of reflection and cultivation will be lost in unsuitable places.

The wisdom of study is said to be the cause for all.[27]

Jigme Lingpa defines wisdom born from reflection as analytical investigation on the nature of phenomena, which is co-dependent arising or emptiness as explained in the Madhyamaka school, leading to personal conviction,

That any given thing arises in dependence

Is the treasure of all teachings without exception.

The wisdom that reflects about it,

Is the key that perfectly penetrates it.[28]

Ultimately, this certainty born from reasoning is to be followed by a direct recognition through cultivation,

Therefore, appearances are unborn.

This is ascertained through reflection.

Then, the real condition of knowing such nature

Is called the wisdom of cultivation.[29]

Along this developmental process, mindfulness is the very thread that connects these three types of wisdom: study, reflection, and cultivation. In *Cudgel to Discern the Real*, based on the scriptural basis of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 25), Jigme Lingpa explicitly asserts, "what is studied, reflected, and cultivated is established on the basis of mindfulness".[30] From this perspective, in reference to Vasubandhu who defines the essence of the four ways of applying mindfulness as the threefold wisdom,[31] Deroche (2021a) has proposed a threefold model of mindful wisdom or *presence* that articulates the three facets of mindfulness according to the threefold wisdom progression, related with memory, judgment, and attention: (1) keeping Buddhist teachings *present* in mind, (2) formulating their adequate re-*present*-ation, and (3) cultivating a *presence* of mind. According to the gradual approach, mindfulness as presence of mind is cultivated in the twofold method of calm- abiding and insight. As we shall see, when insight is fully realized, mindfulness is transformed into the transcending virtue of wisdom. In the interpretation of the threefold-wisdom model, there is thus a continuity thesis and a discontinuity thesis; the latter considers the possibility of a radical shift into non-conceptual insight.[32]

Then, according to Jigme Lingpa's model, among those of low capacity and who practice calm-abiding and insight meditation sequentially, there is a second subcategory: those who follow the "spiritual instructions" (*gdams ngag*, *man ngag*), which means the yogic practical instructions, especially that of Dzogchen. This approach seems to refer specifically to the Mind Series (*sems sde*), which represents an interesting mediation between the gradual and the simultaneous methods. The methods of calm-abiding and insight meditation are practiced differently in the classic Mahāyāna context (referred to as "threefold wisdom" by Jigme Lingpa) and in this Dzogchen context (referred to as "spiritual instructions"). The fundamental view of Dzogchen is that of the nonduality of primordial purity (*ka dag*) and spontaneous presence (*lhun grub*). In the Dzogchen context, abiding (*gnas*), movement (*'gyu*), and their inseparability are thus reinterpreted according to this fundamental framework. Abiding corresponds ultimately (but not at the level of a beginner in training) in the recognition of primordial purity; movement in the recognition of spontaneous presence (Namkhai 2014, pp. 25–38). Their nonduality is found in the very act of recognition (*rig*) of both the states of abiding and movement. Hence, according to the Dzogchen view, the conjunction of calm-abiding and insight meditation consists in fully recognizing the nonduality of abiding and movement. But again, the terms calm- abiding and insight are given a different meaning that is contextually specific to Dzogchen, and the methods are different from that of the classic Mahāyāna context referred to by Jigme Lingpa as the "threefold wisdom" approach. The approach of practicing the sequence of calm-abiding and insight meditation according to this category of "spiritual instructions", seems to correspond to the first two of the four yogas of the Mind Series, a fourfold progressive system within Dzogchen (Sogdogpa 1999), which is a common feature of the Mahāmudrā of the Kagyü tradition, as discussed above. In Dzogchen, these four yogas are: (1) abiding (*gnas pa*), the absence of thought activity or movement, which is interpreted as calm-abiding meditation; (2) immovability (*mi g.yo ba*), which is defined as the immovable recognition of thought movement, and interpreted as insight meditation. In Jigme Lingpa's presentation, those with medium capacity practice the conjunction of calm-abiding and insight meditation, and this corresponds to the third yoga of the Mind Series: (3) equality (*mnyam nyid*). Finally, those with high capacity, according to Jigme Lingpa's presentation, which is natural settling without antidotes, would correspond to the fourth yoga of the Mind Series: (4) spontaneous presence. These latter two levels—equality and spontaneous presence—are more immediately reached according to the Instructions Series (*man ngag sde*) with reportedly further depth according to the method of *tregchö*

(*khregs chod*) or literally the "spontaneous release of binds".[33] The distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen, as exposed in Jigme Lingpa's two texts, belongs to the practice of *tregchö*. As expressed in the *Ocean of Qualities*, these practices are intended for people of the highest caliber, but again, mindfulness can be taken as the thread that connects these various levels and leads to the pinnacle realization of Dzogchen,

> If renunciate meditators were to establish the entirety of expressions and Dharma language of the path into the definition of mindfulness, then among those of the simultaneous type with supreme intelligence who reside in meditative equipoise, the distinctive feature of natural Dzogchen is not settling mindfulness[34] on top of meditative equipoise. Mindfulness itself is the perfect essence of meditative equipoise that is especially great for traversing the stages.[35]

This remarkable statement by Jigme Lingpa introduces the main point of his two texts: (a) integrating all Buddhist teachings up to Dzogchen, their pinnacle, into the concept of mindfulness; and (b) bringing this understanding into a direct realization through the instructions on the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen.

3.2. Analysis of Ocean of Qualities

At the outset of *Ocean of Qualities*, the circumstances in which the advice was given are reported. A meditator named Gelong Lama presents his past experiences in the contemplative life and how his "deliberate mindfulness" led him to experience obstacles and problems. Gelong Lama praises Jigme Lingpa for having taught him the "instantaneous mindfulness of natural awareness",[36] the "essence to be meditated".[37] The fundamental distinction between two styles of mindfulness is posited. Depending on if the view of Dzogchen has been understood, Gelong Lama asks whether "it is appropriate to directly increase such character only through mindfulness?"[38] The text can be read as Jigme Lingpa's fully developed reply to Gelong Lama's question, which starts with the powerful statement: "You should know that the root of all the teachings relies upon mindfulness".[39] This statement would be familiar to Gelong Lama since it has a scriptural foundation in Nāgārjuna's well-known *Letter to a Friend* (stanza 54). He then continues by stating that "without mindfulness, not to mention study, reflection, and cultivation, one cannot achieve anything even secular".[40] With this, Jigme Lingpa laments the tragic consequences of forgetting (*brjed*) due to the "deterioration of mindfulness" (*dran pa nyams pa*).

Contemplations of the four reminders, or mind-changers (*blo ldog rnams bzhi*)[41], are understood to rely entirely upon mindfulness. If mindfulness is lost, virtue and non-virtue are forgotten, and a practitioner will err with unethical or mindless behavior. Because mindfulness is understood to guard the ethical precepts, compassion and morality deteriorate if mindfulness deteriorates. Drawing from the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, the *Ocean of Qualities* follows a detailed discussion of the threefold system of precepts and their respective ethical transformations that necessarily transpire by maintaining codes of conduct with specific attributes of mindfulness. Also, without mindfulness, Śāntideva claims that there can be no patience. Śāntideva asserts that patience can be developed by being mindful that the deeper roots of suffering are actually caused by mis-knowing, afflictions and past negative actions, and that these nascent causes lie within oneself. Thus, from this perspective, annoyances caused by others are merely secondary factors for the experience of suffering. Being mindful that others, too, are under the power of ignorance, afflictions, and negative actions, one can develop a compassionate ethics.

Anticipating the period following his death, the Buddha reportedly advised his disciples, "take mindfulness and meta-awareness as your teacher".[42] Jigme Lingpa reiterates this dictum and reminds his audience that the essence of memorization (*dhāraṇī*, *gzungs*) is also mindfulness, which is discussed in relation to guarding the senses and avoiding sensory dissipation in phenomena. To punctuate his contemplative advice, he emphasizes that the essence of meditative stability (*dhyāna*, *bsam gtan*), too, is not different from mindfulness.[43] Jigme Lingpa then discusses mindfulness within the classic Mahāyāna framework of the

fivefold path theory that envisions a progressive application of the thirty-seven branches of awakening.[44] In this way, mindfulness is featured among the "four ways of establishing mindfulness" (*catvāri smṛtyupasthānāni, dran pa nyer gzhag bzhi*), as a "faculty" (*indriya, dbang po*), a "force" (*bala, stobs*), an "awakening branch" (*bodhyaṅga, byang chub yan lag*), and, ultimately, as the "correct mindfulness" (*samyak-smṛti, yang dag pa'i dran pa*) that is part of the eightfold noble path. Aspects of mindfulness that are relevant to the first two paths of ordinary individuals (accumulation and junction) are categorized as conditioned mindfulness, which is a crucial concept for Jigme Lingpa's presentation. Jigme Lingpa quotes Longchenpa's *Treasury of Spiritual Instructions* (*man ngag mdzod*), which presents the progressive path from conditioned mindfulness up to perfect wisdom. Though Longchenpa does not use the term mindfulness to describe the entire path, Jigme Lingpa's presentation, which is later followed by lineage holders including the Third Dodrupchen Jigme Tenpei Nyima (*rdo grub chen 'jigs med bstan pa'i nyi ma*) (1865–1906),[45] specifically ascertains the progressive stages of the path according to a typology of mindfulness.

Essentially, Jigme Lingpa considers "two steps in the way of preserving" (*skyong tshul gyi rim pa gnyis pa*) through the cultivation of mindfulness. The first step or style is a mindfulness that transcends the duality of subject and object; watchful mindfulness and a watched distractor are of a single taste (*ro gcig*), said to be like fire and heat. For this style, mindfulness and conceptual thinking appear and are liberated concurrently. As for the second style, once meditative equipoise is achieved, mindfulness operates to subdue distractors. When a practitioner is in a flustered state of distraction, mindfulness is, however, carried away by conceptuality. In this case, when overwhelmed by distraction, the instruction is to effortfully re-establish mindfulness so that the meditator can re-enter meditative equipoise. This is a dynamic wherein conceptuality and mindfulness quarrel. When mindfulness effortfully gains strength through fortitude—literally through a "heart bone" (*snying rus*)—conceptuality and its discursive patterns of defilement are understood to no longer stand in the face of mindfulness, a recurrent phrase in Jigme Lingpa's advice. This second level belongs to the style of conditioned mindfulness.

This twofold distinction is envisioned both as conditioned mindfulness and as its negation, which points to the realization of gnosis (*jñāna, ye shes*). Conditioned mindfulness operates to shift attention from distraction to concentration, while mindfulness itself can be converted into gnosis.[46] The difference between conditioned mindfulness and gnosis is that, while the former belongs to the level of cognition (*buddhi, blo*), the latter transcends cognition and intellectual discursivity. Jigme Lingpa explains that mindfulness is thus sublimated into gnosis by disentangling the mistaken identification of the self to the five aggregates[47] by means of supramundane meditative equipoise. In ways that read intentional, Jigme Lingpa retains the term mindfulness to refer to this sublimated stage, especially when integrated into post-meditative experience. He states,

> The training of integrating into post-meditation the discriminating wisdom experienced in this meditative equipoise is called 'mindfulness of the nature of reality' (*chos nyid kyi dran pa*). This is the antidote that removes the root mental afflictions and their associated seeds.[48]

Such "mindfulness of the nature of reality" is the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen. This style of mindfulness is not developed along the path of accumulation and junction, but is rather mindfulness at the level of vision, beyond the dualistic mind, at the first level of a bodhisattva. Elsewhere, this is also called "gnosis that appears as mindfulness" (*dran snang ye shes*). This is an essential point that shows the articulation of Mahāyāna and Dzogchen path theories that have major implications for Jigme Lingpa's typology of mindfulness.

In the context of Dzogchen meditation, Jigme Lingpa asserts that "mindfulness accompanied with concepts does not penetrate" (*rtogs bcas kyi dran pa mi 'jug*).[49] In natural liberation (*rang grol*), which is salient for Dzogchen, there is no need for an antidotal mindfulness that would apply corrections to perceived faults or diversions. The advice instead is to forsake all mindfulness and attention. Here, the doctrine of "non-mindfulness" and

"non-attention" exposes how conceptual distinctions (*so sor rtog pa*) and modes of fixation (*'dzin stangs*) are in contradiction with the ultimate. For Jigme Lingpa, "the wisdom beyond the cognition sees the nature of reality beyond mindfulness"[50] since "wisdom appears as the insight that exhausts the basis of mindfulness".[51]

Given that the level of buddhahood is characterized by the possession of "wisdom endowed instantly with all phenomena",[52] and that Dzogchen teachings are defined as directly pointing out such wisdom, it follows that, from the perspective of Dzogchen, the progressive doctrines of a linear succession of discrete stages and paths collapse (*sa lam gyi grub mtha' 'gyel*). The view of Dzogchen is that of the inseparability of "primordial purity" (*ka dag*) and "spontaneous presence"; the first is emphasized through the practice of the spontaneous release of binds (*khregs chod*), while the second is with direct transcendence (*thod rgal*).[53] Jigme Lingpa differentiates these two methods, respectively, to not rely on cultivation, that is "non-meditation" (*sgom med*), and relying on meditation (*sgom yod*). In this way, we can observe that the dialectics of effort and effortlessness play important functions even at the most spontaneous levels of contemplative practice.

Since the Dzogchen contemplative system works directly with the nature of the mind that has never been deluded, "there is no distraction or distractor".[54] Jigme Lingpa makes an important distinction between buddha-nature (*tathāgatagarbha*, *bde gshegs snying po*) as approached progressively according to the Mahāyāna and immediately accessed as original purity according to Dzogchen. He distinguishes the "embryo of a buddha, the element that is present in the mind-streams of sentient beings together with adventitious veils" (such veils being gradually removed) from the "gnosis of the embryo to be realized" (*rtogs bya snying po'i ye shes*), the latter forming core Dzogchen as the self-perfected state containing all qualities.[55]

The text pivots to address the question: why is it that Dzogchen practitioners still appear to others mostly as ordinary individuals, far from the vibrant descriptions of the signs of the paths and stages of an advanced bodhisattva? Jigme Lingpa's answer is that such attributes are not being progressively cultivated during a lifetime, but are simultaneously recapitulated at the moment of death, when the yogin who has stabilized recognition of the nature of mind gets to completely merge with that nature, free from obstructions related to material existence. Dzogchen yogins are thus traditionally compared to the mythical garuḍa bird who is able to fly in the sky as soon as it exits the egg; that is, they immediately attain buddhahood when leaving the physical envelop of body.[56] This specific Dzogchen path theory serves to justify Jigme Lingpa's powerful statement according to which the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen immediately and inwardly accesses the core lucidity of awakening, while outwardly, until physical death, no signs of the radiance of pure awareness are necessarily shown to others. The "gnosis of the embryo to be realized" is thus, so to speak, hidden in plain sight, in the invisible act of seeing itself. Holding that transparent (i.e., trans-apparent) wakefulness, so simple yet so profound, is the very function of the specific mindfulness of Dzogchen.

3.3. Analysis of Cudgel to Discern the Real

Cudgel to Discern the Real was composed in response to questions by a certain Gontse Tulku Rinpoche, for whom we find other texts of advice on mindfulness in Jigme Lingpa's writings.[57] Unlike the *Ocean of Qualities*, this text is not organized sequentially across the entire path but rather focuses on dynamics of meditative cultivation and the "distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen", an expression coined by Jigme Lingpa. At the outset, Jigme Lingpa describes the experience of deliberate mindfulness (*'jur dran*) to be the intentional effort applied by a meditator to not be distracted. Before he introduces meta-awareness, Jigme Lingpa points out that this deliberate mindfulness in the context of calm-abiding meditation is the conscious application of mindfulness to reflectively note that "I must not be distracted".[58] For most meditators, though the application of mindfulness is a necessary starting point, it is important to relax the focus of attention while practicing. Jigme Lingpa

states that this is called "loosely relaxing the focus while staying wakeful" (*hrig gis bsgrims la lhod kyis glod*), and while such effort is necessary to reach a state of meditative equilibrium—not too tense, not too loose—he is quick to point out that this is "not the same as Dzogchen mindfulness that goes into the essence of meditation".[59] He urges beginners, however, to apply an antidotal mindfulness to deliberately counteract or block thoughts. He names this "antidotal mindfulness", to denote the remedial character of this mindfulness style and likens its effortfulness to the careful process of gradually learning a skill or art, such as writing or painting. As he notes, this application of an antidote operates according to the tensions of what is to be discarded and its antidote (*spang gnyen*) and is thereby necessarily a dualistic mindfulness. In this way, Jigme Lingpa's advice is not dismissive of the foundational importance of a dualistic, effortful mindfulness. Very quickly, however, he pivots to present the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen that he describes to be "the perfection of the essence of one's meditation", which is beyond antidotes, and defined as "preserving the flow of natural settling".[60]

Though not named explicitly, antidotal mindfulness is implied in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 54), where Śāntideva implores those on the bodhisattva path to examine their minds with effort by observing upsetting emotions and futilities, and to apply the appropriate antidote.[61] Glossing the double meaning of the Tibetan word "*gom*" (*sgom pa*; *goms pa*), which means both to meditate, habituate, and become familiar, Jigme Lingpa cleverly inserts the mnemonic for the meditator to remember the meditation instructions, "Not meditating is familiarization. Familiarization is attaining mastery".[62] With this, Jigme Lingpa captures the philosophy of meditation as habit-based skill acquisition—applying the attentive effort required to become a master artist, for instance—and summarizes the dynamics of dualistic mindfulness as applying an antidote and regular familiarization. The process described is to apply an initial effort to the extent that habituated familiarization of the practice yields automaticity, which, in turn, gradually conserves energy and reduces effort.[63] Since mindfulness functions as the ability to remember a task—in this case the instructions to recall the object of meditation and return attention to that object—the practice is coordinating learned automatism. With effort, the performance of mindful meditation practice eventually reaches the point of full effortless or *habitless* automatization, what the contemplative traditions call "non-meditation", which involves "non-mindfulness" (*asmṛti*, *dran med*) and "non-attention" (*amanasikāra*, *yid la mi byed pa*).[64]

Jigme Lingpa introduces the understanding that discursive thoughts can arise and be freed naturally so that what is to be discarded and its antidote are identical, or as he expresses in the experiential language of meditation, a single taste. The possibility of this equality, that thoughts can be experienced without the dualistic tensions of needing to be discarded or counteracted, he asserts is because thoughts lack an inherent nature (*rang bzhin med*), that is, because they arise due to emptiness. He advises that, although beginner practitioners do not experience this equality of mind for prolonged durations, by noticing the movements of mind, thoughts automatically dissolve in the face of mindfulness,

> That, likewise, does not happen long for a beginner. For this reason, when you notice movement, these discursive thoughts cannot endure in the face of mindfulness. This process of dissolution into evenness and lucidity is the unmistaken point of the way to sustain the continual flow of mindfulness.[65]

Sustaining this continuity of mindfulness moment by moment without tensing or loosening, correcting or modifying, discarding or applying antidotes to thoughts, Jigme Lingpa calls "preserving the flow of natural settling" (*rang babs kyi rgyun skyong ba*). Once this possibility of recognizing the dissolution of discursive thoughts through mindfulness is introduced, Jigme Lingpa switches back to the dynamics of mindfulness and meta-awareness,

> Alternatively, what are called 'mindfulness' and 'meta-awareness' are likewise distinguished as being the cause and its effect. Generally, there are numerous discussions in all the meditation manuals about what are called mind-

> fulness and meta-awareness. I understand this mindfulness to belong to a conditioned mindfulness.[66]

The dynamic relation between the dyad of mindfulness and meta-awareness is described to be that of a cause and its effect, making it a conditioned mindfulness on par with the tensions of what is to be discarded and its antidote, attributed to antidotal mindfulness. This dualistic dynamic is necessary, especially for a novice meditator, to maintain the experiential flow of the practice while retaining the working memory of the instructions to practice. As Jigme Lingpa makes clear, mindfulness is the faculty that enables the practitioner to recollect one's training, precepts, and the philosophical view.[67] While the practice is to remain undistracted in the present moment, this requires that the practitioner be cognizant of the instructions and maintain the view while meditating. The meditation instructions are not, however, to enter a vacuous trance-like state or to suppress thoughts, but rather are to be at ease in nondual pure awareness, which requires an iterative recollection of how to practice.

To reiterate this back-and-forth relationship between mindfulness and meta-awareness, Jigme Lingpa quotes the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 33),

> When mindfulness, at the gate of the mind,
>
> Stands as a guard,
>
> At this moment, meta-awareness arrives,
>
> And even if it departs, it returns.[68]

If there is conditional mindfulness, meta-awareness is also present. Meta-awareness emerges in tandem with the presence of mindfulness and operates to sustain and continually monitor the experiential flow during meditation. As this stanza describes, meta-awareness monitors the mindfulness so that "even if it departs", meta-awareness is regularly checking for potential distractions and evaluating the need to apply an antidote. For meta-awareness to return means that it comes back to monitoring mindfulness. In the context of meditation, this is a gesture of awareness back to the chosen meditative object, whether it be the breath, a visual image, a syllable, and so forth.

Having explained the dualistic dynamics of conditioned mindfulness and the monitoring operations of meta-awareness, Jigme Lingpa pivots to contrast those with the mindfulness applied during Dzogchen practice,

> In Dzogchen, the view and meditation are of a single taste. This mindfulness does not guard as dual facets—the mindfulness of the view and the meta-awareness of meditation—since this is the perfect essence of meditative equipoise. Such meta-awareness is understood to be a cognitive obscuration. These appear to be the cause and effect, before and after. The reason is that if there is mindfulness, from that, there is residual meta-awareness that is a defiled cognition. If there is no mindfulness, since there is nothing knowable, there is only the knower.[69]

Jigme Lingpa distinguishes Dzogchen mindfulness from the dyad as defined in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to be based on cause and effect (*rgyu 'bras*), with mindfulness and meta-awareness, respectively, preceding and succeeding (*snga phyi*). An important distinction being made is that, while conditioned mindfulness is critical to maintain a philosophical or intellectually constructed view, within the context of Dzogchen meditation, the view is not intellectually constructed and is intimately integrated with the experience of meditation. In fact, the causal relationship between mindfulness and meta-awareness is understood to be a cognitive obscuration (*shes bya'i sgrib*).[70] The logic is that, if there is effort applied through mindfulness, by the very tension inherent in that application, a linear and causal relationship emerges, as detailed in the discussion about conditioned mindfulness. Without mindfulness (*asmṛti*, *dran pa med*), the mind is freed from this dualistic dynamic. Devoid of the duality of the subject–object complex—the apprehender and what is to be apprehended (*gzung 'dzin*)—there is nothing knowable, only the knower (*shes bya med pas shes byed*). Since the mind is ordinarily oriented with an object, when the mind is not objectively or

spatially oriented, this is nondual mindfulness. Dzogchen mindfulness is understood to transcend the linear cause-and-effect model of mindfulness and meta-awareness because this distinctive mindfulness is not confined to the operations of a subject–object duality. These dynamics of duality are implicit in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*'s definition of mindfulness, which necessitates retained attentive focus on an object of meditation while meta-awareness monitors potential distractors to apply mindfulness to be corrective. The distinction made by Jigme Lingpa extends not only to calm-abiding but to insight meditation, especially when the provisional view of emptiness established first by deconstructive reasoning is taken as an object of focus, retained by mindfulness and observed by meta-awareness.

While conditioned mindfulness is suitable at the level of conceptual analysis, including analytical meditations (*dpyad sgom*) of insight meditation where emptiness is discerned through reasoning, this remains a conceptual approximation of emptiness. Contrasting Dzogchen meditation with analytical meditations, Jigme Lingpa states,

> While it's like that, when abiding reality is not realized to be as it is, view and meditation are intellectual speculation that impute a mindfulness that apprehends emptiness and meta-awareness that monitors whether there is a decline in that very flow [of consciousness]. Consequently, this is not free from the cognition of mental factors, the four omnipresent and two variable.[71]

The Abhidharma is concerned with a descriptive taxonomy of the mind that is necessarily oriented with an objective reference, and thereby does not articulate a nondual meditative state that is devoid of an object of meditation (Dunne 2011, pp. 73–75). Nonetheless, as is the case throughout Tibetan writings on nondual states of meditation, Jigme Lingpa references the Abhidharma to emphasize his point that discrete mental factors are operable for conditioned mindfulness to apprehend emptiness while nondual meditation is devoid of operative mental factors. Assuming that his audience is learned in the Abhidharma, he simply remarks that, during the process of analytical meditations, the mind is not free from the "four omnipresent and two variable", a reference to the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*. In this Abhidharma taxonomy of fifty-one mental factors, there are five omnipresent factors (*pañcasarvatraga*, *kun tu 'gro ba lnga*) and four variable factors (*anyathābhāva*, *gzhan 'gyur bzhi*). Of the five omnipresent factors, Jigme Lingpa implies that the faculty of attention (*manasikāra*, *yid la byed pa*) is an operative cognition and of the four variable factors, both the factors of cognitive selectiveness (*vitarka*, *rtog pa*) and discernment (*vicāra*, *dpyod pa*), which function in tandem, are also operative during analytical meditations.[72] Because these mental factors are operative in analytical meditations, conditioned mindfulness involves cognitive effort.

Even a subtle cognitive gesture towards an objective reference reconditions this causal dynamic so that meta-awareness is the result of mindfulness, and, consequently, there is the duality of "mindfulness that is knowable and meta-awareness that is the knower". Summarizing this dynamic, Jigme Lingpa states,

> If one asserts that meta-awareness is the result of mindfulness, at the moment of meditative equipoise in definitive meaning, it's not possible to discard what obstructs the dual facets of the practice that proceed as mindfulness that is knowable and meta-awareness that is the knower. Nevertheless, in this way, conditioned mindfulness is suitable as a reflected image of the definitive meaning. Because there is mindfulness that is the object to be seen and meta-awareness that is the subject, both cognition and its object appear.[73]

Conditioned mindfulness, an expression of this causal duality, is understood to be suitable at the level of conceptual analysis to ascertain emptiness, and thereby is a conceptual approximation or, as Jigme Lingpa puts it, a "reflected image" of emptiness.

3.4. Dzogchen Mindfulness in Cudgel to Discern the Real

In contradistinction to deliberate mindfulness, through the application of Dzogchen mindfulness, cognition is progressively sublimated and operations of mental factors are

neither pursued nor blocked. These cognitive operations are directly watched without distraction. As Jigme Lingpa puts it, in Dzogchen, "what is called a 'distraction' is co-emergent ignorance".[74] Therefore, the mere absence or protection from such distraction, distraction being defined fundamentally as the loss of awareness, is the essence of Dzogchen mindfulness.[75] Jigme Lingpa is careful to differentiate his approach to Dzogchen mindfulness—characterized by fresh wakefulness in which all distractions naturally subside—from related Tibetan discourses that use the categories of calm-abiding and insight meditation. He criticizes some of his contemporaries for being confused about the actual nature of mental factors and for mistaking liberation with the karmically conditioned states of meditative stability, which Buddhism relies upon, but constantly warns about being potential dead ends. As discussed above, the debate revolves especially around the faculty of attention, the negation of which represents a hallmark of simultaneous approaches in their interpretation of the apophatic literature, especially of the corpus of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*.

Jigme Lingpa intends to clarify the issue with a threefold theoretical scheme of meditative stability: (1) the first level is mundane, that is, within cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*) and thus subject to decay; (2) the second level corresponds to the bodhisattva paths of accumulation and of junction, that is, engaged with the path of liberation from cyclic existence and directed toward complete awakening; and (3) the third level concerns realized beings who have a direct knowledge of ultimate truth, starting from bodhisattvas on the path of vision, up to perfect buddhas. Dzogchen meditation is categorized into this third and supreme level, "Here, the natural Dzogchen is the virtuous meditative stability of the *tathāgathas* along the noble path".[76] At this point, Jigme Lingpa warns his audience not to take such an exalted statement about their meditative tradition as automatically granting realization or as completely dispensing of relative and ethical matters. The motive is to ensure that the two accumulations, merit (*puṇya, bsod nams*) and gnosis, are both perfected as they are the indispensable means to realize buddhahood in its two corresponding aspects: the formal dimensions or bodies (*rūpakāya, gzugs kyi sku*) that spontaneously benefit others, and the ultimate dimension or body (*dharmakāya, chos sku*) that consists in abiding ultimate reality. This framework, emphasized in the Madhyamaka school, seeks to avoid both the extremes of eternalism and annihilation. In the gradual versus simultaneous dichotomy, this approach forms the central critique set forth by Kamalaśīla in his *Stages of Meditation*, which is directed against his Chan opponent. Its usage here illustrates Jigme Lingpa's strategy to reconcile the gradual approach of Indian Madhyamaka with the simultaneous method of his Dzogchen tradition. One may infer that the gradual method leads to obtaining the capacity to practice the simultaneous method. Even a practitioner of the simultaneous method, in order to stay on the right tracks, may, however, need to alternate the simultaneous method with the gradual method. So, for Jigme Lingpa, there is a constant movement back and forth between these two methods until the point that these both are totally sublimated into the inseparability of the two corresponding aspects of primordial purity and spontaneous presence, according to the nondual view of Dzogchen.

More broadly, this responds to critiques about tantric methods that act to manipulate the body and subtle energy, and that emphasize direct and powerful threshold experiences. Such responses occupy the latter part of Jigme Lingpa's advice. Tantric practice is presented as a specialized method that enables the simultaneous emergence of gnosis to transcend discursive cognition, accelerating progress on the path. Jigme Lingpa warns that, after a profound and subtle contemplative experience, a practitioner can regress to ordinary modes of awareness. In tantra, meditative experiences of extreme heights and depths are both maximal. Along this path, the most difficult aspect may not be momentary access to gnosis—which is reportedly facilitated by skillful means and blessings—but is likely the extension, stabilization, and integration of gnosis. From the experience of gnosis to that of ordinary consciousness, including its subtlest dimensions, even without noticing the difference, the non-application of conditioned mindfulness and meta-awareness is understood to lead to ethical issues, erroneous meditation, and unfortunate outcomes. We

can thus see how, in this text, Jigme Lingpa oscillates back and forth between a deliberate, conditioned mindfulness and the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen.

Jigme Lingpa describes two extreme conditions in which gnosis is obscured: firstly, that of misguided meditators who lack rigorous concepts and clear intentionality; and secondly, that of narrow-minded scholars who, too attached to the concepts of cause and effect, perceive contradictions between sūtra and tantra. The last part of the text concerns the fine line between the preservation of ethics based on the concepts of cause and effect, good and bad on the one hand, and, on the other, gnosis transcending all concepts and actions. The balance and integration of these two poles—compassion and wisdom, conduct and view, or meditation and post-meditation—constitute the practical dynamics of Madhyamaka. Jigme Lingpa's text, close to the spontaneous form of spoken discourse, oscillates between insisting on ethical and conceptual guidelines, and pointing out their gnostic transcendence. For him, seizing any one aspect would lead to falling into an extreme. The attachment to ethical and doctrinal aspects is shown to be limited to the psycho-physiological conditions of the five aggregates (forms, affects, cognitions, volitional factors, and consciousness), ultimately all aspects of deluded perception. Nevertheless, for Jigme Lingpa, lacking the necessary ethical and doctrinal references due to the loss of conditioned mindfulness increases the saṃsāric structure of experience with a surge in mental afflictions. Ethical and doctrinal training is meant to reduce such psychic entropy. Nonetheless, transcendence of conditioned mindfulness is not to be confused with ordinary mental dispersion. The issue with such transcendence is that its experience must be sustained beyond a certain extent to become an irreversible realization. Until this definitive stage is realized, a practitioner is advised to alternate the practice of conditioned mindfulness with Dzogchen mindfulness, taming the mind first, then shifting from the dualistic mind to abide in the nondual nature of mind. While conditioned mindfulness operates at the level of mental factors that need antidotal solutions, the application of Dzogchen mindfulness is understood to operate beyond mental factors,

> Even if there are multiple antidotes taken on the paths of renunciation and transformation, mindfulness that is equivalent to pure awareness is like a unique medicine for a hundred diseases. Also, there are distinct ways to recognize these two: (a) mindfulness is the mindfulness of the nature of reality that is free from the five aggregates; and (b) pure awareness is the gnosis of discriminative reflexive awareness that is the uncompounded non-collection of consciousnesses.[77]

This passage equates the mindfulness of Dzogchen with pure awareness while giving us precise definition for each term. The panacea referred to above is also "identified as the discriminative wisdom of the nonduality of mindfulness and pure awareness".[78] What matters for the Dzogchen practitioner is to extend the duration of such moment-by-moment vivid recognition that effortlessly transforms excitation and laxity—the usual faults meditators generally struggle with—into a state of clarity. In the end, the two styles of mindfulness exposed by Jigme Lingpa are not opposites of equal importance: conditioned mindfulness is both integrated and transcended in the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen. In the classical terms of Mahāyāna, mindfulness has its principle and ends in wisdom. This idea is supported by the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (IX, 1) that explains that the different branches of practice, and we could say mindfulness, are ordered and oriented toward wisdom. Therefore, ultimately, mindfulness sublimated as wisdom, when directly introduced as such, is the very nonduality of mindfulness and pure awareness, Jigme Lingpa's very definition of the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen.

In the *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse*,[79] where the main practice of Dzogchen is concerned, conditioned mindfulness is negatively valued while Dzogchen meditation is described as "not being trapped in the cage of mindfulness",[80] remaining free "at this moment, whatever memories and thoughts arise".[81] Eloquent expressions are also found for the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen, such as the "mindfulness of reflexive awareness" (*rang rig gi dran pa*),[82] unconditioned as "natural mindful awareness" (*gnyug ma'i dran rig*),[83]

and "knowing of the spontaneous release of ties in the present moment".[84,85]—however, "this is not a deliberate mindfulness, a mindfulness that purposely tenses".[86] In this way, as Jigme Lingpa instructs, a practitioner "enters into the citadel of the all-encompassing mindfulness",[87] the stronghold of Dzogchen, the Great Perfection.

4. Conclusions

4.1. Jigme Lingpa's Typology and Creativity

To summarize Jigme Lingpa's typology of mindfulness according to the two columns of the Table 2:

Table 2. Two styles of mindfulness according to Jigme Lingpa.

Conditioned Mindfulness	Distinctive Mindfulness of Dzogchen
Deliberate mindfulness	Natural settling
Antidotal mindfulness	Beyond antidotes
Mindfulness as part of mental factors of the dualistic mind	Not the mindfulness and not the attention, etc., as mental factors of the dualistic mind
Mindfulness as belonging to the five aggregates	Mindfulness free from the five aggregates
Mindfulness and meta-awareness as cause and effect, previous and successive	Beyond duality of subject and object, non-duality of mindfulness and pure awareness
Multiplicity of antidotes	Unique medicine to a hundred diseases
Accumulation of merit	Accumulation of gnosis
Conduct	View

The insertion of the accumulations of merit and gnosis, conduct and view, here tries to encapsulate Jigme Lingpa's constant movement back and forth between those two styles of mindfulness along the path. It shows that both styles of mindfulness are to be coordinated on the path while conditioned mindfulness is ultimately sublimated into the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen.

Emerging from oral advice by Jigme Lingpa to adept practitioners, these texts are rooted in Jigme Lingpa's own experience, and endowed with a sense of spontaneity and creativity. New expressions such as the "distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen" are forged in these texts to mark important distinctions. Since such terminology is not directly found in the canonical literature of Dzogchen—the Dzogchen tantras and exegesis by Longchenpa—further research needs to consider other potential influential sources for Jigme Lingpa, such as the terma (*gter ma*) literature,[88] including his own revelations,[89] and related meditation instructions from traditions such as Mahāmudrā.

Fundamental questions remain about the continuity or discontinuity between these two styles of mindfulness, as distinguished by Jigme Lingpa. A common element consists in the "preservation" (*skyong*) of a state of "flow" or "continuity" (*rgyun*). The *moment-to-moment* application of conditioned mindfulness is intimately connected to the sudden shift into *instantaneous* pure awareness (*rig pa skad cig ma*). *Present*-centered awareness or *presence* represents, thus, the essential bridge between the succession of time and timeless simultaneity.[90] In this way, Dzogchen sources offer important developments to the Buddhist doctrine of momentariness. But it is important to note here that, in Jigme Lingpa's lineage, in addition to considerable preparations (the so-called preliminary practices, *sngon 'gro*), such conversion between two radically different modes of presence is possible through the receptive and devotional practice of integrating one's mind state with that of the teacher (*guru yoga, bla ma'i rnal 'byor*), a method that takes place in the context of an interpersonal transmission. Thus, in the Dzogchen tradition, mindfulness cannot be understood in purely instrumental terms but is rather reverential,[91] allowing an opening and expansion of awareness toward the recognition of a greater presence that is already perfect as it is. Moreover, the general dichotomy of effortful versus effortless is to be further differentiated with the recognition of a broader spectrum between these two poles within Dzogchen

meditation according to the categories of the three types of liberation: "liberation through naked seeing" (*gcer grol*),[92] "liberation upon arising" (*shar grol*), and "natural liberation". These are different modes of watchfulness, varying from slight effort to total spontaneity, and are to be applied according to various circumstances and capacities.

4.2. Nondual Mindfulness in the Contemplative Sciences

With an increasing interest in empirical research on meditation, and the rise of the transdisciplinary contemplative sciences, accessing and interpreting Tibetan meditation literature can inform current understandings of contemplative practices in dialogue with cutting-edge science. Dunne (2015) articulated three reasons why meditation researchers and clinicians can derive benefit from understanding Buddhist sources.[93] Extant research on mindfulness to date refers mostly to the twofold Focused Attention (FA) and Open Monitoring (OM) framework (Lutz et al. 2008; Dahl et al. 2015). Recent scholarship has both acknowledged the importance of nondual styles of practice to contemporary mindfulness in experimental and applied clinical settings (Dunne 2011, p. 75; Kabat-Zinn 2011), and advanced frameworks for conceptualizing and assessing nondual awareness (NDA) in meditation research (Josipovic 2010; Hanley et al. 2018). To conclude, we would like to offer reflections on three areas of possible future collaboration between Buddhist studies and the contemplative sciences in conversation with Jigme Lingpa's advice on mindfulness and meta-awareness, and especially nondual mindfulness: (a) refinement of a lexicon of technical phrases and terms for contemplative styles; (b) framing effortful versus effortless practices as a paradigm for interdisciplinary engagement; and (c) researching meta-awareness to bridge mindfulness with NDA research:

(a.) *Lexicon of technical terminology*: The lack of a standardized English lexicon of technical terms for the analysis of contemplative practices and, consequently, the numerous conceptual and theoretical issues that ensue because of this deficiency, has been identified as one of the major areas that Buddhist sources can contribute to empirical understandings of meditation (Lutz et al. 2007, pp. 508–10). Terms are the building blocks for descriptive accounts and analyses of practices, and without a common lexicon of contemplative terminology with fine-tuned definitions, there will remain confusion about the meanings of specific terms. Buddhist sources have developed and refined a technical vocabulary for meditation, and for this reason, it is important for empirical researchers to be in dialogue with this descriptive literature on meditation. For instance, in the case of Jigme Lingpa's *Cudgel to Discern the Real*, his typology of mindfulness differentiates conditioned mindfulness as being an "antidotal mindfulness" or "deliberate mindfulness" in contrast to unconditioned mindfulness, which he discusses in terms of nondual mindfulness or the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen. Jigme Lingpa's descriptive vocabulary for mindfulness, as well as that of Dzogchen authors including Jigme Tenpei Nyima who articulates six styles of mindfulness, provide stepping stones to a more nuanced lexicon.

(b.) *Effort as a paradigm for interdisciplinary meditation research*: While the pervasive tension between practices that apply effort and those that are effortless is presented as a binary in classical accounts—as if effort is a fixed and static quantity that is present or absent— effort is spectral. This is better understood to be a descriptive framework for a range of contemplative dynamics that unfold during meditative experiences, and which can be intentionally enacted, or fostered, by different contemplative techniques. These practices are performed in ongoing and dynamic shifts across a spectrum of intensities of effort, and with increased expertise, attentional control is understood to gradually become effortless. Practices typically oscillate between deliberate effortful applications to gestures of release and resting in effortlessness states, and different contemplative styles facilitate these transitions along a spectrum of effort. Degrees of subjective effort and the ability to sustain attentional focus over durations is well-studied within the cognitive sciences; however, little is known about subjective or cognitive effort in meditation. The cognitive sciences have generally approached research on attention and self-control through different effortful training programs; however, training programs can also be effortless

(Tang et al. 2022). Along lines of research in skills acquisition in other domains of expertise, contemplative neuroscience research has shown that, after extensive Focused Attention meditation training, regulative skills were invoked less frequently and minimal effort was required to sustain attentional focus (Lutz et al. 2008, pp. 3, 6). In dialogue with Tibetan meditation theories, such findings may also suggest that expert practitioners increasingly access implicit and invariant features of consciousness. Because Buddhist sources offer rich descriptive and theoretical discourse about the pervasive tension of effort, and because effort is a measurable physiological and cognitive ability, this is one possibly constructive framework for interdisciplinary collaboration in meditation research.

(c.) *Meta-awareness as a bridge with nondual awareness (NDA) research*: The two texts by Jigme Lingpa in the present study detail his advice on mindfulness to provide a window into the features and operations of meta-awareness. Because meta-awareness is a critical operation for many contemplative techniques, it is especially relevant to the ongoing dialogue between historical contemplative traditions and the cognitive sciences. Given recent empirical studies on meta-awareness, particularly to understand mind-wandering and spontaneous thought, and the centrality of this cognitive operation within Buddhist mindfulness-styled practices, studies on meta-awareness can prospectively serve to bridge the science of mindfulness with several domains of research, including discernment and insight, constructions of self, reflexivity of mind, and NDA research. Cognitive scientific and philosophical considerations suggest that there may be a distinct kind of "non-propositional meta-awareness" (Dunne et al. 2019), distinct from the propositional representation of one's own mental states. The propositional versus non-propositional distinction is meant to capture the difference between a kind of meta-awareness that takes explicit note of the contents of consciousness and represents them in the form of propositions (e.g., "I noticed my mind was wandering"), and a kind of skillful meta-awareness that consists in an implicit awareness of characteristics of ongoing mental processes, such as the spontaneous arising of thoughts, fluctuations in attention, emotion and affect, and state awareness, for example, during lucid dreaming. The ongoing and implicit monitoring function of meta-awareness aligns closely with Buddhist theoretical understandings of reflexive awareness (*svasaṃvedana/svasaṃvitti*, *rang rig*) as an invariant feature of consciousness that makes phenomenality accessible to the practitioner, yet is not structured by subject–object duality (Dunne 2011, p. 74). This secondary feature of meta-awareness—its intrinsic reflexivity—is characterized as effortless in contrast to its monitoring function, which is effortful. Jigme Lingpa brings complexion to these oscillatory dynamics between mindfulness and meta-awareness by using the phrase, "mindfulness of reflexive awareness" (*rang rig gi dran pa*),[94] demonstrating how meta-awareness is cultivated to transition into states of nondual awareness while mindfulness is applied to sustain nondual states.

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Appendix A. English Translation of Jigme Lingpa's *Cudgel to Discern the Real: Advice That Shines from Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness*

Homage to the ever-present *vajra*!

Here are my instructions as a single response to various questions by Gontse Tulku Rinpoche that primarily concern issues about meditation:

Concerning the style of mindfulness that is deliberate mindfulness (*'jur dran*), observe while continually thinking, "I must not be distracted". In this way, in the present moment, there is the flow of mindfulness. It's said that the awareness that cognizes the very absence of distraction must be the essence of meditation. Besides those of the simultaneous type, for most others, it's important to apply methods to find calm-abiding at the beginning. To correct mistakes, while in the state of mere non-distraction, since it's important to relax your focus as much as possible, this is similarly called, "loosely relaxing the focus while staying wakeful". This is not the same as Dzogchen mindfulness that gets at the essence of meditation. At the moment when intense attraction or aversion arise, it's difficult for these feelings to subside immediately by observing their essence. Over lifetimes, we have been deeply habituated to attraction or aversion, which are to be discarded. As for antidotal mindfulness (*gnyen po'i dran pa*), its basic nature is conditioned mindfulness that is just slightly in the present moment. Because the forces of an antidote and what is to be discarded are not equal, it does not depart from the very moment. So, while it's not a mistake to deliberately block thoughts, it's also not unnecessary. This is like when learning arts such as writing, painting, and carving, and so forth. At first, there is no other way than to use measurements. In this way, skilled arts are produced gradually through a very careful process. It's said to be true that, "Not meditating is familiarization. Familiarization is attaining mastery".

When discursive thoughts naturally arise and are naturally freed, what is to be discarded and its antidote are of a single taste. Even discursive thoughts of attraction or aversion, from their onset, manifest without an inherent nature. That, likewise, does not happen long for a beginner. For this reason, when you notice movement, these discursive thoughts cannot endure in the face of mindfulness. This process of dissolution into evenness and lucidity is the unmistaken point of the way to sustain the continual flow of mindfulness. Though the intrinsic essence of attraction or aversion does not subside, in this state, this is not simply dualistic perception, like that of an ordinary person. If attraction or aversion become nullified as the empty absence of self, this will temporarily suffice. The distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen is known as, "the perfection of the essence of one's meditation". In the moment-by-moment flow of mindfulness, there is no need to tense or loosen, correct or modify, discard or apply an antidote. This is known as, "preserving the flow of natural settling".

Alternatively, what are called "mindfulness" and "meta-awareness" are likewise distinguished as being the cause and its effect. Generally, there are numerous discussions in all the meditation manuals about what are called mindfulness and meta-awareness. I understand this mindfulness to belong to a conditioned mindfulness. The training and vows of personal liberation, bodhisattva, and mantra, being mindful of the purity [of the deity] during the generation stage, and so forth, take mindfulness as their basis. Then, not diminishing this ongoing state is designated to be meta-awareness. Likewise, mindfulness keeps a philosophical understanding of the view beyond elaborations that are reached by examination. Such flow is preserved by meta-awareness. These exist like cause and effect, before and after. According to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 33) it reads,

When mindfulness, at the gate of the mind,

Stands as a guard,

At this moment, meta-awareness arrives,

And even if it departs, it returns.[95]

In Dzogchen, the view and meditation are a single taste. This mindfulness does not guard as dual facets—the mindfulness of the view and the meta-awareness of meditation—since this is the perfect essence of meditative equipoise. Such meta-awareness is understood to be a cognitive obscuration. These appear to be the cause and effect, before and after. The reason is that if there is mindfulness, from that, there is residual meta-awareness that is a defiled cognition. If there is no mindfulness, since there is nothing knowable, there is only the knower. As stated in the text cited earlier (*Bodhicaryāvatāra*, V, 27),

The thieves of lacking meta-awareness

Follow with a decline in mindfulness.[96]

This is clearly explained.

While it's like that, when abiding reality is not realized to be as it is, view and meditation are intellectual speculation that impute a mindfulness that apprehends emptiness and meta-awareness that monitors whether there is a decline in that very flow [of consciousness]. Consequently, this is not free from the cognition of mental factors, the four omnipresent and two variable.[97] If one asserts that meta-awareness is the result of mindfulness, at the moment of meditative equipoise in definitive meaning, it's not possible to discard what obstructs the dual facets of the practice that proceed as mindfulness that is knowable and meta-awareness that is the knower. Nevertheless, in this way, conditioned mindfulness is suitable as a reflected image of the definitive meaning. Because there is mindfulness that is the object to be seen and meta-awareness that is the subject, both cognition and its object appear. According to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (V, 25),

Those with a mind without meta-awareness,

Even if they study, reflect, and cultivate,

Like a vase that leaks when cracked,

They do not retain it with mindfulness.

Consequently, what is studied, reflected, and cultivated is established on the basis of mindfulness.

Alternatively, while there is a flow of mindfulness, when the two facets of stillness and movement appear, there is also a mode that causes hair-splitting distinctions and clearly distinguishes good from bad. The cognition that conceptually analyzes, which resides within the naturally settled mindfulness of the nature of phenomena, makes hair-splitting and clear distinctions about what is good and bad. Mindfulness of the inherent nature of phenomena recognizes whether there are distractions or no distractions—if discursive thoughts arise or do not arise—without any effect. To the extent there are discursive thoughts, if there is a distraction, what is called a "distraction" is co-emergent ignorance. At that moment, isn't freedom not following it? Therefore, the mere absence of distraction is the essence of mindfulness. When discursive thoughts arise from within the very ongoing state of mindfulness, since discursive thoughts are an adventitious appearance of dynamic power, they cannot withstand in the face of mindfulness, and these disperse by their own energy. In this way, what dissolves is not capable of destroying the freshness of mindfulness. So, in a single mindfulness, there is neither good nor bad.

Nevertheless, non-thought that is merely an absence of distraction regarding the categorical ultimate, is destroyed. From that, insight meditation which intellectually analyzes, recognizes the extent to which a thought arises as a distraction. These are the attractions and aversions of meditation. Calm-abiding meditation is without moving. Insight meditation is like the flash of a fish. To stabilize the mind, you must actually be free from constructs and dullness. That's what they say.

Here in Tibet, due to diversions that mix mental factors during meditative equipoise, those with agitated meditative stability assert such [instructions] to be the unsurpassable intent of the Great Madhyamaka.[98] However, if examined from the point of view of realization itself, these are karmic actions of meditative equipoise. The dualistic phenomena

of actor and action that correspond to the phenomenon of attention (*yid byed*) in insight meditation do not have the capacity to discard the two obscurations. From the *Tantra of Confession* it reads, "Action, actor, and mental examination are totally purified". That would thus contradict the meaning of this quotation. Nevertheless, because the essence of the meditative stability that discerns the real is the cause for the acquisition of establishing mindfulness along the path of accumulation and the capacity of mindfulness along the path of junction, this produces only steps along the way towards the path of vision.[99] Here, the natural Dzogchen is due to the virtuous meditative stability of the tathāgathas along the noble path. As for the mindfulness of the nature of reality (*chos nyid kyi dran pa*), which is totally beyond cognition, it does not enter into cognitive deceptions due to conception and examination. It's primordially free (*ye grol*), continually free without meditating, equal, naturally settled, naturally clear, not fabricated, not deceptive. It's called, "ordinary awareness" (*tha mal gyi shes pa*).

Nevertheless, due to an excessively loose use of these words that transgress the exalted Dharma terms—suchness, freedom from proliferations, essencelessness, the expanse of phenomena, and so forth—the two truths are portrayed like antlers of a deer. Through distortions of understanding, experience, and realization, the secret words of the profound tantras, textual transmissions, the *Treasury of Dohā*, and so forth are disregarded as truth of the path and declared to be "the view of Heshang". Now, the Dharma terms "mindfulness, mindfulness" are the topic of conversation by ignorant people about their stupid meditation (*glen sgom*). There is the mindfulness of self-recognition (*rang ngo shes pa'i dran pa*), and from that, impassable mindfulness (*mi 'da ba'i dran pa*), and mindfulness that is devoid of an inherent nature (*rang bzhin med pa'i dran pa*). Among these three, the first and the second have cognitive obscurations of grasping at things. As a method to relinquish these, exert yourself in devotion, compassion, and the other causes to accumulate merit. Then, there is the accumulation of gnosis. As a means to perfect it, you do not meditate. You must associate with the luminous state without illusion, the heart of awakening. According to a tantra it reads, "As long as the eighth stage (*bhūmi, sa*) is not ascertained, you will be frightened by the lower vehicles".

Along the mantra path, even though there are fruits of profound meaning that come from exertion, simultaneous (*cig car ba*) gnosis arises from temporary methods. During the third empowerment, represented by symbolic gnosis, there is tremendous increasing and decreasing as well as ways that don't rely on meditative warmth.[100] In particular, due to pure awareness (*rig pa*) of the wind-mind, both aspects of experience and realization manifest just as increasing and decreasing alternate. Moreover, perfectly pure mindfulness that does not mentally engage in intellectual analysis (*yid la mi byed pa'i yang dag gi dran pa*) that grasps emptiness is extensively vast and wide open. Within the state that is not established by an inherent nature—like water that is struck with a sword—thoughts of attraction and aversion dissolve with mindfulness of mental movements (*'gyu dran*). When this vanishing occurs, this is the vanishing of intellectual proliferation. According to *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (IX, 2),

The ultimate is beyond the scope of cognition,

Cognition is asserted to be the relative.

Like this, you must prolong the duration of meditation on vanishing.

Moreover, according to the vehicle of transcendent virtues (*pāramitā*), what is called "being on the elevated path", is when the consciousnesses of the five perceptual gates are transformed into gnosis. Persons who meditate alternately on the path are under the influence of the five aggregates and the eight types of consciousness. Due to the profound points of view and meditation that emerge from the path of mantric methods, sometimes experiences and realizations arise simultaneously (*cig car du*). When the truth of the path arises as relative, there is a special appearance of the wisdom of discriminative reflexive awareness. Sometimes, defiled by objects, conditions, or the wind-mind, the suchness of realization is obscured. It turns out that they cannot bear to stop appearances

and consciousness of attraction, aversion, and delusion. At that moment, without being guided by sublime teachers, by thinking that they are introduced to their mind, they do not have meta-awareness of what is to be accepted and transcended in terms of personal liberation, bodhisattva vows, mantra vows, and of the nature of reality. Their apprehending mindfulness (*gzung dran*) is blank and dark. Having taken that to be their meditation, the majority of stupid meditators that behave carelessly out of disturbing emotions fall to lower destinies.

Alternatively, even among those who are very learned, there are those who seize onto liberation based on cause and effect. Since they fall under the power of the antidote that is emptiness, they sharply conceive and examine the contradictions and inclusions of the view and conduct of mantra and the transcendent virtues. Their self-arisen gnosis is obscured. In this way, they think that practitioners will be sullied by such misconduct regarding how they live by the precepts, and the defeats and falls that are characterized by the four roots.[101] Without trust in the path of mantric methods, the view of emptiness outshines the relative! Nevertheless, in terms of post-meditation, having grounds to harm others even without any intent whatsoever, is the cause that destroys the bodhisattva vows. If there are doubts about accepting or transcending wrongdoings towards others, these are like reflective images of virtuous and vicious discursive thoughts. Until discursive thoughts vanish, by pursuing them, relative truth cannot be blocked. Therefore, for a beginner, at any moment, it is suitable to confess vows without a mind that conceals.

At the time of Lama Lhaje Rinpoche, there was an experienced meditator who ate deceptive scriptures, and a great regret arose within him.[102] Though he was realized, he said to the lama that he felt diminished. He was told to write down those very scriptures. Annoyed by the distraction of composition, since this was an obstacle to meditative stabilization, he said there is surely no purification of obscurations greater than realization of the nature of mind. [The lama] said, "Oh, you understand! This is exactly it". So, he stopped writing. Without entering into the previous flow of the two kinds of moments,[103] he settled in the midst of fresh awareness. In this way, hearers' (*śrāvaka, nyan thos*) vows that have a form[104] are vows born from the karma of body and speech, and in the state of emptiness, those do not have a form. If thinking "this is a transgression" belongs to the aggregate of affect (*vedanā, tshor ba*), it is not established within the true condition of the nature of reality. When one seizes onto guarding or transgressing as true, with the very aggregate of cognition (*saṃjñā*, *'du shes*), this substantially contradicts with discriminative reflexive awareness. From that moment onwards, approximate volitional factors (*saṃskāra, 'du byed*) cease since there is no abiding of ordinary consciousness within the gnosis of discriminative reflexive awareness. Guarding or transgressing are patterns of the intellect.

From the *Condensed Transcendent Wisdom*, "These sentient beings are ethical but they have lost their ethics".[105] To attend to the cognition of multitudes is to entirely lose ethics. This is to transgress ethics and not have a perfectly pure ethics. For someone without cognition of one's self or sentient beings who is free from attachment of cognition, how could there be a non-virtuous vow? Settle evenly into this meaning. Up to this point, this is seeing the truth of the nature of reality so that the profound path of mantric methods does not become a threat. All the infractions when you don't realize that there is no contradiction among the intentions of the sūtras and tantras are overcome. You will not be tainted by vicious deeds, the worst being "to kill a brahmin daily, to perform the five inexpiable acts and so forth". Practice this meaning! This is advice drawn from direct experience. In the words of the authors of treatises (*śāstra*), this is explained in this way with refutation and demonstration. Commentaries on the mantras are clarified in the omniscient chariots. Moreover, without the teachings in the scriptures, those are all the circumstances of lacking mindfulness. According to the *Letter to a Friend* (stanza 54), "With the impairment of mindfulness, all the Dharma is destroyed".[106]

In this way, discursive thoughts of desire, aversion, and delusion take over. The fivefold accumulation of merit, generosity and so forth, and subsequent twofold accumulation of gnosis are depleted. Without cutting-off the limits of discursive thoughts that arise from

mind and mental factors, since the root of all of these is ignorance, it's said that "discursive thinking is the great ignorance that plunges one into the ocean of *saṃsāra*". Even if there are multiple antidotes taken on the paths of renunciation and transformation, mindfulness that is equivalent to pure awareness is like a unique medicine for a hundred diseases. Also, there are distinct ways to recognize these two: (a) mindfulness is the mindfulness of the nature of reality that is free from the five aggregates; and (b) pure awareness is the gnosis of discriminative reflexive awareness that is the uncompounded non-collection of consciousnesses. As it's taught in the *Condensed Transcendent Wisdom*,

> Not seeing forms is also not seeing affect,
>
> And when there is no seeing a cognition, there is not seeing directionality of mind,
>
> And whoever does not see consciousness, mind, and the intellect–
>
> Sees this Dharma.
>
> This is what the Tathāgatha taught.

In this way, by merely recognizing the discriminative wisdom of the nonduality of mindfulness and pure awareness (*dran rig gnyis su med pa*), and by entering into an undetermined state of being naturally awake, there are no grounds to support afflictions such as torpor and so forth. Like this, by mindfulness being strengthened, ignorance arises as luminosity within the gnostic expanse of reality, and so on. This comes from prolonging your meditation. In sum, if even the slightest intellectual understanding that arises in regards to emptiness is particularly beneficial in destroying reifications of the real, what's the need in discussing experienced persons?

For this reason, by diminishing clinging to the real and holding onto all the philosophical systems that fixate on the liberation of past causes and their results, cognition becomes expansive and open. Isn't this the nature of phenomena? It's not necessary to have inimical doubts about diminishing clinging to the real in every respect that principally elicits conditions along the truth of the path. This enfolds the immense awakened activities of the *maṇḍala* and so forth. As for dark chatter, even if the slightest understanding and experience have not arisen in their mindstreams, they mimic adepts (*siddha, grub thob*). By establishing their words and reasonings in their mind, and by being greedy, they only debate! Furthermore, the great one from Oḍḍiyāna said,

> This view of my secret mantra is very important. Don't let conduct slip onto the side of the view. If conduct slips onto the side of the view, this becomes the view of the dark chatter according to which virtues are empty and vices are empty. Don't let the view slip onto the side of conduct. If the view slips onto the side of conduct, one will be entangled by materialism and ideology, and there will be no time for freedom.

Since this point is extremely profound, now, when you alternate rest in and out of realization, do not fixate on aspects of the ultimate. While there are aspects of relative blockages, do not obstruct. Alternatively, since the complete fruition of the two accumulations is perfect buddhahood of renunciation and realization, without completion of the accumulation of gnosis, how could there be completion of the accumulation of merit? Moreover, from *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (IX, 1) it reads,

> All of these branches,
>
> The Sage has taught for the sake of wisdom.

[**Translators' final note**: The end of the text is concerned with advice on rituals: filling statues with mantras, *torma* offering, smoke offering, etc. It is not translated here. There is no colophon to the text.]

Notes

1 See below the abbreviations for reference to the versions of Jigme Lingpa's *Collected Works* that were used for this paper.

2 A contemporary Tibetan text dealing exactly with this topic from the standpoint of Dzogchen is Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's (*chos rgyal nam mkha'i nor bu*, 1938–2018) *Mirror: Advice on Mindfulness and Meta-Awareness (dran pa dang shes bzhin gyi gdams pa me long ma)*. Commenting on his intention for writing such a treatise, he writes (Namkhai [1983] 2005, p. 39): "It is difficult to find works dealing specifically with this topic, because in all the Buddhist teachings, from the sutras and tantras, the principle in general is that there are rules to be observed. The Dzogchen masters in Tibet, who taught people who had practiced Sutra or Tantra teachings, always confined themselves to advising them simply to have awareness. Since they were addressing disciples who would have been familiar with this principle, in their writings they never gave detailed explanations of what awareness is and how to apply it. That is why I thought I would write a text to provide this 'advice'". The English translation of this short treatise without the Tibetan text and the commentary has also been published in the form of an open-access journal article (Namkhai 2013b).

3 *dran pa'i gtam yon gtan rgya mtsho* (A, vol. 4, pp. 438–64; B, pp. 517–49; C, pp. 600–19), translated into English by Thinley Norbu (*phrin las nor bu*, 1931–2011) (Norbu [2015] 2021).

4 *dran pa dang shes bzhin las 'phros pa'i gtam don rab 'byed pa'i thur ma* (A, vol. 4, pp. 465–75; B, pp. 550–62; C, vol. 4, pp. 620–27), translated into English here, in the Appendix A, to our knowledge for the first time.

5 Here the repetition of the term "mindfulness" (*dran pa*) seems to suggest a sense of irony by Jigme Lingpa. He may somehow be mimicking his fellow Tibetan people who mindlessly parrot the term mindfulness, talking repeatedly about it, but without understanding its essential meaning and actual implications.

6 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 468; B, p. 554): *da dran pa dran pa zhes pa'i chos skad glen sgom gti mug can yan chad kyi kha nas don kyang*.

7 (Dreyfus 2011, pp. 49–50) and (Apple 2015, pp. 12–13). The translation of *shes bzhin* (*saṃprajanya*) as meta-awareness is meta- (*bzhin*) awareness (*shes*). The Tibetan particle *bzhin* (*saṃ*) is self-referential, meaning to correspond with; *shes* (*prajanya*) means to know or be aware of. For relevant perspectives in cognitive sciences on the construct of meta-awareness see (Chin and Schooler 2009).

8 Sanskrit text edited in Śāntideva (1960), Tibetan version in Śāntideva (Śāntideva 1994–2008). The English translation that was consulted here is Śāntideva (1995). In this paper, we refer to its chapters in Roman numbers, and its stanzas in Arabic numbers.

9 See Pelden (2010) for a Nyingma commentary of this classical Indian text, in the lineage of Jigme Lingpa, through the oral explanation of Patrul Rinpoche (*rdza dpal sprul o rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po*, 1808–1887).

10 This metaphor is expressed in different variations, for instance, in chapter III of Bhāviveka's *Essence of Madhyamaka* (*Madhyamakahṛdaya*) where he states that the elephant mind should be bound to the object of mediation by the rope of mindfulness and subdued by the iron-hook of meta-awareness. Bhāviveka, *Dbu ma'i snying po (Madhyamkahṛdaya)*. Sde dge Bstan 'gyur, 3855. Dbu ma, 98 (*dza*), 1b–40b. Quoted in Paṇchen Lama Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen 's *Lamp So Bright* (*yang gsal sgron me*), see (Jackson 2019, p. 507). Also quoted in (Namgyal 2019, p. 55).

11 (Śāntideva 1994–2008, p. 972): *sems bsrung 'dod pa rnams la ni/ dran pa dang ni shes bzhin dag/thams cad 'bad pas srungs shig ces/ bdag ni de ltar thal mo sbyor/*.

12 This reformed presentation of insight meditation emerged from Tsongkhapa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Awakening*, was reified by the Second Dalai Lama Gendun Gyatso (*dge 'dun rgya mtsho*, 1475–1542) in his writings on how the Prāsaṅgika view relates to Mahāmudrā, assimilated as Geluk Mahāmudrā by Paṇchen Lama Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen's *Lamp So Bright*, and, ultimately, canonized by Yeshe Gyaltsen's essentialized Geluk instructions on insight meditation. See (Sheehy 2022; Jackson 2019, pp. 154, 187, 212, 278).

13 Paṇchen Lama Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen's *Lamp So Bright* is his prose auto-commentary on his root text on Mahāmudrā, *Highway of the Conquerors* (*rgyal ba'i gzhung lam*). The Paṇchen writes that when mindfulness has arisen, meta-awareness arises as its result, and so is understood to be derivative. See Jackson's translation of *Lamp So Bright* (Jackson 2019, p. 507) and, for the broader discussion of the causal relationships and application of antidotes, see Jackson (2019, pp. 505–10).

14 (Namgyal 1978, p. 18). For a translation, see (Namgyal 2019, pp. 25–26).

15 (Namgyal 1978, pp. 43–44). For a translation, see (Namgyal 2019, pp. 54–56).

16 In this context of sustaining Mahāmudrā, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal introduces a third faculty to complement mindfulness and meta-awareness, that of conscientiousness (*apramāda, bag yod*), which he defines as twofold: (a) having the ability to protect the mind from afflictive phenomena (*nyon mongs kyi chos rnams*), and (b) enabling the meditator to fully practice worldly and transworldly virtues. (Namgyal 1978, p. 239): *de'i ngo bo ni kun nas nyon mongs kyi chos rnams la sems bsrung zhing 'jig rten dang 'jig rten las 'das pa'i dge ba rnams yongs sus grub par byed pa ste*. For a translation, see (Namgyal 2019, p. 311).

17 (Namgyal 1978, pp. 240–41). For a translation, see (Namgyal 2019, p. 313).

18 (Namgyal 1978, p. 240): *snga ma ni/ dran rgyu de nyid dran par byed pa'i 'dun pa gtod pa tsam yin la/ phyi ma ni dran rgyu de nyid yid la byas nas de las ma yengs pa'i dran pa dngos gzhi ste/.* For a translation, see (Namgyal 2019, p. 313).

19 (Namgyal 1978, pp. 240–41): *las dang po la de gnyis snga phyi'i rnams pa cung zad yod kyang goms nas phyogs gcig tu 'char ro.* For a translation, see (Namgyal 2019, p. 313).

20 (Namgyal 1978, pp. 240–41): *de lta bu'i dran pa de'ang sgrub brgyud pas rtsol bcas kyi dran pa dang/rtsol med kyi dran pa gnyis su bshad nas/ snga ma la/a 'thas kyi dran pa'am 'jur dran dang/stong nyid kyi bzung dran nam ngo shes kyi dran pa dang/phyi ma la/ yang dag gi dran pa'am zung 'jug gi dran pa dang/ blo bral las blo 'das kyi dran pa ste/.* For an alternative translation and further detail on these four styles of mindfulness, see (Namgyal 2019, p. 313).

21 (Sogdogpa 1999, p. 290): *dwags po bka' brgyud pa gnas 'gyu'i bar lag 'gyel ba zer/ ngo bo blos byas pa'i sgom yin/ 'di la ngo shes kyi dran pa dang ma bral ba dgos pas bka' brgyud pa stong nyid gzung dran zer/ 'di ka rgyun bskyangs nas bsgoms pas/ gzung dran de rang gsal gyi dran pa ru 'gro/ ma yengs pa rang byas na 'di yang kha gze mo zhig yin te/ zla ba gcig tsam nas nyin snang 'dre thub/.*

22 It is important to note here that the "mindfulness that apprehends emptiness" in the context of Mahāmudrā relates to the yogic perception of emptiness.

23 (Sogdogpa 1999, p. 290): *sngar gyi zhi gnas kyi ting nge 'dzin de rang ngo shes pas zhi lhag zung 'brel lam/ phyag rgya chen po'am/ rdzogs pa chen po zhes zer/.*

24 In *Man ngag gi rgyab rten padma dkar po* (C, vol. 8, p. 380): *da lta'i dran pa de las sgom go chod par bya'o.*

25 For a discussion of this debate, see (Ruegg 1989) and for a recent overview of the scholarship on this topic, see (Higgins 2016). For a rebuttal of views in the context of Mahāmudrā, see (Namgyal 2019, pp. 129–35).

26 Tibetan text in Lingpa (2004, pp. 470–82), English translation in Lingpa (2013, pp. 51–60).

27 Lingpa (2004, pp. 392–93): *de'ang 'di na so so'i skye bo'i sar // thos pa las byung shes rab ma bsten na/ bsam dang sgom pa'i yon tan gnas min 'khyams/ thos pa'i shes rab kun gyi rgyu ru gsungs/.*

28 Lingpa (2004, p. 401): *gang zhig rten cing 'brel 'byung ni/ chos rnams ma lus kun gyi mdzod/ gang la bsam pa'i shes rab kyis/ yang dag 'jug pa lde mig yin/.*

29 Lingpa (2004, pp. 404–5): *de ltar snang ba skye med du/ bsam pas gtan la phab pa de'i/ rang bzhin shes pa'i chos nyid la/ sgom pa'i shes rab ces su grags/.*

30 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 467; B, p. 553): *thos bsam sgom gsum po dran gzhir bzhag pa.*

31 *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, Chapter VI, 15a.

32 For references to the considerable discussions in Buddhist studies regarding this major issue, see for example (Adam 2016).

33 On the meaning and translation of the term *tregchö*, see Namkhai (2013a, pp. 133–34). *Treg* (*khregs*) refers to the "binding up" of body, speech, and mind. *Chö*, "to cut" is here in its intransitive form (*chod*), not to be confused with its transitive form (*gcod*). It refers thus not to a deliberate action to cut something as performed by someone (dualistic model), but to the spontaneous freeing or breaking free of tensions and thoughts in Dzogchen meditation (nondual model). Chögyal Namkhai Norbu thus proposes the interpretative and suggestive translation of *tregchö* as "total relaxation". We propose here "spontaneous release of ties".

34 Not settling deliberate mindfulness, as such, deliberate style of mindfulness is not the distinctive mindfulness of Dzogchen.

35 *Ocean of Qualities* (A, p. 453; B, p. 536): *lam gyi chos skad tshon* (B: *chen*) *po mtha' dag spong ba bsam gtan pas dran pa'i mtshan nyid du gtan la phab na/ 'di ltar mnyam par bzhag* (B: *gzhag*) *pa po blo mchog tu gyur pa cig car ba'i rigs la rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po'i khyed chos mnyam gzhag* (B: *bzhag*) *gi steng du dran pa mi gzhag par/ dran pa rang mnyam gzhag gi ngo bor rdzogs pa de sa chod lhag par du che ba yin/.*

36 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 518): *rang bzhin shes pa'i dran pa skad cig ma.*

37 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 518): *bsgom bya'i ngo bo.*

38 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 518): *de gshis thog tu bskyed pa la dran pa gcig pos chog pa lags sam.*

39 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 519): *chos thams cad kyi rtsa ba dran pa la thug pa shes par gyis shig.*

40 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 519): *dran pa med na thos bsam sgom pa'i bya ba lta ci/ 'jigs rten yang ma 'grub.*

41 I.e., precious human life, impermanence and death, karmic retribution, and the sufferings of cyclic existence.

42 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 530): *khyad rnams kyis ston pa ni dran pa dang shes bzhin la gyis shig.*

43 Ibid., p. 532: *bsam gtan gyi ngo bo ni dran pa las logs su gyur pa ma yin.*

44 See Nagarjuna (2005, pp. 182–83) for a useful table prepared by the Padmakara Translation Group that shows the details and relationship between these two lists of categories.

45 Another similar but different quotation of the *Treasury of Spiritual Instructions* served later to Jigme Tenpei Nyima in his own advice summarizing the entire path of Dzogchen according to six styles of mindfulness (Tibetan text in Nyima 2003): (1) "conditioned mindfulness" (*'du byed kyi dran pa*), (2) "mindfulness of the nature of reality" (*chos nyid kyi dran pa*), (3) "mindfulness of post-meditative appearances" (*rjes snang gi dran pa*), (4) "mindfulness of direct perception" (*mngon sum gyi dran pa*), (5) "mindfulness of the field of experience" (*spyod yul gyi dran pa*), (6) "mindfulness of the exhaustion of phenomena" (*chos zad kyi dran pa*). This text has been translated by Adam Pearcey (2018, pp. 75–86). It must be noted that, originally, Longchenpa did not explicitly use any of these categories of mindfulness or even the full term of mindfulness (*dran pa*). These are the later and self-consciously

creative interpretations of Jigme Tenpei Nyima. Jigme Lingpa's model studied in this paper is simpler and consists mainly in the two first styles of mindfulness of the above list elaborated by Jigme Tenpei Nyima.

46 Jigme Lingpa quotes the *Tantra of the Vajra Pinnacle* (*rdo rje yang tog gi rgyud*): "The movements of thought are subdued by mindfulness. Mindfulness purified is gnosis". *Ocean of Qualities*, (B, p. 538): *'gyu ba dran pas btul ba yin/ dran pas sangs pa ye shes yin/.*

47 Forms, affects, cognitions, volitional factors, consciousness.

48 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 539): *de'i myong ba so sor rtog pa'i shes rab rjes thob thams cad du bsre ba la bslab pa ni chos nyid kyi dran pa zhes bya ste nyon mongs pa sa bon dang bcas pa drungs nas 'byin pa'i gnyen po yin.*

49 *Ocean of Qualities*, B, p. 540.

50 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 543): *'dir ni blo dang bral ba'i shes rab kyis dran pa med pa'i chos nyid mthong.*

51 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 543): *shes rab kyis dran gzhi zad pa'i lhag mthong du shar*.

52 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 544): *chos thams cad skad cig dang ldan pa'i shes rab*.

53 Spontaneous release of binds (*khregs chod*) and direct transcendence (*thod rgal*) are the two main types of Dzogchen practice in the Instructions Series. The first consists in the direct recognition of the primordial purity, or emptiness, of the nature of mind. The second is formed by visionary exercises, with the use of specific postures, gazes, etc., that enhance a direct perception of the spontaneous presence, i.e., the creative energy of the nature of mind. These are interpreted as forming a Dzogchen parallel to calm-abiding meditation (in spontaneous release of binds: resting in the empty nature of mind) and insight meditation (in direct transcendence: observing directly the luminous apparitions emerging from the nature of mind).

54 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 547): *yengs dang yengs mkhan med do.*

55 *Ocean of Qualities* (B, p. 548): *sems can gyi rgyud la glo bur gyi dri ma dang lhan cig pa'i khams bde gzhegs snying po.*

56 On this point, see van Schaik (2004, pp. 124–27).

57 *dgon rtse sprul sku rin po cher gdams pa* (A, vol. 9, pp. 207–10) and *dgon rtse sprul sku rin po che nas dran pa skyong tshul gyi dris lan* (A, vol. 9, pp. 236–45). Deroche is currently preparing a study and translation of these two supplementary texts for another publication.

58 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 465; B, p. 550).

59 Ibid.: *'di rdzogs chen pa'i dran pa sgom gyi ngo bor song* (A: seng) *ba dang ni mi gcig go.*

60 Ibid. (A, p. 466; B, p. 551): *rang sgom kyi ngo bor rdzogs* and *rang babs kyi rgyun skyong ba.*

61 (Śāntideva 1994–2008, p. 975): *de ltar kun nas nyon mongs dang/don med brtson pa'i yid brtags nas/ de tshe dpa' bos gnyen po yis/ de ni brtan por gzung bar bya/.*

62 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 465; B, p. 551): *sgom pa ma yin goms pa yin/ goms pa klong du gyur pa yin/ zer ba 'di bden/.*

63 This meditation theory is worth noting in conversation with empirical studies on mindfulness and habituation. For a study on attenuated habituation due to mindfulness practice with Dzogchen and Mahāmudrā practitioners, see (Antonova et al. 2015).

64 On these concepts, particularly the historical development of *amanasikāra*, see (Higgins 2008). On non-mindfulness and non-attention in Mahāmudrā instructions, see (Namgyal 2019, pp. 314–16) and on the symmetry of these opposites, see (Guenther 1993, pp. 38–40).

65 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 465; B, p. 551): *de 'dra las dang po'i ring mi 'byung/des na 'gyu ba tshor dus rnam rtog des dran pa'i gdong* [A: *gdod*] *ma bzod* [A: *bzed*] *cing/phyal le/ sang nger dengs 'gro ba de dran rgyun brten lugs kyi gnad ma 'khrul ba yin/.*

66 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 466; B, p. 551): *yang dran pa dang shes bzhin zer ba rgyu 'bras ltar 'byung ba ji ltar dbye ba ni/ spyir dran pa dang shes bzhin zer ba 'di sgom yig thams cad du gleng ba mang ste/ 'di'i dran pa ni 'du byed kyi dran pa la 'jug pa kho bos go ste/.*

67 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 466; B, p. 551).

68 (Śāntideva 1994–2008, p. 973): *gang tshe dran pa yid sgo nas/ bsrung ba'i don du gnas gyur pa/ de tshe shes bzhin 'ong 'gyur zhing/song ba dag kyang 'ong bar 'gyur/.*

69 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 466; B, p. 552): *rdzogs pa chen po ni lta sgom rog gcig pas/ lta ba'i dran pa dang/sgom pa'i shes bzhin cha gnyis su mi skyong bar dran pa de ka mnyam gzhag gi ngo bor rdzogs pas shes bzhin de shes bya'i sgrib par mthong bas rgyu 'bras snga phyi med par snang ngo/ de'i rgyu mtshan/ dran pa yod na de las lhag pa'i shes bzhin blo'i dri ma/ dran pa med na shes bya med pas shes byed de ya cha/.*

70 The two kinds of obscuration (*sgrib gnyis*) are a cognitive obscuration (*shes bya'i sgrib*) and an affective obscuration (*nyon mongs pa'i sgrib*).

71 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, pp. 466–67; B, p. 552): *de lta mod kyi gnas lugs ji bzhin ma rtogs kyi ring la stong 'dzin gyi dran pa dang/de ka rgyun ma nyams* [B: *mnyam*] *par yod do snyam pa shes bzhin du 'dogs pa yid dpyod kyi lta sgom ste/kun tu 'gro ba'i bzhi dang/gzhan 'gyur gyi gnyis te sems byung gi blo dang ma bral ba'i phyir ro/.*

72 According to the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, the other four omnipresent mental factors are sensation (*tshor ba*), perception (*'du shes*), cognitive directionality (*sems pa*), and contact (*reg pa*); the other two variable mental factors are torpor (*gnyid*) and worry (*'gyod*). See (Guenther and Kawamura 1975, pp. 19–28, 99–107). The variable factor of cognitive selectiveness identifies phenomena while

the factor of discernment reflexively apperceives and mediates the contents of consciousness. On cognitive selectiveness and discernment, see (Guenther 1976, p. 50; Vasubandhu 1990, p. 102; Sheehy 2006, p. 72). There is little discussion of the operation of attention (*yid la byed pa*) by Jigme Lingpa, who only makes cursory use of the term with the abbreviation *yid byed*, and to denote attentional investigation, the term *yid dpyod*.

73 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 467; B, p. 552): *gal te shes bzhin dran pa'i 'bras bur 'dod na/ nges don la mnyam par 'jog pa'i tshe dran pa de shes bya dang/shes bzhin de shes byed du 'gro ba'i nyams len cha gnyis kyi sgrib* [B: *bsgrib*] *pa spong mi nus/"on kyang nges don gyi gzugs brnyan 'du byed kyi dran pa can la ni de* [B: *'di*] *ltar rung ste/ blta bya'i dran pa dang/lta byed kyi shes bzhin blo rdzas gnyis par snang ba'i phyir ro/.*

74 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 467; B, p. 553): *yengs pa* [B: *ba*] *zhes bya ba ni lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa yin pas.*

75 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 467; B, p. 553): *de'i phyir ma yengs tsam pa ni dran pa'i ngo bo.*

76 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, p. 468; B, p. 554): *'dir rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po ni 'phags pa'i lam de bzhin gshegs dge ba'i bsam gtan yin pas.*

77 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, pp. 471–72; B, p. 558): *de la spang bsgyur lam du byed pa'i gnyen po mang yang/nad brgya sman gcig lta bu ni dran pa'am rig pa yin/ de gnyis la'ang ngos 'dzin lugs tha dad pa yod/ 'di'i dran pa ni chos nyid kyi dran pa phung po lnga dang bral ba yin/ rig pa ni rnam shes ma tshogs pa'i 'dus ma byas so so rang rig gi ye shes yin/.*

78 *Cudgel to Discern the Real* (A, pp. 472; B, p. 558): *dran rig gnyis su med pa'i so sor rtog pa'i shes rab ngos zin pa.*

79 In particular, *klong chen snying thig gi bzhugs byang rab gsal nyi 'od rnam par snang ba'i rgyan* (C, vols 8–9), chapter VIII (C, vol. 9, pp. 197–482). For a full study on texts belonging to this collection, see (van Schaik 2004).

80 In *man ngag rdzogs pa chen po'i rgyu phyi ma* (C, vol. 8, p. 208): *dran pa'i gseb kyis mi 'ching ngo.*

81 In *man ngag rdzogs pa chen po'i rgyu phyi ma* (C, vol. 8, p. 208): *de tshe dran bsam ci shar yang.*

82 In *kun mkhyen zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs pa* (C, vol. 8, p. 397).

83 In *kun mkhyen zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs pa* (C, vol. 8, p. 399).

84 In *snying tig sgom pa'i bya bral gyi gol shor tshar gcod seng ge'i nga ro (C, vol. 8, p. 405):* da lta'i khregs chod kyi shes pa. The Dzogchen path consists, then, in "preserving with a mindfulness that is simply not forgetting"

85 In *rdzogs pa chen po gnas lugs gcer mthong* (C, vol. 8, p. 412): *ma brjed tsam pa'i dran pas skyong ba.*

86 In *rdzogs pa chen po gnas lugs gcer mthong* (C, vol. 8, p. 412): *dran pas ched du gcur ba'i 'jur dran ma yin pa.*

87 In *snying tig sgom pa'i bya bral gyi gol shor tshar gcod seng ge'i nga ro* (C, vol. 8, p. 407): *khyab gdal gyi dran pa'i mkhar tshugs pa.*

88 Kapstein (1992) has studied the Dzogchen doctrine of mindfulness in reference to the revelatory literature of the Northern tradition (*byang gter*), which refers to the term mindfulness (*dran pa*) at the level of Dzogchen practice. The dialectical relationship between mindfulness and forgetfulness in the cosmological and soteriological processes is well-illuminated by Kapstein.

89 According to the extracts of the *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse* presented above, the use of the term mindfulness for the Dzogchen level is not found in revealed texts per se, but in Jigme Lingpa's own important compositions that were compiled together as part of the cycle of the *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse*.

90 In order to point out the close relationship between the two styles of mindfulness around the notion of *present awareness* or *presence*, and considering them together as the main Dzogchen practice par excellence, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu used to translate *dran pa* (in the sense of conditioned mindfulness) as "ordinary presence" and *rig pa skad cig ma* as "instant presence" (Namkhai 2013a, pp. 214–16).

91 In the preliminary practices of the *Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse*, the following supplication is even addressed to the teacher: "I pray you to establish also all mindfulness and meta-awareness" (*dran pa dang shes bzhin kun kyang bzhengs su gsol*, Tibetan text edited in (Klein [2009] 2020, p. 117)).

92 Or "wide open" (*gcer bu*).

93 In sum, these are: (1) because most clinical adaptations of mindfulness are explicitly based on Buddhist practices; (2) because the rich theoretical literature of Buddhist traditions can provide insights or suggest lines of research; and (3) because Buddhist contemplative traditions promote multiple approaches that involve different techniques framed within different theoretical discourses (Dunne 2015, pp. 251–52).

94 Here, reflexive awareness is to be understood in the context of Dzogchen, that is of pure awareness itself.

95 Meta-awareness is monitoring, so the phrase "if it departs" means that it regularly checks for potential distractions or hindrances and evaluates the necessity of applying antidotes, or not. The phrase, "[if] it returns" means that meta-awareness comes back to monitoring.

96 The lines that conclude this verse are (Śāntideva 1994–2008, p. 972): *bsod nams dag ni nyer bsags kyang/rkun pos phrogs bzhin ngan 'gror 'gro/*; "Even if one has accumulated merits, Being plundered by thieves, one goes to miserable destinies".

97 Please see Section 3.3. for a detailed discussion of the factors here mentioned.

98 The following discussion assumes the distinction of three types of meditative stability. The first consists of meditative stability within cyclic existence, the second of the bodhisattva path of accumulation and junction, the third of noble bodhisattvas from to

the path of vision and onwards (Lingpa 2010, p. 93 for stanzas nos. 106–8, pp. 329–34 for commentary). The argument here is that Dzogchen meditation corresponds to the third type.

99 Commentary by Kangyur Rinpoche (Lingpa 2010, p. 332): "For people who have entered one of the three vehicles and are abiding on the paths of accumulation or joining, it is through the concentration associated with insight meditation that the path of seeing (i.e., liberation) is attained. This state of mind is known as clearly discerning concentration, where the name of the result is given to the cause".

100 This is the first of the four aspects of ascertainment on the bodhisattva path of junction.

101 (1) Not to know the line of the downfalls, (2) not to respect one's teacher, (3) to be habituated to carelessness, (4) to have strong defilements. To these, Jigme Lingpa adds great forgetfulness and unclear mindfulness. Thus, he considers mindfulness and meta-awareness to be the core antidotes to the downfalls. See chapter X of the *Treasury of Precious Qualities* (Lingpa 2004, pp. 455–56).

102 The sentence is (*Cudgel to Discern the Real*, A, p. 470.4): *sgom nyams can zhig gis gsung rab kyi bslus zos pas 'gyod pa chen po skyes shing*. It likely refers to the practice of eating Buddhist scriptures.

103 Here an ultimate time fraction (*dus mtha'i skad cig ma*) and the time-span of completing an action (*bya rdzogs kyi skad cig ma*).

104 On this issue, see (Lingpa 2010, appendix 4, p. 377).

105 *Ārya-prajñāpāramitā-sañcaya-gāthā*, *'phags pa shes rab pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa tshig su bcad pa*, Pekin, Otani no. 735, vol. 21, pp. 185–95 (sher phyin, tsi).

106 Nāgārjuna's *Suhṛllekha*, *bshes pa'i spring yig*. See (Nagarjuna 2005, pp. 48–49).

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Article

Shouldering His Guru's Legacy: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's Discourse in Relation to *thos-bsam-sgom* after the Death of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok

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Abstract: This article contributes to the growing discussion of the ways that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy has been carried forward by his spiritual successors at the Larung Five Sciences Buddhist Academy (or Larung Gar), in contemporary Eastern Tibet, by focusing on the contribution of the Larung vice principal and leading second-generation luminary, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (1962–). Drawing on a range of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's spoken teachings and writings over a twenty-year period, this article undertakes a contextualised analysis of how he has shouldered his guru's legacy in the areas of Tibetan Buddhist monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations. It explores how the threefold framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* (listening, reflecting, meditating), whether in its parts or its entirety, lies at the centre of his reformist discourse in these matters, articulated in relation to a wide range of Buddhist and secular concepts, as well as to concrete institutions and organisational structures. It is argued that, while Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro expounds the entire framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* throughout the years in question, in 'the earlier period' (c.2000–2012), from shortly before his guru's death until approximately a decade afterwards, he subtly privileges the intellectual attributes associated with *thos-bsam*, while in 'the later period' (c.2013–2021) he reweights his exposition to give a balanced emphasis to the practice of *sgom*.

Keywords: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro; Larung Gar; listening; reflecting and meditating; *thos-bsam-sgom*; monastic education; monastic governance; monastic–lay relations; Tibetan Buddhist revival; Buddhist educational reform

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1. Introduction

If one visits Larung Gar today, physical reminders of its founding lama, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok Wish-Fulfilling Jewel (*mkhan po 'jigs med phun tshogs yid bzhin nor bu*) (1933–2004),[1] can be seen in the form of the large gilded portraits adorning the exteriors and interiors of many halls and buildings. These are but one of the many ways in which the Larung community continues to remember and revere its guru, invoke his power of blessing, and remind residents and visitors alike that his legacy remains alive and active in the institution today. Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death in 2004 was a time of rupture, sadness, and uncertainty for Larung Gar. As a guru-centred religious institution, the loss of the figure who had served as its magnetic and inspiring lynchpin, spiritual director, chief educator, and tantric master for two-and-a-half decades raised doubts about its ongoing viability. These doubts must only have been deepened by a series of demolitions at Larung Gar in the years immediately before Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, which greatly reduced the size of the institution, hampered its activities, and demoralised the community. However, in the subsequent years, Larung Gar not only survived but flourished, growing even beyond its former size while continuing to serve as, undeniably, the most dynamic and influential hub of Tibetan Buddhism in Eastern Tibet.

The story of this period of reinvigoration is partly one of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's charismatic inspiration, even in death, and of the extraordinary prescience and resilience of his vision for Larung Gar. However, it is also one of the actions and discourse of his disciples who, once thrust into positions of second-generation leadership, did their utmost to ensure that Larung Gar authentically remained the Dharma seat of their guru. It is the second story that will be under consideration here. With a view to contributing to the growing discussion of the ways that various elements of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy have been inhabited and carried forward by his spiritual successors at Larung Gar, this article focuses on the Larung Gar vice principal and leading second-generation luminary, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (*mkhan po tshul khrims blo gros*) (1962–).

Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok did not appoint any one disciple as his sole successor to carry forward his legacy. Insofar as his legacy has been maintained, it has relied on his second-generation disciples upholding formal equality with one another while each carrying forward separate aspects of that legacy relating to the roles for which Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok trained and mentored them, albeit with an absence of specificity and prescription that has left them with considerable agency and discretion as they have navigated the contingencies of their times. Collectively, the second-generation disciples might be said to loosely span the staggering breadth of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's activities, which traversed the full range of the paṇḍita and siddha poles of Tibetan Buddhism. Individually, however, each of them has only ever been a partial successor.

From the early 2000s, by which time Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok was already in worsening health, and, to a far greater degree, in the aftermath of his death, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro carried forward his guru's legacy in fields relating primarily to the paṇḍita pole of his guru's activities, namely, fields such as monastic ethics, monastic education, monastic governance, lay education, lay ethical activism, monastic–lay relations, and the rational defence of Buddhist doctrines. To carry forward such a significant portion of his guru's legacy might have appeared a heavy burden, but Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro shouldered the responsibility with extraordinary vigour.

Existing scholarship has examined his activities in some of these fields: Gayley (2013, 2016, 2017), notably, has addressed his lay ethical activism, and both Duckworth (2015) and Sheehy (2021) have explored his rational defence of Buddhist doctrines. Building on that work, this article will primarily examine Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's pursuit of his guru's legacy in the three fields of monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations, although some reference to his activities in the fields of monastic ethics, lay education, and lay ethical activism will be integrated throughout. Specifically, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's *discourse* will be the main 'activity' under consideration, with his practical actions in the three fields described in a secondary fashion. This discourse will be contextualised through an accompanying analysis of the institutional changes at Larung Gar and the sociopolitical changes in wider Tibetan and Chinese society in this period, not only to illuminate how the context may have influenced Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse, but also to suggest how Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse may have, in turn, influenced the context.[2] As will be highlighted from several perspectives, the threefold framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* (listening, reflecting, meditating) (see Deroche 2021),[3] whether in its parts or its entirety, lies at the centre of his discourse in these matters, articulated in relation to a wide range of Buddhist and secular concepts, and also in relation to concrete institutions and organisational structures.

This article will first provide, as essential background, a short biography of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro in the years before Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death. It will then briefly discuss the context of Larung Gar's emergence as a key centre of the post-Mao Tibetan Buddhist monastic education movement. Drawing on a wide range of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's spoken teachings and writings in both Tibetan and Chinese, it will move on to analyse his discourse relating to monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations over approximately twenty years.[4] Throughout this time, he expounds the entire framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* as the core of the Mahāyāna path. However, there is a

subtle but discernible shift in how he emphasises the different aspects of this framework, beginning roughly around 2013. This article will, therefore, first examine the years c.2000–2012—which are here termed 'the earlier period', and which encompass the time from shortly before Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death until approximately a decade afterwards—and will contend that a slightly greater emphasis is given in his discourse during this period to the intellectual attributes associated with *thos-bsam*. It will then examine the years c.2013–2021—which is here termed 'the later period'—and will draw attention to a reweighting of his discourse that gives balanced emphasis to the practice of *sgom*.

2. Biography

Born in 1962, near Kharsa Lake (*mkhar sa mtsho*) in Dranggo County (*brag 'go rdzong*; Ch. *luhuo xian*炉霍县) of Kardze Prefecture (*dkar mdzes khul*; Ch. *ganzi zhou*甘孜州), to an ordinary seminomadic family, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro came of age just as Tibetan communities across the plateau were emerging from the Cultural Revolution. During his youth, he obtained a basic secular middle school education which, although devoid of any Tibetan language component because of the assimilationist cultural policies of the time, nevertheless equipped him with literacy in Chinese. In his private time, through assiduous self-study, he learned to read and write in his native Tibetan. With what was, by local standards, a very respectable level of education, several years after finishing his schooling, he gained employment at the township level of the Luhuo county government. In 1984, at age twenty-two, and after three years in the position, he declined a significant offer of promotion and resigned in order to pursue a monastic career as a disciple of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok at Larung Gar.

In 1984, the Larung community was a predominantly male saṅgha of roughly seventy members. After first venturing into the Larung valley, it would be three years before Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro next set foot outside the encampment. Under Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's close mentorship, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro applied himself with great diligence to the systematic study of the sūtric and tantric scriptures, and, at age twenty-four, he began to receive Dzogchen pith instructions from his guru. He clearly stood out among his peers for his scholastic aptitude and probity. In 1986, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok conferred on him his Dharma name of Tsultrim (*tshul khrims*—'ethical discipline') Lodro (*blo gros*—'discerning intellect'), widely known to be an alternate name of the fourteenth century Nyingma master, Longchen Rabjam (*klong chen rab 'byams*) (1308–1364).

Before long, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro had distinguished himself, not only as a promising scholar-practitioner,[5] but as a versatile and talented assistant. When Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok led his entire saṅgha and an estimated 10,000 followers on a pilgrimage to the sacred Buddhist centre of Wutaishan in Shanxi Province in 1987, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro served with devotion as his secretary, Tibetan–Chinese translator, and cook.

During the 1990s, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok went on to give Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro a leading role in shaping the institutionalisation and systematisation of monastic education at Larung Gar. In 1990, he was dispatched on a ten-month teaching assignment to Nyaklhang Monastery (*nyag lhang brag de'u tri*) in Nyarong County (*nyag rong rdzong*, Ch. *xinlong xian*新龙县), where a shedra (*bshad grwa*) had been newly founded. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro returned to Larung Gar in 1991 and, after passing a set of rigorous examinations, was awarded the khenpo (*mkhan po*) degree at the highest level of distinction. While the duration required to complete this challenging degree was traditionally in the order of fifteen years, the urgent need for trained monastics to power the educational revival underway at Larung Gar, and elsewhere, led Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok to award it in some cases, including in that of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, considerably sooner. That same year, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok appointed him to the newly created position of Dean of Studies (*slob don khang gi gtso 'gan pa;* Ch. *jiaowuzhang* 教务长), in addition to his daily teaching duties in the shedra programme. As Larung Gar's first ever Dean of Studies, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was responsible for overseeing its new Education Office (established between the autumn of 1990 and the summer of 1991) and for administrative tasks, such as developing the

curriculum, setting examinations, and systematising the process for awarding degrees. He continued in this role until 2013, when he passed his administrative responsibilities to a cohort of younger khenpos, whom he had personally trained for the purpose.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's first decade as Dean of Studies accompanied a period of rapid growth, diversification, and globalisation for the Larung community more generally. His guru's burgeoning charisma among Tibetan and Han Chinese audiences saw the encampment's population increase upwards of seven hundred percent by the beginning of the new millennium. Larung Gar's initially small population of Tibetan nuns had massively expanded, making it one of the primary centres for female monasticism in Eastern Tibet. From 1993, when a designated 'Chinese Division' (Ch. *hanseng bu* 汉僧部) was established in response to the demand of a growing stream of Han Chinese Dharma-seekers, it had also become one of the few religious communities in Eastern Tibet to pedagogically accommodate Sinophone Buddhists. While Larung Gar remained on the geographic margins of the exile-based and transnational arenas of Tibetan Buddhism, the relatively relaxed cultural policies of this period enabled Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, and a small retinue of close disciples, to undertake several extensive teaching tours across Asia, Europe, and America. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was himself sent on teaching assignments to Southeast Asia and Taiwan in 1994 and 1997, which both launched his career of international Dharma outreach and opened his eyes to the wider world. Meanwhile, from the mid-1990s, he began to develop and articulate a forceful socioreligious voice of his own through verbal and written engagement with wider Tibetan society.[6]

Shortly after the beginning of the new millennium, Larung Gar's decade of vigorous growth and widening international exchange suffered harsh setbacks. The delicate matrix of political conditions, regulatory openings, and personal connections that had allowed it to develop into the largest religious community in the Tibetan Buddhist world, under the watchful gaze of the Chinese state, collapsed. A series of government-ordered demolitions, beginning in 2001, led to the top-down razing of thousands of monastic dwellings, the mass expulsion of practitioners, and the imposition of a restrictive official population ceiling. Khenpo Jigme Phuntok's movements were circumscribed and his health progressively declined. On 7 January 2004, at age 71, he died. Having expressed his intent to take rebirth in Sukhāvatī, he left explicit instructions that his reincarnation should not be sought. Responsibility for continuing his legacy passed to his second-generation disciples, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro already prominent among them.

3. 'The Earlier Period'

3.1. Monastic Education: thos-bsam-sgom as the Core Path

From a vantage point four decades after Larung Gar's founding, Gayley (2021, p. 17) writes that 'Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's revival of monastic scholasticism stands as one of the crowning achievements of his legacy.' Indeed, few today would deny that the results in this area have been remarkable, both in scale and in quality.[7] During the early decades of the post-Mao period, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's activities vis-à-vis the revival of monastic education had two components, as described by Germano (1998, p. 66), on the basis of fieldwork conducted in 1990: 'The development of rigorous scholastic training programs at Larung . . . [and] at the other [shedra] in Eastern Tibet that he founded during the 1980s'.

Moreover, as Kapstein (2004, p. 252) describes on the basis of fieldwork in 1998 and 2000, over the years, Larung Gar increasingly became a key hub for a 'widespread Buddhist educational movement in Eastern Tibet' that went well beyond the monastic institutions that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok had himself founded. A key practical element of Larung Gar's role in this movement, as Kapstein identifies, was the training of a new generation of educated Buddhist clergy—khenpos, in Larung Gar's case, given its predominantly Nyingma affiliation—who could then go on to teach in their own right elsewhere. That is not to say that Larung Gar was the sole engine of this movement. Indeed, galvanising monastic quality through education was a widespread concern throughout the Tibetan Buddhist landscape, with other large monasteries, such as Labrang in northeastern Tibet, playing

leading roles in other regions (see also Caple 2019, especially Chapter Four). The return of lamas from exile, where a monastic educational revival had already been underway since the 1960s (see e.g., Brentano 2018), further stoked the momentum. Nonetheless, Larung Gar was key, providing practical support, discursive guidance, and an inspirational example through the scale and sophistication of its own scholarly activities (see e.g., Kapstein 2004, p. 252).[8]

From the beginning,[9] *thos-bsam-sgom* was an important emic framework through which the monastics training at Larung Gar, and promoting its mission elsewhere, discursively conceived of their activities. While Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok can rightly be described as traversing Tibetan Buddhism's two affective poles—the clerical, scholarly, and ethical at one end, and the yogic, magical, and visionary at the other (see Samuel 1993)—expressed in a certain way, such binary framing can give the impression that the two poles are all but irreconcilable. At Larung Gar, however, the two poles were understood as comprising a synthetic but consistent unity, the highest ideal of Tibetan Buddhism, embodied in Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok himself. One important way in which that unity of the two poles was discursively articulated and institutionally actualised in the education system at Larung Gar was in terms of the path linking them, namely, *thos-bsam-sgom*, conceived in accordance with the gradual approach of Mipham, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's most significant Nyingma influence, who argued that, for all but a spiritually advanced minority, there was a necessary link between the precise intellectual understanding of Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka in particular, and the highest nonconceptual realisations of Dzogchen. As Mipham writes in his *Beacon of Certainty* (Pettit 1999, p. 209): 'In cutting through to primordial purity/One needs to perfect the Prāsaṅgika view.' In his basic teachings, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok (see e.g., Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok 2015, pp. 112–14) was unequivocal that this gradual path was necessary.[10]

Moreover, since *thos-bsam-sgom* is a framework recognised as authoritative by all the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism—deriving as it does, in its canonical form, from Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa VI.5*—it was useful for conveying the nonsectarian (*ris med*) ethos that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok implemented at Larung Gar, allowing it to serve as a training hub for scholars of all sectarian affiliations who could then return to their home monasteries to pass on the core scriptural knowledge of the Indo-Tibetan Mahāyāna tradition, in particular the classic Five Major Topics of Vinaya (*'dul ba*), Abhidharma (*mngon pa*), Pramāṇa (*tshad ma*), Madhyamaka (*dbu ma*), and Prajñāpāramitā (*phar phyin*).

It might seem unsurprising that the community at Larung Gar conceived of its training, at least in part, in relation to *thos-bsam-sgom*. As Dreyfus (2003, p. 165) explains, it is the norm for Tibetan scholastics to 'explain the soteriological value of their studies' through that framework. However, whereas Dreyfus notes that, at the Three Seats (*gdan sa*) of the Geluk School, the actual practice of *sgom* was uncommon—given that meditative practice (Dreyfus 2003, p. 166) 'requires the calm and isolation that are difficult to find in scholastic centers'—at Larung Gar, under Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, all aspects of *thos-bsam-sgom* were equally emphasised. In an institutional form, this manifested in Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok establishing not only shedra programmes focusing on *thos-bsam*, but also drubdra (*sgrub grwa*) programmes focusing on *sgom*, both at Larung Gar and, as Germano (1998, p. 66) observes, at other monasteries in Eastern Tibet.[11] However, the establishment of a formal drubdra programme was not the only way in which Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's equal emphasis on *sgom* was actualised at Larung Gar. As he himself had undergone long periods of hermitic retreat and had attained the profound realisations that grant charismatic tantric authority in the Tibetan Buddhist context, he attracted many serious meditation practitioners, both monastic and lay, who came to Larung Gar not to be enrolled in formal programmes, but to receive meditative guidance in an informal, spontaneous fashion through personalised pith instructions.

The balanced emphasis that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok placed on the full framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* stands in subtle tension with the Chinese designation of '*foxueyuan*' (佛学院; *nang bstan slob gling*), which Larung Gar received in 1987. This designation played a

crucial role in its long-term survival, allowing it to develop from a 'Dharma encampment', (*chos sgar*) with what Terrone (2009, p. 85) describes as 'unofficial status' outside the formal legal-political regulations of the PRC, and protected by little more than its remote location, into a Buddhist institution limited, but also afforded a durable protection, by those regulations (see also Germano 1998).[12] The concept of the *foxueyuan* originated with the Chinese Buddhist modernist reformer, Taixu (1890–1947), and, in its very name—'Buddhist Academy'—it throws emphasis on the rationalised education-centric model of Buddhism that the CCP became prepared to (re)legitimise during the 1980s.[13] While, on one level, the framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* accords well with this model, providing as it does, through *thos-bsam*, a firm emphasis on the foundational necessity of study and intellectual reasoning on the Buddhist path, it could be argued that the spontaneous tantric flavour of the *sgom* that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok taught as an integral part of Larung Gar's offering never sat entirely comfortably with the bureaucratic designation of *foxueyuan*.[14]

Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok was doubtless conscious of this, but, under the influence of the Paṇchen Lama (see Terrone 2021, p. 3), was savvy enough to welcome the regulatory cover of *foxueyuan*, even while exploiting the space inherent in these legal-political regulations, and the relatively light touch with which they were first implemented, in order to maintain Larung Gar as a conducive environment for tantric meditation and related activities. In this regard, Caple (2019, p. 166) offers a useful framework for understanding monastic activities in Tibet in the post-Mao period, arguing that 'State-imposed norms and regulations may have shaped what has been possible', but that monastic actors have still been able to act with meaningful 'agency and responsibility' within those regulations.

Indeed, while Larung Gar's official classification as a *foxueyuan* linked its institutional legitimacy to its capacity to serve as, first and foremost, a Tibetan Buddhist education provider, while Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok was alive, minimal prescription evidently pertained with respect to the nature of the educational project enacted within its institutional parameters. Whereas the Buddhist academies founded by Taixu in the early twentieth century, as described by Birnbaum (2003, pp. 435–36), featured rationalised modern curricula combining the study of Buddhist philosophy with foreign languages and secular subjects, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok and his disciples utilised Larung Gar's certification as a *foxueyuan* more than half a century later to develop what was, certain innovations aside, a traditional system and culture of Tibetan Buddhist education based on an indigenous educational theory and framework, namely, *thos-bsam-sgom*. It is also worth noting that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok was skilled, as Gayley (2011, pp. 438–39) explains, in the 'subaltern strategy of appropriating aspects of the dominant discourse and reframing them for counter-hegemonic ends.' One important feature of dominant PRC discourse was (and remains) the importance of 'education' (*slob gso*; Ch. *jiaoyu* 教育). Not only does this concept possess political legitimacy, but it also carries powerful social and cultural prestige. By presenting Larung Gar's activities as a sophisticated system of education, through the designation of *foxueyuan*, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok may well have been seeking, in the words of Gayley (2011, p. 443), 'to reverse the label of backwardness (*rjes lus*; Ch. *luohou* 落后) assigned to Tibetans and other minorities in state-sponsored media and publications.' In this regard, it is interesting to note the grandly intellectual full name that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok accepted for Larung Gar, which as Bianchi (2018, p. 113) describes, derived from the input of both the Paṇchen Lama and Zhao Puchu, the President of the Buddhist Association of China: 'The Serta Larung Five Sciences Buddhist Academy (*gser rta bla rung lnga rig nang bstan slob gling*; Ch. *Seda Larong Wuming Foxueyuan* 色达喇荣五明佛学院).

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was appointed 'Dean of Studies' in 1991 and, as such, he was an important player in the training of scholars at Larung Gar and, less directly, via the fact that Larung Gar was a key node for it, a player in the wider Buddhist educational movement across Eastern Tibet. Nonetheless, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok remained the absolute leader of all Larung Gar's activities, including in educational matters. When Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok died, however, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro immediately found himself de facto responsible for carrying forward his guru's legacy as Larung Gar's preeminent educational leader.

Rather than faltering under the burden, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro embarked on a period of immense discursive and practical activity. While a distinction can be made between his practical activities at Larung Gar itself and those beyond, his discourse from this period can be interpreted as comprising a unified whole, in which he reaffirms the importance of monastic education from first principles as it pertains, not only to the smallest village monasteries, but also to the largest institutions with the greatest capacities, such as Larung Gar. This interpretation of his discourse as comprising a unified whole is informed both by its internal consistency over many years, and by the way in which his discourse has been propagated; even those speeches that were delivered at a specific place for a specific audience were either filmed or recorded and were later made into VCDs or CDs, or were transcribed in writing and turned into books that were then circulated at Larung Gar and across Tibet to both monastic and lay audiences.[15] Thus, even when he makes specific prescriptions for specific situations, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro is conscious that the ideas he propounds must have general applicability.

Turning first, briefly, to his practical activities in this period, at Larung Gar, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro redoubled his commitment to the project of institutionalising mass monastic education that had begun in 1991 with the establishment of the encampment's Education Office. In a teaching given in 2006 (SS3, p. 346), he acknowledges significant progress during his, by then, fifteen-year tenure as Dean of Studies in building a comprehensive shedra curriculum, replete with 'core' (*rtsa ba*) and 'branch' (*yan lag*) courses. It should be noted that the systematisation and refinement of learning conditions among Larung Gar's separate academic divisions proceeded at different paces, with the Tibetan monks' shedra, in which Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro also taught (see e.g., Duckworth 2021), blazing the trail with its well-developed khenpo programme. While the direction of his work as Dean of Studies remained consistent with before, the impetus to further improve and consolidate the encampment's educational system was doubtless heightened in the post-guru period.

Beyond Larung Gar, meanwhile, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro stepped up efforts to unite Tibetan monastic communities across regional and sectarian lines around the cause of improving monastic education.[16] Between 2003–2007, for example, he claims to have travelled to more than ninety Tibetan settlements with monasteries (KTL 2012, p. 12). In doing so, he was not only forging links that would support those monasteries in establishing and strengthening their educational programmes—with or without the direct logistical support of Larung Gar—but was also doing what might, in an academic context, be described as 'fieldwork', in order to further inform his understanding of the issues on the ground. For example, he describes going to thirteen monasteries north of Kokonor (*mtsho byang*) and observing that only two had set up learning systems (MTT, pp. 153–54). The empirical 'data' from this fieldwork, interpreted with reference to Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's extensive reading in fields ranging from modern science to the histories of both Buddhist and non-Buddhist religions, and analysed in his typically intellectual fashion into categorised patterns of cause and effect, strongly shapes his discourse on monastic education in this period. With a deft political sensitivity for the art of the possible, even within the PRC, he details the problems that he observes and presents specific prescriptions for their remedy.

Turning then to this discourse, in framing Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's writings relating to the 'ten virtues' (*dge bcu*) lay ethics movement, Gayley (2013, pp. 250–51) observes: 'Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok provides the broad ideological backdrop for the movement . . . and Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro formulates this into a coherent series of action points in a later work.' This observation provides a useful basis for a discussion of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse in general, and captures the important fact that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok initiated, in some form, many of the discursive (and practical) activities that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro has carried forward. However, with regard to the areas under discussion here—not only monastic education, but also monastic governance and monastic–lay relations—this article seeks to give greater weight to Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's own contribution. This approach is underpinned by three key reasons. Firstly, legacies do not flow onward in

and of themselves, but depend on purposive and substantive acts of reinvestment on the part of those who follow next in line. After Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, the reaffirming and re-enacting of what Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok had initiated was, thus, a critically important step, without which various aspects of his legacy may have dissipated. Secondly, while one of the distinctive qualities of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse is, indeed, to formulate 'broad ideologies' into 'coherent action points,' in the areas under discussion such phrasing would not do justice to the erudition and systematic clarity entailed in formulating such action points in a detailed and consistent manner, nor to the ways in which Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse is not only intellectually skilful, but also morally powerful and emotionally inspiring. When advocating specific prescriptions in scholarly, pedagogical, and administrative matters—matters that can easily become dry and dull—Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro brings a didactic vigour that has undoubtedly played a key role in the adoption of those prescriptions. Thirdly, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's contribution can be understood, to some degree, as not only reiterating and promulgating Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy in a compelling fashion, but also as developing that legacy in significant ways.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's speeches and writings on monastic education in the years leading up to and after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death (and subsequently) convey a deep moral concern about the corruptions of Tibetan Buddhism that he observes in his contemporary milieu, which he sees as both negative in themselves, and as threatening to the long-term survival of Tibetan Buddhism. In this regard, he follows his guru, who sought, as Germano (1998, pp. 69–70) describes, to purify the corruptions in Tibetan Buddhism arising from the Cultural Revolution and who put considerable thought, as Gayley (2011) shows, into the long-term interrelated survival of both Tibetan Buddhism and wider Tibetan culture. An important difference, however, is that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro came to maturity through the period of major socioreligious transformation in Tibet from the 1980s onwards, with the result that the corruptions he observes and seeks to address in his discourse are less those arising from the Cultural Revolution—the desecration of monasteries, the harming of lamas, the breaking of vows, and so forth—and more those arising from unwholesome trends within the Tibetan Buddhist revival, such as an excessive emphasis on building material culture, such as temples, stupas, and statues, and the problem of incompetent, or even fake, Buddhist leaders exploiting the commercialisation of society to offer flamboyant initiations and superficial spiritual guidance to those able to pay (KTL 2000, p. 299) (see Caple 2019).[17]

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's solution to the corruptions he observes likewise follows that of his guru in emphasising monastic ethics and monastic education as key. Like his guru, moreover, he sees ethics and education as symbiotic, with ethical discipline providing a supporting condition for learning—in accordance with Vasubandhu's canonical exposition in *Abhidharmakośa* VI.5—and learning, in turn, giving rise to the virtuous qualities that make ethical discipline and ethical comportment a natural way of life. As education is the focus here, what will be stressed is Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's unequivocal reaffirmation of his guru's idea that monastics must not be defined by their external appearance, but must, within their minds, *know* the content of the Buddhadharma, with the ever greater degrees of knowledge, understanding, and realisation that they should strive to possess articulated through the framework of *thos-bsam-sgom*.

One characteristic feature of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse is that, when he advocates something, he also makes clear what he opposes. Whenever speaking or writing about monastics—which, in context, usually refers explicitly to monks, but should also, according to his own prescriptions that they are equal, be understood as referring implicitly to nuns—Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro consistently criticises those who only know how to perform rituals such as village rites (*grong chog*) (KTL 2000, p. 316), and whose only skills are the likes of chanting quickly, beating drums (KTL 2004, p. 19), or dancing (KTL 2004, p. 319). Following his guru (see Gayley 2021, p. 26), Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro does not object to ritualistic activities per se—he affirms that rites are essential in certain cases, such as after

death (SS1, p. 451), and he states that ritual music and dances should be preserved and passed on in an authentic form (KTL 2004, p. 394)—but he is, nonetheless, clear that they should not comprise the main substance of the monastic path. If monastics are trained only in these matters then, at best, they will do little good for themselves, Tibetan Buddhism, and wider society, and, at worst, they will commit deeds that do harm to Buddhism's reputation, since despite wearing robes, they are no different in their minds from lay people (KTL 2000, p. 316).

When directly addressing what must change at monasteries where formalistic practices are all that are offered, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's language from this period is often strident, exhorting monastics to practise *thos-bsam* as their first task, and stressing that monastic learning institutions, most notably shedra, should be built as the most urgent priority:

> *'There is nothing more important than establishing proper shedra in monasteries'*[18] (KTL 2000, p. 317); '*Those who have never done any thos-bsam training whatsover . . . do not benefit the core purpose of monasteries, which is the Dharma of scripture and realisation*'[19] (KTL 2004, pp. 389–90); *'There are some monasteries that only focus on rituals and ceremonies and so on but not on thos-bsam . . . That is pitiful . . . We should expend more effort these days solely on building up the foundations of study and practice'*[20] (KTL 2004, p. 395); *'We should respect the learned ones . . . these days it is like this . . . people look upon those who have wealth and power as very valuable and pay deference to them but do not see learned ones as valuable. But actually . . . as it is said, it is learned ones who we should really respect'*[21] (SS3, p. 495); '*Without a shedra, it is the same whether a monastery exists or does not exist . . . Don't think that a monastery is just having some monks gathering for rituals and ceremonies and going out to do village rites. There is no meaning in having monasteries like this.'*[22] (MTT, pp. 313–15)

As a serious pedagogue, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (2004, p. 391) recognises that intellectual study best begins early in life, while the mind still has a greater capacity for tasks such as memorisation. He therefore asserts that Buddhist education for future monastics should ideally begin in childhood, at designated monastery schools (*slob grwa/yig grwa*), where children should receive language training, a basic cultural education (*rig gnas*), and some foundational Buddhist teachings. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro believes this education will benefit them whether they grow up to become monastics or not (KTL 2004, p. 392). While, in recent years, the political space for monasteries to teach children has narrowed significantly, Kapstein (2004, pp. 253–54) documents how, in the 1990s, Dzogchen Monastery, as well as other smaller institutions, were involved in such activities.

Notwithstanding his emphasis on childhood education, the principal institution through which Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro prescribes that monastics—ideally in young adulthood—should receive a full Buddhist education is the shedra. In his discourse from this period, he gives concrete practical guidance, describing the exact progression of a model shedra curriculum in a nonsectarian fashion (KTL 2004, p. 394).[23] He tells monasteries that Larung Gar can send khenpos to teach if needs be (KTL 2012, p. 38), and leaves no loophole for excuses, saying that monasteries should send their monastics elsewhere if they cannot offer them a proper education (KTL 2004, pp. 394–95).

While *thos-bsam* and the building of shedra is the first priority in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's writing, which accords with its foundational position in the framework of *thos-bsam-sgom*, he also makes it clear that monasteries should, insofar as they are able, build drubdra to provide for the practice of *sgom* (SS1, p. 395). He therefore opposes the idea—which one might even interpret as implied in some of his own rhetoric—that activities related to *thos-bsam*, such as debate, are more important than *sgom*. Expressing concern that young debate-minded monastics 'will not understand that their own practice and benefiting others are the core of the Dharma but rather think that debating is the core'[24] (SS1, p. 58), he deploys the traditional Mahāyāna idiom of 'not falling to the extreme' (*mtha' gnyis su mi lhung*) of only focusing on scripture and reasoning (SS1, p. 59).

In some of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's rhetoric it is *thos-bsam* alone, institutionalised in a shedra, that seems to comprise what he understands by 'education', with *sgom* treated as a second, separate activity to be undertaken on completion of that education. In other places, however, it is the entire framework of *thos-bsam-sgom*, institutionalised in both a shedra and a drubdra,[25] that seems to comprise what he understands by 'education' in the fullest sense. Thus, he speaks about both shedra and drubdra in works titled 'Some Thoughts on the Need for Education in Monasteries' (KTL 2004) and 'General Remarks on Improving Monastic Education' (KTL 2012, pp. 1–106). Moreover, while his writings from this 'earlier period' do not go into great detail in defining the three stages of the framework and the relationships between those stages—perhaps because he thinks that such an explanation is redundant for monastics who already have access to texts explaining *thos-bsam-sgom*—in his later foundational teachings for Chinese lay audiences, he speaks of *thos-bsam* as providing an intellectual understanding of Buddhist doctrines, and of *sgom* transforming that intellectual understanding into practical understanding. In one teaching (KTL 2015), he describes this progression, in modern idiom, as analogous to the transition between knowing the theory of driving a car and actually being able to drive a car. This analogy throws some light on why Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro might conceive of *sgom* itself as part of 'education' in its fullest sense: what is gained from *sgom* is not separate from what is learnt through *thos-bsam*, but, rather, is a deeper and more embodied form of the same knowledge.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro encapsulates the totality of the system that should be implemented for monastic education at 'qualified monasteries' (*dgon pa mtshan nyid ba*), across sectarian traditions, through the formula of 'three schools and one village' (*grwa gsum sde gcig*). He writes: 'Modest paintings, statues and buildings are enough for monasteries. If you have some money, you should spend that on building shedra, drubdra and lobdra. A qualified monastery needs "three schools and one village" . . . The one "village" is a place where lay people, when they get a bit older, can practice the Dharma'[26] (SS3, p. 355). The 'village' will be further discussed below. What should be observed at this point, however, is the concision and practicality of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's formula, which he originated himself: 'Even though the situation of "three schools, one village" existed in the past, the term itself is new'[27] (SS3, p. 357).

Three further issues of interest emerge from Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on monastic education in this period. Firstly, when speaking about nuns in particular, he tends to be unequivocal that their practice of *thos-bsam-sgom* should be identical to that of monks: 'As for nuns, the requirements are the same, there is not the slightest difference at all . . . the younger ones should work hard. No one is saying nuns cannot do *thos-bsam*, and no one should ever oppress them in this way. In general, there is no one stopping them, least of all at Larung Gar'[28] (SS3, pp. 237–38).

In this regard, he follows Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, who, as Liang and Taylor (2020) describe, established Tibet's first khenmo (*mkhan mo*) programme. Given that this programme had not established a deep foothold at the time of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, in order to survive as equal in status to that of the monks, it relied on the support and encouragement of influential second-generation leaders at Larung Gar, notably, of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro himself. While his discourse alludes to the fact that, on average, the nuns have not yet attained the same level of learning as the monks, he does indeed offer them such encouragement, often in quite a paternalistic strict tone (see 'Don't Blame Ghosts and Spirits all the Time' (SS3, pp. 53–55)).[29] He endorses the principle of the equality of nuns with monks, but stresses that practical actions—the nuns' own proactive engagement in scholarship, benefiting of society through the Buddhadharma, and advancing of Tibetan culture—will speak louder than mere words with respect to the realisation of that equality (SS3, p. 237).

Secondly, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro asserts that it is through *thos-bsam-sgom* alone, and particularly through *thos-bsam*, that monastics can preserve the Buddhadharma into the future: ' . . . the responsibility for holding the fundamental Buddhist teachings lies on the

shoulders of monks [but] that is probably not possible without education'[30] (KTL 2012, p. 63). He justifies this, in another discourse, through the history of the Chan School of Chinese Buddhism, which, in his reading (SS3, p. 234), 'only focused on *sgom* but neglected teaching and studying, including exposition, debate and composition . . . Eventually, *thos-bsam-sgom* disappeared'[31] (i.e., even the *sgom* that the Chan School focused on disappeared). This style of well-read transcultural historical analysis is indicative of how, in certain ways, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro develops his guru's legacy according to his own distinctive capacities.

Thirdly, while there is a clear affirmation of the importance of the entire sequence of *thos-bsam-sgom*, with *thos-bsam* more strongly emphasised for younger monastics, and *sgom* more strongly emphasised for older monastics (KTL 2012, p. 62), it is contended that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's writings from this period, despite his explicit warnings to the contrary, do indeed give greater prestige to the rational values associated with *thos-bsam* than they do to the meditative values associated with *sgom*. This is a matter of nuance. It is not difficult to find examples of him praising meditation practice in retreat as 'the best of the best' *(ang dang po'i nang gi dang po*) (KTL 2012, p. 54). Nonetheless, in speaking of building a shedra to practise *thos-bsam* as the priority for monasteries, in suggesting that even through *thos-bsam* alone many contemporary ills within the monastic saṅgha can be solved, and through arguing that *thos-bsam*, in particular, is key to the preservation of Buddhism, he does seem to attribute slightly higher value to intellectual attributes than to meditative ones. Moreover, in certain places, he even seems to suggest (SS1, p. 468) that it is those who are less capable who should seek to go into retreat.

The act of paying such close attention to Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse might leave the misleading impression that his prescriptions were universally adopted by his wide-ranging audiences. This was far from the case. Even at Larung Gar, there continued to be discrepancies between his prescriptions for *thos-bsam-sgom* as the mainstay of monastic life and the actual situation on the ground, while, beyond Larung Gar, the reality was even more varied. To a great degree, the uptake of educational reforms was in the hands of monastic leaders. Therefore, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on monastic governance will now be examined.

3.2. Monastic Governance: Learned and Democratic Leadership

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse relating to the fulfilment of *thos-bsam-sgom* at monasteries is not limited to explaining what a full monastic education system should include. He has a realist's grasp of the fact that education systems can only be implemented by those who actually run monasteries. With this is mind, he sets forth clear and strongly worded proposals for the reform of monastic governance. While Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's proposals for monastic governance reform have precedent in Buddhist modernist movements, including in reforms pushed by the likes of the Dalai Lama in exile, and reflect the broader influence of liberal-democratic discourse among monks across the Tibetan world during the post-Mao revival (see e.g., Caple 2011; Lempert 2016),[32] they nevertheless represent a radical shift in values from Tibetan tradition, and, even if influenced in spirit by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's ideals, they mark a clear expansion of his guru's vision.

Three interrelated issues appear to provide the context and motivation for his proposals. First, his empirical observation in this period that certain types of monastic leadership are obstructing the implementation of monastic education. Second, his sincere commitment to democratic egalitarian ideals and his evident distaste for the pitfalls of traditional Tibetan Buddhist models of leadership. Third, the pressing need at Larung Gar itself to create a new and durable leadership structure after the death of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok in order to 'institutionalise his charisma' in a way that could protect and carry forward his legacy, even while conforming with the political-regulatory constraints entailed in the designation of Larung Gar as a *foxueyuan*.

The first issue links most explicitly to monastic education itself. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro writes: 'You might be wondering whether there are people who say that we don't

need study and practice (*bshad sgrub*)[33] in monasteries; [I can tell you] there are many of these types indeed'[34] (KTL 2012, p. 30). The most significant polemical targets of his rhetoric are the traditional leaders of monasteries, whether reincarnate tulkus (*sprul sku*) or hereditary lamas, who—in the non-Geluk schools especially—are often noncelibate, and who Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro often refers to collectively as the 'monastery leaders' (*dgon dpon*). He takes a two-pronged approach to navigating the power and sensibilities of this broad and diverse group. On the one hand, he holds them responsible for the training and behaviour of the monks in their monasteries, calling upon them to set up systems of monastic education, and praising them if they do so. Thus, he says: 'It is ultimately up to the monastery leaders whether or not there is a division for study and practice. It is thanks to the monastery leader if a virtuous attitude is developed within a monastery'[35] (SS1, p. 290).

On the other hand, he says monastery leaders should not implement these changes by themselves (KTL 2012, p. 18), but should instead set up a 'monastic committee' (*dge 'dun mthun tshogs*) to address issues including, but not limited to, monastic education:

> *'So the first thing to do is form a committee in the monastery to manage all the internal and external matters of the monastery . . . It has to be a group of more than four people who are elected by monks, who have a comprehensive understanding of the Buddhadharma, who have a pure-minded attitude of service towards the Dharma, and especially who care greatly for study and practice.'*[36] (KTL 2004, p. 389)

The qualities of the monks who should be elected to the committee, namely, learnedness and compassion, reflect the very qualities that, in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's view, monastic education generates. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro suggests that, ideally, the committee should be inclusive of both ordinary monks and the traditional monastery leaders, if those leaders possess the relevant qualities: 'Whether monastery leaders or ngakpa, if they possess the qualities mentioned earlier they should be selected in the committee'[37] (KTL 2012, p. 29).

However, what if the leaders are reluctant to introduce monastic education? In this case, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro seems to suggest that the monks should proceed with establishing the proposed committee anyway: 'Monastic study and practice should not be ignored just because one person cares less about it; it has to be held deeply at heart and be well organised by the committee elected by the monks'[38] (KTL 2004, p. 390).

While, from one perspective, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro seems to be mainly focused on ensuring a governance structure that will deliver effective monastic education, and is prepared to accept a prominent role for traditional monastery leaders if they support monastic education, there is also plentiful material in his discourse that suggests he sees weakening the power of traditional monastery leaders amid the moral depredations of the contemporary context as an end in itself. In one teaching (KTL 2012, p. 27), he disparages the self-interest of those present-day lamas and tulkus who 'imitate big bosses' (*tshong pa chen po dag gi lad mo byas*), 'compete over the height of their thrones' (*khri mtho dman brtsad*), and 'solely copy the style of big kings' (*mi chen rgyal po'i lad mo sha stag byed*) in their quest for wealth and power, and is emphatic that such individuals bring 'no benefit whatsoever' *(phan gang yang thogs kyi mi 'dug*).

In some regards, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's evident antipathy towards the abuses of traditional models of leadership, such as the tulku system, is a direct continuation of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy in this regard (see Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok 2015, p. 108).[39] As Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro himself notes: 'Among us Nyingmapa there was no one more qualified than Lama Wishfulfilling Jewel to recognise tulkus but he never recognised a single tulku in his entire lifetime. This tells us something'[40] (KTL 2012, pp. 34–35). Furthermore, as Germano (1998, p. 69) notes, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok was sceptical of noncelibate practitioners who, in his view, often 'used the claim of a 'tantric lifestyle' to legitimize doing as they pleased under the spell of sexual desire.' Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro echoes this scepticism about noncelibacy in remarks suggesting, indirectly, that the leaders

who do not introduce education systems are often the very ones who 'are not monastics and have wives' (*rab byung ma red bud med 'dug)* (KTL 2012, p. 32). Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's influence can even be seen in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's criticism of the 'kingly decree' (*rgyal po'i smra ba lan gcig*) (KTL 2012, pp. 22–30) at many monasteries, whereby one leader decides and has the final say on everything. During the 1990s, as noted above, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok had taken steps to give positions of important leadership and responsibility to disciples, including Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro himself, rather than monopolising all the power.

While his negative critique of the potential for abuse in traditional leadership models echoes that of his guru, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's positive case for a democratic model is more distinctively a development of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy, even if it is far from original in the wider context of Buddhist modernism. His rhetoric (KTL 2012, p. 35) reveals that he has read about American democracy and the advantages of the separation of powers. He suggests (SS3, pp. 484–85) that there is a relationship between democracy and the internal unity of a community, even while recognising that this is a fragile construct and that it may allow for certain misuses of democracy, such as endless disputation or disrespect for elected leaders, which can exacerbate division. Finally, an underlying theme in his discourse is that democratic elections are more likely to deliver meritocratic outcomes than a monarchical system, and are, thus, more likely to give responsibility to those who are learned and virtuous.

Even while advocating for democratic changes that are influenced by modern ideals, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro attributes the foundation of many of these ideals to the Buddha: 'In fact, the Buddha was the first to initiate a democratic system before democracy even existed in the world'[41] (KTL 2012, p. 19). He thus implicitly suggests that the situation he is trying to rectify is the corruption of an original and purer model. Indeed, the choice of four as the minimum number of monastics on the committee clearly echoes the traditional minimum number of monks required to be present to form a quorum for ordination. It is also significant that, in calling for greater democracy—which, in its socialist rather than liberal conception, is an important and prestigious concept in the PRC—Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro not only articulates his ideas for governance within the linguistic space allowed by the PRC's legal-political regulations, but also, in the manner discussed above, follows his guru in seeking to counter the assertions of 'backwardness' and—in this governance context—of 'feudalism' (Ch. *fengjian* 封建), which are mainstays of PRC discourse about Tibetans (see Gayley 2011, 2021).[42]

Three further points should be noted. Firstly, there is a degree of tension between certain essential aspects of Tibetan Buddhism and democratisation. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro addresses this issue directly by distinguishing between the 'religious system' (*chos kyi lam lugs*), namely, issues of monastic management, rules, and regulations, which can be democratised, and the 'Buddhadharma' (*chos*) itself, with its teachings on the absolute authority of the guru in the guru–disciple relationship, and on the truth of orthodox doctrines, which cannot: 'We cannot say that whether or not we listen to a lama possessing the three kindnesses should be decided through a raising of hands. . . . Likewise, there is no way that we would determine whether to accept karmic cause and effect by raising our hands'[43] (SS3, p. 487).

Secondly, while Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro advocates for a weakening of the power of traditional monastery leaders, he has no desire to cause conflict. Indeed, he follows his guru (see Gayley 2011, p. 448) in emphasising unity among the Tibetans, and instead seeks compromise:

> *'It is up to the monasteries to decide what to do with tulkus, but as for those tulkus who were recognised by spiritual forefathers, regardless of whether they are good or bad, all the monks should respect them even if they do not know basic grammar or how to read. When having festivals and assemblies, they should sit at the front on a high seat...They should also be included and consulted in the discussions of monastery matters'*[44] (KTL 2012, pp. 32–33); *' . . . we should not dethrone the monastery leader but should let him*

> *stay in his position . . . otherwise it will create violent conflicts . . . but these monastery leaders must rotate from time to time. There are strong reasons why global leaders serve five-year terms.'*[45] (KTL 2012, p. 37)

This suggests that the deep reform of monastic governance is not the very highest of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's priorities, and that, given his practical and realistic bent, he would rather work with traditional hierarchies to increase monastic education than position himself against them.

Thirdly, in alignment with what was asserted at the end of the discussion of monastic education, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse with respect to monastic governance in this earlier period tends to valorise *thos-bsam* over *sgom*. From an emic perspective, traditional monastic leaders legitimately wield power because they are believed to possess (from previous lives, in the case of tulkus) prestigious spiritual qualities associated with the practice of *sgom*. While Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro does not deny that certain traditional leaders nowadays may indeed possess these qualities, by stating that such qualities are chiefly valuable in specific contexts, such as in tantric initiations or rituals, and by making clear that they do not automatically equip their bearers to legitimately wield power over the management of monasteries, he undercuts and limits the value of *sgom*. Moreover, by asserting that it is the intellectually learned who are the most qualified participants in the management of monasteries, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro can be seen as bolstering the prestige of those who possess the qualities derived from *thos-bsam*.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on monastic governance in this period cannot be separated from the context of the significant transformation in monastic governance at Larung Gar after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death. The full nexus of causation between the two is impossible to fully map, but it is beyond doubt that they influenced each other, with Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's ideas feeding into what was implemented at Larung Gar, and that implementation, and its attendant lessons drawn from trial and error, in turn, feeding back into his discourse. Here, the changes at Larung Gar will be briefly described, without any deep effort to analyse the causes, but with the aim that the parallels and resonance with Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse can be seen.

After the guru's death, Larung Gar witnessed a quintessential 'institutionalisation', or 'routinisation', of charisma—the process whereby conditions for long-term organisational survival are created by stabilising the charismatic authority of an individual into ongoing structures. According to Weber's (1978, p. 241) paradigmatic analysis, an orderly determination of who legitimately wields power must be arrived at in order for a social organisation to endure beyond the period of its initial charismatic leader.

Thus, the issue for Larung Gar after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death was not that the second-generation disciples might somehow misinterpret his legacy, but rather that, in seeking to carry his legacy forward, they might fail to divide up and structure their separate responsibilities in a way that avoided conflict and that guaranteed the legitimacy of the new system of governance.

This challenge was smoothed over by the fact that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok had already taken steps to institutionalise some power outside his own charismatic person in the 1990s. For one thing, his longstanding tantric tutelage of his niece, Jestunma Mume Yeshe Tsomo (*rje btsun ma mu med ye shes mtsho mo*) (1966–), known in the Larung community by the honorific title of Lama Mumtso, positioned her as his logical ritual successor.[46] Echoing the hereditary 'bones' (*rus pa*) principle of succession common in the Nyingma tradition, after his death, she took the role of the formal tantric leader of Larung Gar, who sits on the highest throne to lead the community's tantric empowerments. She also took the formal Chinese title of '*yuanzhang*' (*gling gtso*; 院长), the technical head of the *foxueyuan* required by regulation. To manage all the other aspects of Larung Gar's governance, however, by 2007, the second-generation disciples had formed a committee of senior khenpos and had established a rotating system whereby two representatives were elected to hold executive administrative leadership for five-year terms. Significantly, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was one of the first two executive leaders holding this post in the immediate post-guru period.[47]

Moreover, outside the formal leadership structure, principles of equality were institutionalised for the entire Larung community, which, in time, became known as the 'five equalities' (*'dra mnyam lnga*):[48] (1) Equality of income (donations are divided equally between even the most senior leaders and the most junior novices); (2) Equality of place (no one is entitled to a higher seat unless actually engaged in the act of teaching or leading a ritual); (3) Equality of works (everyone has to share in community chores); (4) Equality of gender (monks and nuns, as well as lay practitioners of both genders, have equal status); (5) Equality of ethnicity (Tibetans, Chinese, and any other ethnicities have equal status). Irrespective of whether these 'five equalities' have been consistently, fully, and universally implemented at Larung Gar, they have served as an influential social contract for the community in the era after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death.

In these institutional changes, there is much that resonates with Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on monastic governance. Nonetheless, tensions can also be observed. To tease out just one example, the manner of Lama Mumtso's succession, which echoes hereditary principles, seems slightly discordant with the egalitarian and democratic model that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro advocates. However, both the fact that she is a woman and the fact that her role as the symbolic figurehead and tantric lineage holder of the community is not coterminous with its everyday educational management, and is, therefore, in line with the principle of the separation of powers, seems concordant with that model.

Such issues will now be put to one side, however, in order to turn to another important aspect of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse, which concerns monastic–lay relations.

3.3. Monastic–Lay Relations: Teaching as the Key Activity

In Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse from this period, the practice of *thos-bsam-sgom* is, to some degree, presented as an end in itself for monastics, both because it will bring about positive transformations in their individual minds, and because it will make it possible for the monastic saṅgha collectively to preserve the Buddhadharma for future generations. However, the dominant theme of his writings is that training in *thos-bsam-sgom* should not be seen purely as an end in itself, but, rather, should prepare monastics to benefit beings in accordance with the bodhisattva ideal of the Mahāyāna tradition. On the deepest level, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro sees benefitting beings not merely as the activity that monastics should perform as the next task after completing substantive educational programmes in *thos-bsam-sgom*, but rather as the ultimate aim and justification of that very training, which should underpin their motivation and orientation throughout.

> *'As for our Gar, if it [continues] to be a place that benefits sentient beings for a long time, then it is good that it remains. If it is not beneficial then I am not so sure whether there is much meaning in it being here.'*[49] (SS3, p. 324)

Following Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok (see Gayley 2011, pp. 458–59), Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro speaks of sentient beings less in terms of the traditional Buddhist cosmology of the six realms, and more through what Gayley (id.) describes as a 'this-worldly' framework, comprising widening spheres of human lay society: individual Tibetan villages, Tibetan society at large, the entire Chinese nation, and the whole world. While there is ample textual evidence of his concern for other sentient beings, especially animals, as seen through his advocacy of vegetarianism, life-release and the non-slaughter movement (see Gaerrang 2015, 2016; Gayley 2017; Barstow 2018; Hardie 2019), the focus here is the human realm. His key prescription is for monastics to proactively engage in teaching ordinary Tibetans the foundations of the Buddhadharma. This is influenced by, and builds upon, the vision of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, who was himself deeply engaged in teaching lay audiences, as evidenced, for example, by the *Heart Advice* that Gayley (2011) analyses, and who often sent his own disciples, including Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, to teach elsewhere, but who seemingly did not systematise to the same degree the idea that teaching is a core activity for all monastics.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro writes:

> *'Lay people in many areas just see the Dharma as a good thing that is beneficial for the next life; they can recite some mani and sado mantras,*[50] *but they have no idea about the content of the Dharma and the right ways to practise it. There are so many Buddhist scriptures in the Tibetan language and the contents are so rich. Even though we possess such rich contents of the Dharma, it is really sad that so many people do not have even a basic knowledge and pass empty-handed into the next life. The core reason for this is because we have not been able to promote Buddhism and spread an understanding of it among the people.'*[51] (KTL 2000, p. 324)

As an orthodox Buddhist scholastic who vigorously upholds the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth (see Sheehy 2021), Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro believes that teaching on this topic will benefit lay people by creating the causes for their liberation in future lives. However, following his guru (see Gayley 2011), Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro is also deeply concerned with addressing the contemporary social problems in Tibetan society. In powerful language, he argues that the key to solving these problems is lay people knowing the Buddhadharma, and that it is well-educated monastics who must be the ones to teach them:

> *'Monasteries not only should educate monks, but also educate and care about the faithful masses in their divine communities or those with whom they have a connection. This is extremely important . . . '*[52] (KTL 2004, p. 395); *'If every monastery has a quality teaching system, monks will have the opportunity to understand and practise Buddhism profoundly. They will not only be able to stand on their own feet but will also be able to guide others on the path of liberation. As a result, the Buddhadharma will last for a long time. Because people's minds will become tamed, they will not kill, steal, fight or cheat. All the causes of suffering will grow fewer and they will attain happiness immediately.'*[53] (KTL 2004, pp. 393–94)

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro states that monastics should engage in teaching as an end in itself, in accordance with *bodhicitta*, not as a means to receive donations. He urges them not to 'look for comfortable places or places where one can get a lot of offerings', but to 'go to poor places bereft of the Dharma'[54] (KTL 2000, p. 318). This indicates an important difference between his approach to the relationship between the monastic saṅgha and lay society, and the approach articulated by Germano (1998, p. 70)—and adopted by Liang and Taylor (2020)—when he explains the reasons for Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's strict monastic values: 'In this way [Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok] felt that monastic communities could purify themselves and again become worthy fields of merit for lay people to honor, offer alms, and go to for refuge. It cannot be overemphasized how central this ethical issue is in terms of the relationships between lay individuals and monks, since ethical purity (especially celibacy) is what qualifies the monks as recipients of offerings from the lay community'.

Two points should be examined in this context. Firstly, Germano suggests that the relationship between the monastic saṅgha and lay society is, in an important sense, a defensive one: the monastic saṅgha needs something that lay society possesses, namely, offerings, and it therefore has to justify receiving those offerings by providing something in turn. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's approach is far more confident: the monastic saṅgha possesses something that lay society needs, namely, the substantive content of the Buddhadharma, and they should go out and share it. It should be noted that, unlike the situation facing Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok when he first founded Larung Gar in the 1980s, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse responds to a contemporary reality in which certain monasteries, including Larung Gar, are increasingly awash with donations. These donations, moreover, often derive from Chinese, and even foreign sources, rather than Tibetan sources. While the lack of total reliance on financial support from Tibetan lay people may partly account for the confident emphasis of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's approach, his approach is noteworthy, nonetheless. Secondly, even insofar as Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro acknowledges that lay devotion to and support for the monastic saṅgha is crucial for Buddhism's survival, and sees this as anchored, to some degree, in reciprocal exchange, he describes the goods given by the monastic saṅgha in exchange for donations less in terms of intangible benefits

relating to future lives conveyed via the passive process of the monastic saṅgha serving as a field of merit, and more in terms of concrete benefits relating to this life conveyed via the active process of the monastic saṅgha engaging in teaching.

In emphasising that the monastic saṅgha should provide concrete tangible benefits for lay people, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro follows in a tradition of Buddhist modernists in the Chinese world, such as Taixu (1890–1947), and his successor, Zhao Puchu (1907–2000).[55] It is therefore notable that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, in several discourses, goes out of his way to distinguish his approach from Taixu's and Zhao Puchu's 'Humanistic Buddhism' (*mi yul kyi nang bstan*; Ch. *renjian fojiao* 人间佛教) (see Goossaert and Palmer 2011, pp. 79–83 and 160–61). Even though, in general, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (2000, p. 320) advocates that Buddhists engage in philanthropic deeds, he asserts (KTL 2012, p. 84; SS1, p. 463; SS2, p. 120) that Humanistic Buddhists fell into the extreme of overemphasising activities such as helping the poor, building schools, and building hospitals, to the extent that they lost sight of *thos-bsam-sgom* altogether. He describes *thos-bsam-sgom* as the 'root' (*rtsa ba*) of the monastic path, and philanthropic activities as the 'branches' (*yal ga*) and 'leaves' (*lo ma*) (SS1, p. 463). While he affirms that both the root as well as the branches and leaves should be practised, he makes clear that the root is more fundamental: 'If you think building schools, hospitals, and helping poor people are more important and *thos-bsam-sgom* is not important, that is totally wrong'[56] (SS3, p. 226). Although Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro does not explicitly discuss teaching the Dharma to lay people in the passages distinguishing the 'root' and the philanthropic 'branches,' he makes clear elsewhere that Dharma teaching is a more valuable act than mere material philanthropy.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro goes into considerable detail in describing how exactly the Buddhist teaching of lay people should be enacted. He is conscious of the need to be smart in navigating government regulations and policies (SS3, p. 392), and is concerned (SS3, p. 326) to ensure that political leaders do not get the impression that Larung Gar is the leader of a cross-plateau movement, but, for the most part, he seems to treat such regulations and policies as leaving ample space for what he proposes.[57] For one, he advocates that monasteries set up lay teaching programmes through dedicated institutions. Thus, within the context of the 'qualified monastery' described above, he imagines the 'school' (*slob grwa/yig grwa*) serving as a centre for the teaching of both monastic novices and lay children, and the 'lay village' (*dge bsnyen sde*) serving as a centre, not only for the elderly to retire to, but also for the teaching of lay people in general, including young adults (SS3, p. 356). However, as not all monasteries are able to set up such centres, he also advocates that learned monastics should play a leading role in what might best be understood as a comprehensive missionary programme, with the important proviso being that the objects of their mission are not non-Buddhists to be converted, but rather faithful Buddhists to be taught:[58]

> *'Although Buddhism is well-developed in Tibetan areas generally, there are still many places, including remote regions, where the righteous Dharma is extremely scarce . . . They also cannot afford [to invite teachers from other places] . . . So, we should volunteer with altruistic minds to go to those poor and humble places that lack the noble Dharma and give teachings. At the same time, we should also go to cities and promote the Dharma because cities are the centres of economy and culture. This is important because there is no meaning if we just let the Buddhadharma remain in mountain valleys. In addition, it is important to make books, videos and audio materials to transmit basic knowledge of the Buddhadharma.'*[59] (KTL 2000, p. 326)

With his typical eye for detail, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro even describes a basic curriculum that monastics could teach to Tibetan lay people, which follows the 'stages of the path' (*lam rim*) approach, and which, he stresses, must be adapted according to the abilities of the audience. This begins with the refuge vow and at least some lay precepts, and proceeds through the paths for the 'three kinds of person,' (*skyes bu gsum*), covering

'the good qualities of the Three Jewels, the benefits of liberation, the detriments of cyclic existence, past and future lives, the law of karmic causality, and so on'[60] (KTL 2000, p. 325).

In order to serve as good teachers in practice, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro says that monastics must have, themselves, developed a deep understanding of the Dharma through training in *thos-bsam-sgom*. However, there is an emphasis in his overall discourse on the training in *thos-bsam* being especially key. As evidenced by the style of his own writings, his conception of a successful Dharma teaching is one that, first and foremost, provides a clear conceptual explanation of the Dharma, not one that is inspiring in some vague poetic sense. Thus, while Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro never expresses it in such explicit terms, it nonetheless seems to be the case that, from his perspective, a monastic who has attained personal realisation through training in the entire framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* may perhaps be able to give a better Dharma teaching than a monastic who only possesses intellectual knowledge through *thos-bsam*. However, a monastic who only possesses intellectual knowledge through *thos-bsam* will certainly be able to give a better Dharma teaching than a monastic who has practised some *sgom*, but who lacks a foundation in *thos-bsam*.

Moreover, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro states that, in order to successfully engage with lay society, monastics must learn knowledge other than Buddhism:

> *'In [the scriptures and commentaries], it is said that a bodhisattva should learn everything. As long as it is for the temporary or ultimate happiness of people, we must learn as much as we can. So our study as monastics is of utmost importance.'*[61] (SS1, p. 449)

The three main areas of knowledge that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro cites, with differing degrees of emphasis (KTL 2012, p. 89; SS1, p. 464; SS2, p. 126), are cultural knowledge (*rig gnas*), which seems to refer primarily to the five major and five minor sciences—excluding Buddhism—revered in Tibetan culture since introduced by Sakya Paṇḍita;[62] other languages, most notably English and Chinese;[63] and modern knowledge, in particular the natural sciences, such as physics and astronomy. In part, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro seems to think such knowledge will allow monastics to frame and articulate their teachings according to the zeitgeist, making them accessible by adopting the idioms and psychology of contemporary society. His analysis of the success of Christian missionaries is their mastery of such methods: 'Even though the religion in essence is not reasoned, precisely because it is in the hands of [people with modern knowledge and missionary know-how] it has spread across the five continents'[64] (SS2, p. 111).

At the same time, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro also sees such wider knowledge as necessary in order for monastics to defend Buddhism from polemical attack when they engage in lay society. His discourse is situated within a context in which attacks and challenges appear to come from all sides. For example, there is a need to defend both Tibetan Buddhism and wider Tibetan culture from the charge of 'backwardness' laid against it by PRC state discourse, which, in turn, requires knowledge of the sophistication of Tibet's historical culture. There is a need to defend Tibetan Buddhism from the charge levelled by the likes of the secularly educated Tibetan 'New Thinkers' (*bsam blo ba gsar ba*), that it is responsible for the ills and predicaments of Tibetan society (see Ronis 2021, p. 110). Moreover, as is most pronounced in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's own discourse, there is a need to defend the core doctrines of Tibetan Buddhism, such as rebirth, against the challenges posed by modern science. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro himself is renowned on the Tibetan plateau for his efforts to mount a rational defence of Buddhist doctrines (see Duckworth 2015; Sheehy 2021). His corpus is filled with statements that Buddhism is a rational religion rather than a religion based solely on faith. He argues that Buddhism has nothing to fear from science and adopts various—sometimes seemingly contradictory—rhetorical postures to make his case. For example, in the 'Clear Mirror' (KTL 2000), he argues that Buddhism can neither be proven nor disproven by science, that Buddhism is corroborated by science, and that Buddhism is, in fact, more advanced than science.

It was noted above, when discussing his discourse around monastic education and monastic governance in this 'earlier period,' that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro seems to place

a somewhat greater emphasis on *thos-bsam* than *sgom*. This sense is strengthened by the points just made about his discourse relating to teaching. One result of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's emphasis on the further secular knowledge and intellectual skills required to be a good teacher and polemicist in lay society—when considered alongside the way in which Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, through his own example, shows that Dharma teachings should be systematic and rational—is that the attributes associated with *thos-bsam* receive greater valorisation in his discourse about teaching to lay people than the attributes associated with *sgom*. By affirming that the ultimate purpose of *thos-bsam-sgom* is to benefit beings, by stating that lay Tibetans are best served by Dharma teaching, and by describing how such teaching is best conducted in practice, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro makes a powerful case for the value of intellectual capacities, but, perhaps unintentionally, does not make a correspondingly strong case for the value of meditative capacities.

4. 'The Later Period': Reweighting towards *sgom*

Taken collectively, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse and action in the fields of monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations over the two decades in question have a striking consistency. Nonetheless, it is possible to detect, from the period beginning roughly around the year 2013, a subtle shift of emphasis towards the meditative values associated with *sgom*, which rebalances the stronger emphasis he seems to place on *thos-bsam* in what has been termed, 'the earlier period.'[65] The extent of this shift should not be overstated; after this point, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro continues to uphold everything that he upheld previously. Nor should the shift be understood as happening at one particular moment or in one particular text or action; it is a subtle reweighting that can be observed only in relation to a wide range of his discourse and action. It arises not because of any change in his conception of *thos-bsam-sgom,* in its totality, as the core of the Mahāyāna path, but in response to and as a corrective of issues he observes in the apparent implementation of study and practice in his milieu. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's underlying motivation, as in the period immediately after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, is still to carry forward his guru's legacy with regard to the entire framework of *thos-bsam-sgom*, in what he perceives to be a balanced fashion.

Given the subtlety of the reweighting, one might question why it is worth drawing attention to at all. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, the fact that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro makes adjustments to his discourse relating to *thos-bsam-sgom* in light of what he observes further reinforces the point that has been made about his empirical and practical disposition. While his discourse on *thos-bsam-sgom* is firmly anchored in Tibetan Buddhist tradition, he is not inflexible in how he goes about articulating that framework, and he perceives its implementation to be a matter of constant balancing and rebalancing.[66] Secondly, the subtle shift in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse parallels, and responds to, important evolutions at Larung Gar and in wider Tibetan Buddhist society in the years after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death. The socioreligious environment did not remain static in these years, and it is therefore valuable to show how Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse and actions are not static, but, rather, evolve in a dynamic fashion. The subtle shift can be seen in his teachings to two broad audiences: monastics and lay people.

The issues informing his reweighted emphasis on *sgom* for monastic audiences seem to have arisen primarily from the evolution of Larung Gar itself in the decade after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, following the demolitions of the early 2000s. On the one hand, this evolution was successful, resulting in Larung Gar growing even larger than its previous size.[67] On the other hand, this evolution was not perfectly balanced with regard to *thos-bsam-sgom*. While the shedra-based educational programmes for both monks and nuns, Tibetan and Chinese, flourished,[68] with the result that ever more khenpos and khenmos graduated from Larung Gar with a strong training in *thos-bsam*, Larung Gar seems to have become a slightly less conducive environment for the meditative practice of *sgom*. It is not the intention here to pick apart the full nexus of causes and effects and give accurate weight to each, but the following range of factors can be suggested as important.

Firstly, as a result of the increased state attention that followed the first cycle of demolitions and Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, which was further exacerbated by the CCP's general crackdown in response to the 2008 protests and to the subsequent series of self-immolations in Eastern Tibet, the second-generation leaders collectively had to take ever greater care to secure Larung Gar's existence. Therefore, they not only restrained Larung Gar's monastic population from becoming involved in the political upheavals of the times, but also emphasised those aspects of Larung Gar's mission that accorded best with the designation of *foxueyuan*, namely, the khenpo and khenmo programmes at the shedra of the monks and nuns respectively, which, as McDougal (2016, p. 57) observes, became ever more institutionalised into a rationalised and bureaucratised system of classes, examinations, and qualifications that accorded with the academic university-like approach favoured by the state.

Secondly, with its increased resident population, the improved roads leading to it, and the increased number of pilgrims and tourists visiting, Larung Gar became too big, busy, noisy, and distracting for the effective practice of *sgom*, at least at certain times of the year.

Thirdly, after the death of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, no second-generation leader was able to fully step into his centralised role as the tantric guru to inspire and lead the meditative activities of the whole community through large-scale empowerments and spontaneous individualised pith instruction. Although Lama Mumtso formally inherited the role of tantric leader, in part because of the strict equality of the second generation, in part because of her ill health throughout the entire period after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, and in part because of the patriarchal norms of Tibetan society constraining her ability to serve as the active guide of the male monastic population, she was not able to wholly embody Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy in this regard, and nor was any other leader of the second generation.[69] Serious tantric meditation in a Tibetan context has never been upheld only through institutionalised courses such as drubdra programmes or three-year retreats; rather, it has received its fullest actualisation either in relatively spontaneous, unstructured, free communities, centred on a tantric guru, or in solitary hermitic or wandering retreats. Thus, notwithstanding that Larung Gar's drubdra programme remained in place it was probably inevitable that, after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, the *sgom* of *thos-bsam-sgom* would decline to some degree at Larung Gar.

Fourthly, during this period, the nearby Nyingma institution of Yachen Gar (*ya chen sgar*; Ch. *yaqing si* 亚青寺) increased in relative prominence as a centre of *sgom*, in part because its first-generation leader, Akhyuk Rinpoche (*a khyug lung rtogs rgyal mtshan*) (1927–2011), outlived Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok and, thus, attracted many of his meditation students after his death—including a large population of nuns who were forced out of Larung Gar after the demolitions of the early 2000s—and in part because, even after Ahkyuk Rinpoche's death,[70] Yachen Gar adopted a different model of second-generation leadership than Larung Gar, with Tulku Asang (*sprul sku a gsang*) (1975–) more directly filling Akhyuk Rinpoche's role as the tantric guru of the community (see also Padma 'tsho 2014).[71] Moreover, Yachen Gar, despite its vast size, was never instituted as a *foxueyuan* and retained, to a higher degree, the atmosphere of a spontaneous tantric meditation community.[72] As a consequence, notwithstanding that Larung Gar, beginning in 2008, acted to strengthen *sgom* by introducing a compulsory annual meditation retreat (*tshams*; Ch. *biguan* 闭关) for all monastics, including students in the shedra programme, a discourse emerged in certain Nyingma circles in Eastern Tibet that 'one goes to Larung Gar to do *thos-bsam*, and one goes to Yachen Gar to do *sgom*.'[73]

Finally, in the decade after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's own star shone ever brighter among the second-generation leadership, matched only by that of Khenpo Sodargye (*mkhan po bsod dar rgyas*) (1962–). His discourse on monastic education reform, with its tendency to place greater emphasis on the attributes of *thos-bsam*, therefore inevitably played some role in Larung Gar's overall tendency towards *thos-bsam* during this period. His individual discursive influence should not, however, be overstated compared to the other factors mentioned above.

Given its ongoing and, perhaps, even increasing influence after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, Larung Gar's overall internal leaning towards *thos-bsam*, as analysed above, had a wider effect across Eastern Tibet. For example, McDougal (2016, p. 58) observes during fieldwork an increase in scholastic education in Nangchen County (*nang chen rdzong*), and attributes this, in part, to the influence of Larung Gar, as well as to wider secular, rational, and educational forces sweeping through Tibetan society, with the support of the Chinese state. She suggests that this has brought about a corresponding weakening of the meditative culture of *sgom*.[74] While Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro would not acquiesce to any necessary relationship between a strengthening of *thos-bsam* and a weakening of *sgom*—quite the opposite in fact—he does, in various places in his discourses from roughly 2013, observe the same phenomenon as McDougal. Thus, he recognises, and treats as a positive development, the increase in both monastic education and wider education across Eastern Tibet, while also acknowledging that *sgom* has received too little attention. For example, in 2013, before an audience of monastery leaders in Nangchen (KTL 2013a, disk 6 time-stamp 1 h: 22:00–30:00 min), he states that scholastic training in Tibetan monasteries is now sufficiently strong to survive for one or two hundred years, but that traditions of meditative practice are at risk of dying out in just twenty or thirty years.[75]

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's practical response to what he observed in this period did not constitute a dramatic about-face. For example, he did not seek to weaken Larung Gar's shedra programmes or to set himself, or anyone else, up as tantric guru in Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's mould. That said, he did play a role in bringing about some small, but still noteworthy, practical changes: in 2018, for example, he integrated a short daily *sgom* component into his annual summer teachings at Larung Gar. His discourse, however, undergoes a more significant reweighting in this period, albeit not a radical change. He continues, for example, to strongly emphasise (KTL 2019, session 44/65 time-stamp 42:00–56:00 min) to the monastic saṅgha that Buddhism is a rational religion whose truth should be tested through analysis rather than blindly accepted through faith. He also continues to argue that monastics should play a key role in teaching to lay people, and that broad knowledge and intellectual skills are required to be effective teachers. Nonetheless, there is an evident shift in the way he makes clear that the very best path a monastic can follow is to go into meditative retreat. While statements along these lines can be found in his earlier teachings (see e.g., KTL 2012, p. 54), Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro is more emphatic and systematic in spelling this out in his reweighted teachings in this 'later period.' Not only does he discursively undercut the value of *thos-bsam* without *sgom*, but, perhaps more significantly, he situates meditative retreat at the top of clear hierarchies and makes clear that the young should practise *sgom* as well as the old:[76]

> *'As a monastic,* the best thing to do is to stay in a solitary and remote place and do meditation and practice . . . And the second is to study the scriptures well and then teach people with pure motivations. The third is to at least properly learn Tibetan grammar and spelling, and with a virtuous mind go about eliminating illiteracy and educating people about hygiene and environmental protection.'[77] (KTL 2017a, p. 34)

> *'Even the mere understanding we gain from listening and reflecting helps but it is not enough. So, we have to practise meditation. At Larung Gar, there are some meditators and also some people who do retreat for certain amount of time each year. This is still not enough. We should [all] start doing meditation practice from a young age.'* (KTL 2020, session 1/3 time-stamp 6:00 min)

At the same time, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro clearly articulates how *sgom* should be conducted. Of note is the emphasis he places on a gradual path also within meditation, beginning with those meditations that he summarises as 'mind training' (*blo sbyong*)—namely, those rooted in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the likes of the 'four thoughts that turn the mind' (*blo ldog rnam bzhi*)—alongside the full tantric preliminaries (*sngon 'gro*) described in Patrul Rinpoche's *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*, before moving on to higher

meditations, such as generation and completion stage practices, and Dzogchen. He gives repeated and emphatic rhetorical validation to the worth of basic mind-training meditations, which goes hand in hand with his support for young monastics engaging in *sgom*, as otherwise they would not have anything to practice appropriate to their level. With regard to the more senior members of the monastic community at Larung Gar, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro describes (KTL 2020, session 1/3 time-stamp 6:37 min) how it can be practically arranged for them to take some time away from their teaching and administrative duties, in order that they too can spend time in retreat.

The second aspect of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's overall reweighting towards *sgom* concerns lay people. As has been discussed, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro argues in 'the earlier period' that providing basic ethical Buddhist teachings to lay people should be a core duty of the monastic saṅgha. He continues to emphasise this in 'the later period.' However, in addition to this, in his personal capacity as a teacher, he began, even in the years immediately after Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, to offer an increasing quantity of systematic higher-level teachings to those better-educated lay people who had the ability to follow a compressed version of the monastic path of *thos-bsam-sgom*.[78] This audience primarily included Chinese lay people[79]—on average better-educated than their Tibetan counterparts[80]—who, in part as a result of the pioneering outreach efforts of Khenpo Sodargye,[81] became an increasingly important part of the Larung textual community in the post-guru period.

The same reweighting towards a balanced emphasis on *sgom* seen in his teachings to monastics is paralleled in his outreach activities among these better-educated lay people, from 2013 onwards. In that year, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro founded a new training programme for a Chinese lay audience called Luminous Wisdom Meditation (*Huideng Chanxiu* 慧灯禅修).[82] One reason for its name and focus was perhaps to counterbalance Khenpo Sodargye's pre-existing Bodhi Study Association (*Puti Xuehui* 菩提学会) programme, which placed its central emphasis on textual study.

In addition, from some of his assumptions about his Chinese lay audience that emerge across his various teachings, it is possible to extrapolate some further reasons that may have influenced the emphasis that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro places on *sgom* in this programme: the fact that many of them are, on average, reasonably well-educated and do not need such extensive intellectual training; the fact that many of them are busy with work and other responsibilities and do not have as much time as monastics to engage in lengthy *thos-bsam* on the Five Major Topics; and the fact that, as a result of worldly life, with its attendant psychological challenges, many of them have an acute realisation of the sufferings of cyclic existence—greater, perhaps, than that of monastics living sheltered lives—and, therefore, both do not need to study such matters in such extensive theoretical detail and are able to derive great benefit from meditation training.

Furthermore, in the years from 2014–2018, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro travelled widely, visiting such places as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, and observed the emphasis that lay Buddhists were placing on the practice of meditation, and the positive results they were experiencing in doing so.[83] In 2016 in the United States, for example, he engaged in a dialogue with neuroscience professor, Richie Davidson, famous for performing experiments on the effects of meditation on the brains of monks; he visited Naropa University, where meditative practice is integrated throughout the curriculum; he took part in events with American Buddhist meditation teachers, including Alan Wallace, Sharon Salzburg, Jack Kornfield, and Tara Brach; and he engaged in numerous dialogues with university academics and researchers interested in the benefits of meditation, particularly mindfulness, in everyday life. Such experiences doubtless strengthened his pre-existing reweighting towards *sgom* and further convinced him that meditative practice, which had, in Tibet, traditionally been the domain of religious specialists, might indeed be valuable for wider lay audiences.

As a conclusion to this section, some aspects of his discourse to Chinese lay audiences after 2013 will be highlighted. This will illuminate important features of his presentation of the whole balanced framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* (*Ch. wen-si-xiu* 闻思修) for this Chinese audience, which, in turn, resonates with some of the important themes discussed throughout this article.

Firstly, he repeatedly emphasises the entire framework of *wen-si-xiu* as the proper way to practice Buddhism; for example:

> *'When we study Buddhism, we need to learn theory . . . and also to practise. We need to do both. Studying Buddhism, especially Tibetan Buddhism, three words are emphasised. They are wen-si-xiu.'*[84] (KTL 2013b)

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro contrasts this sharply with the ritualistic temple devotions undertaken by many self-proclaimed Buddhists in China, which he refers to as '*shaoxiangbaifo*' (烧香拜佛—'offering incense and praying to the Buddha'), as well as with other common Chinese Buddhist practices, such as copying out sūtras and vegetarianism. He praises such practices but says that they only constitute merit-making activities, and are no substitute for the core path of *wen-si-xiu*, which, using Chinese modernist idiom, he describes as '*xuefo*' (学佛—'studying Buddhism'): 'If we are able to practice both core and formalistic elements, this is the best of all. However, if we have to choose between the former and the latter, then we must definitely choose the former'[85] (KTL 2013c).

Secondly, he stresses that *wen-si-xiu* is the core path of Mahāyāna Buddhism as a whole and, thus, is an appropriate practice for Chinese Buddhists who might not formally affiliate themselves with Tibetan Buddhism, even while noting repeatedly that it is a framework that has been preserved in Tibetan Buddhism in particular. He thus builds on Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's mission to reverse the charge that Tibetan Buddhism is 'backward' by subtly stating that it has preserved its Mahāyāna heritage better than Chinese Buddhism, where practices, such as *shaoxiangbaifo,* that are more easily characterised as 'superstitious' (*mixin* 迷信) have been overemphasised.[86]

Thirdly, he iterates that Buddhism is a rational religion 'that does not rigidly prescribe blind obedience or blind faith'[87] (LW9) and, thus, that it is compatible with modern scientific standards of reasoning based in logic and evidence (see also Sodargye and Yü 2017). This also counters the implicit charge of backwardness and superstition.

Fourthly, he stresses that the practice of *wen-si-xiu* will not only result in such Buddhist soteriological goals as liberation, but that it will also provide a measurable solution to problems in this life, especially the psychological problems that he observes arising from the relentless and stressful materialism of Chinese society: 'Actually, we could say that the Buddha Śākyamuni's Dharma is a science of happiness. It is a super science of happiness, a super psychology' (KTL 2013c).[88]

Finally, given that he assumes Chinese lay audiences are far less familiar than Tibetan monastic audiences with the framework of *wen-si-xiu*, and given that, within his programme, his teachings are self-sufficient and do not rely on reference to further canonical texts, it is here, more than anywhere else in the entirety of his spoken and written corpus, that he details the definitions of each of *thos*, *bsam,* and *sgom* and articulates the relationships between them. His discourse here, which often employs modern colloquial language, such as 'updating an operating system' and 'going to the gym,' thus stands as the clearest evidence of his orthodox gradualist approach to the framework. In accordance with Mipham's teachings, as explained by Pettit (1999, p. 191), he stresses the theoretical conviction that one must first gain through *wen-si*, and *si* most especially:

> *'It's not enough just to listen; we need to reflect on things . . . [given that] the view taught by the Buddha is very different to our commonsense understanding.'*[89] (KTL 2013b)

> *'We need to reflect repeatedly. Only after reflecting over and over again are we able to truly understand the meaning of the Buddha.'*[90] (KTL 2015)

This theoretical conviction is not, however, an end in itself and must serve as a preliminary to the deep practical realisation that can only be gained through *xiu*, which he describes, repeatedly and emphatically, as (KTL 2015): 'the most important part.' Nonetheless, his overall presentation of the framework is balanced, and he stresses that, even though *xiu* is the most important, for the vast majority of people, *wen-si* is a necessary foundation. He illustrates this with his usual erudition through a Chinese Buddhist example (LW9):

> *'Of course, there is an extremely small number of people with mature causes-and-conditions, such as the Sixth Patriarch Huineng and some other great figures in Buddhist history who really did attain enlightenment without wen-si. But how many people are like Master Huineng? Therefore, we still need to be down to earth and do wen-si-xiu.'*[91]

5. Conclusions

In the eighteen years since Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, his prodigious institutional legacy has been collectively carried forward by his close cohort of second-generation heart disciples who have come to embody complementary, but distinct, leadership roles vis-à-vis the Larung community. In this article, we have focused on the second-generation Larung leader, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, and his 'shouldering of his guru's legacy' with respect to the paṇḍita dimensions of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's activities. We have sought to provide a broad and nuanced analysis of his discourse in relation to the areas of monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations. We have also sought to contextualise this discourse through a discussion of the institutional changes at Larung Gar, and the sociopolitical changes in broader Tibetan and Chinese society in the period in question, on the basis of the presumption of an interdependence between Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse and the contexts at hand.

In this article, we have demonstrated how the threefold framework of *thos-bsam-sgom*, articulated in flexible and various ways, and in conjunction with a range of Buddhist and secular concepts, has served as the fulcrum of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations in the two decades in question.

We have shown how *thos-bsam-gom*—accompanied by the dictum that contemporary Tibetan monastics must *know* the Buddhadharma—is core to the reformist message he delivers to audiences at Larung Gar and beyond. Inveighing against monasteries filled with uneducated monks preoccupied with formalistic rituals, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro champions the ideal of a monastic saṅgha who are trained from youth in *thos-bsam-sgom*—or *thos-bsam*, as a minimum—and argues that it is only by means of expanding monastic education through the establishment of shedra and drubdra in monastic communities that a range of pressing problems, challenges, and corruptions in the contemporary milieu of Tibetan Buddhism can be addressed. By accompanying his modernist prescriptions in this area with forceful proposals for reforms of traditional governance, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro sanctions new models of monastic meritocratic leadership that are grounded in democratic values as conducive to institutionalising *thos-bsam-sgom* at monasteries and as a positive end in itself.

We have contended that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's concern in the past two decades has been to carry forward the entire threefold framework of *thos-bsam-sgom* in a balanced manner. Even so, we have argued that, throughout his discourse in what we have termed 'the earlier period,' the rational and intellectual values associated with *thos-bsam* can be seen as receiving more emphasis and cultural valorisation than the meditative values associated with *sgom*. An implicit privileging of *thos-bsam* is particularly discernible in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's call for educated monastics to proactively and tangibly serve lay society in the most beneficial way possible, namely, by giving the gift of Dharma in the form of systematic discursive teachings on foundational Buddhist topics. While making a vigorous case for the importance of monastics with broad knowledge and honed intellectual capacities for Buddhism's ongoing survival, he does not make an equivalently strong case for monastics trained in meditative methods.

Notwithstanding a remarkable continuity and consistency in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on matters of monastic education, monastic governance, and monastic–lay relations throughout the 'earlier' and 'later' periods, we have, nevertheless, posited a subtle but significant shift in his words (and in his actions) in the later period, pertaining to the relative weight given by him to the intellectual and meditative aspects of the threefold framework. Namely, in this period, we have observed a rebalanced emphasis on the importance of *sgom* for monastic and lay practitioners alike.

Through this analysis, we have sought to contribute to an enriched understanding of how Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro has carried forward his guru's legacy in the domain of monastic education and in related fields. In looking to build on this work, scholars may find it fruitful to examine his actions and discourse in the field of education more widely, including in secular education, as well as his suggestion that 'cultural knowledge' (*rig gnas*) is more important to the preservation of Tibet's national and ethnic identity than economic and political forces (see e.g., SS1, pp. 214–17). Such scholarly work would throw further light on the dynamic and resilient process by which Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's legacy not only has been sustained and developed, but continues to be so, even despite ongoing challenges, such as the recent series of demolitions at Larung Gar.

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Notes

1 In this article we employ the *Treasury of Lives* system of transliteration for Tibetan names and words. However, we have used Khenpo Jigme *Phuntsok* rather than Khenpo Jigme *Puntsok* as we believe the former has now become the common usage. The first time a name or word is used we also include the Wylie transliteration for reference.

2 While the primary methodology we use in this article is discourse analysis of texts available in the public domain, our contextualisation and analysis of this discourse draws on insights gleaned from our separate multiple fieldwork activities in Eastern Tibet throughout the 2010s, which included visits to Larung Gar.

3 In this article we choose to translate *sgom* within the context of the threefold framework as 'meditation.' While we endorse Deroche's (2021, p. 22) explanation of *sgom* as a process whereby the contents of one's listening and reflection are 'fully assimilated and embodied as a part of one's own being,' we consider that, insofar as each of the three activities is capable of effecting positive transformations in the subjectivity or disposition of the Buddhist practitioner, the English term 'cultivation'—Deroche's preferred translation of *sgom*—perhaps better serves as a description of the threefold framework holistically than as a translation of *sgom* in isolation. Moreover, in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse the term *sgom* is sometimes used in the specific sense of 'seated meditation' and at other times in the broader sense of 'practice' or 'familiarisation' (where it is often used interchangeably with *nyams len* 'to take into experience'). Since arguably no single English word fully captures both conceptions, for concision's sake we translate *sgom* as 'meditation' in the present article.

4 The textual sources we draw on for this article span a period of twenty-one years and include polemic essays written by Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro himself and volumes of books (both officially and unofficially published) containing his transcribed teachings. For 'the later period' analysis we also draw on oral teachings given by him in both Chinese and Tibetan. Much of the latter material can be accessed respectively via his Chinese mobile app 慧灯之光 and Tibetan mobile app 慧音. The six unofficially published texts drawn on in this article that do not have a clearly marked year of publication are cited throughout according to the following abbreviations: *Summer Sunshine Volume One* [SS1] (KTL n.d. a); *Summer Sunshine Volume Two* [SS2] (KTL n.d. b); *Summer Sunshine Volume Three* [SS3] (KTL n.d. c); *Medicine for The Times* [MTT] (KTL n.d. d); *Light of Wisdom Volume Nine* [LW9] (KTL n.d. e) and *Training of the Mind* [TOM] (KTL n.d. f).

5 While Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro received meditation training alongside scriptural instruction at Larung Gar, time spent in extended multi-year retreat did not form part of his foundational education.

6 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro began composing Buddhist polemics directed at audiences beyond Larung Gar from as early as 1995, when he assisted Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok in writing the widely circulated *Heart Advice to Tibetans for the 21st Century* (see Gayley 2011, 2021). Upon completion of this important work, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok bestowed formal thanks and offerings on Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro in front of the assembled Larung saṅgha. Around the turn of the millennium, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's own essays and petitions on vegetarianism, animal rights, and lay ethics (including 'Clear Mirror' (KTL 2000)) were already circulating unofficially in Eastern Tibet. Two volumes of his compiled works (*gsung 'bum*) were published in 2006.

7 As Goldstein (1998, p. 15) notes, in pre-1959 Tibetan society it was the *quantity* of monastics that was most valued, not the *quality* of their training or attainments. Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, by contrast, emphasised the quality of monastics' training but even so managed to expand this training to a vast number of monastics.

8 Kapstein (2004, p. 252) records that in the summer of 2000 Larung Gar had 9300 residents, a large proportion of whom must have been engaged in scholarly activity.

9 In a teaching given to the Larung Gar saṅgha on Dodrubchen Tenpai Nyingma's *Heart Advice* (*rdo grub zhal gdams*) རྡོ་གྲུབ་ཞལ་གདམས། Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (2020, session 1/3 time-stamp 11:42 min) notes, 'It is now 40 years since the founding of Larung . . . and *thos-bsam-sgom* has been here all along'.

10 Although, as Duckworth (2011, p. 5) describes, Mipham spent much of his life in retreat, his primary reputation is as a great scholar. Thus Smith (2001, p. 231) writes: 'Mipham's greatest contribution to the cultural history of Tibet lies in his brilliant and strikingly original commentaries on the important Indic treatises.' Karma Phuntsho (2007, p. 200) states: 'Of all (Mipham's) writings, his writings on *Madhyamaka* thought attracted the most attention from other scholars and brought popularity and fame in religious and scholarly circles.' Given that Mipham was not a recognised terton (*gter ston*) in the manner of other Nyingma luminaries such as Jigme Lingpa (*'jigs med gling pa*) (1730–1798), it might be mistakenly assumed that there is some tension between scholarly attainments and yogic accomplishment. In this regard it is notable that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's (2008) own biography of Mipham emphasises his miraculous powers, thus implicitly reaffirming that the yogic pole should not be seen as contradictory with the scholarly.

11 This combination of shedra and drubdra was not unprecedented in the Nyingma school, which has traditionally prioritised meditative cultivation at least as highly as scholarly activity. For example, pre-1959, Dzogchen Monastery in Eastern Tibet had both the Śrī Siṃha Shedra and a designated retreat centre at Pema Tang.

12 While designation as a *foxueyuan* brought limitations, these were not as great as the limitations that would have been incurred if Larung Gar had been designated as a formal monastery, which, as Terrone (2009, p. 86) observes, were strictly controlled in this period. Germano (1998, pp. 64–65) also records that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok thought designation as a monastery would bring about 'inevitable sectarian tendencies' contradictory to Larung Gar's nonsectarian ethos. Moreover, in an interview conducted by Catherine Hardie on 16 August 2016, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro notes that monasteries traditionally have more arduous responsibilities to provide ritual services to the Tibetan lay community than *chos sgar*.

13 A number of state-sponsored Tibetan *foxueyuan* were established in the 1980s at the instigation of the Paṇchen Lama, though there is some minor dispute about the exact dates. Kolås and Thowsen (2005, p. 77) list *foxueyuan* founded in 1985 at Nechung Monastery in Lhasa in the TAR, at Labrang Tashikyil Monastery in Gansu, and at Kumbum Monastery in Qinghai, as well as the 'High-Level Tibetan Buddhist Institute of China' (*Zhongguo Zangyuxi Gaoji Foxueyuan*) founded in Beijing in 1987. Tuttle (2005, p. 231) also records 1987 as the date for the *foxueyuan* in Beijing but Terrone (2021, p. 3) states that it was in fact founded in 1986. Furthermore, a *foxueyuan* was founded in Kardze in Sichuan, perhaps as early as 1984 according to our sources, and another was founded in Dechen Prefecture in Yunnan in subsequent years. Thus, from the 1980s there appears to have existed the leading Tibetan *foxueyuan* in Beijing and subsidiaries in the five provinces with ethnic Tibetan populations. Monastics at these state-sponsored institutions studied a curriculum with both traditional and modern components, and were not expected to engage in ritual activities. Kolås and Thowsen (2005, p. 78) state that the *foxueyuan* in Kardze stopped taking students in 1998; as of 2017 it has been relocated to Chengdu, with a sub-branch in Ngaba Prefecture opened in 2021. Moreover, a further *foxueyuan* seems either to have been established or recently upgraded in Yushu, Qinghai. Together with Larung Gar, which appears unique among the institutions designated as *foxueyuan* not to have been founded by state diktat, this totals nine Tibetan *foxueyuan*. This total number seems to accord with and even exceed a plan announced at the 18th National Congress in 2012.

14 The designation of *foxueyuan* does allow for meditation (*chanxiu*) as a legitimate monastic activity, but one could argue that its implicit conception of that activity conforms better with sūtric ideals than the tantric approaches taught at Larung Gar.

15 With the exception of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's early polemical essays, which were geared from the outset towards a broad monastic and lay readership beyond Larung Gar (what one might gloss as the 'Tibetan public'), his other teachings and speeches consulted for this article were originally delivered either at Larung Gar or to the local Eastern Tibetan communities he visited on his outreach peregrinations. These included communities from diverse sectarian traditions in Kham and Amdo, with audiences sometimes comprised solely of monastics and other times of lay people and monastics combined. Once turned into DVD and especially book format (which removed dialect barriers through the use of standard written Tibetan), these teachings travelled widely, not only reaching audiences across northern Kham and parts of Amdo, but also more distant corners of the Tibetan world.

Notably, *Timely Rain* (KTL 2012), an edited collection of his teachings given in Kham and Amdo from 2006–2010, was reprinted in India for an exile readership in 2012, following its initial publication in the PRC.

16 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was also active in the creation of a 'Buddhist Association' (*nang bstan mthun tshogs*) that brought together monastic leaders in Northern Kham across regional and sectarian lines to discuss monastic education, lay ethical reform, and other matters of common interest from 2010–2013.

17 As Caple's (2019) work on Geluk monastic revival in Rebkong shows, deepseated moral concerns of this nature have been pervasive among Tibetan monastics and lay people throughout the post-Mao revival of institutional Buddhism. Inasmuch as Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro follows in his guru's footsteps in criticising corruptions in his midst, he is also participating in, and helping to shape, a transregional, trans-sectarian and polyvocal moral discourse on the appropriate course of Tibetan Buddhist monastic development in a drastically reconfigured and rapidly changing historical context.

18 *dgonpa rnams kyi nang du bshad grwa tshad ldan re 'dzugs rgyu 'di las gal che ba gzhan ci yang med.*

19 *thosbsam slob gnyer ci yang byed ma myong ba . . . dgon pa'i snying don lung rtogs la phan thogs ci yang med.*

20 *dgon pa 'ga' res ni dus mchod sogs kho na la mthong chen byed pa las thos bsam slob gnyer la do snang ye mi byed . . . de ni bya ba tha shal ba yin . . . de ni bshad sgrub kyi gzhi cung zad re 'dzugs rgyu kho na la 'bad dgos.*

21 *mkhas pa rnams ni bkur dgos pa red . . . kha sang de ring de 'dra zhig red . . . rgyu yod dang dbang yod gcig yin na de la ha cang rin thang can du brtsis nas tshang mas gus gus zhum zhum byed kyin yod mkhas pa zhig yod na de la rin thang can du brtsi ba ma red kyang . . . gtso bo ngo ma mkhas pa rnams bkur dgos gsungs.*

22 *bshad grwa med na dgon pa zhig yod dang med don gcig red . . . dgon pa zer ba de grwa pa re gnyis tsam yar dgon pa'i nang la 'tshogs rgyu yod nas tshogs dus mchod 'dra yod mar grong chog la 'gro mkhan zhig yod na des nyan snang ma skye de 'dra'i dgon pa zhig yod ma yod chen po ci yang mi 'dug.*

23 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro follows his guru in upholding nonsectarian ideals. As Duckworth shows (Duckworth 2021, p. 170), in a translation of a work by Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro on Madhayamaka, even when he propounds the view of his own Nyingma tradition he still praises the luminaries of other traditions. However, it should be acknowledged that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro holds most sway within his own tradition. Thus, while he offers discursive and practical support to monasteries of all sectarian affiliations, it is among Nyingmapas that his actual influence has been greatest.

24 *chos kyi snying po ngo ma rang gi nyams len dang sems can la phan pa bsgrub rgyu yin pa de mi shes nas chos kyi snying po ngo ma de rtsod pa brgyag rgyu dang de tsho yin snang skye 'gro ba red.*

25 On one reading, *sgrub grwa* also refers to a type of 'school'-*grwa*—which accords with its conception as part of a system of education.

26 *dgon pa rnams kyis lha bris rten bzhengs sogs gang la gang 'tsham tsam gyis chog gi 'dug so so la sgor mo cung zad yod na bshad grwa dang sgrub grwa slob grwa btsugs nas dgon pa mtshan nyid pa zhig yin na grwa gsum dang sde gcig tshang dgos . . . sde gcig gang red zer na mi skya pho mo rnams lo cung zad chen po chags dus chos sgrub sa'i dge bsnyen gyi sde 'dzugs dgos.*

27 *grwa gsum sde gcig zer ba de don sngar nas yod pa red kyang tha snyad gsar du byung ba zhig red.*

28 *de bzhin du jo mo tshang la mtshon na 'dra 'dra yin dgos pa red khyad par spu'i rtse mo tsam yang mi 'dug . . . de'i phyir na lo nyung rnams kyis rgod rgod gyis de bzhin du jo mos thos bsam byed mi dgos zer mkhan zhig yod pa ma red kyang de 'dra bshad nas mgo su gcig gis mnan mi rung spyir mgo gnon mkhan yod pa ma red la nged cag bla rung sgar na de bas kyang med.*

29 It nonetheless should be emphasised that Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse on monastic education is primarily directed towards an audience of male monastics.

30 *gzhi rtsa'i bstan pa 'dzin pa'i khur thang de dge 'dun pa la yod phan chad rig gnas med phyin 'dzin lugs mi shes.*

31 *chos bshad rgyu dang rtsod pa rgyag rgyu dang bstan bcos brtsam rgyu sogs 'chad nyan gyi skor la mthong chen mi byed nas sgom kho na brtsal 'don byas pa yin 'dug . . . de'i rjes su thos bsam sgom gsum med par gyur.*

32 Caple (2011) describes the inspiration of liberal-democratic modernist discourse among Geluk monks inside the PRC, and its role as an alternative source of scientific rationalism to that promoted by the Chinese state. Lempert (2016) describes the use of liberal-democratic principles to reimagine Tibetan patrimony and monastic governance in the contemporary Geluk exile context.

33 While some translators render *bshad sgrub* as 'teaching and practice,' in a personal communication in October 2021 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro indicated his preference for the Chinese translation '*xue xiu*' (学修) which we follow here by translating *bshad sgrub* as 'study and practice.'

34 *'o na dgon par bshad sgrub mi dgos zer mkhan zhig e yod na snyam na de rigs shin tu mang po 'dug.*

35 *bshad sgrub kyi sde yod med de phugs gtugs na dgon dpon rnams la thug bsdad yod bas rtsa ba ngo ma dgon dpon rnams la thug bsdad yod pa red dge sems yod na dgon dpon rnams kyi bka' drin yin.*

36 *thog mar bya dgos pa ni dgon pa de'i phyi nang gi bya ba thams cad la bdag gnyer bgyid pa'i dge 'dun gyi sde tshogs shig 'dzugs dgos . . . sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa spyi la go ba chags shing bstan 'gro la lhag bsam rnam par dag pa yod pa dang khyad par du bshad sgrub kyi bstan pa la thugs khur yang dag bzhes nges pa'i gang zag bzhi yan chad tshang ba zhig dge 'dun gyis bsko dgos.*

37 *khong du bshad pa'i mtshan nyid tshang na dgon dpon yin na'ang 'dra sngags pa yin na'ang 'dra dgon pa'i tshogs pa'i nang du 'jog dgos.*

38 *dgon pa'i bshad sgrub kyi bstan pa ni mi gcig gi bsam tshul dang bstun te btang snyoms su gzhag tu med pas dge 'dun spyis bskos pa'i tshogs pa yang dag pa des dgon pa'i slob gnyer de thugs dam gyi mthil du bzung ste bkod sgrig legs po bya dgos so*.

39 Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's reluctance to personally recognise any tulkus stood in contrast with the proliferation of tulkus across Tibet during the post-Mao Tibetan Buddhist revival. This is not to suggest that he was resistant to a way of seeing the world that recognised continuities across lives—indeed, ample evidence demonstrates the absolute contrary. At the same time, his saṅgha at Larung Gar included a sizeable contingent of tulkus, and, at one point, he took the initiative of organising a 'tulku class' to provide them with special instruction, befitting of their important social and religious function in Tibetan society. A number of his close disciples, including his niece, Lama Mumtso, were recognised as tulkus by lamas at other monasteries.

40 *rang re rnying ma'i phyogs la ni sprul sku zhig ngos 'dzin byas na bla ma yid bzhin nor bus mi byed na sus byed snyam pa zhig yin na yang sku tshe gang por sprul sku gcig kyang ngos 'dzin byas med pa 'dis gnad cig bstan yod pa red*.

41 *'dzam bu gling gi thog tu dmangs gtso gtan nas ma dar ba'i skabs su thog mar dmangs gtso mdzad mkhan de sangs rgyas shākya thub pa red*.

42 It is interesting to reflect on how Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro might be said to be positioned with relation to the phenomenon often referred to as 'Buddhist modernism.' While this is a complex and diverse phenomenon that belies simple categorisation, one axis of differentiation can be drawn between those archetypal 'modernists' who seek to reject swathes of their received Buddhist heritage, such as rituals, in favour of a reworked interpretation of Buddhism more compatible with the values of individualistic rational modernity (but who may still justify their interpretation on the 'conservative' grounds of being in tune with the historical Buddha's original intent), and those archetypal 'conservatives' who seek to defend and uphold their received Buddhist heritage (but who may still employ 'modernist' rhetoric in bolstering that defence). Gayley (2021, p. 26) says that one might be tempted to characterise Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok as someone firmly in the latter camp, but asserts that, in fact, 'he does not treat tradition as if it were a static entity to be reproduced wholesale,' and that 'it might be more apt to consider his approach to be reformist and constructive rather than conservative per se.' It is unsurprising, given the influence of his guru, that something similar could be argued of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro. He is inclined to defend and uphold Tibet's Buddhist heritage but is not uncritical of that heritage and seeks to reform its failings. Nonetheless, we suggest that the likes of his proposed democratic reforms within monasteries and his serious engagement with scientific thought arguably situate him further towards the 'modernist' end of the axis than his guru.

43 *'di nga tsho'i bka' drin gsum ldan gyi bla ma red kyang phan chad nga tshos 'di'i bka' brtsi dang mi brtsi de ring nga tshos lag pa zhig bkyag zer na ci yang byed rgyu yod pa ma yin . . . de bzhin du . . . nga tshos las rgyu 'bras khas len dang mi len lag pa bkyag zer rgyu yod pa ma red*.

44 *sprulsku dag gang 'dra byed min de dgon pa rang gis thag gcod dgos na yang bla ma gong ma dag gis ngos 'dzin gnang bzhag pa zhig yin na bzang rung ngan rung tha na sum rtags dag gsum tsam yang mi shes mkhan dang yi ge yag po zhig kyang klog mi shes mkhan zhig yin yang brnyas bcos lta ga la ste dgon dpon gyi sa nas bzhag sgrub pa 'dra 'tshogs skabs yin na gral mgo dang khri mthon po'i thog tu bzhugs su gsol te . . . blo 'dri dang gros kyi gral du bzhag*.

45 *dgondpon mar phab nas med par bzo rgyu min par dgon dpon dgon dpon gyi sa nas 'jog dgos . . . ma gtogs byod mi sha rta bab la thug gi red . . . dgon dpon 'di dag kyang skabs shig nas brje len byed dgos nges red 'dzam bu gling gi tho na mgo khrid dag lo lnga re na brje dgos pa 'di la gnad sgo shin tu chen po yod pa red*.

46 Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok and Lama Mumtso are said to have benefited beings together for a garland of lifetimes in multiple relational configurations, including master-disciple and terton-consort.

47 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was appointed to the rotating position of Larung Gar's managing director (Ch. *changwu lishi*, 常务理事) in 2007. When he finished his official term in 2012, he continued to serve as its deputy managing principal (Ch. *changwu fuyuanzhang* 常务副院长). After the state-led reorganisation of Larung Gar's management system between 2016–2017, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was made one of Larung Gar's five vice principals (Ch. *fuyuanzhang* 副院长).

48 The five equalities are enumerated in *Medicine for the Mind* (KTL 2017a, pp. 31–32), where Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro describes the principle of equality as Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's sole and supreme strategy for keeping the Larung community harmonious and united.

49 *nged cag gi sgar la mtshon na sems can la phan thogs na yun ring po'i bar du gnas na ha cang bzang po red sems can la phan ma thogs pa yin na yod med gang dga' pa yin ha mi go ba 'dug*.

50 '*Mani* and *sado* mantras' refers to the Chenrezik and Vajrasattva heart mantras, two of the most popular mantras across the Tibetan plateau.

51 *da lta yul gru shin tu mang po zhig na khyim pa pho mo rnams kyis dam pa'i chos zhes pa bzang po zhig dang tshe phyi mar phan 'dogs byed cig yin snyam pa tsam dang kha nas ma ṇi sa twa re 'don shes pa tsam ma gtogs dam pa'i chos kyi nang don dngos dang de bsgrub lugs ji ltar yin rtsa ba nas go bar mi 'dug bod kyi skad yig gi steng na bka' bstan mdo sngags kyi chos tshul ji 'dra'i phun sum tshogs pa zhig 'dug de 'dra yod bzhin du chos kyi go don phal ba tsam yang ma rnyed pas mi rab tu mang po zhig chos sa chos yul du skyes kyang chos med lag stong du tshe phyi mar chas dgos byung ste 'di ni ches yid pham pa'i gnas shin red 'o na de'i rtsa ba gang la thug yod ce na rang re rnams kyis dad ldan mang tshogs kyi khrod du dam pa'i chos kyi go don khyab gdal du spel ma thub pa'i skyon de la thug yod*.

52 *dgonpa dag gis rang gi grwa pa rnams kyi slob spyong legs po'ong bar byed dgos par ma zad rang gi lha sde'am rang dang 'brel ba'i dad ldan mang tshogs la'ang dam pa'i chos kyi slob spyong legs po yong ba'i thugs khur nges par bzhes dgos 'di ni shin tu don che.*

53 *dgonpa so so la bshad sgrub kyi bstan pa spus dag re yod na grwa pa rnams kyis dam pa'i chos rnal ma'i dgongs pa legs par rtogs shing ci rigs par nyams su blangs pas rang mgo thon par ma zad sems can gzhan pa rnams la'ang thar pa'i lam ston byed nus shing de'i dbang gis bstan pa rin po che'ang yun du gnas par 'gyur.*

54 *yulgang skyid dang rnyed pa gar yod sogs rang gi don la mi sems par chos kyis phongs shing 'byor ba med pa'i sa phyogs rnams su song.*

55 The same Zhao Puchu who, as President of the Buddhist Association of China, was involved in giving Larung Gar its full name.

56 *nged cag gis spyi tshogs kyi thog la slob grwa dang sman khang dang de bzhin du dbul skyob sogs la brtson bstad na gal che sa 'dug thos bsam sgom gsum gtso bor yin sa mi 'dug snyam na de tsho rtsa ba ma yin.*

57 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse from this period suggests that, irrespective of the political turbulence, political space continued to exist for teaching activities throughout the 2000s and well into the 2010s.

58 The missionary sense is amplified by his rhetoric about the competitive nature of the religious market place: 'These days, there is a tendency for religions in the world to also [seek to get more market share] . . . Even though our territory is being taken away by others, Buddhists are still pretending not to notice and are staying in the mountains. In the future when you attain Buddhahood and want to go out and benefit beings you will find it difficult!' (SS2, p. 127)—*dzams bu gling gi chos lugs rnams kyis kyang de 'dra byed bzhin yod . . . rang gi sa thams cad gzhan pas za 'gro bzhin yod pa red kyang da dung mi go khul byas nas yar re sgang gzhi la song nas bsdad yod rjes ma sangs rgyas nas mar thon yong dus 'gro don byed bsams na de dus dka' mo yin.*

59 *de yang spyir bod kyi yul na chos dar yang mtha' mtshams la sogs yul gru mang po na chos gsha' ma shin tu dkon . . . gdan zhu byed pa'i cha rkyen yang med . . . des na dbul po nyam chung chos med kyi yul de dag tu rang mos kyis song ste phan sems kho nas dam pa'i chos 'chad spel bya dgos yang grong khyer rnams ni dpal 'byor dang rig gnas kyi lte gnas yin pas de rnams su'ang khyab spel bya dgos kyi rang re'i chos 'di re khugs dang lung kyog rnams na yod pa tsam gyis ci yang mi 'ong pa'i phyir te 'di gal che'o gzhan yang dpe deb dang sgra brnyan dang gzugs brnyan gyi lam nas kyang rmang gzhi'i skor gyi shes bya 'di rnams khyab gdal du gtong dgos.*

60 *de nas dkon mchog gi yon tan dang thar pa'i phan yon 'khor ba'i nyes pa tshe snga phi las rgyu 'bras bcas kyi rnam gzhag rnams bshad.*

61 *rgyalsras byang chub sems dpa' rnams kyis gang la yin na spyang dgos pa red mdor na sems can rnams la gnas skabs kyi phan pa dang mthar thug gi bde ba 'byung byed cig yin nas bzung ste sbyang dgos gsungs pa red de'i phyir na nged cag dge 'dun rnams kyis slob sbyong byed rgyu de ha cang gal chen po'i nang nas gal chen po yin.*

62 Five major sciences: craftsmanship (*bzo rig pa*), logic (*gtan tshigs*), grammar (*sgra*), medicine (*gso ba*), Dharma (*nang don rig pa*). Five minor sciences: synonyms (*mngon brjod*), astrology (*skar rtsis*), drama (*zlos gar*), poetry (*snyan ngag*), composition (*sdeb sbyor*).

63 There is, however, some ambivalence about Chinese language learning for Tibetan monastics in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's discourse, due to his concern that Chinese-speaking Tibetan monastics may become lured to the opportunities for economic enrichment in China, and thus cause harm to themselves and the Dharma. One might note in this connection that unlike other *foxueyuan* Larung Gar has never instituted a compulsory Chinese (or second) language learning component in its curriculum.

64 *chos lugs kho rang ngo bo'i sgom nas rgyu mtshan ci yang med na'ang mi de 'dra rkyang rkyang gi lag tu yod pa'i rgyu mtshan gyis 'dzam bu gling 'dir spel nas gling chen snga'am bdun la khyab bsdad yod.*

65 While a subtle shift in Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's published discourse can be observed from around 2013, there is evidence his concern about the relative status of *sgom*, especially at Larung Gar, predated this time. For example, in 2008, during his tenure as Dean of Studies, the first compulsory annual meditation retreat for all monastics was introduced. It is important to note that an analysis of other discourses by Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro on monastic education from this period (of which we were unaware at the time of writing this paper) could well justify some revision of the periodisation employed herein.

66 In an academic dialogue at the University of Virginia in 2016, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro (2016, time-stamp 32:30–33:05 min) says that charting a pedagogical path that balances scholastic (or 'academic') and meditative (or 'contemplative') aspects is a frequently discussed topic among leaders at Larung Gar.

67 While the exact size of the Larung community before the 2016–2017 government-led population-reduction campaign has never officially been made known, it is generally believed to have been home to well over 10,000 residents. During festivals in the summer pilgrimage season, the population was known to double in size.

68 While the Larung Chinese Division's educational structure is roughly analogous to that of the Tibetan monks and nuns, insofar as it has offered full-time resident practitioners the choice of enrolling in a shedra-style '*wensi ban*' (闻思班—'listening and reflecting stream') or a drubdra-style '*xiuxing ban*' (修行班—'meditation practice stream'), there have also been significant differences between the Chinese and Tibetan programmes, which have been administered separately. One notable difference pertains to award structures. Whereas completion of the shedra curriculum and the award of khenpo or khenmo degrees for Tibetan monks and nuns typically entails fifteen years of study, for Chinese practitioners the equivalent award of '*fashi*' (Ch. 法师) (also referred to, following the Tibetan nomenclature, as '*kanbu*' (Ch. 堪布) and '*kanmu*' (Ch. 堪母)) has been attainable within eight to ten years.

69 Lama Mumtso has nevertheless played an important role in the continuity of Larung Gar's tantric transmission, primarily by presiding over the empowerment rituals that form part of the community's four major Dharma assemblies, as her health has permitted. Tulku Tenzin Gyatso (*sprul ku bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho*) (1968–), another second-generation heart son, has also conferred empowerments on the Larung saṅgha in the period since Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's death, as has Tulku Lungtok (*sprul ku lung rtogs*) (1953–) who primarily resides at his home monastery, Do Ngak Monastery (*mdo sngags chos byung dgon*; Ch: *Xianmi Fayuan Si*显密法源寺) in Dawu County (*rta'u rdzong*; Ch. *Dawu Xian* 道孚县) in Sichuan.

70 Akhyuk Rinpoche's body is said to have shrunk dramatically after his death, a sign of having attained the Rainbow Body (*'ja' lus*). This likewise served to inspire practitioners across the plateau and strengthen Yachen Gar's reputation as a community of meditative realisation.

71 Padma 'tsho (2014, p. 187) records how nuns came to Yachen Gar out of faith in Tulku Asang.

72 Cho (2019, pp. 829–30) describes Yachen Gar's 'informality as a meditation-focused encampment.'

73 Initially, the retreat was fixed as one month in duration, with Larung Gar's different divisions undertaking their retreat at different times. No standardised retreat programme applied across all divisions. In recent years, the ninth month of the Tibetan calendar serves as retreat month for all monastics, and a standardised retreat programme has been introduced. Since the retreat month overlaps with Larung Gar's annual week-long Amitabha Dharma Assembly (*bde chen zhing sgrub chen mo*; Ch. *jile fahui* 极乐法会), many monastics leave retreat to take part in the assembly and thus effectively spend roughly twenty days in retreat.

74 There is no hard data to corroborate such a weakening and different accounts can give opposing impressions. Turek (2013, p. 104), for example, describes, on the basis of fieldwork in Nangchen up to 2008, the 'rapidly expanding phenomenon of meditation schools.'

75 McDougal (2016, p. 100) records him making very similar comments to another audience of Tibetan Buddhist teachers in October 2015.

76 The enforcement of an official population ceiling of five thousand on Larung Gar in 2016 strengthened an institutional expectation that once students (particularly male monastics) completed their formal training programmes they would move on to monastic careers elsewhere. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's positioning of meditative retreat at the top of a hierarchy of monastic career paths implicitly assumes that monastics who choose to pursue this lifestyle would be doing so somewhere other than at Larung Gar.

77 *nga tsho rab tu byung ba zhig yin nas bzung rab na dpen pa'i ri khrod 'grims te sgom sgrub nyams len e thub ltos . . . 'bring na dpe cha bltas te bsam pa rnam dag gis gzhan la chos kyi kho brda legs po sprod tha na yang sum rtags dag gsum spyangs te mang tshogs la bsam pa rnam dag gis yig rmongs bsal rgyu dang gtsang sbra 'phrod bsten khor yug sprung skyong gi thog nas mang tshogs la go brda yag po sprod*. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro also repeated this hierarchical arrangement (KTL 2021, session 25/41 time-stamp 13:00–41:30 min) in an oral teaching on Gyelse Tokme Zangpo's commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* given at Larung Gar in 2021.

78 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro seems to have thought this higher-level lay audience would not only benefit from such teachings themselves, but would also be able to play a role in preserving the Buddhadharma alongside the monastic saṅgha, which might serve to compensate for the decline in total monastic numbers across Tibet in this period (see KTL 2017b, p. 100). In another discourse (KTL 2013a), Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro deems declining monastic numbers in Tibet as an inevitable trend and urges greater attention to consolidating monastic quality through education to offset its effects.

79 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's Dharma teaching to Chinese lay audiences began in the 1990s. His first Chinese language Dharma book *Theories of Past and Future Lives* (Ch. *qianshi jinsheng lun* 前世今生论) was unofficially published in 2002. The first volume of his *Light of Wisdom* (Ch. *Huideng zhi guang*慧灯之光) series was unofficially published in 2003. Volumes 1-6 were officially published in 2010. He established a Chinese language website and began giving online teachings for Chinese lay Buddhists in 2011. His current website, upgraded in 2016, is https://luminouswisdom.org.

80 Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro also gave a series of teachings emphasising the importance of meditation for lay Buddhists to a group of Tibetan intellectuals at Wutaishan in 2017. The teachings were later transcribed and turned into the unofficially published book, *Training of the Mind* (*sems kyi sbyong brdar*) (TOM). His recent teachings given at Larung Gar are freely available to Tibetan listeners via his Tibetan language mobile app 慧音FM (as of 1 December 2021).

81 Khenpo Sodargye was primarily responsible for carrying forward his guru's legacy in the field of Chinese outreach and had enormous success. Aside from serving as the Director of the Chinese Division at Larung Gar from 1993 onwards, he also launched a digitally-mediated lay study network named the Bodhi Study Association (*Puti Xuehui*) for Sinophone students in 2006, which expanded rapidly in the 2010s before it was closed down by state authorities in 2019. His Chinese Weibo currently has 2.9 million followers.

82 While higher tantric meditation is touched on in this programme, the mainstream of his teachings is at a foundational level, aligning broadly with the mind training (*blo sbyong*) level discussed above. His teachings on non-dual wisdom typically draw on approaches from the sūtric vehicle.

83 From 2015–2018 Catherine Hardie served as Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's English translator during his teaching and academic exchange visits in the West.

84 Ch. 我们学佛的时候, 我们需要理论 . . . 然后也要去修行。这两个都需 . . . 要的学佛，尤其是藏传佛教,它强调三个字，那这三个字是什么呢，就是闻,思,修,就这三个字。

85 Ch. 当然我们核心形式都做到了, 那当然是非常圆满了。但是如果这些形式和这个核心当中，让我们选,那我们肯定要选这个核心。

86 Such discourse is echoed in the formulation heard among many Chinese Buddhists in Eastern Tibet, who say 'temples in China are like kindergartens, monasteries in Tibet are like universities'.

87 Ch. 不是硬性规定必须盲目， 迷信 . . .

88 Ch. 实际上释迦牟尼佛的佛法，它是一种幸福学,可以这么说， 它是一种超级的幸福学，它是一种超级的心理学。

89 Ch. 我们光是听还不够, 要去思考问题 . . . [因为]那这个常识跟佛教告诉我们的见解是有非常不一样的地方。

90 Ch. 所以我们听完了以后, 要去思考, 反复地去思考, 反复地去思考以后, 我们才能够真正地了解到了佛的这个意思。From the section 《闻思修的原理 一。闻思修三，不可脱节》no page reference.

91 Ch. 当然，有极个别因缘非常成熟的人, 六祖慧能大师，以及佛教历史上出现过的一些很了不起的人， 他们的确是不经闻思而成就的。但六祖慧能大师这样的人有多少呢？ 所以，我们还是应该脚踏实地闻思修。From section on《缘起赞》略释, no page reference.

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The Methodological Implications of the Buddhist Model of Study, Reflection, and Cultivation

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Abstract: This paper discusses aspects of the Buddhist concept of threefold wisdom and their implications on methodology for Buddhist studies, especially the academic study of Buddhist philosophy. The first part of the paper discusses aspects of threefold wisdom as presented in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist sources, arguing that threefold wisdom is not simply a presentation of mental cultivation and philosophical practice, but that it also proposes what can be called a practical hermeneutic, that is, a method to maximize a reader's understanding of Buddhist scriptures and their full implication. Second, we consider how certain methods of studying Buddhist thought, especially those that deal with philosophical engagement with Buddhist thought, should be adapted to include the dimension of Buddhist philosophy that is exemplified by threefold wisdom. More particularly, Buddhist philosophy's perspective on what a successful reading method consists of, which is exemplified by the practical hermeneutic described by threefold wisdom, should be included as part of what scholars pay attention to when studying Buddhist philosophy. Thus, only will the conditions for an open dialogue between Buddhism and other philosophical traditions be sufficiently present for such a dialogue to take place in a fruitful way.

Keywords: Buddhist philosophy; Buddhist doctrine; Buddhist meditation

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1. Introduction

While historical studies of Buddhist philosophy are still pursued, we see on the other hand a continued popularity for philosophical methods that target engagement with Buddhist ideas as the main goal of the study of Buddhist philosophy, whether for the purpose of keeping Buddhist philosophical ideas alive by bringing them in conversation with contemporary philosophy,[1] facilitating conversation or dialogue between philosophical traditions,[2] or to reconstruct a reading of classical Buddhist authors in a charitable and coherent manner. For example, see Westerhoff (2009, p. 8). Unfortunately, we have to admit that the divide between historical and interpretative methods noted by Cabezón (1995, pp. 231–68). still exists in Buddhist studies. While philosophers deepen their analysis of specific philosophical issues, our overall understanding of Buddhist intellectual traditions is still partial and could be improved not only by narrowing down on specific topics, but also by deepening our knowledge of Buddhist intellectual cultures in general. In addition to learning the specifics of various schools and thinkers of Buddhist philosophy, we could learn more about topics such as the relation between Buddhism and the various fields of knowledge,[3] various models of the place of logic and rationality on the Buddhist path and in Buddhist culture more generally, the relation between specific Buddhist views and the cultural background in which they appeared, and the specific features of Buddhist intellectual cultures from which specific philosophical traditions emerge.[4] As some of the heretofore ignored features of Buddhist intellectual cultures come to our knowledge, it becomes necessary to draw the implications of newly acquired facts about the traditions we are studying on the methods we use to study them, for our methods should be open to

be evaluated and redefined when they are no longer able to account for known facts about what they study.

This publication does not focus on a particular school or concept of Buddhist philosophy, but rather on a widely shared model of study and practice attested in various forms of Buddhism, the model of wisdom defined as three-stage progression from study to reflection and finally cultivation. Scholars of Buddhist doctrine (whether or not they use the expression "Buddhist philosophy") often mention the fact that Buddhist philosophy, since it ultimately targets liberation from saṁsāra, has soteriological dimensions; what exactly that entails for the way they read the same sources, though, is often left unsaid and unanalyzed. In this paper I will argue that the model of threefold wisdom that is the topic of this special issue has more to tell us than the theoretical recognition of liberation as the final goal of philosophical practice: it offers a model for what we could call a practical hermeneutic, that is, a model to be applied to make the most of what can be communicated across generations interpreting the same Buddhist teachings. Because the threefold wisdom model provides a detailed hermeneutic model, a cross-cultural or reconstructive model should consider engagement with that model as part of the conditions for a fruitful conversation between contemporary philosophy and Buddhism to take place.

After offering a summary of the threefold wisdom model and showing how it is a model not only for spiritual cultivation, but for a practical hermeneutic, we will survey individual features of study, reflection, and cultivation that, I argue, are methodologically relevant, and should be part of any treatment of Buddhist thought presented as a cross-cultural conversation or dialogue. A real dialogue with Buddhist intellectual culture requires scholars to appreciate the specificities of a Buddhist model of reading and its relation to the practice of mental cultivation on the path to liberation.

2. The Threefold Wisdom Model as a Practical Hermeneutic

In this section we will consider classical descriptions of the three-wisdom model that help define a model for the use of textual study as part of the Buddhist path of spiritual cultivation. We will see that the threefold wisdom can be seen as a method explaining how to use study and reading as part of Buddhist spiritual cultivation. The method described is based on what we can call a practical hermeneutic, that is, a reflection on how the transmission of understanding can happen between a student and written or oral text, often assumed to be Buddhist scripture, that is, for the authors we are considering here, either words that are considered as the words of the Buddha or authoritative commentaries thereon. The classical locus for, and probably one of the earliest definitions of the threefold wisdom model is found in chapter 6 of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* and its auto-commentary.[5] First, let us note that, for Vasubandhu, the threefold wisdom is part of a larger model of the path towards liberation. Cultivation (*bhāvanā*) and concentration (*samādhi*) are only possible after prerequisites have been established, generally following the Buddhist model of progression from morality (*śīla*) to concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*prajnā)*. In that regard, first, it is worthwhile noting the *Kośa*'s mention that "[Cultivation] is produced in the persons who are equipped with the two withdrawals"[6]; that is, the study of scripture is recommended for those who have already achieved a certain level of contentment and have few desires. In other words, one's general emotional and cognitive orientation towards the world is already established as a relevant factor in being able to apply the threefold wisdom model to the understanding of scripture.

In chapter 6, verse 5 of his *Abhidharmakośa*, Vasubandhu makes it clear that the stages of threefold wisdom function as a progression. He describes the process as, "Settled in one's conduct, equipped with [listening to] the teachings [*śruta*] and reflection [*cintā*], one will be capable of devoting oneself to cultivation [*bhāvanā*] (Ibid 1893)". It is therefore fair to say that, for him, cultivation is the result and goal of study[7] and reflection. Both classical and modern sources typically refer to the third part of the threefold wisdom model as *bhāvanāmayīprajñā*. Let us note, though, that the expression translated here as "cultivation" is glossed by Vasubandhu as "*samādhibhāvanā*", i.e., the cultivation of *samādhi*: "Having

reflected, they devote themselves to the cultivation of concentration (*samādhibhāvanā*) (Ibid 1893).". In chapter 4 of his auto-commentary, Vasubandhu also explains the phrase "The wholesome which is concentrated or the wholesome which is concentration in its intrinsic nature is *bhāvanā* . . . " as "That which is concentration (*samādhi*) in its intrinsic nature and that which coexists with what is concentration in its intrinsic nature (Ibid 2012)."

Another highly relevant source on the threefold model, especially with regard to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, is Kamalaśīla's first *Bhāvanākrama*. Here, Kamalaśīla adds to the prerequisites for cultivation the development of great compassion. He then brings the distinction between the provisional and definitive meanings of scripture (*neyārtha* and *nītārtha*) as the proper subject of the wisdom of reflection, which results into the disappearance of doubt and, following that, "perfect wisdom" (*samyagjñāna*). The progression of the threefold wisdom is described by Kamalaśīla as follows:

There, first of all, the wisdom of hearing should be generated. For through it one enters into the meaning of the scriptures. Thereafter one penetrates their provisional and definitive meanings by the wisdom of thinking. After that, having ascertained the meaning that is real (*bhūtam artham*, i.e., non-origination, emptiness) by means of that (wisdom of thinking), one should cultivate it, not that which is unreal (*abhūtam*, i.e., *neyārtha*). Otherwise, on account of meditating upon the false and the (consequent) non-disappearance of doubt, there could be no production of perfect knowledge. Additionally, then meditation would be pointless, just like that of the non-Buddhists (Translation in Adam 2002, p. 128).

Summarizing the application of the threefold wisdom model to Mahāyāna doctrine, he adds,

> Therefore, when the wisdom consisting in thinking has investigated by way of both logic and scriptures, the very reality which is the natural condition of things should be cultivated. Additionally, the natural condition of things is ascertained, on the basis of scripture and reasoning, to be in the ultimate sense only non-origination. (Adam 2002, p. 128)

As will be made clear below, it is important to note that the wisdom of reflection uses both scripture (*āgama*) and reason (*yukti*). Thus, scripture is important not only as the object of the wisdom of study, but of the wisdom of reflection as well. Regarding the wisdom of cultivation, Kamalaśīla says, "Thus having ascertained the real meaning by means of the wisdom of thinking, one should give rise to the wisdom of meditation in order to directly perceive it (Adam 2002, p. 134)." *Bhāvanā*, thus, leads into a clearer perception of reality, not mediated by conceptions (the Sanskrit phrase used is "*pratyakṣīkaraṇāya*"). The final result of the process is the removal of both afflictive and cognitive obscurations, the latter's root described as mistaken notions such as existence:

> . . . on the basis of the removal of all conceptualizations of existence and so forth by this practice of yoga, there is the removal of the mistaken transposition of all existence, which is the nature of ignorance and the root of the afflictive obscurations. Thus, on account of being cut off at the root the afflictive obscuration is completely removed. (Adam 2002, pp. 145–46)

Kamalaśīla's treatment of the threefold wisdom model is interesting in many ways, for it details his understanding of the relation between conceptual and non-conceptual methods of training, supplementing his analogy of two sticks which, when rubbed against each other, end up burned (Adam 2002, p. 207), with more details about removing doubt and hence wrong conceptualizations as the root of removing cognitive and afflictive obscurations.

In brief, classical presentations of the threefold wisdom model by Vasubandhu and Kamalaśīla stress the importance of concentration for cultivation, the importance of scripture as well as logic as part of reflection, and the fact that the direct experience of reality that happens during cultivation (and therefore concentration) is where study and reflection are supposed to lead.

The model thus described can be understood as what I would call a practical hermeneutic. We do not find, in these sources, an explicit abstract discussion of the question of

prejudice, bias, and how the reader's predisposition determines understanding as much as the author's words. What we do find, though, is the description of a method to ensure that the reader is able to produce the best possible understanding of scripture, leading to the right result. Study and reflection help one get close to what a scriptural statement means, but the full circle of interpretation is only complete when a direct experience of what scripture conveys is produced in the context of cultivation, that is, as the object of concentration (*samādhi*). The hermeneutical model described does not offer much of a theoretical and critical reflection on interpretation in general, but a clear method to ensure that genuine understanding is established with confidence. If the reader does not have the prerequisites, does not base their reflection and concentration on adequate scriptural statements, or misunderstands them with regard to their reality and their status as provisional or definitive, then understanding is not complete, and the reader has failed to receive the full message intended to be conveyed. If wisdom is to penetrate reality, all these elements are required. Without the direct cultivation of reality as conveyed in scripture, the act of interpretation is not complete.

In the next section we will discuss the methodological implications of these points for scholars who wish either to obtain a full picture of the place of intellectual practices in Buddhist cultivation or to establish a solid basis for dialogue on the views discussed by Buddhist philosophy.

3. The Methodological Implications of Threefold Wisdom

Threefold wisdom can thus be understood as the description of the process by which one ensures that the best possible understanding of Buddhist scripture is achieved. It seems to include an awareness of the fact that rational analysis and concordance with scripture can convince one of the validity and truth of a statement, but a full understanding of the same statement is not achieved until one has cultivated it as a lived reality, that is, after having applied a reading method and connecting it with cultivation exercises. The simple fact that the Buddhist tradition has a quite clearly defined model of how we can and should learn from scripture is significant for the interpretive models we use in the academic study of Buddhism, especially if the method privileged to study Buddhist thought is that of philosophical engagement through conversation or dialogue, an awareness of how differently Buddhists understand the process of interpretation to work will be necessary for a fruitful conversation to take place. This section highlights specific elements of that model and their implications on method.

(a). Separating listening and reflection

Little detail is given by Vasubandhu and Kamalaśīla on the wisdom of study itself other than to say that it is the basis for reflection and then cultivation. To help us distinguish between the Buddhist model and the contemporary philosophical approach[8] with which it is often brought in dialogue, it is worthwhile noting that the fact that study and reflection are described as separate steps is itself significant for a comparative methodology of Buddhist and contemporary models of textual interpretation.

The separation of study and reflection is evidence that, according to the Buddhist model described above, it would be a mistake to engage in critical reflection before a proper study of a text has been conducted. The objective of critical reflection is the properly established meaning of the text we are studying; the process of identifying that is distinct from the evaluation of its truth through scripture and logic.

Contemporary academic conversations tend to see these two parts of the process of interpretation as inconsistent methods. One can either engage (philosophically or theoretically) with the ideas in a reinterpretation of the text based on current context[9] or set aside one's own evaluation of the same ideas by attempting to get as close as possible to the original circumstances of the creation of the same text. While proponents of philosophical engagement reject the purely historical method as based on the illusion of objectivity,

historians criticize proponents of a philosophical reading as having no way to show that they are doing anything but projecting their own ideas on to the material.

The Buddhist model of the threefold wisdom is different in several ways. First, it goes beyond the apparent dichotomy between an objective reading free from evaluation and an engagement based primarily on evaluation. Both these approaches are required and properly applied, that is, in succession, they lead to the full understanding that is lived in cultivation. The approach based on critical, philosophical engagement is thus, from the Buddhist perspective, incomplete and inadequate not only because it does not include cultivation, but because it fails to take the wisdom that comes from study seriously. Being able to suspend judgment and evaluation is a prerequisite to a proper study of scriptural statements.

Proponents of philosophical engagement as the only way to engage with Buddhist texts should therefore be aware that the view according to which understanding proceeds through evaluation of the validity of ideas goes against the gradual process described in Buddhist sources. They should also be happy to hear that an approach that suspends judgment altogether is, from the Buddhist point of view, also incomplete: it would amount to using only the wisdom that comes from study, and not continuing on to the other two stages of interpretation. The Buddhist model thus offers the double benefit of, on the one hand, making our best effort at understanding a text on its own terms while, on the other, retaining the possibility of engaging with the ideas conveyed using available epistemological tools to establish their validity. Any model of reading Buddhist scriptures that limits itself to either one of these two approaches is thus, from the point of view of threefold wisdom, incomplete.

Finally, separating the wisdom of study from that of reflection paints a reader that lets, at least provisionally, the text establish its own interpretive environment. Through explicit statements of the purpose of a text, who it is composed for, and what attitude one should take in reading it, it advocates a skill in study that consists essentially in orienting one's disposition, as a reader, with the text. That does not imply that the process ends there and that there is no evaluation going on: indeed, a rigorous evaluation of statements found in scripture is conducted using criteria such as logical and scriptural consistency. Nor does it open one to the faults of assuming the possibility of objectivity: an objective reading that sets aside one's criteria for truth and validity is itself only provisional and is a crucial yet only partial feature of the ideal picture of the Buddhist art of reading.

Thus, the Buddhist threefold wisdom provides an interesting and unique take on the question of interpretation and the role of philosophical evaluation and engagement, seemingly avoiding a false dichotomy between descriptive and philosophically engaged methods. Engaging philosophically with its textual tradition while skipping the phase of listening is likely to undermine the establishment of ideal conditions for a fruitful dialogue to take place.

(b). The importance of scripture for the wisdom of reflection

The wisdom of reflection gives us the most obvious common point between contemporary philosophical and Buddhist approaches to reading Buddhist texts, especially when approached more specifically through emphasizing reflection using reason. Logical coherence is an obvious point of contact between Buddhism and contemporary academic and philosophical approaches, hence probably why most philosophical studies of Buddhist thought highly emphasize the polemical dimensions of doctrinal writing. Logical arguments, insofar as they tend to be readily isolated from specific contexts, lend themselves to generate confidence that we understand what they are about.

Just what the role of reflection using scripture is in the process of developing threefold wisdom, though, has not been fully appreciated by studies of Buddhist philosophy. How does reflection using scripture differ from the wisdom of study? How exactly does one apply scripture as a way to reflect on the validity and the interpretive status (i.e., as provisional or definitive) of statements? While I think this issue requires further research, basing ourselves on the example of Kamalaśīla, the process seems to describe a cross-

referencing with other established scriptural statements. Kamalaśīla stresses, for example, that contradictions should not be found within scriptural statements (Adam 2002, p. 125); seemingly incompatible statements should be reconciled by being interpreted using the distinction between provisional and definitive statements. While rational analysis is used to critically evaluate statements and views, scripture is kept in play to complement logic. The text one is interpreting is judged not only against logic, but also against other scriptures. The rationality used as part of the wisdom of reflection is synthetic as well as critical.

One possible consequence of this point for methodology is to stress efforts at checking one's philosophical readings against other texts: other scriptures, possibly other works stemming from a same tradition. More importantly, it shows the importance given to scripture in the process of interpretation, not only as the basis for study, but as part of the process of reflection.

A large part of philosophical readings of Buddhist sources deals with rational elements, completely ignoring aspects of Buddhist thought related to scriptural interpretation. This can only lead to an extremely partial understanding of the discussions taking place in Buddhist philosophical literature. Some of the debates on emptiness, for example, can be explained as having to do with the principles of interpretation much more than with purely logical arguments.[10] More attention to the scriptural, exegetical and hermeneutical discussions that surround Buddhist doctrinal conversations could certainly improve the mutual understanding of the various methods that face each other in cross-cultural readings of Buddhist sources.

Moreover, Vasubandhu and Kamalaśīla both convey an important point: reflection on the validity of ideas is not the end of the process of interpretation. It is an important yet only preliminary stage of the process of making the meaning of what one studies integrated in one's life by removing doubt about its meaning and validity.[11] Any interpretive approach that deliberately ignores this fact will limit the space for dialogue, that is, the range of questions that are considered relevant to the discussion, so as to make a vast portion of Buddhist discussions of texts and their application in mental cultivation fall outside the space set for dialogue. Setting aside from the start issues of scripture and scriptural interpretation, unsurprisingly, can feel alienating to live conversation partners and, correspondingly, lead to selective and highly directed readings of the literature. A more open and impartial attitude towards the works we study is impeded by the decision not to pay attention to the scriptural dimensions of these discussions.

(c). Methodological implications of cultivation

The importance given to cultivation as part of the practice of reading scripture is often referred to by scholars, but its implications, especially with regard to method, have not been fully fleshed out. Discussions of reading, exegesis, and hermeneutics are usually based on Western notions of hermeneutics, assuming that the debates about hermeneutics we are familiar with exhaust the possibilities of what thinking about interpretation entails, and that Buddhist intellectual culture does not have its own understanding of how interpretation works and should be done. As a result, the way we engage with Buddhist text—philosophically or otherwise—is determined by our understanding of hermeneutics, making no effort to include a specifically Buddhist understanding of how the "art of reading" should be performed. Here, we will consider two aspects of the Buddhist art of interpretation described by the threefold wisdom model and their implications on method for scholars who study Buddhist culture.

First, as we have seen above, for Vasubandhu, Kamalaśīla, and followers of that tradition, reading culminates in the direct cultivation of the direct experience of the reality described in the scripture studied. That emphasis on the practical dimension of reading—the stage where the ideas studied and analyzed are put into practice—distinguishes that understanding of reading from what we often assume reading to be about in contemporary discussions of hermeneutics. When applied to Buddhism, those discussions stress the model of the hermeneutic circle: the determination of meaning is performed by the reader in relation to the text, but there is never a way to obtain a view of what the text says outside

of our perspective as a reader (See, e.g., Garfield 2002, pp. 229–50). As Andrew Tuck has shown, attempts at objectivity can often be shown to be as likely to lead readers to project our assumptions on the text as more openly "engaged" approaches (Tuck 1990).

An emphasis on cultivation allows a different perspective. When reading following the model of threefold wisdom, the back and forth between the reader and the text is not a closed circle because it also reaches out into practical application. The addition of cultivation, especially when conceived, following Vasubandhu, as *samādhibhāvanā*, brings an additional way to test our reading against the text. Adding cultivation to the act of reading brings an element to reading that is different from study and reflection, an element that is eminently practical and as close as a direct experience as is available to us. Concentration, insofar as it includes non-discursive practices, enriches the experience of interpretation with elements that are not limited to the realm of words and ideas. Tested against descriptions of concentration found in the text, it adds a richer, lived dimension to the act of reading.[12]

An important distinction should be made here. The point is not that non-Buddhist philosophical traditions, even the professionalized academic approaches to philosophy, have no practical application. Philosophical reflections have consequences on many aspects of our lives. The important difference is rather in the underlying belief that the reality—often conceived in metaphysical terms—and which is the main and final object of study and reflection is considered to be something that can be attained or realized not simply through words but through some other form of experience. That experience is itself to be further refined against study and reflection in a dynamic process, but the very possibility, even if only theoretical, that one can see reality for oneself adds an important dimension to interpretation: you can check it for yourself, so to speak.

Vasubandhu describes the wisdom of cultivation using the analogy of the person crossing a river:

One can compare three kinds of persons who are crossing a river: (1) those who do not know how to swim do not abandon their swimming device [*plava*] for one moment; (2) those who know how to swim a little sometime hold onto it, sometimes let go of it; (3) those who know how to swim cross without support (Vasubandhu 2012, p. 1893).

If we take the threefold wisdom model to describe the process of reading, debating the meaning and validity of textual assertions without direct cultivation is like debating the nature of swimming without having practiced it. More importantly, it gives a different take on the problem of interpretation. It hints at the level of confidence a reader can gain as to the accuracy of his/her interpretation of a text by applying the practice itself. The experience of cultivation is as certain and straightforward as we can get. We can debate whether our understanding of the feeling of hot, cold, sweet, or seeing red or blue is the same as anybody else's experience of the same things, and maybe ultimately they are not the same, but our confidence that our understanding of what hot is is as good as understanding can get.

Such a view of textual interpretation gives a different perspective on our ability to understand textual statements; while on the one hand being aware that understanding needs to be set up by adequate preparation, "listening" with an open mind to what the text is saying, and applying analysis to determine the exact meaning of the text, it aims at an understanding that is pragmatically adequate, that is, to be validated in experience unmediated by concepts. In that light, arguments against the possibility of a perfect understanding of the author's "intention" appear irrelevant; the point is not to get the exact same experience as the author, for such a thing would only be possible after an equal level of mental and spiritual development has been reached, but to reach an experience that confirms our understanding by practical standards. Now, of course, such a model of interpretation presupposes that one accepts the possibility of such an unmediated experience, and contemporary readers, whether they are philosophers from a tradition that does not emphasize or acknowledge that possibility or Buddhists who disagree with the importance given by some to an unmediated experience, may disagree with such an

assumption. The fact remains that Vasubandhu and Kamalaśīla do seem to accept that presupposition, and that it makes a model for understanding through study and reading valid to the extent to which it is needed. If contemporary philosophers disagree with that assumption, it would be a good idea for them to have a conversation on why that is the case.[13] However, ignoring it and assuming that the Buddhist model of interpretation shares their assumptions about experience and hermeneutics can only undermine the quality of the common basis for dialogue they use to support their own method.

The question of the role of experience is now familiar to scholars and students of Buddhist studies, and I want to emphasize that I do not wish to bring back the idea that the only important thing in Buddhism is experience, especially in the context where some Buddhists, and some Buddhist scholars, still promote the idea that all that matters about Buddhism is some form of non-conceptual experience that arises during meditation. Cf. Sharf (1995); Gyatso (1999). I rather wish to emphasize that study, reading, and reflection are part of a continuum of cultivation that includes both discursive and more practical, hands-on dimensions. For example, in the mind training (*blo sbyong*) system of cultivation, we find a lot of teachings emphasizing that self-cherishing is at the root of saṁsāric experience, and that one can only benefit from reducing all self-centered dispositions and behavior. That cultivation involves reading, but also imagination and some rationally derived arguments and contemplations. They also include the cultivation of certain mental qualities such as friendliness and compassion, coupled with some discussions of ultimate bodhicitta that depict the latter as being free of conceptual constructions.[14] That system of practice is not simply about the latter, non-conceptual experience, but it is there, at least theoretically in the beginning, and attaining familiarity with it is recognized as something real at least in the life stories of the great adepts of the past. So, while we cannot reduce that whole tradition to the experience of ultimate bodhicitta, it does acknowledge it in part. It also includes the idea of post-meditation (*rjes thob*), that is, what happens when you try to carry on the attitudes developed into your daily life. What I am proposing here is that we pay more attention to those elements as part of our philosophical study of those traditions, at least insofar as they are relevant contextual elements without which the interpretation of the analytic, discursive dimensions of the reflection is difficult.

The point is not to reduce Buddhism to experience, but to recognize that the unmediated experience of the reality (or realities) described in scripture and studied philosophically is, for Buddhist philosophical traditions, at least theoretically possible. The degree to which an unmediated experience of reality is possible, and the conditions that are required for that to be possible, are understood differently by different people. Those ideas form the basis of much Tibetan debate, for example. As far as I know, though, inasmuch as one recognizes the possibility of attaining the state of buddha, or awakening, the fact that the buddha's gnosis is also real is also accepted. Correspondingly, most practices, whether they are called *vipaśyanā*, meditation on *rig pa*, the completion stage (*rdzogs rim*), is understood as cultivating a perception of reality the is mediated as little as possible by wrongly imposed views and latent cognitive and emotional tendencies. For authors such as Mipham, topics of philosophical debates are described in highly "experiential" or subjective categories such as the absence of constructions (*niśprapañca/spros pa dang bral ba*) or unity/coalescence (*zung 'jug*) Wangchuk (2012, p. 15). Without going into how representative these ideas are of Tibetan philosophy, or their place in contemporary philosophical debates, I hope the reader will at least agree with me that such ideas give a clear indication that, for authors like Mipham, the rational analysis of ideas like emptiness is done while keeping in mind the wish to make a full realization of reality the final, more or less remote, yet undoubtedly real goal of philosophical practice.

In short, we could say that, in the context of the study of Buddhist philosophical argument, an attitude opposite yet similar to what Buddhist modernism has created about experience has appeared: while the secularists and modernists focus on experience, philosophers tend to eliminate it from the discussion. Revalorizing the importance of the

context for philosophical discussion, especially the practical context, can only help gather more conditions for a fruitful discussion to take place.

4. Conclusions

If taken as describing a method of reading leading to understanding scriptural statements so as to lead to an unmediated experience of the realities pointed out in scripture, the threefold wisdom model offers its own take on the question of interpretation, a model that, by focusing on a practical notion of understanding, circumvents issues related to the impossibility of objectivity and recovering authorial intent. Methodological implications of such a model include the expectation of striving for understanding prior to evaluation, to the recognition of the importance of the role of scripture in the act of interpretation, and to the necessity of cultivation, that is, of a practical application to our experience of the object of study for understanding to be complete. As a result of this analysis, I propose that any method that claims dialogue or conversation based on a commonality of purpose should include a conversation about these topics as well as specific philosophical issues, lest the basis assumed for dialogue be established from the unique point of view of academia rather than being a genuinely shared basis. Buddhist presentations of threefold wisdom thus offer us an interesting topic for philosophical conversation, a fact about Buddhist intellectual life that is good for us to keep in mind as we read Buddhist literature, and an area that should be addressed by future discussions of comparative or cross-cultural philosophical study. Further study should probably consider to what extent the model of understanding described in Buddhist literature are actually carried out in living traditions,[15] and the variations found in various Buddhist traditions. It would also be useful to the present discussion to see how similar questions were addressed in other religious traditions. It is to be hoped, though, that in the meantime modern assumptions about reading and understanding are not projected on to Buddhist traditions, but that a properly Buddhist understanding of study and reading and their place in cultivation will be appreciated for its unique character and importance.

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Notes

1 For a discussion of "productive encounters" as the work of cross-cultural philosophy, see for Garfield (2002, p. 244).

2 Such a method is described for example in Garfield (2015, p. 3).

3 Recent contributions bring much needed information on the intellectual background of Buddhist traditions. For example, the relation between linguistic philosophy and Buddhism is described in, Bronkhorst (2019).

4 An example of such a study is offered in Gold (2007).

5 For a wider discussion of hermeneutics in Buddhism, see Lopez (1988).

6 Translation in Vasubandhu (2012, pp. 1894–95).

7 While the term *śruta* ("listening") carries the connotation of orality, it can be applied to written text as well as oral text, so that listening can stretch into study more generally to include the potential use of written support as part of study.

8 While a detailed definition of contemporary academic philosophy is too big a topic for the current essay, and since I certainly do not want to imply that contemporary philosophy, even when practiced in purely academic settings, cannot be applied to one's life, the difference between the two types of philosophical practice I want to emphasize here rests on the notion that the possibility of connecting correct views of reality to a lived experience of that reality, distinct from deluded experience, as part of Buddhist mental cultivation. See below, Section 3 for more on that point.

9 This method corresponds to what Kapstein calls the "problems and solutions approach." See the introduction of Kapstein (2001). It also corresponds to Garfield's "cross-cultural philosophy", cited above.

[10] An example of this in the thought of the Tibetan author Śākya mchog ldan is given in Philippe Turenne, "Interpretations of Unity: Hermeneutics in ŚĀKYA MCHOG LDAN's Interpretation of the Five Treatises of Maitreya." (Montreal, McGill University, 2012).

[11] Kamalaśīla describes the disappearance of doubt as the result of reflection. See Adam (2002, p. 128).

[12] A similar point of comparison is to be found in Hadot's description of philosophy as spiritual exercise. See Hadot (1995, 2003). For applications of that discussion to Buddhism, see Fiordalis (2018), Eltschinger (2008, pp. 285–544) and Deroche (2021, pp. 19–32).

[13] We should note that, as a significant part of comparative or cross-cultural studies of Buddhist philosophy pursues the overt goal of convincing Western philosophers of the importance of studying Buddhist philosophy, and as an open discussion of the spiritual dimensions of Buddhist thought may be seen as going against that purpose, philosophers interested in engagement with Buddhist thought may be tempted to set aside such dimensions.

[14] Many instances of teachings belonging to that system can be found Jinpa (2006).

[15] A good example of such a study is offered in Liberman (2007).

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Article

Did Socrates Meditate? On Some Traces of Contemplative Practices in Early Greco-Latin Philosophy

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Abstract: Following insights by Pierre Hadot, I suggest that although explicit discussions of practices of breath control and other psychosomatic techniques of contemplative attention management are conspicuously absent in early Greek thought, there are some signs that analogous practices did exist, perhaps as early as Socrates. The combined evidence of Aristophanes and Plato suggests that Socrates may have engaged in a practice that has key features in common with meditative practices and experiences as attested in Zen Buddhism. This technique consists in two stages: an initial practice of top-down, voluntary, egocentric focused meditation resulting in a state of "absorption" or abstraction from all sensory input, followed by the practice of a more bottom-up, open, other-centered (allocentric) form of meditation, intended to provide a more global or universal perspective, in which the practitioner situates herself as a part of the cosmos. This paper includes discussion of "withdrawal" into oneself as a contemplative practice in Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Evagrius Ponticus, and Gregory Palamas.

Keywords: meditation; neurophysiology; contemplative studies; Plato; Socrates

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> *Etenim quomodo utique adjaciet indicibilissimo*
> *omnium aliter quam soporans quæ in ipsa garrulamina?*
> For how else could it [the soul] approach the most
> ineffable of all things than by putting to sleep the chatter in it?
> (Proclus, *On Providence and Fate*, 31, 14, in Steel 2007, p. 56, translation Steel slightly modified)

In one of his earliest papers, given in 1953, Pierre Hadot wrote of the lasting influence of the Stoic idea of tonic motion (*tonikê kinêsis*), a "vibrational movement proceeding from the internal to the external, and from the external to the internal" (Hadot 2019, pp. 45–52). For Hadot, this conceptual scheme "beyond the Stoics, goes back to more primitive intuitions concerning vital rhythm, and particularly respiration" (Hadot 2019, pp. 45–46). Hadot saw this conceptual scheme, involving a stage of inward-directed motion followed by one of outward-directed expansion, as constitutive of many aspects of Greco-Roman thought. When, more than twenty years later (Hadot 1993, 1995), Hadot first set forth his analysis of ancient philosophy as consisting in spiritual exercises (SEs), he divided these exercises, in accordance with this distinction between internally and externally directed orientations, into what Christoph Horn has analyzed as SEs intended for concentration or self-development, and those intended for "self-renunciation" (Horn 1998, p. 39). For Horn, SEs intended for concentration may be seen as corresponding to Hadot's movement of contraction from the external to the internal, while what Horn calls SEs of self-renunciation, but I would prefer to call SEs of self-transcendence, would correspond to the reverse process, or movement of expansion from the internal to the external[1].

In what follows, I will develop this and other insights by Hadot, in order to suggest that while it is true that explicit discussions of practices of breath control and other techniques of contemplative attention management are conspicuously absent in early Greek thought,

there are some signs that analogous practices did exist, perhaps as early as Socrates. To set the stage for this discussion, however, I will begin with some considerations derived from the findings of modern cognitive science and neurophysiology.

1. Prelude: The Neurophysiology of Focused and Open Meditation

Experimental cognitive scientists have identified two main pathways of our visual and auditory attentional networks (Austin 2009, p. 29f. and Table 4; 2011, p. 42f.). The starting point of both pathways is in the occipital lobe at the back of the brain; yet from here they diverge. The dorsal pathway begins by transmitting information to the upper portions of the parietal cortex, along what has been called the "where? pathway", which serves to identify the position of objects in space in relation to us, and in this sense, it can be called egocentric or self-referential. It is activated by voluntary, intentional efforts on the part of the subject, and can therefore be considered "top-down" (compare Harter 2018, pp. 155–56). The ventral pathway, in contrast, runs from the lower occipital region along the temporal lobe, and thence to the lower frontal lobe. It follows the so-called "what? pathway", the attentional stream that is concerned with answering questions concerning objects independently of their relation to us, and can, therefore, be designated as other-oriented or allocentric. It responds automatically and pre-consciously to external stimuli.

It is interesting to compare the itineraries of the dorsal/parietal and ventral/temporal attentional streams with what is known as the brain's "default mode network" (DMN): those regions of the brain that always remain metabolically active, even when we're at rest, and which neurologists often identify as the seat of our usual awareness of our self (Davey et al. 2016)[2]. The dorsal/parietal attention network—egocentric or self-referential—runs right through one of the two main regions of the DMN[3]. The ventral/temporal attentional stream, in contrast, runs south of these centers and largely avoids them (Austin 2009, p. 61).

On the basis of such experimental findings, some neurologists who are also practicing meditators, such as James Austin, have proposed that by gradually quieting the chattering, word-oriented, self-centered dorsal/parietal attention network and activating the pre-linguistic, bottom-up, allocentric ventral/temporal attention stream, we may facilitate access to a peak experience that is deeper and more transformative than the mere "internal absorptions" that can be triggered by focused attention alone. In Austin's words, such an experience "combines the total absence of the old psychic Self with (…) the stunning realization of coidentity with the world"[4] (Austin 2016, chp. 2, n. 10).

Correspondingly, contemplative studies scholars have distinguished two quite different styles of meditation: on the one hand, focused or concentrative; and, on the other, open or receptive (Austin 1998, pp. 75–76; 2006, p. 29ff.; 2009, p. 3ff.; 2016, p. 13, Table 1.1), sometimes designated in recent literature as "convergent" and "divergent" respectively[5] (Austin 2016, p. 14). In the former, one begins by focusing one's attention on a single external location, if meditating with one's eyes open, or, if one's eyes are closed, on the breath and the rhythmic motions of the abdomen that accompany it. The main goal of this focused, concentrated, top-down, egocentric attention is to quiet the incessant chatter of thoughts—Proclus' *garrulamina*—which usually fill our minds and distract us from whatever else we are doing. In some Buddhist traditions, however, this stage, which can lead to a brief state of "internal absorption" (Austin 1998, pp. 467–518)[6] or state of more or less complete lack of awareness of one's surroundings, is only a preliminary. The second stage can be interpreted as the reverse of the first: it is a state or process of open receptivity. Here, instead of narrowing our attention, we expand it to take in the sights, sounds, and all other sensory perceptions that reach us from the outside world. Open and inclusive, this mode is characterized by bottom-up processing and allocentric or other-related attitudes, and activates the ventral attention stream instead of the dorsal one. Years of balanced training in both meditative techniques, can, according to Zen adepts, lead to a diminution of the dominance of the egocentric system, and a reawakening of systems of allocentric processing: in other words, a shift from thinking primarily about oneself to thinking about others. This, in turn may facilitate the experience designated by the Japanese word *kenshō*

見性: literally "seeing the nature (of reality)", a fleeting experience of insight into the world as it really is objectively, sometimes referred to in the literature as an experience of the world as "just this", "thusness", or "suchness" (Austin 2014, p. 21)[7].

It may seem far-fetched to suggest that something akin to these two approaches of focused and open meditation may be attested as far back as Greco-Roman Antiquity, and perhaps even in the historical Socrates. Yet I want to propose here that this, in fact, may be the case.

2. Socrates in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedo*

As Pierre Hadot has pointed out (Hadot 1993, p. 32), Socrates seems to have been "capable of extraordinary mental concentration". At the beginning of Plato's *Symposium*, Socrates is on his way, together with Aristodemus, to a banquet at Agathon's house, when he starts to lag behind, because he "somehow directed the attention of his intellect to himself"[8]. At the end of the dialogue, Alcibiades tells how once, when on military campaign at Potidaia, Socrates stood lost in thought. To the amazement of his fellow soldiers, he remained transfixed on the spot all night, thinking about something (*phrontizôn ti*, *Symposium* 220a), and stayed that way until dawn of the following day. The Latin author Aulus Gellius (c. 125–180 CE) describes the incident as follows (Aulus Gellius 1927, book 2, chp. 1):

> Socrates habitually practiced this: he would stand, so the story goes, in one fixed position, all day and all night, from early dawn until the next sunrise, open-eyed, motionless, in his very tracks and with face and eyes riveted to the same spot in deep meditation (*cogitabundus*), as if his mind and soul had been, as it were, withdrawn from his body[9].

What is going on in such episodes, in which Socrates could be said to "have his mind elsewhere"? Some scholars have supposed that Socrates, like several other early Greek thinkers, was engaging in a technique of meditation that involved controlling the breath (Hadot 2002, p. 180ff.)[10]. We cannot know for sure, of course, but it could well be that Socrates was engaging in a mental practice in which, as James Austin writes, "our attention turns internally and shifts into Self-referential (egocentric) tasks" (Austin 2009, p. 99), a state that may be best characterized as a state of "internal absorption"[11]:

> Internal absorption is a relatively early state [along the Path of Zen], a further surge in amplification into hyperawareness. Simultaneously, it deletes vision, hearing, and the sense of one's physical self-image. These sensate losses seem referable to an inhibitory blockade down at the level of the ventral thalamus, mediated by the back of the thalamic reticular nucleus. (Austin 2009, p. 387)

On this interpretation, then, in the episodes Plato relates, Socrates may have been engaged in a form of focused meditation, characterized by top-down, voluntary concentration of the attention that activates the dorsal attention stream. This type of meditation is particularly apt to lead to episodes of absorption; but it is not the only kind of meditation which Socrates may have practiced. As we shall see, it may have been merely a preliminary stage towards another, more open, less voluntary, bottom-up form of meditation that activates the ventral attentional stream.

Equally influential for the Western philosophical tradition was Plato's depiction of Socrates in the *Phaedo*. I won't go into the question of the extent to which Plato's portrayal of Socrates corresponds to the historical Socrates: scholars have spent entire careers on this question and have not yet, to my knowledge, reached a definitive conclusion. In any case, in the *Phaedo* Plato portrays the Socrates as an Orphico-Pythagorean ascetic. Just before the famous passage in which he defines philosophy as a training for or exercise of death (*meletê thanatou*), Socrates speaks as follows:

> Doesn't purification (*katharsis*) then, as the ancient account would have it[12], turn out to be the separation of the soul as far as possible away from the body, accustoming it to gathering itself (*sunageiresthai*) and collecting itself (*athroizesthai*)

> by itself, withdrawn from all parts of the body[13] and living as far as possible both in the present circumstances and in the future alone by itself, released, as it were, from the chains of the body?". (Plato (2017), *Phaedo* 67cff., translation Jones-Preddy modified)

This text is rather enigmatic. In it, Socrates tells us that this separation of the soul from the body[14] is to be accomplished by accustoming the soul to "gather itself up (*sunageiresthai*) and collect itself (*athroizesthai*) by itself". Oddly, classical philologists and historians of philosophy have typically paid little heed to this strange terminology. It was left to historians of Greek religion and medicine to call attention to it, especially the late Marcel Detienne (Detienne 1963), who devoted an insightful discussion to the passage.[15] Detienne was surely right to observe that this terminology, especially the verbs *sunageiresthai* and *athroizesthai*, which also occur elsewhere in the *Phaedo*,[16] "clearly indicates a vocabulary which we may call technical, and there is no doubt that the Phaedo here echoes a very ancient religious vocabulary". In 6th century CE Alexandria, the Neoplatonist Olympiodorus explains Plato's terminology with reference to the Orphic myth of the tearing apart (*sparagmos*) of the infant Dionysos by the Titans:

> What is the meaning of this pleonasm? Surely the words are not linked together for nothing (…) 'to gather itself together' (*sunageiresthai*) means to turn away from corporeal life, and 'to collect itself' (*athroizesthai*) means to turn away from the faculty of opinion. Is it not obvious, moreover, that Plato is giving a parody of the Orphic myths, which tell how Dionysus is torn to pieces by the Titans and is made whole by Apollo, so 'collecting and gathering itself together' means passing from the Titanic life to the unitary life? (…) Plato, indeed, gives parodies of Orpheus everywhere. (Olympiodorus 1976, pp. 113–15, translation Westerink, modified)

Olympiodorus thus identifies two components in Plato's definition of purification: *epistrephesthai* denotes withdrawing from corporeal life, while *athroizesthai* designates the act of turning away from the faculty of opinion[17].

When Socrates advises his interlocutors to habituate the soul to "gather itself (*sunageiresthai*) and collect itself (*athroizesthai*) by itself from all parts of the body", then, I want to suggest this represents an instance of concentrative meditation, which may or may not have involved exercises of controlling the breath. At any rate, it certainly seems to consist in a voluntary, top-down process of focusing and narrowing down the attention, which, as we have seen, can lead to a state of absorption in which input from the senses is diminished or all but eliminated.

3. The Doctrine of Innate Ideas

Marcel Detienne also had the merit of pointing to a text which has not often been seen as what it is: a commentary on, or at least development of, our *Phaedo* passage and its parallels. It comes from the *Letter to Marcella* by Porphyry, which takes the form of a letter the Neoplatonist philosopher wrote in the late 3rd century to his wife Marcella, an indigent widow with several children whom he had married in his old age. The letter was intended to console Marcella for the fact that unspecified patriotic duties had forced Porphyry to leave her behind after only a few months of marriage. Porphyry writes as follows:

> (…) you could best encounter me in a pure way, present and with you day and night, in the most pure and beautiful of unions, without it being possible for me to be separated from you, if you practice rising up to yourself (*eis seautên anabainen*), collecting (*sullegousa*) from your body all your dispersed (*diaskedasthenta*) limbs, which have been cut up (*katakermisthenta*) into multiplicity, from the state of union that had, until then, prevailed in the greatness of its power. You could gather together (*sunagein*) and unite (*henizein*) your innate ideas, trying to articulate them (*diarthroun*) in their confusion, and bring them to light, now that they have been plunged in darkness. It was starting out from these [innate ideas] that the divine

> Plato carried out his recalling from sensible things to the intelligibles. Moreover, if you remember them, you could articulate them (*diarthroiês*). (Porphyry 1969, c. 10)

Here, as in later passages from Olympiodorus and Damascius, the Orphic myth of Dionysius and Apollo seems to be lurking in the background[18]. Porphyry advises Marcella to exercise or train herself (*meletan*)[19] to

(i) rise back up to herself (*eis seautên anabainen*); and (ii) gather together from the body (*apo tou sômatos sullegein*) her scattered (*diaskedasthenta*) [interior] limbs, which have been dispersed (*katakermisthenta*) from the state of unity that once was theirs. It looks, then, that there at least a strong analogy between Plato's advice to habituate the soul to "gather itself (*sunageiresthai*) and collect itself (*athroizesthai*) by itself, withdrawn from all parts of the body" and Porphyry's advice to "gather together (*sunagein*) and unite (*henizein*) your innate ideas." Yet Porphyry also goes further than Plato, and tells Marcella how she is to accomplish this process of almost literal *re-collection*: by working on her innate ideas (*emphutous ennoias*). This work in turn consists of a three-part operation:

(iia) these ideas are to be gathered together (*sunagein*) and united (*henizein*); then,

(iib) from the state of confusion (*sunkekhumenas*) in which they are currently, they are to be articulated (*diarthroun*), and then

(iic) from their current state of darkness, they are to be brought to light. Here, Porphyry reminds Marcella that this technique of reactivating the innate ideas was precisely the one Plato used to call us back from the sensible to the intelligible world (cf. Hadot 1995, pp. 84–85; 112, n. 33; 113 n. 44). Finally,

(iii) Marcella is to solidify and preserve the precepts she has learned by putting them into action.

With Porphyry's passage from the *Ad Marcellam*, let's compare a passage from Augustine, who has often been suspected of tacitly using Porphyrian doctrines (*Confessions* 10.XI.18):

> Therefore, with regard to those things whose images we do not draw in through the senses, but see them within, without images, as they really are and in themselves, we find that learning (*discere*) them is nothing other than this: those things which memory contained scattered and without order, by thinking them (*cogitando*), we, as it were, gather them together (*colligere*), and, by directing our attention to them (*animadvertendo*), we see to it that, whereas they previously lay hidden, dispersed and neglected, they are now made readily available (*ad manum posita*), and easily come forward by the familiar kind of effort (*familiairi intentione*). (Augustine 1969, vol. 2, p. 253)

For Augustine in the *Confessions*, the Latin verb for thinking (*cogitare*) derives from the "gathering together" (*colligere*) of memories: "so that what is gathered together (*colligitur*), that is, is forced (*cogitur*), is properly called 'to cogitate'" (Augustine 1969, vol. 2, p. 253). Augustine's discussion of innate ideas here is remarkably like that of Porphyry in several respects. In both cases, we have to do with notions that we do not obtain through the senses, and which, therefore, do not consist in, and are not accompanied by, images transmitted by the faculty of representation or imagination (Greek *phantasia*). The process of learning accordingly consists in "gathering together" (Porphyry: *sunagein* or *henizein*; Augustine: *colligere*) these notions which are already stored in our memory, but are in a state of dispersal and disorder (Porphyry: *sunkekhumenas*; Augustine: *passim atque indisposite*). For Augustine, by thinking about (*cogitando*) and directing our attention (*animadvertendo*) to these confused ideas, which previously lay hidden (*latitabant*), dispersed (*sparsa*), and neglected (*neglecta*) in the memory, we are to take care (*curare*) that they are henceforth "at hand" (*ad manum posita*). The end goal of this is process is that our innate ideas, initially confused, scattered, and hidden, have now been brought to light, and have been set in order or articulated (Porphyry: *diarthroun*) within the memory, so that they will henceforth be easily accessible to habitual acts of voluntary attention (Augustine: *familiari intentioni*).

There is much more to say on this topic of innate ideas and their crucial importance in Neoplatonism[20], but for now, let us merely note the similarities between the passages we have studied from Plato's *Phaedo*, Porphyry's *Letter to Marcella* and Augustine's *Confessions*: Plato speaks in terms of *sunageiresthai* and *athroizesthai*; Porphyry uses the verbs *sullegein* and *henizein*; and Augustine uses expressions like *colligere* and *animaduertere*. Our three authors do not use identical terminology. Nevertheless, they are close enough to allow us to suggest the Porphyry probably had the *Phaedo* passage in mind when he came to elaborate his doctrine of innate ideas, and that Augustine was thinking of Porphyry's doctrine when he came to discuss closely related themes in his *Confessions*.

4. Aristophanes' Testimony on Socrates

It is well known that in his *Clouds* (Aristophanes 1998), Aristophanes satirizes Socrates and the advice he supposedly dispensed in his school, which the comic poet derisively refers to as Socrates' "think-tank" (*phrontistêrion*). In another passage discussed by Pierre Hadot (1993, p. 32f.), Socrates is advising Strepsiades on how to come up with a method to avoid paying his debts. The account is, of course, intended to ridicule Socrates, portraying him as both an unscrupulous Sophist and an impractical, head-in-the clouds intellectual. Yet in order for Aristophanes' portrayal of Socrates to be perceived as funny, the audience must have been able to recognize a kernel of truth, or at least plausibility, in the depiction. Some of Socrates' advice seems to be quite consistent with methods we later find described and recommended in the Platonic dialogues. For instance, Strepsiades is advised to "correctly divide and examine" (διαιρῶν καὶ σκοπῶν) the question at hand (Aristophanes 1998, verse 742). To be sure, Kenneth Dover, the most influential modern commentator on the *Clouds*, states peremptorily that this advice "has no bearing on the *diairesis* which is introduced by Plato" (Dover 1968, p. xliii), but he does not adduce any arguments or evidence to justify this pronouncement. However, if we approach the matter from a philological perspective, we find a close parallel to the advice given to Strepsiades in Plato's dialogue *The Statesman* (285A)[21]:

> For in a certain way all things which are in the province of art do partake of measurement; but because people are not in the habit of considering things by dividing them into classes (σκοπεῖν διαιρουμένους), they hastily put these widely different relations into the same category, thinking they are alike; and again, they do the opposite of this when they fail to divide other things into parts. (Plato 1925, translation Lamb modified; cf. Oberhammer 2016, pp. 224–25)

Plato recommends a similar method in the *Cratylus* 425a,b:

> Our job—if indeed we are to examine all these things with scientific knowledge—is to divide (σκοπεῖσθαι αὐτὰ πάντα, οὕτω διελομένους) where they put together, so as to see whether or not both the primary and derivative names are given in accord with nature. (translation C. D. Reeve in Plato 1997)

Likewise, in the *Laws* (658A), the Athenian Stranger says:

> Ah, my fine fellow, such a conclusion 'may be' rash! We must make some distinctions, and examine the question (διαιροῦντες αὐτὸ κατὰ μέρη σκοπώμεθα) rather like this. (translation T. Saunders in Plato 1997)

Thus, the advice Aristophanes attributes to Socrates that Strepsiades "correctly divide and examine (διαιρῶν καὶ σκοπῶν) the question at hand" bears a remarkable resemblance to the actual method of division (*diairesis*) which Plato recommends and attributes to Socrates.

Another piece of advice given to Strepsiades in the *Clouds* is that, if he comes to a dead end, he should stop, return to his starting point, and approach the issue from another angle (Aristophanes 1998, verse 703f.; 743f.):

> whenever you hit a dead end, quickly jump to another line of thought (. . .) if you hit a dead end with one of your ideas, toss it aside and abandon it, then later try putting it in play again with your mind and weigh it up.

Here, Dover concedes that this method "is Socratic"; yet he goes on to declare that it also so banal as to be "characteristic of any active intellect" (1968, p. xliv). Yet several modern scholars have viewed this method as being characteristic of the Platonic dialogues[22]. The ancient scholiasts on *Clouds* 703, at any rate, had no doubt that Aristophanes was alluding here to Socrates' method. Thus, for instance, the scholiast in Ms. E (Estensis α. U.5–10, 14th cent.), explains:

> Here he attacks Socrates because this is what he did in his investigations. (Scholia to Aristophanes 1977, p. 197)

Thus, we see that the testimony of Aristophanes probably does give us reason to believe that at least some doctrines and methods familiar from the later Platonic dialogues were already believed to be typical of Socrates' teachings during Socrates' lifetime. Most interesting for our purposes, however, is the fact that Strepsiades is given two additional pieces of advice, in this order: First, Strepsiades is to

> . . . think and contemplate, twirl yourself every way and concentrate (φρόντιζε δὴ καὶ διάθρει πάντα τρόπον τε σαυτὸν στρόβει πυκνώσας). (Aristophanes 1998, verse 700, translation Henderson)

Once again, Aristophanes' language is obscure here, and was hard to decipher even for later Greeks. Yet the ancient scholiasts largely agreed that the word *puknôsas* (aorist participle of the verb *puknoun*, "to make solid, contract, condense" (Liddell et al. 1996), which Henderson renders by "concentrate", was a technical term. They provided several synonyms to elucidate it, including the Greek verbs *sphingein* ("to bind, tighten up"), and *katapuknoun* ("to condense"). In this regard, a scholium attributed to Thomas Magister and to Triclinius (both ca. 1300 CE) is particularly interesting:

> "Having condensed (*puknôsas*): that is, having gathered together (*sunagein*) your entire intellect" (πυκνώσας] ἤγουν συναγαγὼν πάντα τὸν νοῦν σου. (Koster 1974)

A bit later in the play, Strepsiades is given new piece of advice:

> Now don't keep winding yourself up in your thoughts; rather, unreel your mind into the air, like a beetle leashed by its leg with a thread (μή νυν περὶ σαυτὸν εἵλλε τὴν γνώμην ἀεί,/ἀλλ' ἀποχάλα τὴν φροντίδ' εἰς τὸν ἀέρα/λινόδετον ὥσπερ μηλολόνθην τοῦ ποδός). (Aristophanes 1998, verses 761–63, translation Henderson)

Once again, Aristophanes' vocabulary is terse and obscure enough to allow a variety of interpretations. Verse 761 centers around the verbal form εἵλλε, second person singular imperative of the verb εἴλω, a verb which has many forms and meanings, although the imperative form εἵλλε occurs only here in all of Greek literature. The verb's meanings include "to enclose", "to press, to concentrate", "to collect" or "to wind round", among others. The ancient scholiasts (Tzetzes 1960) suggest as synonyms the verbs στρέφε ("turn, twist"), σύγκλειε ("enclose, shut in"), σύσφιγγε ("bind close together", "hold in"), while the Suda proposes ἀπόκλειε ("shut up, confine"), or ἔφελκε ("attract to oneself, draw or pull in, draw a breath"). Liddell et al. (1996), for their part, admit that of the texts in which forms of the verb εἴλω occur, "some passages are doubtful in meaning", and they eventually propose, reasonably enough, that the Aristophanes passage means "do not roll or wrap your thought round you, or do not confine your thought within you." The first half of the advice to Strepsiades thus seems to amount to "stop thinking about yourself;" "stop confining your thought to yourself." In terms of modern contemplative neuroscience, we could perhaps paraphrase the meaning here as "stop practicing a concentrated, self-centered mode of thought."

The second verse of our passage from the *Clouds* is equally enigmatic. The rare verb *apokhalaô* which occurs in it is translated by Liddell et al. (1996) as "to slack away", the meaning of which is not much clearer than that of the original Greek. The Diccionario Griego-Español (n.d.) gives the more illuminating translations "soltar, dejar libre, relajar." Once again, the ancient scholiasts propose several helpful synonyms: *endidou/endide* ("give in, allow, grant"), *epaphie* (let go), *aphiei/aphes* ("let go, let loose, release"), and *apolue* ("loose, set free, release"). Particularly interesting is the explanation of one late scholiast, who paraphrases Aristophane's advice as follows:

> Unreel . . . air: that is, *dissolve yourself* (εἰς διάλυσιν δίδου σαυτόν). (Koster 1974, to verse 762β)

Aristophanes' image is burlesque, of course, and intended to make fun of Socrates and the methods he supposedly taught in what Aristophanes calls his "think-tank" (*phrontistêrion*). Nevertheless, is it too far-fetched to perceive here an echo of the open, receptive approach to meditation? After an initial stage in which Strepsiades' thought or attention has been concentrated on a specific inner object—in this case, apparently, the meditator's own thoughts, awareness, or "self" ("winding yourself up in your thoughts")–, he is now encouraged to relax this focused concentration and allow his thought to "soar into the air" (ἀποχάλα τὴν φροντίδ' εἰς τὸν ἀέρα).

5. Εἰς ἑαυτὸν συνειλοῦ: From Aristophanes to Marcus Aurelius

What about the posterity of these ideas? Do any later Greek or Roman thinkers echo what I have proposed may have been Socratic practices of a kind of two-stage meditation?

In early Greek monastic literature, the verb *anakhôrein* and the verbal noun *anakhôrêsis* (Guillaumont 1991) came to mean respectively "to withdraw from the world in order to lead a religious life" and "withdrawal from the world, solitude, as aid to the spiritual life" (Lampe 1961), i.e., to become a monk or a hermit. Thus, a person who carries out *anakhôrêsis* is an *anakhôrêtês*, i.e., an anchorite or a hermit. In early Patristic literature, Evagrius of Pontus (345–399 CE) uses the term *hoi anakhôrountes* to mean "monks", while he defines *anakhôrêsis* as "training for death and the flight from the body" (Ponticus 1971, Section 62)[23]:

> Separating body from soul belongs solely to the one who joined them together; but separating soul from body belongs also to one who longs for virtue. Our fathers call *anakhôrêsis* a training for death (*meletê thanatou*) and a flight from the body.

Basil of Caesarea (330–379), for his part, defines *anakhôrêsis* as follows (Basil of Caesarea 1957–1966, Epistle 2.2):

> *anakhôrêsis* from the world does not mean coming to be outside of it in a bodily sense, but breaking off the soul from its sympathy with the body.

Both these definitions by two of the founding 4th-century fathers of the Eastern monastic movement are, of course, inspired by Plato's *Phaedo*, either directly or through the intermediary of Plato's Neoplatonic commentators, such as Porphyry.

The verb *anakhôreô* is ancient, often occurring in Homer, where it means "to go back, return, withdraw, retire" (Cunliffe 1963). The noun *anakhôrêsis* first occurs in Thucydides, with the meaning of a military "retreat". We find it once on Plato, who, in the *Philebus* (32b), defines pleasure as the "passage and return of all things to their own nature." However, the most influential Platonic use of the verb *anakhôreô* is no doubt the following, from the *Phaedo* (Plato 2017, 83a):

> It [viz., philosophy] persuades it [viz., the soul] to retreat (*anakhôrein*) from these senses except where it is necessary to use them, and encourages the soul to gather and collect itself together (*autên de eis autên sullegesthai kai athroizesthai*) and trust nothing else but itself in itself, whichever of the realities alone by itself it thinks about alone by itself.

Here, in a passage that recommends the same practice of "gathering together" or "collecting" the soul from the various parts of the body which we have seen earlier in the dialogue, we find Socrates advising the philosopher to make the soul retreat from the senses, i.e., to abstain from using them as far as is possible.

Plato's use of the term *anakhôrêsis* seems to have had little echo in Hellenistic philosophy, although Seneca does attribute a similar idea to Epicurus (Seneca, *Epist*. 25.6 = Epicurus fr. 209, Usener 1887):

> Epicurus, in another passage, suggests: "The time when you should most of all withdraw into yourself (*in te ipse secede*) is when you are forced to be in a crowd."

It comes as something of a surprise, then, when, despite this apparent lack of proximate Greek antecedents, we find the term *anakhôrêsis* used to designate a spiritual, inner retreat in the *Meditations* of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180 CE) (Marcus Aurelius 1944, 4.3, translation Farquharson):

> People look for retreats (*anakhôrêseis*) for themselves, in the country, by the coast, or in the hills; and you too are especially inclined to feel this desire. But this is altogether un-philosophical, when it is possible for you to retreat into yourself (*eis heauton anakhôrein*) at any time you want. There is nowhere that a person can find a more peaceful (*hêsukhiôteron*) and trouble-free retreat than in his own soul, especially if he has within himself the kind of thoughts that let him dip into them and so at once gain complete ease of mind; and by ease of mind, I mean nothing but having one's own mind in good order. So constantly give yourself this retreat (*anakhôrêsis*) and renew yourself.

This text, with its notion of a retreat into the self as a kind of fortress, seems to represent something new in Greco-Roman philosophy and spirituality. In a sense, it marks a turning point between paganism and a certain tendency of inward-directed Christianity. Another similar passage in Marcus runs as follows (Marcus Aurelius 1944, 7.28, translation Farquharson):

> Withdraw into yourself (Εἰς ἑαυτὸν συνειλοῦ): the reasonable governing self (*hêgemonikon*) is by its nature content with its own just actions and the tranquility it thus secures.

In his excellent *Commentary* on the *Meditations*, Farquharson (in Marcus Aurelius 1944, vol. II, p. 733) writes that "the exact meaning of συνειλοῦ is doubtful", but, after discussing some alternatives, he decides that this word, which, as the second-person middle imperative of the verb συνειλέω, is unattested elsewhere in Greek literature, probably means *sese colligere*, "to collect oneself"; similarly, Dübner translated Marcus' συνειλοῦ by "Contract yourself within yourself" (*in temet ipsum te contrahere*) (Marcus Aurelius 1840, p. 38). Liddell et al. (1996) suggest the possible meanings of "crowd together, bind together"; adding that the verbal noun συνείλησις, literally "to roll oneself up like a hedgehog", can mean "synthesis", in which sense it is opposed to ἀνάπλωσις, "unfolding." Everything indicates, then, that the *hapax legomenon* συνειλοῦ in Marcus Aurelius means "collect or concentrate yourself into yourself." Yet we have already seen something akin to this rare verbal form συνειλοῦ, middle imperative form of the verb συνειλέω. Almost 600 years prior to Marcus, Aristophanes had used the imperative form εἴλλε of the verb εἴλω, also a *hapax*, to describe Socrates' advice to Strepsiades in the *Clouds*. Marcus' hapax συνειλοῦ is, then, roughly equivalent to Aristophanes' εἴλλε, except that while εἴλλε is transitive and takes a direct object in the accusative, συνειλοῦ is in the middle form and is preceded by the prefix συν-, "with." In both cases, the context is analogous: we probably have to do with an inner-directed "spiritual exercise" or technique, intended to achieve concentration of one's thought.

6. Conclusions

This entire discussion has been highly speculative. However, the preceding discussion strongly suggests the following results:

> The combined evidence of Aristophanes and Plato suggests that Socrates may have engaged in a practice that has important features in common with meditative practices and experiences attested, for instance, in Zen Buddhism, at least on Austin's account[24]. As we have seen, it consists in two stages:

Stage 1. the practice of top-down, voluntary, egocentric focused meditation resulting in a state of "absorption" or abstraction from all sensory input.

Stage 2. The practice of a more bottom-up, open, other-centered (allocentric) form of meditation, intended to provide a more global or universal perspective, in which the practitioner situates herself as a part of the cosmos.

The best example of this latter practice, which Pierre Hadot has described as an exercise of imaginative physics, closely linked to what he has called the "View from Above", and intended to achieve a state of "cosmic consciousness", is a passage from Plato's *Republic* (486a) which is—perhaps not coincidentally—quoted by Marcus Aurelius (1944, 7.35, p. 132, translation Farquharson modified):

> "Do you then think it is possible for the thought to which belongs greatness of soul and the contemplation of all of time and all of substance to regard human life as something great?"
>
> "No, that's impossible." he replied.
>
> "Such a person then will not consider death as something terrifying either?"
>
> "No, not at all."

The posterity of these ideas can be traced right down to the end of the Byzantine period. It can be shown, I believe, that the technique of beginning by concentrating oneself upon oneself or "gathering together one's soul from all the parts of the body" in order to achieve, first, self-knowledge, and then a spiritual ascent that can lead as far as identification with the First Principle or God, is present throughout later Neoplatonism (Chase 2019, p. 19ff.) and culminates in Byzantine Hesychasm of the 13th-14th centuries, where, unlike in the Ancient Greek texts that have come down to us, this technique is explicitly combined with the adoption of specific bodily postures and practices of breath control. In a text by Gregory Palamas, for instance, written in 1332, we find echoes of several of the themes we have encountered in Aristophanes, Plato, and Marcus Aurelius. In his life of the Hesychast Peter of Athos, probably Palamas' first work, written c. 1332, he describes (Palamas 1992, *Oratio ascetica* part 2, section 17), how Peter

> produced remarkable intensity for his intellect, and rendered his heart a truly divine vessel and another heaven, a dwelling-place more beloved than the heavens, for God, by means of exact attention in accordance with quietude (*kath' hêsukhian*)[25]. That is, in brief, the intellect's conversion and convergence to itself (*tou nou pros heauton epistrophê kai sunneusis*[26]), or rather, amazing as it may sound, the conversion of all the faculties of the soul toward the intellect (*pasôn tôn tês psukhês dunameôn (. . .), pros ton noun epistrophê*) and activity according to it and according to God.

Here, in this notion of "converting all the faculties of the soul toward the intellect", we seem to have a clear reminiscence of Socrates' advice to "separate the soul as far as possible away from the body, accustoming it to gathering itself (*sunageiresthai*) and collecting itself (*athroizesthai*) by itself, withdrawn from all parts of the body". In his second work written at Mount Athos, the *Discourse on the entry of the Mother of God into the Holy of Holies*, probably written around 1335, Palamas prefaces a brief excursus into Neoplatonic epistemology by the following remarks:

> Come, noble friends, those who do not prefer earth, which is easily available, to gold, which is hard to procure, and, each of you gathering together the intellect into itself (*ton noun (. . .) eis heauton sunagagontes*), as people do with their robes when traversing narrow places, raise it up intently toward the grandeur of thought. (Palamas 1986, Homily 53)

Future work should be directed toward pursuing parallels to these techniques in such Eastern philosophical religions as Buddhism, trying to identify the neurological correlates of the experiences they describe, and, perhaps, studying the possible historical pathways by which techniques originating in Indian Buddhism eventually reached Byzantine Greece and Islam. Yet the main question I have sought to underline is not that of historical priority. I do not intend to argue that the Greeks "invented" meditation. Instead, like "mysticism"—another ill-defined and misunderstood term—I wish to maintain that meditation is a cross-cultural phenomenon that recurs throughout human history in widely different times and places. Its prevalence is likely due, more than to particular instances of historical diffusion, to the universally invariant structure of the human sensory-motor and cognitive apparatus.

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Notes

1 Here one may usefully compare the Buddhist doctrine of the triple wisdom (cf. Deroche 2021): wisdom born from reading or listening, wisdom born from thought, and wisdom born from contemplation or cultivation (Sanskrit *bhāvanā*). Within this third stage, Buddhist theorists distinguish between focused meditation (Skt. *śamatha*), aimed at states of calm and absorption or concentration (*samādhi*), and insight meditation (Skt. *vipaśyanā*); the latter form is characterized by openness. M.-H. Deroche (personal communication) suggests that these two forms of Buddhist meditation may correspond to Hadot's exercises for the concentration and expansion of the self respectively.

2 Both FAM and OMM meditation tend to decrease activity of the DMN by down-regulation and by gating or tuning respectively; cf. (Raffone et al. 2019). On the DMN as correlated with "self-referential processing", and showing reduced activation during mindfulness meditation, cf. (Tang et al. 2015, p. 220).

3 Key centers of the DMN include such midline brain structures as the medial prefrontal cortex, anterior precuneus, and the posterior cingular contex (Tang et al. 2015, p. 220).

4 Compare Gehin (1998, p. 175), who points out that in Buddhism "when calm and insight meditation are brought together (. . .) the unconditioned may be experienced".

5 The two approaches to meditation are often designated as as FAM (Focused Attention Meditation) and OMM (Open Monitoring Meditation) respectively; cf. (Lutz et al. 2008; Raffone et al. 2019).

6 Austin classifies internal absorptions as stage VIb in a nine-level division of "Extraordinary Alternate States of Consciousness" (Austin 1998, p. 312). More advanced states include kenshō or Insight-Wisdom (VII), Ultimate Being (VIII), and the State of Ongoing Enlightened Traits (IX).

7 The notion of "suchness" in the thought of the Zen master Dōgen (c. 1200–1253) attracted the attention of Pierre Hadot, a few years before his death; cf. (Hadot 2004).

8 τὸν οὖν Σωκράτη ἑαυτῷ πως προσέχοντα τὸν νοῦν κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν πορεύεσθαι ὑπολειπόμενον. Most translations banalize this remarkable expression *prosekhein ton noun*, which literally means "to direct the attention of one's intellect". Cf. Plato, *Meno* 96d: "So our first duty is to direct our intellect to ourselves (προσεκτέον τὸν νοῦν ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς), and try to find somebody who will have some means or other of making us better".

9 Compare the story of Master Hanshan (16th century), who "sat immobile on a bridge absorbed in *samadhi* for a day and a night, unaware of his surroundings" (Austin 2006, p. 322). Compare the description by the 6th-7th century CE Christian Johannes Climacus (*Scala Paradisi*, chp. 5, ed. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* vol. 88, 756A), of the Monastery of Repentance, where the monks engaged in sometimes spectacular self-mortification: "I have seen some of these innocent guilty stand under the open sky all night, until the morning, with their feet immobile". Here, of course, the point of the monks' practice was not to obtain insight into the nature of reality, but to inflict suffering upon themselves with a view to expiating their sins.

10 Hadot (2002, p. 181) himself does not exclude the possibility that Socrates may have been engaged in exercices of breath control in the passages from the *Symposium* and the *Phaedo* that speak of exercices for "concentrating the soul".

11 Elsewhere (Austin 1998, pp. 468–519; cf. index s.v. Absorption), Austin speaks of "internal absorption" as cases in which (1998, p. 278), the "visual grasp reflex", originating primarily in the superior colliculus of the midbrain have been overridden and amplified by the "gaze centers" in the frontal lobe. Internal absorption constitutes phase VI-B in Austin's scale of nine "ordinary and meditative states of consciousness"; cf. the tables in Austin (1998, pp. 300–3).

12 The reference in ὅπερ πάλαι ἐν τῷ λόγῳ λέγεται is probably to an ancient (*palai*) soteriological doctrine (*logos*), presumably Orphic, Pythagorean, or a combination of the two. On the expression *palaios logos* as designating "some Orphic poem in Plato (ap. Platonem quoddam Orphicum carmen)", cf. (Bernabé Pajares 2004, p. 47), 2nd apparatus criticus to line 7.

13 I thank an anonymous reviewer for calling my attention to an interesting parallel from the *Hippocratic Corpus*, Regimen IV on Dreams (Hippocrates 1931, p. 421, translation modified), which may help to understand in what way the soul, in its waking state, is dispersed throughout the body: "When the body is awake, the soul (*psukhê*) is its servant; it never comes to belong to itself (*ou gignetai autê heôutês*), but is partitioned among many things (*epi polla merizomenê*), assigning a part of itself to each faculty of the body—to hearing, to sight, to touch, to walking, and to acts of the whole body; but thought does not come to belong entirely to itself (*autê d' heôutês hê dianoia ou ginetai*). But when the body is at rest, the soul, being set in motion and awake, manages its own household (*dioikeei ton heôutês oikon*), and itself performs all the acts of the body. For the body when asleep has no perception; but the soul when awake has cognizance of all things—sees what is visible, hears what is audible, walks, touches, feels pain, ponders".

14 χωρίζειν ὅτι μάλιστα ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος τὴν ψυχὴν. In a highly influential text (Sentences 7–9), Porphyry distinguishes between the process by which nature binds the body within the soul and releases the body from the soul, and that by which the soul binds itself within, and then separates itself from, the body. The former kind of separation or release is natural death, the latter is philosophical death. See the text, translation and commentary in Brisson (2005, vol. I, pp. 310–11, vol. 2, pp. 394–400).

15 Cf. (Detienne 1963). Unfortunately, Detienne and others went on to attribute the terminology in question to Pythagoreanism which, he thought, itself represented a vestige of primordial shamanism. These are murky waters: not much is known about ancient Pythagoreanism, as opposed to later Hellenistic reconstructions and forgeries of its doctrines. As for shamanism, for which great claims of historical importance have been made, I cannot judge, although I am sceptical of claims for its all-pervading universality, as was Hadot (1995, p. 116, n. 79; 2002, pp. 181–85).

16 Cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 83b, discussed below. In subsequent Greek philosophy, these two terms are among those used to denote the process by which, according to Aristotle, individual sense impressions are "gathered together" or "collected", in order to give rise to the formation of universal concepts (*Metaphysics* A, *Posterior Analytics* 2.19); cf. (Helmig 2012, pp. 31–32).

17 Likewise, for Augustine (*De genesi ad litteram* XII.xxvi.54), it is possible to ascend from the vision of spiritual realities that resemble bodies to the region of intellectual or intelligible realities, which have no resemblance to bodies and are not obscured by the clouds of false opinions (*nullis opinionum falsarum nebulis offuscatur*). Since Middle Platonism, opinion (Greek *doxa*) is identified as the faculty that allows us to perceive and recognize sensible objects.

18 Similarly, Proclus (*Commentary on the Timaeus*, vol. I, p. 198, 11ff. ed. Diehl) reminds us that Apollo is "the god who collects (*sunagôn*) and reunites (*henizôn*) the dismembered limbs (*ta meristhenta melê*) of the lad Dionysus in accordance with the will of the father".

19 On *meletê*, which Hadot translates by "meditation", cf. Hadot (1995, pp. 84–86, 87–89 (Epicureans), 96–97 (Platonic), 133–34 (Christian). Hadot defines *meletê* as "an attempt to control inner discourse, in an effort to render it coherent" (ibid., p. 85). Above all, meditation, for Hadot, is "the practice of dialogue with oneself" (ibid., p. 91).

20 The doctrine of innate ideas is essential to Neoplatonic thought, although it has not been sufficiently studied. It originates in the myth of Plato's *Phaedrus*, when the souls, prior to their incarnation within a human body, follow the chariots of the gods and contemplate the Platonic Ideas that are found in the supracelestial place. They are thereby filled with wisdom, but when they fall down to earth to be incarnated in a human body, the vestiges of this divine knowledge they carry within their souls in the form of innate ideas, often described as a spark of the intellect, becomes, as it were, cooled off and buried under a heap of ashes. Only with the healing that results from personal tutoring by a skilled Neoplatonic teacher can these buried sparks be fanned until they burst into flame again, at which time they can serve as steps in ladder that can help the soul to rise back up to the intelligible world whence it came. The best presentation of these themes remains Hoffmann (1987); cf. (Chase 2014, p. 85f).

21 Stallbaum (Stallbaum 1841, p. 239) compares *Phaedrus* 265Eff., *Sophist* 253C-D; *Republic* 7, 532Aff., and astutely remarks that what is alluded to here is nothing other than the method of analysis and synthesis, on which see (Chase 2015).

22 Hadot cites Schaerer (1969, pp. 84–87), who views it as characteristically Platonic. For Hadot (1993, p. 53), this method of approaching a problem from several starting-points was extremely influential: it is likely to have been important in the Academy, and scholars such as Ingemar Düring have argued that it one of the most characteristic features of thought of Aristotle.

23 The distinction between separating body from soul (designating natural death, the time and place for which reserved for God) and separating soul from body (designating the Platonic exercise of training for death) goes back to Porphyry, *Sentences* 7–9; cf. supra n. 14. On the use of Porphyrian material by Evagrius, cf. (Pirtea 2019).

24 It should be emphasized, of course, that the ascetic aspects of Greek meditation, largely directed is it was to separating the soul from the body, which is viewed as an obstacle to knowledge and true awareness, is totally foreign to the embodied, holistic viewpoint of Zen.

[25] On *hêsukhia*, cf. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 4.3, cited above (*hêsukhiôteron*).

[26] For the expression *eis heauton/eis heautên sunneuein*, where the meanings of *sunneuô* include "contract, converge, concentrate" (Lampe 1961), cf. Porphyry, *Sentence* 43; Proclus, *Platonic Theology*, vol. 4, p. 110, 13; vol. 5, p. 22, 16 ed. Saffrey-Westerink; Proclus, *Commentary on Alcibiades I*, p. 247, 14–15 ed. Westerink; Simplicius ? *In De an*., p. 103, 4; 229 12, 273, 33 ed. Hayduck; Simplicius, *Commentary on the Manual of Epictetus*, preface line 65 ed. I. Hadot; Michael of Ephesus, *In EN IX* p. 603, 17 ed. Heylbut, etc.

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Article

Rethinking Mindfulness in Education within Two Frameworks: Articulating the "Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom" with the "Theory of Mental Interference"

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Abstract: The existent trend of implementing mindfulness-based programs (MBPs) into public education came along with an increasing scientific record regarding the definitional construct of mindfulness, effects of various mindfulness-based interventions and their basic mechanisms. In terms of the rising definitional discourse in the interdisciplinary field of mindfulness, the "threefold model of mindful wisdom" (TMMW) was proposed. In the present paper's quest of rethinking mindfulness in education, the relevance of the TMMW for didactics in modern Western educational systems (with special interest on the region of Germany) is examined, affirmed in several points and—with the aid of the "Theory of Mental Interference" (TMI)—methodically linked to individual learners' needs. The TMI has been developed at the University of Hamburg since 1984 by Wagner and colleagues. This is compatible with the TMMW with regard to the concept of self and basic psychological mechanisms of "mindful exercises". Its basic approach conceives the epistemic level of cognitive processes (1) to be unbiased by affect and (2) to be different from a level of mental interference, which in case of an arising default habitually interferes with the cognitive processes. Implications for further research, for modern educational systems and for MBPs in education are discussed.

Keywords: mindfulness; modern educational systems; curriculum development; achievement evaluation; Introvision; judgement; memory; mental conflicts; cognitive development; socio-emotional development

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1. Introduction

Educational systems no longer aim only at general educational knowledge and administrative skills that enable graduates to become functioning members in a postindustrial society. Modern educational systems[1] aim at developing interdisciplinary competencies that generate solution-oriented behavior in social and environmental realms (e.g., UNESCO 2013; European Parliament and Council 2018). This can be formulated as a call for an education that cognitively and psychoeducationally prepares future generations to cope with growing global crises like climate change, resource scarcity, migration flows and societal inequalities.

One popular revolutionary movement in the global modern educational landscape is the mindfulness movement, which also pervades other areas, e.g., health, business or military (McMahan 2008; Brown et al. 2015b; Purser et al. 2016; Jha et al. 2015). The exponentially growing trend to implement Mindfulness-Based Programs (MBPs) into various contexts evoked a critical discourse that sought to differentiate and to classify the definitions that underly the construct of mindfulness presupposed by these programs (e.g., Sternberg 2000; Dorjee 2010; Williams and Kabat-Zinn 2013; Brown et al. 2015a; Crane et al. 2017; Feldman and Kuyken 2019). At the same time, there are influential attempts to find a unitary definition of mindfulness that can claim a broad acceptance among practitioners and researchers alike (Kabat-Zinn 1994; Bishop et al. 2004; Lutz et al. 2008). Critical voices question the overall emphasis on the present moment and the non-judgmental attitude

(e.g., Dreyfus 2013[2]; Deroche 2021) in these operational definitions that were initially elaborated in a clinical context. Other scholars cautioned against the abandonment of the traditional Buddhist context to constitute a secular interpretation of historically religious meditation practices (Kuan 2008; Bodhi 2013; Gethin 2015; Sharf 2015; Walsh 2016; Brown 2017; Anālayo 2019).

For MBPs introduced in educational contexts, however, it seems indispensable to describe the construct of mindfulness in a transparent way that points out its Buddhist origins and, at the same time, explicitly includes the cognitive aspects that are relevant in learning processes (e.g., regarding memory and judgements). Therefore, this paper advocates the newly contextualized model of mindfulness inherent in the recently proposed "Threefold model of mindful wisdom" (TMMW) (according to Deroche 2021). The TMMW is based on Buddhist wisdom traditions[3], however it rearticulates these in an integrated and dynamic way with a view on "the recognition of self-awareness and the integration of personality" (Deroche 2021, p. 26). Here, the construct of mindfulness is attributed with a didactical function as a "core element and thread" (Deroche 2021, p. 30), linking the three levels of mindful wisdom.

Another point of criticism needs to be considered here: many MBPs employed in schools largely function as black boxes as research has been focused primarily on the programs' effectiveness (Roeser 2016). Little attempt has been made to discuss the didactical relevance and methodological propriety of either the underlying definition or the curriculum of the respective MBP concerning the application in schools (ibid.). Given the increasing presence of mindfulness in modern educational systems (cf. Zenner et al. 2014; Schonert-Reichl and Roeser 2016; Ditrich et al. 2017; Ergas and Hadar 2019), it is necessary to take a closer look at the conceptional compatibility of the educational goals and the underlying conception of self in both, the respective MBPs and the modern educational systems in which they are implemented.

A look at the TMMW as a didactical framework for mindfulness provides the starting point for the following examination of its relevance for modern educational systems. In pointing out the historical emergence of three significant psychological concepts relevant for education (the concept of childhood, the concept of individuality and concepts of cognitive and socio-emotional development), it will be shown that the TMMW has a recognizable rapport with modern educational terms that recently tend to be classified in an analogue trichotomy: i.e., "knowledge", "skills", and "attitudes" (CMEC 1997; European Parliament and Council 2006; UNESCO 2013; United Nations 2015). Since international guidelines and recommendations for curricular development have no legal force for actual pedagogical practice in modern educational systems in most Western countries, the TMMW will be compared with an interdisciplinary didactical framework from Germany: the "Requirement Areas I–III" (RA) (KMK 2005b). The RA I–III have a remarkable conceptual overlap with the TMMW regarding their trichonomic didactical structure. The differences regarding their didactical function and their context of application and pedagogy will lead to the conclusion that (thinking of an in-class implementation) an alternative psychological framework is necessary to mediate between them.

The "Theory of mental interference" (TMI) (according to Wagner [2007] 2021) will be proposed as such a mediating framework. The TMI is a general psychological framework that explains the origins of mental conflicts on a cognitive level within sensory processing (Wagner [2007] 2021). It will be shown that the TMI and the TMMW are compatible regarding the concept of a self and the basic mechanism of how mindfulness works. In terms of the examination of the TMMW's relevance for modern educational systems, the TMI can methodologically and theoretically support the demonstration of how mindfulness can help at all three levels of knowledge and competencies. Accordingly, an integrated model of the TMMW and the TMI will serve to elucidate: (a) the advantages of promoting the cognitive faculty of "attention" as an equitable element alongside the cognitive faculties of "memory" and "judgment" within an educational process; (b) the potential of integrating the practice of self-awareness into each stage of such educational process; and (c) the new

perspectives for demand-actuated support of learners' needs in the context of public education or in the context of an MBP.

2. Pedagogical Relevance of the "Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom" for Modern Educational Systems

Following Benner's categories devised for pedagogical research on modern educational systems (Benner 2002), the implicit relation between didactics, curricular development, achievement evaluation and methodology need to be taken into account. The first three elements (didactics, curricular development, and achievement evaluation) depend on various external factors related to society and the political system and have undergone different developmental stages over time. On that note, the historical emergence of today's conception of self and educational goals in modern educational systems shall be considered first and made accessible for the following examination of the didactical relevance and the methodological fit of the "Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom" within modern education.

2.1. Conception of Self and Educational Goals in Western Educational Systems

While educational goals were defined prevalently by religious or political leaders during ancient and medieval times, pedagogical expertise and practice became increasingly independent from religion and politics with the advent of humanistic ideas (Lawton and Gordon 2002). Humanists' (re)discovery of the Classics (i.e., Greek philosophy etc.), led to the occurrence of pedagogical concepts that were philosophically better informed and sensitive. Hence the "transition from the Age of Faith to the Age of Reason" that marks the Renaissance began (Lawton and Gordon 2002, p. 57). The assumption that human beings possess individuality (that is, above all, unique character and a free will) and, with the onset of the Enlightenment, the growing significance assigned to reason and critical thinking paved the way for (1) the recognition of the individual and (2) for the integration of the individual in its (so far externally assessed) socio-emotional and cognitive development into pedagogical concepts (Lawton and Gordon 2002; Zirfas 2018). Several thinkers developed their concepts between the 18th and 20th centuries and exhibited a sustained influence on present-day pedagogy. These are, for example, Jean J. Rousseau, who recognized the significance of childhood; Jean Piaget, who proposed the step model of cognitive and ethic development; Lawrence Kohlberg, who formulated a theory of stages of ethic development; and Erik H. Erikson, who introduced a progressive model of psychosocial development and identity (Lawton and Gordon 2002; Berk [1998] 2018). These developmental-psychological models of identity, cognition, and ethics lend themselves to an analysis in terms of the framework of the TMMW (see Deroche 2021), which will, however, exceed the limitations of the current paper. What is relevant here is that the ultimate stage of identity development in these concepts addresses a relatively constant psychological identity, a sense of self in terms of personal continuity and "more adaptive, less conflicted rearrangements of impulse and defence" (cf. Engler 1984, p. 52). This sense of self forms the basis for the humanistic value of self-realization (that is often recognized as a core idea of Western pedagogics) and contradicts the Buddhist spiritual ideal of reaching the state of "no-self", i.e., the realization of the discontinuity of object relations (Engler 1984; Ryan and Rigby 2015). Engler (1984) addressed this question of self or no-self and introduced the "full-spectrum model of object relations development" that includes various states of self and no-self instead. According to Engler (1984), Western psychological models address the earlier stages of personality organization, whereas Buddhist psychology, on the other hand, addresses the other end of the developmental spectrum at which one can reach a "more ultimate view of the self and reality" (Engler 1984, p. 52). Such a state can also be recognized in Western psychological theories (e.g., the gerotranscendence theory, which can be understood as "a cosmic and transcendent perspective directed beyond the self to affinity with past and future generations and oneness with the universe", Berk [1998] 2018, p. 611) although only within the context of the advanced age of life and the awareness of the limitations of one's own existence. According to Engler (1984, pp. 51–52), in order

to ensure healthy development, the sense of self needs to be established first before one can attempt to annihilate the ego and to achieve a universal perspective of self-realization (cf. Deroche 2021).[4]

With the cognitive revolution in psychology around 1970 and the advancement in the cognitive sciences, the student's self-image (Bandura 1977) and differences in individual perspectives (Lazarus and Folkman 1984) came into the focus of educational science and the pedagogical discourses held therein. Against the backdrop of post-colonial and post-modern developments, and in view of the emergent discourse on equal opportunities in education, the belief in the existence of absolute values has been weakened (Lawton and Gordon 2002). At the end of the 20th century, this weakening caused, among other things, rising pressure on the "United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation" (UNESCO), which was founded after World War II to promote educational concepts and teacher training for peace and democracy, "to be less dominated by Western European cultures and education models" (Lawton and Gordon 2002, p. 187). Around the same time, an essential conceptual change in Western educational systems became apparent. This consisted of a movement away from input-orientation, with the focus on a knowledge-based curriculum, towards output-orientation focused on comparable performance control while extending the possibilities for individual learning approaches (Zuber et al. 2019). Following the prevalent Zeitgeist, the "Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development" (OECD), which was established in 1961 to promote sustainable economic growth and living standards on an international level, initiated the "Programme for International Student Assessment" (PISA). PISA's goal was to assess the extent to which 15 year old students, close to the end of their compulsory education, have acquired knowledge and skills essential for full participation in modern societies (OECD 2019a). With PISA, the OECD pursues an approach that prioritizes students' educational experience and pays less attention to the specific cultural context of a particular country (Tröhler 2019).

So-called output orientation resulted in a fundamental change in didactics, curricular development and achievement evaluation. This change can be considered to constitute the second major transition within the history of Western educational ideas. Given that this transformation has started relatively recently and has not been completed yet, it cannot be delineated with any certainty. Following Lawton and Gordon (2002)[5], it could be described as a transition from the Age of Reason to the Age of Attitudes. The idea of mere knowledge accumulation has come to its limits in times when a major body of knowledge is instantly available online. Similarly, education cannot accentuate a mere accumulation of skills and use of technologies when humanity faces global crises of climate change, resource scarcity, migration flows and growing social disparities. Nevertheless, it presently seems difficult to illiberally decree a canon of universal values or a universal code of conduct. Educational ideas have to address the future generations, provide knowledge about the extent of global crises and the skills to either impel or prevent those. This transition can be seen in close connection with the output-orientation of modern educational systems: when the focus shifts from the curricular content towards the application of acquired knowledge and skills, the attitude of performance becomes an inevitable influential variable. However, the perception of attitudes as an essential element of education is not new to Western educational ideas. The workgroup Bloom et al. (1956) had defined three domains to be included in a complete taxonomy of educational objectives: the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor domain. Bloom et al. (1956) concentrated on classifying the cognitive domain as cognitive objectives were the easiest to access rationally at that time (Bloom et al. 1956). The affective domain was classified further a little later in Krathwohl et al. (1964). Here, the hierarchical taxonomy covers an ascending range of affective concerns from mere awareness to an embodied and internalized value complex that has been conceptualized and organized previously[6]. In this way, the taxonomy by Krathwohl et al. (1964) is conceptualized to measure "changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment" (Bloom et al. 1956, p. 7).

The transition towards an Age of Attitudes is further reflected by recent attempts to constitute international educational standards, showing a trend in a common tripartite categorization of interdisciplinary didactics: "knowledge, skills and attitudes" (see Appendix A).

2.1.1. Didactical Guidelines and Achievement Evaluation in Modern German Education

As a direct result of the first PISA study in 2000, which attested to unexpectedly low academic achievements of German students, the German government commenced an attempt to develop nationwide educational standards and competency step models with legal force to enable the measurable improvement of students' learning outcomes (Klieme et al. [2004] 2007). The authority in charge of the legislative proposals was the school committee for primary and secondary education of the "Kultusministerkonferenz"[7] (KMK). In 2004, the KMK founded the "Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung im Bildungswesen"[8] (IQB) at the Humboldt-Universität Berlin, which since then has been in charge of the conceptual development and scientific evaluation of subject-specific and age-appropriate educational standards and competency levels. The concisely formulated competency levels serve as the basis for constructing tasks varying in difficulty and for improving the transparency of requirements and the evaluation of learning outcomes (Klieme et al. [2004] 2007).

Thinking about education, starting from achievement evaluation and defining national educational standards as an orientation for territorial curricular development and didactical conceptualization (like the first attempts made in Canada, see CMEC (1997)) was, metaphorically speaking, like putting the cart before the horse. In a more conventional scenario, educational goals were set as the primary point of departure that needed to be defined within curricular development, which included, among other things, methodological adjustments, task conceptualization and teaching implementation. In view of these, the achievement evaluation remained a matter of mere certification and feedback. However, the educational reform demands that the conceptualization of achievement evaluation should go hand in hand with the construction of educational goals in terms of competencies. The newly established competency models mediate between educational goals, the subject-specific curriculum and the concrete task development in the day-to-day pedagogical practice. In this way, competency models supplement the curricular development, which is now almost entirely focused on the process-accompanying monitoring of academic achievements and on the final assessments (Klieme et al. [2004] 2007; Zuber et al. 2019). This education reform brings some advantages, like, for example, enhanced transparency in achievement expectations and a shift of emphasis towards promoting argumentation and presentation skills in students. However, it has already been shown to have a negative influence on teachers (e.g., deprofessionalization caused by a reduced scope for pedagogical action) and students (e.g., via increased competitive pressure), which demonstrate the difficulties that this reformative process has to overcome and why it still requires more time before it can be evaluated (Zuber et al. 2019). To this day, in Germany, the centralized development of educational standards and competency models with legal force has focused mainly on the core subjects (languages, mathematics and sciences) at the levels of the different school qualifications (after fourth, ninth, tenth and twelfth/thirteenth grade). Therefore, the goal of providing educational standards and competency models for each subject and every grade in primary and secondary education remains to be attained in the distant future. During the interim phase, the "requirement areas I–III" (which are relatively consistent over the range of different subjects) are in force to provide a nationwide and interdisciplinary didactical guideline for task conception and achievement evaluation (KMK 2005b).

The "requirement areas I–III" (RA I–III) (in German: "Anforderungsbereiche I–III") combine both old and new educational conceptions. On the one hand, they result from pooled teachers' experience of day-to-day pedagogical practice (as opposed to empirically validated testing methods, see KMK (2005b))[9]. On the other hand, they are conceptualized

with reference to the "competencies", defined by Weinert ([2001] 2014) as: "cognitive abilities and skills possessed by or able to be learned by individuals that enable them to solve particular problems, as well as the motivational, volitional and social readiness and capacity to utilise the solutions successfully and responsibly in variable situations"[10]. Therefore, they can be executed dynamically within one task. Despite the dynamic conceptualization, these competencies help determine a task's level of difficulty and complexity and allow an estimation of the adequacy of task performance requirements (KMK 2005b). Furthermore, the RA I–III are constructed inclusively: the second area includes the first one, and the third, in its turn, includes the second and the first area. Therefore, the rating value of the respective task achievement is ascending from areas I to III. However, this does not mean that students are free to concentrate on the third area to achieve the highest possible rating. The horizon of expectations has its main focus on task requirements from area II. The accentuation of the second focus in the senior school classes on either area I or III depends on the course's curriculum level that can be either basic or advanced. For the exam in a course from the basic curriculum, the range of expectations includes mainly task requirements from areas II and I; in a course from the advanced curriculum, the task requirements derive primarily from areas II and III (KMK 2005b). This demonstrates how the German educational system leans towards average learning outcomes.

Although the RA I–III were meant to play only a provisional role in educational reform (KMK 2005b) and were initially defined subject-specifically[11], they are presently found in the latest directives in terms of educational standards by the IQB for the "Abiturprüfung" (the general higher education entrance qualification) in a number of subjects: German, mathematics, and continued second languages, such as English and French (with documents issued in 2012) as well as biology, chemistry and physics (added in 2020). In these fields, the requirement areas are found as general interdisciplinary categories of the exam, and for some subjects (e.g., KMK 2012), they are formulated as an orientation for subject-specifically formulated competency levels. For other subjects taught in senior school grades, where the educational standards are not yet issued, the formulation of the RA I–III is subject-specific and includes examples for the construction of tasks in respective fields. However, the basic tripartite structure (as found in the interdisciplinary version in Table 1 and OECD (1999) or Blömeke (2013)) is similar: "basic knowledge and work techniques", "application/analyzation" and "evaluation/creation" (e.g., KMK (2005a) for the subject Geography, KMK (2006) for the subject "school theatre"). Therefore, the interdisciplinary formulation (see Table 1 in Section 2.1.2) can be seen as a representative example for the RA I–III as they are used for task construction and achievement evaluation in the modern German educational system and will serve for further examination of the didactical relevance of the TMMW according to Deroche (2021).

Table 1. Comparative overview of the interdisciplinary "requirement areas I–III" (according to, e.g., KMK (2012)) and the "Threefold model of mindful wisdom" (according to Deroche (2021), summarized).

Requirement Areas I–III (e.g., KMK 2012)	**Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom (Deroche 2021)**
Requirement area I: reproduction of facts and knowledge in the context in which they were learned; understanding as well as application and description of studied techniques and processes. * (1, ABC)	Level 1: study of something by tradition and teachings using memory and keeping such vital information "*Present* in mind". * (1, ABCD)
Requirement area II: independent selection, arrangement, processing, explanation and presentation of known facts from a given point of view in a context known through practice, independent transfer and application of what has been learned to comparable new contexts and facts. * (234, ABCD)	Level 2: reflection of something learned by logical thinking and self-reflection using mindful judgments to formulate adequate "Re-*Present*-ations". * (2345, ABCD)
Requirement area III: processing of complex facts with the aim of arriving at independent solutions, designs or interpretations, conclusions, generalizations, justifications and evaluations. Students choose suitable methods and procedures independently to cope with the task, apply them to a new problem and reflect on their own approach. * (56, ABCD)	Level 3: cultivation of something learned by intuition/direct experience using attention and exercizing "Presentification" or "*Presence* of mind". * (6, ABCD)

* Classification according to the "taxonomy of educational objectives" by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001).

2.1.2. Comparison of the "Requirement Areas I–III" and the "Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom"

Table 1 presents a comparative overview of the interdisciplinary RA I–III in the senior grades (e.g., KMK 2012) and the TMMW (Deroche 2021) that introduces, among other things, a division of each three levels into four partial aspects. According to Deroche (2021), the four major aspects of the TMMW are as follows: (1) three steps of the traditional Buddhist "threefold wisdom model" ("Study", "Reflection" and "Cultivation"); (2) epistemic sources in the learning process ("Tradition", "Reason" and "Intuition/Direct Experience"); (3) cognitive faculties that are considered to be essential for each level of "mindful wisdom" ("Memory", "Judgement" and "Attention") and; (4) three categories of the construct of "Mindfulness/Presence" ("Present in mind", "Re-present-ation" and "Presence of mind/'Presentification'") that stand for three different levels of self-knowledge, internalized wisdom, synthesis and creativity in the learning process (see Table 1 in Deroche 2021, p. 29).

For the following comparison, the "taxonomy of educational objectives" according to Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) (a revised version of the internationally renowned "Bloom's taxonomy" (Bloom et al. 1956) that now includes also the category of metacognitive knowledge) will be used. The framework's two-dimensional structure provides for the differentiated classification of educational objectives within six categories of cognitive processes ("1. Remember", "2. Understand", "3. Apply", "4. Analyze", "5. Evaluate", and "6. Create") and four categories of knowledge ("A. Factual knowledge", "B. Conceptual knowledge", "C. Procedural knowledge", and "D. Metacognitive knowledge") (Anderson and Krathwohl 2001). The classification of the RA I–III and the three levels of the TMMW in accordance with Anderson and Krathwohl's taxonomy is also noted in the respective cell in Table 1.

In view of the basic structure, it can be noted that both frameworks have a similar tripartite structure and are formulated inclusively and transcendently (each higher area/level includes the lower one(s) and adds something new). Therefore, a single area/level partially includes elements of the preceding area/level.

Within the "requirements", one can recognize two lines of thought: one line, which concerns the application of work techniques and processes, is drawn through all three areas, another line concerns reflective requirements that only go through areas II and III. Area I requires the application of already "studied techniques and processes", however area II demands application within an "independent transfer [. . .] to comparable new contexts and facts". Area III includes the application of "suitable work techniques and procedures" within an independent transfer to "a new problem". While area II asks for an "independent selection, arrangement, processing, explanation and presentation of known facts" and "from given points of view", in area III, "the processing of complex facts" (that are partially new) is to be performed "with the aim of arriving at independent solutions, designs or interpretations, conclusions, generalizations, justifications and evaluations" (that require one forming one's own point of view). Moreover, the requirement for the students to "reflect on their own approach" in area III includes the independent processing of a self-generated context from one's point of view.

Within the TMMW, a continuous line that cuts through all three levels can be defined via the construct of "mindfulness/presence" (Deroche 2021) that links spheres in which the student is present via "mindfulness". On the first level, the "presence" is encountered within the mind, while the senses and the relationship to the teacher/the tradition serve only to channel the information. If they are included in the teachings on this level, judgements are an adoption or an interpretation of the teacher's/tradition's view. On the second level, the sphere of "presence" includes the mind (the information process) and further self-knowledge that allows independent reflection on what has been studied and the "possibility of a correction of judgment and the careful formulation of an adequate representation" (Deroche 2021, p. 22) in relation to the particular context. The third level focuses on "the epistemological primacy of direct perception or lived experience" (Deroche 2021, p. 21) in reference to the concept of "Presentification" by the French psychologist Pierre Janet[12]. Level 3 is characterized by "the expansion of the pause between perception and action, including the action to judge" (Deroche 2021, p. 25). As a result of the constant actualization of the present-centered mind that focuses on the flow of sensory and epistemic information, judgements can become unbiased by emotions (Deroche 2021).

Classifying the categories of knowledge according to Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) along with the three areas of the RA I–III and the three levels of the TMMW, it is noteworthy that while all four categories of knowledge and all six categories of cognitive processes are covered in both the frameworks (with only one exception, see below), their distribution and prioritization differs. All four categories of knowledge are represented across all areas and levels, except for the first requirement area, which does not include the metacognitive knowledge. Both the first requirement area and the first level of the TMMW refer to the first category of cognitive processes ("1. Remember"). While the second requirement area includes the next three categories of cognitive processes ("2. Understand", "3. Apply", and "4. Analyze"), the second level of the TMMW additionally includes the subsequent cognitive process ("5. Evaluate"). Regarding the final area, we can observe that the third requirement area includes the categories "5. Evaluate" and "6. Create", whereas the TMMW focuses exclusively on the last category of cognitive processes ("6. Create").

Another significant difference lies in the didactical function. While the RA I–III have been elaborated to estimate performance requirements in curriculum development and task construction as well as to supply transparent guidelines for achievement evaluation (Klieme et al. [2004] 2007), the TMMW has been developed to revise the concept of mindfulness dynamically so that it can support the developmental path toward a "Buddhist integrative wisdom" in modern MBPs (Deroche 2021). In this way, the TMMW is not meant to provide a framework for achievement evaluation.

The most apparent difference in the content-related context of the KMK (2012) and the TMMW is that the former is entirely secular, while the latter has clear religious connections. In view of the actual pedagogical context, it can be stated that both aim at promoting psychological development (that include both cognitive and socio-emotional development,

cf. Berk [1998] 2018). The difference between them can be identified in the orientation within the full developmental spectrum of personality organization (according to Engler 1984). While the requirement areas address earlier stages of personality organization, the TMMW addresses the other end of the developmental spectrum with a main focus on spirituality. The comparison of the respective content of each area/level (which leads to the comparison of the didactical function) reflects that difference, especially in the higher areas/levels.

2.2. Methodological (Practical) Fit for an In-Class Implementation

Regarding the personality formation of school kids during the critical period of their lives, the methodological framework of the TMMW should be adjusted to their respective developmental stage of personality continuity (cf. Engler 1984) and attuned to the psychoeducational approach. Although most popular MBPs do not include any practice that questions the existence of a self (Petranker 2016, p. 96), they also do not provide a psychological framework that is compatible with both, the Buddhist practices and basic Western pedagogical assumptions. The "Theory of mental interference" (TMI) (according to Wagner [2007] 2021) can serve as a secular psychological framework for the construct of mindfulness that is inherent in the TMMW (according to Deroche 2021) while it is compatible with contemporary psychological step models of cognitive and socio-emotional development (cf. Berk [1998] 2018). Originally, the TMI was not developed with a view to describing and guiding a spiritual path rather than with a view regarding the mental blockages of students and teachers in the classroom (Wagner et al. 1984). It serves as a theoretical basis for a technique of mental self-regulation, the so-called "Introvision" (see Appendix B), the practice of which aims at regaining the ease and ability to act in situations of accumulated stress and psychic tension.

2.2.1. The "Theory of Mental Interference" as a Secular Psychological Framework for Mindfulness

The TMI is a general psychological theory that combines approaches from different schools of psychotherapy and that has been developed at the University of Hamburg since 1984 by Wagner and colleagues. This is not to be confused with the psychological "Interference Theory" that deals with cognitive processes in terms of memory retrieval (Underwood 1957). The TMI proposes an explanation for the degree and origin of psychic stress and mental conflicts as well as for the resolution of such conflicts.

Among other things, Wagner ([2007] 2021) postulates a "Psycho tone scale" (see Figure 1) with seven different stages of psychic tension. In relation to this scale, the TMI postulates a correlation between interference into mental processes and psychic stress.[13] A reduction in interference reduces stress and may result eventually in a state of complete inner peace and the sense of no-self/no-body/no-time (cf. Psycho tone 1 in Figure 1). Although the TMI refers to a psychological state similar to the one aimed at within a spiritual practice, it focuses on the middle stage (Psycho tone 4) that corresponds to the psychic tone on the level of everyday routine. From here, a decreasing psychic tone leads to stage 3, which is characterized by an incipient relaxation. Stage 2 is characterized by the feeling of absorption and flow in the present action. An increasing psychic tone, on the other hand, first leads to stage 5, characterized by recognizable effort of volition and self-mastery. With a further increase in psychic tension, one encounters stages 6 and 7. At these stages, an acute conflict (stage 6) or an escalating acute conflict (stage 7) manifest in the form of a predominant feeling of strong or extreme emotions, respectively. On stage 7, a blackout is also possible (Wagner [2007] 2021).

Having Engler's "full-spectrum model of object relations development" (Engler 1984) in mind, the "Psycho tone scale" can describe the stages of psychic tension in relation to eventual mental conflicts along the very same spectrum. With a focus on the middle stage the TMI meets the age- and development-actuated needs of school students[14] while being ready to support mental self-regulation towards a lower psycho tone.

In order to explain the origination of mental conflicts from the outset, the TMI postulates that the epistemic level of cognitive processes is: (1) unbiased by affect and; (2) different from the level of mental interference, which—in case of an arising default—habitually interferes with the epistemic system. The process of mental interference is described in four steps that cause the psychic tone to raise (see Figure 2):

Psycho tone scale (according to Wagner)	
7	escalating acute conflict (manifesting in e.g. panic, despair, blackout)
6	acute conflict (manifesting in e.g. anxiety, decision-making dilemma, anger, depression)
5	effort, volition (manifesting in e.g. self-command, impulsivity, self-mastery)
4	daily routine consciousness (manifesting in e.g. wakefulness, deliberate acts without sensible resistance)
3	incipient relaxation (manifesting in e.g. decreasing arousal, lack of active volition processes)
2	absorption, flow experience (manifesting in e.g. oneness, inner clarity, trance)
1	absolute serenity (manifesting in e.g. timelessness, egolessness, emptiness)

Figure 1. Psycho tone scale (stage names and characteristics of manifestation according to Wagner [2007] 2021), translated from German. The seven colors representing the seven stages in the "Psycho tone scale" (see Figure 1) are not included in the original description of the system (cf. Wagner [2007] 2021). They were added by the author to support intuitive understanding of each stage (being aware that such an approach is not fully backed up by scientific evidence).[15].

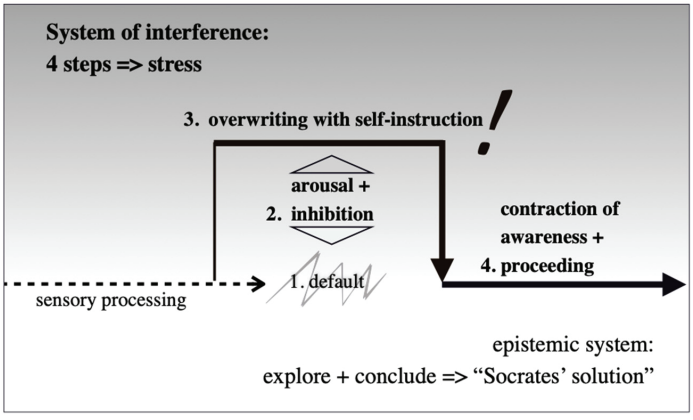

Figure 2. Model of the four steps of mental interference (according to Wagner [2007] 2021), modified graphics according to Klebanova (forthcoming), translated from German.

The TMI categorically distinguishes between the appearance of a default (a contradictive or invalid, an unwanted or overcharging cognition) and the aversive arousal that is being coupled with the default in terms of interference. The coupling between default and arousal defines the mental conflict and represents the first step of mental interference (Wagner [2007] 2021). In steps 2 and 3, in terms of a quick deal with the conflict, the

cognition of the default situation will be inhibited, and a self-instructed imperative will be affirmatively written over the inhibited cognition. Finally, in step 4, the sensory processing can proceed under the condition of increased psychic tension that comes along with a narrowed focus of attention (ibid.). This 4-step-process of interference can be executed multiple times if the interference has led to another default. In that way, the TMI serves as the basis for the "Theory of subjective imperatives" (according to Wagner [2007] 2021) that explains the inner structure of mental conflicts (see Appendix B).

As an alternative, an ideal resolution of a default situation without affective interfering can take place within the epistemic sensory processing—the "Epistemic system" (according to Wagner [2007] 2021). In the absence of irritation or frustration, the interrupted sensory processing can proceed once the available solution methods have been explored and considered carefully (Wagner [2007] 2021). Wagner ([2007] 2021) speaks of "Socrates' solution" by referring to Socrates' statements regarding the role of prudence for a flawless flow of life: The metacognitive knowledge of what is known and what is not was beneficial—for oneself and for others for whom the same could be realized (Wagner [2007] 2021, pp. 75–76).

In an ordinary case, the often repeatedly layered interferences in the "System of interference" need to undergo a gradual ablation in order to arrive at a habitually non-interfering sensory processing within the "Epistemic system". This systematical degradation of interferences is operationalized by the "Introvision" (according to Wagner [2007] 2021), a technique of mental self-regulation that was developed at the University of Hamburg by Wagner, Iwers and colleagues (Wagner et al. 2016). As the Introvision is not yet described in English, its basic theoretical and practical tenets have been summarized in Appendix B.

On the one hand, the TMI is applicable to each developmental state of Western psychological step models. On the other hand, the TMI is congruous with the framework of the TMMW with regard to its two essential aspects: the concept of self/no-self and the basic mechanisms of "Mindful exercise" (Deroche 2021, pp. 19–20). The concept of self/no-self within the framework of the TMMW can be retrieved from its spiritual approach (Deroche 2021). The basic mechanisms of "Mindful exercise" are defined within the TMMW in an understanding of "clear comprehension" (Deroche 2021, p. 20), which includes cognitive processes (including judgements) that are emotionally unbiased and not automatically reactive within their mnemonic, conceptual and attentional dimensions (Deroche 2021, pp. 20–24). The TMI, as a psychological framework for sensory and cognitive processing (especially regarding mental conflicts), can explain the same basic mechanisms of "Mindful exercise" in a more general perspective that also includes the mechanisms of emotional bias and impulsivity.

2.2.2. Integration of the "Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom" and the "Theory of Mental Interference"

The integrated model of the TMMW and the TMI (introduced in the following section) includes for each level of "mindful wisdom", the summarized components of the TMMW (according to Deroche 2021, p. 29), the different educational goals (associated accordingly to the analysis of Section 2.1), the different characteristics of the mode and focus of attention, an exemplary beginner's conflict and the, respectively, suggested exercises in terms of Wagner's "Stated attentive perception"[16] (SAP) to resolve that conflict (see Table 2).

Table 2. An extended and integrated framework of the "Threefold model of mindful wisdom" (summarized according to Deroche (2021)), including educational goals, modes of attention, and foci of attention as elements needed for the analysis and resolution of beginner's conflicts with the aid of the "Theory of mental interference" and the "Stated attentive perception" (both according to Wagner [2007] 2021).

Threefold Model of Mindful Wisdom (Deroche 2021)	Educational Goal	Mode of Attention	Focus of Attention	Exemplary Beginner's Conflict	Suggested Exercise (Wagner [2007] 2021)
Level 1: study of something by tradition and teachings using memory and keeping such vital information "*Present* in mind"	knowledge	exteroceptive	Narrow	being blocked/helpless	SAP I and II
Level 2: reflection of something learned by logical thinking and self-reflection using mindful judgments to formulate adequate "Re-*Present*-ations"	skills	alternating: exteroceptive and interoceptive	alternating: narrow and wide	being prejudiced	SAP III
Level 3: cultivation of something learned by intuition/direct experience using attention and exercizing "Presentification" or "*Presence* of mind"	attitudes	interoceptive	Wide	being apathetic	SAP IV

The first exemplary inner conflict of a beginner learner of mindfulness arises in the context of level 1 of the TMMW, which consists of the educational goal of gaining and reproducing basic knowledge. The student's attention is directed towards the teacher (or the teaching), and instructions are taken literally. Accordingly, the mode of attention is exteroceptive, and the focus is narrowed down to prevent distraction. The instruction may be: "Don't follow the wandering mind and attend the present moment!" The default in the form of an overcharging cognition may be: "I can't stop the wandering mind. I want to follow the teacher's instructions, but I do not know how." The student unknowingly couples the default with affect (step 1), inhibits the default cognition (step 2) and (in step 3) inhibits the default cognition to prepare the implementation of the following self-instruction: "I have to try harder, I must stop the wandering mind!" This subjective imperative is charged with arousal in order to keep it operating. Consequently, the student proceeds on trying to follow the instructions, although with a narrowed focus of attention on the subjective imperative instead of the initial instruction by the teacher (which is related to step 4 in the process of mental interference, see Figure 2). After a while, the student gets more stressed and frustrated about the failed exercise. The conflict manifests in the feeling of helplessness. In terms of SAP I and SAP II exercises (in which the student is instructed to memorize and confidently focus on the literal instruction while neutrally noticing body sensations or emotions related to frustration or despair in case it does not work immediately), a student could be helped in two ways. On the one hand, the stress level would decrease as the "System of interference" would not add any new interferences. On the other hand, this exercise would allow the student more time to realize the difference between "Do not follow the wandering mind!" and "Stop the wandering mind!" An important learning outcome, in this case, would be the ability to differentiate between an epistemically reasoned decision and an interfered (emotionally charged) self-instruction.

In the context of level 2 of the TMMW, which consists of the educational goal of acquiring important skills, the second exemplary inner conflict arises. The student's attention on this level shifts between an exteroceptive focus on the educational object and an interoceptive focus on the sensory input related to the process of learning (that both can be narrow or wide). The instruction may be the following: "Search for your independent routine for practicing mindfulness!". Over several weeks, the student observes their own attempts at practice and tries out different settings. With due regard to the gained observations, the student concludes which type of setting will bring the best stress-relieving results. Accordingly, the student builds up their own practice routine. A few months later, circumstances change and make it impossible to continue the established practice routine. Along with this, the default in the form of a discrepant cognition may take the following form: "The best possible way for my practice routine became impossible to follow." The student unknowingly couples the default with affect (step 1), inhibits the default cognition (step 2) and (in step 3) prepares the implementation of the following self-instruction: "I must find a way to restore the setting as it was!" This subjective imperative is charged with arousal in order to keep it operating. Consequently, the student proceeds to restore his practice routine, but this time with a narrowed focus of attention, always having the previous setting as a threshold in mind (which is related to step 4 in the process of mental interference, see Figure 2). No matter how close the student will come to aligning the new circumstances with the old ones, the effect will not be the same as long as the "System of interference" is activated and holds the psychic tone on a higher stage. Eventually, the student gets frustrated. The conflict manifests in the feeling of being prey to circumstances. In terms of an SAP III exercise, an extended and differentiated task construction with well-established methods of opinion formation (e.g., listing pro and contra aspects concerning a specific issue or conducting a role play with given characters while explicitly reflecting on the value measures underlying the judgments) is conceivable. By doing so, a student on this level of "mindful wisdom" could be helped in two ways as well. On the one hand, they would learn how to differentiate habitually between a judgment and the underlying measures of values and, on the other hand, the student could come to realize the contextual dependence of these measures of values.

The third exemplary inner conflict arises in the context of level 3 of the TMMW, which consists of the educational goal of developing embodied/internalized attitudes that allow a sustainable and independent self-application of whatever has been learned so far. On this level, the student's attention mode is mainly directed towards the inner flow of sensory processing and is thus interoceptive—the focus of attention is likely wide.[17] The student who once suffered from exam anxiety is starting to internalize the practice of serenity and knows how to disidentify with the discursive mind. The student now understands on an experiential level that exam ratings are context-dependent, partly subjective and not geared to the inner values or the self. Even in very challenging exam situations, the student can keep the stress level during exam preparation and exam performance comparatively low, which often leads to comparatively higher ratings of the exam performance. Towards the end of school education, the student realizes that to get the most desired job, certain marks in the final examination certificate are required and therefore, their exam performance needs to be improved. Along these lines, the student proceeds with the exam preparation. At some point, the student gets the impression of a need for breaking some of the established habits of mindfulness practice in order to actively leave the comfort zone. The default in the form of incompatible cognitions may be: "In order to earn good marks in the upcoming final school exam, I need to let go habits of mindfulness, but when I become too ambitious, my exam anxiety may come back and impair my exam performance." The student unknowingly couples the default with affect (step 1), inhibits the default cognitions (step 2) and (in step 3) prepares the implementation of the following self-instruction: "I may not push myself just for the sake of good marks!" This subjective imperative is charged with arousal in order to keep it operating. Therefore, with a narrowed focus of attention (which is related to step 4 in the process of mental interference, see Figure 2) the student starts to question

the meaning of good marks/use of taking part in a competition. Eventually, the student questions the desire for this particular job—not out of deep insight but out of ignorance about the ways to effectively motivate oneself positively. The conflict manifests in the feeling of being apathetic. Here, exercises of goal setting, planning and attainment would be conceivable. With this, the student could gain self-awareness concerning advantages and deficits in their goal pursuit behavior (cf. Gollwitzer 1999). In terms of an SAP IV exercise, an empirical experiment could be implemented to engage the student in observing their sensory experiences in situations of intrinsic motivation for personally salient activities. An important learning outcome in this regard may be the student's ability to differentiate between interfered extrinsic motivation that eventually creates stress and intrinsic or autonomous motivation (cf. Ryan et al. 1997) that finds its impulses within the "Epistemic system" and, thus, is enjoyable (Waterman 2005).

3. Discussion and Practical Implications

To start off with, in the described historical succession (Age of Faith, Age of Reason and Age of Attitudes), one can find parallels to the three levels of the TMMW as well as to the tripartite structure of national and international didactical concepts (CMEC 1997; KMK 2012; European Parliament and Council 2006; UNESCO 2013; United Nations 2015; see also Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2). This parallelism does in no way imply the (no longer widely held) biological "Recapitulation theory", which claims that the individual development recapitulates the evolutionary development of the respective species. Applying this theory in the current context would lead to accepting two erroneous presuppositions. The first would classify educational systems and adult human beings in general from other cultures as deficient if they represent what this view identifies as "an earlier developmental stage" (Fallace 2012).[18] The second wrong presupposition is that today's humans are, by some account, superior to historical ones. Here, the newly contextualized and dynamically articulated model of TMMW can serve to avoid this defective interpretation. Deroche (2021) describes how the Buddhist wisdom-tradition has been re-actualized by every generation: students have to follow the traditional teachings, engage in discussion and self-reflection, and apply or actualize their knowledge personally, and finally transmit such lived experience to others through teaching, debating or composing their own texts (ibid.). This, again, goes in line with major evidence from developmental psychology according to which school-aged children and young adults traverse cognitive stages shaped by roles/rules, abstraction/logic and—if achieved within school age—autonomy (cf. Berk [1998] 2018).

Concerning the more concrete didactic relevance of the TMMW for the modern educational system in Germany, no final judgment can be achieved. Until today, the main body of didactical thinking and curriculum development throughout primary and secondary education is organized decentrally (except for the subject-specific guidelines for the graduation's final exams, see KMK 2007). Nevertheless, wide-ranging parallelism between the TMMW and the RA I–III could be demonstrated: both didactical frameworks are structured in a dynamically articulated trichotomy, in which each level comprises the previous one(s) and is applicable separately or in combination with the previous or following level(s). The differences found in the level's structure regarding the educational objectives (according to the revised Bloom's taxonomy, Anderson and Krathwohl 2001) can be interpreted in relation to the respective context of application and pedagogy. The 5th category of knowledge ("Evaluate") belongs to RA III, however in the TMMW it belongs to level 2. This can be explained by the predominant didactic focus of the TMMW on the mindfulness centered pedagogy of direct experience in terms of the practice of "bare attention" (Deroche 2021). According to Deroche, "the exercise of mindful awareness, or mindful wisdom, represents the systematic cultivation of the core cognitive power of integration or synthesis" (Deroche 2021, p. 28), and this is what the 6th category of knowledge ("Create") stands for (Anderson and Krathwohl 2001).

The fact that the TMMW is not meant to provide a didactical framework for achievement evaluation may be explained likewise by its context of application and pedagogy.

In the case of integration of the TMMW into modern educational systems, the *Taxonomy of educational objectives. Handbook II: the Affective domain* by Krathwohl et al. (1964) could serve as a basic approach for evaluative conceptualizations. Further research could provide a detailed comparison of subject-specific formulations of the RA I–III. Such oppositional comparison could also serve as an impulse for the further integration of "responsible transformative engagements" (OECD 2019b) into concrete didactical concepts of modern educational systems.

Although the didactical consideration of attitudes presently increases its impact (e.g., the most recent PISA framework also refers to the SDG 4.7 by the United Nations: see OECD (2019a)), the increasing centralization of curriculum development and achievement assessment does not provide the optimal environment for the development of intrinsically motivated attitudes. An explicit training of reflected skills of discernment (that comes with consciously adduced values), as suggested in Section 2.2.2, could support transparency and objectivity in the evaluative process of achievement and teaching evaluation. This could help students to deal with their educational achievements and to develop their intrinsic motivation more independently, away from from ratings and competition. The integration of demand-actuated exercises (similar to those suggested in Section 2.2.2) into the regular school curriculum might be of an increased future's educational interest as the current program of the "Global education 2030 Agenda" by the OECD (2019b) investigates the felicity conditions of "responsible transformative engagements" (ibid.). The program defines four differently challenging types of personal engagement ("Duty-based", "Participatory", "Justice-driven", or "Liberatory", OECD (2019b)). Future research may investigate, if the insight of intrinsic or autonomous motivation, to which the suggested exercise on level 3 of the extended and integrated framework of TMMW is targeted, can play a central role for liberatory responsible transformative engagements.

A didactical approach that integrates the TMMW into modern educational systems is conceivable in two different ways. It could be possible either to extend the RA I–III by explicitly including attitudes (based on Krathwohl et al. 1964) and the emphasis on metacognitive knowledge within all three RAs, or to include the affective domain in terms of a parallel taxonomy of educational requirements (based on Bloom et al. 1956; Krathwohl et al. 1964). However, given the emphasis on average learning outcomes prevalent in the present-day German educational system, it seems unlikely that the former approach could be followed any time soon.

Concerning the methodological (practical) fitness for in-class implementation of the TMMW, it was argued that the differences in the inherent concept of a self would call for a mediating framework that is simultaneously compatible with the TMMW as well as with basic pedagogical assumptions of modern Western education. On top of that, there is a reasonable doubt if it is possible to separate the concept of mindfulness and its applied methods in MBPs from its religious context (Brown 2016) and if the actual practice and vocabulary within MBPs can be considered secular (Rahmani 2021). However, these questions must be investigated individually in connection to the specific MBP implemented in education and shall not be discussed here. It can be stated that recently introduced neurobiological and psychological frameworks for mindfulness (e.g., Vago and Silbersweig 2013; Lindsay and Creswell 2017) do not include entirely secularly generated exercises and instructions to teach mindfulness.

The TMI supports the age-dependent needs described in pedagogical step models of psychological development (cf. Berk [1998] 2018) and comes along with secularly developed SAP exercises that are applicable to, stepwise, instruct mindfulness practices. As the TMI postulates a correlation between an increased psycho tone and a narrowed focus of attention (as well as between a decreased psycho tone and a widened focus of attention), it could serve as a simplified framework to describe the basic psychological mechanisms of attention regulation in both, "Open Monitoring" meditation techniques (OM) and "Focus Attention" meditation techniques (FA) (as defined by Lutz et al. (2008)).

Besides its secular background, the TMI comes along with two features to promote self-knowledge, both of which make the TMI particularly relevant for an application in educational contexts. Firstly, the Psycho tone scale serves as an orientation for one's own state of psychological tension and does not imply the long-term goal to reach psycho tone 1. Introvision or SAP exercises can be used to lower the psycho tone (or to reach deeper relaxation if preferred). However, the knowledge about how to bypass a conflict can also be used as a preliminary yet effective solution to quickly deal with a conflict in a situation of limited conflict coping resources. Secondly, by analyzing the mental interferences with the aid of TMI, the cognitive part in affective reactions or the affective part in cognitive processes, respectively, will be elucidated. This promotes, for one thing, the ability to differentiate between emotionally charged judgements and epistemically evaluated discernments (neutral observation, in particular, is relevant for learning in scientific subjects), and, for another thing, the understanding of the context-dependent nature of emotions (cf. Barrett 2017). Thereby, in terms of psychoeducation, the TMI can help to promote the importance of "attention" as an epistemic faculty that needs to be developed equitably alongside the cognitive faculties of "memory" and "judgment".

The generalizability of the introduced exemplary mental conflicts for each level of the TMMW has not been verified, and it is subject to further research to find out more about the frequency and probability distribution of mental conflicts among students with respect to the levels of TMMW. In this regard, the suggested exercises that have been matched to the beginner learner's situation in MBPs implemented in education can be seen as impulses for further research and its discourse regarding demand-actuated implementation. The need for such research is further supported by the neuroimaging evidence reported by Tang and Posner (2015). The latter study could determine which neural networks are involved, and to what extent, in early, intermediate, and advanced stages of meditation practice, depending on the degree of effort applied to the maintenance of the meditative state (Tang and Posner 2015). The more effort required during the meditation practice, the more activities were shown in the lateral prefrontal cortex (LPFC) and parietal cortex (PC), that is, brain regions that are associated with voluntary control of behavior (ibid.). Advanced meditative states (in FA or OM meditation) are maintained by activity in the Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC) and striatum, which are "mainly related to autonomic or/and emotional control" (Tang and Posner 2015, p. 85). These findings could support the assumption that beginner learners of meditation still tend to use the "System of interference", even though the exercises of meditation superficially seem to be executed (as the exemplary mental conflicts for all three levels demonstrate, see Section 2.2.2).[19] In this regard too, further research is needed.

Regarding the implementation of MBPs conceptualized on the basis of TMMW into the regular school curriculum in modern educational systems, several advantages are thinkable. The explicit integration of the concept of mindfulness or "Presence" (according to the TMMW) into the learning process could help to support the recognition of individuality in perspective and therefore promote tolerance among students. Moreover, this could help promote the integration of TMMW oriented educational goals into standardized regulations and guidelines of didactics and methodology. Public recognition of the importance to include psychoeducational concepts and teaching methods into curricular development could eventually give impulses to rethink psychological step models of cognitive and socio-emotional development. Possibly, this could promote further research in the psychological field of self-transcendence (cf. Berk [1998] 2018, p. 611), although with a more age-independent approach.

New Perspectives for Starting and Existing Mindfulness-Based Programs in Education

The increasing interest in implementing the MBPs into educational contexts (next to other contexts) is often explained by the growing need for wellbeing (stress reduction) and slow movement in the globalized world that keeps on increasing the speed of technological development and therefore increasing the demand for adaptation to the growing complexity of information flow and competition (cf. Rosa 2012). Knauth and Roloff (2021) interpret the

societal drive of the "mindfulness movement" as a subjective counter-reaction in regard to Jeaggi's "alienation diagnosis of society"—a current socio-philosophical problem that manifests in a relationally disturbed sense of autonomy (Jaeggi 2016 in: Knauth and Roloff 2021). Concerning the world of experience of school children, the positive flip-side of this drive might be relevant: by reconnecting to body sensations and integrating the emotionally unbiased perspective of inner awareness into their learning process, students can generate self-knowledge and perceive self-efficacy. In connection with the general deficit in modern societies of a healthy connection to bodily experiences (Müller-Braunschweig and Stiller 2010), this benefit of practicing mindfulness seems to create a special interest for students who undergo age-dependent fundamental bodily transitions. Similarly, given the increased pressure that students experience due to the standardization of educational goals and achievement evaluation, the stress reductive effect and slow movement may provide great advantages for students' development. The additional benefit of enhancing self-knowledge and perceived self-efficacy as a positively driven interest should not be neglected when it comes to the articulation of the need for MBPs in education.

In connection to the ongoing discourse concerning the need to reconnect MBPs to the traditional Buddhist context (cf. Kuan 2008; Bodhi 2013; Gethin 2015; Sharf 2015; Anālayo 2019), there are possible advantages to maintaining the secularity of MBPs in education: the recognition and integration of its historical origins could cause a turning point for MBPs in educational contexts (analogous to such effect in the history of Western educational ideas). This could give another impulse to reflect on its conception of the self and the educational goals within the specific framework of the respective MBP. In this context, the contextualization of MBPs implemented in modern educational systems based on the Buddhist wisdom traditions (as Deroche (2021) did in terms of the TMMW) is advocated not only as a result of its compatibility with basic didactical concepts in modern educational systems (e.g., the RA's of the German educational system), but also due to the transparent linkage to its Buddhist origins.

Furthermore, a conceptualization of MBPs implemented in modern educational systems on the basis of TMMW could support existing impulses to rethink the predominance of the elements of being "non-judgmental" and "present-centered" within the definition of "mindfulness" (e.g., Dreyfus 2013; Gethin 2015). Feldman and Kuyken (2019) accordingly suggest a differentiation between "judgment" and "discernment" on a cognitive level as well as on the level of direct experience. Such differentiation can teach how to "disengage from the usual patterns of discursivity and reactivity through which we usually function" (Dreyfus 2013, p. 52). Correspondingly, Deroche suggests a "mindful discipline of judgment" (Deroche 2021, p. 25). In the sense of emotionally unbiased discernment, judgments can serve as an orientation for decision-making (which is essential for educational goals in the modern German educational system).

The exemplary mental conflicts introduced in this paper and their analysis in terms of the TMI could serve to support autodidact learners of mindfulness. There is no didactical function for achievement evaluation involved in the TMMW, and the learners of secular MBPs may miss the support—especially in terms of evaluation and self-reflection—that a monastic community can provide for Buddhist novices. The model of the four steps of mental interference (Figure 2) could serve as an easily applicable analytical instrument for cases, in which a mindfulness exercise works well or not (in case of mental interference).

One possible way of dealing with mental conflicts of beginner learners in MBPs would be to explicitly incorporate the individual quest and resolution of mental conflicts into the teaching methods. In this case, the Introvision (according to Wagner ([2007] 2021), see Appendix B) would lend itself as an appropriate and secular method that could be taught to the students (Klebanova forthcoming). In this case, a further alignment of the actual exercises to the beginner learner's situation would be pursued on an individual basis.

4. Summary and Conclusions

The TMMW (according to Deroche 2021) is of twofold interest for the wide-ranging interdisciplinary scientific discourse regarding the definitional construct of mindfulness and the existent trend of implementing MBPs into modern educational systems: 1. It provides a philosophical contribution to the definitional discourse and transparently (re)contextualizes an integrative and dynamically articulated construct of mindfulness within Buddhist wisdom traditions; 2. The TMMW, understood as a didactical framework for mindfulness, provides several starting points for examining the theoretical and technical fitness of MBPs for modern educational systems. In the quest of rethinking mindfulness in education, the relevance of the TMMW as a newly contextualized framework of mindfulness was examined in two steps: at first, the relevance for didactics in modern Western educational systems (with a special focus on the region of Germany) was examined; secondly, the methodological fit of the TMMW for the possible implementation in modern educational systems with the aid of the TMI (according to Wagner [2007] 2021) was elaborated.

Remarkable conceptual overlaps were found regarding significant educational terms and concepts in Western didactics, such as the terms of "knowledge", "skills", and "attitudes". These terms took special meanings within the history of Western educational ideas and currently seem to be widely understood as a basic tripartite taxonomy for educational objectives and achievement evaluation. At the same time, they can be considered to express the basics of the three levels of "mindful wisdom" within the TMMW.

A need for an alternative secular framework of mindfulness in education has been derived from the incompatibility of basic psychological mechanisms and conceptual assumptions regarding the self within the framework of TMMW and within Western psychological models of cognitive and socio-emotional development. As a candidate for such a secular psychological framework, the TMI (developed at the University of Hamburg by Wagner and colleagues) was introduced. The basic approach of the TMI postulates the epistemic level of cognitive processes (the "Epistemic system") (1) to be unbiased by affect and (2) to be different from a level of mental interference (the "System of interference"), which in case of an arising default habitually interferes with the "Epistemic system" (Wagner [2007] 2021). To assure the theoretical and practical compatibility of the TMI and the TMMW, both frameworks have been compared regarding the concept of self and basic psychological mechanisms of "mindful exercises" (Deroche 2021). An integrated model of the TMMW and the TMI was introduced. For each level of the integrated and extended TMMW, an exemplary mental conflict was introduced and analyzed in regard to processes of mental interference with the aid of the TMI. Based on these mental conflicts, different exercises have been proposed methodically linked to the respective learners' needs on each level of the integrated model of the TMMW and the TMI. The current paper discussed the integrated model's advantages of promoting the cognitive faculty of "Attention" as an equitable element alongside the cognitive faculties of "Memory" and "Judgment" within an educational process, as well as the potential for self-knowledge by integrating the practice of self-awareness into each stage of such educational process.

For further research and its discourse regarding demand-actuated and self-regulated learning environments, the suggested exercises that are adjusted to the beginner learner's situation in MBPs implemented in education were discussed as a considerable impulse. Another impulse for future studies in regard to the neural networks involved in early, intermediate, and advanced stages of meditation practice and their practical implications for demand-actuated implementation has been discussed in the context of the findings from Tang and Posner (2015). Moreover, a prospect for a revision of step models of cognitive and socio-emotional development regarding a more age-independent approach of self-transcendence has been considered possible.

As for practical implications for modern educational systems, the integrated model of TMMW and TMI could serve as a thoroughly secular framework that could complement any interdisciplinary didactics that is based on the tripartite structure of "knowledge, skills and attitudes" and that aims at the learner's self-empowerment in the individual

learning process through self-knowledge. The *Taxonomy of educational objectives. Handbook II: the Affective domain* by Krathwohl et al. (1964) was considered as a basic approach to explicitly include attitudes into competency models for achievement evaluation and to complement existing didactical frameworks. In this context, the TMI and the four exercises of the "Stated attentive perception" (SAP, see Appendix B) in particular were discussed as a help to teach young and adolescent students, gradually, the difference in interfering versus non-interfering attention regulation. The findings of Section 2.2. might be applicable to the drivers of modern educational systems, as the methodology deals with techniques and learning tools, which are being relatively independently chosen and conducted in a class by the teachers (according to the educational setting and the learners' needs).

For starting and existing mindfulness-based programs in education, it was suggested the possible benefit concerning the enhancement of self-knowledge and perceived self-efficacy (cf. Deroche 2021) needs pointing out when it comes to the articulation of the need for MBPs in education. Generally, the contextualization on the basis of the Buddhist wisdom traditions for MBPs implemented in education was advocated: (1) due to the compatibility with basic didactical concepts in modern educational systems; (2) as it explicitly includes cognition and evaluation and; (3) as a result of the transparent linkage to its Buddhist origins. The model of the four steps of mental interference (Figure 2) was discussed as an instantly applicable analytical instrument for cases in which a mindful exercise works well or it does not (in the case of mental interference). It remains to be seen in the future whether or not the integrated framework of TMMW and TMI can provide a description of MBPs that is more adequate for educational needs—especially in regard to the compatibility with subject-specific didactical concepts.

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Appendix A. Comparative Overview of Exemplary National and International Curricular Regulations for Modern Educational Systems

In 2006, the European Parliament and Council published a recommendation of eight "Key Competences for Lifelong Learning" (European Parliament and Council 2006) to enable Europe's citizens "to adapt flexibly to a rapidly changing and highly interconnected world" (European Parliament and Council 2006, p. 13). The importance assigned to the adaptivity can explain (and be explained through) the focus shift from a defined (input-oriented) curricular catalogue of knowledge and skills towards an (output-oriented) framework of the so-called "key competences". The key competences, in their turn, have been defined in detail in terms of the three aspects, that is, "knowledge, skills and attitudes" (European Parliament and Council 2006, pp. 13–18). In 2013, UNESCO introduced their framework of the "Global Citizenship Education" in order to "empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world" (UNESCO 2013, p. 3). Here, four core competencies have been listed: "1. knowledge [. . .], 2. cognitive skills [. . .], 3. non-cognitive skills [. . .] and 4. behavioral capacities to launch and engage in proactive actions" (UNESCO 2013, p. 4). The third core competence consists of a catalogue of non-cognitive skills that are

essential for the attitudinal performance within the overall goal of UNESCO's "Global Citizenship Education" (see above). Therefore, the third core competence can be seen as a transition towards the fourth ultimate behavioral competence of engaging in proactive actions. Shortly afterwards, in 2015, the United Nations announced "the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which determined 17 "Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)" and 169 sub-targets (United Nations 2015). The SDG 4.7 is the only sub-target among ten sub-targets on education (which otherwise concentrate on inclusiveness and equity in education, educational access, organizational structures and teacher training) that deals explicitly with a curricular concept. Although SDG 4.7 is captured in a single sentence, it can be analyzed so as to talk about three main categories: knowledge, skills and attitudes. The category "attitudes" is not labelled as such in the text. However, next to knowledge and skills (which are explicitly classified as two separate categories), several actions are listed, which may result from the acquired knowledge and skills "[. . .] to promote sustainable development [. . .]" (United Nations 2015, p. 19). Although there are remarkable overlaps between the core concepts laid out in the above documents (see Table A1), the authors of the respective documents have not referenced each other (with the exception of the terminological anchoring of "global citizenship" in the "Sustainable Development Goal on Education 4.7" by the United Nations that is the parent organization of the UNESCO). The first explicit mention of attitudes next to knowledge and skills in the context of pedagogical directives issued by governmental institutions, however, can be traced back to 1997 in Canada. Two years after the pan-Canadian protocol for collaboration on the school curriculum, the "Council of Ministers of Education, Canada" (CMEC) introduced the "Common Framework of Science Outcomes" to promote "Canada's place internationally [. . .] to ensure greater harmonization [. . .] of educational opportunities across Canada [. . .] based on shared and relevant goals, and to demonstrate accountability for achieving them" (CMEC 1997, p. 2). The framework identified four key components of scientific literacy: "science, technology, society, and the environment (STSE), skills, knowledge, and attitudes" (CMEC 1997). At first glance, the order of these components stands out compared to those found in the international documents mentioned above. Nonetheless, given that the STSE already includes basic knowledge, it can be seen as a part or a pre-stage of the third key component of scientific literacy. Besides the overlap in content, the Canadian framework provides a precocious statement on the necessity for including attitudinal indicators into curricular concepts in terms of output-orientation and adaptivity: "Scientific literacy is an evolving combination of the science-related attitudes, skills, and knowledge students need to develop inquiry, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities, to become lifelong learners, and to maintain a sense of wonder about the world around them." (CMEC 1997, p. 4).

Table A1. Comparative overview of exemplary national and international curricular regulations for modern educational systems (sources from CMEC 1997; European Parliament and Council 2006; UNESCO 2013; United Nations 2015).

Key Components of Scientific Literacy in the Common Framework of Science Outcomes K to 12 (CMEC 1997)	**Aspects of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (European Parliament and Council 2006)**	**Core Competencies for Global Citizenship Education (UNESCO 2013)**	**Sustainable Development Goal on Education 4.7 (United Nations 2015)**
Science, technology, society and the environment (STSE)—Students will develop an understanding of the nature of science and technology, of the relationships between science and technology, and of the social and environmental contexts of science and technology.	Knowledge	Knowledge and understanding of specific global issues and trends, and knowledge of and respect for key universal values (e.g., peace and human rights, diversity, justice, democracy, caring, non-discrimination, tolerance)	[. . .] knowledge [. . .]
Skills—Students will develop the skills required for scientific and technological inquiry, for solving problems, for communicating scientific ideas and results, for working collaboratively, and for making informed decisions.	Skills	Cognitive skills for critical, creative and innovative thinking, problem-solving and decision-making	[. . .] skills [. . .]
Knowledge—Students will construct knowledge and understandings of concepts in life science, physical science, and Earth and space science, and apply these understandings to interpret, integrate, and extend their knowledge.	Attitudes	Non-cognitive skills such as empathy, openness to experiences and other perspectives, interpersonal/communicative skills and aptitude for networking and interacting with people of different backgrounds and origins	[. . .] to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of cultures contribution to sustainable development.
Attitudes—Students will be encouraged to develop attitudes that support the responsible acquisition and application of scientific and technological knowledge to the mutual benefit of self, society, and the environment.		Behavioral capacities to launch and engage in proactive actions.	

Appendix B. Introvision—A Technique of Mental Self-Regulation

Introvision is a technique of mental self-regulation that aims to resolve inner conflicts and has been developed by Wagner, Iwers and colleagues at the University of Hamburg during the last 35 years (cf. Wagner et al. 2016). Although it has some elements (e.g., the "Stated attentive perception", see below) in common with most mindfulness-based programs currently implemented in schools, the Introvision differs in its application to specific (reoccurring) situations of inner conflicts. Research evidence indicates Introvision

can help in dealing with writing blocks (Möller 2008), tinnitus (Buth 2011), chronic neck pain (Pereira Guedes 2011), and math anxieties (Iwers-Stelljes et al. 2014) as well as in reducing social stress within exam settings (Klebanova forthcoming) and competitive sports (Benthien 2011).

Alongside the TMI, which describes how inner conflicts appear within the scope of sensory processing (see Figure 2), the Introvision is based on an extended theoretical background. The "Theory of Subjective Imperatives" (TSI) (according to Wagner et al. 2016) models in the first place the semantic manifestation of a subjective imperative (inner self-instruction with its "must-/must not-syndrome", a linkage with emotional arousal). Moreover, it explains and depicts the conjoined structure of inner conflicts that typically find its highly emotionally charged core among a few variations of "core imperatives" that are, hypothetically, very similar in all humans. Assuming the conjunction of different subjective imperatives results from repeated overwriting (as it has been described within the framework of the TMI, see Section 2.2.1) according to previous life experiences, the TSI can explain the greater diversity of reported subjective imperatives regarding specific situations compared to the lower number of individually encoded core imperatives regarding one's own greatest fear (e.g., "I must be loved!"/"I must not be lost!"/"I must not be helpless!", see Wagner [2007] 2021, p. 180).

The first phase of Introvision aims at analyzing the structure of the inner conflict, starting with the situation in which the conflict habitually shows its adverse impact (may it be a mental block, stomach pain or an irritating emotion). By stating the possibility of the same event, that the subjective imperative should prevent (the so-called "subcognition", see Wagner [2007] 2021) and asking for the bad elements of it, the linkage to the next subjective imperative gets revealed, whereas the linkage itself typically shows up in the form of "if-then-phrases" (ibid.). Depending on how much one is ready to face one subcognition after the other (not only intellectually but also emotionally), one gets access to the subjective imperatives, which are charged with increasing arousal and finally to the core imperative. The given chain of subjective imperatives in Figure A1 serves as a fictitious, yet still realistic, example.

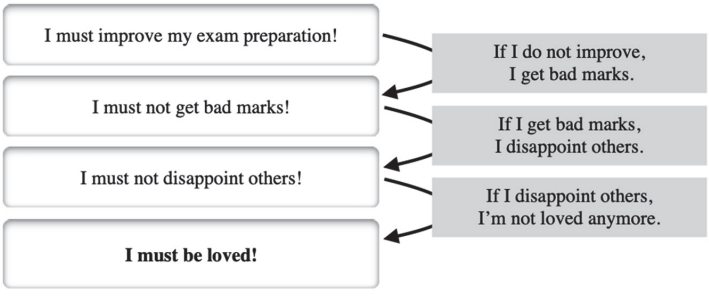

Figure A1. Exemplary "chain of subjective imperatives", the white boxes display the "subjective imperatives", the imperative written in bold letters is the "core imperative", the grey boxes give the gist of the "if-then-phrases" that link the imperatives (according to Wagner [2007] 2021).

The second phase of Introvision seeks to decouple the subcognition of the core imperative from its emotional charge. This succeeds with the aid of a certain technique of attention regulation (also developed by Wagner and colleagues, see Wagner [2007] 2021), called "stated attentive perception" (SAP). The SAP is distinguished by six characteristics (Wagner [2007] 2021, p. 99, translated from German):

1. stating the attention, in other words: epistemically noting "That's how it is!" (namely: the respecting cognition)—without interfering the sensory processing;
2. keeping a constant focus of attention—without wandering away, as much as possible;
3. widening the attention—not narrowing it down to concentrate with mental effort;

4. perceiving/to literally watching, listening, feeling, smelling, tasting— not repeating knowledge from other experiences or associations;
5. directing the attention without actively suppressing other occurring cognitions in the margins of consciousness;
6. refraining from actively and interferingly searching for a solution (that can be deferred until later where applicable).

The decoupling of the subcognition from its emotional charge can be achieved by setting here the focus of SAP for a little while. Sometimes it can be done in less than a minute, sometimes it needs a little longer or several attempts (see Wagner [2007] 2021). The psychological mechanism behind this effect can be comparatively described by a reappraisal of the subcognition (see Herwig et al. 2010).

To prevent further interferences from the moment of starting the Introvision, the first phase already happens in the mode of SAP. Therefore and as a result of its key role in the second phase of Introvision the SAP needs to be trained in advance (mostly within a setting of one-on-one counseling). The SAP training has been developed and evaluated by Wagner and colleagues in more than 60 studies from different fields of target groups. Further adaptations of the training for high school students have been developed by Klebanova (forthcoming).

These are the four basic and stepwise SAP exercises according to Wagner ([2007] 2021): Exercise SAP I aims at stating the perception—including body sensations, emotions and any cognitions like thoughts and memories or imaginations. The development of a witness's state of attention that enables the differentiation between cognitive and affective components accompanied by body sensations in emotionally charged situations is crucial for the further three exercises. SAP II aims at the ability to widen the focus of attention while keeping the witness's state of mind trained in the first exercise. If, for instance, cognitions related to visual perception are observed, even objects and impressions from the very edges of the visual field are included in the exercise. Likewise, for the observation of body sensations, the number of sensations that are observed at once will be increased gradually and without losing the stating mode of attention. The enhanced relaxation effects from this exercise can be neurologically explained by the findings of Herwig et al. (2010). In exercise SAP III, a constant focus will be set while the attention will be held wide and neutral as trained in the exercises before. This exercise aims at a reduction in mind wandering and at the habituation of the stating and attentively widened perception. In SAP IV, finally, the focus of attention will be set on an emotionally charged cognition (e.g., a thought, a memory, an imagination, a certain body sensation, or another sensory impression) while the attention will be kept widened and as neutral as possible. In this way, the continuation of mental interference can be interrupted, and the coupling between the cognition and the affect can be resolved.

Notes

1 In this paper, the term "modern educational systems" refers to national (often territorially organized) educational systems of Western industrialized countries (cf. Benner 2002). It should be added, that there is no commonly accepted definition to refer to. The reason for using this term is twofold: 1. The list of countries where Mindfulness currently plays a role at all (cf. Ergas and Hadar 2019; Zenner et al. 2014) is roughly covered by the list of countries classified as "Western industrialized countries". 2. Those countries seem to be oriented towards each other (e.g., via the OECD "Programme for international student assessment" (PISA)). Therefore, it makes sense to pool the educational systems of these countries for a joint examination in this paper.

2 Dreyfus 2013, S.52–53: "[. . .] present-centred non- judgmental attention is only one of the modalities of mindfulness, which is much broader in its scope, including explicit recollective abilities to remember the past and cognitive abilities to evaluate mental and bodily states. [. . .] Mindfulness is central to Buddhist practice not because it provides the degree of self-acceptance necessary to mental health but because it leads to liberative cognitive transformations.".

3 In particular, the TMMW is related to "the paradigmatic model of the 'threefold wisdom' or the 'three wisdoms', respectively, born from (1) study, (2) reflection, and (3) cultivation (Fiordalis 2018; Deroche 2019)" (Deroche 2021).

4 Other authors suggest a generally careful application of mindfulness exercises under a professional psychological guidance (e.g., Germer et al. [2005] 2013). But especially in regard to age-dependent needs of school students in their developmental stages

and the absence of psychological support in class rooms, Engler's approach of respecting the need for identity formation before introducing into other practices seems to be applicable.

5 Lawton and Gordon (2002), pp. 99–100: "Above all, the Enlightenment virtually destroyed for ever the idea that education was primarily concerned with memorising sacred texts, or indeed any other books. The Age of Reason demanded that education should be concerned with developing the powers of the mind to criticise the status quo and to think rationally. [. . .] Those responsible for planning national curricula are still trying to get the balance right between educating the intellect, moral education and educating the emotions."

6 The affective domain within the taxonomy of educational objectives (according to Krathwohl et al. 1964): A. Receiving (Attending): 1. Awareness, 2. Willingness to Receive, 3. Controlled or Selected Attention; B. Responding: 1. Acquiescence in Responding, 2. Willingness to Respond, 3. Satisfaction in Response; C. Valuing: 1. Acceptance of a Value, 2. Preference for a Value, 3. Commitment; D. Organization: 1. Conceptualization of a Value, 2. Organization of a Value System; E. Characterization by a Value or Value Complex: 1. Generalized Set, 2. Characterization.

7 German equivalent to "Conference of ministers of education and cultural affairs".

8 German for "Institute for quality development in education".

9 Also in other documents by the KMK, there are no more precise bibliography references than this. Backtracing the conceptional origins of the RA I–III, two possibilities seem to be plausible: 1. Due to the wide conceptual overlap the development of the RA I–III might have been influenced in some form by Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom et al. 1956) or the revised version by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001). This hierarchical classification of cognitive abilities has been cited in the German-speaking field of curriculum studies in the context of teacher education with a similar trichotomy: "recognize and retrieve", "understand and analyze" and "evaluate and create" (Blömeke 2013). 2. Due to the connection to PISA 2000 that initiated an impulse for the development of educational standards in Germany, it's possible that the defined proficiency levels in terms of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy (that might be collectively expressed in the trichotomy "reproduction and retrieval", "connection and interpretation" and "reflection and insight", OECD 1999) might have had an influence on the development of the RA I–III.

10 English translation by Klieme et al. ([2004] 2007).

11 This refers to the subject-specific "nationwide exam performance requirements" (in German: "Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen (für die Abiturprüfungen)"), that has been provided for every school subject by the KMK (KMK 2007).

12 For Janet the concept of "Presentification" consists of a mental state that "requires attention, that is, the act of perceiving both external reality as well as thoughts and ideas" (Craparo et al. 2019, p. 33). This also included "the capacity to act in a fully focused and meaningful [i.e., psychologically healthy] way in the present, integrating one's past experiences and future plans" (Craparo et al. 2019, p. 133, note added by the author).

13 A similar correlation between the "way of cultivating receptive and non-interfering mindfulness" (that can be subsummized under the term of "bare attention" or "bare awareness") and "the potential of leading to awakening" is been attributed to historic forms of mindfulness (Anālayo 2018, p. 16).

14 In modern Western psychological step models, the cognitive development of students between 6 years and 11 years and in the age of early adulthood is described by concrete operational thinking, the orientation towards formal operational thinking and logical reasoning (Berk [1998] 2018, chp. 9, 11). The emotional and social developmental stages for these age groups are described in relation to first self-regulatory experiences and fragile attempts of identity formation (Berk [1998] 2018, chp. 10, 12).

15 At least for the color combination of green (=Safety), yellow (=Malfunction) and red (=Emergency), which is widely used in displays and in electric control panels (Lee and Hwang 2015), a common color interpretation can be assumed. The color blue seems to be intuitively associated with "water" or "sky" which in turn seems to be related to well-being (Lengen 2015).

16 Translated from German: "Konstatierendes Aufmerksames Wahrnehmen" (Wagner [2007] 2021). For a brief overview of the SAP's characteristics and the four basic SAP exercises, see Appendix B.

17 The mode and focus of attention on this level of "mindful wisdom" depend on the cultivated practice of mindfulness. In order to relate the exemplary conflict to a setting, in which the student has been trained in SAP (according to Wagner [2007] 2021), the focus of attention will be wide while holding a single focus set on a certain cognition.

18 This calls for an interpretation in order to distinguish it from approaches of historic determinism or ethnocentric and racist approaches in the field of educational science most widely developed in the period between 1894 and 1916 to reinforce "White supremacy through educational practices and policies in the United States and abroad" (Fallace 2012, p. 511).

19 The findings concerning the differing activations of neural networks during meditation (Tang and Posner 2015) could also explain the contradictory outcomes of the two publications from Kok and Singer (2017) and Schindler et al. (2019) that rest on evidences from mindfulness-based interventions in regard to the effects of mindfulness meditation practice on social bonding and empathy. The first paper refers to a 9-month-long intervention and reports significant evidences supporting the assumption mindfulness may enhance social connectedness (Kok and Singer 2017). The second paper reports evidences of reduced empathy referring to three of five intervention studies that"experimentally induced mindfulness via a short breathing exercise" for participants with

no or nearly no previous meditation experience (Schindler et al. 2019). In any case, the findings of Tang and Posner (2015) should be considered when it comes an evaluation of scientific evidences in the interdisciplinary field of mindfulness.

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