

# The Two Truths Theory of Jñānagarbha<sup>1)</sup>

AKAHANE Ritsu

## Introduction

Jñānagarbha (ca. early eighth century) is one of the most important Indian Buddhist masters belonging to the tradition of Madhyamaka, due to the explanation of the Two Truths Theory (*satyadvaya*) that he outlines in his text, the *Satyadvayavibhāṅgavṛtti* (SDVV).<sup>2)</sup> This treatise influenced Mādhyamikas such as Śāntarakṣita (ca. 725–788) and Kamalaśīla (ca. 740–795),<sup>3)</sup> who played important roles in introducing Indian Buddhism into Tibet. The Two Truths Theory has not developed significantly since Jñānagarbha's own time, thus, the SDVV can be viewed as presenting the theory in its most fully developed form.<sup>4)</sup> Unfortunately, however, we have little historical information about Jñānagarbha or his texts. According to certain Tibetan sources, such as the *Tāranātha* and the *Deb ther sñon po*, he was originally from Odiviśa (today's Orissa in eastern India), he wrote the text known as the SDVV, and is said to have been one of the teachers of Śāntarakṣita.<sup>5)</sup> Although we can refer to texts that are attributed to him, it is difficult to positively assert what Jñānagarbha actually wrote, or whether some texts may have been authored by another person, possibly with the same name.<sup>6)</sup>

While his Two Truths Theory was certainly highly influential on later Buddhists, his theory in turn was no doubt strongly influenced by the epistemology that had been chiefly developed by Dharmakīrti (ca. 600–660)<sup>7)</sup> and his followers from around the seventh century.<sup>8)</sup> This paper will examine Jñānagarbha's Two Truths Theory, while noting the various theories that he depends on in his SDVV.

## 1 The ultimate truth

Firstly, I would like to address a question many people may have concerning this topic: why there are not one but two truths. Some people have indeed posed this question and have insisted that, in regard to the nature

of reality, the existence of only one truth seems much more reasonable.<sup>9)</sup> This opinion might initially appear to be natural and acceptable from a common sense perspective. However, to assume that Mādhyamikas insist that two kinds of truths really exist, would be to misunderstand the theory. For Mādhyamikas, Reality (*tattva*) can neither be referred to as one nor as two. Instead, Reality refers to the fact that all things have no intrinsic nature (*niḥsvabhāva*) and are empty (*śūnya*) because they exist in dependence on any causes and conditions. This lack of an intrinsic nature can be said to be “the ultimate truth” (*paramārthasatya*). On the other hand, if we focus on the idea of an “existence” that depends on causes and conditions, this can be said to be “the conventional truth” (*saṃvṛtisatya*). Therefore, the presence of two truths does not mean that two different Realities exist. However, there have certainly been different interpretations among Mādhyamikas throughout the long history of Buddhism. Some even may have appeared to insist that two different Realities do actually exist.<sup>10)</sup> However, even in these cases, it is plausible that this was a rhetorical method to persuade non-Buddhists who believed in a real existence, in order to help them to understand emptiness (*śūnyatā*).

To return to the main subject, I will begin by surveying the ultimate truth in the SDVV. Traditionally, the ultimate truth for the Madhyamaka tradition is free from any verbal expression or conception. Jñānagarbha also explains the ultimate truth in this way, citing a famous episode<sup>11)</sup> from the ninth chapter, “The Dharma Gate of Nonduality,” of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra* (VNS), when the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī asked Vimalakīrti what is Reality, he says nothing in order to reveal its characteristics as free from conception.

It (=Reality) is without manifestation (*\*prapañca*). [v 11b]

Reality (*\*tattva*) is that which is free from any net of conception. Therefore, although the bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī, asked what is Reality, the son of the Victor [namely, Vimalakīrti] stayed without saying anything. [v 11cd]<sup>12)</sup> (SDVV: p. 162 ll. 10–14)

After citing this episode of the VNS, Jñānagarbha summarizes its intention as a conclusion by stating the following:

In it (= the ultimate truth<sup>13)</sup>) nothing exists to be expressed. Therefore, [Vimalakīrti] thoroughly explains the meaning [of Reality] by staying without saying anything even when [he] was asked [what is the

ultimate truth]. (SDVV: p. 163 ll. 7–10)<sup>14)</sup>

This passage of the VNS has often been cited not only by Jñānagarbha, but also by many other Mādhyamikas in order to explain the characteristics of Reality (i.e., the ultimate truth) that it is free from any verbal expression or conception. It is well known that the founder of Madhyamaka tradition,<sup>15)</sup> Nāgārjuna (ca. 150–250), also understood reality in this way.<sup>16)</sup>

To this extent, Jñānagarbha’s definition of the ultimate truth in his Two Truths Theory is not unique. However, he also defines the ultimate truth again in another part in the SDVV.

It is not suitable that [the ultimate truth] exists as something that is just as it appears (*\*yathābhāsa/yathādarśana*), because [the ultimate truth] does not even appear as any form of cognition. [v 5]

The ultimate truth does not exist as something with an appearance, because [it] does not appear even as a cognition of the omniscient (*\*sarvajñā*). Therefore, it is said in the [Dharmasaṃgīti] sūtra, “Not seeing anything is seeing Reality.” [commentary on v 5] (SDVV: p. 157 ll. 10–17)<sup>17)</sup>

Jñānagarbha defines the ultimate truth as that which does not appear at all. In other words, even if something is free from conception, it could “appear” as someone’s cognition, but then this appearance could not be considered to be the ultimate truth. Dharmakīrti (ca. 600–660), who was active about half a century before Jñānagarbha, insisted upon the idea that something that does have an appearance, but is also free from conception, is the ultimate thing. We can find interesting evidence for this in his famous texts, the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV) and the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (PVin):

Here, whatever is capable of performing an effective action (*arthakriyāsamartha*) is said to be the ultimate thing (*paramārthasat*). The other [namely, whatever is not capable of performing an effective action] is the conventional thing. These two are respectively a particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) and a universal (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*) (PV III: v3 p. 61 ll. 7–8)<sup>18)</sup>

Direct perception is free from conception and is non-erroneous. (PVin I: v 4a, p. 7 l.2)<sup>19)</sup>

According to him, the object of direct perception, which is free from conception, is a particular (*svalakṣaṇa*), which is itself the ultimate thing. It goes without saying that the object of direct perception appears as someone's cognition, because Dharmakīrti is known as a sākārajñānavādin. Therefore, what Dharmakīrti asserts to be the ultimate thing is excluded from Jñānagarbha's definition of the ultimate truth.

From this evidence, we can surmise that Jñānagarbha includes the definition that the ultimate truth does not appear, in addition to the traditional definition that the ultimate truth is free from conception, in order to negate Dharmakīrti's definition of the ultimate thing.<sup>20)</sup> However, why must Jñānagarbha have defined the ultimate truth in this way, rejecting Dharmakīrti's definition of it? Jñānagarbha answers this in the SDVV. The answer concerns the different ways that the Madhyamaka and the Yogācāra interpreted the passage from the *Dharmasaṃgītisūtra* (DSS) that states: "Not seeing anything is seeing Reality" (Dharmakīrti is considered to have been an adherent of Yogācāra). Yogācārins interpret the passage from the DSS that states "not seeing anything" as meaning not to see the imaginary nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) of the Yogācāra Three Natures Theory (*trisvabhāva*), but to see the other two natures: the dependent nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*) and the absolute nature (*pariniṣpannasvabhāva*). On the other hand, Jñānagarbha, who does not accept the existence of all three natures within the ultimate truth,<sup>21)</sup> interprets the same passage as literally meaning nothing at all, and because it means seeing nothing at all, any appearance should not exist even as the cognition of the omniscient.<sup>22)</sup>

Now I have finished describing the fundamental structure for Jñānagarbha's definition of the ultimate truth in the SDVV. It can be summarized as having the following two conditions:

"The ultimate truth is (1) that which is free from conception and (2) that which does not appear as any cognition by any person, including the omniscient."

It should be noted that, for Jñānagarbha, both conditions are necessary in defining the ultimate truth.

## 2 The conventional truth

### 2.1 The correct and incorrect conventional truths in verse eight

What, then, is Jñānagarbha's view of the conventional truth (*saṃvṛtīsatya*)? Simply put, we can say that the conventional truth and the ultimate truth are poles apart. The conventional truth is not free from conception and can appear as any cognition. This section will observe how Jñānagarbha defines the conventional truth in the SDVV.

Jñānagarbha first summarizes the characteristics of the two truths at the beginning of the SDVV. In verse 3cd and verse 4 and its commentary, he defines the conventional truth as “something that is just as it appears (*\*yathābhāsa/yathādarśana*),” which, unlike the ultimate truth, can appear as any sort of knowledge to any person.

“The conventional [truth] is nothing other than something that is just as it appears: the thing that is different [from something that is just as it appears] is the other [truth: the ultimate truth].” [v 3cd]

[The “other”] means the ultimate truth. [A pot, etc.,] exists as truth in the conventional sense, since [all] people [from a saint with pure wisdom] to cattle women see [a pot and understand it], but not in Reality (*\*tattvataḥ*). (SDVV: p. 156 ll. 4–8)<sup>23</sup>

The definition of the conventional truth as “something that is just as it appears,” is an understandable statement, since we already know the definition of the ultimate truth, which is in opposition to the conventional truth, as that which does not appear as any cognition. However, this definition alone is not enough to express the full meaning of the conventional truth. Therefore, in verse 8 and 12, Jñānagarbha further explains how the conventional truth should be defined.

First, in verse 8 the conventional truth is divided into two: the correct conventional truth (*\*tathyaṣaṃvṛtīsatya*) and the incorrect conventional truth (*\*atathyaṣaṃvṛtīsatya*). The former is explained in verse 8abc and in its commentary, as follows:

A mere thing (*\*vastumātra*), which arises dependent on [causes], is free from conceptual objects, and should be known as the correct conventional [truth] (*\*tathyaṣaṃvṛtī*). [v 8abc]

Conceptual objects include “real arising” and so on [in Abhidharma

theory], “[real] appearance of the mind” [in Yogācāra theory], “the changing of the [real] originator” (*\*pradhāna*) [in Sāṃkhya theory], “the [real] element” (*\*bhūta*) [in Lokāyata/Cārvāka theory], and so forth. [The correct conventional truth is] that which is free from [the conceptual objects], because the thing by itself has the ability of effective action (*\*arthakriyāsamartha*) [to get something that is] just as it appears. What arises in a way that is dependent on causes and conditions (*\*hetupratyaya*) should be known as the correct conventional truth (*\*tathyaśaṃvṛtisatya*). So, it is reasonable that all objects that appear in a way that is dependent on causes, which correspond with the cognitions of [all] people [from a saint with pure knowledge] to a fool, are the correct conventional truth, because these things, corresponding with their appearances as [people’s] cognitions, exist [in the conventional truth]. (SDVV: p. 160 ll. 4–16)<sup>24</sup>

Jñānagarbha says that the “real things” that other Buddhist schools or Indian philosophical schools insist on are nothing other than conceptual things, and that the correct conventional truth is free from such “real things.” When we take these descriptions from verse 8abc into account, the definition of the conventional truth as, “the thing by itself, which arises in a way that is dependent [on causes], and is free from conceptual objects,” and that is also “something just as it appears” in verse 3cd, is similar to the definition of the ultimate thing, as described by Dharmakīrti in verse 3 of the PV III and the PVI in I (see section 1 of the present paper). Also, the ability of effective action, which is seen here as one of the characteristics of the conventional truth, is also referred to as a characteristic of the ultimate thing in verse 3 of the PV III. In essence, Jñānagarbha attempts to prove in the SDVV that Dharmakīrti’s definition of the ultimate thing is, in fact, the conventional truth.<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand, the incorrect conventional truth is described in verse 8d and in its commentary:

The imaginary [thing] is [the] incorrect [conventional truth]. [v 8d]  
The “real arising” and so on are made by conception. [Therefore,] they are the incorrect conventional truth. (SDVV: p. 160 ll. 25–28)<sup>26</sup>

Verse 8abc excludes imaginary things from the definition of the correct conventional truth. Therefore, it is natural to explain it as the incorrect conventional truth. However, the term, “the incorrect conventional

truth (*\*atathyaśaṃvṛtisatya*),” gives a curious impression, because it includes the two opposing notions of “truth” and “incorrect.” This point is not directly addressed in the SDVV. Depending on the context, it can be asserted that these imaginary things are what the other Buddhist schools or philosophical schools think are the real thing, namely “the true thing.” Therefore, we should see this term, *atathyaśaṃvṛtisatya*, as meaning, “what is conventionally but incorrectly thought to be a truth.”

According to these explanations, the correct conventional truth appears and is free from any conception. On the other hand, the incorrect conventional truth is the imaginary thing that people think is real.

## 2.2 The correct conventional truth and the incorrect conventional in verse twelve (*\*tathyaśaṃvṛtisatya* and *\*atathyaśaṃvṛti*)

Jñānagarbha also divides the conventional truth into two in verse 12, as follows:

Conventional [things] should be divided [into two, namely], correct and incorrect, because [the former has] the ability of effective action and [the latter] does not, even if both things are just as they appear. [v 12]

Verse 12 states: “Water,” etc., and “a shimmer of hot air,” etc., are understood as being correct and incorrect respectively by ordinary people, because [they] are fixed as non-erroneous and erroneous respectively on [the basis of the existence and non-existence of] the ability of effective action [to get something] just like appearance, even if [both] cognitions are the same in terms of the appearance of their clear form. In substance, neither has anything other than the same characteristics as that which has no intrinsic nature. [And both] exist [only as something that is] just as it appears. It is nothing other than what is [generally] known [by ordinary people,] whether or not [something] is non-erroneous or erroneous in terms of the ability of effective action, because it (= the ability of effective action) has no intrinsic nature. (SDVV: p. 163 l. 21–p. 164 l. 3)<sup>27)</sup>

Here, the difference between correct and incorrect is whether or not something that is just as it appears has the ability of effective action (*\*arthakriyāsamartha*). Of course, something with the ability of effective action is the correct conventional truth, and something without it is in-

correct. The commentary of verse 8abc has already referred to the existence of the ability of effective action as one of the characteristics of the correct conventional truth. If it is the case, why did Jñānagarbha have to purposely divide the conventional truth into two again? It is most likely that this division of the two conventional truths in verse 12 is intended to emphasize the incorrect conventional. The incorrect conventional truth in verse 8 is a real thing, which is conceived but does not appear as a cognition. On the other hand, the incorrect conventional in verse 12 is free from conception but does clearly appear. Therefore, Jñānagarbha divides these concepts again to show that things that are free from conception or appear as a cognition are not necessarily the correct conventional truth.

In addition, we should note that Jñānagarbha does not describe these things that do not have the ability of effective action as “the incorrect conventional truth,” unlike the real arising, etc., in verse 8d. This is because nobody, even in the conventional world, accepts that a thing without the ability of effective action is real or true. Therefore, these things are not described as “the incorrect conventional truth” (\**atathyaśamvṛtisatya*), but as “the incorrect conventional” (\**atathyaśamvṛti*) without the inclusion of the term “truth” (\**satya*).

In the end of this section on the conventional truth, I want to explore the expression of the conventional truth (*śamvṛtisatya*). Jñānagarbha uses both terms, the correct conventional truth (\**tathyaśamvṛtisatya*) and the conventional truth (\**śamvṛtisatya*) equally in the SDVV. As far as I can tell, the two terms have no distinctive different meaning. Therefore, at least in the SDVV, we can see the term “the conventional truth” as meaning “the correct conventional truth.”

## 2.3 Some remaining questions concerning the conventional truth

### 2.3.1 The negation of the incorrect conventional truth

Even though the conventional truth can be defined as above, some questions remain to be answered. In this section, I will address five important discussions between Jñānagarbha and his opponents, in order to clarify his definition of the conventional truth.

Firstly, what is the negation of the incorrect conventional truth? For example, if the incorrect conventional truths, “Real arising,” and so on need to be denied because of being incorrect, this denial must therefore



reveal the correct conventional truth, because what is not incorrect is correct and what is not correct is incorrect. Therefore, “to deny the incorrect conventional truth” should represent the correct conventional truth. If this is so, “to deny the incorrect conventional truth,” which is the correct conventional truth, should be exactly what appears as our cognitions. But does this really appear as our cognitions? In other words, is this notion grasped by direct perception? Generally speaking, the answer should be “no,” because normally we cannot imagine what it means for “to deny the incorrect conventional truth” to appear. Jñānagarbha answers this question in his commentary on verse 8d:

[Objection:] But, to deny the “Real arising [e.g., of a pot],” and so on [should] also be the incorrect conventional [truth], because it (= to deny the “Real arising [e.g., a pot]”) does not appear [as any cognition] such as the [non-appearance of] the “Real arising [e.g., of a pot],” when a mere thing [such as a pot] itself appears [in our cognition]. [Answer:] This is not correct. This is because [to deny the “Real arising of a pot”] is not different from the nature of the thing [such as the pot. Therefore, we should see it as appearing in our cognitions as a substance, and thus it is the correct conventional truth]. (SDVV: p. 160 ll. 29–33)<sup>28)</sup>

According to Jñānagarbha, “to deny the incorrect conventional truth” appears. Or, to follow his example: when the appearance of a pot can be grasped by direct perception, “to deny the real pot,” which is the nature of a pot, can be considered to appear.<sup>29)</sup> This answer seems to be difficult, because Jñānagarbha essentially admits that “to deny the incorrect conventional truth” does not appear as a cognition. At the same time, this answer includes another very important problem for Jñānagarbha as a Mādhyamika, as he clearly insists that any intrinsic nature does not exist, but he seems to admit to the existence of an intrinsic nature. If this were so, he would not be a Mādhyamika.<sup>30)</sup> However, at no point does Jñānagarbha actually insist that the so-called intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) really exists. Rather, the reason he had to assert that a thing has a nature is that “to deny the incorrect conventional truth” must be the correct conventional truth, and thus appear as our cognitions as he defines. Therefore, his answer seems rather curious and forced. I will also refer to this problem in the third section of the present paper.

On the other hand, unlike with the Real arising, Jñānagarbha does not

explain why the incorrect conventional, such as a double moon, should be denied. It is probably because denying such things is considered commonsense, since they are not the truth, and thus can be excluded even by ordinary people without any examination.

It may be an important point for Jñānagarbha that the object, which a Mādhyamika should deny, is what cannot appear as our cognitions and is conceptually constructed like the Real arising, but not what does appear as our cognitions, whether they are correct or incorrect. He repeatedly insists on this point again in the later part of the SDVV.

Something that appears [in our cognitions] cannot be denied. It is not reasonable to deny anything that is grasped now by direct experience (*\*anubhava*). [v 28]

This is because [it would] contradict direct perception (*\*paratyakṣa*). [If someone asks us what we should deny if we do not deny what appears as our cognitions, then I answer as follows:] [Mādhyamaka] denies the [Real] arising, etc., which have been conceptually constructed as real by others and cannot appear [as any cognition].” [v 29] (SDVV: p. 181 ll. 7–16)<sup>31)</sup>

Therefore, what a Mādhyamika should deny is not something that is just as it appears, namely, the correct conventional truth, but “real things,” which people conceptually construct.

### 2.3.2 Are *Karma* and *Phala* the conventional truth?

The second question is in regards to action (*karma*) and its fruit (*phala*). If the conventional truth appears [as our cognitions] and thus can be grasped by direct perception, as was explained above, how should we think about action and its fruit? It seems that neither is the conventional truth, because the action is what was made before and the fruit is what has not yet been made, so neither is now grasped by direct perception. Regarding this question, Jñānagarbha answers as follows:

[Objection:] If [you] say that a thing exists only as something that is just as it appears, how should [we] think about action (*\*karma*) and its fruit (*\*phala*), [which are not the object of direct perception]?

[Jñānagarbha:] Action and its fruit are things that are just as they appear in the view of the Bhavagat,<sup>32)</sup> and he says so. Therefore, all [ac-

tion and its fruit] exist just as they appear [as the conventional truth, even if they cannot be grasped by the direct perception of ordinary people]. [v 31] (SDVV: pp. 182 l. 28–183 l. 4)<sup>33)</sup>

Generally speaking, as the objector says in the above citation, we ordinary people cannot see what is in the future and what was in the past through direct perception. However, the Bhavagat, who knows all things perfectly, sees them appear clearly and says that they appear, thus other people should believe his words, and accept that both are the conventional truth. Even if we accept Jñānagarbha’s explanation, it is true that action and its fruit do not appear as ordinary people’s cognition, so ordinary people cannot know action and its fruit on the basis of their own abilities. Nevertheless, Jñānagarbha had to insist that both do appear. We think this is probably because in the same way that he denied the incorrect conventional truth, Jñānagarbha had to maintain consistency with both his own definition of the correct conventional truth and the contents of the sūtras, the words of Buddha.

In any case, what we can understand from such discussions is that the fundamental definition of the conventional truth of Jñānagarbha is “something that is just as it appears,” and that, by depending on this definition, he tries to reject various different kinds of objections.

### 2.3.3 The conventional truth should not be examined

As mentioned above, Jñānagarbha argued that the incorrect conventional truth, such as the “real arising,” and other conceptual objects, should be examined and then denied, but the correct conventional truth, something that is just as it appears, should not be. This is one of the most important points in Jñānagarbha’s Two Truths Theory. In verse 21 and in its commentary, he states that the correct conventional truth, something that is just as it appears, should not be examined in any way.

[We] should not make an examination of this (= the correct conventional truth), because it exists intrinsically as something that is just as it appears. [v 21ab]

Indeed, the conventional [truth] is something that is just as it appears and no grounds exist to examine it that have been preached [by Buddha]. If [a person] examines [the correct conventional truth], [the conclusion] will be another [unrelated] meaning, [not the true mean-

ing of the correct conventional truth] and thus [it] will be denied. [v 21cd]

We [Mādhyamikas] do not make any examination of this (= the correct conventional truth), and [rather] refuse to examine [it]. If [the correct conventional truth] is examined, and then it [turns out to] be unreasonable, [it] is unreasonable [to examine it, but the conventional truth itself is not unreasonable]. To examine the conventional [thing] in the conventional world, which is essentially something that is just as it appears, would make a person understand a different meaning [from the conventional thing's essential meaning]. Therefore, such an examination [of the conventional thing] should be completely avoided. Even if [you] point out a fault about something that has different characteristics from what we have already explained [as something that is just as it appears], there is not any fault on our [the Mādhyamikas'] side. (SDVV: p. 175 ll. 7–18)<sup>34</sup>

The correct conventional truth should not be examined, he argues, for any reason. We should simply accept it as something that is just as it appears, without any examination or inquiry. In summary, Jñānagarbha's argument about the conventional truth is very easy to understand: "In terms of the conventional truth, we should simply accept without any examination something that is just as it appears as the cognition of all people."<sup>35</sup>

This interpretation regarding the correct conventional truth seems to have strongly influenced Mādhyamikas such as Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. For example, in the *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti* (MAV), verse 64, Śāntarakṣita defines the conventional truth as having three characteristics.

The conventional [truth] is thought to have [the following three] characteristics: (1) what is desirable in terms of not being examined (*\*avicāraikaramaṇīya*), (2) something has the attributes of arising and distinguishing, and (3) something that has the ability of effective action. (MAV: v 64 p. 202 ll. 7–10)<sup>36</sup>

Of these three characteristics, (2) is the same as what is described in the SDVV, verse 8abc: a mere thing, which arises in a way that is dependent on causes, (3) is also the same as the description in the SDVV verse 12, and (1) relates to what has been addressed in this section, that

is, something that should not be examined. The expression of the MAV, *\*avicāraikaramaṇīya*, is more sophisticated than used the SDVV, and it is known to have become a kind of technical term in defining the conventional truth around the middle of the eighth century.<sup>37)</sup> Therefore, we can say that, in regards to the Two Truths Theory, Śāntarakṣita was strongly influenced by Jñānagarbha.

### 2.3.4 The interpretations of the *Āryākṣayamatīrdeśasūtra*

If the conventional truth, as Jñānagarbha defines it in verse 3cd, 8, and 12, is something that is just as it appears, or a mere thing, that is free from conception, arising in a way that is dependent on causes, and has the ability of effective action, how should we think about the name of an object like a “pot,” which is a mere thing, or just as it appears? The description “pot” is not in itself the conventional truth, because it is nothing other than a conception expressed by words. However, Mādhyamikas traditionally consider such verbal conventions to be the conventional truth, because they are commonly recognized as a truth for ordinary people. Indeed, it is well known that Nāgārjuna thought that the conventional (*saṃvṛti*) is almost equal to verbal conventions (*vyavahāra*). We can see an answer to this question in the *Āryākṣayamatīrdeśasūtra* (ANS), which Jñānagarbha cited in the SDVV as evidence for his definition and interpretation of the Two Truths Theory.

The ANS is one of the Mahāyāna sūtras that Yogācārins and Mādhyamikas often cite in their own texts.<sup>38)</sup> One passage in particular, in which three truths—the conventional truth (*kun rdzob kyi bden pa; \*saṃvṛtisatya*), the ultimate truth (*don dam pa'i bden pa; paramārthasatya*), and the characteristic truth (*mtshan ñid kyi bden pa; \*lakṣaṇasatya*) are discussed, is often cited.<sup>39)</sup> The passage reads as follows:

Among them (= three truths), if [it is asked] what is the conventional truth, it is as much *\*lokavyavahāra* [as possible] and what is expressed by as many syllables (*\*akṣara*), phrases (*\*śabda*), and designations (*\*saṃketa*) [as possible].<sup>40)</sup> The ultimate truth is something in which any work of mind does not exist, let alone letters.<sup>41)</sup> (ANS: p. 73 ll. 1–2)

In order to understand the meaning of this passage, we can use the commentary on the ANS, the *Āryākṣayamatīrdeśasūtratīkā* (ANST), which is attributed to Vasubandhu in Tibet.<sup>42)</sup> The ANST gives the detailed

comments on this passage.

Among them, [the Bodhisattva] wants to explain the conventional truth [and thus, the sūtra states] “as much *lokavyavahāras* [as possible] and as much as what is expressed by many syllables, phrases, and designations [as possible].” The word, “As much [as possible] (*\*yāvat*),” is connected with all [items]; namely, as much *lokavyavahāras* [as possible], as much of what is expressed by syllables [as possible], as much of what is expressed by phrases [as possible], and as much of what is expressed by designations [as possible]. The word, “as much [as possible] (*\*yāvat*),” conveys to the meaning of “as much as exists.” Namely, it means as much *lokavyavahāras* as exists. In this case, (1) *lokavyavahāra* is what is expressed [by syllables, phrases, and designations]. The others (= syllables, phrases, and designations) are what express [*lokavyavahāra*]: syllables are things such as “a” or “ka”, which are related to sūtra; phrases are things such as “mental conformation (*\*saṃskāra*) is impermanent (*\*anitya*),” etc., which are elements of declarations, and are related to sūtra; and designations are parts of declarations that can express objects clearly and discriminate them [from the others]. By [using] the word, “as much [as possible] (*\*yāvat*),” [it is shown that] not only [syllables, phrases, and designations] of sūtra but also ordinary syllables and phrases, etc., are included. It (*\*yāvat*) also [shows that] there are two kinds of instruction: through minds and through words. Of these, the instruction through minds is “to clearly show the dharma to Śakra through minds,” “for the [Śakra] himself to bring his own questions to [his] mind,” and “answers [for him] are also given in the form of verse through his mind.” [These things are] preached in different [kinds of] sūtras. The instruction through words is what reaches the ears of those, who have the different kinds of knowledge about Veda. (2) In summary, it is shown [through this sūtra] that, depending on [the abilities of] the people to be educated (*\*vineya*), all *vyavahāras*, which are as much said as exist, are the conventional truth.”<sup>43</sup> (ANST: pp. 269–70 n. 1)

*\*Lokavyavahāra* (*'jig rten gyi tha sñad*) is often translated as “worldly conventions.”<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, *yi ge* (*\*akṣara*), *sgra* (*\*śabda*), and *brda* (*\*saṃketa*) refer to syllables like “a” and “ka,” etc., “phrases” refers to parts of a phrase [of a sūtra], and “designations” means that which conveys meaning to other people. As we can understand from part (1), *\*Lokavyavahāra* is

that which is expressed by syllables, phrases, and designations, and thus refers to verbal conventions. In addition, *lokavyavahāra* does not only refer to the sūtra but also refers to ordinary things. Therefore, we can say that Jñānagarbha thinks that the name “pot,” for instance, is also *lokavyavahāra*, or the conventional truth as Madhyamaka has traditionally accepted the ordinary usage of words as the conventional truth. This is also clear from the last sentence of the citation, which is noted above as (2).

However, Jñānagarbha’s interpretation of the same passage of the ANS in the SDVV is slightly different from that of the ANST, thus providing another interesting fact about the conventional truth. His interpretation is as follows:

(A) *\*Lokavyavahāraprajñāpti*<sup>45</sup> [in this sūtra] is an worldly activity, which has the characteristics of the cognizing and cognized, but not the characteristic of naming (*\*abhidhāna*), since it (= naming) is mentioned by the latter part (= syllables, phrases, and designations). The word, “as much [as possible] (*\*yāvat*),” means “all (*\*sakala*).” This means that things that are decided by the cognition of direct perception (*\*pratyakṣa*), which is free from conception, namely, those objects recognized as form (*\*rūpa*), etc., or pleasure (*\*sukha*), etc., are nothing other than the conventional truth. It (= the word, “all (*\*yāvat*)”) is also to be taken with the subsequent [terms: that is, syllables, phrases, and designations]. Thus, not only [what is expressed by syllables, phrases, and designations] is used in [sacred texts such as] sūtras, but also [what is expressed by ordinary] syllables, phrases, and designations other [than what is used in sūtras] are [all also] included [by this term]. (SDVV: p. 158 l. 26–p. 159 l. 4)<sup>46</sup>

As we can see, Jñānagarbha’s explanation of the ANS is substantially the same as that in the ANST.<sup>47</sup> However, we can see a different interpretation of the term *lokavyavahāra* in part (A) from that in the ANST. Jñānagarbha separates *lokavyavahāra* from “what are expressed by syllables, phrases, and designations,” which he attributes to ordinary cognitive activity. Moreover, by adding the term *\*yāvat* which means “all,” he tells us that such cognitive activities include even non-conceptual things, such as form (*\*rūpa*), which is the object of the sense organ (*indryapratyakṣa*) and pleasure (*\*sukha*), which is the object of self-cognition (*svasaṃvedana*), both of which are direct perceptions. On the other hand, according to Jñānagarbha, the traditional or general interpretation of *lokavyavahāra*,

that of worldly verbal conventions, can be expressed only by syllables, phrases, and designations. Although this interpretation seems to be challenging, it is not impossible to include cognitive activity within its framework, because the broad sense of “*vyavahāra*” is “activity” or “action.” Presumably the reason why he tries to include cognitive characteristics within the context of *lokavyavahāra* is that he wants to interpret objects of direct perception that are free from conception as still within the boundary of the conventional truth.

Matsumoto [1987], who does not address the ANST, refers to this difference and asserts that it depends on the differences of interpretations in terms of the conventional truth between Yogācāra and Madhyamaka. He makes note of some valuable examples as evidence for this. As I have already mentioned in the present paper, if Jñānagarbha is conscious of Dharmakīrti’s epistemological theory when he explains the two truths, is there the possibility that this difference in the interpretation of the ANS is not between the two Buddhist schools but between the time before and after Jñānagarbha?

Regarding the above question, we have one interesting example. Candrakīrti (ca. 600–660), whose active time was more or less the same as that of Dharmakīrti, cites this passage of the ANS and comments on it in the *Śūnyatāsaptatīrṭti* (ŚSV), where *Lokavyavahāra* is explained as follows:

Also, as for *Lokavyavahāra* as it is preached [in the ANS], it is said to be *vyavahāra* to make various things, which one person wants to understand and perfectly comprehends, recognized within the stream of another person’s [mind]. *Lokavyavahāra* is “*lokasya vyavahāra*,” and makes meanings, which ordinary people want to understand together, or makes the objects that [ordinary people] want to cognize, decided. Just like that, [*lokavyavahāra*] makes the relationship between the mentioning and mentioned, and between the cognizing and cognized, work; and then, in order not to extinguish the establishment of *vyavahāra* in another time, the things that have substance produced only by false [understanding], which have the characteristics of the mentioning and mentioned and the cognizing and cognized, are said to be *vyavahāra*. Therefore, it (*vyavahāra*) is related with not only the actors [but also the objects]. It is also known as *lokavyavahārasatya* because ordinary people accept it as a truth, and it is the same as the conventional truth (\**saṃvṛtisatya*). (ŚSV: p. 213 ll. 14–24)<sup>48</sup>



When Candrakīrti explains *lokavyavahāra*, it is obvious that he is conscious of its connection to cognition. On this topic, we may be able to say that the two interpretations of *lokavyavahāra* by Candrakīrti and Jñānagarbha are similar. However, Candrakīrti does not refer to the difference between conceptual and non-conceptual cognition. These differences and similarities between Candrakīrti and Jñānagarbha illustrate the process of how cognition has been related to the conventional truth.

On the other hand, unlike Jñānagarbha, Candrakīrti does not make a distinction between *lokavyavahāra* and syllables, phrases, and designations. Instead, like the ANST, he adopts the understanding that *lokavyavahāra* is what is expressed by syllables, phrases, and designations, and thus that both cognitions and verbal designations can be seen as the characteristics of *lokavyavahāra*. This is why he does not need to comment on the characteristics of syllables, phrases, and designations in the SŚV.

How was it possible to interpret the ANS in these two different ways? Braarvig suggests the Sanskrit sentence *lokavyavahāro yāvad akṣarāśabda-saṃketanirdiṣṭam*<sup>49)</sup> as the source for this passage. No doubt, Braarvig's suggestion is reasonable, on the basis of Tibetan translations of the ANS and that cited in the SDVV. However, we cannot interpret this Sanskrit sentence in the way that the ANST does.<sup>50)</sup> As a source for this interpretation, perhaps we could instead suggest a Sanskrit sentence such as *yāvallokavyavahārākṣarāśabdasamketanirdiṣṭam*. This, of course, remains for now only a hypothesis.

In any case, before discussing the differences of interpretations of the ANS, when we check all of the Tibetan translations, we can find that two different kinds of translations of this passage in the ANS exist. One is Braarvig's edited version, which I have already shown in this section:

[X] 'jig rten gyi tha sñad dañ / yi ge dañ / sgra dañ / brdas bstan pa ji sñed pa'o // (ANS: p. 73 ll. 1-2)

The other is the version that is found in the sTog Palace edition and the Kawaguchi collection,<sup>51)</sup> which Braarvig did not adopt. This includes:

[Y] ji sñed du 'jig rten gyi tha sñad yi ge dañ sgra dañ brdas bstan pa'o // (ANS: p. 74 n. 15)

Although the two translations look almost the same, the latter version [Y] has no “dañ (and)” between *lokavyavahāra* ('jig rten gyi tha sñad) and syl-

lables (*yi ge*), etc., and thus it makes the interpretation found in the ANST possible, while, in the former version [X], we can find “*dañ* (and),” which distinguishes *lokavyavahāra* from syllables, phrases, and designations, thus making the interpretation found in the SDVV also possible.

Interestingly, the texts in which version [X] is used and the texts in which version [Y] is used were used respectively before and after Jñānagarbha. Before Jñānagarbha, this passage was not divided into two, as in version [Y], as follows:

*de la kun rdzob kyi bden pa gañ ze na / ji sñed du 'jig rten gyi tha sñad yi ge dañ sgra dañ brdar bstan pa'o //* (SAVBh: D tsi 31a6, P tsi 36a6–7 written by Sthiramati)

*de skad du mdo las / kun rdzob kyi bden pa gañ ze na / ji srid du 'jig rten gyi tha sñad yi ge dañ skad kyis ston pa'o zes so //* (ŚSV: p. 213 ll. 5–6, written by Candrakīrti)

*'Phags pa blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa'i mdo las kyañ / kun rdzob kyi bden pa gañ ze na / ji tsam du 'jig rten gyi tha sñad du yi ge dañ sgra dañ brdas bstan pa'o //* (PPT: D. wa 17a2–3, P. wa 20b2–3, written by Avalokī-tavrata).

When following this type of reading, we should see *lokavyavahāra* as referring to fundamentally ordinary verbal designations, which are expressed by words, etc. This is probably the oldest known reading, as can be seen from the Chinese translation. The ANS was translated into Chinese by Zhì yán bǎo yún (智嚴寶雲) in Northern Liang (北凉: Běi Liáng; 397–439): this is the oldest translation of the ANS, and includes the following:

云何俗諦、若世間所用語言文字假名法等。(T 13 [397] (12) 197b8)

What is the conventional truth? [It is] like syllables, letters, and designations, etc., which ordinary people use.

In this Chinese translation, the conventional truth only refers to the verbal designations. In any case, it is clear that *lokavyavahāra* is not distinguished from words, and that the translation does not include any necessity of cognition.

On the other hand, after Jñānagarbha, the version [X] is adopted:

[SDVV] *de la kun rdzob kyi bden pa gañ ze na / ji sñed 'jig rten gyi tha sñad*

*gdags pa dan / yi ge dan skad dan brda bstan pa dag go //* (SDVV: p. 158 ll. 25–26)

[MAV] *de la kun rdzob kyi bden pa gan ze na / 'jig rten gyi tha snad ji sned pa dan / yi ge dan skad dan brda bstan pa dag go //* (MAV: p. 204 ll. 13–4 written by Śāntarakṣita)

[MĀ] *mdo las kun rdzob kyi bden pa gan ze na / 'jig rten gyi tha snad ji sned yi ge dan sgras bstan pa yin no //* (in *pūrvapakṣa* of MĀ: D142a1–3, P153a6–8 written by Kamalaśīla)

Although Kamalaśīla certainly describes version [Y] in MĀ, this is in the *pūrvapakṣa*, which picks up objections from Yogācārins (who were mostly active before Dharmakīrti). Therefore, This does not reflect his interpretation. Indeed, he adopts [X] in the *Madhyamakālamkārapañjikā* (MAP), the commentary on the MAV, as his own position.<sup>52)</sup>

In conclusion, in discussions of the two truths before the time of Jñānagarbha, the issue of how cognition, especially non-conceptual cognition, should be handled in terms of the conventional truth was not emphasized. The conventional truth was something verbal, like a worldly verbal convention. Therefore, translation of the passage in the ANS was as in version [Y]. Although Candrakīrti was conscious of the issue of cognition, and added it as one of the characteristics of *lokavyavahāra*, he does not consider non-conceptual cognition like direct perception, and still adopts the traditional reading of the ANS as in version [Y]. The problem, for Jñānagarbha, who was active after Dharmakīrti, was how he should interpret non-conceptual cognition, which was presented by Dharmakīrti as the ultimate thing, or whether he should include it within the context of the conventional truth. He most likely resolved this question by dividing the passage included in the ANS into two, and providing a new meaning for *lokavyavahāra*. This interpretation was adopted by his followers, including Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. Although worldly verbal conventions are only discussed minimally in the SDVV, this is because Jñānagarbha considers them to be the conventional truth. This was probably not a topic of much concern for him because he thought it was obvious that they were merely the conventional truth.

### 2.3.5 *Atathyaśaṃvṛti* or *Mithyāśaṃvṛti*?

I will now address the philological issue of which Sanskrit term to use *atathyaśaṃvṛti*<sup>53)</sup> or *mithyāśaṃvṛti* when referring to the incorrect conven-

tional truth and the incorrect conventional. In the present paper, I use the term *atathyaśamṛti*, but not *mithyāśamṛti*, for the incorrect conventional, although scholars of Buddhist Sanskrit generally use the latter term.<sup>54)</sup> My argument is mainly based on the Tibetan translation found in the available texts referenced in this paper, *yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob*, which is thought to be literally translated from the Sanskrit term *atathyaśamṛti* or *abhūtaśamṛti*. On the other hand, the Sanskrit term *mithyāśamṛti* is normally translated into Tibetan as *log pa'i kun rdzob*. Although I believe there is not a significant difference between the meanings of the two terms, we should consider the major difference in regards to the time periods in which the terms were used.

First of all, we cannot find any use of *log pa'i kun rdzob* (*\*mithyāśamṛti*) in any of the Mādhyamikas' texts that were written before the middle of the eighth century. As far as I can tell from my research, the earliest use of the term *log pa'i kun rdzob* (*\*mithyāśamṛti*) can be found in the text, the *Madhyamakālaṃkāraṇjīkā* (MAP), written by Kamalaśīla.<sup>55)</sup>

On the other hand, it has been asserted by recent scholars that *tathyaśamṛti* (*yañ dag pa'i kun rdzob*) was first used by Bhāviveka (ca. 490/500–570).<sup>56)</sup> After that, Avalokitavrata, who wrote one commentary, the *Prajñāpradīpatīkā* (PPT), on the *Prajñāpradīpa* (PP) of Bhāviveka, uses *\*atathyaśamṛti* (*yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob*), which appears to be the first use of this term. So how can we reasonably address this situation regarding the use of these three terms (*\*tathyas°*, *\*atathyas°*, and *\*mithyās°*)?

Firstly, Bhāviveka needed to provide a positive estimation of the conventional truth (*śamṛtisatyā*), which had been, at times, understood as incorrect in comparison to the ultimate truth (*paramārthasatyā*). He wanted to present the conventional level as the correct truth, in his attempts to actively debate with other Indian philosophers on the conventional level and prove Madhyamaka theory through inference. Consequently, it seems that he used the term correct conventional (*tathyaśamṛti*). However, within the framework of discussing the two truths in reference to one another, the conventional truth would be considered to be the incorrect truth. Mādhyamikas after Bhāviveka, who expressed the incorrect nature of the conventional, tried to assert this view through adding a negative predicative “a” to “tathya.” Therefore, Avalokitavrata, Jñānagarbha, and others use the term *\*atathyaśamṛti* (*yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob*) in their texts such as the SDVV and the PPT.<sup>57)</sup> After the middle of the eighth century, Kamalaśīla used an expression of direct denial, *log pa'i kun rdzob* (*\*mithyā*), in the MAP and the *Tattvāloka* (TĀ),<sup>58)</sup> instead of an expression

of indirect denial, like “*a-tathya*.”<sup>59)</sup> But even if my suggestion is correct, it should be noted that overall we can find more usage of *yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob* (\**atathyasaṅvṛti*) than *log pa'i kun rdzob* (\**mithyāsaṅvṛti*) in most Madhyamaka texts, even after middle of the eighth century.

### 3 The secondary ultimate truth

Finally, I will examine one of the most complex issues in terms of the conventional truth and the ultimate truth. If the ultimate truth, as Jñānagarbha insists, does not appear as any cognition, how can Buddhists understand the ultimate truth and thus attain enlightenment? Buddhists need a method for directly realizing the ultimate truth. Indeed, Jñānagarbha also refers to another ultimate truth that is to be expressed through words:

\**Paramārthasatyam* is *paramārthasya satyam* (genitive *tatpuruṣa*). This means the truth that is consistent with logic (\**nyāyanusārin*). Essentially, “Nothing other than logic is the ultimate, because it is not contradictory [to Reality (\**tattva*)].” [v 4ab1]

A decision in terms of an object by [the power of] logic is not contradictory [to Reality]. Therefore, the acquisition (\**adhigama*) [of an object] established by logical reason with three conditions (\**trairūpya*) is the ultimate (\**paramārtha*) because [logic is] not only “ultimate (\**parama*)” but also “the object (\**artha*).” [Namely,] the object that is acquired by it (= logic, which is the ultimate), is also the ultimate, like [the object, which is acquired by] direct perception (\**pratyakṣa*) [is called *pratyakṣa*], etc. (SDVV: p. 156 ll. 15–24)<sup>60)</sup>

Jñānagarbha insists that logic (\**nyāya*), and the object established by logic are the ultimate [truth]<sup>61)</sup> because they are not contradictory [to Reality], unlike the conventional truth. Logic is needed as a bridge to connect people with Reality (= the *real* ultimate truth), which does not manifest as appearances, that is free from conception. Of course, logic itself is not the same as the ultimate truth, which I have already shown in the first section of the present paper, because logic, which must be expressed by words, is not free from conception. Thus, logic is called the secondary ultimate truth (\**paryāyaparamārtha*) by Śāntarakṣita. In this way, logic also has the characteristics of the conventional truth. Namely, logic and the object established by it should appear. Therefore, Jñānagarbha explains

logic, which has the characteristics of both of the two truths, as follows:

[The Buddha] acknowledges that nothing other than the true essence of the conventional is the ultimate. [v 17ab]

Why? [This is] because [both the conventional and the ultimate are] not different. Such logic also exists as something that is just as it appears. [v 17cd]

Logic is also something that is just as it appears in substance and thus nothing other than the conventional. (SDVV: p. 173 ll. 6–14)<sup>62)</sup>

As far as logic is considered equal to the conventional truth, it is natural that it exists as something that is just as it appears. Indeed, we need something that is just as it appears when we use logic. Jñānagarbha explains this point:

As far as something exists that is just as it appears in the cognitions of both debaters [like the one who questions and the one who answers on the basis of inference], [they can] set property posseser (*\*dharmin*) and property (*\*dharma*), etc., depending on this appearance alone. [v 18]

At that time, the inference [can be] established. Otherwise, [the inference] cannot [be established]. Therefore, when people who debate depend on the use of logic in this way, who can deny its inference [and its objects]? [Nobody denies it.] [v 19] (SDVV: p. 173 ll. 15–22)<sup>63)</sup>

The establishment of inference with logical reason means that all people see the same appearance. Therefore, logic is also the conventional truth: something that is just as it appears.

However, it is curious that such a thing is asserted as the same as the ultimate truth of Buddhism. If logic and the object that it establishes are called the ultimate truth, the existence of fire on the mountain, which is proved by the logical reason, “smoke,” should also be accepted as the ultimate truth, because this fire is proved by logic, which is the ultimate truth. Is this true? I think that this is not true at all, because “fire” is certainly proved by logic but, since it is still a concept, it is not non-contradictory with Reality: that is, emptiness (*śūnyatā*), a lack of intrinsic nature (*niḥsvabhāva*), etc., and Buddhist enlightenment. In other words, just because something is established by logic, it is not always the ultimate (*paramārtha*). For something to be called the ultimate [truth], it needs to

be not only established by logic, but also to be consistent with reality. Jñānagarbha says as follows:

“To deny [Real] arising” is also, by logical reason, to deny something conceptually constructed, such as “Real arising,” etc. [The ultimate] is accepted, because [it] is consistent with Reality. [v 9ab] (SDVV: p. 161 ll. 3–6)<sup>64</sup>

“To deny Real arising” has two conditions: (1) it is established by logic, which is the ultimate [truth] and (2) it is consistent with Reality. Therefore, “to deny Real arising” can be called “the ultimate truth.”

We should now recall the discussion in section 2.3.1. This gives us a key to clearly solve the question, as to why “to deny Real arising,” which does not appear practically as our cognitions, had to be asserted as something that is just as it appears. Depending on the explanation of verse 9ab, it is apparent that Real arising is examined by logic and is denied, so “to deny Real arising” is established by logic, the secondary ultimate truth, which has characteristics of both of the two truths. Therefore, it can be said that “to deny Real arising” does not appear, because it is consistent with reality, the characteristic of the ultimate truth. On the other hand, it can be said that “to deny Real arising” does appear because it is established by logic, which works depending on appearance, the characteristic of the conventional truth.

Finally, I want to point out another reason why Jñānagarbha had to establish this logic. In reality, no logic, negation, or object of negation exists, because nothing has an intrinsic nature in terms of Reality. If the ultimate truth means only Reality, when Jñānagarbha uses the phrase, “as the ultimate truth,” in relation to an inference, the inference itself cannot come into existence. However, if logic is considered to be the ultimate truth, the phrase, “as the ultimate truth,” can be understood as “as logic,” and thus the inference comes into existence.<sup>65</sup>

“[A thing] does not arise as the ultimate truth.” The meaning of this phrase is “[a thing] does not arise as [a consequence of] logic.” In the same way [the expression, “as logic”] should substitute for [the expression, “as the ultimate truth”] in other [similar] phrases. (SDVV: p. 172 ll. 22–25)<sup>66</sup>

As has just been described, this logic plays a very important role in

Jñānagarbha's Two Truths Theory, though Jñānagarbha's explanations of it are sometimes confused and difficult to understand.

This explanation of logic provides an interesting example of what one needs to consider in terms of *svātantrika* and *prāsaṅgika*, because logic, or inference, which is considered to be the ultimate truth in the SDVV, only works in order to deny the theories submitted by those outside of Buddhism and those outside of the Madhyamiaka tradition, but it does not work directly in order to establish Madhyamaka theory.

#### 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, Jñānagarbha's Two Truths Theory can be summarized as follows:

##### **The ultimate truth (\*paramārthasatya)**

The ultimate truth is free from conception and does not appear as any cognition, even in the cognition of the omniscient (\*sarvajñā).

##### **The conventional truth (\*saṃvṛtisatya)**

**The general definition:** Something that is just as it appears (\*yathābhāsa / \*yathādarśana)

**The correct conventional truth (\*tathyaṣaṃvṛtisatya):** A mere thing (\*vastumātra), which is free from conception, appears in dependence of causes (\*pratītyasamutpāda), and has the ability of effective action (\*arthakriyāsamārtha), which is defined as the ultimate thing by Dharmakīrti. This should be accepted without any logical examination.<sup>67)</sup>

**The incorrect conventional (\*atathyaṣaṃvṛti):** A mere thing, which is free from conception, appears as conventional cognitions, and has no ability of effective action. This is denied by the common sense of ordinary people without any examination by means of logic. For example, something like double moon (\*dvicandra), a shimmer of hot air, and so on.

**The incorrect conventional truth (\*atathyaṣaṃvṛtisatya):** What is conceptually constructed as the Real thing by other Indian philosophical schools and other Buddhists, which does not even appear as a conven-



tional cognition and is not free from conception. This is an object that is denied by logic. For example, the “Real arising” for Sarvastivādin, the “Real appearance of the mind” for Yogācāra, and so on.

**Supplemental definition:** All ordinary and sacred verbal designations, which are expressed by utterances, letters, and words, are also the correct conventional truth, though they are not free from conception. It is clear for Jñānagarbha that they are the conventional truth following the Madhyamaka tradition, and thus he probably does not refer to them very much in the SDVV.

### **The secondary ultimate truth (\**paryāyaparamārthasatya*)**

The secondary ultimate truth is logic and what is examined and then established by it, which has the characteristics of both of the two truths.

**The conventional characteristics:** Logic appears as any cognition, because it is constructed only when all its components (*dharmīn*, *dharmā*, *dr̥ṣṭānta*) appear to both persons, who debate in dependence on such components of an inference.

**The ultimate characteristics:** Logic and what it examines and then establishes are consistent with Reality (*\*tattva*), having no intrinsic nature (*nīḥsvabhāva*), emptiness (*śūnyatā*), and so on. Therefore, if what is examined and then established by logic is NOT inconsistent with Reality, it is not the secondary ultimate truth.

As I have examined in the present paper, these characteristics of the two truths in the SDVV are not only strongly influenced by the epistemology of Dharmakīrti, but also have subsequently influenced other Mādhyamikas such as Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, who use more sophisticated expressions or terms, including *avicāraikaramaṇīya* and *mithyāsamvṛti*.

## **NOTES**

- 1) I would like to offer my special thanks to Toshikazu Watanabe for his valuable comments, as well as to Casey Kemp and Gregory Forgues for correcting my English.
- 2) The SDVV is the auto-commentary of the *Satyadvayavibhaṅgakārikā* (SDVK)

by Jñānagarbha. It is thought, as Matsumoto [1978] insists, that the SDVK, which we can find in the Tibetan Buddhist canon (both the Tibetan translations of the SDVK and the SDVV can be found in only two editions, the sDe dge and Co ne, but not in the others, such as the Peking, sNar thang, or dGa' ldan editions), is taken from the SDVV. However, some verses of the SDVK do not perfectly correspond with those in the SDVV. Moreover, the number of the verses of the SDVK, which are recorded in some catalogues of the Tibetan canon, are all different. See, Akahane [2001]. With such facts in mind, we can easily infer that the translation and transmission between the SDVK and the SDVV were not consistent. Thus, we should also consider the possibility that the SDVK may have been lost and not transmitted into Tibet, and thus the SDVK may have been reconstructed from the SDVV.

- 3) I follow Frauwallner [1961] regarding the time periods during which Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla were active.
- 4) Of course, Jñānagarbha's definition is not the final one, and some developments can be found in the texts that were written by later Mādhyamikas. For example, Śāntarakṣita insists the term *\*avicāraikaramaṇīya* (*ma brtags gcig pu ṅams dga'*) to be one of the definitions for the conventional truth in verse 64 of the *Madhyamakālaṃkārikā* (MAK). It was first used as such by Śāntarakṣita. Although the association can also be observed in the *Āryakṣayamatinirdeśasūtraṭīkā* (ANST) and the *Prajñāpradīpaṭīkā* (PPT), as found in the explanations for the conventional, the term is not explicitly used as a definition for the conventional truth. See, Akahane [2003]. Jñānagarbha does not use this term but in the SDVV insists that the conventional truth should not be examined, which implies the same meaning of *avicāraikaramaṇīya* as by Śāntarakṣita.
- 5) See, Teramoto [1928, p. 270], Schiefner [1869, pp. 198–199], Schiefner [1868, p. 152]. Although *Tāranātha* writes that Śrīgupta was alive before Jñānagarbha, it has been proven by recent scholars like Matsumoto and Kobayashi that Śrīgupta was active after Jñānagarbha, Śāntarakṣita, and even Kamalaśīla, mainly due to the fact that the *Tattvāvatāra*, written by Śrīgupta, explains itself as a memorandum of a certain text and its contents appears to be a short summary of the *Madhyamakālaṃkāra* by Śāntarakṣita. See, Matsumoto [1978] and Kobayashi [1993].
- 6) Ruegg [1981] and Matsumoto [1978] think that there have been three persons who had the name Jñānagarbha. One person was the author of the SDVV. The second person mainly translated Madhyamaka texts into Tibetan during the early 9th century. The third person transmitted the *Guhyasamājatantra* to Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros in the 11th century. In addition, we can find in the *Nyāyabinduṭīkāṭīppaṇī* the name of Jñānagarbha, who insisted on *mānasapratyakṣa*. However, we do not have any other information on this Jñānagarbha. At the least, we cannot find the reference to the theory of *mānasapratyakṣa* in the SDVV. See, Mimaki [1988, pp. 248–249]. Although there have been some scholars who insist that only one Jñānagarbha or possibly two Jñānagarbhas existed, the theory that three Jñānagarbhas existed is considered most reasonable among the majority of contemporary

scholars. Four other texts attributed to Jñānagarbha can be found in the Tibetan canon apart from the SDVK and the SDVV. Two texts among them, namely, the *Āryānantamukhanirhāradhāraṇīkārikā* (D2695, P3519) and its auto-commentary, the *Āryānantamukhanirhāradhāraṇīvṛtti* (D2696, P3520), are most likely written by the Jñānagarbha discussed here since some verses can also be found in the SDVV. See, Akahane [2003]. The authorship of the *Yogabhāvanāpatha* (or *-mārga*) (D3909, P5395 & 5452) is difficult to determine. However, it is highly possible that this was also written by the very Jñānagarbha discussed here because many texts that handle the same topic, namely, the path to enlightenment, are said to have been written in 8th century when he was active. The text that is most difficult to determine whether or not is his commentary is on the sixth chapter of the *Samḍhinirmocanasūtra*, the *Āryasamḍhinirmocanasūtre Āryamaitreyakevalaparivartabhāṣya* (D4033, P5535), because this sūtra is famous for being cited by the Yogācāra school of thought, traditionally considered by scholars as promoting an opposing view to Madhyamaka. On the other hand, this chapter was often cited as proof in the *Bhāvanākrama*, written by Kamalaśīla. Therefore, the decision whether or not to attribute this work to Jñānagarbha must be reserved until new evidence comes to light.

- 7) Recently Krasser [2011] casts some doubt on the lifetime of Dharmakīrti. Although his suggestion is worth examining, in the present paper I follow the suggestion made by Frauwallner [1961].
- 8) Matsumoto [1980 and 1981] insists that Jñānagarbha criticized Devedrabuddhi (ca. 630–690) and then Śākyabuddhi (ca. 660–720) criticized Jñānagarbha. On the other hand, Moriyama [1993] denies this assertion of Matsumoto and insists that Jñānagarbha criticized Śākyabuddhi.
- 9) Kataoka casts a similar question on his own blog, where he asserts his own opinion that one truth is much more reasonable than two truths. See Kataoka [2009]. If we take up this question, we would need to address even more fundamental questions as to what is the truth or why should there be only one truth even if it could be argued that two truths are unreasonable? However, these issues are beyond the present paper and therefore will not be discussed here.
- 10) For example, it is said that Bhāviveka (ca. 490/500–570) insists that things really exist according to the conventional truth as the Sautrāntika school insists. See, Kajiyama [1982] and Tamura [2010] etc.
- 11) *mdo las / de nas 'jam dpal g'zon nur gyur pas / li tstsha bi dri ma med par grags pa la 'di skad ces smras so // rigs kyi bu bdag cag gis ni ran ran gi bstan pa bsad zin na / khyod kyan gn̄is su med pa'i chos kyi sgo bstan pa spobs pa mdzod cig / li tstsha bi dri ma med par grags pa can mi smra bar gyur to // de nas 'jam dpal g'zon nur gyur pas / li tstsha bi dri ma med par grags pa la legs so zes bya ba byin te / rigs kyi bu gan la yi ge dan skad dan / rnam par rig byed 'jug pa med pa de ni byan chub sems dpa' rnam kyi gn̄is su med pa'i sgo la 'jug pa ste / legs so legs so zes ji skad gsuñs pa lta bu'o // (SDVV: p. 162 ll. 15–23).*
- 12) *de ni spros pa med pa yin // [v 11b]  
de kho na rtog pa'i dra ba thams cad dan bral ba'o // de n̄id kyi phyir /*

- 'jam dpaḷ gyis ni yañ dag dris // rgyal ba'i sras po mi gsuñ bźugs //* [v 11cd] (SDVV: p. 162 ll. 10–14).
- 13) Although the term, “Reality” (*de kho na; \*tattva*) but not the ultimate truth (*paramārthasatya*) is used in this context, Śāntarakṣita shows in the SDVP that it means the ultimate truth: *gañ gi phyir kho na don dam pa de la ni brjod par bya ba'i bag kyañ* / (SDVP: D26b1, P15b6–7). However, it seems to me that there is a difference between Reality and the ultimate truth in substance, at least as far as I read in the SDVV. This was discussed before in Akahane [2002].
- 14) *gañ phyir kho na de la ni // brjod bya'i bag kyañ ci yañ med //  
de yi phyir na dris kyañ don // mi gsuñ bźugs pas rgya cher bśad //*  
(The last *antaraśloka* found in the commentary of verse 11cd: SDVV: p. 163 ll. 7–10).
- 15) According to recent scholars, although the works of Nāgārjuna are irrefutably the fundamental bases for Madhyamaka theory, he did not establish the so-called Madhyamaka school. Ejima makes it clear that Bhāviveka (ca. 490/500–570) first used the term, dBu ma pa (*\*Madhyamaka*), dBu ma smra ba (*\*Madhyamakavādin*), etc., which can be found in the *Prajñāpradīpa* (PP) more than ten times. See, Ejima [2003, pp. 181–198], and Saito [2007, Note 2] who shows important papers on this topic.
- 16) See, Ejima [1984], Saigusa [1985], and Saito [1998].
- 17) *ji ltar snañ ba'i dños por ni // rnam par gnas par mi ruñ ste //  
śes pa'i dños po thams cad la // ji lta bur yañ snañ mi 'gyur //* [v 5]  
*don dam pa ni ji ltar snañ ba bźin du rnam par gnas pa med de / thams cad mkhyen pa'i mkhyen pa ñid la yañ mi snañ ba'i phyir \*ro // de ñid kyi phyir mdo sde las 'ga' yañ mthoñ ba med pa\* ni de kho na mthoñ ba źes gsuñs so //* [comments on v 5] (SDVV: p. 157 ll. 10–17)  
Eckel's edition lacks the part between two asterisks.
- 18) *arthakriyāsamarthaṃ yat tad atra paramārthasat /  
anyat samvṛtisat proktaṃ te svasāmānyalakṣaṇe //* (PV III: v3 p. 61 ll. 7–8).  
Matsumoto [1980 and 1981] points out the importance of this verse and PV III verse 4 not only for Jñānagarbha but also for Mādhyamikas and Yogācāras after Dharmakīrti.
- 19) *pratyaḥsaṃ kalpanāpodham abhrāntam /* (PVI: v 4a, p. 7 l.2).
- 20) It goes without saying that Dharmakīrti's definition that direct perception is free from conception is not his original idea but relies on Dignāga's thought. However, the characteristic of being non-erroneous is unique to Dharmakīrti, as I will refer to this in the section on the conventional truth. Therefore, we can say that Jñānagarbha was conscious of Dharmakīrti but not Dignāga. It has been unclear yet whether or not Dharmakīrti truly thought that what has the ability of effective action (*\*arthakriyāsamartha*) is the ultimate thing, because it seems that he insists that it is also the conventional thing in the following verse (PV III v 4). The question over the interpretation of the ability of effective action in verses three and four of PV III is minutely examined in Inami [2000]. Also, see Steinkellner [1990].

In addition, Dharmakīrti's definition of the ultimate thing coincides with a part of the definition of the conventional truth, which Jñānagarbha insists

upon, as I will show later. Thus, we may be able to say that Jñānagarbha redefined it as the definition of the conventional truth.

- 21) Jñānagarbha sometimes points out the flaw of the Three Natures Theory in the SDVV also in the conventional truth. Especially in verse 24 and its commentary on the SDVV, he proves that the relationship between the imaginary nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) and the dependent nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*) cannot be established. As I will explain in the section on the conventional truth in the present paper, although the same concept as the dependent nature is thought of the conventional thing, it is not in the framework of the Three Natures Theory.
- 22) A discussion on this topic can be found also in verse 6 of the SDVV and its commentary, in which it is discussed that the self-cognition (*svasaṃvedana*), one of direct perceptions, does not exist in terms of the ultimate truth.
- 23) *ji ltar snañ ba 'di kho na // kun rdzob gzan ni cig śos yin // [v 3cd]*  
*don dam pa'i bden pa zēs bya ba'i tha tshig go // ji ltar ba lañ rdzi mo la sogs pa yan chad kyis mthoñ ba de ltar kun rdzob tu bden pa rnam par gnas kyi yañ dag par ni ma yin te / (SDVV: p. 156 ll. 4–8).*
- 24) *brtags pa'i don gyis dben gyur pa // dños tsam brten nas gañ skyes te //*  
*yañ dag kun rdzob śes par bya // [v 8abc]*  
*brtags pa'i don ni yañ dag par skye ba la sogs pa dañ / rnam par śes pa snañ ba dañ / gtso bo dañ 'byuñ ba'i yoñs su 'gyur ba la sogs pa ste / de dag gis dben pa'o // dños po tsam gañ yin pa ni ji ltar snañ ba bzin du don byed nus pa'i phyir ro // rgyu dañ rkyen rnam la brten nas skyes pa de ni yañ dag pa'i kun rdzob kyi bden pa yin par śes par bya ste / 'di ltar byis pa yan chad kyi śes pa la mthun par don ji sñed rgyu las snañ ba de ni yañ dag pa'i kun rdzob yin par rigs te / śes pa la snañ ba dañ mthun par dños po gnas pa'i phyir ro // (SDVV: p. 160 ll. 4–16).*
- 25) I would like to suggest one more interesting point here. This explanation of the conventional truth reminds us of the Three Natures Theory of Yogācāra. “Arising in dependence on causes,” “the conceptual objects,” and “the mere thing” correspond with “the dependant nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*),” “the imaginary nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*),” and “the perfect nature (*pariniṣpannasvabhāva*),” respectively. Namely, the dependent nature, which is free from the imaginary nature, is the perfect nature. Therefore, we might be able to say that Jñānagarbha’s explanation of the two truths appears to be based on this Yogācāra theory, even though he denies this.
- 26) *yañ dag min ni kun brtags yin // [v. 8d]*  
*yañ dag par skye ba la sogs pa gañ yin pa de ni rtog pa'i bzos sbyar ba ste / de ni yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob kyi bden pa'o // (SDVV: p. 160 ll. 25–28).*
- 27) *snañ du 'dra yañ don byed dag // nus pa'i phyir dañ mi nus phyir //*  
*yañ dag yañ dag ma yin pas // kun rdzob kyi ni dbye ba byas // [v 12]*  
*zēs bya ba'o // śes pa gsal ba'i rnam pa snañ ba can du 'dra yañ / ji ltar snañ ba bzin du don byed pa la slu ba dañ mi slu ba yin par ñes par byas nas chu la sogs pa dañ smig rgyu la sogs pa dag 'jig rten gyis yañ dag pa dañ yañ dag pa ma yin par rtogs so // dños su na gñis ni ño bo ñid med ñid du ño bo ñid mtshuñs pa kho na'o // ji ltar snañ ba bzin du ni rnam par gnas so // don byed pa la slu ba dañ mi slu ba yañ ji ltar grags pa kho na bzin te / de yañ ño bo ñid med pa'i phyir ro // (SDVV: pp. 163 l. 21–164 l.*

- 3).
- 28) *'o na yañ dag par skye ba la sogs pa bkag pa yañ ci ga yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob tu 'gyur te / de ni dños po snañ ba na yañ dag par skye ba la sogs pa bzin du mi snañ ño // ma yin te dños po'i ño bo dañ tha dad pa ma yin pa'i phyir ro //* (SDVV: p. 160 ll. 29–33).
- 29) Although Jñānagarbha does not clearly say so, this fact implicitly says that such Real things are conceptually constructed depending on appearances grasped by direct perception. Therefore, even if the “real thing” is denied, something that is just as it appears remains as the conventional truth.
- 30) A similar problem concerning the intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) can be found in the *Prasannapadā* (PrasP), of Candrakīrti (ca. 600–660), who is one of the most famous Mādhyamikas. See Tamura [2008, PrasP: p. 264 ll. 3–4, P. 265 ll. 7–8].
- 31) *snañ ba'i ño bo gañ yin pa // de ni 'gog pa ma yin ñid // ñams su myoñ ba gañ yañ ni // dgag par rigs pa ma yin no // [v 28] mñon sum dai 'gal bar 'gyur ba'i phyir ro sñam du bsams pa yin no // skye la sogs pa'i rnam pa gañ // snañ ba min la de yañ ni // yañ dag par zés bya sogs par // gzan gyis yons su brtags pa 'gog // [v 29]* (SDVV: p. 181 ll. 7–16).
- 32) The term “*mthoñ ba po*” means “a person, who sees something (\**paśyaka*).” However, the SDVV comments that this term means “*ston pa* (\**śāstr*)” which means Buddha or Bhagavat, as the commentary mentions, referring the term to *bcom ldan 'das* in the SDVP (D.46b1–2; P.41a2–5).
- 33) *gal te dños po ji ltar snañ ba bzin kho nar gnas par zad na las dai 'bras bu dag ji lta bu sñam pa la / mthoñ ba po yi lta ba la // las 'bras ji ltar snañ ba dag // de ltar des bsad de yi phyir // thams cad ji ltar snañ bzin gnas // [v 31]* (SDVV: pp. 182 l. 28–183 l. 4).
- 34) *ji ltar snañ bzin ño bo'i phyir // 'di la dpyad pa mi 'jug go // [v 21ab] ci ste kun rdzob ni ji ltar snañ ba bzin yin te / de la ni ji skad bsad pa'i dpyad pa'i gnas med pa ñid do // 'di ltar / rnam par dpyod pa byed na don // gzan du soñ bas gnod par 'gyur // [v 21cd] kho bo cag ni 'di la dpyod par mi byed kyi / dpyod par byed pa la ni 'gog par byed do // gal te dpyad par byas te ma ruñ na ma ruñ du zad do // ji ltar snañ ba'i ño bo'i kun rdzob pa la brten nas de la dpyod pa byed pa ni don gzan du 'gro ba'i phyir gnod pa 'ba' žig tu zad do // ji skad bsad pa'i mtshan ñid ma yin pa la ni ñes pa brjod kyañ kho bo cag la gnod pa ci yañ med pa ñid do //* (SDVV: p. 175 ll. 7–18).
- 35) Such an attitude toward the conventional truth seems to provide a clue for solving a problematic question: What kind of Madhyamaka school in Tibet do we think he belonged to? It seems to me that Jñānagarbha belonged to the Madhyamaka school, called *'jig rten grags sde spyod pa* in Tibet, though we can find other valuations of the Madhyamaka schools which he is said to have belonged to, in Tibetan Buddhist Grub mtha' documents. It is well known that Mādhyamikas are classified in Tibetan Buddhism depending on their interpretations of the two truths, especially of the conventional truth. Among many Mādhyamikas, Jñānagarbha particularly gives a strange im-

pression because he is classified as part of almost every kind of Madhyamaka school, Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka, and so on in various Grub mtha'. In other words, this fact teaches us that even Tibetan Buddhists cannot agree which Madhyamaka school he should belong to, and his Two Truths Theory could be in line with various schools of thought. Among recent scholars, different answers to this question have been given and thus it has not been decided yet which interpretation is most reasonable. However, if we particularly focus on his interpretation of the conventional truth, we can say that he belongs to 'Jig rten grags sde spyod pa'i dbu ma pa as dBu pa blo gsal (ca. 13th century) says. The classification of Madhyamaka schools and the details of Grub mtha' documents are minutely observed and discussed in Mimaki [1982].

- 36) *ma brtags gcig pu ñams dga' zñi // skye dan 'jig pa'i chos can pa // don byed pa dag nus rñams kyi // ran' bzin kun rdzob pa yin rtogs //* (MAV v 64: p. 202 ll. 7–10).
- 37) This term, *avicāraikaramaṇīya* (there are also other similar expressions: *avicāraramaṇīya*, *avicāritaramaṇīya*, etc.), was not first used by Śāntarakṣita. As far as I have examined, we can find the term in the ANST and the PPT. Although we have no concrete date of the establishment of the ANST, it is obvious that the ANST influenced the SDVV (see this section of the present paper) and thus it was written before the SDVV. The date of establishment of the PPT is also unclear. However, recent studies like Kuijp [2006] and Akahane, Nishiyama, and Hayashima [2011] suggest that the PPT was written in about 700, which is about half a century before the MAV. However, what we should notice is that the examples found in the ANST and the PPT are not used as the definition of the conventional truth, though they are used in the contexts of referring to the conventional truth. Therefore, although this term has already existed by about 700, Śāntarakṣita is probably the first person who obviously used this term as one of the definitions for the conventional truth. For more information about this term: see Akahane [2003]. Kyūma [1995] suggests that Prajñākaragupta (ca. 8th century) uses this term as the definition for the conventional truth in the *Pramānavārttikabhāṣya*.
- 38) For example, the MAV (p. 204 ll. 12–16); the PrasP (p. 374 ll. 1–2); the SAVBh (P249a2–3, D224b3), and so forth.
- 39) In most texts, only two (*\*samvṛtisatya* and *paramārthasatya*) among these three truths are cited, as if the third one (*\*lakṣaṇasatya*) is not considered to exist. It is probably because the three truths are not consistent with Madhyamaka theory, and others that insist on two truths.
- 40) We can suggest different Sanskrit words for the three Tibetan translated terms, *yi ge*, *sgra*, and *brda*. However, Eckel [1987] translates these three terms as “syllables,” “utterances,” and “words”; on the other hand, Braarvig translates them as “syllables,” “words,” and “designations,” respectively. Although I think that their suggestions are reasonable, I translate them according to the interpretation of the ANST, which will be picked up later in the present paper. Cf. Braarvig’s translation of this passage is as follows: “What is concealed truth? Worldly conventions, all that is expressed with syllables,

words, and designations. The highest truth is where there is no activity even of thoughts, so how can one speak of that of syllables.” (Braarvig [1993a, p. 269]).

- 41) *de la kun rdzob kyi bden pa gañ ze na 'jig rten gyi tha sñad dan / yi ge dan / sgra dan / brdas bstan pa ji sñed pa'o // don dam pa'i bden pa ni gañ la sems kyi rgyu ba med pa ste / yi ge lta ci smos //* (ANS: p. 73 ll. 1–4).

\* The Sanskrit sentence of the passage referring to *paramārthasatya* can be found in the PrasP, p.374 l.2: *paramārthasatyaṃ yatra cittasyāpy apracārah / kaḥ punar vādo 'kṣarāṇām //*.

\* Jñānagarbha shows in the SDVV that there exist different interpretations of what is the work of mind between Yogācāra and Madhyamaka. The former asserts that it means “the work of only the conceptual cognition,” while the latter thinks that it means “the work of all cognitions including both conceptual and non-conceptual.” See the SDVV, p. 159.

- 42) This Vasubandhu is not the well-known author of such works as the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and so forth, because some texts like the SAVbh, which was written by Sthiramati in the 6th century, are quoted in it. On the other hand, the ANST is obviously written from the viewpoint of Yogācāra. Therefore, Braarvig, who prepared the critical edition of the ANS, infers that the ANST was written by Sthiramati or much later Yogācāravādin. See Braarvig [1993a, pp. CXVii–CXXX].

- 43) *de la kun rdzob kyi bden pa bsad par bzed nas 'jig rten gyi tha sñad dan / yi ge dan / sgra dan / brdas bstan pa ji sñed pa zes gsuñs te / ji sñed pa zes bya ba'i sgra thams cad dan sbyar te / 'jig rten gyi tha sñad ji sñed pa dan / yi ges bstan pa ji sñed pa dan / sgras bstan pa ji sñed pa dan / brdas bstan pa ji sñed pa zes bya bar sbyar ro // ji sñed kyi sgra ni ji tsam yod pa'i don drañs te / 'jig rten gyi tha sñad ji tsam yod pa zes bya ba'i tha tshig go // de la 'jig rten gyi tha sñad ni bstan pa'o // lhag ma rnams ni bsad pa ste / yi ge a dan ka la sogs pa gsuñ rab kyi luñ dan 'brel pa rnams so // sgra ni gsuñ rab kyi luñ dan 'brel pa 'du byed mi rtag ces bya ba la sogs pa'i tshig gi rkañ pa rnams so // brda ni don ston par nus sñiñ khoñ du chud par nus pa'i tshig gi rkañ pa rnams // ji sñed ces bya ba'i tshig gi luñ 'ba' zig gi ma yin gyi / 'jig rten gyi yi ge dan sgra la sogs pa ci tsam yod pa rnams kyañ sdud de / de yañ yid kyi dan ñag gi sgo nas ston pa rnam pa gñis so // de la yid kyis ston pa ni ji ltar brgya byin la yid kyis chos mñon par bsad pa dan / de dag gis kyañ rañ gi the tshom yid la btags pa dan / lan kyañ yid kyis tshigs su bcad pas glan no / mdo de dan de dag las 'byuñ ba lta bu'o // ñag gis bstan pa ni tshig gi rig byed rnam pa sna tshogs ñan pa'i gañ zag rnams kyi rna bar soñ ba rnams so / de dag gis ni mdor na 'di skad du / gdul bar bya ba'i sems can rnams kyi dbañ du ji tsam du tha sñad brjod pa thams cad kun rdzob kyi bden pa yin no / zes bstan te /* (ANST: pp. 269–70 n. 2).

- 44) For example, Eckel translated this term as such. See Eckel [1987, p. 74].

- 45) Not *\*lokavyavahāra* but *\*lokavyavahāraprajñāpti* is used in the ANS, which is cited in the SDVV. I cannot find the same version of the ANS in other texts apart from the SDVV and the SDVP.

- 46) *'jig rten gyi tha sñad gdags pa ni 'jig rten gyi 'jug pa ste / ses pa dan ses bya'i mtshan ñid yin gyi / rjod par byed pa'i mtshan ñid ni ma yin te / de ni 'og mas brjod pa'i phyir ro // ji sñed ces bya ba'i tshig ni mtha' dag ces bya ba'i don to // des na rnam par rtog*



*pa med pa'i mñon sum gyi ses pas yoñs su bcad pa'i no bo'i dños po gzugs la sogs pa dan bde ba la sogs par rig par grub pa rnam ni kun rdzob kyi bden pa kho na yin no // de ni 'og tu yañ sbyar bar bya'o // de'i phyir mdo las 'byuñ ba dan / yi ge dan skad dan brda bstan pa gzan dag kyañ gzuñ no // (SDVV: pp. 158 l. 26–159 l. 4).*

- 47) Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla adopt almost the same interpretation as that of Jñānagarbha in the MAV and the MAP. (MAV: pp. 204 and 206, MAP: pp. 205 and 207).
- 48) *'jig rten gyi tha snad du gsuñs pa yañ gzan gyis khoñ du chud par 'dod pa'i dños po kun nas rtogs pa'i dños po sna tshogs pa gzan gyi rgyud la rtogs pa 'jug par byed pa la tha snad ces brjod do // 'jig rten pa'i tha snad ni 'jig rten tha snad de / ji ltar 'jig rten pa rtogs par 'dod pa'i don phan tshun du rtogs par byed pa'am / ses par 'dod pa'i don khoñ du chud pa de bzin du don de la brjod bya rjod byed kyi 'brel pa dan / ses bya ses byed du rnam par 'jog par byed cin / dus gzan du yañ tha snad kyi gdams pa mi 'chad pa'i don du de la 'di ltar rjod byed dan brjod bya dan / ses pa dan ses bya'i mtshan nid can gyi don phyin ci log tsam gyis ñe bar bskyed pa'i bdag nid kyi dños po la tha snad ces brjod kyi / byed pa po'i tshogs pa gcig dan 'brel pa ni ma yin no // de nid kyañ 'jig rten pa bden par 'dod pa'i phyir 'jig rten pa'i tha snad kyi bden pa zes bya ste gcig go // (ŚSV: p. 213 ll. 14–24).*
- 49) See Braarvig [1993a, p. 269]. Although I followed his suggestion in Akahane [2003], I want to rectify it as such in the present paper because we can read it like [X], but not like [Y], as far as we adopt his reconstruction.
- 50) In Akahane [2003], I suggest the possibility that the end of this sentence “m” was misunderstood as “h” in order to make both interpretations possible.
- 51) See Braarvig [1993, p. 74 footnote no. 15].
- 52) Kamalaśīla says in the *uttarapakṣa*, in which his assertion is mentioned, as follows: *'phags pa blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa las kyañ / 'di dan rjes su mthun par 'jig rten gyi tha snad ses pa dan / ses bya'i bdag nid dan / yi ge dan / sgrar bstan pa brjod pa'i bdag nid ni kun rdzob kyi bden pa yin no zes bya bar ses par bya'i / (MĀ: D231a4, P257b3–4).*
- 53) I adopt the Sanskrit terms, *tathyaśaṃṛti* and *atathyaśaṃṛti*, for *yañ dag yin pa'i kun rdzob* and *yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob*, respectively, in the present paper, while we can also suggest the Sanskrit terms, *bhūtaśaṃṛti* and *abhūtaśaṃṛti*, respectively. However, we can find the usage of *tathyaśaṃṛti* in the *Madhyamakahrdayakārika* (MHK):  
*sā ca satyadvayāpekṣā dvividhābhimatā matih / tathyaśaṃṛtibhūtārthaprawivekānugun-*  
*yataḥ //*  
*blo gros de yañ bden gñis la // bltos nas rnam pa gñis su 'dod //*  
*yañ dag don rtogs rjes mthun phyir // yañ dag kun rdzob ses pa yin // (MHK: chapter*  
*3, v 7, pp. 268–269).*  
 On this basis, I have chosen to use *tathyaśaṃṛti* and *atathyaśaṃṛti* for the present paper. Of course, we cannot completely discard the other possibility of attributing these Tibetan terms to the Sanskrit *bhūtaśaṃṛti* and *abhūtaśaṃṛti*.
- 54) For example, Eckel assumes the Sanskrit term *mithyāśaṃṛti* for the incorrect conventional in his translation of the SDVV.
- 55) Kamalaśīla uses this term two times in the MAP, namely, the MAP p. 205 l.

- 3 and ll. 24–25. According to the date found in the ACIP, we can find that Kamalaśīla uses this term in his other texts, the *Madhyamakāloka* (MĀ) and *Tattvāloka* (TĀ) too. See MĀ: D230a5, P256a8; TĀ: D272b4, P311b2.
- 56) See, Ejima [1980]. This term is used in the MHK, as I have already shown in the first comment of this section.
- 57) ...*de'i phyir de ltar yañ dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob tu rtog pa las byuñ ba'i lta ba dag ni sdug bsñal sna tshogs kyi sa bon yin par thugs chud nas / ...* (PPT: D za 328a4; P za 389b3).
- 58) *de dag rnams kyi brtags pa de // log pa'i kun rdzob ñid du 'dod // des na dños po'i cig śos ni // yañ dag kun rdzob yin par smra //* (TĀ: D272b3–4, P311b2).
- 59) This does not mean that we cannot find the term *mithyā* in any text written before the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. For example, we can find the following expression when Candrakīrti discusses the incorrect conventional in the *Madhyamakāvatarākārikā* (MAvK).  
*vinopaghātena yad indriyānām śannām aṇi grāhyam avaiti lokāḥ / satyaṃ hi tal lokata eva śeṣaṃ vikalpitaṃ lokata eva mithyā //* (MAvK: chapter 6 v 25: p. 6).  
*gnod pa med pa'i dbaṅ po drug rnams kyi // bzuñ ba gañ zig 'jig rten gyis rtogs te // 'jig rten ñid las bden yin lhag ma ni // 'jig rten ñid las log par rnam par bžag //* (MAvK: chapter 6 v 25: p. 104).
- 60) *don dam par bden pa ni don dam pa'i bden pa ste / de ni rigs pa'i rjes su 'gro ba can gyi bden pa ñid ces bya ba'i tha tshig go // gañ gi phyir / slu ba med pas rigs pa ni // don dam yin te / [v 4ab1]*  
*rigs pa'i stobs kyi don la ñes pa ni slu bar mi 'gyur te / de'i phyir tshur gsum pa'i rtags kyi bskyed pa'i rtogs pa gañ yin pa de ni dam pa yañ yin la / don yañ yin pas don dam pa'o // des gtan la phab pa'i don kyañ don dam pa ste / mñon sum la sogs pa bžin du brjod do //* (SDVV: p. 156 ll. 15–24).
- 61) Jñānagarbha calls such logic and its object the ultimate (*\*paramārtha*) in most cases, but not the ultimate truth (*\*paramārthasatya*). However, in one case, he calls it the ultimate truth. See SDVV p.156 (the commentary of verse 3cd). Although it would be of interest to assess whether *paramārtha* and *paramārthasatya* refer to the same or different meaning, in the SDVV, it seems that we cannot find an obvious difference between the two.
- 62) *kun rdzob de bžin ñid gañ yin // de ñid dam pa'i don gyis bžed // [v 17ab]*  
*ci'i phyir ze na / tha dad min phyir / [v 17c1]*  
*kun rdzob dañ don dam pa gñis zes bya ba lhag ma'o // rigs de yañ // ji ltar snañ ba bžin du gnas // [v 17c2d]*  
*rigs pa yañ ji ltar snañ ba'i no bo yin pa'i phyir kun rdzob kho na yin te / rigs pa ni gžan du mi 'jug go //* (SDVV: p. 173 ll. 6–14).
- 63) *rgol ba gñi ga'i śes pa la // ji tsam snañ ba'i cha yod pa // de tsam de la brten nas ni // chos can chos la sogs par rtog // [v 18]*  
*de tshe rjes su dpag pa 'byuñ // gañ gi tshe na gžan na min // de bas rigs pa smra ba rnams // de skad smra la su žig 'gog // [v 19]* (SDVV: p. 173 ll. 15–22)

- 64) *skye la sogs pa bkag pa yañ // [v 9a]*  
*yañ dag par skye ba la sogs par rtog pa'i dños po bkag pa'i gtan tshigs kyis /*  
*yañ dag pa dañ mthun phyir 'dod // [v 9b] (SDVV: p. 161 ll. 3–6).*
- 65) It is very well known that the term, “as the ultimate truth,” as inference, plays a very important role in Bhāviveka’s texts.
- 66) *dam pa'i don du ma skyes pa // tshig don 'di ni rigs pa yi //*  
*rjes su 'brañs nas skye ba med // gzan la'añ de bzin sbyar bar gyis // [v 16] (SDVV: p. 172 ll. 22–25).*
- 67) It seems that Jñānagarbha does not divide the conventional truth (\**saṃvṛtisatya*) and the correct conventional truth (\**tatahyasaṃvṛtisatya*).

### Abbreviations

- ACIP: The Asian Classic Input Project.
- ANS: *Āryākṣayamatīrdeśasūtra*. Braarvig [1993]. (chin.) T 13 [397] (12) pp. 184–213. *Dà jí jīng wú jìn yì pú sà huì* (大集經無盡意菩薩會) in *Dà jí jīng* (大集經).
- ANST: *Āryākṣayamatīrdeśasūtraṭīkā* by Vasubandhu. Braarvig [1993a].
- D: sDe dge edition.
- MĀ: *Madhyamakāloka* by Kamalaśīla. (tib.) D (3887) sa 133b4–244a7, P [101] (5287) sa 143b2–275a4.
- MAP: *Madhyamakālamkārapañjikā* by Kamalaśīla, Ichigō [1985] pp. 3–337.
- MAV: *Madhyamakālamkāravṛtti* by Śāntarakṣita, Ichigō [1985] pp. 2–336.
- MAvK: *Madhyamakāvātārakārikā* by Candrakīrti, (tib.) Poussin [1970], (skt.: chapter 6 vv. 1–97) Li [2012].
- MAvBh: *Madhyamakāvātārabhāṣya* by Candrakīrti, (tib.) Poussin [1970].
- MHK: *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* by Bhāviveka, (skt. and tib. chapter III) Ejima [1980] pp. 268–361.
- P: Peking edition.
- PP: *Prajñāpradīpa* by Bhāviveka. (tib.) D (3853) tsha 45b4–259b3, P [95] (5253) tsha 53b3–326a6. (chin.) T 30 [1566] pp. 51–136. *Bān ruò dēng lùn shì* (般若燈論釋).
- PPT: *Prajñāpradīpaṭīkā* by Avalokitavṛata. (tib.) D (3859) wa 1–287a7 za 1–338a7 za 1–341a7, P [96–7] (5259) wa 1–333a6 za 1–394a5 za 1–406a8.
- PV III: *Pramāṇavārttika* III (pratyakṣa chapter) by Dharmakīrti, (skt.) Tosaki [1985].
- PVin I: *Pramāṇaviniścaya* by Dharmakīrti, (skt. chapter 3) Steinkellner [2007].
- SAVBh: *Sūtrālamkāravṛttibhāṣya* by Sthiramati, D (4034) mi 1b–283a7 tsi 1b–266a7, P [108–9] (5531) mi 1–308a8 tsi 1–308a6.
- SDVP: *Satyadvayavibhaṅgapañjikā* by Śāntarakṣita. (tib.) D (3883) sa 15b2–52b7, P [100] (5283) sa 1–48b7.
- SDVV: *Satyadvayavibhaṅgavṛtti* by Jñānagarbha, (tib.) Eckel [1987] pp. 155–190.
- ŠSV: *Śūnyatāsaṃvṛtāvṛtti* by Candrakīrti, (tib. vv. 1–14) Erb [1997] pp. 205–268.
- T: Taishō shinshū daizōkyō.
- TĀ: *Tattvāloka* by Kamalaśīla. (tib.) D (3888) sa 244b1–273a4, P [101] (5288) sa 275a4–312a5.

v: verse.

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