Verses from the Centre

Sanskrit: Mula madhyamaka karika.

Tibetan: dBu ma rtsa ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba.

by Nagarjuna

Romanization and Literal English Translation of the Tibetan Text

by Stephen Batchelor, Sharpham College, April 2000

Preface


In making the English translation, the primary authority was Tsongkhapa’s fourteenth century commentary: An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text Verses from the Center.

The following translations from Sanskrit were also consulted:


As was the following translation from the Tibetan:

Any mistakes are my own.

Stephen Batchelor, Sharpham College, April, 2000

**Abbreviations**

In the comments that follow some of the verses, the abbreviations refer to the works below. The number after the abbreviation refers to the page number of the editions cited.


The title given in brackets below the title at the head of each chapter is the name of the poem found in *Verses from the Center: A Buddhist Vision of the Sublime*.

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[Translator’s homage]

dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa Shes rab ces bya ba bzhugs so // //
rgya gar skad du // Pra dzny'a n'a ma m'u la ma dhy'a ma ka k'a ri ka
bod skad du // jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa la phyag 'tshal lo

Herein lie the Root Verses of the Center called “Intelligence”. In the language of India: Prajñānāmanamulamadhyākārika. In the language of Tibet: dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba. I prostrate to the youthful Manjushri.
I bow down to the most sublime of speakers, the completely awakened one who taught contingency (no cessation, no birth, no annihilation, no permanence, no coming, no going, no difference, no identity) to ease fixations.

1. Investigation of Conditions

(Conditions)

1. /bdag las ma yin gzhan las min//gnyis las ma yin rgyu med min//dngos po gang dag gang na yang//skye ba nam yang yod ma yin/

1. No thing anywhere is ever born from itself, from something else, from both or without a cause.

2. /rkyen rnams bzhi ste rgyu dang ni//dnigs pa dang ni de ma thag//bdag po yang ni de bzhin te//rkyen lnga pa ni yod ma yin/

2. There are four conditions:Causes, objects, immediate and dominant. There is no fifth.

3. /dngos po rnams kyi rang bzhin ni//rkyen la sogs pa yod ma yin//bdag gi dngos po yod min na//gzhan dngos yod pa ma yin no/

3. The essence of things does not exist in conditions and so on. If an own thing does not exist, an other thing does not exist.

4. /bya ba rkyen dang ldan pa med//rkyen dang mi ldan bya ba med//bya ba mi ldan rkyen ma yin//bya ba ldan yod ‘on te na/

4. There is no activity which has conditions. There is no activity which does not have conditions. There are no conditions which do not have activity, and none which do have activity.

5. /’di dag la brtan skye bas na//de phyir ‘di dag rkyen ces grag//ci srid mi skye de srid du//’di dag rkyen min ci ltar min/

5. Since something is born in dependence upon them, then they are known as “conditions”. As long as it is not born, why are they not non-conditions?

6. /med dam yod pa’i don la yang//rkyen ni rung ba ma yin te//med na gang gi rkyen du ‘gyur//yod na rkyen gyis ci zhig bya/
6. It is impossible for something that either exists or not to have conditions. If it were non-existent, of what would they be the conditions? If it were existent, why would it need conditions?

7. When things cannot be established as either existent, non-existent or both, how can one speak of an “establishing cause.” Such would be impossible.

8. An existent phenomenon is clearly said to have no object at all. If the phenomenon has no object, where can the object exist?

9. If phenomena are not born, it is invalid for there to be cessation. Therefore, an immediate [condition] is unreasonable. What, having ceased, can also be a condition?

10. Because the existence of essence-less things does not exist, it is incorrect to say: “When this exists, that arises.”

11. There is no effect at all in the conditions individually or together. How can that which is not in the conditions itself be born from conditions?

12. If, although the effect is not there, it is born from those conditions, why is an effect not born from what are not its conditions?

13. Effects [are of] the nature of conditions. Conditions do not have own nature. How can those effects of what does not have own nature [be of] the nature of conditions?
14. Therefore, [it does] not have the nature of conditions, nor is there an effect with the nature of non-conditions. Since there is no effect, what could [be its] non-conditions or conditions?

2. Investigation of Coming and Going

(Walking)

1. /re zhig song la mi 'gro ste/ /ma song ba la'ang 'gro ba min/ /song dang ma song ma gtogs par/ /bgom pa shes par mi 'gyur ro/

1. Then there is no going in what has gone; there is no going also in what has not [yet] gone. Motion is unknowable apart from what has gone and not [yet] gone.

2. /gang na g.yo ba de na 'gro/ /de yang gang phyir bgom pa la/ /g.yo ba song min ma song min/ /de phyir bgom la 'gro ba yod/

2. Where there is moving, there there is going. Furthermore, because moving is within motion -- and is neither gone nor not [yet] gone, therefore, there is going within motion.

3. /bgom la 'gro ba yin par ni/ /ji lta bur na 'thad par 'gyur/ /gang tshe 'gro ba med pa yi/ /bgom pa 'thad pa med phyir ro/

3. How can going be possible within motion? Because motion that is not going is impossible.

4. /gang gi bgom pa la 'gro ba/ /de yi bgom la 'gro med par/ /thal bar 'gyur te gang gi phyir/ /bgom la 'gro ba yin phyir ro/

4. For whomever there is going within motion, for him it will follow that there [could be] no going within motion, because there is going within motion.

Or, following the structure and wording of v. 10: “To claim that there is going within motion implies that there could be no going within motion, because it is asserted there is going within motion.”

5. /bgom la 'gro ba yod na ni/ /'gro ba gnyis su that 'gyur te/ /gang gis de bgom gyur ba dang/ /de la 'gro ba gang yin pa'o/

5. If there were going within motion, it would follow that going would be twofold: that by which one becomes someone in motion [in a place] and [that by which one] goes in that [place].
6. /'gro ba gnyis su thal 'gyur na/ /'gro ba po yang gnyis su 'gyur/ /gang phyir 'gro po med par ni/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur phyir/

6. If going were twofold, the goer also would be twofold, because going is impossible without a goer.

7. /gal te 'gro po med gyur na/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur te/ /'gro ba med na 'gro ba po/ /yod pa nyid du ga la 'gyur/

7. If there were no goer, going would be impossible. If there were no going, where could a goer be existent?

8. /re zhir 'gro po mi 'gro ste/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur te/ /'gro ba med na 'gro ba po/ /yod pa nyid du ga la 'gyur/

8. When a goer does not go, a non-goer cannot go; what third one other than a goer and a non-goer could go? [cf. v. 15]

9. /gang tshe 'gro ba med par ni/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur na/ /re zhir 'gro po 'gro'o zhes/ /ji litar 'thad pa nyid du 'gyur/

9. When a goer* is impossible without going, then how is it possible to say: “a goer goes”?

* 'gro ba: Ts. 102 glosses this as ‘gro ba po = ‘goer’ which makes more sense and agrees with K. 123. Could this be a textual corruption? l.2 would read better as: ‘gro po thad par mi 'gyur na.

10. /gang gi phyogs la 'gro ba po/ /'gro ba de la 'gro med pa'i/ /'gro po yin par thal 'gyur te/ /'gro po 'gro bar 'dod phyir ro/

10. To claim that a goer goes implies that there could be a goer who does not go, because it is asserted that a goer goes. [cf. v. 4]

11. /gal te 'gro po 'gro 'gyur na/ /'gro ba gnyis su thal 'gyur te/ /gang gis 'gro por mngon pa dang/ /'gro por gyur nas gang 'gro ba'o/

11. If the goer goes, it would follow that going would be twofold: that which reveals* the goer and that which goes once [he] has become a goer.

*Ts. 103 understands mgon as brjod, i.e. “that which allows someone to be designated as a goer.” This agrees with K. 124 (vyapadesa).

12. /song la 'gro ba'i rtsom med de/ /ma song ba la'ang 'gro rtsom med/ /bgom la rtsom pa yod min na/ /gang du 'gro ba rtsom par byed/

12. If a beginning of going does not exist in what has gone, [if] a beginning of going does not exist also in what has not [yet] gone [and if] there does not exist a beginning within motion, wherein is a beginning of going made?
13. Before a beginning of going, there is not any motion or anything which has gone wherein going could begin. How can going exist in what has not [yet] gone?

14. If a beginning of going is simply not apparent in any way, examine: what has gone? what is motion? what has not [yet] gone?

15. When a goer does not stay, a non-goer cannot stay; what third one other than a goer and a non-goer could stay? [cf. v. 8]

16. When a goer is not possible without going, how then is it possible [to say]: “a goer stays.”

17. There is no reversal of motion*, nor also of what has gone [and] what has not [yet] gone. [Reversal of] going, engagement [to stay] and reversal [of staying] are similar to going.

* Ts. 105 connects the “reversal of motion” with the “starting to stay”. Skt. seems explicitly to mention “staying”. In the following line, Ts. explains that there is no reversal of motion in either what has gone or not yet gone because both are devoid of going. “Reversal of motion” seems to mean simply “stopping.” Ts’s comm. on l c-d is difficult to trace, suggesting that he may be following a different version of the root text. My rendition of c-d is tentative. K. 127 has: “Movement, commencement and cessation (of movement) are all comparable to motion.”

18. It is inappropriate to say: “going and a goer are the same.” It is inappropriate to say: “going and a goer are different.”

19. If whatever is going were a goer, it would follow that the actor and the act would be the same too.
20. /gal te 'gro dang 'gro ba po/ /gzhan pa nyid du rnam brtag na/ /'gro po med pa'i 'gro ba
dang/ /'gro ba med pa'i 'gro por 'gyur/

20. If going and a goer were conceived as different, there could be going without a
goer and a goer without going.

21. /gang dag dngos po gcig pa dang/ /dngos po gzhan pa nyid du ni/ /grub par gyur pa yod min
na/ /de gnyis grub pa ji ltar yod/

21. If things are not established as the same and as different, how can they be
established?

22. /'gro ba gang gis 'gro por mngon/ /'gro ba de ni de 'gro min/ /gang phyir 'gro ba'i snga rol
med/ /gang zhig gang du 'gro bar 'gyur/

22. That very going by which a goer is made evident does not [enable a goer to] go.
Because there is no [goer] before going, who would be going where?

23. /'gro ba gang gis 'gro por mngon/ /de las gzhan pa de 'gro min/ /gang phyir 'gro po geig pu
la/ /'gro ba gnyis su mi 'thad do/

23. [A going] which is other than the going by which a goer is made evident does not
[enable a goer to] go. Because it is impossible for going to be twofold within a single
goer.

24. /'gro po yin par gyur pa ni/ /'gro rnam gsum du 'gro mi byed/ /ma yin par ni gyur de yang/
/'gro rnam gsum du 'gro mi byed/

24. One who is a goer does not go in the three aspects of going. Also one who is not [a
goer] does not go in the three aspects of going.

25. /yin dang ma yin gyur pa yang/ /'gro rnam gsum du 'gro mi byed/ /de phyir 'gro dang 'gro
po dang/ /bgrod par bya ba'ang yod ma yin/

25. One who is and is not [a goer] also does not go in the three aspects of going.
Therefore, going and a goer and also that which is gone over do not exist.

3. Investigation of the Sense Organs

(Seeing)
1. Seeing and hearing and smelling and tasting and touching, mind are the six sense organs; their experienced objects are what-is-seen and so forth.

2. Seeing does not see itself. How can what does not see itself see anything else?

3. The example of fire is not able to fully establish seeing. It, along with seeing, has been refuted by “gone”, “not gone” and “going.”

4. When not seeing the slightest thing, there is no act of seeing. How can it [then] be reasonable to say: “seeing sees”?

5. Seeing does not see; non-seeing does not see. It should be understood that seeing explains the seer too.

6. Without letting go of [seeing] a seer does not exist; in letting go of seeing, there is also [no seer]. If there is no seer, where can there be what-is-seen and seeing?

7. Just as it is said that a child emerges in dependence on a father and a mother, likewise it is said that consciousness emerges in dependence upon an eye and a visual form.
8. Because there is no what-is-seen and no seeing, the four such as consciousness do not exist. How can clinging etc. exist?

9. It should be understood that seeing explains hearing and smelling and tasting and touching, mind, hearer, what is heard, etc.

dbang po brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa gsum pa'o///

4. Investigation of the Aggregates

(Body)

1. Apart from the cause of form, form is not perceived. Apart from “form”, the cause of form also does not appear.

[Ts. 128 gives “the eye etc.” as examples of “form” and “the four elements” as examples of the “causes of form.”]

2. If there were form apart from the cause of form, it would follow that form is without cause; there is no object at all that is without cause.

3. If a cause of form existed apart from form, it would exist as a cause without fruit; causes without fruit do not exist.

4. If form existed, a cause of form would be untenable; if form did not exist, a cause of form would be untenable.

5. Forms which do not have a cause are not at all tenable. Therefore, do not conceive the concept of form at all.
[Ts. 129-30 explains “rung min nyid” as being an added emphasis. To “not conceive of the concept of form” he regards as unworthy for the yogin who beholds reality. He cites Buddhapalita, who explains how it is “inappropriate,” in contrast to “how appropriate it would be to reflect on non-abiding.”]

6. /'bras bu rgyu dang 'dra ba zhes/ /bya ba 'thad pa ma yin te/ /'bras bu rgyu dang mi 'dra zhes/ /bya ba'ang 'thad pa ma yin no/

6. It is untenable to say, “the fruit is like the cause.” It is also untenable to say, “the fruit is unlike the cause.”

7. /tshor dang 'du shes 'du byed dang/ /sems dang dngos po thams cad kyang/ /rnam pa dag ni thams cad du/ /gzugs nyid kyis ni rim pa mtshungs/

7. Feeling and perception, impulses and mind and all things are comparable in every aspect, at every stage with form.

8. /stong pa nyid kyis brtsad byas tshe/ /gang zhig lan 'debs smra byed pa/ /de yi thams cad lan btab min/ /bsgrub par bya dang mtshungs par 'gyur/

8. When having argued by means of emptiness, everything of that one who objects is not an objection; it is similar to what is to be established.

9. /stong pa nyid kyis bshad byas tshe/ /gang zhig skyon 'dogs smra byed pa/ /de yi thams cad skyon btags min/ /bsgrub par bya dang mtshungs par 'gyur/

9. When having explained by means of emptiness, everything of that one who finds fault is not a fault; it is similar to what is to be established.

pheung po brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bzhi pa'o///

5. Investigation of the Elements

(Space)

1. /nam mkha'i mtshan nyid snga rol na/ /nam mkha' cung zad yod ma yin/ /gal te mtshan las snga gyur na/ /mtshan nyid med par thal bar 'gyur/

1. Not the slightest bit of space exists prior to the characteristics of space. If [space] existed prior to its characteristics, it would follow that it would be without characteristics.

2. /mtshan nyid med pa'i dngos po ni/ /'ga' yang gang na'ang yod ma yin/ /mtshan nyid med pa'i dngos med na/ /mtshan nyid gang du 'jug par 'gyur/

2. A thing without characteristics does not exist anywhere at all. If a thing without characteristics does not exist, to what do characteristics extend?
3. Characteristics do not extend to that which has no characteristics; nor to what possesses characteristics. They also cannot extend to something other than what either possesses or does not have characteristics.

4. If characteristics do not extend [to something], something characterized would be impossible. If something characterized is impossible, characteristics too would not exist.

5. Therefore, something characterized does not exist and characteristics do not exist. There also does not exist a thing which is apart from being something characterized or a characteristic.

6. If there is not a thing, of what can there be a non-thing? By whom are the opposites thing and non-thing known [as] a thing and a non-thing?

[Ts. 140 understands “a thing” to refer to the obstructive matter of which space, as a negation and hence a non-thing, is a negation of.]

7. Therefore, space is not a thing; it is not a non-thing; it is not something characterized; it is not a characteristic. The other five elements too are similar to space.

8. Those of small minds see things as existent and non-existent. They do not behold the utter pacification of what is seen.

6. Investigation of Desire and the Desirous One
(Addiction)

1. If a desirous one without desire exists before desire, desire would exist dependent on that [desirous one]. [When] a desirous one exists, desire exists.

2. If there were no desirous one, how could there be desire? The same follows for the desirous one too: [it depends on] whether desire exists or not.

3. It is not reasonable for desire and the desirous one to arise as co-existent. In this way desire and the desirous one would not be mutually contingent.

4. Identity has no co-existence: something cannot be co-existent with itself. If there were difference, how could there be co-existence?

5. If the identical were co-existent, [co-existence] would also occur between the unrelated; if the different were co-existent, [co-existence] would also occur between the unrelated.

6. If the different were co-existent, how would desire and the desirous one be established as different or, if that were so, [how would] those two be co-existent?
7. If desire and the desirous were established as different, because of what could one understand them as co-existent?

8. If one asserts them to be co-existent because they are not established as different, then because they would be very much established as co-existent, would one not also have to assert them to be different?

9. Since different things are not established, co-existent things are not established. If there existed any different things, one could assert them as co-existent things.

10. In that way, desire and the desirous one are not established as co-existent or not co-existent. Like desire, all phenomena are not established as co-existent or not co-existent.

[Ts. 153 explains “all phenomena” to refer to hatred and the hater, stupidity and the confused one, and proceeds to reconstruct v.1 substituting “hatred” for “desire” etc.]

7. Investigation of Birth, Abiding and Perishing

[Birth]

1. If birth were compounded, it would possess the three characteristics [of a compound]. If birth were uncompounded, how would it be a characteristic of a compound?
2. The three such as birth cannot individually be that which characterises compounds. How is it possible for one at one time to be compounded [of all three]?

3. If birth, abiding and perishing had an other characteristic of being compounded, this would be endless. If not, they would not be compounded.

4. The birth of birth gives birth to the root birth alone. The root birth also is that which gives birth to the birth of birth.

5. If your birth of birth gives birth to the root birth, how does that which is not yet born from your root give birth to that [root birth]?

6. If that which is born from your root birth gives birth to the root, how does that root which is born from that give birth to that [from which it is born]?

7. If that which has not been born is able to give birth to that, that of yours which is being born should be able to give birth to that.

[v. 4-7: This is a clear example of another hand interfering with the text. Not only is it incapable of being reset as poetry, it is incompatible with the style of the verses that precede and especially those that follow. Also cf. MMK 1: 7-9]

8. Just as lamplight illuminates itself and others, likewise birth too gives birth to both itself and the thing of others.

[“itself and the thing of others” is the clumsy Tibetan form of svaparaatma, cf. svabhava / parabhava.]
9. /mar me dang na /de 'dug pa na mun pa med /mar mes ci zhig snang bar byed /mun pa sel bas snang byed yin/

9. Wherever lamplight is present there is no darkness. What does lamplight illuminate? It illuminates by dispelling darkness.

10. /gang tshe mar me skye bzhin pa /mun pa dang ni phrad med na /ji ltar mar me skye bzhin pas /mun pa sel bar byed pa yin /

10. If, when lamplight is being generated, it does not encounter darkness, how does the generation of lamplight dispel darkness?

11. /mar me phrad pa med par yang /gal te mun pa sel byed na /jig rten kun na gnas pa'i mun /'di na gnas pa des sel 'gyur/

11. If darkness is dispelled even though it does not encounter lamplight, this [lamplight] dwelling here would eliminate the darkness that dwells in all the worlds.

12. /mar me* rang dang gzhan gyi dngos /gal te snang bar byed 'gyur na /mun pa'ang rang dang gzhan gyi dngos /sgrib par 'gyur bar the tshom med/

[Ts. *mes]

12. If lamplight illuminated itself and the thing of others, darkness too would without doubt obscure itself and the thing of others.

13. /skye ba 'di ni ma skyes pas /rang gi bdag nyid ji ltar skyed /ci ste skyes pas skyed byed na /skyes na ci zhig bskyed du yod/

13. How can unborn birth give birth to itself? If the born gives birth, when it has been born, what would be born?

14. /skyes dang ma skyes skye bzhin pa /ji lta bur yang mi skyed pa /de ni song dang ma song dang /bgom pas rnam par bshad pa yin/

14. The born and the unborn, the being born do not in any way give birth. That has been explained by the gone, not gone and going.

15. /gang tshe skye ba yod pa na /skye bzhin 'di 'byung med pa'i tshe

ji ltar skye la brten nas ni /skye bzhin zhes ni brjod par bya/

15. When being born does not arise in what is born, then how can one say “[it is] being born in dependence on the born”?

16. /rten cing 'byung ba gang yin pa /de ni ngo bo nyid kyis zhi /de phyir skye bzhin nyid dang ni /skye ba yang ni zhi ba nyid/
16. Whatever is dependently arising, that is by nature pacified. Therefore, being born and what is born too are pacified.

[Ts. 174-6 gives a good summary of the identity of dependent arising and emptiness with citations, including (174): “Whoever sees dependent and relational arising sees the Dharma; whoever sees the Dharma sees the Buddha.” and (175) “What is born from conditions is unborn. By its very nature it has no birth. What is dependent on conditions is said to be empty. He who knows emptiness is conscientious (bag yod”]

17. /gal te dngos po ma skyes pa/ /'ga' zhig gang na yod gyur na/ /de ni skye 'gyur dngos po de/ /med na ci zhig skye bar 'gyur/

17. If any unborn thing existed anywhere, on being born that [unborn] thing would not exist. If so, what would be born?

18. /gal te skye ba de yis ni/ /skye bzhin pa ni skyed byed na/ /skye ba de ni skye ba lta/ /gang zhig gis ni skyed par byed/

18. If that which has been born gives birth to what is being born, what [other thing] that has been born would be giving birth to which has been born?

19. /gal te skye ba gzhan zhig gis/ /de skyed thug pa med par 'gyur/ /ci ste skye ba med skye na/ /thams cad de bzhin skye bar 'gyur/

19. If another [thing] that has been born gives birth [to it], this would be endless. If it is born without [another] which has been born [OR if it is born without being born], everything would be born like that [i.e. causelessly].

20. /re zhig yod dang med pa yang/ /skye bar rigs pa ma yin zhing/ /yod med nyid kyang ma yin zhes/ /gong du bstan pa nyid yin no/

20. Thus it is not reasonable for what exists or does not exist to be born. It has been shown above that there is no existent or non-existent.

21. /dngos po 'gag bzhin nyid la ni/ /skye ba 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /gang zhig 'gag bzhin ma yin pa/ /de ni dngos por mi 'thad do/

21. It is not tenable for a thing that is perishing to be born. It is not tenable for that which is not perishing to be a thing.

22. /dngos po gnas pa mi gnas te/ /dngos po mi gnas gnas pa min/ /gnas bzhin pa yang mi gnas te/ /ma skyes gang zhig gnas par 'gyur/

22. A thing that has remained does not remain. A thing that has not [yet] remained does not remain. That which is remaining also does not remain. What unborn [thing] can remain?

23. /dngos po 'gag bzhin nyid la ni/ /gnas pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /gang zhig 'gag bzhin ma yin pa/ /de ni dngos por mi 'thad do/
23. It is not possible for a thing that is perishing to remain. It is not possible for that which is not perishing to be a thing.

24. /dngos po thams cad dus kun tu//rnga dang 'chi ba'i chos yin na//gang dag rga dang 'chi med par//gnas pa'i dngos po gang zhig yod/

24. If all things at all times are aging and dying phenomena, what things are there which could remain without aging and dying?

25. /gnas pa gnas pa gzhan dang ni//de nyid kyis kyang gnas mi rigs//ji ltar skye ba rang dang ni//gzhan gyis bskyed pa ma yin bzhin/

25. It is not reasonable for what remains to remain due to something else that remains or due to itself. This is like how what has been born is not given birth to by itself or another. [cf. v.18-19]

26. /gags pa 'gag par mi 'gyur te//ma 'gags pa yang 'gag mi 'gyur//gag bzhin pa yang de bzhin min//ma skies gang zhig 'gag par 'gyur/

26. What has ceased does not cease. What has not ceased also does not cease. Likewise what is ceasing also does not. What unborn [thing] can cease? [cf. v. 22]

27. /re zhig dngos po gnas pa la//gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro//dngos po mi gnas pa la yang//gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/

27. It is not possible for a thing which has remained to cease. It is also not possible for a thing which has not remained to cease.

[past tense “has remained” follows Skt. (K .175). Tib. and Ts. 183 could read: “It is not possible for a thing which remains to cease. It is also not possible for a thing which does not remain to cease.”]

28. /gnas skabs de yis gnas skabs ni//de nyid 'gag pa nyid mi 'gyur//gnas skabs ghan gyis gnas skabs ni//ghan yang 'gag pa nyid mi 'gyur/

28. A particular state [of something] does not cause that particular state itself to cease. Moreover, another particular state does not cause that particular state to cease.

[Ts. 184 illustrates this with the example of milk and curds (butter), i.e.: milk does not cause milk to cease, nor do curds cause milk to cease.]

29. /gang tshe chos rnams thams cad kyi//skye ba 'thad par mi 'gyur ba//de tshe chos rnams thams cad kyi//gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/

29. When the birth of all phenomena is not possible, then the cessation of all phenomena is not possible.

30. /re zhig dngos po yod pa la//gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro//geig nyid na ni dngos po dang//dngos po med pa 'thad pa med/
30. Cessation is not possible in an existent thing. Thingness and nothingness are not possible in one.

31. /dngos po med par gyur pa la'ang/ /gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /mgo gnyis pa la ji ltar ni/ /gcd du med pa de bzhin no/

31. Cessation is not possible also in what is not a thing. This is similar to how there is no cutting off a second head. [i.e. a person cannot be beheaded twice]

32. /gag pa rang gi bdag nyid kyis/ /yod min 'gag pa gzhan gyis min/ /ji ltar skye ba rang dang ni/ /gzhan gyis skyed pa na yin bzhin/

32. Cessation does not exist by its own self, nor does cessation [exist] by something else. This is like how what has been born is not given birth to by itself or another [cf. 25]

33. /skye dang gnas dang 'jig pa dag/ /ma grub phyir na 'dus byas med/ /'dus byas rab tu ma grub pas/ /'dus ma byas ni ji ltar 'grub/

33. Because birth and remaining and perishing are not established, there is no conditioned. Because the conditioned is utterly unestablished, how can the unconditioned be established?

34. /rmi lam ji bzhin sgyu ma bzhin/ /dri za'i grong khyer ji bzhin du/ /de bzhin skye dang de bzhin gnas/ /de bzhin du ni 'jig pa gsungs/

34. Like a dream, like a magician's illusion, like a city of gandharvas, likewise birth and likewise remaining, likewise perishing are taught.

8. Investigation of Act and Actor

(Actors)

1. /byed po yin par gyur pa de/ /las su gyur pa mi byed do/ /byed po ma yin gyur pa yang/ /las su ma gyur mi byed do/

1. One who exists as an actor does not do that which exists as an act. One who does not exist as an actor also does not do that which does not exist as an act.

2. /yin par gyur la bya ba med/ /byed po med pa'i las su'ang 'gyur/ /'yin par gyur la bya ba med/ /las med byed pa por yang 'gyur/

2. One who exists has no activity; [something] would also exist as an act without an actor. One who exists has no activity; [something] would also exist as an actor without an act.
3. If one who does not exist as an actor did that which does not exist as an act, the act would have no cause; the actor too would have no cause.

4. If there were no cause, effect and cause would not be evident. If they were non-existent, activity and agent and doing would not be evident.

5. If activity etc. did not appear, dharma and adharma would not be evident. If dharma and adharma did not exist, there would be no fruit that comes from them.

6. If there were no fruit, the path of liberation and higher states would not be appropriate. Also it would follow that all activities are meaningless.

7. One who exists and does not exist as an actor does not do what exists and does not exist [as an act]. Since existence and non-existence are mutually contradictory in one [thing], where can they exist?
8. One who exists as an actor does not do an act which is not existent. One who does not exist [as an actor] also does not do what exists [as an act]. Here too faults will follow for one.

9. /byed pa por ni gyur pa dang/ /bcas pa las ni ma gyur dang/ /gyur ma gyur pa ni byed de/ /gtan tshigs gong du bstan phyir ro/

9. One who exists as an actor does not do what does not exist as an act and what neither exists or not [as an act], because of what was demonstrated by the proof above.

[Verses 9-11 are suspect. This degree of systematic nit-picking as well as the scholarly reference to “the proof above” seem out of character.]

10. /byed pa por ni ma gyur pas*/ /las ni gyur dang bcas pa dang/ /gyur ma gyur pa ni byed de/ /gtan tshigs gong du bstan phyir ro/

[*Lha. pa]

10. One who does not exist as an actor does not do what exists as an act and what neither exists or not [as an act], because of what was demonstrated by the proof above.

11. /byed pa por gyur ma gyur ni/ /las su gyur dang ma gyur pa/ /mi byed 'di* yang gtan tshigs ni/ /gong du bstan pas shes par bya/

[*Lha.Ts. ‘dir]

11. One who neither exists nor does not exist as an actor does not do that which exists and does not exist as an act. Here too this is to be known through the proof demonstrated above.

12. /byed pa po las brten* byas shing/ /las kyang byed po de nyid la/ /brten nas 'byung ba ma gtags pa**/ /'grub pa'i rgyu ni ma mthong ngo/

[*Lha. byed po las la brten; **par]

12. An actor depends on acts and acts too occur in dependence on an actor. Apart from this, one does not see a cause which is established.

13. /de bzhin nyer len shes par bya/ /las dang byed po bsal* phyir ro/ /byed pa po dang las dag gis/ /dngos po lhag ma** shes par bya/
13. Likewise, one should understand clinging, because act and actor are dispelled. Remaining things too should be understood by means of actor and act.

byed pa po dang las brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa brgyad pa'o//

9. Investigation of the Presence of Something Prior

(Already)

1. /lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor sogs dang yang dbang byas pa //gang gi yin pa de dag gi //snga rol de yod kha cig smra /

1. Some say that whatever is involved in seeing, hearing etc. and feeling etc. exists prior to them.

2. /dngos po yod pa ma yin na //lta ba la sogs ji ltar 'gyur //de phyir de dag snga rol na //dngos po gnas pa de yod do /

2. If [that] thing is not evident, how can there be seeing etc? Therefore, the presence [of that] thing [must] exist before them.

3. /lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor ba la sogs nyid kyi ni //snga rol dngos po gang gnas pa //de ni gang gis gdags par bya /

3. What configures/makes known that thing which is present before seeing and hearing etc. and feeling etc.?

4. /lta ba la sogs med par yang //gal te de ni gnas gyur na //de med par yang de dag ni //yod par 'gyur bar the tshom med /

4. If it were present even without seeing etc., there would be no doubt that they would exist even without it.

5. /ci yis gang zhig gsal bar byed //gang gis ci zhig gsal bar byed //ci med gang zhig ga la yod //gang med ci zhig ga la yod /

5. It is illuminated by them; they are illuminated by it. How could it exist without them? How could they exist without it?

6. /lta la sogs pa thams cad kyi //snga rol gang zhig yod pa min //lta sogs nang nas gzhan zhig gis //gzhan gyi tshe na gsal bar byed /

6. It is not evident prior to the totality of seeing etc. From among seeing etc. a different one illuminates [it] at different times.
7. /lta la sogs pa thams cad kyi //snga rol gal te yod min na //lta la sogs pa re re yi //snga rol de ni ji ltar yod /

7. If it is not evident prior to the totality of seeing etc., how can it be evident prior to [each of them] seeing etc. individually?

8. /lta po de nyid nyan po de //gal te tshor po'ang de nyid na //re re'i snga rol yod gyur na //de ni de ltar ni rigs so /

8. If the seer itself [were] the hearer and the feeler [were] it too, if it existed prior to each, in that way it would not make sense.

9. /gal te lta po gzhan nyid la //nyan pa po gzhan tshor gzhan na //lta po yod tshe nyan por* 'gyur //bdag kyang mang po nyid du 'gyur /

[!*Ts. po; Lha. por]

9. If the seer were different, the hearer different, the feeler different, at the time the seer exists, there would be a hearer. Many selves would come about.

10. /lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor ba dag la sogs pa dang* //gang las 'gyur ba'i 'byung de la'ang //de ni yod pa ma yin no /

[!*Ts. & Lha. yang]

10. Also it is not evident in the elements from which seeing and hearing etc. and feeling etc. occur.

11. /lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor ba dag la sogs pa yang //gang gi yin pa gal te med //de dag kyang ni yod ma yin /

11. If that to which seeing and hearing etc. and feeling etc. belong is not evident, they too could not be evident.

12. /gang zhig lta la sogs pa yi //snga rol da lta phyi na med //de la yod do med do zhes //rtog pa dag ni ldog par 'gyur /

12. Reject the concepts “it exists,” “it doesn’t exist” about that which is not evident prior to, now or after seeing etc.

snga rol na gnas pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa dgu pa'o // //

10. Investigation of Fire and Firewood

(Fire)
1. If firewood were fire, actor and act would be one. If fire were other than wood, it would occur even without wood.

2. [Fire] would burn permanently and would not arise from causes for burning. Starting [a fire] would be meaningless. If it were like that, there would also be no act.

3. Because [fire] does not depend on anything else, it would not arise from causes for burning. If it burned permanently, starting it would be meaningless.

4. Concerning this, if one thinks that while burning it is firewood, if it is such only at that time, by what could that firewood be ignited?

5. Because [fire] is other, it would not connect; if it did not connect, it would not ignite; if it did not ignite, it would not die; if it did not die, it would also remain in possession of its own characteristic.

6. Just as a woman connects with a man and a man too with a woman, although fire is other than wood, it is fit to connect with wood.

7. If fire and wood eliminated each other, even though fire is something other than wood, it would have to connect with wood.

8. If fire were dependent on wood and wood were dependent on fire, of what becomes fire and wood dependently, which would be established first?
9. If fire were dependent on wood, [already] established fire would be established [again]. Firewood also would be [such] even without fire.

10. If a thing (A) is established dependently (on B), [but] if what it depends upon (B) is established also in dependence on that very thing (A), what would be established in dependence on what?

11. How can a thing (A) which is established dependently (on B) be dependent (on B) when it (A) is not established? If one asks, “how can establishment be dependent?” It is not reasonable for it (A) to be dependent.

12. There is no fire that is dependent on wood; there is also no fire that is not dependent on wood. There is no wood that is dependent on fire; there is also no wood that is not dependent on fire.

13. Fire does not come from something else; fire also does not exist in wood. Likewise, the remainder of wood has been shown by gone, not-gone and going.

14. Wood itself is not fire; fire is also not something other than wood. Fire does not possess wood; wood does not exist in fire; that (fire) does not exist in it.

15. Through fire and wood is explained without exception all the stages of self and the grasped and at the same time jugs, cloth and so on.

16. I do not think those who teach the identity or difference of self and things are wise in the meaning of the teaching.
11. Investigation of Extremes of Before and After

(Before)

1. When asked, “is a before-extreme evident?” the great Muni said, “it is not.” Samsara has no beginning, no end; it has no before, no after.

2. For that without beginning [and] end, where can a middle be in that? Therefore, it is not possible for it to have before, after, and simultaneous phases.

3. If birth were before and aging/death after, there would be birth without aging/death and also without dying one would be born.

4. If birth were after and aging/death before, how could there be an uncaused aging/death which has no birth?

5. It is not suitable for birth and aging/death to be simultaneous; that which is being born would be dying and both would be without cause.

6. Why fixate on that birth, that aging/dying, for which the phases of before, after, simultaneity are impossible?
7. /khor ba ‘ba’ zhig sngon gyi mtha’/ yod ma yin par ma zad kyi//rgyu dang ‘bras bu nyid dang ni//mtshan nyid dang ni mtshan gzhi nyid/

7. It is not just samsara alone that has no before-extreme, cause and fruit themselves, and characteristics and the basis for characteristics themselves,

8. /tshor dang tshor po nyid dang ni//don yod gang dag ci yang rung//dngos rnams thams cad nyid la yang//sngon gyi mtha’ ni yod ma yin/

8. feeling and the feeler, whatever is suitable to bear meaning, also all things have no before-extreme.

/sngon dang phyi ma’i mtha’ brtag pa zhes bya ste rab tu byed pa bcu gcig pa’o/ 

12. Investigation of Anguish

(Anguish)

[Tib. has “Investigation of what is made by me and made by others” while Skt. has duhkha.]

1. /kha cig sdug bsngal bdag gis byas //gzhan gyis byas dang gnyi gas byas //rgyu med pa* las ’byung bar ’dod //de ni bya bar mi rung ngo /

[*Lha. par]

1. Some assert that anguish arises from being made by self, made by other, by both, without cause. To do that is not suitable.

2. /gal te bdag gis byas gyur na //de phyir brten nas ’byung mi ’gyur //gang phyir phung po ’di dag la //brten nas phung po de dag ’byung /

2. If it were made by self, therefore it would not be contingently arising, because those aggregates arise contingently on these aggregates.

[A difficulty with this entire chapter is to know what bdag (self) refers to in the context of the creation of anguish. Does it refer to “oneself”, i.e. the person who suffers, or to anguish “itself?” In verse 2, the latter reading would seem to suggest itself, but then it would be at odds with the subsequent verses, where N. explicitly introduces the ideas of svapudgala and parapudgala (one’s own person and the other person) as the creators of anguish. Verse 10, with its comparison of anguish with external things, likewise would suggest the latter reading. I have chosen to translate the entire chapter (thus leaving v.
10 ambiguous) in the former sense. The crucial issue here, I feel, is the confusion around what it means to say “I cause myself pain.”

3. \[ gal \text{ de} \ 'di \text{ las de gzh}an \ zhing //gal \text{ de} \ 'di \text{ g}zhan \ \text{na} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ gzh\text{an} \ gyi\text{s bya} \ \text{par} \ 'gyur \ zh\text{ing} //\text{g}zhan \ \text{de} \ dag \ \text{gis de bya}s \ 'gyur / \]

3. If that were other than this and if this were other than that, anguish would be made by other and that would be made by those others.

[ Ts. 244 is happy with the reading of c-d by Buddhapalita and Sherab Dronme: \[ gzh\text{an de dag gis 'di bya}s \ \text{pas} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ gzh\text{an} \ gyi\text{s bya}s \ \text{par} \ 'gyur / = “...anguish would be made by others since those others made this.”

4. \[ gal \text{ te} \ \text{gang zag b}d\text{ag gis ni} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ \text{bya}s \ \text{na} \ \text{gang b}\text{dag gis} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ \text{bya}s \ \text{pa'i gan} \ \text{zag ni* //\text{sdug b}nsgal} \ \text{ma g}togs \ \text{gang zhig yin} / \]

[*Lha. de*]

4. If anguish were made by one’s own person, who would that person be who has made anguish by himself, but is not included in the anguish?

5. \[ gal \text{ te} \ \text{gang zag gzh}an \ \text{las ni} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ 'by\text{ung na g}z\text{han zhig gis} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ \text{de bya}s \ \text{gang sb}yin \ \text{de} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ \text{ma g}togs \ \text{ji ltar rung} / \]

5. If anguish arose from another person, how could it be suitable for there to be [someone] not included in the anguish, who has been given it by another who made the anguish?

6. \[ gal \text{ te} \ \text{gang zag gzh}an \ \text{sdug b}nsgal // 'by\text{ung na gang gis de bya}s \ \text{nas} //\text{g}z\text{han la ster ba'i gan} \ \text{zag gzh}an //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ \text{ma g}togs \ \text{gang zhig yin} / \]

6. If anguish arose [from] another person, who would that other person be who, having made it, gives it to someone else, but is not included in the anguish?

[Ts. 246 points out that this verse is not found in Buddhapalita or Sherab Dronme, but is found in Chandrakirti.]

7. \[ b\text{dag gis bya}s \ \text{par ma grub pas} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ gzh\text{an} \ gyi\text{s ga la bya}s //gzh\text{an} \ gyi\text{s sdug b}nsgal \ \text{gang byed pa} //\text{de ni de} \ \text{yi b}d\text{ag bya}s \ 'gyur / \]

7. Since it is not established as made by self, how can anguish have been made by other? [For] whatever anguish is made by other, that has been made by his self.

8. \[ re \ \text{zhig sdug b}nsgal \ b\text{dag bya}s \ \text{mi}n //de \ \text{nyi}d \ \text{kyis ni de ma bya}s //gal \ \text{te g}z\text{han b}d\text{ag ma bya}s \ \text{na} //\text{sdug b}nsgal \ gzh\text{an} \ \text{bya}s \ \text{ga la} \ 'gyur / \]
8. Anguish is not made [by] self; that is not made by that itself. If it is not made by an other self, how can anguish be made by other?

9. /gal te re res byas gyur na //sdug bsngal gnyis kas byas par 'gyur //bdag gis ma byas gzhan ma byas* //sdug bsngal rgyu med ga la 'gyur /

[*Lha. gzhan gyis ma byas bdag ma byas]

9. If it is made by each, anguish would be made by both. Not made by self, not made by other, how can anguish have no cause?

10. /sdug bsngal 'ba' zhog rnam pa bzhi //yod ma yin par ma zad kyi //phyi rol dngos po dag la yang //rnam pa bzhi po yod ma yin /

10. Not only does anguish alone not have the four aspects, external things too do not have the four aspects.

bdag gis byas pa dang gzhan gyis byas pa bhtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu gnyis pa'o // ///

13. Investigation of Samskaras

(Change)

1. /bcom ldan 'das kyis chos gang zhig//bslu ba de ni brdzun zhes gsungs//du byed thams cad bslu ba'i chos//des na de dag brdzun pa yin/

1. The Bhagavan said that whatever dharma is deceptive, that is false. All conditions [are] deceptive dharmas, thus they are false.

[The key to this verse lies in the source of the statement of the Buddha. Hopkins points out that a similar statement is found in the Dhatuvibhanga-sutra of the Majjhima Nikaya [MN 140: 26, p.1093]. This passage is translated from the Pali as: “For that is false, bhikkhu, which has a deceptive nature, and that is true which has an undeceptive nature - Nibbana. Therefore a bhikkhu possessing [this truth] possesses the supreme foundation of truth. For this, bhikkhu, is the supreme noble truth, namely, Nibbana, which has an undeceptive nature.” Tsongkhapa’s outline treats this verse under the heading: “explaining non-inherent existence by means of a citation well-known to others.” He then cites this text, which reads: “Bhikshus, whatever phenomenon is a deceptive conditioned thing, (’dus byas) that is false and whatever phenomenon - nirvana - is undeceptive, that is the sublime truth.” And then another: “Likewise, a conditioned thing is also a deceptive phenomenon. It is also an utterly perishing phenomenon.” [Ts. 250-1]]
2. If whatever is a deceptive phenomenon is false, what is deceptive about it [in what way is it deceptive]? That statement by the Bhagavan is a complete presentation of emptiness.

3. Things have no essential nature because they are seen to change into something else. Things do not lack an essential nature because things are emptiness.

4. If there were no essential nature, whose [nature] would it be to change into something else? If there were an essential nature, how would it be possible to change into something else?

5. This itself does not change into something else. The other itself too does not [either]. Because youth does not age. Because age too does not age.

6. If this itself changes into something else, milk itself would be curds. Something other than milk would be the being of curds.

7. If a bit of the non-empty existed, a bit of the empty would also exist. If there did not exist a bit of the non-empty, how could the empty exist?

8. If there were no essential nature, whose [nature] would it be to change into something else? If there were an essential nature, how would it be possible to change into something else?
8. The Conquerors taught emptiness as the forsaking of all views. Those who view emptiness are taught to be without realisation [incurable/incorrigible].

[The source here is given by Candrakirti and Tsongkhapa as the *Ratnakuta Sutra*, i.e. a Mahayana text. “The earliest Mahayana sutras now extant appear to be some of those collected in what came to be called the *Ratnakuta*. ... Some of these were translated into Chinese as early as the latter part of the 2nd century AD.” Warder. *Indian Buddhism*, 356. The *Kasyapaparivarta* seems to be one of these early sections, in Warder it is sometimes synonymous with the *Ratnakuta* (in contrast to the *Great Ratnakuta*). It also originates from Andra in South India.

Tsongkhapa quotes a large chunk of the *Kasyapaparivarta* (*od srungs kyis zhus pa*), pp 260-1, which concludes with this passage: “The Bhagavan said: ‘Likewise, Kasyapa, if emptiness is the emerging from (forsaking of) all views, then Kasyapa, he who views emptiness alone cannot possibly be cured.’”

¹⁄₁₄. Investigation of Connections

*(Connection)*

1. The seen, the seeing and the seer: these three do not mutually connect [as] pairs or all [together].

2. Likewise desire, desiring and the desired, the remaining afflictions and also the remaining sense-fields do [not connect] by three aspects.

3. If the other connects to the other, because the seen and so forth do not exist [as] other, therefore there is no connection.
4. Not only are the seen and so forth alone not existing as other, it is invalid for anything simultaneous with something to be other [than it].

5. The other is other in dependence upon the other. Without the other, the other would not be other. It is invalid for whatever is dependent on something to be other than that.

6. If the other was other than the other, then, without the other, it would be other. Without the other it would not be other. Therefore, it does not exist.

7. Otherness does not exist in the other. Nor does it exist in what is not other. If otherness does not exist, neither the other nor that itself exists.

8. That does not connect with that. The other too does not connect with the other. The connecting, the connection and the connector too do not exist.

15. Investigation of Essences

(Essence)

1. It is unreasonable for an essence to arise from causes and conditions. Whatever essence arose from causes and conditions would be something that has been made.
2. How is it possible for there to be “an essence which has been made?”

Essences are not contrived and not dependent on anything else.

3. If an essence does not exist, how can the thingness of the other exist?

[For] the essence of the thingness of the other is said to be the thingness of the other.

[There is a problem here with the Tibetan translation from Sanskrit. Svabhava is translated as rang bzhin, but parabhava rather clumsily as gzhan gyi dngos po [the term first appears in I:3]. A Tibetan reader would thus lose the etymological connection between “own-thing” (svabhava) and “other-thing” (parabhava), which then link up with “thing” (bhava) and no-thing (abhava). Nagarjuna is playing on the word “thing”.

4. Apart from an essence and the thingness of the other, what things are there? If essences and thingnesses of others existed, things would be established.

5. If things were not established, non-things would not be established.

[When] a thing becomes something else, people say that it is a non-thing.

Those who view essence, thingness of the other, things and non-things do not see the suchness in the teaching of the awakened.

7. Through knowing things and non-things, the Buddha negated both existence and non-existence in his Advice to Katyayana.

8. If [things] existed essentially, they would not come to non-existence.
It is never the case that an essence could become something else.

9. /rang bzhin yod pa ma yin na//gzhain du ‘gyur ba gang gi yin//rang bzhin yod pa yin na yang//gzhain du ‘gyur ba gang gi yin/

9. If essences did not exist, what could become something else? Even if essences existed, what could become something else?

10. /yod ces bya ba rtag par ‘dzin//med ces bya ba chad par lta//de phyir yod dang med pa la/mkhas pas gnas par mi bya’o/

10. “Existence” is the grasping at permanence; “non-existence” is the view of annihilation. Therefore, the wise do not dwell, in existence or non-existence.

11. /gang zhig rang bzhin gyis yod pa//de ni med pa min pas rtag//sngon byung da ltar med ces pa//das na chad par thal bar ‘gyur/

11. “Since that which exists by its essence is not non-existent,” is [the view of] permanence. “That which arose before is now non-existent,” leads to [the view of] annihilation.

rang bzhin brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bco lnga pa’o

16. Investigation of Bondage and Freedom

(Life)

1. /gal te ‘du byed ‘khor zhe na//de dag rtag na mi ‘khor te//mi rtag na yang ‘khor mi ‘gyur//sems can la yang rim ‘di mtshungs/

1. If it is said that impulses are “samsara”, if they were permanent, they would not move around. Even if impermanent, they would not move around. Sentient beings too are similar in this respect.

2. /gal te gang zag ‘khor zhe na//phung po skye mched khamz rnams la//de ni rnam pa lngas bstal na//med na gang zhig ‘khor bar ‘gyur/

2. If it is said that persons “move around,” if they are non-existent when searched for in five aspects among the aggregates, sense fields and elements, what would move around?

3. /nye bar len nas nyer len par//‘khor na srid pa med par ‘gyur//srid med nye bar len med na//de gang ci zhig ‘khor bar ‘gyur/
3. If one moves around in having clung [to something] and then clinging [to something else], there would be no becoming. If there were no clinging and no becoming, who would move around?

4. /'du byed mya ngan ‘da’ bar ni/ci ltar bur yang mi ‘thad do//sens can mya ngan ‘da’ bar yang//ci ltar bur yang ‘thad mi ‘gyur/

4. It is in no way feasible that impulses go beyond misery.

And it is in no way feasible that living beings go beyond misery.

5. /skye ‘jig chos can ‘du byed rnams//mi ‘ching grol bar mi ‘gyur te//snga ma bzhin du sens can yang//mi ‘ching grol bar mi ‘gyur ro/

5. Impulses that have the properties of being born and dying are not bound and will not be freed. In the same way as above living beings too are not bound and will not be freed.

6. /gal te nye bar len ‘ching na//nye bar len bcas ‘ching mi ‘gyur//nye bar len med mi ‘ching ste//gnas skabs gang zhis ‘ching bar ‘gyur/

6. If clinging binds, the one who has clinging would not be bound.

And there would be no bondage without clinging. In what situation would there be bondage?

7. /gal te bcing bya’i snga rol na//ching ba yod na ‘ching la rag//de yang med de lhag ma ni//song dang ma song bgom pas bstan/

7. If binding existed prior to one who is bound, [that unbound person] would depend on binding. That too cannot be. The rest has been explained by the gone, the not-gone and the going.

8. /re zhig bcings pa mi ‘grol te//ma bcings pa yang grol mi ‘gyur//bcing pa grol bzhin yin ‘gyur na//bcing dang grol ba dus gcig ‘gyur/

8. Those who are bound will not be free. And those who are not bound will not be free. If those who are bound become free, bondage and freedom would be simultaneous.

9. /bdag ni len med mya ngan ‘da’//myang ‘das bdag gir ‘gyur ro zhes//de ltar gang dag ‘dzin de yis//nyer len ‘dzin pa chen po yin/

9. “I, without clinging, am beyond misery. Nirvana is mine.” Those who grasp in that way have great grasping and clinging.

10. /gang la mya ngan ‘das bskyed med//’khor ba bsal ba’ang yod min pa//de la ‘khor ba ci zhig yin//mya ngan ‘das pa’ang ci zhig brtag/
10. When nirvana is not born and samsara not eliminated, then what is samsara? And what is considered as nirvana?

bcings pa dang thar pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu drug pa'o // //

17. Investigation of Actions and Fruits

(Acts)

1. /bdag nyid legs par sdom pa dang//gzhon la phan ‘dogs byams sems gang//de chos de ni ‘di gzhon du//bras bu dag gi sa bon yin/

1. Restraining oneself well and loving thoughts that benefit others are the Dharma which is the seed of fruits here and elsewhere.

2. /drang srong mchog gi las rnams ni//sems pa dang ni bsams par gsungs//las de dag gi bye brag ni//rnam pa du mar yongs su bsgrags/

2. The great sage has taught all actions to be intention and what is intended. The specifics of those actions are well known to be of many kinds.

3. /de la las gang sems pa zhes//gsungs pa de ni yid gyir ‘dod//bsams pa zhes ni gang gsungs pa//de ni lus dang ngag gir ‘dod/

3. In this respect action spoken of as “intention” is regarded as being that of mind. That spoken of as “what is intended” is regarded as being that of body and speech.

4. /ngag dang bskyod dang mi spong ba’i//rnam rig byed min zhes bya gang//spong ba’i rnam rig byed min pa//gzhon dag kyang ni de bzhin ‘dod/

4. Whatever (1) speech and (2) movements and (3) “unconscious not-letting-go,” (4) other kinds of unconscious letting-go are also regarded like that.

5. /longs spyod las byung bsod nams dang//bsod nams ma yin tshul de bzhin//sems pa dang ni chos de bdun//las su mngon par ‘dod pa yin/

5. (5) Goodness that arises from enjoyment/use and in the same manner (6) what is not goodness,[and] (7) intention. These seven dharmas are clearly regarded as action.
[This seven-fold division of acts is not traceable to any school of which I am aware. The simpler division into restraint and love found in v. 1 serves a similar purpose to v. 4&5 and has the added advantage of leading into v. 6 through its mention of “fruits”.

6. /gal te smin pa’i dus bar du//gnas na las de rtag par ‘gyur//gal te ‘gags na ‘gag gyur pas//ciltar ‘bras bu skyed par ‘gyur/

6. If the action remained until the time of ripening, it would become permanent. If it stopped, by having stopped, how could a fruit be born?

7. /myu gu la sogs rgyun gang ni//sa bon las ni mngon par ‘byung//de las ‘bras bu sa bon ni//med na de yang ‘byung mi ‘gyur/

7. The continuum of sprouts and so on clearly emerges from seeds, and from that fruits. If there were no seeds, they too would not emerge.

8. /gang phyir sa bon las rgyun dang//rgyun las ‘bras bu ‘byung ‘gyur zhing//sa bon ‘bras bu’i sngon ‘gro ba//de phyir chad min rtag ma yin/

8. Because continuums are from seeds and fruits emerge from continuums and seeds precede fruits, therefore, there is no annihilation and no permanence.

9. /sems kyi rgyun ni gang yin pa//sems las mngon par ‘byung bar ‘gyur//de las ‘bras bu sems lta zhig//med na de yang ‘byung mi ‘gyur/

9. The continuum of mind clearly emerges from mind, and from that fruits. If there were no mind, they too would not emerge.

10. /gang phyir sems las rgyun dang ni//rgyun las ‘bras bu ‘byung ‘gyur zhing//las ni ‘bras bu’i sngon ‘gro ba//de phyir chad min rtag ma yin/

10. Because continuums are from minds and fruits emerge from continuums and actions precede fruits, therefore, there is no annihilation and no permanence.

11. /dkar po’i las kyi lam bcu po//chos sgrub pa yi thabs yin te//chos kyi ‘bras bu ‘di gzhan du//’dod pa’i yon tan rnam lnga po/

11. The ten paths of white action are the means of practising Dharma. Here and elsewhere, the fruits of Dharma are the five kinds of sensual qualities.

12. /gal te brtag pa der gyur na//nyes pa chen po mang por ‘gyur//de lta bas na brtag pa de//’dir ni ‘thad pa ma yin no/

12. If it were as that investigation, many great mistakes would occur. Therefore, that investigation is not valid here.

13. /sangs rgyas rnams dang rang rgyal dang//nyan thos rnams kyi’s gang gsungs pa’i//brtag pa gang zhig ‘dir ‘thad pa//de ni rab tu brjod par bya/
13. I will fully declare the investigation which is taught by the Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas and Sravakas, which is valid here.

[The explicit denunciation of v. 12 and the strident certainty of v. 13 are an uncharacteristically heavy-handed and wordy way of telling us that the “right” view is about to be given. Yet the text presents all voices with sympathy, suggesting a developmental account of ethics in Buddhism rather than a “we’re right - you’re wrong” version.]

14. Just like a contract, irrevocable action is like a debt. In terms of realms, there are four types. Moreover, its nature is unspecified.

[nb. “nature” = Skt. prakrti = Tib. rang bzhin]

15. If it perished through being let go of by letting go and the transcendence of the action, then faults would follow such as the perishing of actions.

16. In the visible world there are two kinds. Actions of all [types] and that [irrevocability] of actions are produced as different things and remain [so?] even on ripening.
19. When the fruit is transcendent and when one dies, that ceases. One should know its divisions to be without-corruption and with-corruption.

20. Emptiness is not annihilation and samsara is not permanent. The dharma of the irreversibility of actions is taught by the Buddha.

21. Because actions are not born, in this way they have no nature. Therefore, because they are not born, therefore they are irreversable.

22. If actions existed [by] nature, without doubt they would be permanent. Actions would not be done [by an agent] because what is permanent cannot be done.

23. If actions were not done [by anyone], one would fear meeting what [one] has not done. Also the fault would follow for that [person] of not dwelling in the pure life.

24. All conventions also without doubt would be contradictory. Also the distinction between doing good and evil would not be valid.

25. [When] the ripening of that [action] has ripened it would ripen again and again, because if it existed [by] nature, it would [always] remain.

26. This action has the character of affliction and afflictions are not real. If affliction is not real, how can action be real?
27. Actions and afflictions are taught to be the conditions for bodies. If actions and afflictions are empty, how can one speak of bodies?

28. /ma rig bsgrig pa'i skye bo gang//sred ldan de ni za ba po//de yang byed las gzhan min zhi ng//de nyid de yang ma yin no/

28. People who are obscured by ignorance, those with craving, are the consumers [of the fruits of action]. They are not other than those who do the action and they are also not those very ones.

29. /gang gi phyir na las 'di ni//rkyen las byung ba ma yin zhi ng//rkyen min las byung yod min pa//de phyir byed pa po yang med/

29. Because the action does not emerge from conditions and does not emerge from non-conditions, therefore, the agent too does not exist.

30. /gal te las dang byed med na//las skyes 'bras bu la yod//ci ste 'bras bu yod min na//za ba po lta ga la yod/

30. If neither the action nor the agent exists, where can there be a fruit of the action? If the fruit does not exist, where can the consumer exist?

31. /ci ltar ston pas sprul ba ni//rdzu 'phrul phun tshogs kyis sprul zhing//sprul pa de yang sprul pa na//slar yang gzhan ni sprul pa ltar/

31. Just as a teacher creates a creation by a wealth of magical powers, and just as if that creation too created, again another would be created,

32. /de bzhin byed po das las gang//byas pa'ang sprul pa'i rnam pa bzhin//dper na sprul pas sprul gzhan zhig//sprul pa mdzad pa de bzhin no/

32. Like this, whatever action too done by that agent [is] also like the aspect of a creation. It is just like, for example, a creation creating another creation.

33. /nyon mongs las dang lus rnam s dang//byed pa po dang 'bras bu dag//dri za'i grong khyer lta bu dang//smig rgyu rmi lam 'dra ba yin/

33. Afflictions, actions and bodies and agents and fruits are like a city of gandharvas, a mirage, a dream.

las brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu bdun pa'o // //

18. Investigation of Self and Things
1. If the aggregates were self, it would be possessed of arising and decaying. If it were other than the aggregates, it would not have the characteristics of the aggregates.

2. If the self did not exist, where could what is mine exist? In order to pacify self and what is mine, grasping I and grasping mine can exist no more.

3. The one who does not grasp at me and mine likewise does not exist.

Whoever sees the one who does not grasp at me and mine does not see.

[c-d are omitted on the grounds of their being a reiteration of a-b]

4. When one ceases thinking of inner and outer things as self and mine, clinging will come to a stop. Through that ceasing, birth will cease.

5. Through the ceasing of action and affliction, there is freedom. Action and affliction [come] from thoughts and they from fixations. Fixations are stopped by emptiness.

6. It is said that “there is a self,” but “non-self” too is taught. The buddhas also teach there is nothing which is “neither self nor non-self.”

[Tsongkhapa (325) cites the Kasyapaparvrtti as a source here]
7. That to which language refers is denied, because an object experienced by the mind is denied. The unborn and unceasing nature of reality is comparable to nirvana.

[Tsongkhapa (326) explains that c-d are an answer to the question implied in 5c-d, i.e. “how does emptiness stop fixations?”]

8. Everything is real, not real; both real and not real; neither not real nor real: this is the teaching of the Buddha.

9. Not known through others, peaceful, not fixed by fixations, without conceptual thought, without differentiation: these are the characteristics of suchness.

10. Whatever arises dependent on something else is at that time neither that very thing nor other than it. Hence it is neither severed nor permanent.

[Buddhapalita commentary gives: /don gcig min don tha dad min//chad pa ma yin rtag ma yin/

11. That ambrosial teaching of the buddhas, those guardians of the world, is neither the same nor different, neither severed nor permanent.

[Buddhapalita commentary: Not the same, not different, not severed, not permanent - that is the ambrosial teaching of the buddha, the guardian of the world.]

12. When perfect buddhas do not appear, and when their disciples have died out, the wisdom of the self-awakened ones will vividly arise without reliance.
19. Investigation of Time

(Time)

1. /da ltar byung dang ma ‘ongs pa//gal te ‘das la ltos gyur na//da ltar byung dang ma ‘ongs pa//’das pa’i dus ni yod par ’gyur/

1. If the present and the future were contingent on the past, then the present and the future would have existed in the past.

2. /da ltar byung dang ma ‘ongs pa//gal te de ni med gyur na// da ltar byung dang ma ‘ongs pa//ci ltar de la ltos par ’gyur/

2. If the present and future did not exist there, then how could the present and the future be contingent on it?

3. /’das pa la ni ma ltos par//de gnyis grub pa yod ma yin//de phyir da ltar byung ba dang//ma ‘ong dus kyang yod ma yin/

3. Without being contingent on the past neither can be established. Hence the present and the future times also do not exist.

4. /rim pa’i tshul ni ’di nyid kyis//hlag ma gnyis po bsnor ba dang//mchog dang tha ma ‘bring la sosgs//gcig la sosgs pa’ang shes par bya/

4. These very stages can be applied to the other two. Superior, inferior, middling etc., singularity and so on can also be understood [thus].

[a-b: this means that you could say the same about past and future in relation to the present and present and past in relation to future as you can of present and future in relation to past as Nagarjuna has just done in v. 1-3.]

5. /mi gnas dus ni ‘dzin mi byed//gang zhig gzung bar bya ba’i dus//gnas pa yod pa ma yin pas//ma bzung dus ni ji ltar gdags/

5. Non-dwelling time cannot be apprehended. Since time which can be apprehended, does not exist as something which dwells, how can one talk of unapprehendable time?

6. /gal te dus ni dngos rten te//dngos med dus ni ga la yod//dngos po ‘ga’ yang yod min na//dus lta yod par ga la ‘gyur/
6. If time depended on things, where would time which is a non-thing exist? If there were no things at all, where would a view of time exist?

dus brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu dgu pa'o ///

20. Investigation of Combination

(Combination)

1. /gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs pa nyid las skye ‘gyur zhing//tshogs la ‘bras bu yod na ni//ji ltar tshogs pa nyid las skye/

1. If a fruit is born from the combination of cause and conditions and exists in the combination, how can it be born from the combination itself?

2. /gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs pa nyid las skye ‘gyur zhing//tshogs la ‘bras bu med na ni//ji ltar tshogs pa nyid las skye/

2. If a fruit is born from the combination of cause and conditions and does not exist in the combination, how can it be born from the combination itself?

3. /gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs la ‘bras bu yod na ni//tshogs la gzung du yod rigs na//tshogs pa nyid la gzung du med/

3. If the fruit exists in the combination of cause and conditions, it would be correct for it to be apprehendable in the combination but it is not apprehendable in the combination.

4. /gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs la ‘bras bu med na ni//rgyu rnams dang ni rkyen dag kyang//rgyu rkyen ma yin mtshungs par ‘gyur/

4. If the fruit does not exist in the combination of cause and conditions, the causes and conditions would be comparable to non-causes and conditions.

5. /gal te rgyus ni ‘bras bu la//rgyu byin nas ni ‘gag ‘gyur na//gang byin pa dang gang ‘gags pa'i//rgyu yi bdag nyid gnyis su ‘gyur/

5. If the cause stops once it has given the cause to the fruit, there would be a double nature of the cause: one that gives and one that stops.

6. /gal te rgyus ni ‘bras bu la//rgyu ma byin par ‘gag ‘gyur na//rgyu ‘gags nas ni skyes pa yi//bras bu de dag rgyu med ‘gyur/

6. If the cause stops without having given the cause to the fruit, those fruits which are born after the cause has stopped would be uncaused.
7. If the fruit were also born at the same time as the combination, it would follow that the producer and the produced would be simultaneous.

8. If the fruit were born prior to the combination, there would occur an uncaused fruit which has no cause and conditions.

9. If [when] a cause stops, it is forever transferred to the fruit, then it would follow that the cause which was born before would be born again.

10. How can the production of fruit be produced by the stopping and disappearing [of something]? Also how can fruit be produced by related causes which persist with it?

11. If cause and fruit are not related, what fruit can be produced? Causes do not produce fruits they either see or don’t see.

12. The simultaneous connection of a past fruit with a past, a future and a present cause never exists.

13. The simultaneous connection of a present fruit with a future, a past and a present cause never exists.

14. The simultaneous connection of a future fruit with a present, a future and a past cause never exists.
15. When there is no connection, how can a cause produce fruit? Even when there is connection, how can a cause produce fruit?

16. If a cause is empty of fruit, how can it produce fruit? If a cause is not empty of fruit, how can it produce fruit?

[Ts. 353 appears to read stong in this context as simply “absent”. This verse and 17-18 indicate N’s fluid, non-dogmatic use of the term “empty”.]

17. Unempty fruit would not be produced; the unempty would not stop. That unempty is unstoppable and also unproducible.

18. How would empty [fruit] be produced? And how would the empty stop? It follows that that empty too is unstoppable and also unproducible.

[ Ts. 354 gets round this by saying: “How would fruit which is empty of inherent existence be intrinsically produced? And how would it stop by its own nature?” This adds something that is not there in Nagarjuna in order to conform to Ts’s insistence that stong pa ALWAYS means rang bzhin gyis stong pa.]

19. It is never possible that cause and fruit are identical. It is never possible that cause and fruit are other.

20. If cause and fruit were identical, produce and producer would be identical. If cause and fruit were other, cause and non-cause would be similar.
21. If fruit existed essentially, what would a cause produce? If fruit did not exist essentially, what would a cause produce?

[Ts. 354-5 has the same difficulty as in 16-18 with l. c-d. He explains that a non-inherently existing fruit would not be produced by a cause in the sense that non-inherently existence things are also non-inherently existent. This is another example of Ts. forcing Nagarjuna into his interpretative scheme. It also shows Ts. as somewhat “incurable”. G. 266 also fudges this difficulty: “from the ultimate standpoint it does not arise.”]

22. /skyed par byed pa ma yin na//rgyu nyid ‘thad par mi ‘gyur ro//rgyu nyid ‘thad pa yod min na//’bras bu gang gi yin par ‘gyur/

22. If it were not productive, the cause itself would be impossible. If the cause itself were impossible, whose would the fruit be?

23. /rgyu rnams dang ni rkyen dag gi//tshogs pa gang yin de yis ni//bdag gis bdag nyid mi skyed na//’bras bu ji ltar skyed par byed/

23. If whatever is a combination of causes and conditions does not produce itself by itself, how could it produce fruit?

24. /de phyir tshogs pas byas pa med//tshogs min byas pa’i ‘bras bu med//’bras bu yod pa ma yin na/rkyen gyi tshogs pa ga la yod/

24. Therefore, there is no fruit which has been made by combination [or] made by non-combination. If fruit does not exist, where can a combination of conditions exist?

21. Investigation of Rising and Passing

(Disappearance)

1. /’jig pa ‘byung ba med par ram//lhan cig yod pa nyid ma yin//’byung ba ‘jig pa med par ram/ /lhan cig yod pa nyid ma yin //

1. Passing does not exist without or together with rising. Rising does not exist without or together with passing.
The Sanskrit terms sambhava ('byung ba/rising) and vibhava ('jig pa/passing) are related to bhava (dgnos po/thing); also cf. svabhava and parabhava. So “appearance” and “disappearance” would capture the play on the two words. Not also that in verses 15-16 the Tib. 'byung/'jig does not translate sambhava/vibhava, but udaya/vyaya

2. '/jig pa 'byung ba med par ni/ /ji lta bur na yod pa 'gyur/ /skye ba med par 'chi bar 'gyur/ /'jig pa 'byung ba med par med //

2. How can passing exist without rising? Is there death without birth? There is no passing without rising.

3. '/jig pa 'byung dang lhan cig tu/ /ji ltar yod pa nyid du 'gyur/ /chi ba skye dang dus gcig tu/ /yod pa nyid ni ma yin no //

3. How could passing exist together with rising? Death does not exist at the same time as birth.

4. '/byung ba 'jig pa med par ni/ /ji lta bur na yod par 'gyur*/ /dngos po rnam s la mi rtag nyid/ /nam yang med pa ma yin no //

[Lha. *ji ltar yod pa nyid du 'gyur]

4. How could rising exist without passing? Things are never not impermanent.

5. '/byung ba 'jig dang lhan cig tu/ /ji ltar yod pa nyid du 'gyur/ /skye ba 'chi dang dus gcig tu/ /yod pa nyid ni ma yin no //

5. How could rising exist together with passing? Birth does not exist at the same time as death.

6. gang dag phan tshun lhan cig gam/ /phan tshun lhan cig ma yin par/ /grub pa yod pa ma yin pa/ /de dag grub pa ji ltar yod //

6. How can those that are not established either mutually together or not mutually together be established?

7. /zad la 'byung ba yod ma yin/ /ma zad pa la'ang 'byung ba med/ /zad la 'jig pa yod ma yin/ /ma zad pa la'ang 'jig pa med //

7. The finished does not rise; the unfinished too does not rise; the finished does not pass; the unfinished too does not pass.

8. /dngos po yod pa ma yin par/ /byung dang 'jig pa yod ma yin/ /'byung dang 'jig pa med par ni/ /dngos po yod pa ma yin no //

8. Rising and passing do not exist without the existence of things. Things do not exist without the existence of rising and passing.

9. /stong la* 'byung dang 'jig pa dag/ /'thad pa nyid ni ma yin no/ /mi stong pa la'ang 'byung 'jig dag/ /'thad pa nyid ni ma yin no //
9. Rising and passing are not possible for the empty; rising, passing are not possible for the non-empty also.

10. /byung ba dang ni ‘jig pa dag/ /gcig pa nyid du* mi ‘thad do/ /byung ba dang ni ‘jig pa dag/ /gzhan nyid du yang** mi ‘thad do//

[Lha. *ni. **gzhan pa nyid du’ang]

10. Rising and passing cannot possibly be one; rising and passing also cannot possibly be other.

11. /byung ba dang ni ‘jig pa dag/ /mthong ngo snyam du khyod smsa na/ /byung ba dang ni ‘jig pa dag/ /gti mug nyid kyis mthong ba yin//

11. If you think that you can see rising and passing, rising and passing are seen by delusion.

12. /dngos po dngos las mi skye ste/ /dngos po dngos med las mi skye/ /dngos med dngos med mi skye ste/ /dngos med dngos las mi skye’o//

12. Things are not created from things; things are not created from nothing; nothing is not created from nothing; nothing is not created from things.

13. /dngos po bdag las mi skye ste/ /gzhan las skye ba nyid ma yin/ /bdag dang gzhan las skye ba ni/ /yod min* ji llar skye bar ‘gyur//

[Lha. *na]

13. Things are not created from themselves, nor are they created from something else; they are not created from [both] themselves and something else. How are they created?

14. /dngos po yod par khas blangs na/ /rtag dang chad par lta bar ni/ /thal bar ‘gyur te dngos de ni/ /rtag dang mi rtag ‘gyur phyir ro//

14. If you assert the existence of things, the views of eternalism and annihilationism will follow, because things are permanent and impermanent.

15. /dngos po yod par khas blangs kyang/ /chad par mi ‘gyur rtag mi ‘gyur/ /bras bu rgyu yi ‘byung ‘jig gi/ /rgyun de srid pa yin phyir ro//
15. If you assert the existence of things, eternalism and annihilationism will not be, because the continuity of the rising and passing of cause-effect is becoming.

16. `/bras bu rgyu yi* ‘byung ‘jig gi/ rgyun de srid pa yin ‘gyur na/ ‘jig la yang skye med pa’i phyir/ rgyu ni chad par thal bar ‘gyur //

[Lha. *gal te ‘bras rgyu’i]

16. If the continuity of the rising and passing of cause-effect is becoming, because what has passed will not be created again, it will follow that the cause is annihilated.

17. /dngos po ngo bo nyid yod na/ dngos med ‘gyur bar mi rigs so/ mya ngan ‘das pa’i dus na chad/ srid rgyun rab tu zhi phyir ro //

17. If things exist essentially, it would be unreasonable [for them] to become nothing. At the time of nirvana [they] would be annihilated, because the continuity of becoming is totally pacified.

18. /tha ma ‘gags par gyur pa na/ srid pa dang po rigs mi ‘gyur/ /tha ma ‘gags par ma gyur tshe/ srid pa dang po rigs mi ‘gyur //

18. If the end stops, it is unreasonable for there to be a beginning of becoming. When the end does not stop, it is unreasonable for there to be a beginning of becoming.

19. /gal te tha ma ‘gag bzhin na/ dang po skye bar ‘gyur na ni/ /gag bzhin pa ni gcig ‘gyur zhing/ skye bzhin pa yang gzhan du ‘gyur //

19. If the beginning is created while the end is stopping, the stopping would be one and the creating would be another.

20. /gal te ‘gag bzhin skye bzhin dag/ lhan cig tu yang rigs min na/ phung po gang la ‘chi ‘gyur ba/ de la skye ba* ‘byung ‘gyur ram //

[Lha. *ba’ang]

20. If it is also unreasonable for stopping and creating to be together, aren’t the aggregates that die also those that are created?

21. /de ltar dus gsum dag tu yang/ srid pa’i rgyun ni mi rigs na/ dus gsum dag tu gang med pa/ de ni ji ltar srid pa’i rgyun //

21. Likewise, if the continuity of becoming is not reasonable at any of the three times, how can there be a continuity of becoming which is nonexistent in the three times?

‘byung ba dang ‘jig pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu gcig pa’o //
22. Investigation of the Tathagata

(Buddhanature)

[For Ts. 370, this and the following chapter on error both serve to “demonstrate that the flow of becoming is empty of inherent existence.”]

1. /phung min phung po las gzhan min//de la phung med de der med//de bzhin gshegs pa phung ldan min//de bzhin gshegs pa gang zhig yin/

1. Not the aggregates, not other than the aggregates; the aggregates are not in him; he is not in them: the Tathagata does not possess the aggregates. What is the Tathagata?

2. /gal te sangs rgyas phung po la//brten nas rang bzhin las yod min//rang bzhin las ni gang med pa//de gzhan dngos las ga la yod/

[Here and below the sanskrit for brten pa is upadaya (upadana). Only from v. 5 does the Tibetan start using forms of nyer len]

2. If the buddha depends on the aggregates, he does not exist from an own-nature. How can that which does not exist from an own-nature exist from an other-nature?

3. /gang zhig gzhan gyi dngos brten nas//de bdag nyid du mi 'thad do//gang zhig bdag nyid med pa de//ji ltar de bzhin gshegs par 'gyur/

3. It is not tenable for something dependent on other-nature to be self-existent. How can that which has no self-existence be tathagata?

4. /gal te rang bzhin yod min na//gzhann dngos yod par ji ltar 'gyur//rang bzhin dang ni gzhan dngos dag//ma glogs de bzhin gshegs de gang/

[1. a-b cf. 2.c-d: /rang bzhin las ni gang med pa//de gzhan dngos las ga la yod]

4. If self-nature does not exist, how can there be the existence of other-nature? What is a Tathagata apart from own-nature and other-nature?

5. /gal te phung po ma brten par//de bzhin gshegs pa 'ga' yod na//de ni da gdong* rten** 'gyur zhing//brten nas de nas 'gyur la rag/

[Lha. *gdod **brten Ts. *gzod **brten]

5. If there exists a tathagata [who is] not depending on the aggregates, he exists in depending [on them] now and will henceforth depend.
6. If there does not exist a tathagata [who is] not depending on the aggregates, how does he grasp [depend on? them]?

[v. 5 & 6 mirror each other grammatically - (cf. Skt.) l.c of v. 6 is effectively redundant; it serves as metric padding for the conditional na]

7. [Since] there is nothing to be grasped/dependent on, there can be no grasping/depending. There is no tathagata at all who is without grasping/depending.

8. If having examined in five ways, how can that tathagata who does not exist as that one or the other be [conventionally] understood by grasping/depending?

9. That which is grasped/depended on does not exist from its own nature. It is impossible for that which does not exist from its own nature to exist from another nature.

10. In that way, what is grasped/depended on and what grasps/depends are empty in every aspect. How can an empty tathagata be [conventionally] understood by what is empty?
11. Do not say “empty,” or “not empty,” or “both,” or “neither:” these are mentioned for the sake of [conventional] understanding.

12. /rtag dang mi rtag la sogs bzhi/ /zhi ba 'di la ga la yod/ /mtha' dang mtha' med la sogs bzhi/ /zhi ba 'di la ga la yod /

12. Where can the four such as permanence and impermanence exist in this peaceful one? Where can the four such as end and no-end [of the world] exist in this peaceful one?

13. /gang gis de bzhin gshegs yod ces/ /'dzin pa stug po* bzung gyur pa/ /de ni mya ngan 'das pa la/ /med ces rnam rtog rtog par byed /

[Lha. *pos Ts. *po]

13. Those who hold the dense apprehension, “the tathagata exists” conceive the thought, “he does not exist in nirvana.”

[Ts. 378-9 says that while this version is found in Chandrakirti’s Prasannapada, he prefers the version quoted by Buddhapalita: /gang gis 'dzin stug bzung gyur pa/de ni mya ngan 'das pa la/de bzhin gshegs pa yod ce'am/med ces rnam tog rtog par byed/. Those who hold dense apprehensions conceive thoughts of the tathagata’s “existence” or “non-existence” in nirvana.]

14. /rang bzhin gyis ni stong de la/ /sangs rgyas mya ngan 'das nas ni/ /yod do zhe'am med do zhes/ /bsam pa* 'thad pa nyid mi 'gyur /

[Lha. *pa'ang]

14. For that one empty of own-nature, it is entirely inappropriate to think that once the buddha has nirvana-ed he either “exists” or “does not exist.”

15. /gang dag sangs rgyas spros 'das shing/ /zad pa med la spros byed pa/ /spros pas nyams pa de kun gyis/ /de bzhin gshegs pa mthong mi 'gyur /

[K. 310. zad pa med pa = avyaya = non-variable/steadfast]

15. Those who make fixations about Buddha who is beyond fixations and without deterioration -- all those who are damaged by fixations do not see the tathagata.

16. /de bzhin gshegs pa'i rang bzhin gang/ /de ni 'gro 'di'i rang bzhin yin/ /de bzhin gshegs pa rang bzhin med/ /'gro ba 'di yi rang bzhin med/
16. Whatever is the own-nature of the tathagata, that is the own-nature of this world. The tathagata has no own-nature. This world has no own-nature.

de bzhin gshegs pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu gnyis pa'o

23. Investigation of Error

(Confusion)

1. /'dod chags zhe sdang gti mug rnams//kun tu rtog las 'byung bar gsungs//sdu gnac mi sdu gnac phyin ci log//brten pa nyid las kun tu 'byung/

1. It is said that desire, hatred, stupidity arise from conceptuality; they arise in dependence on the pleasant, the unpleasant and confusion. [they arise in dependence on confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant]

[K. 312 reads: “perversions regarding the pleasant and unpleasant (i.e. confusing pleasure and displeasure”) for l.c. (Inada and Streng agree.) Chandrakirti and Tsongkhapa differ. My tr. follows Ts. 383. The Tibetan could be read either way. The Skt. translation develops the meaning of conceptuality. C. and Ts. quote the rten 'brel gyi mdo: “What is the cause of ignorance? Inappropriate attention. Stupidity arises from corrupt attention (yid la byed pa rnyog pa).”]

2. /gang dag sdu gnac mi sdu gnac//phyin ci log las brten 'byung ba//de dag rang bzhin las med de//de phyir nyon mongs yang dag med /

2. Whatever arises in dependence upon the pleasant, the unpleasant and confusion, (whatever arises in dependence on confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant) they have no own-nature, therefore, afflictions do not really exist (do not exist in themselves).

[Although the Tibetan supports this reading by adding dang before phyin ci log (thereby making error the third item of a list), the Skt. repeats the exact wording of v.1. Ts. 384 notes the different commentarial glosses on these two verses.]

3. /bdag gi yod nyid med nyid ni//ji lta bur yang grub pa med//de med nyon mongs rnams kyi ni//yod nyid med nyid ji lla 'grub /

3. The existence or non-existence of self is not established in any way. Without that, how can the existence or non-existence of afflictions be established?

4. /nyon mongs de* dag gang gi yin//de yang grub pa yod ma yin//ga' med par ni gang gi yang//nyon mongs pa dag yod ma yin /

[* Ts. and Lha. ‘di]
4. These afflictions are someone’s. But that [someone] is not established. Without [someone], the afflictions are not anyone’s.

5. Like [the self apprehended in] the view of one’s own body, the afflictions do not exist in five ways in the afflicted. Like [the self apprehended in] the view of one’s own body, the afflicted does not exist in five ways in the afflictions.

6. If confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant does not exist from its own nature, what afflictions can depend on confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant?

7. Colour/shape, sound, taste, tactile sensation, smell and dharmas: these six are conceived as the basis of desire, hatred and stupidity.

8. Colour/shape, sound, taste, tactile sensation, smell and dharmas: these are like gandharva-cities and similar to mirages, dreams.

9. How can the pleasant and unpleasant occur in those [things] which are like phantoms and similar to reflections?

[K. 317 takes this to mean “how can pleasure or displeasure arise in people who are like illusions etc.” This makes little sense in context, and the word “people” is not in the original. G. hedges his bets and opts for ambiguity. Ts. 387 explains this as a question about how the “marks” (mtshan ma) of pleasure and displeasure can occur in the six sense objects. So: how can the features of likeability and unlikeability occur in the objects themselves?]

10. Something is called “pleasant” in dependence on the unpleasant. Since that would not exist without relation to the pleasant, therefore, the pleasant is not tenable.
11. Something is called “unpleasant” in dependence on the pleasant. Since that would not exist without relation to the unpleasant, therefore, the unpleasant is not tenable.

12. If the pleasant does not exist, how can desire exist? If the unpleasant does not exist, how can hatred exist?

13. If such an apprehension as “the impermanent is permanent” is confused, since impermanence does not exist in the empty, how can such an apprehension be confused?

[*Lha. pa’ang]

[Ts. 389 says that the other three confusions (re: happiness, purity and self) can be substituted for that about impermanence. He gives an alternative for c-d from the “other two great commentaries”: /stong la rtag pa yod min pas//'dzin pa ji ltar log pa yin/]

14. If such an apprehension as “the impermanent is permanent” is confused, how would the apprehension “there is impermanence in the empty” also not be confused?

15. [The means] by which one apprehends, the apprehension [itself], the apprehender and the apprehended: all are completely pacified, therefore there is no apprehending.

16. If there is neither confused nor right apprehension, who is confused and who is not confused?

17. Confusions do not occur for those who are [already] confused; confusions do not occur for those who are not [yet] confused;
18. **confusions do not occur for those who are being confused.** For whom do confusions occur? Examine this by yourself!

19. **If confusions are not born, how can they exist?** If confusions are not born, where can there be someone who has confusion?

20. **Things are not born from themselves, not born from others.** If they are also not from self and others, where can there be someone who has confusion?

21. If self and purity and permanence and happiness were existent, self and purity and permanence and happiness would not be confusions.

22. If self and purity and permanence and happiness were non-existent, selflessness, impurity, impermanence and anguish would not exist.

23. Thus by stopping confusion, ignorance will stop. If ignorance is stopped, impulsive acts etc. will stop.

24. If the afflictions of some existed by their own nature, how could they be let go of? Who can let go of what exists by nature?

[Skt. gives *svabhavam* for *yod pa* in l.d]
25. /gal te la la'i nyon mongs pa //gang dag rang bzhin gyis med na //ji lla bur na spong bar 'gyur //med pa su zhig spong bar byed /

24. If the afflictions of some did not exist by their own nature, how could they be let go of? Who can let go of what does not exist?

phyin ci log brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu gsum pa’o // //

24. Investigation of the Ennobling Truths

(Awakening)

1. / gal te ‘di dag kun stong na//’gyur ba med cing ‘jig pa med//’phags pa’i bden pa bzhin po rnams//khyod la med par thal bar ‘gyur/

1. “If all were empty, nothing could come about or perish. It would follow for you that the four ennobling truths could not exist.

2. /’phags pai’ bden pa bzhin med pas//yongs su shes dang spang ba dang//bsgom dang mgon du bya ba dang//’thad par ‘gyur ba ma yin no/

2. “Since the four ennobling truths would not exist, understanding, letting go, cultivating and realizing would no longer be valid.

3. /de dag yod pa ma yin pas//’bras bu bzhin yang yod ma yin//’bras bu med na ‘bras gnas med//zhugs pa dag kyang yod ma yin/

3. “Since they would not exist, the four fruits would also not exist. If the fruits did not exist, there could be no abiding in the fruits. Experiencing them would also not exist.

4. /gal te skyes bu gang zag brgyad//de dag med na dge ‘dun med//’phags pa’i bden rnams med pa’i phyir//dam pa’i chos kyang yod ma yin/

4. “If those eight beings did not exist, the Community would not exist. Since there would be no ennobling truths, the sublime Dharma could also not exist.

5. /chos dang dge ‘dun yod min na//sangs rgyas ji ltar yod par ‘gyur//de skad stong pa nyid smra na//dkon mchog gsum la gnod pa ni/

5. “If the Community and the Dharma did not exist, how could Buddha exist? When you talk of emptiness, the three Jewels are maligned.
6. “The existence of actions and fruits, what is not Dharma and what is Dharma, the conventions of the world: all these too are maligned.”

7. An explanation for that: since you do not understand the need for emptiness, emptiness, and the point of emptiness, therefore in that way you malign.

8. The Dharma taught by Buddhas perfectly relies on two truths: the ambiguous truths of the world and the truths of the sublime meaning.

9. Those who do not understand the division into two truths, cannot understand the profound reality of the Buddha’s teaching.

10. Without relying on conventions, the sublime meaning cannot be taught. Without understanding the sublime meaning, one will not attain nirvana.

11. If their view of emptiness is wrong, those of little intelligence will be hurt. Like handling a snake in the wrong way, or casting a spell in the wrong way.

12. Therefore, knowing how difficult it is for the weak to understand the depths of this Dharma, the heart of the Muni strongly turned away from teaching the Dharma.

13. Since [those] erroneous consequences do not apply to emptiness, whatever rejections you make of emptiness do not apply to me.
14. /gang la stong pa nyid rung ba//de la thams cad rung bar ‘gyur//gang la stong nyid mi rung ba//de la thams cad mi rung ‘gyur/

14. Those for whom emptiness is possible, for them everything is possible. Those for whom emptiness is not possible, for them everything is not possible.

15. /khyod ni rang gi skyon rnams ni//nga la yongs su sgyur byed pa//rta la mngon par zhon bzhin du//rta nyid brjed par gyur pa bzhin/

15. You are transferring your own mistakes onto me. This is like mounting a horse but forgetting about the horse itself.

16. /gal te dgnos rnams rang bzhin las//yod par rjes su lta byed na//de lta yin na dngos po rnams//rgyu rkyen med par khyod lta’o/

16. If you view all things as existing from their own nature, then you would view all things as not having causes and conditions.

17. /’bras bu dang ni rgyu nyid dang//byed pa po dang byed dang bya//kye ba dang ni ‘gag pa dang//’bras bu la yang gnod pa byed/

17. Cause and effect itself, agents, tools and acts, production and cessation, the effects too would be undermined.

18. /rten cing ‘brel par ‘byung ba gang//de ni stong pa nyid du bshad//de ni brten nas gdags pa ste//de nyid dbu ma’i lam yin no/

18. Whatever is contingently related, that is explained as emptiness. That is contingently configured; it is the central path.

19. /gang phyir rten ‘byung ma yin pa’i//chos ‘ga’ng yod pa ma yin pa/ de phyir stong pa ma yin pa’i//chos ‘ga’ng yod pa ma yin no/

19. Because there are no things at all, which are not contingently emergent, therefore, there are no things at all, which are not empty.

20. /gal te ‘di kun mi stong na '//byung ba med cing ‘jig pa med//’phags pa’i bden pa bzhin po rnams//khyod la med par thal bar ‘gyur/

20. If all were not empty, nothing could come about or perish. It would follow for you that the four ennobling truths could not exist.

21. /rten cing ‘byung ba ma yin na//sdug bsngal yod par ga la ‘gyur//mi rtag sdug bsngal gsungs pa de//rang bzhin nyid la yod ma yin/

21. If things were not contingently emergent, how could anguish exist? Impermanent things are taught to be anguish; in their very own nature they do not exist.
22. *rang bzhin las ni yod min* na//ci zhig kun tu ‘byung bar ‘gyur//de phyir stong nyid gnod byed la//kun ‘byung yod pa ma yin no/ [*error?*]

22. If it did exist from its own nature, why would it have an origin? Therefore, for those who undermine emptiness, it can have no origin.

23. *sdug bsngal rang bzhin gyis yod la//'gog pa yod pa ma yin no/rang bzhin nyid ni yongs gnas phyir//'gag la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/

23. If anguish existed by its own nature, there could be no cessation. Because its own nature would be totally present, cessation too would be undermined.

24. *lam la rang bzhin yod na ni//bsgom pa ‘thad par mi ‘gyur te//ci ste lam de bsgom byas na/khyod kyi rang bzhin yod ma yin/

24. If the path existed by its own nature, cultivation would not be appropriate. If the path is to be cultivated, your own nature cannot exist.

25. *gang tshe sdug bsngal kun ‘byung dang//'gog pa yod pa ma yin na/lam gyis sdug bsngal ‘gog pa ni//gang zhig ‘thob par ‘gyur bar ‘dod/

25. When anguish, origins and cessation cannot exist, what ceasing of anguish could one seek to attain by the path?

26. *gal te rang bzhin nyid kyis ni/yongs su shes pa ma yin na//de ni ci ltar yongs shes ‘gyur//rang bzhin gnas pa ma yin nam/

26. If non-understanding existed by its very own nature, how could one ever understand? Doesn’t it abide by nature?

27. *de bzhin du ni khyod nyid kyi//spang dang mngon du bya ba dang//bsgom dang ‘bras bu bzhi dag kyang//yongs shes bzhin du mi rung ngo/

27. In the same way, your letting go, realizing, cultivating and the four fruits too are as impossible as understanding.

28. *rang bzhin yongs su ‘dzin pa yi//'bras bu rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//’thob pa min pa gang yin de//ci ltar ‘thob pa nyid du ‘gyur/

28. How can any fruits, which totally hold their own nature and by their own nature are unattained, be attained?
29. If the fruits did not exist, there could be no abiding in the fruits. Experiencing them would also not exist. If those eight beings did not exist, the Community would not exist.

30. Since there would be no ennobling truths, the sublime Dharma could also not exist. If the Community and the Dharma did not exist, how could Buddha exist?

31. It would also follow that your Buddha does not depend on awakening. It would also follow that your awakening does not depend on Buddha.

32. For you, someone who by his very nature is not Buddha could not attain awakening however much he strove in the practice of awakening for the sake of awakening.

33. No one would ever do what is Dharma and what is not Dharma. What can that which is not empty do? Inherent nature is inactive.

34. Even without Dharma and not-Dharma, you would have the fruits. You would not have the fruits which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma.
35. If you have the fruits which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma, why are the fruits which have arisen from the Dharma and not-Dharma not empty?

36. /rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba yi//stong pa nyid la gnod byed gang//'jig rten pa yi tha snyad ni//kun la’ang gnod pa byed pa yin/

36. Whoever undermines emptiness which is contingent emergence also undermines all the conventions of the world.

37. /stong pa nyid la gnod byed na//bya ba ci yang med 'gyur zhing/rtsom pa med pa’i bya bar ‘gyur//mi byed pa yang byed por ‘gyur/

37. If one undermines emptiness, there would be no actions at all and actions without an author and agents who do not act.

38. /rang bzhin yod na ‘gro ba rnams//ma skyes pa dang ma ‘gags dang//ther zug tu ni gnas ‘gyur zhing//gnas skabs sna tshogs bral bar ‘gyur/

38. If there were inherent nature, all beings would be unborn and unceasing, would be fixed in place forever, separated from the variety of situations.

39. /gal te stong pa yod min na//ma thob ‘thob par bya ba dang//sdug bsngal mthar byed las dang ni//nyon mongs thams cad spong ba’ang med/

39. If [things] were not empty, there could be no attainment of what had not been attained, no ending of anguish and no letting go of all actions and afflictions.

40. /gang gis rten cing ‘brel par ‘byung//mthong ba des ni sdug bsngal dang//kun ‘byung dang ni ‘gog pa dang//lam nyid de dag mthong ba yin/

40. He who sees contingent emergence sees anguish and origins and cessation and the path itself.

/phags pa’i bden pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu bzhi pa’o // //

25. Investigation of Nirvana
(Nirvana)

1. If everything were empty, there would be no arising and perishing. From the letting go of and ceasing of what could one assert nirvana(-ing)?

2. If everything were not empty, there would be no arising and perishing. From the letting go of and ceasing of what could one assert nirvana(-ing)?

3. No letting go, no attainment, no annihilation, no permanence, no cessation, no birth: that is spoken of as nirvana.

4. Nirvana is not a thing. Then it would follow that it would have the characteristics of aging and death. There does not exist any thing that is without aging and death.

5. If nirvana were a thing, nirvana would be a conditioned phenomenon. There does not exist any thing anywhere that is not a conditioned phenomenon.

6. If nirvana were a thing, how would nirvana not be dependent? There does not exists any thing at all that is not dependent.

7. If nirvana were not a thing, how could it possibly be nothing? The one for whom nirvana is not a thing, for him it is not nothing.

8. If nirvana were nothing, how could nirvana possibly be not dependent? There does not exist any nothing which is not dependent.
9. Whatever things come and go are dependent or caused. Not being dependent and not being caused is taught to be Nirvana.

10. The teacher taught [it] to be the letting go of arising and perishing. Therefore, it is correct that nirvana is not a thing or nothing.

11. If nirvana were both a thing and nothing, it would follow that it would be a thing and nothing. That is incorrect.

12. If nirvana were both a thing and nothing, nirvana would not be not-dependent, because it would depend on those two.

13. How could nirvana be both a thing and nothing? Nirvana is unconditioned; things and nothings are conditioned.

14. How could nirvana exist as both a thing and nothing? Those two do not exist as one. They are like light and dark.

15. The presentation of neither a thing nor nothing as nirvana will be established [only] if things and nothings are established.

16. If nirvana is neither a thing nor nothing, by who could “neither a thing nor nothing” be perceived?
17. After the Bhagavan has entered nirvana, one cannot perceive [him? it?] as “existing,” likewise as “not existing,” nor can one perceive [him? it?] as “both” or “neither”.

18. Even when the Bhagavan is alive, one cannot perceive [him? it?] as “existing,” likewise as “not existing,” nor can one perceive [him? it?] as “both” or “neither”.

19. Samsara does not have the slightest distinction from Nirvana. Nirvana does not have the slightest distinction from Samsara.

20. Whatever is the end of Nirvana, that is the end of Samsara. There is not even a very subtle slight distinction between the two.

21. Views about who passes beyond, ends etc. and permanence etc. are contingent upon nirvana and later ends and former ends.

22. In the emptiness of all things what ends are there? What non-ends are there? What ends and non-ends are there? What of neither are there?

23. Is there this? Is there the other? Is there permanence? Is there impermanence? Is there both permanence and impermanence? Is there neither?

24. Totally pacifying all referents and totally pacifying fixations is peace. The Buddha nowhere taught any dharma to anyone.
26. Analysis of the Twelve Links of Becoming

(Contingency)

1. /ma rig bsgrigs pas yang srid phyi/*/ /du byed rnam pa gsum po dag/ /mgon par ‘du byed gang yin pa’i** /las de dag gis ‘gro bar ‘gro/

[Lha. *phyir **pa’o]

1. In order to become again, those obscured by ignorance are moved into destinies by actions which are impelled [by] the three kinds of formative impulses.

2. /’du byed rkyen can rnam par shes/ /’gro ba rnams su ‘jug par ‘gyur/ /rnam par shes pa zhugs gyur na/ /ming dang gzugs ni chags* par ‘gyur/

[Lha. *chags]

2. Consciousness conditioned by formative impulses enters into destinies. When consciousness has entered, name and form develop.

3. /ming dang gzugs ni chags* gyur na/ /skyé mchéd drug ni ‘byung bar ‘gyur/ /skyé mchéd drug la brten nas ni/ /reg pa yang dag ‘byung bar ‘gyur/

[Lha. *chags]

3. When name and form develop, the six senses emerge. In dependence upon the six senses, impact actually occurs.

4. /ming* dang gzugs dang dran byed la/ /brten nas skyé ba kho na ste/ /de lta r ming** dang gzugs brten nas/ /rnam par shes pa skyé bar ‘gyur/

[Ts/Lha. *mig. Lha. **mig - Ts. has ming] [Skt. has caksuh and nama resp.]

4. Just as [it] only arises in dependence on the eye, [visual] form and attention, so consciousness arises in dependence on name and form.

[Tsongkhapa has a rather tortured way of explaining this; he compares the arising of visual consciousness from the dominant, object and immediate conditions (i.e. eye, visual form and attention) with its arising from name (= attention) and form (= eye and visual form). But since he equates nama with the latter four skandhas, he is forced to imply that vijnana arises from vijnana, i.e. A is the cause of A. No doubt Tibetans would
explain this away by arguing that A is the cause of A+1 etc., but this is not convincing in context. Tsongkhapa seems unaware that nowhere in the early canon does the Buddha include vijnana in nama. Nagarjuna, however, does seem to follow this early tradition here.

5. /mig dang gzugs dan rnam par shes/ /gsum po ‘dus pa gang yin pa / /de ni reg pa’o reg de las/ /tshor ba kun tu ‘byung bar ‘gyur/

5. The gathering of the three: eye and [visual] form and consciousness, that is “impact.” From impact feeling totally arises.

6. /tshor ba’i rkyen gyis sred pa ste/ /tshor ba’i don du sred par ‘gyur/ /sred par gyur na* nye bar len/ /rnam pa bzhi po nyr len ‘gyur/

[Lha. *nas]

6. Due to the condition of feeling, there is craving; one craves for what is felt. When one craves, one clings to the four aspects of clinging [sense objects, views, morals and rules, and views of self].

7. /nyer len yod na len pa po’i/ /srid pa rab tu* ‘byung bar ‘gyur/ /gal te nye bar len med na/ /grol bar ‘gyur te srid mi ‘gyur/

[Lha. *kun tu]

7. When there is clinging, the becoming of the clinger fully arises. When there is no clinging, one is freed; there is no [more] becoming.

8. /srid pa de yang phung po lnga/ /srid pa las ni skye bar ‘gyur*/ /rga shi dang ni mya ngan dang/ /smre sngags ‘don bcas sdug bsngal dang/

[Lha. *byungs]

8. Becoming is the five aggregates; from becoming one is born. Aging, death, torment, lamentation, pain,

9. /yid mi bde dang ‘khrug pa rnams/ /de dag skye las rab tu ‘byung/ /de ltar sdug bsngal phung po ni/ /’ba’ zhig pa* ‘di ‘byung bar ‘gyur/

[Lha. *po]

9. mental unhappiness, anxiety: these vividly emerge from birth. Likewise, the entire mass of anguish emerges.

10. /’khor ba’i rtsa ba ‘du byed de/ /de phyir mkhhas* rnams ‘du mi byed/ /de phyir mi mkhhas byed po yin/ /mkhhas min** de nyid mthong phyir ro/

[Lha. *kham *pas]
10. The root of life is formative impulses. Therefore, the wise do not form impulses. Therefore, the unwise are formers, but not the wise since they see reality.

[mi mkhas = Skt. avidvan = the ignorant]

11. /ma rig ’gags par gyur na ni/ /’du byed rnams* kyang** ‘byung mi ’gyur//ma rig ’gag par ‘gyur ba ni/ /shes pas de nyid bsgoms pas so/

[Lha. *rnam **kun]

11. When ignorance stops, formative impulses too do not occur. The stopping of ignorance [comes] through practising that with understanding.

12. /de dang de ni ’gags gyur pas/ /de dang de ni mngon mi ’byung/ /sdug bsngal phung po ’ba’ zhig pa*/ /de ni de ltar yang dag ’gag**/

[Lha. *po **dgab (corrupt)]

12. By the stopping of the former, the latter will clearly not occur. The entire mass of anguish will likewise completely stop.

// srid pa’i yan lag bcu gnyis brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu drug pa’o ///

27. Investigation of Views

(Opinion)

1. /’das dus byung ma byung zhes dang// ’jig rten rtag pa la sog s par//lta ba gang yin de dag ni//sngon gyi mtha’ la brten pa yin/

1. Those views such as “I occurred or did not occur in the past,” the world is permanent, are dependent on the extreme of before.

2. /ma ’ongs dus gzhan ’gyur dang//mi ’byung ’jig rten mtha’ sog s par//lta ba gang yin de dag ni//phyi ma’i mtha’ la brten pa yin/

2. Those views such as I will occur or not occur at another time in the future, the world has an end, are dependent on the extreme of Later.

3. /’das pa’i dus na byung gyur zhes// bya ba de ni mi ’thad do//sngon tshe rnams su gang byung ba//de nyid ’di ni ma yin no/

3. It is incorrect to say: “I occurred at a time in the past.” Whatever occurred before, that is not this.

4. /de nyid bdag tu ’gyur snyam na//nye bar len pa tha dad ’gyur//nye bar len pa ma glogs par//khyod kyi bdag ni gang zhig yin/
4. If you think that that became me, then that-which-is-clung-to would be something else. What is your self apart from that-which-is-clung-to?

5. Were you [to say] that there exists no self apart from that-which-is-clung-to, if the very that-which-is-clung-to were the self, your self would be non-existent.

6. The very that-which-is-clung-to is not the self: it arises and passes away. How can that-which-has-been-clung-to be the one that clings?

7. It is not correct for the self to be other than that-which-is-clung-to. If it were other, with nothing to cling to, then something [i.e. the self] fit to be apprehended would not be apprehended.

8. In that way, it is not other than that-which-is-clung-to nor is it that-which-is-clung-to. The self is not not that-which-is-clung-to, nor can it be ascertained as nothing.

9. It is incorrect to say: “I did not occur at a time in the past.” Whatever occurred before, this is not other than that.

10. If this were other, it would arise even without that. Likewise, that could remain and be born without dying in that [former life].

11. Cut off and actions wasted, acts committed by others would be experienced by someone else. Such would be the consequences.

12. Such would be the consequences.
12. There is no occurrence from what has not occurred. In that case faults would follow: the self would be something made or even though it occurred it would be uncaused.

13. /de ltar bdag byung bdag ma byung//gnyis ka gnyis ka ma yin par//’das la lta ba gang yin pa*/de dag* ‘thad pa ma yin no/

13. Therefore, “the self occurred, did not occur, both or neither:” all those views of the past are invalid.

14. /ma ’ongs dus gzhan ‘byung ‘gyur dang//’byung bar mi ‘gyur zhes bya bar//lta ba gang yin de dag ni//’das pa’i dus dang mtshungs pa yin/

14. “I will occur at another time in the future,” “I will not occur:” all those views are similar to [those of] the past.

15. /gal te lha de mi de na//de lta na ni rtag par ‘gyur//lha ni ma skyes nyid ‘gyur te//rtag la skye ba med phyir ro/

15. If the divine were human, then there would be something permanent. The divine is utterly unborn, because there is no birth in permanence.

16. /gal te lha las mi gzhan na//de lta na ni mi rtag ‘gyur//gal te lha mi gzhan yin na//rgyud ni ‘thad par mi ‘gyur ro/

16. If the human were other than the divine, then there would be no permanence. If the divine and the human were different, there could be no continuity [between them].

17. /gal te phyogs gcig lha yin la//phyogs gcig mi ni yin gyur na//rtag dang mi rtag ‘gyur ba yin//de yang rigs pa ma yin no/

17. If one part were divine and one part were human, there would be both permanence and no permanence. But that is not reasonable.

18. /gal te rtag dang mi rtag pa//gnyis ka grub par gyur* na ni//rtag pa ma yin mi rtag min//’grub par ‘gyur bar ‘dod la rag/

[Lha. *’gyur]
18. If both permanence and impermanence were established, you would have to assert non-permanence and non-impermanence as established.

19. If something came from somewhere and went somewhere, then samsara would be without beginning. That is not the case.

20. If there were nothing permanent at all, what thing could be impermanent, permanent and impermanent, free of both?

21. If this world had an end, how would the next world come to be? If this world had no end, how would the next world come to be?

22. Because the continuity of the aggregates is similar to the light of a lamp, therefore the very existence or non-existence of an end is unreasonable.

23. If the former perished and that [future] aggregate did not arise in dependence upon this aggregate, then this world would have an end.

24. If the former did not perish and that [future] aggregate did not arise in dependence upon this aggregate, then this world would not have an end.

25. If one part had an end and one part did not have an end, the world would be with and without an end. That too is unreasonable.
26. How can one part of the one-who-clings perish while one part does not perish?
Likewise, that is unreasonable.

27. How can one part of that-which-is-clung-to perish while one part does not perish?
Likewise, that is unreasonable.

28. If both the presence and absence of an end were established, you would have to assert non-presence and non-absence as established.

29. And because all things are empty, about what and in whom do views such as that of permanence spring forth?

30. I bow down to Gautama, whose kindness holds one close, who revealed the sublime dharma in order to let go of all views.

[Ts. recognizes that this verse can be treated as separate from the body of the chapter. He also cites the Sa lu Ijang pa’i mdo (Shalistamba Sutra), an early Mahayana sutra, as a source for this chapter.]

Ita ba brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu bdun pa’o/
dbang phyug dam pa'i mnga' bdag rgyal po chen po dpal lha btsan po'i bka' lung gis/rgya gar
gyi mkhan po chen po dbu ma pa/'dzin'a na garbha dang/ zhu chen gyi lo tshcha ba dge slong
cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan gyis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa/'di la rab tu byed pa nyi shu
rtsa bdun/shloo ka bzhi brgya bzhi bcu rtsa dgu yod/bam po ni phyed dang gnyis su byas so/
slad kyis kha che'i grong khyer dpe med kyi dbus/gtseg lag khang rin chen sbas pa'i dbus su/
kha che'i mkhan po ha su ma ti dang/bod kyi sgra bsgyur gyi lo tshcha ba pa tshab nyi ma grags
kyis mi'i bdag po 'phags pa lha'i sku ring la 'grel pa tshig gsal ba dang bstun nas bcos pa'o///
slad kyis ra sa 'phrul snang gi gtsug lag khang du/rgya gar gyi mkhan po ka na ka dang/lo
tshcha ba de nyid kyis zhu chen bgyis pa'o///