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Authenticity, effortlessness, delusion and spontaneity in *The Authenticity of Open Awareness* and related texts

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Introduction

In its culminating pages, the masterful Dzogchen (*rDzogs chen*) treatise known as the *Authenticity of Open Awareness, A Collection of the Essential Reasonings* (*gTan tshigs gal mdo rig pa'i tshad ma*), seamlessly interweaves several of the work's most crucial themes, often by way of poetic citation. From the *Primordially Complete Ceaselessness and Changelessness* (*gYungs drung ye rdzogs*), for example, we read:

As for mind nature, the essential Dzogchen instruction,
All is realized as the very essential nature –
No need, therefore, to meditate on mind-objects
For here is sameness: no discarding, no upholding:
Meditative stabilization that never degenerates¹.

By the time this passage occurs, we are well prepared for the text's juxtaposition of essential instructions, (*man ngag*) essential nature (*ngo bo nyid*) and the unchanging character of meditative stabilization (*ting nge 'dzin*). From its opening pages the *Authenticity* considers how essential instructions, like certain scriptures, are authentic methods for understanding the Dzogchen view.

This paper explores explicit and implicit links among these principles of authenticity, especially the relationship between scriptural authenticity (*lung gyi tshad ma*) and unbounded wholeness (*thig le nyag gcig*) as well as the significance of scripture's own embodiment as the *dharmakāya* Samantabhadra. Within this larger framework, we consider the interrelationship of the Dzogchen principles of effortlessness and spontaneity, as well as the ways in which *Authenticity* connects its discussion of these with iterations of delusion and the non-necessity of meditation. In this we draw not only from the *Authenticity* but also from works closely related to it, beginning with its root text, *The Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture* (*Man ngag lung gyi tshad ma*), and then moving to the *Stages of the Vehicles* (*Theg rim*)² and its Commentary (*Theg 'grel*)³, all attributed to sTon-pa gShen-rab. Attention is also given to the *Three Revealed Cycles* (*bsGrags pa skor gsum*), which has the same root text as *Authenticity* itself.

Crucial elements of Bon Dzogchen perspectives (many of which are common to Buddhist Dzogchen) are often given their most succinct expression in the many

poetic citations that form the core around which *Authenticity's* many debates constellate. In taking this bird's eye view of how important themes move through the entire text, and because it conveys something of the Dzogchen spirit that prose does not, our discussion of *Authenticity* often follows that poetic voice⁴.

1 The scriptural voice of Samantabhadra

A statement early in the *Authenticity* foreshadows connections it later suggests among scriptural authority, open awareness, and the three Buddha dimensions (*sku, kāya*).

Through blessings of⁵ the Victor All-Good Bon dimension, reflexive open awareness, a wholeness⁶ which is the heart essence of our ancestor,⁷ is understood by the White Shen Deity, protector⁸ of beings. That itself, the very essence⁹ of mindheart understanding, dawns as open awareness in the mindheart of the emanation dimension gShen-rab. Lyrical speech¹⁰, the musical expression of this [open awareness], is addressed to fortunate ones, the heroically minded Yung Drung Shen-practitioners¹¹ [Bodhisattvas]¹².

This teaching¹³, displayed by his [gShen-rab Mi-bo's] great mindheart {49.2} has three areas of confidence¹⁴ regarding experience, explanation, and essential instructions, and is explained extensively¹⁵ for the wellbeing of those having the karma to meet with it¹⁶.

Here the text introduces a wholeness which is also the ultimate progenitor of authentic scriptures. An unknown annotator of the *Authenticity's* current redaction glosses "ancestor" as "source of confidence" (*vid ches pa'i lung*), with "source" (*lung*) being a term cognate with "scripture," thus implying a profound connection between authenticating scriptures and confident realization¹⁷. By expanding on the text's unelaborated connections between scripture, the wholeness which is reality, and the primordial Buddha, we can access more fully its view of unbounded wholeness and structure of authentication.

The areas of confidence named in the passage above are analogous to the three authenticities the text then enumerates: scripture (*lung*), essential instructions (*man ngag*) and reflective open awareness (*rang gi rig ba'i tshad ma*).¹⁸ According to the *Authenticity*, authentic essential instructions connect the practitioner to authentic scriptures, which themselves facilitate authentic open awareness. These are considered "authenticators of method" (*thabs gyi tshad ma*) insofar as they are methods, or causes, for understanding unbounded wholeness¹⁹.

Thus, the importance of scriptural authority is clear from the outset. Initially it is framed simply as a method for initiating an experience of unbounded wholeness; its virtual identification with the voice of reality in the person of Samantabhadra is an aspect of the narrative which does not fully emerge for another 80 folios. Only gradually does the text reveal how intimately tied is scriptural authority to the

witnessing open awareness' own authenticity and why, nonetheless, even reality's own voice cannot describe it fully.

The *Authenticity* explains essential instructions as the crucial link between authentic scriptures and open awareness. In making this point, the text is challenged to establish that unbounded wholeness and the open awareness which knowingly participates in it do exist and, despite being indescribable by Samantabhadra, and transparent to ordinary dualistic consciousness, can be known.

Although it [unbounded wholeness] is not an external object, it is manifest for open awareness which *through the mere indication of essential instructions*, knows it clearly, nonconceptually, and thinglessly²⁰⁾.

Gradually, the reality known as unbounded wholeness becomes amalgamated with scriptural authenticity itself. Let us briefly trace that trajectory in terms of the larger frame of our discussion, and in this way prepare to explore the text's key philosophical underpinnings, especially the triumvirate of perfectedness, effortlessness, and spontaneity.

Having briefly identified the three authenticators, the *Authenticity* cites the *Venerable Bon Awareness of Everything Tantra (Kun rig bon gyi rje rgyud)*:

I am heart essence of all bon that is,
 Bon-nature is not an object, is your own mind:
 Your uncontrived mind is the Bon Body
 All arises from me, bon-phenomena lord.
 Know me and the All-Good is there²¹⁾.

To identify Samantabhadra, literally "the All-Good," with the nature of reality is common in both Bon and Buddhist Dzogchen. And once reality is personified, however abstractly, it is natural for it to have a voice. Hence, perhaps, the logic of this text's interest in slowly forging a special conflation of this voice, scriptural authenticity, and the structure of reality itself.

The text's next move is to consider ordinary beings' relationship to the "uncontrived mind" of Dzogchen. *Unbounded Wholeness, the Ceaseless, Changeless Essential Heart (gYung drung snying po nyag gcig)* says:

Enlightenment mind, root of all minds and Bon-phenomena
 The very heart essence (*ngo bo snying po*), mother unbounded wholeness
 Within this wholenesses neither meeting nor separation ever was, is, or will be
 Primordially undeluded, originally perfect²²⁾.

Because the base is eternally undeluded, all beings born from "mother unbounded wholeness" are likewise without error. "Buddhas and sentient beings are temporarily separate, finally inseparable²³⁾." Thus the case for effortlessness is introduced. Yet, "without essential instructions there is no benefit but continual delusion²⁴⁾," for open awareness cannot recognize itself as unbounded wholeness without the intervening method of essential instructions, which necessitates their status as authenticators of such realization. Hence, too, the necessity for the artful

endeavor that the text distinguishes from effort.

Sentient beings need essential instructions to recognize their inborn Buddhahood. Only reflexive open awareness (*rang gi rig pa'i tshad ma*) is capable of such self-recognition, and thus even though the text names three “authenticators”, only this actually itself enacts authentication. Only it fully recognizes itself as unbounded wholeness (*thig le nyag gcig*). Furthermore, since unbounded wholeness includes all of cyclic existence and nirvana²⁵), no authenticating description, reasoned proof, or subjective perceiver is external to it. This, the self-recognition of reflexive open awareness, is what distinguishes ordinary sentient beings from Buddhas.

The basis of both Buddhas and sentient beings is the great self arisen primordial wisdom, enlightenment mind²⁶): therefore, sentient beings cause Buddhas and Buddhas cause sentient beings. Hence one speaks of “The Buddha in which cause and effect are one taste²⁷.”

Even though one is primordially a Buddha, one does not realize oneself as that and therefore is deluded. Taking form as a sentient being, one is known conventionally as Buddha who is a sentient being. The very essence of the base (*gzhi yi no bo nyid*)²⁸) does not change at all²⁹).

Midway through the *Authenticity*, important connections are made between reasoning, scriptural authenticity and the already perfect completeness of one's own Buddha nature. For example, the *Blissful Wheel* (*bDe ba'i 'khor lo*) says:

If one understands the very essence, the essential nature just as it is

Meditation and its aftermath are indistinguishable.

Nor does [this nature] depart without meditation

This is the best knowledge of Buddha³⁰).

Also, *Scripture of the Blissful Samantabhadra* (*Kun bzang bde ba'i lung*) says:

If one realizes these essential instructions

Unsearched for, there is an actual Buddha³¹).

Authentic recognition of unbounded wholeness can never arise through effort.

Toward the *Authenticity*'s conclusion, various poetic voices are put forward in concert to express the uniqueness of this teaching, now more clearly and consistently identified with Samantabhadra and effortlessness. The *Great Sky Beyond Effort* (*Nam mka' rtsol 'das chen po'i rgyud*) says:

I, great ancestor of all vehicles

Am primordially without abandonment, inclusion or yearning

Primordially beyond the illness of effortful accomplishment

Primordially free from extremes of permanence and annihilation.

Primordially untouched by the lower vehicles.

All those desiring me through effortful accomplishment

Conjoin once more with the disease of thinking.

They do not see the definitive meaning, the very essence,

Therefore [this teaching] is not for the ordinary everyone³²).

Also, the *Spontaneously Complete Awareness Tantra (Rig pa lhun rdzogs rgyud)*:

E Ma Ho

Marvelous

This great Samantabhadra realm

Being primordially the heart essence, great bliss,

'Tis a pity to make effort now...

The lower vehicles are great contrivances:

A fox, even though making a lion's sound

Will never be an actual lion³³).

Carrying the point further, the *Scripture of the Blissful Samantabhadra* says:

Such teachings are not for the ordinary everyone.

The great Garuda's [way of] flying

Is not common to ordinary birds.

The lion's leaping in snow

Is not common to those with ordinary claws or hoofs³⁴).

There is an untoward logic here. Buddhas and sentient beings, whom we might assume to be more different than sentient beings are from each other, turn out not to be different in any essential way. Yet, there are sufficient differences among sentient beings themselves to mandate that these teachings be withheld from the majority of them. At the same time, the teachings being referred to, as the text shortly makes clear, are not merely descriptive or reasoned, for mind nature is indescribable and unknowable through reasoning. Consequently, such activities are associated with fruitless effort.

The Scripture of the Blissful Samantabhadra says:

As for persons on the path of effortful accomplishment (*rtsol sgrub*) --

Though silver be melted, iron does not arise.

Though stone be cleansed, there is no jewel

Though coal be beautified, there is no tree.

Though descriptive phrases be written, they are inferior to scripture.

How can the meaning of this great completeness be understood by others³⁵?

Also, the *Scriptural Heart of the White Shen Deity (gShen lha dkar po'i thugs kyi lung)* says:

E MA HO

Marvelous

This great completeness, wholeness which is mind-nature --

Lesser [persons] cannot understand it, however much they analyze:

An ocean cannot be consumed by ladling.

You cannot account for or number

A mountains' grains of sand.

Nor grab space with your hands.

Through reversing a river flow you cannot send it back.

Nothing can be proved by destroying with the sounds of reasoning³⁶.

Thus, essential instructions are implicitly divorced from two of the central characteristics of traditional doctrine – description and reasoning.

“Destroying with the sounds of reasoning” evokes the *via negativa* methods which clear away wrong views, leaving only a pristine absence (*med 'gag*). This is not the way of Dzogchen – for one thing, reasoning, like any conceptual activity, requires effort; for another, the reality of Dzogchen is itself multivalent, requiring an unbounded subjectivity which is finally inaccessible through reasoning, for reasoning necessarily operates within the confines of oppositionalities and relies on proof statements that, by definition, draw circles of exclusivity around what is proven and what is not. Yet, reasoning does establish the claim that unbounded wholeness is authenticated; unbounded wholeness is what reasoning reveals³⁷.

Even so, we by no means find here the kind of unmitigated reverence for the reasoning process that we see, for example, in Nāgārjuna or Candrakīrti³⁸, or, much later, in dGe-lugs use of multiple forms of reasoning in meditative analysis. Such reasonings as are put forth in the *Authenticity* do not constitute part of a meditation session. Rather, the reader is led to speculate about reasonings' form, function, and of course their relationship to scripture.

If scriptures and essential instructions are neither descriptions nor reasoned proofs, what are they? This implicit query signals the beginning of a more open identification of scripture, an identity that comes into focus, however, only toward the very end of the *Authenticity*.

The confluence of Samantabhadra, nature of reality, and definitive scriptures emerges in the *Authenticity's* final section, which interrogates the category of scripture and scriptural origins. The question is raised as to whether the Buddha who spoke what we now call scripture was ever a sentient being or not. Either option raises problems that threaten to undermine scriptural authenticity. A teacher who had never been a sentient being would lack consciousness and awareness. Such a being would have neither an incentive for nor the possibility of realizing mind nature and, therefore, would never give instructions on it. But if Buddhas were once sentient beings, then Samantabhadra too would have had a teacher, and thus by implication could not be identified as the ceaseless, changeless, essential nature that is the very reality from which, as we will see, scripture derives its authority. The text responds to the conundrum this way:

The heart essence, unadorned either by the faults of cyclic existence or the good qualities of nirvana, beyond either pure or deluded appearances, is the superb Essential Nature Dimension. It, the primordial wisdom of the primordial meaning, belongs neither to Buddhas nor sentient beings. Realized and understood by Samantabhadra³⁹, that essence arising from the

center of Samantabhadra's mindheart (*thugs*) and explained through the blessings [of Samantabhadra], is the definitive authentic scripture of the teacher⁴⁰.

Samantabhadra's teachings, including his scriptures, arise through blessings that emanate from his own mindheart. These express the natural dynamism of reality; they occur spontaneously, for no effort whatsoever is involved. Unlike the hard-working Creator Deity of Judaism and Christianity, Samantabhadra takes no special rest on the seventh day or any other time. In tandem with being all-good, Samantabhadra is all effortless, all restful.

Moreover, where there is no effort, there is naturally no error. The *Essence of the Precious View Tantra (Rin po che 'i lta ba 'i snying po 'i rgyud)* says:

The errorless, definitively authentic great scripture
Comes prior to either Buddhas or sentient beings.
The Essential Dimension (*ngo bo nyid sku*), the great
ancestor
Wordlessly realizes the meaning in Samantabhadra's heartmind,
Extracts the essence of that heartmind's blessings⁴¹.

After bringing forth several other citations in support of this position, the segment culminates with another quote from the *Scripture of the Blissful Samantabhadra*, the most-cited tantra in the entire text:

Because of the teacher's great compassion
In extracting essence from that heart's center,
Scripture which explains by way of blessings
Is scripture of knowledge, effortless wholeness ---
This is the king of all scriptures:
Powerfully piercing, like the great Garuda
Leaping strongly like the lion
Extending everywhere like the sky.
Moistening everything like the ocean⁴².

This, then is the text's response to the issue of scriptural authenticity, which is expressed neither through reasoning nor description, but because scripture "explains by way of blessings." Dynamic display and the blessings of effortless wholeness, are errorlessly realized as one's own open awareness. The scriptures which reveal this are themselves found to originate with the primordial blessings of the Buddha Samantabhadra. It is primarily on account of this etiology that they are known as authentic⁴³. Born of and borne through the mother unbounded wholeness, authentic scriptures are one taste with the nature of reality itself.

Indeed, the *Authenticity* has from the start been subtly directing attention to just such an identification of scripture, open awareness, and unbounded wholeness. This becomes clear only in hindsight as the work concludes with numerous poetic and philosophical flourishes that turn on this very identity. Before we touch on that conclusion here, let us look more closely at key principles crucial to it. Juxtaposing

Samantabhadra and the nature of reality with scripture suggests an architecture of authenticity whose elements bear closer analysis. The stated necessity of essential instructions in the face of a boundless and errorless nature invites reflection on how delusion arises and can be liberated. This is a starting point for Dzogchen reflections on spontaneous occurrence, open awareness, and the artful endeavor that dissolves delusion.

2 Delusion, effortlessness, and the spontaneous nature of things

To discuss authentic awareness is also to describe the delusion that interferes with it. But given the premise of primordial wisdom and a ubiquitous Samantabhadra, how can delusion even occur? The *Authenticity's* core position on delusion is set forth early on:

Even though everything is primordially [Buddha], it is not contradictory for delusions to arise since unbounded wholeness itself has not been understood. For example, even though something is primordially⁴⁴⁾ golden, it remains unseen⁴⁵⁾ due to being covered by earth⁴⁶⁾.

Because of not understanding and not recognizing the natural state of the enlightenment mind, the mind which is the root of samsara and nirvana, there is error whereby we cycle in the three realms and wander among the six types of rebirth. Moreover, through the power of not realizing (*rtogs*), there is delusion due to an increase (*brtas*) in the consciousness apprehending as that [dualistic] what is not that⁴⁷⁾.

Also, the *Collection of Jewels Sutra*, '*Dus pa rin po che 'i mdo*):

Though the base is without fundamental delusion

Mental delusion modifies the base, and so

Not seeing the very base due to causes and conditions

That very base appears as a bon-phenomenon of samsara⁴⁸⁾.

In short, delusion arises when one's own primordial mind goes unrecognized⁴⁹⁾. Such delusion inevitably involves wrongful ideation that either exaggerates by placing overlays (*sgro 'dogs, samāropa*) on, or under-estimates by detracting from (*skur 'debs, apavāda*) the actual nature of things. Whether or not one is liberated, the text continues, one's essence (*ngo bo*) is the same; both delusion and non-delusion are empty and spontaneously arise from the same nature; both participate in unbounded wholeness.

This conversation sharpens when the *Authenticity*, in the context of engaging an opponent in debate, states that since both delusion and bon-nature occur adventitiously and simultaneously. The Dzogchen view encapsulated in this statement falls neither to the extreme of permanence by declaring everything is just pure, nor to the extreme of nihilism by declaring everything mere delusion⁵⁰⁾. In this way, the all inclusive nature of unbounded wholeness is affirmed.

Authenticity's root text, the *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture* gives further insight into early Bon Dzogchen epistemologies of delusion. This work takes on a more Indian flavor than *Authenticity* ever does, even citing, without attribution, Dharmakirti's famous characterization of direct perception as "that which is free from conceptuality and undeluded" (*rtog pa dang bral zhing ma 'khrul ba*), (15.4) a phrase this work never designates as a definition nor in any way explicitly connect with Dharmakirti, but cites it occurs when the text highlights the non-deluded nature of direct perception as compared with the delusion that attends thought. Still, the root text differs from classic Indic and related Tibetan discussions of authenticity (*tshad ma*) in its characterization of reality, and the associated construal of how delusion (*'khrul ba*) arises.

For example, analyses linking the lack of delusion with spontaneous occurrence are virtually unknown in Tibetan sutra-vehicle literature such as that on mind and awareness (*blo rig*), but in *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture*, and in Dzogchen more generally, non-delusion occurs spontaneously. (15.5) Although, sutra vehicle texts would agree with the *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture's* statement that delusion itself is illusory, a distinctly Dzogchen thread runs through the latter's discussion. For example, the section just noted opens with a description of all appearances as the primordial Buddha and observes that since these are liberated in their own place, delusion does not actually exist and so, naturally enough, non-delusion, rather than resulting from effort, occurs spontaneously.

Does spontaneous delusion exist in the object or in the mind? "According to me" responds the *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture*,

...appearances are primordially Buddha, that very place liberated in its own place. Thus, there is no delusion regarding what is primordially Buddha just as, on an island of gold [there are no stones.]. Where is there delusion or non-delusion? Where there is utterly no thought, that is nonconceptual and therefore nondeluded and free of thought. Hence, through holding the meaning of non-delusion meeting with non-delusion is said to occur spontaneously. Such [ordinary appearances] and what is primordially Buddha are not two, we consider them one. Being nondual, there is no conceptuality; that [conceptuality] is itself a non-deluded state. "That for which an object is clear" is known as direct perception. You are imputing duality where there is none, imputing ultimate and conventional. That is delusion⁵¹). In a compelling variation on the famous "double moon" example of sensory error, the text here goes on to expand on the meaning of delusion. Pressing your eyes, you may see two moons, If, while gazing upon these moons you are drawn to wonder which is the actual one, the moon on the right or the moon on the left, only confusion results. To perceive delusion and non-delusion as separate is, the text concludes, equally deluded.

Thus, like the *Authenticity*, its root text denies a paradigm in which some

objects are true and others are not. As with the moon, it only breeds confusion to ask which of the two truths is correct, the ultimate or conventional, or who is right, Buddhas or sentient beings. Since everything has the same nature, there is only one truth, not two as classically put forward in sutra systems. This premise is integral to a statement, enclosed in the quote above, that also undergirds the entire premise of the *Authenticity*: *Once there is no duality, there is no conceptuality*; Dualism itself is only imputed, just as the categories of ultimate and conventional are imputed, just as the existence of two moons is erroneously imputed. There are neither two moons nor two truths, only one. To depart from a presentation of two truths is common enough in Dzogchen, but unknown to the kinds of discussions of conceptual and perceptual error that are grafted onto Dzogchen explication in the *Authenticity* and its root text.

The one truth is that sentient beings and Buddhas are not disparate. The same essential nature, present in Buddhas and nonBuddhas alike, is true and this is what is authenticated⁵²). Such truth is known by scripture, open awareness, and essential instructions.

This one, all-inclusive truth, is known as unbounded wholeness. As it already incorporates everything, there is nothing to be done, effort is superfluous, all is already complete. Its completeness however does not connote a static sense of being finished but rather a dynamism capable of catalyzing both liberation and the display of delusion, toward which artful endeavor must be directed.

Even though delusion is fully ingredient in unbounded wholeness, it interferes with self-recognition, the open awareness that is the sole experiential authenticator of such wholeness. For this reason delusion must be dealt with. It is a special feature of Dzogchen to partner this clear call to action with the principles of effortlessness and spontaneous occurrence, two crucial characteristics of open awareness:

3. Artful Endeavor and Effortless Spontaneity

How are we to understand the soteriological and epistemological significance of effortlessness in the *Authenticity* and related materials? And how is this to be construed in the face of a clearly expressed need to correct the non-realization of one's own Buddhahood? Failure of recognition is itself delusion; how will it be overcome without effort? And what is so wrong about effort? Is it simply that, if nothing fundamentally changes at Buddhahood, effort is superfluous? Or are there other reasons why effort is incompatible with open awareness, and thus with reality?

There are, of course, other reasons. For one, the nature of reality discussed in our texts is such that effort is intrinsically at odds with its most salient characteristics, especially that of spontaneity. For this reason we draw on literature

associated with the *Authenticity* in order to call attention to spontaneous occurrence as a crucial philosophical principle in Dzogchen. The apparent tension between the need to do something and the injunction to do nothing is at the heart of the Dzogchen view. The doing that undoes delusion and thereby allows recognition of spontaneous open awareness is given a very particular flavor here.

Dzogchen spontaneity is in the *Authenticity* a way of representing the nature of Buddhahood. The *Venerable Bon Awareness of Everything* (*Kun rig bon gyi rje rgyud*) says:

Since they appear as the mind's nature
And because Buddhas and sentient beings have one cause
Buddhahood is natural and spontaneous⁵³.

Spontaneous occurrence is also to be understood as the nature of all things, for according to the *Spontaneously Complete Open Awareness Tantra* (*Rig pa lhun rdzogs rgyud*):

From the Conquerors' mandala to the golden mat of cyclic existence
All samsara and nirvana
Are just the spontaneous heart essence
In whose self-appearance, whether pure or erroneous,
There is not even one iota of movement from that (spontaneous essence)⁵⁴.

The *Commentary on the Stages of the Vehicles* (*Theg 'grel*), one of the important background texts of the *Authenticity*, supports this further:

Realizing just what is, view, meditation, and effect are one.
Wholly complete from the beginning, there is no effort (*gzod*)⁵⁵

And:

Within the view, open awareness, there is neither taking up nor putting aside⁵⁶.

It must be understood, however, that even without the effort of "taking up or putting aside," enormous perseverance is necessary to realize the Dzogchen view. Sociologically and soteriologically, artfully effective endeavor is central to the Dzogchen (and other) contemplative traditions. Yet Dzogchen itself, unlike what it deems the "lower vehicles" inquires deeply into the ontological implications of effort. On the basis of this inquiry, effort is decried.

In this regard, the *Authenticity's* distinction between artful endeavor (*'bad pa*) and effort (*rtsol ba*) is critical. Effort (*rtsol*) is a great error, but practitioners must definitely employ artful endeavor (*'bad pa*). This distinction, though unanalyzed and unremarked upon, is consistent throughout the text. The need for artful endeavor is defended against an opponent who suggests that, given Dzogchen's emphasis on primordial wisdom, liberation can be attained without it. The necessity for artful endeavor is explicitly related with the etiology of delusion. Delusions are not causeless delusions. There are causes [of delusion], for there are adventitious causes. These can be purified⁵⁷; thus, artful endeavor is meaningful⁵⁸.

Something does happen when one practices. Causes of delusion are purified. Still, the injunction to eliminate delusion must be not confused with a call to effort.

When it comes to the thingless heart essence of Bodhicitta, knowing and not knowing are inseparable; hence, there is no effortful (*rtsol*) search for wisdom through purifying obstructions or abandoning ignorance⁵⁹.

The *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture* further clarifies this distinction in the context of a debate with an opponent who suggests that if, as Dzogchen seems to claim, the conditioned and unconditioned go undifferentiated, then liberation would require no effort whatsoever. This point harkens back to the *Authenticity's* central and governing paradigm of truth as an all inclusive whole.

In rhetoric familiar to Indian Buddhism at least since Nāgārjuna, this text asks, as does *Authenticity*: are the conditioned and unconditioned the same or different? If the same, would it not absurdly follow that one is automatically liberated? This is unacceptable, says the *Authenticity*, for without artful endeavor one will simply bypass the truth without recognizing it, like passing a person to whom you have not been introduced and who, for that reason, you cannot actually acknowledge⁶⁰. Thus, artful endeavor is crucial. Does reasoning have a place within it?

The *Authenticity's* interest in reasoning is directly related to its focus on methods establishing authenticity, though the two are by no means co-extensive. The *Authenticity*, in discussing the three “authenticators of method,” traces an arc of transmission that culminates in one’s own authentic reflexive open awareness (*rang gi rig pa'i tshad ma*). Like its root text, *Authenticity* departs from Indian Buddhist formulations of authenticity (and sounds, at least on the surface, similar to Hindu and Jain ones) in including scriptural authority in its triad of authenticators.

The *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture* offers a further analytical perspective on the question of reasoning and its relationship to the reality of unbounded wholeness. Unlike *Authenticity*⁶¹, this work mentions the three types of relationships possible between unbounded wholeness and its scriptural authenticator, as well as the one type of reason which establishes this. All are imputed by the mind which posits them⁶². Also known to sutra exegesis, these three relationships are those of : (1) being the same in nature (*bdag nyid gcig pa'i 'brel ba*) (2) one arising from the other (*de las byung ba'i 'brel ba*) and (3) arising from causes and conditions (*rgyu dang rkyen gyi 'brel ba*)⁶³.

Unbounded wholeness is said to be established by reasons one in nature with it. The separative ratiocination that characterizes reasoning more generally is, this section suggests, incapable of bringing the mind toward unbounded wholeness. Moreover, reasoning, like all the dynamic display of samsara, itself arises from unbounded wholeness. Herein lies a complication where the epistemology seems to struggle to hold to the principles of both *rDzogs chen* and *Tshad ma*. We see this in an *Authenticity* debate, cited below, where the text argues that the relationship of all existents (samsara and nirvana) to unbounded wholeness is like that of smoke to

fire. One arises from the other. At the same time, unbounded wholeness can never be called the cause of samsara and nirvana, since it is changeless, ceaseless, and unconditioned. The crucial point is that even “effects” are one in Buddha nature with their causes. In this way, correctly engaged, reasoning does not so much prove unbounded wholeness as participate with it and, to some degree by its mere existence, demonstrate that unbounded wholeness embraces it.

Moreover, once a reason is considered one in nature with what it establishes, the principle of all-inclusivity arguably goes unviolated by it. This same principle makes it possible to argue that open awareness itself, not being different in nature from scriptural and or instructional authenticators, is not caused by them. This matter is also given consideration as *Authenticity* seeks to establish the multiple nature of unbounded wholeness. This multiplicity becomes another factor making unbounded wholeness unascertainable by reasoning.

Since there are many diverse perspectives, argues the *Authenticity*, there is necessarily a wholeness which they constitute. “Since there are many diverse perspectives, it is impossible that there not be a whole, all-suffusing mind nature which is the basis⁶⁴). For example, once there is smoke, it is impossible that there not be fire⁶⁵.”

The textual opponent remains unconvinced, and puts forward a counter argument:

Not so, because fire and smoke have a relationship of one arising from the other⁶⁶). In this case there is no such relationship⁶⁷⁾⁶⁸).

The *Authenticity* responds that there is in fact a relationship of one arising from the other, because the base which is the mind nature, an all pervasive wholeness, is not constrained in any one direction. This is typical of the text’s indirect style; it never argues, as it cannot, that unbounded wholeness is a cause, only that it is “not constrained”; thereby suggesting that nothing is prevented from arising from it. On this basis it states that, because of mutually antithetical sense perceptions (*dbang po mthong snang*) arise, including the perceptions of delusion, many discordant appearances also arise, just as smoke rises from fire⁶⁹). As is its custom, the text supports its point by bringing forward a poetic citation, in this case from *Mirror of Mind-Nature Treasure* (*Sems nyid me long gi mdzod phug*):

Appearances are different, diverse, and so
 Extend all through mind nature⁷⁰), samsara and nirvana;
 Because they always self-arise [from] wholeness,
 These things⁷¹) are related with, rise from, reality⁷²⁾⁷³).

The issue of the relationship between an authenticator and unbounded wholeness – or between any subject and object – is directly related to the relationship between sources of arising and that which arises from them, or between causes and effects. It also directly pertains to the relationship between effort and enlightenment, ignorance and wisdom. Strictly speaking, from an ultimate perspective, ignorance arises from wisdom, and effort from enlightenment

mind. Logic's linear, chronological movement from cause to effect, or from ignorance to wisdom, is thus disrupted by Dzogchen epistemology. Primordial wisdom is where everything begins and in which everything is resolved.

Whereas Mādhyamika, in many interpretations, maintains that because phenomena are empty their causality is merely a convention, the *Authenticity* goes further, maintaining that there is neither coming together nor separation within unbounded wholeness. In that case, how is causality to be understood? The *Authenticity* takes great care not to level causal relations to the point that any sign might prove any predicate. Just as unbounded wholeness participates in everything, providing a sameness which yet does not vitiate distinctions, a reason can arguably function in relation to phenomena similar in nature to itself without necessarily and fundamentally dichotomizing cause and effect. Reasoning cannot, however, ever completely uncover or articulate the most subtle nature through which it is connected with its object of proof. And reasoning cannot cause wisdom.

For example, a syllogism such as "it follows that the subject, sound, is impermanent, because of being a product like pot" is sensible insofar as product and impermanence are equally characterized by the "momentariness" (*skad gcig ma*) which defines impermanence. This too is a reasoning by way of the nature (*rang bzhin gyi gtan tshigs*). Product and impermanence have one nature but are different for thought⁷⁴). However, in the *Authenticity's* use of the principle, the unity in nature of reason and proof takes a different turn from more well known Indian-based Tibetan styles of debate. Its point with respect to cause and effect is that all effects occur spontaneously and thus are not sufficiently separate in nature from their causes to justify saying that a fruit or effect is in a dualistic relationship to causes or circumstances that facilitated it. This point, while not elaborated in relation to products in general, is significant in connection with the effortless nonmovement from delusion to wisdom.

3.1 Effort's incompatibility with the Path

Effort cannot be a part of Dzogchen soteriology for three distinct yet related reasons: (1) the structure of the path, (2) the nature of reality and (3) the character of open awareness. Most briefly, effort is extraneous to the path insofar as Dzogchen practice is always complete. In this sense, there are no stages to make effort at traversing. Effort is also untenable because the nature of reality, replete with spontaneous occurrence, pervades everywhere, suffusing effort itself and thus making untenable an effort toward it. Effort itself needs to be understood as an instance of reality's spontaneous dynamic display. This nature, present in everyone, is immutable to change. That which recognizes it is open awareness, a nonconceptual presence which itself is incompatible with effort for two reasons. First, not being a consciousness, it will not arise due to any causal factors that effort might provoke. Second, effort, inevitably associated with purpose, is always conjoined with conceptual thought, which is absent in open awareness. We will

consider each of these incompatibilities, even as we acknowledge that artful activity is crucial for the Dzogchen practitioner.

3.2 Completeness of the Path

A classic Bon discussion of the Dzogchen path's completeness is in *Three Revealed Cycles* (*bsGrags pa skor gsum*), emically regarded as the oldest exposition of Bon Dzogchen and considered a crucial background text for the *Authenticity*. Like the *Authenticity*, this work is regarded as a commentary on the *Authenticity of Essential Instructions and Scripture*.

Three Revealed Cycles is a collection of 47 different texts discovered together with the *Utmost Peak, Great Expanse* (*Yang rtse klong chen*) behind a Vairocana statue in the temple of Kho-mthing in Lho-brag by gZhod-ston dNgos-grub grags-pa in 1100⁷⁵. Shar-rdza Rinpoche describes gZhod-ston dNgos-grub as a distinguished scholar and an emanation of Li-shu stag-ring and says that these texts were hidden during the waning days of Bon by none other than Li-shu stag-ring. *Three Cycles* frames the completeness of Dzogchen in terms of the five paths, ten grounds, and six perfections. These classic categories of Indian Buddhism are in *Three Cycles* assimilated to Dzogchen this way:

Because of the absence of grasping and desire, giving is complete. Because neither of the two first truths, suffering nor its causes, are present, ethics are included [presumably a reference to the way in which non-ethical activities cause suffering]. Because this nature has no feeling (*tshor ba, vedanā*) of happiness of suffering, patience is perfected.

Because the natural state has neither laziness nor neutrality, the quality of effort is complete. Because concentration (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*) is unchanging, its qualities are complete. Because there is no risk at all of falling into an abyss [of error], the quality of power is complete. Because there are neither afflictions nor suffering, compassion is complete. Because this nature has neither hope nor doubt, the perfection of prayer is complete. Because the nature is not bound up with any worldly conditions, the perfection of method is complete. Because it has no delusion (*'khrul ba, bhrānti*) the perfection of wisdom is present.

The five paths are also perfected:

The path of accumulation, because the natural state is unceasing, ongoing, not dependent on causes; the path of union, because the natural state has neither internal nor external portions, it is simply unbounded wholeness⁷⁶.

Because it is beyond saying "this is this," a pure seeing without any elaborations, the seeing path is perfected. Because there is no effortful thought of speech, the path of meditation is complete. Because there is neither center nor boundary, the path of liberation (*mthar phyin pa'i lam*) is complete, which means there is no more learning (*mi slob lam, aśāikṣa mārga*)⁷⁷.

Thus, Dzogchen is not so far beyond the paths of sutra that it does not contain them; indeed, here it is presented as complete and perfect (*rdzogs*) precisely because all ten grounds and nine vehicles are included in it⁷⁸). However, Bon and other Dzogchen texts do not speak of moving step by step through the five paths, for all these find their perfection in the natural state of open awareness. The superfluity of gradual effort is further addressed by the *Authenticity* in its treatment of open awareness. Crucial here is the way open awareness is contrasted with consciousness and virtually identified with the nature of reality.

3.3 Open awareness and consciousness

Though not a ubiquitously held position in either Bon or Buddhist Dzogchen, the difference between open awareness and consciousness is a crucial point for the *Authenticity* and related literature. For example, *Three Revealed Cycles*, just before the passage cited above, states “This great perfection is without consciousness (*shes pa med pa*) but is an excellent superior wisdom (*shes rab*)⁷⁹.” None of the other Nine Vehicles would make put forward such a claim.

It is axiomatic in Indian and Tibetan epistemology that any consciousness must have an object of which it is conscious (*shes bya, jñeya*) that is, an object which it observes (*dmigs pa, ālambana*) and thus on which it is focused. Focusing in turn requires effort, as well as a more narrow scope than the unbounded wholeness toward which open awareness is directed. Because the Dzogchen state of meditative stabilization is not focused or directed at any particular object, no effort is required.

This point is further underscored by those who maintain that whereas the meditative stabilization taught in other vehicles is a consciousness (*shes pa*), the Dzogchen categories of open awareness and unbounded wholeness are not. Moreover, in the *Authenticity*, as for Dzogchen more generally, any appearance associated with subject and object is a conventional truth⁸⁰). Since conceptual thought, including inference, is necessarily predicated on a subject and an object, these modes of cognition are by definition excluded from having the ultimate as their object. Expressing a view that is also held in the early Perfection of Wisdom (*phar phyin, prajñāpāramitā*) literature, we read, “All signs of conventionalities are conventional truths. The pacification of all signs of elaboration is ultimate truth⁸¹.”

Thus, open awareness and unbounded wholeness, in addition to being non-conceptual and free of ordinary sensory perception; do not even fall under the rubric of consciousness. Consciousness is an impermanent phenomena (*ngos po*), whereas open awareness and unbounded wholeness are not. This point harkens back to the *Authenticity*'s discussion of the relationship between cause and effect, effort and realization. As we have seen, whereas a consciousness necessarily arises from causes, the self-arisen wisdom does not. Primordial wisdom is neither a consciousness nor is it related with any cause⁸²), nor is it a causeless impermanent

thing because such do not exist. Although this distinction between consciousness and the self-arisen primordial wisdom is not universally held in Dzogchen, it serves well as a way of philosophically protecting the unique Dzogchen epistemology from assimilation into other perspectives. (Those upholding this perspective maintain that to consider wisdom a causeless consciousness is to take up a *Tīrthika tenet*⁸³.) Distinguishing wisdom and consciousness is also a way of expressing the well known Dzogchen contention that its view is inconceivable and inexpressible.

For Dzogchen, the effortless fruit of practice is an unbounded wholeness (*thig le nyag gcig*) which spontaneously occurs in its own place. In this sense, effort is antithetical to reality itself (although in another sense, less emphasized in our texts, effort must be included within unbounded wholeness.) Spontaneity also is ingredient in authenticity, for the authenticating power of reflexive open awareness (*rang gi rig pa'i tshad ma*) is naturally conjoined with spontaneous meditation⁸⁴ and thus, again, is effortless. Such is its manner of Dzogchen authenticity.

According to the *Authenticity* this does not exist in the lower vehicles. Likewise the natural vitality of a meditative stabilization that primordially and spontaneously arises is not discussed in the lower vehicles, whose meditative stabilization comes about through effort.

In a manner entirely consistent with, though not specifically articulated in, the *Authenticity*, Lopön Tenzin Namdak elaborates the epistemological uniqueness of Bon Dzogchen's open awareness in his *Treatise on the Mother Tantra*⁸⁵. He maintains that although open awareness is a type of direct perception, it is not found among the categories of direct perception discussed in sutra vehicle literature, especially that associated with the Sautrāntika and Cittamātra systems (*mdo sems thun mong ba*).

The four direct perceivers described in these systems are well known: sensory direct perception (*dbang po'i mngon sum, indriya-pratyakṣa*) mental direct perception (*gid gyi mngon sum, mānasa-pratyakṣa*), yogic direct perception (*rnal 'byor mngon sum, yogi-pratyakṣa*), and, the category seemingly most compatible with Dzogchen discussions, open awareness direct perception (*rang rig mngon sum, svasaḥvedana-pratyakṣa*). However, in this Bon Dzogchen perspective, its reflexive open awareness is none of these.

This open awareness is neither sensory nor mental direct perception, continues Lopön Tenzin Namdak, because these do not observe their own natural state⁸⁶. Moreover, such perception lacks the meditative stabilization of open awareness, and open awareness is not, like these, induced by an immediately prior condition (*de ma thag rkyen, samanantara-pratyaya*), that is, by a previously existing consciousness. Nor is the open awareness of Dzogchen the same as the open awareness spoken of in Cittamātra. The latter necessarily has consciousness, rather than unbounded wholeness, as its explicit object (*dnagos yul*). Moreover, the consciousness which is the direct object of the open awareness described in Cittamātra is conditioned whereas the ultimate, unbounded wholeness, which is the

direct object of the open awareness as well as its own nature, is described in Dzogchen as unconditioned⁸⁷⁾.

Nor is open awareness the equivalent of yogic direct perception as described in sutra literature. In discussing this, Lopön Tenzin Namdak specifically considers the wisdom of meditative equipoise belonging to a Superior of the Perfection Vehicle. After all, dualistic appearances dissolve for such a consciousness, and meditative equipoise experiences the natural condition of emptiness⁸⁸⁾. Whereas the wisdom of meditative equipoise cognizing emptiness is described, for example, in dGe-lugs texts as induced by an inferential consciousness which then itself segues into the wisdom of emptiness, the open awareness of Dzogchen is described as self-settled, and there is no process by which conceptual thought *itself* is transformed into or precipitates wisdom. The open awareness discussed in Dzogchen is not induced by a meditative stabilization that exists prior to it. Primordial wisdom's ontology does not rest with reasoning. Thus, although the construction of conceptual positions has some purpose, noted at the outset of the *Authenticity*, it does not take one to ultimate understanding. Why? Conceptual processes, the *via negativa* alone, cannot make open awareness manifest.

Whereas a consciousness necessarily arises from causes, the self-arisen wisdom does not. Not being a consciousness, it is not related with any cause but is imbued with the quality of spontaneous occurrence. Effortful exertion is antithetical to its very nature, though artful activity (*'bad*) is not. This is one theoretical principle which facilitates Dzogchen's extrication from the morass of difficulties associated with an extreme subitist view. To claim that effort is unnecessary is to invoke the core Dzogchen principle that delusion is temporary and nondelusion is always present. Any effort to produce nondelusion is inappropriate because both open awareness and the reality which it gnostically engages are spontaneous occurrences.

Not being a consciousness, there is no need to posit an object for Dzogchen's open awareness. For this reason, effort is seen as an inappropriate gesture toward open awareness partly because, as we have seen, open awareness is neither a consciousness nor an impermanent phenomena and thus cannot be brought about due to any cause and effect process.

Spontaneous occurrence is thus fundamentally related to effortlessness; to elaborate on this we turn to another text emically associated with the *Authenticity*, the *Stages of the Vehicles* (*Theg rim*) and its commentary (*Theg 'grel*). Both works are traditionally attributed to gShen-rab Mi-bo. Vairocana⁸⁹⁾ – who by some accounts studied with gShen-rab Mi-bo – is said to have translated *Stages of the Vehicles* (*Theg rim/theg pa'i rim pa mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud*) from Zhang-zhung language, also identified as the language of Gilgit, and later to have hidden it as *gter* at Yer-ba near Samye.

The root text, *Stages of the Vehicles* and its commentary, *Theg pa'i rim pa mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud kyi 'grel pa (theg 'grel)*⁹⁰⁾ are, like the

Authenticity, said to have been discovered by the three Buddhists. These works provide the *Decisive Overview (lTa ba spyi gcod)* of the *Clearing Extremes from the Primordial Mind (Ye khri mtha' gsal)*⁹¹⁾ another work considered associated with the *Authenticity*⁹²⁾.

The discussion of spontaneous occurrence in *Commentary on the Stages of the Vehicles* is an important element in that text's explication of how Dzogchen differs from and is superior to the other eight vehicles. The *Commentary* opens with sTon-pa gShen-rab exhorting his three main students, known as the "three sharp ones" (*skam gsum*) to listen undistractedly⁹³⁾. Referring to himself as the Lion Speaker, he notes that his extensive discussion of the Dzogchen Vehicle will proceed by way of seven central topics:

- 1) view realized,
- 2) pledges held,
- 3) stages of meditation
- 4) method of accomplishment,
- 5) good activities engaged
- 6) effects of accomplishment and
- 7) that which distinguishes Dzogchen from lower vehicles⁹⁴⁾.

These topics are discussed in terms of five categories: view, behavior, fruition, the dynamic display (*rtsal*) of meditative stabilization, and great reasoning⁹⁵⁾.

A full synopsis of these issues would take us too far afield, but a synthesis of important areas of confluence (or, less frequently, contrast) with the presentation in *Authenticity* will further illustrate the contours of the latter. Even though we cannot be absolutely sure, as Bon tradition holds, that these works predate the *Authenticity*, they certainly provide an important intellectual context for it.

Unlike *Authenticity*, the *Vehicle Commentary* describes the Dzogchen view in terms of three aspects: (1) primordial purity (*ka tag*), (2) spontaneous occurrence (*lhun grub*) and, (3) the union of these with just-is-ness (*ji bzhin nyid kyi skye mched*). Primordial purity and spontaneous occurrence are united as the base (*gzhi*) and with each other, for neither one is, by itself, the complete self-arisen primordial wisdom (*rang 'byung ye shes*). Primordial purity signifies that everything whatsoever, in cyclic existence and nirvana, is the self clarity of primordial wisdom (*ye shes rang gsal*)⁹⁶⁾. Nonetheless, delusion does arise. These two claims become compatible by way of the claim that spontaneous occurrence is not the same as causeless occurrence, for, as we have seen delusion indeed has causes.

The union of primordial purity and spontaneous occurrence is possible because primordial purity is not ontologically reified; the *Vehicle Commentary* notes early on that it does not actually (*dngos su*) exist⁹⁷⁾. Likewise, we find the observation that primordial purity and spontaneous occurrence are actually not true (*dngos mi bden*)⁹⁸⁾. They are, however, dynamic:

Since this very base
Has spontaneity in great primordial purity

Play (*rol ba*) itself is its essential nature.⁹⁹⁾

Neither primordial purity nor spontaneous occurrence alone is the complete self arisen primordial wisdom (*rang 'byung ye shes*). Of the three Dzogchen terms that thematize *Stages*, only spontaneous occurrence is found in the *Authenticity*. The absence of the well known-term *ka dag* in *Authenticity* is curious, not least because the word occurs frequently in both the *Stages of the Vehicles* and its *Commentary*. Perhaps these two works, though now emically considered a source for the *Authenticity*, were in fact written after it; although clearly some kind of Nine Vehicles literature is in the background of Li-shu stag-ring's text. The term *ka tag* frequently occurs in other Bon Dzogchen works, we find it in *Clearing Extremes from the Primordial Mind, Magical Space Treasure* (*Nam mkha'i 'phrul mdzod*) and *Three Revealed Cycles*¹⁰⁰⁾. Further research here is needed.

However this may be, the principle of primordial purity (*ka dag*) and the associated observation in *Commentary on the Stages of the Vehicles* that all things whatsoever of samsara and nirvana are characterized by the self-clarity of primordial wisdom (*ye shes*) is fundamental to a central conundrum of the *Authenticity*, and of Dzogchen more generally: If all is primordially pure, whence ignorance? If primordial wisdom is already present, why practice? Most, if not all, of the crucial issues of Dzogchen philosophy, especially as introduced in the *Vehicle* literature and elaborated in the *Authenticity*, are related to these questions.

In this literature, spontaneous occurrence, a characteristic of the base, the path, and the fruit, is the antithesis of effortful engagement, for base, path, and fruit are equally effortless, primordially perfect¹⁰¹⁾. For Dzogchen, the pedagogical dangers of renouncing effort pale beside the imperative to sustain effortlessness. Without spontaneous occurrence, none of the qualities of enlightenment would occur. This point, part of the description of reality, flows directly into the undesirability of effort.

The unsuitability of effort for accessing an ontologically effortless reality also informs Dzogchen descriptions of meditative stabilization which, unlike that in the lower vehicles, is not characterized as an effect. With this claim, the *Vehicle Commentary* emphasizes that the experience of open awareness never results from conceptual endeavor. Here, as in the *Authenticity*, effort and conceptuality are antithetical to base, path, and fruit. The spontaneous, primordial purity of Dzogchen is discovered only with the absence of effort. Indeed, for the *Authenticity*, effortlessness and non-holding mark the difference between correct and incorrect Dzogchen practice. Any attraction (*zhen*) to internal thoughts or external objects is effortful and therefore must be abandoned before mind nature can be experienced. The lower vehicles however recognize neither primordial purity, spontaneous occurrence nor just-is-ness (*ji bzhin nyid*). This, most succinctly, is the difference in view between Bon Dzogchen and its other vehicles.

In this context, the *Vehicle Commentary* concludes its thematizing of issues related with primordial purity by reflecting on the ontological status of delusion;

considering, for example, whether it is causeless or not¹⁰²). Like the *Authenticity*, the *Vehicle Commentary* concludes that delusion (*'khrul ba*) beginninglessly arises from unawareness (*ma rig pa*)¹⁰³). Failure to recognize one's own self arising primordial wisdom is the source of innate unawareness. Learned unawareness follows from this.

The *Vehicle Commentary's* section on spontaneous occurrence¹⁰⁴) opens by echoing the text's own earlier statement that everything that exists, whether of cyclic existence or nirvana, is spontaneously occurring. There are two systems (*gzhung lugs*) regarding this, the spontaneous occurrence of the nature and of those phenomena which possess nature¹⁰⁵).

What is the relationship between Bon nature and the phenomena through which it manifests? Are they mixed up in such a way that impermanent phenomena take on qualities of the nature or is the nature itself as momentary as impermanent phenomena? The answer is neither. One does not take on the qualities of the other, just as the faces of human, horse, and bird can be simultaneously reflected in water – they do not become mixed, their own shape and their own colors remain clear¹⁰⁶).

This pattern of argumentation persists through much of the *Authenticity*: two elements are named, for example nature and the phenomena which possess it, or primordial wisdom and ignorance appearance and emptiness. The naming of these dyads precipitates debate as to their relationship, analysis that gains its drama because of an apparent irreconcilability with the Dzogchen view. That is, to prove either utter identity or difference between the elements in the dyad will damage the Dzogchen position. In “solving” this matter, the *Authenticity* deflects the direction suggested by its opponents' debate and suggests a new ontological move, pointing toward, for example, a kind of unbounded yet coherent identity that does not entail unwanted philosophical consequences. This repetitive opening of the dialogical space opens in turn to the Dzogchen view.

In the *Authenticity*, the refusal to be limited by the formal strictures of debate is reflected also in its frequent use of the poetic voice; over a hundred ancient, mainly nonextant tantric poetic texts are cited throughout the work. Although the *Vehicle Commentary* does not quote poetry, it too has a multivalent voice. After situating itself solidly within Nine Vehicle categories, and contesting those of the lower vehicles with the type of debate just mentioned, the text takes on the kind of evocative tone more characteristic of Dzogchen in general. The structure of debate is left behind as a steady stream of descriptive ontologies evoke the nature¹⁰⁷). Open awareness [has] the nature of clear light, for its essence is untouched by extremes of permanence or annihilation; its nature is nondual, for it neither includes nor excludes (*spong sdud*); it is uncontaminated by attraction (*zhen*) and thus very blissful in nature. Because nature, unbounded wholeness, is the spontaneously occurring nature, its nature does not arise through other effects. Because it is birthless streams of light, like the sun rising in the sky, its nature never ceases¹⁰⁸).

4 Scripture and reality

Let us now return to the theme of authenticity and the ways in which scripture, essential instructions, and the voice of reality itself converge in the *Authenticity*. How is this articulated?

Samantabhadra is ingredient in the realization of mind nature, in mind nature itself, and in the scriptures explaining the connection between them. Clearly, if authentic scriptures are part of the expression of reality itself, they cannot be products of effort. Nor is this necessary. For the *Authenticity*, the power of those scriptures lies not in their words but in the blessings, literally “waves of giving” (*byin rlabs*) that give rise to them. Authentic scriptures are dynamic in the way that Samantabhadra, reality itself, is dynamic, but their efficacy lies neither in description nor in reasoning, not really in words at all. Conceptual authenticity has no place in actual Dzogchen practice, however important it may be in Dzogchen training¹⁰⁹.

Thus we arrive at the a-logical conclusion toward which the text has been moving all along. Neither bound by the linearity of conventional logic, nor divorcing itself from reason’s rigor, the *Authenticity* develops a logic that often follows the form, not of syllogistic reasoning, but of poetic and multidimensional exploration. We have, after all, already been told that neither description nor reasoning are the acme of scriptural performance; early on the *Authenticity* noted that even Samantabhadra cannot demonstrate reality to be “this.”¹¹⁰ Undecidability as a crucial feature of reality is reiterated much later in the text when we read that “The undwelling, unseen emptiness is difficult to indicate as ‘this,’ like a stammerer’s dream¹¹¹.” If it is difficult even for the dharmakāya Samantabhadra to indicate mind nature as “this”, gShen-rab has a similar conundrum, stated in the *Scripture of the Blissful Samantabhadra* :

This is the heart of the Great Completeness:
 One being indefinite, there are many
 Many not occurring, a dwelling as one,
 A non-difference between one and many
 Even nonexistence itself passes beyond nonexistence.
 The convention of saying “beyond”
 Has not been stated even by gShen-rab¹¹².

Scriptures arise from the heart of effortlessness to express the spontaneous mind-nature, synonymous with the base, that is prior to any division into Buddhas and sentient beings. Authentic scriptures are seen as the direct expression *from*—not *about*—reality itself. In this way the discussion of authentic scriptures teaches the authenticity of open awareness. Furthermore, both scripture and open awareness are characterized by a completeness correlate with effortlessness and

spontaneity. Not inconsequentially, it is through realizing these, which is tantamount to recognizing one's own nature as Samantabhadra, that one is enlightened:

Regarding this point, the *Ceaseless, Changeless Essence which is Wholeness* (*gYung drung snying po nyag gcig*) says:

If one realizes the essential instructions dwelling spontaneously during the three intervals

From then on one's own mind is the Body of Bon

Hence, at the moment of separating from the body

One is a Buddha, manifesting the great bliss which itself is

The excellent Samantabhadra¹¹³).

In this way the text comes full circle, as unbounded wholeness can and must. Poetry has been a natural vehicle for putting forward such a-logical and meta-conceptual lore. At the same time, the philosophical principles at their root are also given rigorous voice in the *Authenticity*, in much the way that both reasoning and the special, direct engagement with reality unique to open awareness are both part of that text and part of the overall makeup of any given practitioner.

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Notes

- 1) *sems nyid man ngag rdzogs chen ni / thams cad ngo bo nyid yin rtogs/ des na yid yul sgom mi dgos / spang blang med phyir mnyam pa nyid / ting 'dzin rtag tu nyams pa med /* [120.3-4]
- 2) *Theg pa'i rim pa mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud*, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre: Dolanji, India: 369-385; #74 in Samten Karmay, *Catalogue*
- 3) *Theg pa'i rim pa mngon du bhsad pa'i mdo rgyud kyi 'grel pa* (*theg 'grel*, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre: Dolanji, India: 387-559; mentioned Karmay, *Catalogue*
- 4) For a brief consideration of the significance of the *Authenticity's* poetic voice, see Klein, "Bon Dzogchen on Authenticity: Prose and Poetry on the Path" in *Changing Minds: Contributions to the Study of Buddhism and Tibet in Honor of Jeffrey Hopkins* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Press, fall 2000, (forthcoming).
- 5) whatever is spoken by [Samantabhadra] Here, as elsewhere, underlined notes indicate translation of the annotation from the *Gal mdo* itself. We do not know whose hand inscribed them or at what date.

- 6) Which is [a term] that is an explanatory response to [a request for] explanation regarding entityness and such. (*dag* here signifies *la sog.*)
- 7) source of faith.
- 8) if one asks to whom [there is teaching], it is the Sambhogakāya
- 9) The White Shen [Deity] itself explains
- 10) associated with the aesthetics of composition
- 11) [followers of] the [Shen] deity.
- 12) That is, the practitioners of Bon (*g-yung drung sems dpa'* = *byang chub sems dpa'* = Bodhisattva).
- 13) widespread pervasion of Yung Drung[teachings].
- 14) Confidence in oneself, the Tathāgathas, and one's masters.
The term *gding* carries the connotation of being non-dualistic, signifying the subject's quality of surety, in contrast to trust (*nyid ches*) which appears below and connotes a more sutra style understanding of trust as belief in something or someone, hence a dualistic state. (Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche)
- 15) for those practitioners having a blessed karmic connection (*las 'phros*) with gShen-rab
- 16) *yang mes snying po nyag gcig rang rig pa / bon sku rgyal ba kun bzang byin rlabs kyis / 'gro ba'i mgon po gshen lha dkar pos rig / de nyid thugs kyis dgongs pa'i ngo bo nyid / sprul sku gshen rab thugs la rig par shar / de nyid sgra dbyangs gsung don bdud rtsi'i rgyun / skal ldan sems dpa' g-yung drung gshen la bsgrags / de nyid thugs kyis bkrol ba'i bstan pa 'di / nyams myong lung dang man ngag gding gsum ldan / [48.3-49.2]*
- 17) Similarly, the *Zhang zhung sNyan rgyud* tradition maintains that it is through the blessings of the *dharmakāya* that realization arises in the *sambhogakāya* which in turn brings about the teaching of the *nirmānakāya*, gShen-rab Mi-bo-che. (Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche)
- 18) The passage on the three authenticators is examined more thoroughly in Klein, "Bon Dzogchen on Authenticity (*Tshad ma, pramāṇa*) Prose and Poetry on the Path."
- 19) Gloss by Lopön Tenzin Namdak
- 20) *phyi'i yul du ma gyur yang rang rig pa'i man ngag bstan btsam gyis / mngon sum du gsal la / rtog pa med cing dngos po med par rig ste / [55.5-6]*
- 21) *nga ni bon gyi snying po ste / bon nyid yul med rang gi sems /rang sems ma bcos bon gyi sku /snying po kun 'byung nyag gcig de / ma nor ba de nyid /rang rig tu nga las kun 'byung bon gyi rje /nga rtogs kun tu bzang po 'byung /zhes pa dang [52.4-5]*
The "I" and "me" of this poem is Samantabhadra, For this reason, the 'byung of this line is translated as "is there" instead of, as elsewhere in this text, the more literal translation of 'byung as "arise." The text here also reflects on whether Samantabhadra, personification of the bon-nature, is a "person." From the viewpoint of the base (*gzhi nas*), Samantabhadra is a principle rather than a person; from the viewpoint of dynamic display (*rtsal du shar*), however, Samantabhadra is a person. Here we translate the name as "All-good" to make clear that this is a principle as well. *Bon sku* is most strongly related with *gzhi* and thus with emptiness; Samantabhadra relates with the dawning of clarity (*gsal shar*).
- 22) *sems kun gyi rtsa ba byang chub sems / ngo bo'i snying po nyag gcig ma / dus gsum 'du 'bral med de gcig gi ngang / ye nas 'khrul pa mi mnga' ka nas dag [77.2-3]*
- 23) *sangs rgyas dang ni sems can la / gnas skabs 'brel med mthar thug 'brel pa yod / [84.4]*
- 24) *man ngag med la mi phan rtag tu 'khrul / [84.4-5]*

- 25) It follows that the bon subject, all these, samasāra and nirvāna, is the primordial ancestor, the great vehicle, unbounded wholeness; this is the thesis, because there are many diverse perspectives.”
'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa 'di dag thams cad bon can / yang mes theg pa chen po thig le nyag gcig yin te dam bca' / mthong stangs mi mthun du ma 'dug pa'i phyir ro / [53.6-54.1]
- 26) the very essence of the meaning (*don gyi ngo bo nyid*)
- 27) *sangs rgyas dang sems can gnyis ka'i gzhi snying po byang chub kyi sems rang 'byung gi ye shes chen po yin pas / sangs rgyas kyi rgyu yang sems can yin la / sems can gyi rgyu yang sangs rgyas yin te / des na rgyu 'bras ro gcig pa'i sangs rgyas zhes bya'o / [84.5-6]*
- 28) from the beginning (*gdod nas*)
- 29) *ye nas de ltar sangs rgyas yin yang / yin pa la yin par ma rtogs pa'i phyir 'khrul te / sems can du smin pas / de'i tha snyad du sems can gyi rgyu sangs rgyas yin zhes bya ste / gzhi ngo bo nyid la ni 'gyur ba gang yang med do / [85.6-86.1]*
- 30) *snying po ci bzhin ngo bo nyid shes na / bsam gtan mnyam par gzhag dang langgs zhes yod mi mnga' / ma sgom 'bral med sangs rgyas dgongs pa'i mchog [99.6]*
- 31) *man ngag 'di dag rtogs 'gyur na / btsal ba med par mngon sangs rgyas / [100.1-2]*
- 32) *theg pa kun gyi mes po nga / spong bsdud zhen gsum ye nas med / rtsol sgrub nad las ye nas 'das / rtag chad mtha' las ye nas grol / dman pa'i theg pas ye ma reg / de kun nga 'dod rtsol sgrub pas / slar la rtog pa'i nad kyis zin / snying po nges don mthong mi srid / des na kun gyi thun mong min / [107.4-6]*
- 33) *e ma ho /kun bzang spyod yul chen po 'di / ye nas bde chen snying po la / da gzod rtsol bar snying re rje / 'og ma nga ru che bcos pa / wa yi seng ge'i skad sgrogs kyang / seng ge nyid du cang 'gyur ram / [107.6-108.1]*
- 34) *sder chags* refers to animals with nails or hoofs i. e., not birds.
- 35) *rtsol sgrub lam la gnas pa'i gang zag rnams / dngul la yang zhun byas kyang lcags mi 'byung / mchong bu byi dor byas kyang rin chen min / sol ba sgeg par byas kyang ljon shing min / mtshon pa'i tshigs su byas kyang lung las nyams /rdzogs chen 'di don gzhan gyis ga la dpog / [108.5-6]*
- 36) *e ma ho / sems nyid nyag gcig rdzogs pa chen po 'di / 'og mas ci ltar dpyad kyang rtogs mi srid / rgya mtsho skyog gis bcus pas zad mi srid / bye ri grang gis bcad pas chod mi srid / nam mkha' lag gis bsnyabs pas snyob mi srid / chu bo gyen la bzlog pas zlog mi srid / gtan tshigs sgra yis gzhigs pas 'grub mi srid / [108.6-109.1]*
- 37) Lopön Tenzin Namdak, oral commentary February, 1999
- 38) i.e., Candrakīrti's *Mādhyamakāvatāra* VI 116, which states that conceptions of [inherent] existence cease once phenomena have been thoroughly analyzed.
- 39) The basis of all which is the very essence of the basis (*gzhi'i ngo bo nyid kun gzhi*)
- 40) *ma yin te 'khor 'das gnyis kyi ma gos pa'i snying po / dag snang 'khrul snang gnyis ka las 'das / ngo bo nyid kyi sku mchog / sangs rgyas sems can gnyis ka ma yin par ye don gyi ye shes de / kun tu bzang pos rtogs shing rig nas / de'i thugs kyi dkyil nas bcud phyung ste / byin gyis rlabs kyis bshad pas / ston pa nges pa'i lung tshad ma'o / [109.6-110.1]*
- 41) *ma nor nges pa'i tshad ma lung chen ni / sangs rgyas sems can med pa'i snga rol du / yang mes chen po ngo bo nyid sku yis / kun bzang thugs la tshig med don du rtogs / de'i thugs kyi byin rlabs bcud phyung pa'o / [110.2-3]*
- 42) *ston pa thugs rje che mnga' bas / thugs kyi dkyil nas bcud phyung nas / byin gyis rlabs kyis bshad pa'i lung / rtsol bral nyag gcig dgongs pa'i lung / lung rnams kun gyi rgyal*

- po 'di / khyung chen bzhin du rlabs kyis gcod / sing ge bzhin du shugs kyis mchongs / nam mkha' bzhin du yongs la khyab / rgya mtsho'i rlan bzhin kun la bangs / [111.1-3]*
- 43) *Gal mdo*, 111.3-4.
- 44) the mind-nature which is wholeness (*sems nyid nyag gcig.*)
- 45) as golden
- 46) *de ltar ye nas yin kyang 'khrul ba 'byung bar mi 'gal te / thig le nyag gcig de nyid ma rtogs pa'i phyir ro / dper na ye nas gser yin kyang / sas sgrib pa'i phyir ma mthong bzhin no / [58.3-4]*
- 47) *'khor 'das kyi rtsa ba byang chub kyi sems nyid ma rtogs shing ngo ma shes pas 'khrul te / khams sum du 'khor zhing rgyu drug tu 'khyams pa yin no / de yang ma rtogs pa'i dbang gis de ma yin la der 'dzin gyi shes pa brtas pas 'khrul pa'o / [77.6-78.1]*
- 48) *gzhi las 'khrul pa gtan med kyang / blo'i 'khrul pas gzhi bcos pas / gzhi nyid ma mthong rgyu rkyen gyis / gzhi nyid 'khor ba'i bon ltar snang / [81.5]*
- 49) See *Gal mdo* 50.5-6
- 50) See 78.5-6.
- 51) *Nga ni snang ba 'di ye nas sangs rgyas te/ rang sa rang sar grol ba yin/ de ltar ye sangs rgyas pa la 'khrul du med de/ dper na rin po che gser gyi gling dang 'dra'o/ de na gar 'khrul te ma 'khrul lo/ gang la yang rtog med de mi rtog ste/ des na rtog pa dang bral zhing ma 'khrul pa'o/ des na ma 'khrul pa'i don bzung bas/ ma 'khrul dang 'phrad pa de la lhun gyis grub pa zer/ ye sangs rgyas pa dang 'di ltar snang ba gnyis su med pa de la gcig bu zer/ gnyis su med pas gang la yang mi rtog ste/ de kho na ma 'khrul bar 'dug pa/ de'i don gsal bar 'dug pa de la mngon sum zer/ khyod gnyis su med pa la gnyis su brtags pa ste don dam dang kun rdzob tu btags pa de nyi/ de 'khrul pa yin te...[15.3-16.1]*
- 52) Lopön Tenzin Namdak, oral commentary, Kathmandu, February, 1999
- 53) *sems kyi rang bzhin yin snang du / sems can sangs rgyas rgyu gcig phyir / rang bzhin lhun grub sangs rgyas so / [85.4-5]*
- 54) *rgyal ba'i dkyil 'khor gser gdan bar / 'khor dang mya ngan 'das pa kun / snying po lhun grub nyid yin te / de nyid rang snang dag 'khrul kyang / nyid las g-yos pa rdul tsam med / [85.5-6]*
- 55) *Ji bzhin ngang du rtogs na lta sgom 'bras bu gcig/ ye nas yongs rdzogs da gzod btsol da med / Theg rim 382.1-2*
- 56) *lta ba rang rig sgo nas spyod pa blang dor med / Theg rim 383.3*
- 57) because it can be purified
- 58) *'khrul pa de rgyu med par las 'khrul pa ma yin te / rgyu yod de / rgyu de rang glo bur ba yin pa'i phyir 'khrul pa sbyang du btub po / des na 'bad pa la don yod do / [81.1-2]*
- 59) *snying po byang chub kyi don sems nyid dngos med la / ma rig pa rig pa gnyis dbyer med pas / sgrib pa sbyang zhing ma rig pa spang ste / ye shes ched du btsal du med pas / [94.4-5]*
- 60) *Man ngag lung gyi tshad ma* See for example 13.6-14. 2
- 61) The *Authenticity* does (105.6ff) discuss the difference between reasons which operate through the power of connection (*bral*) and through opposites (*'gal*) and relates this with its discussion of cause and effect. It does not, however, elaborate on the three relationships between reasoning and that which it authenticates.
- 62) *Man ngag lung gyi tshad ma 'i 'grel ba*, 17.3 -18.2
- 63) *Man ngag lung gyi tshad ma 'i 'grel ba* 16.5-6 .
- The typologies of reasoning in relation to *Authenticity* requires further analysis; here we can only begin to introduce the problems involved.

- 64) Here *gzhi*, *sems nyid*, and *thig le nyag gcig* are identical (*don gcig*). However, *gzhi* and *sems nyid* are *mu gsum*. Whatever is *sems nyid* is necessarily a *gzhi*, but whatever is a *gzhi* is not necessarily a *sems nyid*. For example, *bon nyid* is a *gzhi* but not a *sems nyid*; likewise the emptiness of a table is a basis but not a mind-nature, for a mind-nature must be connected with mind. It is also said that the fortunate meditate on the three, *bon nyid*, *sems nyid*, *nam mkha'i dbyings nyid* as one and inseparable.
- 65) *dper na / du ba 'dug phan chad / me med mi srid bzhin no /*
- 66) *de las byung ba'i 'brel pa*. [54.6]. This is first instance in this text of a classic phenomenology descriptive term; several centuries later it becomes one of two types of relationship possible between objects. 67) between cyclic existence and nirvana and the mind-nature.
- 68) *de ltar ma yin te / me dang du ba de las byung ba'i 'brel pa yod la / 'di la 'brel pa med 'khor 'das sems* [54.6]
- 69) 55.1-55.2
- 70) unbounded wholeness
- 71) the appearances, i.e. all experienced phenomena
- 72) from the very essence
- 73) *snang ba mi mthun sna tshogs phyir / 'khor 'das sems nyid bdal khyab che / nyag gcig kun tu rang byung bas / dngos bo de nyid las byung 'brel /* [55.2]
- 74) Lopön Tenzin Namdak, in glossing this, uses the well-known sutra term *ngo bo gcig ldog pa tha dad*, a phrase which does not occur in the text
- 75) Karmay, *Catalogue* p. 102
- 76) Thus *sbyor lam [prayoga mārga]* does not mean preparation, in the way that the union of calm (*zhi gnas, śamathā*) and special insight (*lhag mthong, darśana mārga*) are said in sutra to prepare one for direct perception of emptiness. Here it has to do with the quality of meditative stabilization (*ting nge 'dzin, samādhi*).
- 77) *bsGrags pa skor gsum* Vol. *ka* in possession of Lopön Tenzin Namdak, 72b.3ff. n.d., n.p.
- 78) The interest in mapping Dzogchen onto Nine Vehicle structure is a significant feature of the *Authenticity*, although not one we can elaborate here. Suffice it to state that *Three Cycles* also is concerned with the hierarchical structure of its teaching, and thus with the Vehicles. The *Authenticity* is not an isolated instance of this combination.
- 79) 72b.3 (Copy in possession of Lopon Tenzin Namdak, n. d., n.p.)
- 80) See 86.4.
- 81) *tha snyad kyi mtshan ma thams cad snang ba ni kun rdzob bo / spros pa'i mtshan ma thams cad nye bar zhi ba ni don dam pa'o /* [86.4-5]
- 82) In the context of this discussion, and at this early period in Bon philosophical reflection, the third category of phenomena known as neither form nor consciousness (*ldan min 'du byed, viprayuktasamkāra*) did not exist. The shape of this argument itself, therefore, can be understood to emerge from a relatively early period in Tibetan philosophical thinking.
- 83) Lopön Tenzin Namdak, (Feb. 1999, 3a) points out that, nevertheless, there are few Dzogchen exponents who explicitly make this distinction; the great Buddhist Dzogchenpa Longchen Rabjam is one. In particular, Longchenpa cites sutras to establish that Buddha taught Dzogchen, and that Madhyamika teachings on emptiness are not the final teachings.
- 84) *rang gi rig pa'i tshad ma ni / phyi nang gsang ba'i man ngag gis nyams don dang mi 'gal bar gdeng du 'gyur ba ste / dus gsum lhun gyi sgom la mi 'bral bar shes pa'o* [53.4-5].
- 85) *Ma rgyud* pp. 8-9. Although this text in general is from the viewpoint of the seventh vehicle, its discussion here is the same in the Great Completeness.

- 86) *Ma rgyud* 9.8ff
- 87) For example, the open awareness experiencing an eye consciousness observing a table has that eye consciousness as its direct object, whereas the table itself is not a direct object.
- 88) *Ma rgyud* 35.13 ff
- 89) *Theg pa'i rim pa mngon du gshad pa'i mdo rgyud (Theg rim) in Bonpo Grub mtha' Material* Reproduced from manuscripts from the bSam-gling Monastery in Dol-po. Published by Lopön Tenzin Namdak, TBMC (Dolanji 1978), 369-385. Samten Karmay in his *Catalogue* lists it as a work attributed to Shen-lha 'od-dkar.
- The great non-sectarian Dzogchenpa rDo-rje gling-pa (1346-1415) considered himself a reincarnation of Vairocana, and Vairocana a reincarnation of gShen-rab's disciple Yid-kyi khye'u-chung and of Buddha's famous cousin-disciple, Ananda (Karmay 1988: 217). 90) These texts occupy a central place in the curriculum of Menri Monastery in exile, at Dolanji.
- 91) Lopön Tenzin Namdak, August, 1997 notes that this genre combines both *gTer* and *sNyan rgyud* – which is to say it is both a discovered text and part of the oral transmission received by Lung-ston lHa-gnyan. See also the biography written by his son, Lung-sgom 'Khor-lo rgyal-po, *Lung ston lha gnyan gyi rnam thar in Sources of a History of Bon*, Compiled and edited by Lopön Tenzin Namdak, TBMC (Dolanji 1972), pp. 276-286
- 92) For a brief survey of works considered to be sources for or important contexts of the *Authenticity* see Klein, "Sources of Knowing in Early Bon Dzogchen: A Speculative Chronology" in the Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies Meeting in Indiana, 1998, forthcoming.
- 93) 513.4. The names of the three students are given later in the text as lHa'i bon-po lHa-bo lha sras, Li-sha thang-po and lHen-than 'phrul-po-che (389.4)
- 94) *Theg rim* 513.3-6
- 95) *Theg rim* 538.5
- 96) 514.4-5
- 97) 514.1-3
- 98) 381.3
- 99) *gzhi nyid ka dag chen po la / lhun grub ngang ldan gtan tshigs gyis/ rang gzhin rol pa ngo bo nyid* [381.2-3]
- 100) Samten Karmay suggests that the term *ka dag* originated in 10th century Tibet, sometime during the period between Glang Dar-ma's assassination in 842 and about 950 (Karmay 1985: 277). As Dr. S. Karmay has also astutely observed, the term *ka tag* does not appear in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* compiled in 814. This raises the question of when and where it became part of Buddhist Dzogchen usage.

If the *Authenticity* were written in the 8th century as is emically claimed, we would have a very simple explanation on hand for the absence of this term. However, given its many references to the nine vehicles of Bon, in order to place the *Authenticity* at this early period we would also have to assume the presence of Nine Vehicle literature in Tibet in the eighth or ninth century. And we may be able to do that.

Based on his study of canonical materials and early doxographical literature, Phillip Stanley has documented the presence, in 8th century Tibet, of translations of all major categories of the Nine Vehicle system (Stanley 1998, *Forms of Buddhism transmitted to Tibet in the eighth to ninth centuries C.E. based on the translation activity and doxographical texts attributed to that period*, paper delivered at the 8th Seminar of the

International Association for Tibetan Studies, Bloomington, Indiana). He has likewise argued convincingly that the Mind Class (*sems sde*) of Buddhist Dzogchen materials likely came to Tibet very soon after their inception in India.

- 101) Discussion of the nine vehicles occurs for example in some of the early Buddhist Tantras.
102) 539.5-6
103) 516.6- 518.5
104) 515.2
105) 518.6)ff.
106) 519.1ff.
107) 521.6-522.
108) *rang rig 'od sal gyi rang bzhin / ngo bo nyid rtag chad kyi mtha' la ma reg pas gnyis su med pa'i rang bzhin / spong sdud kyis mi 'gyur pas ma slad pas / bde ba chen po'i rang bzhin / bon nyid thig le nyag gcig rang bzhin lhun gyis grub pas / 'bras bu gzhan nas mi 'byung ba'i rang bzhin skye med 'od gsal gyi rlabs nam mkha' la nyi ma shar ba ltar byung bas gar yang mi 'gag pa'i rang bzhin / [527.1-4]*
109) See discussion of the Kusali and Pandita systems of training in Klein, "Bon Dzogchen on Authenticity: Prose and Poetry on the Path" 2000 and in forthcoming translation of and introduction to the *Authenticity* by Klein & Wangyal.
110) *ma nges pa yang yin te 'di kho na'i zhes / kun tu bzang po nyid kyis kyang bstan du med pa'i phyir ro / [61.62..1]*
111) *mi gnas mi mthong stong pa phyod dang 'dra / 'di zhes bstan dka'i dgi ma'i rmi lam 'dra / [118.4-5]*
112) *don gyi nying khu rdzogs chen 'di / gcig tu ma nges mang po yin / du mar mi 'dug gcig tu gnas / gcig dang mang po'i tha dad med / med pa nyid kyang med las 'das / 'das zhes ba'i tha snyad ni / gshen rab kyis kyang ma gsungs so / [123.5-6]*
113) *dus gsum lhun gnas man ngag don rtogs na / da lta nyid nas rang sems bon sku'i phyir / lus bral skad gcig ma la kun tu bzang po'i mchog/ bde chen nyid du mngon par sangs gryas so / zhes pas so / [122.3-4]*

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