

[The following selection is taken from *An Analysis of the Distinction between the Figurative and the Literal*, a textbook used at Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery for the study of this subject. It was written by Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568), and gives both a good sense of the detail in which the monastic textbooks treat their topics, and also a great deal more information on the three turnings of the wheel in relation to interpreting what the Buddha has stated. Several typical dialectic sections are presented here (from folios 1a-5a of the original text), followed by a brief resolution of the questions raised (from folios 9a-10a). The text that is used is the edition with ACIP electronic catalog number S0011.]

* , , MKHAS GRUB SMRA BA'I KHYU MCHO G DGE 'DUN BSTAN DAR BA
CHEN PO'I GSUNG DRANG NGES RNAM 'BYED KYI MTHA' DPYOD
BZHUGS SO , , , ,

Herein contained is "*An Analysis of the Distinction between the Figurative and the Literal*," a Work by the Illustrious Gendun Tendarwa, Wise One, Accomplished One, and a Great Bull who Walks at the Head of a Vast Herd of Masters of the Dharma

* , , RGYAL BA'I RGYAL TSAB BYAMS MGON CHOS KYI RJE,
, RGYAL SRAS GZHON NU'I LUS 'CHANG 'JAM DPAL DBYANGS,
, RGYAL BA'I SRAS PO KLU GRUB THOGS MED SOGS,
, RGYAL BA YAB SRAS BCAS LA GUS PHYAG 'TSAL , ,

I bow down to the Victorious Buddhas, and bow down too to the
sons they have;
To the Lord of the Dharma, our Loving Protector, the one who
stands in the Victors' place;
To the Victors' son, to Gentle Voice, the glorious one in youthful
form;
To those sons of the Victors, to Nagarjuna, and to Asanga and the
rest.

` , , 'DIR GNYIS PA LUNG GI CHOS 'KHOR GYI DRANG NGES 'GREL TSUL
BYE BRAG TU BSHAD PA LA, SEMS TZAM PA'I LUGS BSHAD PA DANG ,
DBU MA PA'I LUGS BSHAD PA DANG GNYIS LAS , , DANG PO LA GSUM
LAS, DANG PO LA,

Here is the second part [of the traditional presentation on the art of interpretation]: a more detailed treatment of how we comment upon the turning

of the wheel of the Dharma in the sense of the physical teachings; that is, how we decide which teachings were literal, and which were figurative.

This part itself has two divisions: an explanation of the system of the Mind- Only School, and an explanation of the system of the Middle-Way School. The first of these has three sections of its own; here is the first of them.

KHA CIG NA RE, 'KHOR LO GSUM PO DE GCIG CAR DANG RIM CAN
GANG RUNG DU MA BSKOR ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

The wheel of the Dharma was turned three times; but these three
times occurred neither one after the other, nor all at once.

'O NA, 'KHOR LO GSUM PO CIG CAR DANG RIM CAN GANG RUNG DU
MA GRUB PAR THAL, KHYOD KYI DAM BCA' 'THAD PA'I PHYIR,

Well then, are you saying that the three turnings of the wheel are neither
successive nor simultaneous events?

[Why do you say that?]

Because your own assertion is correct.

'DOD MI NUS TE, DE GSUM CIG CAR DANG RIM CAN GANG RUNG GI
DON BYED NUS PA YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree to our original statement: the three turnings of the
wheel are neither successive nor simultaneous events.]

But you can't agree, because they are capable of performing a function either
successively or simultaneously.

MA GRUB NA, DE GSUM PO CHOS CAN, DON BYED NUS STONG YIN PAR
THAL, CIG CAR RIM CAN GANG RUNG GI DON BYED NUS STONG YIN
PA'I PHYIR, RTAGS KHAS,

[It's not true that they are capable of performing a function either successively or simultaneously.]

Suppose you say that it's not true.

Consider these three.

Do they then lack any capacity to perform a function?

Because they lack any capacity to perform a function, whether it be successively, or simultaneously.

[It's not true that they lack any such capacity.]

But you just agreed that it was true.

'DOD MI NUS TE, DON BYED NUS PA YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree that they do lack any capacity to perform a function, whether it be successively, or simultaneously.]

But you can't agree, because they do perform a function.

KHA CIG, STON PAS 'KHOR LO GSUM PO DE CIG CAR DU BSKOR ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

When our Teacher turned the wheel of the Dharma three times, he did so all at once.

'O NA, STON PAS DGE SLONG DAG 'DI NI SDUG BSNGAL 'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA'O, , ZHES SOGS KYI MDO DANG , RGYAS 'BRING BSDUS GSUM DANG , BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS ZHUS KYI LE'U RNAMS CIG CAR DU BSKOR BAR THAL, KHYOD KYI DAM BCA' 'THAD PA'I PHYIR,

Well, is it then the case that our Teacher turned the wheel by teaching each of the following at the same time?

(1) The sutra in which he made those statements that begin with,

"This is the realized truth of suffering";

(2) The long, the medium, and the brief presentations of the perfection of wisdom; and

(3) The "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Named Paramarta Samudgata."

[Why do you say that?]

Because your own assertion is correct.

'DOD MI NUS TE, DGE SLONG DAG 'DI NI SDUG BSNAL 'PHAGS PA'I
BDEN PA'O, , ZHES SOGS KYI MDO STON PA MNGON PAR RDZOGS PAR
SANGS RGYAS PA'I TSUL BSTAN NAS ZHAG BZHI BCU RTZA DGU LON
PA'I RJES SU GSUNGS PA DANG , RGYAS 'BRING BSDUS GSUM STON PA
MNGON PAR RDZOGS PAR SANGS RGYAS BA'I TSUL BSTAN PA'I PHYI DE
LO BYA RGOD PHUNG PO'I RI LA GSUNGS PA SOGS YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree that those three were taught at the same time.]

But you can't agree. The sutra in which Lord Buddha made those statements that begin with "This is the realized truth of suffering" was spoken 49 days after our Teacher pretended to reach his total enlightenment. And the long, the medium, and the brief presentations of the perfection of wisdom—these three—were spoken on Vulture Peak the year after our Teacher pretended to reach this total enlightenment; and so on.

KHA CIG, BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS DANG POR GSUNGS PA'I MDO LA
BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR GYIS KHYAB PA DANG , DUS BAR PAR GSUNGS
PA'I MDO LA MTSAN NYID MED PA'I CHOS 'KHOR GYIS KHYAB PA DANG
, DUS THA MAR GSUNGS PA'I MDO LA LEGS PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR GYIS
KHYAB PA YIN NO ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

Any sutra that the Conqueror spoke during the initial period necessarily belongs to the turning of the wheel where he taught the

four realized truths.

Any sutra that he spoke during the middle period necessarily belongs to the turning of the wheel where he taught that nothing exists by definition.

Any sutra that he spoke during the final period necessarily belongs to the turning of the wheel where he made fine distinctions.

'O NA, BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS DANG POR GSUNGS PA'I MDO LA, DGONGS 'GREL NAS DNGOS SU GSUNGS PA'I BKA' DANG PO BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR SOGS KYIS KHYAB PAR THAL, KHYOD KYI DAM BCA' 'THAD PA'I PHYIR,

Well then, is it the case that—if something is a sutra that the Conqueror spoke during the initial period—it necessarily belongs to the turning of the wheel, as described explicitly in the *Commentary on the True Intent*, where he taught the four realized truths, and so on?

[Why do you say that?]

Because your own assertion is correct.

'DOD MI NUS TE, DGONGS 'GREL NAS DNGOS SU GSUNGS PA'I 'KHOR LO GSUM PO DE DUS TZAM GYI SGO NAS 'JOG PA MA YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[I agree that it is the case that—if something is a sutra that the Conqueror spoke during the initial period—it necessarily belongs to the turning of the wheel, as described explicitly in the *Commentary on the True Intent*, where he taught the four realized truths, and so on.]

But you can't agree, because the times when Lord Buddha turned the wheel of the Dharma, as described in the *Commentary on the True Intent*, are not defined solely on the basis of the period in which they occurred.

KHA CIG, BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS DANG POR GSUNGS PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD LA 'KHOR LO DANG POS KHYAB PA DANG , , DUS BAR

PAR GSUNGS PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD LA 'KHOR LO BAR PAS
KHYAB BA DANG , DUS THA MAR GSUNGS PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD
LA 'KHOR LO THA MAS KHYAB PA YIN NO ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

It is necessarily the case that—

Any of those highest of teachings that the Conqueror
spoke during the initial period belongs to the first
turning of the wheel;

Any of those highest of teachings that he spoke
during the middle period belongs to the middle
turning of the wheel; and

Any of those highest of teachings that he spoke
during the final period belongs to the final turning of
the wheel.

'O NA, BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS DANG POR GSUNGS PA'I MDO YIN
NA, DGONGS 'GREL NAS DNGOS SU GSUNGS PA'I 'KHOR LO DANG PO
YIN PAS KHYAB PAR THAL, BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS DANG POR
GSUNGS PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD LA 'KHOR LO DANG POS KHYAB
PA'I PHYIR,

Well then, is it necessarily the case that, if something is one of the sutras that
Lord Buddha spoke during the initial period, it belongs to the first turning of the
wheel as described explicitly in the *Commentary on the True Intent*?

[Why do you say that?]

Because any of those highest of teachings that the Conqueror spoke during the
initial period necessarily belongs to the first turning of the wheel.

'DOD NA, DGE SLONG DAG SHAM THABS DANG CHOS GOS ZLUM POR
BGO BA LA BSLAB PAR BYA'O, , ZHES PA'I MDO CHOS CAN, DER THAL,
DE'I PHYIR,

Suppose you agree [that it is necessarily the case that, if something is one of the

sutras that Lord Buddha spoke during the initial period, it belongs to the first turning of the wheel as described explicitly in the *Commentary on the True Intent*.]

Consider the sutra where Lord Buddha says, "O monks! You should keep to the rule of wearing a lower robe and upper robe that wrap neatly around your body."

Is it then [a sutra that belongs to the first turning of the wheel]?

[Why do you say that?]

Because it is [one of the sutras that Lord Buddha spoke during the initial period].

'DOD NA, BDEN BZHI GANG YANG RUNG BA DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PAR THAL, 'DOD PA'I PHYIR,

I agree [that the sutra where Lord Buddha says, "O monks! You should keep to the rule of wearing a lower robe and upper robe that wrap neatly around your body" is a sutra that belongs to the first turning of the wheel].

Is it then a sutra which expresses its message by taking, as its principal subject matter, some one or more of the four realized truths?

'DOD MI NUS TE, BSLAB BYA TZAM BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PA'I PHYIR, ,

I agree [that the sutra where Lord Buddha says, "O monks! You should keep to the rule of wearing a lower robe and upper robe that wrap neatly around your body" is a sutra which expresses its message by taking, as its principal subject matter, some one or more of the four realized truths].

But you can't agree, because it is a sutra which expresses only certain rules.

GAL TE RTZA BA'I THAL 'GYUR LA MA KHYAB NA, 'O NA, GZUNGS RGYAL NAS BSHAD PA'I 'KHOR LO DANG PO LA 'KHOR LO DANG POS KHYAB PAR THAL, MA KHYAB PA DE'I PHYIR,

Now suppose you reply "It's not necessarily the case" to our original statement of

necessity; [that is, you reply, "It's not necessarily the case that the sutra where Lord Buddha says, 'O monks! You should keep to the rule of wearing a lower robe and upper robe that wrap neatly around your body' is a sutra which expresses its message by taking, as its principal subject matter, some one or more of the four realized truths"].

Are you saying then that if something belongs to the first turning of the wheel as it is described in the *King of Mystic Words*—it necessarily belongs to the first turning of the wheel?

[Why do you say that?]

Because, according to you, it's not necessarily the case [that the sutra where Lord Buddha says, 'O monks! You should keep to the rule of wearing a lower robe and upper robe that wrap neatly around your body' is a sutra which expresses its message by taking, as its principal subject matter, some one or more of the four realized truths].

'DOD NA, YUM RGYAS PA'I NANG TSAN DU GYUR PA'I GZUGS NI DGRAR YID LA BYA'O, , ZHES SOGS 'KHOR BA LA SKYO BA BSKYED PA'I MDO CHOS CAN, 'KHOR LO DANG PO YIN PAR THAL, GZUNGS RGYAL NAS BSHAD PA'I 'KHOR LO DANG PO YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree that—if something belongs to the first turning of the wheel as it is described in the *King of Mystic Words*—it necessarily belongs to the first turning of the wheel.]

Suppose you do agree.

Consider then the following words of sutra, found in the longer Mother of the Buddhas and meant to inspire disgust for the circle of suffering: "Think of your body as the enemy."

Are you saying then that they belong to the first turning of the wheel?

[Why do you say that?]

Because they do belong to the first turning of the wheel as it is described in the *King of Mystic Words*.

,DER THAL, CHOS CAN DE YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that those words of sutra belong to the first turning of the wheel as it is described in the *King of Mystic Words*.]

But it is so correct, because our example is what it is.

'DOD MI NUS TE, YUM RGYAS PA'I MDO TSIG YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I do agree that these words of sutra belong to the first turning of the wheel as it is described in the *King of Mystic Words*.]

But you can't agree, because they are words of sutra that come from the longer Mother of the Buddhas.

KHA CIG, CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA THEG DMAN GYI RIGS CAN LA GTZO BOR DGONGS NAS GSUNGS PA'I MDO, BKA' DANG PO BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID, CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA THEG CHEN GYI RIGS CAN DBANG RNON LA GTZO BOR DGONGS NAS GSUNGS PA'I MDO, BKA' BAR PA MTSAN NYID MED PA'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID, CHED DU BYA BA'I 'DUL BYA THEG CHEN GYI RIGS CAN DBANG RTUL LA GTZO BOR DGONGS NAS GSUNGS PA'I MDO, BKA' THA MA LEGS PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

The definition of the first stage of teachings, the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught the four realized truths, is: "Those sutras that Lord Buddha spoke intended primarily for a specific type of disciple—for those belonging to the lower way.

The definition of the middle stage of teachings, the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught that nothing exists by definition, is: "Those sutras that Lord Buddha spoke intended primarily for a specific type of disciple—for those belonging to the greater way, and possessed of higher powers."

The definition of the final stage of teachings, the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught the fine distinctions between the three qualities, is: "Those sutras that Lord Buddha spoke intended primarily for a specific type of disciple—for those belonging to the higher way, and possessed of lesser powers."

BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS LNGA SDE LA DGE SLONG DAG SHAM THABS
ZLUM POR BGO BA LA BSLAB PAR BYA'O, , ZHES PA'I MDO CHOS CAN,
MTSON BYA DANG PO DER THAL, MTSAN NYID DANG PO DE'I PHYIR,

Consider then the sutra where the Conqueror says to the Group of Five, "O monks! You should keep to the rule of wearing a lower robe that wraps neatly around your body."

Are you saying that this is an example of what you are defining in the first instance above?

[Why do you say that?]

Because it is an example of something that fits your first definition.

DER THAL, THEG DMAN GYI MDO YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that this sutra is an example of something that fits our first definition.]

It is so, because it is a sutra of the lower way.

'DOD NA, BDEN BZHI GANG YANG RUNG BA DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN
BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PAR THAL, , 'DOD PA'I
PHYIR,

[Then I agree that this sutra is an example of something that fits our first definition.]

Suppose you do agree.

Is this then a sutra which expresses its message by taking, as its principal subject matter, some one or more of the four realized truths?

[Why do you say that?]

Because you agreed.

'DOD MI NUS TE, GONG DU BKAG ZIN PA'I PHYIR,

But you can't agree, because we have already disproved this idea earlier.

GZHAN YANG , BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS
ZHUS KYI LE'U CHOS CAN, MTSAN BYA BAR PA DER THAL, MTSAN NYID
BAR PA DE'I PHYIR,

Consider, as a further example, the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva
Paramarta Samudgata."

Are you saying that this is an example of what you are defining in the middle
instance above?

[Why do you say that?]

Because it is an example of something that fits your middle definition.

DER THAL, DE'I CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA DE THEG CHEN GYI RIGS
CAN DBANG RNON YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that this work is an example of something
that fits our middle definition.]

It is so correct, because the specific disciples which this particular teaching was
meant for were those belonging to the greater way, and possessed of
higher powers.

MA GRUB NA, DE'I CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA CHOS CAN, KHYOD
THEG CHEN GYI RIGS CAN DBANG RNON YIN PAR THAL, KHYOD SEMS
TZAM PA'I RIGS CAN YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that the specific disciples that this particular
teaching was meant for were those belonging to the greater
way, and possessed of higher powers.]

Suppose you say it's not correct.

Consider the specific disciples for whom this teaching was meant.
They are so disciples belonging to the greater way, and possessed of higher
powers,
Because they belong to the Mind-Only School.

MA GRUB NA, BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS
ZHUS KYI LE'U CHOS CAN, KHYOD KYI CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA
SEMS TZAM PA'I RIGS CAN YIN PAR THAL, KHYOD SEMS TZAM PA'I MDO
YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that the specific disciples for whom this work
was meant belong to the Middle-Way School.]

Suppose you say it's not correct.

Consider then the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Paramarta
Samudgata."
The specific disciples for whom this teaching was meant do so belong to the
Mind-Only School,
Because it is a sutra of the Mind-Only School.

RTZA BAR 'DOD MI NUS TE, DKA' THA MA LEGS PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR YIN
PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree to your original statement: the "Chapter Requested by
the Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata" is an example of
what we were defining in the middle instance above.]

But you can't agree, because it belongs to the final stage of teachings, the turning
of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught the fine distinctions.

GZHAN YANG , DE CHOS CAN, MTSAN NYID PHYI MA DER THAL,
MTSON BYA PHYI MA DE'I PHYIR, RTAGS SLA'O, ,

Consider moreover this same thing.
Are you saying that the last of the definitions fits it?
Because it is an example of last thing you were trying to define.

The reasoning here is easy.

KHA CIG, DGONGS 'GREL NAS DNGOS SU GSUNG PA'I 'KHOR LO GSUM
PO DE DUS KYI SGO NAS MI 'JOG ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

The three occasions of the turning of the wheel explicitly described in the *Commentary on the True Intent* are not established according to the period in which they were taught.

DE 'JOG PAR THAL, DGE SLONG DAG 'DI NI SDUG BSNGAL 'PHAGS PA'I
BDEN PA'O, ZHES SOGS KYI MDO 'DI 'KHOR LO DANG POR 'JOG BYED CIG
YOD PA GANG ZHIG, BDEN BZHI DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR
BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PA TZAM GYIS KYANG 'KHOR LO DANG
POR MI 'JOG, STONG NYID DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS
NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PA TZAM GYIS KYANG BKA' BAR PA MTSAN
NYID MED PA'I CHOS 'KHOR DU YANG MI 'JOG PA'I PHYIR,

But they are so established in this way, because:

- (1) there is something which enables us to establish the sutra which includes the line "O monks, this is the realized truth of suffering" as belonging to the first turning of the wheel; and
- (2) it is not the case that we establish something as belonging to the first turning of the wheel solely on the basis of its being a sutra which takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths; and neither is it the case that we establish something as belonging to the middle turning of the wheel, where Lord Buddha taught that nothing exists by definition, solely on the basis of its being a sutra which takes—as the principal subject matter which is express directly—the idea of emptiness.

DANG PO DER THAL, DE 'KHOR LO DANG PO YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Your first reason above is not correct: it's not correct to say that there is something which enables us to establish the sutra which includes the line "O monks, this is the realized truth of suffering" as belonging to the first turning of the wheel.]

Our first reason is so correct, because that sutra is an actual example of the first turning of the wheel.

PHYI MA GNYIS MA GRUB NA, YUM BAR MA'I NANG TSAN DU GYUR PA'I
GZUGS MI RTAG PA NYID DU YID LA BYA'O, , GZUGS STONG PA DANG
BDAG MED PA NYID DU YID LA BYA'O ZHES SOGS KYI MDO TSIG CHOS
CAN, BKA' DANG PO BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR YIN PAR THAL, BDEN
BZHI DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO
YIN PA'I PHYIR, ,

[Then your second reason above is not correct: it's not correct to say that it is not the case that we establish something as belonging to the first turning of the wheel solely on the basis of its being a sutra which takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths; and it is neither the case that we do not establish something as belonging to the middle turning of the wheel solely on the basis of its being a sutra which takes—as the principal subject matter which is express directly—the idea of emptiness.]

Suppose you say that our second reason above is not correct.

Consider the following words of sutra, which are found in the *Medium-Length Mother of the Buddhas*:

Think of physical matter as a thing which is changing, and only changing.
Think of physical matter as a thing which is empty, and only empty; think of it as a thing which cannot exist by itself, and only as something which cannot exist by itself. . .

Do they then belong to the first stage of the teachings, to the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught the four realized truths?

[Why do you say that?]

Because they are words of sutra which take—as the principal subject matter which they express directly—the four realized truths.

DER THAL, MNGON RTOGS RGYAN GYI NANG TSAN DU GYUR PA'I, LAM SHES NYID KYI TSUL LA NI, 'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA BZHI DAG GI, RNAM PA MI DMIGS SGO NAS NI, , NYAN THOS LAM 'DI SHES PAR BYA, , ZHES PA'I GZHUNG 'DI BDEN BZHI DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I BSTAN BCOS YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that these are words of sutra which take—as the principal subject matter which they express directly—the four realized truths.]

It is so correct, because the following words of classical commentary from the *Ornament of Realizations* take—as the principal subject matter which they express directly—the four realized truths:

Understand the way of this knowledge
Of the path as being like the path
Of the listeners, where those four truths
Of the realized are perceived
While seeing their lack of self-existence.

DER THAL, MNGON RTOGS RGYAN GYI NANG TSAN DU GYUR PA'I BDEN BZHI DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I GZHUNG TSIG GCIG YOD PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that these words of classical commentary take—as the principal subject matter which they express directly—the four realized truths.]

It is so correct, because there does exist a section of words that is part of the *Ornament of Realizations* and which takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths.

DER THAL, MNGON RTOGS RGYAN GYIS BDEN BZHI DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that there does exist a section of words that is

part of the *Ornament of Realizations* and which takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths.]

It is so correct, because the *Ornament of Realizations* takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths.

MA KHYAB NA, 'GAL LO, ,

[It doesn't necessarily follow that, if the *Ornament of Realizations* takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths, then there does exist a section of words that is part of this same work and which takes—as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—the four realized truths.]

Suppose you say that it doesn't necessarily follow; that in itself would be a contradiction.

RTZA BAR 'DOD MI NUS TE, YUM BAR MA'I MDO TSIG YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree to your original statement: those words of sutra from the *Medium-Length Mother of the Buddhas* do belong to the first stage of the teachings, to the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught the four realized truths.]

But you can't agree to our original statement,

Because they are words of sutra from the *Medium-Length Mother of the Buddhas*.

GZHAN YANG , BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS
ZHUS KYI LE'U CHOS CAN, BKA' BAR PA MTSAN NYID MED PA'I CHOS
'KHOR YIN PAR THAL, STONG NYID DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO
BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PA'I PHYIR,

Consider, moreover, the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata."

Does it then belong to the middle stage, to the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught that nothing exists by definition?

Because it is a sutra which takes—as the principal subject matter which it

expresses directly—the concept of emptiness.

DER THAL, NGO BO DANG KHYAD PAR LA KUN BTAGS PA'I KUN BTAGS
RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS MA GRUB PA DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I
GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I MDO YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that the "Chapter Requested by the
Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata" is a sutra which takes—
as the principal subject matter which it expresses directly—
the concept of emptiness.]

It is so correct, because it is a sutra which takes, as the principal subject matter
which it expresses directly, the fact that constructs—whether they be
constructs relating to the basic nature of a thing or constructs relating to
some detail of the thing—do not exist by definition.

DER THAL, DES NGO BO DANG KHYAD PAR LA KUN BTAGS PA'I KUN
BTAGS RANG GI MTSAN NYID GYIS MA GRUB PA DE RGYAS 'BRING
BSDUS GSUM LAS CHOS THAMS CAD PHYOGS GCIG TU NGO BO NYID
MED PAR BSTAN PA'I DGONGS GZHIR DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO
BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that the "Chapter Requested by the
Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata" is a sutra which takes, as
the principal subject matter which it expresses directly, the
fact that constructs—whether they be constructs relating to
the basic nature of a thing or constructs relating to some
detail of the thing—do not exist by definition.]

It is so correct, because this is a sutra which takes, as the principal subject matter
which it expresses directly, demonstrating that the fact that constructs—
whether they be constructs relating to the basic nature of a thing or
constructs relating to some detail of the thing—do not exist by definition
is what Lord Buddha's true thought is when he states, in the longer,
medium, and briefer versions of the *Mother of the Buddhas*, that all existing
things are, exclusively, such that they have no nature of their own.

DER THAL, DES RGYAS 'BRING BSDUS GSUM LAS CHOS THAMS CAD
PHYOGS GCIG TU NGO BO NYID MED MNYAM DU GSUNGS PA'I DGONGS
GZHI GCIG DNGOS SU BSTAN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that.]

It is so correct, because that particular sutra does express, in a direct way, some true thought that Lord Buddha had when stated—in the longer, medium, and briefer versions of the *Mother of the Buddhas*—that all existing things are, exclusively, such that they have no nature of their own.

RTZA BAR 'DOD MI NUS TE, BKA' THA MA LEGS PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree to your original statement: it is correct to say that the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata" belongs to the middle stage, to the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught that nothing exists by definition.]

But you can't agree, because it belongs to the final stage of teachings, the turning of the wheel where Lord Buddha taught the fine distinctions.

RANG RES, DGONGS 'GREL NAS DNGOS SU GSUNGS PA'I 'KHOR LO GSUM PO DE DUS DANG , CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA DANG , BRJOD BYA GSUM KA'I SGO NAS 'JOG BYAS PA LA, KHO NA RE,

When we come and state our position that the three turnings of the wheel, as described directly in the *Commentary on the True Thought*, are established by all three criteria—by the period in which they were taught, by the disciples for whom the teaching was meant, and by the subject matter which they treat—then someone else comes and makes the following claim:

DE GSUM PO DUS KYI SGO NAS MI 'JOG PAR THAL, LEGS BSHAD SNYING PO LAS, DGONGS 'GREL NAS 'KHOR LO RIM PA GSUM GSUNGS PA NI 'KHOR GYI 'DU THEBS DANG STON PA'I SKU TSE'I TSIGS LA SOGS PAS 'JOG PA MIN GYI BRJOD BYA'I NGOS NAS YIN NO, , DE YANG BDAG MED PA'I DON GTAN LA 'BEBS PA'I DBANG DU BYAS PA STE, ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,

But isn't it the case that these three are not established by the period in which they were taught?

[Why do you say that?]

Because the *Essence of Eloquence* states the following:

When the *Commentary on the True Intent* speaks of the three stages of the turning of the wheel, it establishes them neither by the circle of disciples which had assembled for the teaching, nor by the period of his life in which the Teacher gave the teaching, nor by the rest; rather, it establishes them through the subject matter of the particular teaching. Now all this relates to setting forth what it means when we say that nothing has any nature of its own ...

ZER NA SKYON MED DE, DE'I DON NI, DUS KHO NA DANG , CHED DU
BYA BA'I GDUL BYA KHO NA DANG , BRJOD BYA KHO NA'I SGO NAS MI
'JOG ZHES PA'I DON YIN PA'I PHYIR,

Yet there is no such problem, because the meaning of that particular section in the *Essence* is to say that these stages are established neither by period alone, nor by the disciple for whom they were meant alone, nor by the subject matter which they treat alone.

DE LTAR MA YIN NA DGONGS 'GREL LAS DNGOS SU GSUNGS PA'I 'KHOR
LO GSUM PO DE DUS KYI SGO NAS 'JOG PAR THAL, LEGS BSHAD SNYING
PO LAS, SHUGS LA GNAS PA'I DON DE NYID DUS KYI RIM PA'I SGO NAS
'KHOR LO GSUM DANG SBYAR BA'I DRANG NGES SU 'GYUR TSUL DON
DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS KYIS STON PA LA ZHUS PA NI, ZHES GSUNGS
PA'I PHYIR,

Suppose this were not the case. Are you saying then that the three turnings of the wheel, as they are described directly in the *Commentary on the True Intent*, are established by the period in which they were taught?

[Why do you say that?]

Because the *Essence of Eloquence* states the following:

This way in which we speak of the three historical turnings of the wheel as being either figurative or literal, this point that we arrive

at through implication from what has come before, is expressed to the Teacher by the bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata in the following words from the *Commentary on the True Intent*...

KHA CIG LEGS BSHAD SNYING PO LAS, DANG POR WA RA nA SER GANG
ZAG GI BDAG MED PA GSUNGS SHING , PHUNG PO LA SOGS PA'I CHOS
LA NYUNG SHAS GCIG MA GTOGS BDEN PAR GRUB PA MA BKAG CING ,
BDEN PAR GRUB PA MANG DU GSUNGS PA'I SKOR GCIG GO, DE NAS
RNAME DBYE MA MDZAD PAR PHUNG SOGS KYI CHOS THAMS CAD
BDEN PAR GRUB PA BKAG BA'I SKOR GCIG GO, ZHES SOGS KYIS THAL
'GYUR BA'I LUGS KYI DRANG NGES 'GREL TSUL GTAN LA 'BEBS PA YIN
NO, , ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

The following section from the *Essence of Eloquence* is setting forth the way in which the Consequence section of the Middle-Way School explains how to decide whether something Lord Buddha taught was literal, or whether it was figurative:

There is one set of teachings where, at the beginning, in Varanasi, Lord Buddha said that the individual had no self-nature; and then denied that something could exist in truth with no more than a very few objects, such as the parts of a person and so on; and then made many statements that something could exist in truth.

There is another set of teachings where he made none of these distinctions, and denied that any existing object, whether it be the parts of a person or anything else, could have any true existence of its own...

DE MI 'THAD PAR THAL, SKABS 'DIR SEMS TZAM PA'I THUN MONG MA
YIN PA'I DRANG NGES 'GREL TSUL GTAN LA 'BEBS PA'I SKABS YIN PA'I
PHYIR,

But that cannot be correct,

Because this is a section where Je Tsongkapa is describing the unique position of the Mind-Only School on how to decide whether something Lord Buddha taught was literal, or whether it was figurative.

KHYAB PA YOD PAR THAL, SEMS TZAM PA'I THUN MONG MA YIN PA'I
DRANG NGES 'GREL TSUL GTAN LA 'BEBS PA'I SKABS SU, THAL 'GYUR
BA'I LUGS KYI DRANG NGES 'GREL TSUL GTAN LA PHAB NA SKABS DON
'CHOL BA'I SKYON YOD PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not necessarily the case that—if this is a section where Je Tsongkapa is describing the unique beliefs of the Mind-Only School on how to decide whether something Lord Buddha taught was literal or figurative—then it cannot be the section where he sets forth how the Consequence group of the Middle-Way School decides this same question.]

But this is so necessarily the case,

Because if Je Tsongkapa were to set forth how the Consequence group decides the question of what is literal and what is figurative in the very same section in which he is setting forth the unique position of Mind-Only School on this same question, then he would be making the mistake of confusing his sections.

KHA CIG, GSUNG DE THAL 'GYUR BA'I DKYUS SHOR BA YIN ZER NA,

Suppose someone counters with the following claim:

In this particular section, Je Tsongkapa has slipped back into the position of the Consequence group.

DE MI 'THAD PAR THAL, DRANG NGES RNAM 'BYED DE RGYAL BA'I
GSUNG RAB LA DPYAD PA DAG PA'I TSUL BSTAN PA'I RJES SU RTZOM PA
GANG ZHIG, RGYAL BA'I GSUNG RAB LA DPYAD PA RDZOGS NAS SHING
RTA CHEN PO RNAMS KYI LUGS 'CHAD PA NA SKABS DON 'CHOL BA MI
SRID PA'I PHYIR,

But that can't be correct, because (1) the *Essence, on How to Distinguish the Literal and the Figurative*, was composed in such a way as to explain how we examine the high word of the victorious Buddhas and come to a conclusion of its total accuracy; whereas (2) it would be impossible for a person to undertake a perfect, exhaustive examination of this high word and then confuse his sections when he got to the part where he explained the positions of the schools of the higher way.

KHA CIG GSUNG DE'I DON NI, GRUB DON DANG PO'I SKABS NAS DNGOS SU BSTAN PA'I BKA' DANG PO BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR DES 'DUS BYAS KYI CHOS THAMS CAD BDEN GRUB TU DNGOS SU BSTAN, 'DUS MA BYAS KYI CHOS THAMS CAD BDEN MED DU DNGOS SU BSTAN PAS DE LA DGONGS PA YIN NO ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

Here is what Je Tsongkapa really intended to say in that particular section of his work. In the first stage of the teachings as it is described explicitly in the first of the outcomes—in the turning of the wheel where he taught the four realized truths—Lord Buddha explicitly expressed the fact that all caused things exist in truth; he also expressed, explicitly, the fact that no thing which is not caused has any true existence.

'O NA, GRUB DON DANG PO'I SKABS NAS DNGOS SU BSTAN PA'I BKA' DANG PO BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR DES, GZUGS GZUGS ZHES PA'I THA SNYAD 'JUG PA'I 'JUG BZHI YIN PA DE BDEN MED DU DNGOS SU BSTAN PAR THAL, DES 'DUS MA BYAS KYI CHOS THAMS CAD BDEN MED DU DNGOS SU BSTAN PA'I PHYIR, RTAGS KHAS,

Well then, is it necessarily the case that in the first stage of the teachings as it is described explicitly in the first of the outcomes—in the turning of the wheel where he taught the four realized truths—Lord Buddha explicitly expressed the fact that the fact that physical matter is what the term "physical matter" refers to was something that had no true existence?

[Why do you say that?]

Because, according to you, he expressed—explicitly—the fact that no thing which

is not caused has any true existence.

'DOD NA, DES RANG GI CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA MDO SDE PA LA
DE LTAR BSTAN PAR THAL, 'DOD PA DE'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree that it is necessarily the case that in the first stage of the teachings as it is described explicitly in the first of the outcomes—in the turning of the wheel where he taught the four realized truths—Lord Buddha explicitly expressed the fact that the fact that physical matter is what the term "physical matter" refers to was something that had no true existence]

Suppose you do agree.

Is it then the case that Lord Buddha described things this way directing his explanation to specific disciples—to those who were members of the Sutrists school?

[Why do you say that?]

Because you agreed.

'DOD NA, DE'I CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA MDO SDE PAS DE BDEN
MED DU 'DOD PAR THAL, 'DOD PA'I PHYIR,

[Then I agree that Lord Buddha did describe things this way directing his explanation to specific disciples—to those who were members of the Sutrists school.]

Suppose you do agree.

Is it then the case that the disciples to whom this explanation was supposedly directed—the Sutrists—believe that this fact is something that has no true existence?

'DOD MI NUS TE, DES DE BDEN GRUB TU 'DOD PA'I PHYIR,

[I agree that the disciples to whom this explanation was directed—the Sutrists—do believe that this fact is something that has

no true existence.]

But you can't agree, because they believe that this fact is something that does have true existence.

DER THAL, DES GZUGS GZUGS ZHES PA'I THA SNYAD 'JUG PA'I 'JUG GZHIR RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS GRUB PAR 'DOD PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that the Sutrists believe that this fact is something that has true existence.]

It is so correct, because they believe that the fact that physical form is what the term "physical form" refers to exists by definition.

DER THAL, LEGS BSHAD SNYING PO LAS, DE'I PHYIR 'DI'I BZLOG PHYOGS KYI SGRO 'DOGS NGO BO DANG KHYAD PAR DU MING GIS BTAGS PA DER GZUGS SOGS RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS GRUB PAR 'DZIN PA'I GRUB MTHA'I KHAS LEN KYANG NYAN THOS SDEE PA LA YOD DO, ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that the Sutrists believe that the fact that physical form is what the term "physical form" refers to exists by definition.]

It is so correct, because the *Essence of Eloquence* itself states,

Therefore this same belief exists among those of the Listener groups as well; an idea which is the opposite of that other one, an idea that attributes a quality which is not in actuality there: which says that what are actually only constructed to be the primary form and various expressions of physical matter and the rest exist as such by definition.

KHA CIG, BDAG MED PHRA RAGS GSUM PO GANG RUNG MI STON PA'I MDO RNAMS DRANG NGES 'BYED PA'I GZHIR MI RUNG ZER NA,

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

No sutra which fails to teach some one or more of the three degrees of a lack of self-nature could ever serve as one of those teachings that we examine to see if it is literal or figurative.

DE RUNG BAR THAL, DE BLO GROS MI ZAD PA'I MDO LAS GSUNGS PA'I DRANG NGES 'BYED PA'I GZHIR RUNG BA'I PHYIR,

But a sutra that failed to teach this subject could so serve as one of these types of teachings,

Because it could serve as one of these types of teachings as they are described in the *Sutra Requested by Never-Ending Wisdom*.

DER THAL, DE DAG BLO GROS MI ZAD PA'I MDO LAS GSUNGS PA'I DRANG DON GYI MDO YIN PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that it could serve as one of these types of teachings as they are described in the *Sutra of Never-Ending Wisdom*.]

It is so correct, because these types of teachings are sutras which are described in the *Sutra of Never-Ending Wisdom* as being figurative.

DER THAL, BLO GROS MI ZAD PA'I MDO DES, DON DAM BDEN PA DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS MI STON PA'I MDO RNAMS DRANG DON GYI MDOR GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,

[It's not correct to say that these types of teachings are sutras which are described in the *Sutra of Never-Ending Wisdom* as being figurative.]

It is so correct, because the *Sutra of Never-Ending Wisdom* states that sutras which do not express their message by taking—as the principal subject matter which they describe explicitly—ultimate truth are figurative.

We now jump ahead to the position our own school holds on these questions:

GNYIS PA RANG GI LUGS BZHAG PA LA, BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS

DANG POR CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA THEG DMAN GYI RIGS CAN LA
GTZO BOR DGONGS NAS BDEN BZHI DNGOS BSTAN BSTAN BYA'I GTZO
BOR BYAS NAS STON PA'I THEG DMAN GYI MDO, BKA' DANG PO BDEN
BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID,

Here secondly is the position held by our own school. The definition of the first stage of the teachings, the turning of the wheel of the Dharma where Lord Buddha taught the four realized truths, is:

Those sutras of the lower way which were taught during the initial period, and in which the Conqueror expressed his message by taking—as the principal subject matter which he described explicitly—the four realized truths, intending the teaching for specific disciples belonging to the lower way.

MTSAN GZHI NI, DGE SLONG DAG 'DI NI SDUG BSNAL 'PHAGS PA'I
BDEN PA'O, , 'DI NI KUN 'BYUNG 'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA'O, , 'DI NI 'GOG PA
'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA'O, , 'DI NI LAM 'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA'O, ,

A prime example of this turning of the wheel would be something like the following words of sutra:

O monks, this is the realized truth of suffering. This is the realized truth of the source of suffering. This is the realized truth of the end of suffering. This is the realized truth of the path to the end of suffering.

SDUG BSNAL SHES PAR BYA, KUN 'BYUNG SPANG BAR BYA, 'GOG PA
MNGON DU BYA, LAM BSGOM PAR BYA,

Suffering is something you have to become aware is happening. The source is something you have to eliminate. The end is something you have to bring about. The path is something you have to practice.

SDUG BSNAL SHES PAR BYA, SLAR YANG SHES PAR BYAR MED, KUN
'BYUNG SPANG BAR BYA, SLAR YANG SPANG BAR BYAR MED, 'GOG PA
MNGON DU BYA, SLAR YANG MNGON DU BYAR MED, LAM BSGOM PAR
BYA, SLAR YANG BSGOM PAR BYAR MED, ZHES PA'I MDO LTA BU YIN,

Suffering is something you have to be aware is happening; then there will be nothing left to be aware of. The source is something you have to eliminate; then there will be nothing left to eliminate. The end is something you have to bring about; then there will be nothing left to bring about. The path is something you have to practice; then there will be nothing left to practice.

BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS BAR PAR CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA
THEG CHEN GYI RIGS CAN DBANG RNON LA STONG NYID PHRA MO
BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I THEG CHEN GYI MDO,
BKA' BAR PA MTSAN NYID MED PA'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID,

The definition of the middle stage of the teachings, the turning of the wheel of the Dharma where Lord Buddha taught that nothing exists by definition, is:

Those sutras of the higher way which were taught during the middle period, and in which the Conqueror expressed his message by taking—as the principal subject matter which he described—the subtle object of emptiness, intending the teaching for specific disciples belonging to the higher way, and possessed of higher powers.

MTSAN GZHI NI, RGYAS 'BRING BSDUS GSUM DANG , SDUD PA SHES RAB
SNYING PO DANG BCAS PA YIN,

A prime example of this turning of the wheel would be the longer, medium, and briefer versions of the *Mother of the Buddhas*; their abbreviation; and the *Heart of Wisdom*.

BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS DUS THA MAR CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA
THEG CHEN GYI RIGS CAN LA CHOS KYI BDAG MED PHRA RAGS CI RIGS
BSTAN BYA'I GTZO BOR BYAS NAS BSTAN PA'I THEG CHEN GYI MDO, ,
BKA' THA MA LEGS PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID,

Those sutras of the higher way which were taught during the final period, and in which the Conqueror expressed his message by taking—as the principal subject matter which he described—either the subtle form of a lack of a self-nature to objects, the grosser form, or both, intending the teaching for specific disciples belonging to the higher way.

MTSAN GZHI NI, BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS
ZHUS KYI LE'U DANG , DGONGS 'GREL GYI BYAMS ZHUS KYI LE'U'I
NANG TSAN DU GYUR PA'I BYAMS PA TING NGE 'DZIN GYI SPYOD YUL
GYI GZUGS BRNYAN, ZHES SOGS KYI MDO LTA BU YIN,

A prime example of this turning of the wheel would be sutras such as the
"Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata"; the section of the
"Chapter Requested by Maitreya" from the *Commentary on the True Intent* known
as "Maitreya and the Reflection in which Single-Pointed Concentration Plays."

DE DAG NI GO BA GTZO BOR BYAS PA YIN LA, TSIG SKYON BCAD DE
ZHIB PAR SMRAS NA 'KHOR LO GSUM PO GANG RUNG DU GYUR PA'I
THEG DMAN GYI MDO, BKA' DANG PO BDEN BZHI'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI
MTSAN NYID,

The above are, by the way, only primary descriptions; if one were to eliminate all
the problematic wording in them carefully, then the definition of the first stage of
the teachings, the turning of the wheel of the Dharma where Lord Buddha taught
the four realized truths, would be:

A sutra of the lower way, whichever of the three turnings of the
wheel it belongs to.

DGONGS 'GREL NAS GSUNGS PA'I 'KHOR LO GSUM PO GANG RUNG
GANG ZHIG, CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA'
DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS ZHUS KYI LE'U LTA BUS 'KHOR LO BAR
PA'I DGONGS PA BKRAL BA LA LTOS MI DGOS PA'I THEG CHEN GYI RIGS
CAN LA GTZO BOR DGONGS NAS GSUNGS PA'I MDO, BKA' BAR PA
MTSAN NYID MED PA'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID,

The definition of the middle stage of the teachings, the turning of the wheel of
the Dharma where Lord Buddha taught that nothing exists by definition, would
be:

A sutra that (1) belongs to some one of the three turnings of the
wheel as described in the *Commentary on the True Intent*, and which
(2) was intended primarily for disciples belonging to the greater
way, but of the kind who did not require a re-interpretation of the
middle turning of the wheel through some teaching like the

"Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Parmarta Samudgata."

DGONGS 'GREL NAS GSUNGS PA'I 'KHOR LO GSUM PO GANG RUNG
GANG ZHIG, CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA'
DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS ZHUS KYI LE'U LTA BUS 'KHOR LO BAR
PA'I DGONGS PA BKRAL BA LA LTOS DGOS PA'I THEG CHEN GYI RIGS
CAN LA GTZO BOR DGONGS NAS GSUNGS PA'I MDO, BKA' THA MA LEGS
PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI MTSAN NYID, MTSAN GZHI NI SNGAR LTAR
YIN,

The definition of the final stage of the teachings, the turning of the wheel of the Dharma where the fine distinctions were made, would then be:

A sutra that (1) belongs to some one of the three turnings of the wheel as described in the *Commentary on the True Intent*, and which (2) was intended primarily for disciples belonging to the greater way, and of the kind who did require a re-interpretation of the middle turning of the wheel through some teaching like the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Parmarta Samudgata."

Prime examples would be the same as above.

BKA' THA MA LEGS PHYE'I CHOS 'KHOR GYI CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL
BYA DE LA THEG PA THAMS CAD LA YANG DAG PAR ZHUGS PA ZHES
'CHAD PA'I RGYU MTSAN YOD DE, 'KHOR LO DANG PO'I CHED DU BYA
BA'I GDUL BYA DES 'KHOR LO DANG POS BSTAN TSOD KYI GANG ZAG GI
BDAG MED KYI DBANG DU BYAS PA'I MTSAN NYID GSUM GYI RNAM
BZHAG TZAM ZHIG GO BAR NUS, 'KHOR LO BAR PA'I BRJOD BYAR GYUR
PA'I CHOS KYI BDAG MED KYI DBANG DU BYAS PA'I MTSAN NYID GSUM
GYI RNAM BZHAG GO MI NUS,

Now there is a reason why the sutra says that the specific disciples for whom the final stage of the teachings, the turning of the wheel of the Dharma where fine distinctions were made, were "those who had entered, perfectly, every one of the different ways." The point is that the specific disciples for whom the first wheel was turned are capable only of grasping the system of the three attributes with regard to the version of the lack of a self-nature of persons that was presented during the first turning of the wheel. They are not capable of grasping the system of the three attributes with regard to the lack of a self-nature of objects treated by the middle turning of the wheel.

'KHOR LO BAR PA'I CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA DES MDO GZHAN GYIS
'KHOR LO BAR PA'I DGONGS PA BKRAL BA LA MA LTOS PAR 'KHOR LO
BAR PA'I BRJOD BYAR GYUR PA'I CHOS KYI BDAG MED KYI DBANG DU
BYAS PA'I MTSAN NYID GSUM GYI RNAM BZHAG GO NUS,

Specific disciples for whom the middle wheel was turned are capable of grasping the system of the three attributes with regard to the lack of a self-nature of objects treated by the middle turning of the wheel with requiring any re-interpretation of this middle turning by any other sutra.

'KHOR LO THA MA'I CHED DU BYA BA'I GDUL BYA DES BYANG CHUB
SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS ZHUS KYI LE'U LTA BUS 'KHOR
LO BAR PA'I DGONGS PA MA BKRAL BAR 'KHOR LO BAR PA'I BRJOD
BYAR GYUR PA'I CHOS KYI BDAG MED KYI DBANG DU BYAS PA'I MTSAN
NYID GSUM GYI RNAM BZHAG GO BAR MI NUS,

Specific disciples for whom the final wheel was turned are not capable of grasping the system of the three attributes with regard to the lack of a self-nature of objects treated by the middle turning of the wheel without a re-interpretation of this middle turning of the wheel through some teaching like the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata."

BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DON DAM YANG DAG 'PHAGS ZHUS KYI LE'U
LTA BUS 'KHOR LO BAR PA'I DGONGS PA DNGOS SU BKRAL BA LA
BR TEN NAS 'KHOR LO BAR PA'I BRJOD BYAR GYUR PA'I CHOS KYI BDAG
MED KYI DBANG DU BYAS PA'I MTSAN NYID GSUM GYI RNAM BZHAG
DNGOS SU GO BA'I SHUGS LA, 'KHOR LO DANG PO'I BRJOD BYAR GYUR
PA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED KYI DBANG DU BYAS PA'I MTSAN NYID
GSUM GYI RNAM BZHAG GO BAR 'GYUR BA'I GDUL BYA ZHIG YIN PA'I
RGYU MTSAN GYIS DE LTAR BSHAD PA'I PHYIR,

When we say that they "are immediately capable of grasping the system of the three attributes with regard to the lack of a self-nature of objects treated by the middle turning of the wheel if they do rely on a re-interpretation of this middle turning of the wheel through some teaching like the "Chapter Requested by the Bodhisattva Paramarta Samudgata," the implication is that they are already a disciple who understands the system of the three attributes with regard to the lack of a self-nature of the person presented during the first turning of the wheel. And this is why the sutra speaks of those of "every one of the different ways."

