

[Je Tsongkapa, *Illumination of the True Thought*, folios 75B-76A, 125B-127A, 147B-148B, 174A-174B]

RJE TZONG KHA PA CHEN POS BRTZOMS PA'I DBU MA DGONGS PA RAB GSAL LAS,

The selections are all taken from *Illumination of the True Thought*, written by Lord Tsongkapa:

,GNYIS PA LA GNYIS, GZHAN GYI LUGS BRJOD PA DANG , LUGS DE DGAG PA'O, , DANG PO NI, DE SKAD BSTAN PA YIN DANG SLAR YANG SEMS TZAM PAS RANG GI LUGS BRJOD PA GTZO BOR BYAS PA NYID KYIS RANG GI 'DOD DON 'GRUB PAR BSAMS SHING SMRAS PA,

. . .The second part has two sections of its own: stating the position of the other school, and then denying this position. Here is the first.

This is how the presentation was made. Then those of the Mind-Only School come back, considering and then presenting a position which by itself reflects the primary belief of their entire system.

MIG GI BLO STE RNAM PAR SHES PA SKYE BA'I RANG GI NUS PA BAG CHAGS GANG ZHIG KUN GZHI LA, RNAM SHES GZHAN GYIS RANG 'GAG BZHIN PA NA, DE MA THAG TU 'JOG PAR BYED LA, DE SMIN PA LAS DUS PHYIS SNGA MA DE'I RNAM PA'I RJES SU BYED PA'I MIG GI RNAM SHES SKYE BAR 'GYUR ZHING ,

They speak first of the mental seed, the energy, from which the "mind of the eye" (which refers to the consciousness of the eye) comes forth. Another case of consciousness, as it is in the process of stopping, in the next moment plants this mental seed in the foundation consciousness. When this seed ripens later, it produces that consciousness of the eye, one which takes after the earlier one.

RANG GI STE MIG GI RNAM SHES DE NUS PA'I SKAD CIG BAR MED PA GANG ZHIG LAS SKYE BA'I NUS PA'I SKAD CIG PAR MED PA RTEN DU GYUR PA DE LA, GTI MUG GIS 'JIG RTEN RNAMS DBANG PO GZUGS CAN MIG YIN NO SNYAM DU RTOGS KYI, RNAM SHES LAS THA DAD PA'I MIG DBANG NI YOD PA MIN NO, , DE BZHIN DU DBANG PO GZUGS CAN LHAG MA LA YANG SBYAR BAR BYA'O,

Consider now this energy as it exists immediately before producing the consciousness of the eye related to it; consider the energy which acts as the immediate basis for this eye consciousness. Normal people, out of ignorance, conceive of this as the physical faculty of the eye. In truth though a power of the eye which is something separate from consciousness is something that doesn't even exist. This same explanation applies to all the remaining physical faculties.

,DE LA MIG SHES SKYE BA'I RGYU BAG CHAGS NI DE'I RGYU'I RKYEN
YIN LA, MIG GI DBANG PO NI MIG SHES KYI BDAG PO'I RKYEN NO,

Here the cause behind the consciousness of the eye, the mental seed, is the primary factor behind it. The faculty of the eye is the component of the body that provides a contributing circumstance.

,DIR MIG DBANG MIG SHES KYI DNGOS RGYUR BSTAN PA NI, MIG
SHES SKYE BA'I BAG CHAGS SMIN PA'I SKABS LA DGONGS KYI MIG
DBANG GANG YIN LA MIN NO,

Here when the physical faculty of the eye is presented as the direct cause of the consciousness of the eye, the real intent is to refer to the situation where the mental seed which produces the eye consciousness is ripening. They are not talking here of what we normally think of as the physical faculty of the eye.

,DE YANG DBUS MTHA' LAS, DON DANG SEMS CAN BDAG RNAM RIG,
SNANG BA'I RNAM PAR SHES PA NI, , RAB TU SKYE BO DE DON MED, ,
CES DON GZUGS SOGS DANG , SEMS CAN DBANG PO LNGAR SNANG
BA'I RNAM SHES SKYE'O ZHES GSUNGS PA NI KUN GZHI RNAM SHES
YIN LA SLOB DPON BLO BRTAN GYIS KYANG DBANG PO GZUGS CAN
RNAMS KUN GZHI'I DMIGS PAR BSHAD PAS, SEMS TZAM PA KUN
GZHI KHAS LEN PA RNAMS KYIS KUN GZHI LA DBANG PO GZUGS
CAN DU SNANG BA MIG DBANG SOGS SU 'DOD DO,

Regarding this the text called *Middle and Extremes* states,

The combination of the objects
and the person,
The base consciousness, is a consciousness
that appears;

In reality this is not the being.

Here the word "objects" refers to form and the rest, and "the person" refers to the five faculties; the lines are describing a consciousness that arises and which appears to be them, but which is actually foundation consciousness. Master Stiramati also explains the physical faculties as the object of foundation consciousness. The point then is that those of the Mind-Only School who accept the idea of a foundation consciousness believe that the physical faculties of the eye and so on are actually the condition of the foundation consciousness appearing as the physical faculties.

,RNAME SHES LAS THA DAD PA'I MIG DBANG SOGS MED PAR BSTAN
NAS, GZUGS KYANG RNAME PAR SHES PA LAS DON GZHAN PA MED
PAR BSTAN PA'I PHYIR SMRAS PA, 'JIG RTEN 'DI NA DBANG PO LNGA
LAS BYUNG BA'I RNAME PAR RIG PA LNGA, SNGON PO LA SOGS PA'I
PHYI ROL GYI GZUNG BA MED PAR RNAME SHES RANG GI SA BON
KUN GZHI LA BZHAG PA SMIN PA LAS, SNGO SOGS SU SNANG BA
NYID 'BYUNG BAR MA RTOGS NAS, SKYE BOS SEMS SNGO SOGS SU
SNANG BA LA PHYI ROL GYI GZUNG BAR KHAS LEN PA STE MNGON
PAR ZHEN NO, , DE'I PHYIR RNAME SHES LAS DON GZHAN PA'I PHYI
ROL MED DO,

Once they have demonstrated that there is no such thing as physical faculties of the eye and so on that could ever be anything separate from consciousness itself, then they must show how form as well is nothing other than consciousness. To do this they give the following description. Consider now the five types of consciousness that, according to general belief, arise from the five physical faculties. It is not that there are any outside physical objects such as the color blue and so on which the consciousness has to grasp to. Rather, blue and the rest are only an appearance which occurs through the ripening of the very mental seed which was planted in the foundation consciousness and from which consciousness itself has arisen. Not realizing this fact, people look at the mind appearing as blue or whatever and accept or interpret these appearances as being outer objects.

Selection Two: How the Middle-Way School says the mental seeds of karma work

,GNYSIS PA NI, GAL TE KUN GZHI RNAM SHES KHAS MI LEN KYANG
DGE MI DGE'I BAG CHAGS 'JOG PA DANG , BAG CHAGS DE SMIN PA
LAS 'BRAS BU 'BYUNG BAR 'DOD DGOS TE, 'JUG 'GREL LAS, THOG MA
MED PA'I 'KHOR BAR DNGOS PO'I BAG CHAGS BZHAG PA YONGS SU
SMIN PA, DNGOS PO LA MNGON PAR ZHEN PA, ZHES DANG , DE 'DRA
BA GZHAN YANG MANG DU 'BYUNG BA'I PHYIR RO, , DE YANG BAG
CHAGS 'JOG PA'I GZHI MED PAR MI RUNG BAS GZHI DE GANG YIN
ZHE NA,

Here is the second part [of a different] discussion [about where the
Madhyamika school believes the mental seeds from karma are planted, since
they do not accept the concept of foundation consciousness]. One may begin
with the following question:

Suppose you deny then the existence of a foundation consciousness.
Nonetheless you must accept that mental seeds from virtue or non-
virtue do get planted, and that consequences do arise from the ripening
of these mental seeds. After all, the autocommentary to *Entering the
Middle Way* does state that "For time without beginning, in the suffering
cycle of life, the mental seeds for things have been planted, and have
then ripened, and have then been interpreted by people as the things
themselves." There are as well many other quotations which mention
the same thing. And it would be incorrect to say that there existed no
basis or place where these mental seeds were planted. What then,
according to your view, provides this place for the seeds to be planted?

JI LTAR KUN GZHI RNAM SHES KHAS LEN PA RNAMS KYI LTAR NA,
NYON YID KYIS NGA'O SNYAM DU DMIGS PA'I GZHIR GYUR PA'I KUN
GZHI RNAM SHES BAG CHAGS KYI GNAS SU 'DOD PA DE BZHIN DU
LUGS 'DIS KYANG NGA'O SNYAM PA TZAM GYI BLO LHAN SKYES KYI
DMIGS PA DE NYID BAG CHAGS SGO BA'I GZHIR BZHED DO,

According to those who accept the idea of a foundation consciousness, the
thing called "afflicted mind" focuses on foundation consciousness and holds it
to be "me"; they say that this foundation consciousness then is the place where
the mental seeds stay. In our [Madhyamika] school too we have a similar
concept; we say that the base which is stained with the mental seed is exactly
that thing that you focus on with your simple, natural awareness of yourself
and call "me."

, 'O NA 'JUG 'GREL LAS, SEMS KYI RGYUN BAG CHAGS KYI GZHIR
GSUNGS PA JI LTAR YIN ZHE NA, NGA TZAM DE NYID SEMS RNAM
SHES LA BR TEN NAS BTAGS PA'I RGYUD YIN PAS, SEMS KYI RGYUD
CES KYANG BYA LA, SEMS NYID KYI RIGS 'DRA LA DE'I RGYUD CES PA
LTAR NA, DE YANG RES 'GA' BA'I BAG CHAGS SGO BA'I GZHIR 'GYUR
RO,

One may ask the following:

The autocommentary to *Entering the Middle Way* states that the stream of the mind is the basis where the mental seeds are planted. How does this fit into what you have just said?

The very thing we call the simple "me" is something which results from a label being applied to the *mind*, or consciousness. It also goes on in a *stream*. From this point of view then we can also refer to it as the "stream of the mind." And even if what you mean by a "stream" is the continuation of later, similar instances of mind itself, you can say that it too is the basis which is stained by mental seeds of particular occasions.

, MA RIG PA'I BAG CHAGS KYI TSUL NI, 'JUG 'GREL LAS, GANG GIS
SEMS KYI RGYUD 'GAG PAR BYED CING SGO BAR BYED LA, RJES SU
BGROD PAR BYED PA NI BAG CHAGS TE, NYON MONGS PA'I MUR
THUG PA DANG , GOMS PA DANG RTZA BA DANG BAG CHAGS ZHES
BYA BA NI RNAM GRANGS DAG GO, DE NI ZAG PA MED PA'I LAM
GYIS NYON MONGS PA SPANGS SU ZIN KYANG , NYAN THOS DANG
RANG SANGS RGYAS KYIS SPANG BAR MI NUS TE, TIL MAR DANG ME
TOG LA SOGS PA BSAL DU ZIN KYANG , BUM PA DANG SNAM BU LA
SOGS PA RNAMS LA DE DANG PHRAD PAS YON TAN PHRA MO DMIGS
PA BZHIN NO, , ZHES GSUNGS SO, , DGE MI DGE'I BAG CHAGS LA SOGS
PA'I BAG CHAGS GZHAN LA YANG GZHI GNYIS SU 'GYUR BA JI LTAR
RIGS PAR SBYAR RO,

Here is how the mental seed for ignorance works. The autocommentary to *Entering the Middle Way* says,

That thing which tends to stop, and yet still stain, and then continue on in the flow of the mind is what we refer to as a 'mental seed.' The expressions 'continuity' and 'habit' and 'root' and 'mental seed' for the state of mental affliction all refer to the same thing. This is something

that Listeners and Self-Made "Buddhas" are unable to eliminate even though they may already have eliminated the state of mental affliction itself through using the unstained path. It's similar to what happens with sesame butter or flowers; you may already remove these things from the scene, but the vase in which the flowers were, or the piece of cloth that the butter stained, still retain some subtle trace of them due to the previous contact.

How then could there be any sense to saying that there is another basis, a second one, on top of the one mentioned here, where other types of mental seeds, like those of virtuous deeds and non-virtuous deeds and the rest, are planted?

, 'O NA MTHONG LAM BAR CHAD MED LAM GYI DUS SU DE'I SPANG
BYA MTHONG SPANG MED MOD KYANG , SGOM SPANG GI BAG LA
NYAL YOD DGOS LA, DE'I TSE YID KYI SHES PA NI GNYIS SNANG
'KHRUL PA'I BAG CHAGS KYIS MA BSLAD PA'I ZAG MED YIN PAS, DE'I
NGO BOR BAG LA NYAL DE GNAS PA MI RIGS LA, DBANG SHES
KYANG DE'I RTEN DU MED CING GZUGS KYANG DE'I RTEN DU MI
RIGS LA KUN GZHI YANG MI 'DOD PAS DE'I RTEN MED PAR 'GYUR RO
SNYAM NA, SKYON MED DE DE'I TSE NGA TZAM ZHIG SGOM SPANG
GI BAG LA NYAL GYI RTEN YIN PA'I PHYIR TE, SPANG GNYEN GZHAN
LA YANG DE BZHIN DU SHES PAR BYA'O,

One might wonder about something else:

Let's talk about the period while you are in the "uninterrupted" stage of the path of seeing [the actual direct perception of emptiness]. I can accept that at this point the negative thoughts eliminated by this path are no longer present, but we would have to say that the negative things eliminated by the path of habituation are still there, in a dormant way. At this particular point in time, the consciousness of the mind is unstained, unaffected by the mental seed which causes the mistaken state of mind where the appearance and actuality of things are different from one another. As such none of these things could lie dormant here, due to its very quality at the time. There is no consciousness of the senses that could act as the basis for those mental seeds, and it would be improper to say that physical form could ever provide such a basis either. According to you, moreover, there's no foundation

consciousness. I would have to think then that there is no basis at all where these dormant things could stay.

And yet there is no such problem, for at this point in time it is the simple "me" which is providing the basis for the dormant things eliminated by the path of habituation to stay. You can apply this reasoning as well to all the other cases involving things to be eliminated, and the antidotes which eliminate them.

Selection Three: The Middle-Way School on the question of where the seeds of karma stay until they give their result

,GNYSIS PA NI, DNGOS PO RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA MED PAR 'DOD PA'I PHYOGS LA, KUN GZHI SOGS KHAS MA BLANGS KYANG LAS 'BRAS KYI 'BREL PA 'THAD TSUL JI LTAR YIN ZHE NA,

Here is the second point [of still another discussion]. One may ask the following:

Those who believe that entities have no natural existence [meaning the Madhyamika Prasangika (or Consequence) School] do not accept the concepts of a foundation consciousness and the like; how then is it that they can still assert that all the workings of karma and its consequences are totally right and proper?

LAS DANG DE'I 'BRAS BU'I BAR DU YUN RING POR CHOD PA'I DGE MI DGE'I LAS LAS KYANG , BDE BA DANG SDUG BSNGAL SOGS KYI 'BRAS BU 'BYUNG BA NI RANG GI SDE PA GONG 'OG THAMS CAD 'DOD LA, DE LA LAS DE 'BRAS BU 'BYIN PA'I SNGA LOGS BAR DU GNAS NA NI RTAG PAR 'GYUR LA, RTAG PAS DON BYED PAR MI NUS PAS LAS LAS 'BRAS BU 'BYUNG BA'I 'BREL PA MI 'THAD DO,

All the Buddhist schools, whether higher schools or lower schools, accept the principle that the consequences of pleasure and pain and so on arise from virtuous and non-virtuous karma or actions, even though the original karma and its eventual consequences may be separated by a very long period of time. The problem though is that, if the karma stays around during the entire period up to the point at which it gives its consequence, it would have to be unchanging. An unchanging thing though is incapable of affecting anything,

and so you could never have a relationship where karma gave rise to any consequence.

,LAS DE BYAS PA'I SKAD CIG GNYIS PAR ZHIG NA NI, MTSAMS DE NAS 'BRAS BU DNGOS SU 'BYIN PA'I SNGA LOGS KYI BAR DU LAS DE MED LA, LAS ZHIG PA YANG DNGOS POR MED PAS LAS LAS 'BRAS BU JI LTAR 'BYUNG BAR 'GYUR ZHES BRTZAD PA'I LAN DU,

From the moment after you complete a karma or deed, that deed is finished and gone. During the entire period from that point up to the point at which the consequence actually occurs, the deed no longer exists. A deed which is already gone is no longer a thing that can have any affect on anything. How then does a deed or karma ever produce any kind of consequence? Here is how we explain this problem:

LAS BYAS PA'I SKAD CIG GNYIS PAR 'GAGS ZIN PA'I SNGA LOGS KYI LAS 'GAG PA LA MNGON DU PHYOGS PA'I TSE, LAS KYI NUS PA GZHAG PAR BYA BA'I PHYIR KHA CIG KUN GZHI RNAM PAR SHES PA RTOG PAR BYED LA, KHA CIG BU LON GYI DPANG RGYA STE DE'I YI GE DANG 'DRA BA'I LAS GNYIS LAS DON GZHAN PA, CHUD MI ZA BA ZHES PA LDAN MIN 'DU BYED DU GYUR PA CIG 'DOD DO, , KHA CIG NI LAS GNYIS KYI THOB PA ZHES PA DE GNYIS LAS DON GZHAN DU GYUR PA'I LDAN MIN ZHIG RTOG PAR BYED DO,

Let's consider the deed or karma as it exists up to the point right after the moment in which the deed is completed; that is, let's consider the deed as it approaches its end. The energy of the deed has to be stored somewhere, and so some thinkers have invented the idea of some kind of foundation consciousness for it to stay. Others have said that there is something which is changing but neither mental nor physical, something they call "the fact of not just going away"; they say it is something that exists separately from the two types of deeds [virtue and non-virtue], and that it resembles the document written up for a loan that has to be repaid. Still others have invented the idea that there is another changing thing which is neither mental nor physical, again different from the two kinds of deeds themselves, something they call a "hold."

, KHA CIG NI LAS KYI BAG CHAGS KYIS BSGOS PA'I RNAM SHES KYI RGYUN RTOG PAR BYED LA, DE'I PHYIR LAS 'GAGS KYANG LAS KYIS PHYIS YUN RING PO NAS 'BRAS BU 'BYIN PA MI 'GAL PAR 'DOD DE,

LAS KYIS KUN GZHI LA BAG CHAGS 'JOG PAS BAG CHAGS DE LAS KYI
'BRAS BU YIN LA, DE'I RIGS 'DRA BRGYUD PAS MTHAR 'BRAS BU 'BYIN
PAS DANG PO'I LAS KYI 'BRAS BU BRGYUD PA LAS 'BYUNG BAR 'DOD
PA'O, , DE BZHIN DU GZHAN GSUM LA YANG SHES PAR BYA'O,

Others finally have invented the idea of a stream of consciousness which is stained with the mental seed of the deed. This then is why, they say, that it is no contradiction for the deed to produce its consequence later, even after a very long time. The deed or karma plants a mental seed in the foundation consciousness, and so the mental seed is the result of the deed. This mental seed continues on in a stream of similar forms until eventually it produces the consequence. Thus, they say, the consequence of the original karma is something that is produced indirectly, via a medium. This same type of idea applies to the other three positions expressed.

,DE'I DANG PO NI SEMS TZAM PA 'GA' ZHIG GO, GNYIS PA NI BYE
BRAG TU SMRA BA YIN PAR SPYAN RAS GZIGS BRTUL ZHUGS KYIS
BSHAD DE, KHA CHE BYE BRAG TU SMRA BA LAS GZHAN PA ZHIG
GO, GSUM PA YANG BYE BRAG TU SMRA BA'I NANG TSAN GCIG GO,
BZHI PA LA GSAL KHA MA BYUNG YANG MDZOD 'GREL GYI GNAS
DGU PA DANG BSTUN NA MDO SDE PA DANG KHA CHE BYE BRAG TU
SMRA BA'I YANG 'DOD PA YIN PA 'DRA'O,

The first of these positions belongs to a certain group within the Mind-Only School. The second position is explained by Master Avalokitavrata to be that of the Detailist School—of a certain section other than the Kashmiri Detailists. The third position also belongs to a specific group within the Detailist School. It is not completely clear where the fourth position belongs, but since it is consistent with the ninth chapter of the autocommentary to the *Treasure House of Knowledge (Abhidharmakosha)*, it would appear to be an alternate belief of the Sutrists and the Kashmiri Detailists.

,KHA CHE BAS THOB PA KHAS LEN KYANG THOB BYA'I CHOS LAS
GNYIS KYIS THOB PA SKYED PAR MI 'DOD LA 'DIR NI DE LTAR 'DOD
PA CIG STE GANG GI LTAR NA ZHES PA'I DON NO, , DBU MA THAL
'GYUR BA GANG GI LTAR NA, LAS RANG GI BDAG NYID KYIS MA
SKYES PA DE'I LTAR NA NI, GANG GI PHYIR LAS DE RANG BZHIN GYIS
TE MI 'GAG PA RANG BZHIN GYIS MA 'GAGS PA LAS KYANG 'BRAS BU
'BYUNG BA MI 'GAL BA DE'I PHYIR KUN GZHI SOGS KHAS MA BLANGS
KYANG , LAS LAS 'BRAS BU 'DI 'BYUNG BAR NUS PA'I PHYIR, SEMS

CAN GYI RGYUD LA LAR LAS GNYIS BYAS PA 'GAGS NAS YUN RING
PO BSKAL PA MANG PO LON PA LAS KYANG , LAS LAS 'BRAS BU
YANG DAG PA STE RGYU LA 'BRAS BU MI 'KHRUL BAR 'BYUNG BAR
RIG PAR GYIS SHIG, DE LTAR NA PHYOGS 'DI LA NI LAS DANG 'BRAS
BU'I 'BREL PA CHES SHIN TU 'THAD PAR 'GYUR RO,

Although the Kashmiris do accept the idea of a "hold," they do not assert that a hold could be produced by the two types of karma as something retained by the hold. The position here though belongs to someone who does assert this, and this is the point of the phrase "according to someone." According to someone now of the Madhyamika Consequence school, the deed or karma is not something which arises in and of itself, and so, for this very reason, neither is it something which finishes through any nature of its own. Nonetheless it is no contradiction to say that something which never finishes through any nature of its own can still produce a consequence. As such a consequence can come from a deed even if we never accept the idea of a foundation consciousness or the like.

You must understand then that this is why the two kinds of karma can already have finished in the mental continuum of any given sentient being, and yet still after a long time--even after the passing of many millions of years--these deeds can nonetheless produce their consequences "perfectly," which is to say, without any confusion. [That is, good deeds lead to pleasure, and bad deeds lead to pain, and there is never any case where this law somehow goes wrong, and good deeds lead to pain, or bad deeds to pleasure.]

Given all this, the connection between deeds and their consequences is, in this school, purely and totally correct.

,DE RNAMS KYI DON NI SNGAR BZHIN BRTZAD PA'I LAN SMRA BA PO
BZHI GAS KYANG , LAS LA SKYE BA DANG 'GAG PA RANG GI MTSAN
NYID KYIS GRUB PA KHAS LEN ZHING , LAS BYAS PA'I 'OG TU 'GAGS
PA DE RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PAR 'DOD DO, , DE LA SLOB DPON 'DIS
DE 'DRA BA'I 'GAGS PA YIN KYANG KUN GZHI SOGS KHAS LEN PAS
SKYON MED CES LAN 'DEBS PA MI RIGS TE, RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB
PA'I TSUL GYIS LAS SKYE BA DANG 'GAGS PA MED PA'I PHYIR RO
ZHES 'GOG PA YIN NO,

The point of all this is that all four of the positions above, as they attempt to answer the problem raised, do so from a viewpoint of accepting that a deed

has a beginning that exists by definition and an ending too that exists by definition. They are agreeing as well that the later condition of the deed's having ended is something that exists by definition. The Master [Chandrakirti] is stating that it is improper to answer the problem raised above by saying that, "Even though the ending of the deed is that way, it's no problem, because we believe in foundation consciousness." He is denying all these positions, for the reason that there simply doesn't even exist any beginning or ending of a deed that could occur through any nature of its own.

,LAN 'DEBS TSUL DE NYID 'PHAGS PA'I BZHED PA YIN PAR STON PA
LA, GANG PHYIR LAS NI SKYE BA MED, , 'DI LTAR RANG BZHIN MED
DE'I PHYIR, GANG PHYIR DE NI MA SKYES PA, , DE PHYIR CHUD ZAR
MI 'GYUR RO, , ZHES RTZA SHER GSUNGS PA DRANGS TE, LAS RANG
BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA MED PA'I PHYIR RANG GI BDAG NYID KYIS SKYE
BA MED DO, , DE'I PHYIR LAS RANG BZHIN GYIS 'GAG PA MI SRID PA'I
PHYIR, LAS BYAS PA'I 'OG TU 'GAGS PA

DE RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PAR BZUNG NAS CHUD MI ZA BAR RTOG
PA RIGS PA MIN NO, , ZHES PA'I DON NO,

The Master, to demonstrate how this way of answering reflects exactly the position of the Arya [Nagarjuna], quotes the following statement from the Root Text on Wisdom:

Because the karma never begins,
Because it has no nature of its own,
And since it has never even begun,
Neither then can it simply go away.

The lines are saying that, because there is no such thing as a karma that exists through its own nature, no such karma could ever have a beginning that came in and of itself. Because of this, it is completely impossible for a karma ever to end by any nature of its own. It is illogical to think of the subsequent condition of the deed's having ended and invent some idea of something that can never just go away.

Selection Four: What the Middle-Way School means when it says things are just the results of conceptualization

'DI LA GNYIS, CHOS RNAMS RTOG PA'I DBANG GIS 'JOG TSUL DANG ,
 DE LAS BZLOG STE 'DZIN PA'I BDEN 'DZIN BSTAN PA'O, , DANG PO NI,
 NYE BAR 'KHOR GYIS ZHUS PA LAS, SNA TSOGS YID DGA' ME TOG
 KHA BYE ZHING , , GSER GYI KHANG MCHOG 'BAR BA YID 'ONG BA, ,
 'DI NA DE LA'ANG BYED PA 'GA' MED DE, , DE DAG RTOG PA'I DBANG
 GIS BZHAG PA YIN, , RTOG PA'I DBANG GIS 'JIG RTEN RNAM BRTAGS
 TE, ZHES CHOS RNAMS RTOG PA'I DBANG GIS BZHAG PAR GSUNGS
 TE, CHOS THAMS CAD RTOG PAS BTAGS PA TZAM DANG RTOG PA'I
 DBANG GIS BZHAG PAR GSUNGS PA GZHAN YANG MANG NGO ,

This section [still another one] has two parts to it. First we will show how it is that objects are established through the process of conceptualization, and then describe what it is to grasp to true existence, wherein one holds things as existing in the opposite way. Here is the first.

The *Sutra Requested by Upali* includes the following lines:

A splash of pleasing flowers open their petals,
 Golden palaces blaze in breathtaking beauty;
 Look for their maker, but you'll never find him,
 For all of these are built of conceptions—
 The world is an invention of conceptions.

The verse is describing how objects are established through the process of conceptualization, and there are as well many other statements of the Buddha that describe how every single object in the universe is nothing more than a creation of conceptions.

,RIGS PA DRUG CU PA LAS KYANG , 'JIG RTEN MA RIG RKYEN CAN DU,
 , GANG PHYIR RDZOGS PA'I SANGS RGYAS GSUNGS, , DE YI PHYIR NA
 'JIG RTEN 'DI, , RNAM RTOG YIN ZHES CIS MI 'THAD, , CES GSUNGS PA'I
 DON 'GREL PAR 'JIG RTEN RNAMS RANG GI NGO BOS MA GRUB PA
 RTOG PAS BTAGS PA TZAM DU BSHAD CING ,

The *Sixty Verses on Reasoning* say as well,

The world is something that ignorance causes;
 Why? For the Buddhas say it is so.
 And why then would it be wrong to say

That this world is only conceptions.

The meaning of this verse, according to the commentary, is that none of the many worlds that exist does so through some essence of its own: none of them are anything more than products of our conception.

BRGYA PA LAS KYANG , RTOG PA MED PAR 'DOD CHAGS LA, , SOGS
LA YOD NYID YOD MIN NA, , YANG DAG DON DANG RTOG PA ZHES, ,
BLO DANG LDAN PA SU ZHIG 'DZIN, , ZHES GSUNGS SHING DE'I 'GREL
PA LAS KYANG , RTOG PA YOD PA KHO NAS YOD PA NYID DANG ,
RTOG PA MED PAR YOD PA NYID MED PA DE DAG NI, GOR MA CHAG
PAR THAG PA BSDOGS PA LA BTAGS PA'I SBRUL LTAR RANG GI NGO
BOS MA GRUB PAR NGES SO, , ZHES GSUNGS TE

YANG DAG DON NI RANG GI NGO BOS GRUB PA'O, , RTOG PA NI DE
LA BLTOS TE SKYE BA'O,

The *400 Verses* says as well:

Without conceptions, desire and such
Are nothing that can even exist;
Why then would anyone with a brain
Believe in reality and conception?

The commentary to the work states that—

Things that can't even exist in the absence of conceptions are, beyond any manner of doubt, absolutely things that cannot exist through any essence of their own: they are like a coil of rope you label with "snake."

The expression "reality" here refers to something that could exist through its own essence. "Conception" is the fact that things occur through the process of conceptualization.

, 'GREL PA DER CHAGS SOGS RNAMS THAG PA LA SBRUL DU BTAGS PA
LTAR GSUNGS PA NI MTSAN PA TZAM STE, CHOS GZHAN THAMS CAD
KYANG THAG PA LA SBRUL DU BTAGS PA LTAR RTOG PAS BZHAG PAR
'CHAD PA'O, , DE LA KHRA BO'I MDOG DANG 'KHYIL LUGS SBRUL DANG
'DRA ZHING , YUL MI GSAL BAR SNANG BA NA THAG PA LA 'DI SBRUL
LO SNYAM PA 'BYUNG NGO , , DE'I TSE THAG PA LA THAG PA'I TSOGS PA
DANG CHA SHAS SBRUL GYI MTSAN GZHIR 'JOG RGYU CHUNG ZAD
KYANG MED PAS, DE'I SBRUL NI RTOG PAS BTAGS PA TZAM MO,

When this commentary states that "desire and such" are like a piece of rope labelled "snake," it is only giving a single example; what it means to say is that each and every other existing object is as well like a rope called a snake: they are all established through the process of conceptualization.

Here the colored pattern of the rope and the way it's coiled make it resemble a snake; and if you're in a place where you can't see it very clearly, then you start to think to yourself, "It's a snake!" The fact though is that there is nothing about the rope as a whole, nor anything about its various parts, that you could ever establish as being one kind of a snake; the snake of the rope, then, is nothing but a creation of conceptions.

, DE BZHIN DU PHUNG PO LA BR TEN NAS NGA'O SNYAM PA 'BYUNG BA
NA, PHUNG PO'I STENG NAS SNGA PHYI'I RGYUN GYI TSOGS PA DANG ,
DUS GCIG PA'I TSOGS PA DANG DE'I CHA SHAS DE'I MTSAN GZHIR 'JOG
RGYU CUNG ZAD KYANG MED DE RGYAS PAR 'OG NAS 'CHAD DE,

The same thing happens when you get the idea of "me" about the heaps, the various components to yourself. There is nothing about these components as a whole, when you consider them as a continuum in time, nor as a whole considered in a single moment in time, nor as the various parts to a whole, that you could ever establish as being any kind of "me." We'll go into this in more detail further on.

, DE'I PHYIR DANG PHUNG PO'I CHA DANG CHA CAN LAS NGO BO THA
DAD PA'I DE'I GZHIR 'DZIN RGYU YANG CUNG ZAD KYANG MED PAS,
NGA DE NI RTOG PAS PHUNG PO LA BR TEN NAS BZHAG PA TZAM YIN
GYI, RANG GI NGO BOS GRUB PA MED DO,

Because of this fact, and since moreover there is not the slightest thing outside of the parts or whole of the components to yourself that you could ever consider

any kind of "me," this "me" is nothing more than a creation of conception, based on the components. There is no "me" which exists through any essence of its own.

Selection Five: What the Buddha really meant when He said that things were "mind only"

,RIGS PA DRUG CU PA LAS KYANG , 'JIG RTEN MA RIG RKYEN CAN DU, ,
GANG PHYIR RDZOGS PA'I SANGS RGYAS GSUNG , , DE YI PHYIR NA 'JIG
RTEN 'DI, , RNAM RTOG YIN ZHES CIS MI 'THAD, , MA RIG 'GAGS PAR
GYUR NA NI, , GANG ZHIG 'GAG PAR 'GYUR BA DE, , MI SHES PA LAS
KUN BRTAGS PAR, , JI LTA BUR NA GSAL MI 'GYUR, , ZHES GSUNGS TE,

Now the *Sixty Verses on Reasoning* says,

The world is something that ignorance causes;
Why? For the Buddhas say it is so.
And why then would it be wrong to say
That this world is only conceptions.
If one were to end his ignorance,
Then how is it that the thing that's ended,
Despite our misunderstanding, could never
Disappear, even in conceptions?

RANG GI NGO BO NYID KYIS GRUB NA GNAS LUGS SU GRUB PAR 'GYUR
LA, DE'I TSE 'KHRUL PA LOG PA NA GSAL DU 'GRO DGOS KYI, LDOG PAR
MI 'GYUR RO, , ZHES PA'I DON NO,

The meaning of the lines is as follows. If things existed in their very essence, then they would exist as some independent reality. If this were so, then when you finally stopped your mistaken states of mind, they would never disappear, although they should have.

,SEMS GTZO BO YIN PA DE NYID BSTAN PA'I PHYIR BSHAD PA DE LA
SEMS CAN GYI 'JIG RTEN NI RANG GI SEMS KYIS BSAGS PA'I LAS DANG
NYON MONGS PAS BDAG GI DNGOS PO RNYED PA YIN LA, SNOD KYI 'JIG
RTEN SHIN TU SNA TSOGS PA NI SEMS CAN DE DAG KHO NA'I SEMS

NYID KYIS BSAGS PA'I THUN MANG BA'I LAS KYIS 'GOD PA STE SKYED
DE, RLUNG GI DKYIL 'KHOR NAS 'OG MIN GYI SNOD KYI MTHAR THUG
PA'O,

The mind is the main thing; and to show this, the following explanation appears
in the scripture:

The world, in the form of those who live in it, finds its very being through
the power of the karma they have collected with their minds, and through
the bad thoughts in their minds. All the vast multitude of worlds too, in
the form of the places where these beings live, have been put there, have
been produced, by the collective karma of these same beings, and no one
else—by the karma within their own minds. This refers to everything up
to the farthest reaches of the world, from the great disc of wind that
underpins our planet up to the highest temporary heaven, the one named
"Below No Other."

,DE LA RMA BYA LA SOGS PA'I MDONGS LA SOGS PA SNA TSOGS PA NI,
SEMS CAN DE RNAMS KHO NA'I LAS THUN MONG MA YIN PAS SKYED
PA'O, , PAD MA LA SOGS PA'I 'DAB MA DANG KHA DOG SNA TSOGS PA
NI, SEMS CAN GYI THUN MONG GI LAS KYIS BSKYED PA'O, , DE BZHIN
DU GZHAN LA'ANG SHES PAR BYA'O,

On this subject, the intricate patterns on a peacock and other such objects are
produced by each one's personal karma. The intricacies of the petals and colors
of a lotus flower and other such things are produced by the collective karma of
living beings. You can apply these principles to all other cases as well.

,JI SKAD DU, SEMS CAN LAS KYI DBANG GIS RI, , NAG PO'I DUS SU SKYES
TE DPER, , SEMS DMYAL MTHO RIS 'JIG RTEN DU, , MTSO DANG RIN
CHEN SHING BZHIN NO, , ZHES GSUNGS SO, , 'JIG RTEN GNYIS THUN
MONG GI LAS YIN MIN GNYIS KYIS BSKYED PA NI, SEMS TZAM GYI
GZHUNG DU YANG BSHAD PAS SEMS TZAM GYI LUGS LA'ANG SNOD
KYI 'JIG RTEN MED PA MIN NO,

As the verse goes,

It's through the karma of living beings
That the great dark mountains arise in their time.
It's like the hells, and the heavens above,

And swords, and jewels, and trees in the world.

The great books of the Mind-Only School also discuss whether the two worlds [of beings and the place they live] are produced by karma that is collective or not, and so it's not as though the system of the Mind Only denies the existence of the world where beings live.

,DE LTAR NA 'GRO BA MA LUS PA LAS LAS SKYES PAR GSUNGS SHING ,
SEMS SPANGS NAS NI LAS KYANG YOD PA MA YIN TE SEMS DANG BCAS
PA KHO NAS LAS GSOG PA'I PHYIR NA LAS KYANG SEMS LA BR TEN
PA'O, , DE LTAR NA SA BCU PAR BYED PA PO DANG TSOR BA PO MED PA
ZHES GSUNGS PA LA BR TEN NAS, TZAM GYI SGRAS BYED PA PO GZHAN
'GOG PAR BSTAN LA,

And so it is spoken, that all the living beings of the universe are produced by karma. And if somehow you could stop all minds, then karma itself would cease to be, for it is only through mind and what comes along with it that karma can be collected. Therefore karma itself depends on the mind. So the statement from the *Sutra of the Ten Levels*, where it says that there is no great master of all things, and no great maker of all things, conveys one meaning of the word "only" in the expression "mind-only"; the point is that there is no other creator of things than the mind itself.

YAN LAG BCU GNYIS PO THAMS CAD KYANG SEMS GCIG LA BR TEN PAR
GSUNGS PA LA BR TEN NAS, TZAM GYI SGRAS SEMS GTZO BOR GYUR
PAR BSTAN TE, BSHAD PA SNGA MA DGAG PHYOGS DANG PHYI MA
SGRUB PHYOGS NAS YIN NO, , DE'I PHYIR 'GRO BA RAB TU 'JUG PA LA
SEMS NYID GTZO BO'I RGYU YIN GYI, SEMS LAS GZHAN PA NI GTZO BO'I
RGYU MIN PAS, MDO LAS SEMS TZAM ZHIG GTZO BOR BZHAG GI GZUGS
NI MA YIN NO, , GAL TE GZUGS YOD PAR 'DOD MOD KYI STE KYANG
GZUGS DE LA NI SEMS BZHIN DU 'GRO BA'I BYED PA PO NYID NI YOD PA
MA YIN NO, , DES NA SEMS LAS GZHAN PA'I BYED PA PO BZLOG PA STE
BKAG GI, PHYI ROL GYI GZUGS NI BKAG PA MA YIN NO, ,

It is stated in scripture as well that each and every one of the twelve links in the chain of interdependence depends on a single thing: the mind. These references convey yet another meaning of the word "only" in the expression "mind-only." Here the point is that mind is the main thing. The former scriptural references are putting their point in a negative way, and the latter references are putting their point in a positive way.

Thus we can see that it's the mind which is the one single principal cause that sets all life into motion. The principal cause is not something other than the mind. Therefore when the sutras speak of "mind only," they are making the point that mind is the main thing, and not matter. Although we do of course admit that physical matter exists, this matter is not the one prime creator of sentient beings in the way that mind is.

Therefore all these scriptural references are denying that the opposite of the mind, something other than the mind, could be the creator. They are not though saying that there are no outside physical objects at all