

REVIEW ARTICLE

The Process of Analytical Reasoning according to Tsong-kha-pa¹

YOTSUYA, K.: *The Critique of Svatantra Reasoning by Candrakīrti and Tsong-kha-pa. A Study of Philosophical Proof according to Two Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka Traditions of India and Tibet.* Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 1999. (Tibetan and Indo-Tibetan Studies 8.) XVII + 199 pp.

It is already a widely known fact that the strict division of the Madhyamaka system into **Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka* (*dbu-ma thal-'gyur-ba*) and **Svātantrika-Madhyamaka* (*dbu-ma rang-rgyud-pa*) branches was introduced not by Indian but Tibetan interpreters as a means to arrange the views of the Mādhyamika masters for themselves, and thus to clarify the differences between them. The differing features of the *prāsaṅga*- and *svatantra*-type reasoning and the subtle differences in the philosophical standpoints embodied in them may have started to be realised by the Tibetan scholars only about the second half of the 11th century, when Pa-tshab nyi-ma-grags (1055–1145?) collaborating with

Mahāsumati² translated Candrakīrti's (7th c.) *Prasannapadā* into Tibetan. In the first place it is the knowledge of Candrakīrti's criticism of Bhāvaviveka's (6th c.) svatantra-reasoning advanced in the *Prasannapadā*, his commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ* that may have motivated the Tibetans to form the terms *Rang-rgyud-pa* and *Thal-'gyur-ba*.

As concerns the differences between these two kinds of Mādhyamikas, they are variously treated by the Tibetan interpreters, some heavily emphasising them also from the philosophical point of view, others even totally neglecting them. From among the former ones the most prominent and influential person was Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa (1357–1419) who minutely analysed Candrakīrti's criticism of svatantra-reasoning incorporated in the 1st chapter of *Prasannapadā*, and substantiated the view that the *Prāsaṅgika-Svātantrika* methodological differences are rooted in differing ontological and epistemological assumptions. On the basis of his interpretation Bhāvaviveka and the other *Svātantrika-Mādhyamikas* have come to be regarded as some quasi-Substantialists (*dn̄gos-*

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² On the Indian and Tibetan translators of Candrakīrti's works into Tibetan, see e.g. Fehér (1984, pp. 218–219) and Ruegg (2000, pp. 9–22).

por *smra-ba*, *bhāvavādin/vastuvādin*) by several Tibetan scholars.

Yotsuya's book is a revised version of his Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Hamburg in 1993, which was in turn a further elaboration of the subject treated by him in a former paper (Yotsuya 1992). Though in the present work Yotsuya uses only the scholarly results published until 1993, and several new contributions have come out also since the publication of the present volume (1999),³ his book written with the greatest philosophical and philological accuracy has remained indispensable in the field of Indo-Tibetan Madhyamaka studies. Despite the numerous publications related to the topic, there have still remained several problematic questions to be answered. To arrive at a satisfactory solution it is necessary that the statements of Tsong-kha-pa should be constantly re-evaluated on the basis of the comparative studies of his writings. A piece of this kind of comparative research work has been carried out with great success by Yotsuya. His writing, being full of highly difficult issues, is recommended exclusively for the specialists.

Yotsuya's main aim is to investigate Candrakīrti's criticism of svatantra-reasoning as presented in the *Prasannapadā* (Chapter 4), and to clear up how Tsong-kha-pa interpreted, developed and altered Candrakīrti's arguments in *Lam-rim chen-mo* and *Legs-bshad snying-po* (Chapters 5–6). Before the close analysis and comparison of the relevant passages in these texts, Yotsuya gives a very accurate introduc-

tion (pp. xi–xvii) to his work, and then proceeds to examine those characteristic ideas of Tsong-kha-pa that basically determined his special interpretation of Bhāvaviveka's and Candrakīrti's statements (Chapters 1–3). Finally (Chapter 7), we get a clear-cut synopsis of Candrakīrti's and Tsong-kha-pa's discussions treated in Chapters 4–6, so we can easily survey and compare the structure (the proponents, the opponents, the viewpoints and the arguments) of their reasonings. The book is equipped with a list of the cited primary and secondary sources and an index. Beside the most important terms in English, the index also contains entries of the translated primary sources, indicating the page number where their translation appears in the book.

Yotsuya's method of treatment is highly precise all along the volume: nothing is said without referring to the adequate source material. On investigating a given topic he step by step (often sentence by sentence) analyses, compares and evaluates the relevant Sanskrit and Tibetan sources simultaneously providing us with their critical edition and literal translation, too. His footnotes contain further important translations and interpretations of related material, detailed references to secondary sources and valuable observations. His notes also intend to improve the already available translations of the source material, such as for example the translations of E. Napper (1989) and R. A. F. Thurman (1984). The structure of the book imitates the thematic divisions of the Tibetan treatises: the chapters are divided into thematic units having further and further sub-sections marked by Arabic numerals. This solution is very helpful in the first three chapters, but in Chapters 4–6 it is hard enough to find our way among the several sub-topics on the basis of the Arabic numerals. As Tsong-kha-pa himself mentioned, the subject of svatantra-reasoning is one of the most difficult ones, so it would have been more useful to render the units of thoughts more conspicuous in some other way. Or, the author could have provided us with a separate list of all the sections together with their topics (*sa-bcad*), as well. Apart from this unfortunate formal solution the book has an exceedingly

³ The related secondary materials published since 1999 being too many in number, I am to mention here only two outstanding publications. One of them is the volume edited by G. B. J. Dreyfus and S. L. McClintock (2003), which contains articles of eminent scholars specialised in Mādhyamika studies. The volume was prepared with the specific aim of clarifying issues concerning the *Prāsaṅgika* and *Svātantrika* systems. The other work that is closely related to the subject of Yotsuya's book is a new, annotated translation of chapter 1 of *Prasannapadā*, made by D. S. Ruegg (2002, pp. 1–135).

clear, “nicely woven” logical structure: before starting the analysis of a given topic the author always clearly determines his aims and summarises his most essential conclusions at the end of each chapter or section.

In this paper, I will concentrate on Chapter 1 of Yotsuya’s book entitled *Tsong kha pa’s Unique Understanding of Selflessness* discussing its issues at a greater length. I have chosen to review this particular chapter more thoroughly on due consideration. Though, as far as I know, there has appeared no review proper on the present volume with the exception of one written in Japanese, an excellent article was published by Chizuko Yoshimizu (2003), in which, among others, she concisely surveyed the topics that Yotsuya investigates in minute detail in Chapters 2–7 of our present volume. In her paper Yoshimizu, greatly relying on Yotsuya’s detailed investigation, re-examined Tsong-kha-pa’s interpretation of svatantra-reasoning and Candrakīrti’s arguments against it, and at the same time she critically corrected Yotsuya’s misinterpretations. It is only the subject matter of the first chapter that she did not touch upon at all.

Chapter 1, where Yotsuya depicts Tsong-kha-pa’s unique understanding of selflessness and delineates the cardinal points of his philosophy is of utmost importance, since here the author also elucidates the sense of those statements of Tsong-kha-pa which throw light on what he considered to be the correct mental process of analytical reasoning (*rigs-pa dri-ma med-pa* or *de-kho-na-nyid dpyod-pa’i rigs-pa* or *rigs-shes*). My aim is to clarify some ambiguous or seemingly contradictory points in the matter, and to make a few suggestions about how to interpret the most decisive terms related to the subject. Meanwhile, I cannot but dwell on some well-known notions, too.

First of all one must be fully aware how Tsong-kha-pa interpreted the philosophical “middle” (*dbu-ma, madhyama*), in what manner he has created the balance between the sound conventional world (*kun-rdzob/tha-snyad, sam-vṛti/vyavahāra*) and the ultimate reality (*don-dam-pa, paramārtha*). He stresses that in order

to avoid the extreme of existence (*yod-mtha’, astitānta*) and the extreme of non-existence (*med-mtha’, nāstitānta*) one must carefully distinguish existence through self-nature (*rang-bzhin-gyis yod-pa, svabhāvena-astitā*) from mere existence (*yod-pa-tsam*), and total non-existence (*ye-med*) or non-existence through self-nature (*rang-bzhin med, svabhāvena-nāstitā*) from mere non-existence (*med-pa-tsam*). While existence through self-nature, i.e. hypostatized existence and total non-existence are the neganda (*dgag-bya, pratiśedhya*) of the cognition arising from analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes*), mere existence and mere non-existence (i.e. the sound conventional world) are not objects to be negated by the same analytical reasoning (p. 4). Analytical reasoning is not concerned with merely conventionally existent worldly phenomena, since they do not come within the range of its investigation, they fall out of its sphere of authority. It is only hypostatized existence, existence through self-nature that is, and can be investigated and negated by it (pp. 8–9). Thus, the successfully functioning everyday world being established by conventional cognition (*tha-snyad-kyi shes-pa*) remains untouched by it and the extreme of (total) non-existence is avoided.

Yotsuya systematically explores the most decisive elements of Tsong-kha-pa’s special interpretation of the negation of the self firmly relying on *Lam-rim chen-mo, Legs-bshad snying-po* and *Rigs-pa’i rgya-mtsho*. First he emphatically deals with the analysis of three essential phrases used by Tsong-kha-pa in *Lam-rim chen-mo* and *Rigs-pa’i rgya-mtsho* (pp. 8–15) and makes remarkable observations. The question is whether the statements (1) “X is found by analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes-kyis rnyed-pa*)”, or with other words “X is established by analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes-kyis ’grub-pa*)” and (2) “X can withstand analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes-kyis dpyad-bzod*)” have the same meaning, or not. On giving a very precise account of the most essential cognitive moments of the process of the analytical reasoning reconstructed on the basis of Tsong-kha-pa’s arguments (pp. 13–14), Yotsuya thinks that Tsong-

kha-pa was inconsistent (p. 12), since he spoke of the synonymy of the given terms in *Lam-rim chen-mo*, but in *Rigs-pa rgya-mtsho* we find him to say that phrases (1) and (2) have different meanings.

As for me, I do not see any inconsistency, since it is the context, more precisely the object of the analytical reasoning that is decisive in the matter. The object of the investigation by analytical reasoning is always true existence (*bden-pa*, *bden-par yod-pa*, *yang-dag-par yod-pa*, etc.), or existence through self-nature (*rang-bzhin-gyis yod-pa*), may it be the true existence of X, or the true existence of X's non-existence (or the true existence of X's absence).⁴ Neither of them withstands analytical reasoning, and neither of them can be found or established. So, in both these cases the three terms have the same meaning as Tsong-kha-pa mentioned in *Lam-rim chen-mo*. Yotsuya rightly points out that there are two distinct processes during the investigation of analytical reasoning, but he distinguishes the former process from the latter one from the viewpoint whether (1) X can be found by analytical reasoning, or (2) X can withstand analytical reasoning. I think it is better to distinguish the two processes from a different angle, since the correct order of the investigation being determined by its dissimilar objects is more important. Namely, it is the true existence of X that is investigated first, and only thereafter comes the investigation of the true existence of X's non-existence / absence. These two processes are like point and counter-point, with which both the extreme of existence and the unique extreme of non-existence are avoided. When one examines whether the true existence of X can be found by analytical reasoning, or not, one does nothing else but examines whether the true existence of X can withstand analytical reasoning, or not. These two mental processes cannot be separated from each other just because of the difference of phraseology.

⁴ Mere X, or the mere existence of X is not investigated being not the object of analytical reasoning.

However, the solution is not so simple. In the passage cited by Yotsuya from *Rigs-pa'i rgya-mtsho* (p. 13) Tsong-kha-pa really says that "what is found by the cognition [arising from] analytical reasoning and what withstands investigation by analytical reasoning, are not the same either" (*rigs-shes-kyis rnyed-pa dang des dpyad-bzod gnyis kyang mi mtshungs-so*), still I do not think Tsong-kha-pa is in contradiction with himself as Yotsuya supposes, since Tsong-kha-pa states this in a very special sense in the given context.

To clarify the issue, first we have to clear up what is found during the first process of analytical reasoning according to Tsong-kha-pa. As Yotsuya describes in detail (pp. 15–25) Tsong-kha-pa maintains that the apprehension of the non-existence of self (i.e. selflessness) for example must clearly take place, the non-existence of self as the result of the negation and the object of the cognition must not be abandoned, but must be established, must be inevitably affirmed, and even has to be proved by correct reason. Tsong-kha-pa thinks so on logical grounds. Yotsuya describes his position as follows: "... in the case where there are only two mutually exclusive alternatives, if one alternative is negated the other one must be affirmed and vice versa... They are two sides of the same coin" (p. 24). To put it more simply: the negation of X's existence is nothing else but the affirmation of X's absence/non-existence.⁵ These two statements conveying the same meaning for Tsong-kha-pa, he emphasises that this type of positive determination (*yong-su gcod-pa*, *pariccheda*) of the absence of self-nature (i.e. of selflessness) does not change the

⁵ A similar thought is expressed e.g. in the following statement of ICang-skye Rol-pa'i rdo-rje: "With regard to this, since real existence (*yang-dag-par yod-pa*) does not even conventionally exist, [it logically follows that] non-real-existence (*yan-dag-par med-pa*) must conventionally exist." *de-la yang-dag-par yod-pa tha-snyad-du yang med-pa'i phyir yang-dag-par med-pa tha-snyad-du yod-dgos-la* / (mDzes-rgyan, p. 212: 10–11).

non-presuppositional negation (*med dgag, pra-sajya-pratiṣedha*) into a presuppositional one (*ma yin dgag, prayudāsa-pratiṣedha*), but it remains a mere exclusion (*rnam-par bcad-tsam, vyavaccheda*) of self-nature.

The answer for our original question is lying somewhere here. What is found, or positively determined as the result of the first process of the negation by analytical reasoning is the non-existence of the negandum (e.g. of self or of self-nature), which equals with the mere exclusion of self.⁶ Consequently, what is established can only be a mere conventional non-existence of the negandum. Taking into consideration that according to Tsong-kha-pa the investigation by non-contaminated analytical reasoning does not deny mere existence or mere non-existence, since the conventional world under the aspect of mere being does not belong to its sphere of investigation, it must be assumed that the object of the second process of analytical reasoning, i.e. the non-existence of the negandum is not the same as the one that was found (or established) first. Or one can say, the same object that was found is to be re-examined under a different aspect with a different mind (*blo gzhan-gyis*), since owing to its inevitable establishment some are liable to superimpose real existence even onto the non-existence of the negandum, being the outcome of the negation. In short, what is established and apprehended (= the non-existence of self-nature) during the first mental process is not the same as what is negated (= the existence of the non-existence of self-nature, i.e. hypostatised non-existence) by a subsequent one. The former object is *the final result* of the first process of the investigation by analytical reasoning, which is neither denied, nor is investigated whether it withstands analytical reasoning, or not.⁷ However, the latter

object (the already hypostatised non-existence of self-nature) is *the starting point* of a new process of investigation, which is negated, and cannot withstand investigation by analytical reasoning. It would totally contradict reason if the same non-existence of self-nature, which is nothing but the mere exclusion of self-nature according to Tsong-kha-pa, were to be negated again. Reconstructing the elements of this hypothetical absurd process, we should maintain the contradiction as follows: (1) X is not found (= is negated), therefore the absence of X is found (= is affirmed), (2) but the absence of X is not found (is negated). So, as a consequence of this erroneous logical procedure the negandum (self-nature) that was originally negated would be necessarily established. In *Lam-rim*

5): 'di yang rigs-shes dpyad-bzod dang des grub-pa gnyis don gcig-tu 'dod-pa yin-pas rigs-shes-kyis grub-pa-nyid bden-pa'i don-du 'dod-par song-bas... His translation runs as follows: [Tsong-kha-pa's answer:] "This [view] also accepts that what withstands investigation by analytical reasoning and what is established by it are synonymous and, owing to this, what is established by analytical reasoning just comes to be the true entity (or ultimate existence)". Though the translation is very precise, its sense would become more clear if, instead of giving back *don gnyis gcig-tu* by 'synonymy', we translated: "This [view] also accepts that *the two [objects] (gnyis)*, namely the one that withstands investigation by analytical reasoning and the one that is established by it, *are the same object (don gcig-tu)*...". As indicated above, the object (*don*) which is established, i.e. the absence of self-nature is not investigated any longer with respect to its existence or non-existence, so it is out of question that it should be an object that withstands investigation. This is attested by statements occurring in *Lam-rim chen-mo*. Cf. e.g. *Lam-rim chen-mo*, p. 638: 17–19: [...] *myu-gu-la rang-bzhin mi 'dug-go snyam-du 'dzin-gyi/ rang-bzhin med-pa de 'dug-go zhe 'am mi 'dug-go snyam-pa gnyis gang-du 'ang mi 'dzin-pa* [...] "Though the apprehension occurs that 'there is no self-nature in the sprout', neither does it occur in the mind that 'that [very] non-existence of self-nature exists', nor that 'it does not exist'."

⁶ Since the mere positive determination of the non-existence of the negandum has not any new semantic content, it is very reasonable to state that semantically the second affirmation is the same as the first negation.

⁷ The question also arises what is the correct interpretation of the phrase cited by Yotsuya (p. 12) from *Rigs-pa'i rgya-msho* (p. 47: 3–

chen-mo Tsong-kha-pa highlights this logical fallacy and supports his position by referring to a statement of Nāgārjuna occurring in *Vigrahavyāvartanī*:

“If the existence of emptiness, which is [nothing else but] the absence of self-nature, is negated, then it follows that there is no absence of self-nature. Being the case like that, a self-nature that is established through its own essence comes to exist. Thus it becomes totally invalid to negate self-nature. The same is expressed in [Nāgārjuna’s] *Vigrahavyāvartanī*:

If [my word] that is absent from self-nature
Were to refute things that are absent of self-nature,
Then, the absence of self-nature being annulled,
Self-nature itself would be established.”⁸

In this way Tsong-kha-pa also wants to prove that the absence of self-nature must be apprehended and established: it is only the hypostatized form of emptiness, i.e. the true existence of the absence of self-nature that is not found and must be negated. The undesired logical consequence resulting from the hypothetical negation of the absence of self-nature also implies that it is logically inadequate to examine whether the same object (the mere absence of X) that was found as the final result of the first

process withstands investigation by analytical reasoning. The illogicality of this examination results from the fact that the affirmation of the absence of X is no more than the exclusion (*nam-par bcad-pa-tsam, vyavaccheda*) of X at this stage.

Yotsuya rightly says that in case of sound conventional things established by unimpaired conventional cognition the statement “‘X does not withstand investigation by analytical reasoning’ means that X is not an object (!) of investigation by analytical reasoning” (p. 10), but he does not arrive at the conclusion that just because of this the non-existence of self found and established by the first process of analytical reasoning cannot be the same object as the one that does not withstand a second investigation by analytical reasoning.

Moreover, it seems a bit awkward to state that not only the hypostatized entities posited by the Substantialists, but also the sound conventional phenomena (which expression is used by Yotsuya to denote *mere existence*, etc.) are “held not to withstand investigation by analytical reasoning” (p. 10), if one is aware of the fact that analytical reasoning is not an authority to judge the latter at all, since it is directed exclusively at hypostatized objects. He distinguishes two kinds of sound conventional things that do not withstand investigation by analytical reasoning: (1) the one that is found by analytical reasoning, such as the non-existence of self and (2) the sound conventional world (mere existence, etc.) that has nothing to do with the analytical reasoning (pp. 14–15), presumably in order to dissolve the underlying contradiction resulting from Tsong-kha-pa’s criteria with regard to the possible objects of analytical reasoning (pp. 14–15). He is right to distinguish these two kinds of sound conventions, but it is an apparent contradiction to claim simultaneously that (1) a sound conventional thing does not withstand analytical reasoning, and at the same time (2) it has nothing to do with the investigation by analytical reasoning (pp. 15–16). But this ambiguity of the phraseology is not Yotsuya’s fault, since it is attested by the sources that Tsong-kha-pa himself used the phrase “X

⁸ *rang-bzhin med-pa’i stong-nyid yod-pa ’gog-na rang-bzhin med-pa med-par ’gyur-la de-lta-na rang-gi ngo-bos grub-pa’i rang-bzhin yod-par ’gyur-bas rang-bzhin nam-pa thams-cad-du ’gog-tu mi rung-go/ de-ltar yang/ rTsod-zlog-las / gal-te rang-bzhin med-nyid-kyis / ji-ste rang-bzhin med-la bzlog /rang-bzhin med-pa-nyid log-na/ rang-bzhin-nyid-du grub-par ’gyur / (Lam-rim chen-mo, pp. 639–640).*

The Sanskrit version of the citation is: *naiḥ-svābhāvyanām cennaiḥsvābhāvyaena vāraṇam yaḍi hi/ naiḥsvābhāvyanivṛtau svābhāvyam hi prasiddhaḥ syāt // (Vigrahavyāvartanī, verse 26, p. 27).* The application of positive determination going together with mere exclusion is nicely demonstrated e.g. by Ruegg (2000, pp. 195–199).

does not withstand analytical reasoning” referring also to the merely existent conventional things.

Let us examine such a passage from *Lam-rim chen-mo* cited by Yotsuya (p. 10, n. 26). His translation runs as follows:

“[...] Therefore the investigation which investigates into whether or not they [= visible matter, sound, etc. as merely posited by unimpaired conventional cognition] have self-nature is not made, because those entities, it is maintained, do not withstand investigation (...*dpyad-pa byar med-de/ don de-dag rigs-pas dpyod-bzod-du mi 'dod-pa'i phyir*) by analytical reasoning. For example, when it is said this is a sheep, it is improper to make an investigation, ‘Is it a horse or an ox?’”⁹

On the basis of the context Tsong-kha-pa surely wants to mean that in opposition to the afore-mentioned Substantialists the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas do not postulate any substantial phenomena even conventionally. The sound conventional phenomena’s existence or non-existence is not a question to be treated by them within their philosophical system (*lugs-su byas-nas*) and therefore it is not to be investigated (*byar med-de*)¹⁰ by analytical reasoning whether they are truly existent things established through their self-nature, or not. All this is because, contrary to the Substantialists, the Prāsaṅgika has never the preconception that such objects can

⁹ *de-dag-la rang-bzhin yod-med dpyod-pa'i rigs-pa'i dpyad-pa byar med-de don de-dag rigs-pas dpyod-bzod-du mi 'dod-pa'i phyir-ro // dper-na / 'di lug yin-no zhes smras-pa-na 'o-na rta yin-nam glang-po yin zhes dpyod-du mi rung-ba dang 'dra-ba yin-no // (Lam-rim chen-mo, p. 630: 3–6). See also, The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee (2002, p. 180).*

gzugs-sgra-la sogs-pa-rnams ni tha-snyad-pa'i shes-pa phyi-nang 'khrul-rgyu' gnod-pa med-pa-rnams-la ji-ltar grags-pa de-ltar bzhag-pa-tsam yin ... (Lam-rim chen-mo, pp. 629: 9–630: 1). Cf. The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee (2002, p. 180).

¹⁰ In Tsong-kha-pa’s example the word *mi rung* (improper) corresponds to *byar med-de* (not to be done or irrelevant).

withstand analytical reasoning (*don de-dag rigs-pas dpyod-bzod-du mi 'dod-pa'i phyir*). However, the question arises: If the sound conventional phenomena are never thought of in terms of objects withstanding analytical reasoning, then does it logically follow that they are regarded as having no self-nature or true existence from the very beginning? The supposition is well-founded, since the phrase “they do not withstand analytical reasoning” has the same meaning as “no self-nature can be found in them”. If it is so, then we have a case of redundancy, since what is presupposed is stated again. As a solution it is suggested that the phrase *rigs-pas dpyod-bzod-du mi 'dod-pa* in the above cited passage should be translated as follows: “[a mere conventional phenomenon] is not postulated as to withstand analytical reasoning”. This reading is backed up by the fact that the mere object is said to be cognised in *Lam-rim chen-mo* by one the three modes of the apprehension described e.g. by Ruegg (2000, pp. 276–277): “a cognition that apprehends its object as simply existing as such, without being specified as being either ‘real/true’ or ‘unreal/false’, i.e. established/not established hypostatically”.¹¹ So we can only say that the phrase “X does not withstand analysis” used by Tsong-kha-pa must not be understood literally in case of sound conventional phenomena posited by unimpaired conventional cognition. As Yotsuya has properly remarked it means that “X is not an object of analytical reasoning”.

As for the outcome of the first process, i.e. the mere non-existence of self-nature, it also seems to fall out of the orbit of the investigation by analytical reasoning, and therefore it is out of place to ask whether it withstands analytical reasoning, or not. It deals with it only in its hypostatized form, when the negation of the negandum of the first process erroneously turns into a real presuppositional, or real affirmative negation, and one falls into the extreme of non-existence resulting from the superimposition of real existence onto the very non-existence of

¹¹ *Lam-rim chen-mo*, p. 704: 1–2: *bden-brdzun de-dag gang-gis kyang khyad-par-du ma byas-par spyir yod-pa-tsam zhig-tu 'dzin-pa*.

true existence. On the one hand the absence of self-nature positively determined does come up to the requirements of the “mere conventional thing” since it is the bare fact of its being, without any hint of its true existence.¹² On the other hand it is not “posited solely as something known to conventional consciousness” (*tha-snyad-pa'i shes-pa...-la ji-ltar bzahags-pa-tsam yin*), since it is the resultant object of the uncommon cognition that investigates reality (*rigs-shes*).

In the light of Tsong-kha-pa's definition of the two types of negations demonstrated in detail by Yotsuya in Chapter 1, it is evident that if real existence is superimposed onto the non-existence of the negandum (of true existence) found by the first mental process, then the negation cannot be merely the negation of its negandum (*dgag-bya bkag-pa-tsam*), since this negation implies a nature different (*gzhan chos 'phen-pa*) from the very negation of the negandum. Namely, there are only two mutually exclusive alternatives: true existence (X) or the non-existence of true existence (absence of X). The affirmation (or the determination) of the absence of true existence conveys the same meaning as the negation of true existence. But the affirmation of the true existence of the absence of true existence implies quite different meaning. Using our symbols we get: (1) X is negated = the absence of X is affirmed, (2) X of the absence of X is affirmed. The second affirmation is a false determination, which does not accord with the mere exclusion of true existence. It involves the following faults: on the one side it contradicts the first negation, since X is negated universally, i.e. with regard to all possible phenomena. The true existence that was negated first is affirmed thereafter, so one

¹² Yotsuya (p. 5, n. 14) relying on Matsumoto's publications (1982, 1990) informs us that e.g. Go-ram-pa speaks of three strands of the Tibetan Mādhyamikas in *lTa-ba'i shan-'byed theg-mchog gnad-kyi lta-ba*, one of which is “the Madhyamaka of nihilistic view of Tsongkha pa who emphatically says that the object of the firm belief (*mngon par zhen pa*) of emptiness must not be abandoned (*chad mtha' la dbu mar smra ba*)”.

falls into the extreme of superimposition (*sgro-'dogs-kyi mtha', samāropānta*), in other words into the extreme of existence (*yod-mtha', astitānta*). On the other side it is also an extreme of non-existence (*med-mtha', nāstitānta*), since it is the absence, i.e. the non-existence that is taken to really exist. Thus the non-existence of true existence, or non true-existence (*bden-par med-pa*) erroneously turns to be true non-existence (*rang-bzhin med-pa, bden-med bden-yod*),¹³ or total non-existence. The second process of the investigation by analytical reasoning is to correct the above-mentioned false determination (the affirmation of “X of the absence of X”) by negating “X of the absence of X”, as well, and thus the non-presuppositional negation is restored.

The perverted mode of the establishment of the non-existence of the negandum as a result of the negation by analytical reasoning is called by Tsong-kha-pa “the extreme of non-existence owing to superimposition” (*sgro-'dogs-kyi med-mtha', *samāropa-nāstitānta*), in which both the extreme of existence and the extreme of non-existence are present. As I have pointed out (Fehér 2003), the term seems to have been coined by Tsong-kha-pa himself, which he uses first in *Rigs-pa'i rgya-mtsho* and later on in *dGongs-pa rab-gsal*, too. It is defined by him as follows: “If one holds that the absence of the negandum which is [expressed by] the negation really exists, one is fallen into the extreme of non-things, so when it [= the real existence of the absence of the negandum] is negated, it is a negation of the extreme of non-existence. [... this is] an extreme of non-existence owing to superimposition.”¹⁴

¹³ The term *bden-(par) med(-pa)* (that which does not truly exist, or non true-existence) must be interpreted with caution, since it does not mean: “that which truly does not exist” or “true non-existence (*bden-med bden yod*)”. To apprehend “non true-existence” is to realise the māyā-like nature of the appearing phenomena, to “feel” their emptiness. However, to apprehend “true non-existence” is to hold to the extreme of non-existence.

¹⁴ *dgag-bya bkag-pa'i med-pa yang-dag-par yod-do zhes 'dzin-na dngos-po med-pa'i mthar lung-bas de 'gog-pa yang med-mtha' 'gog-pa*

From this it is clear that according to Tsong-kha-pa the two processes of analytical reasoning come to negate two kinds of extremes: the first process negates the extreme of existence (*yod-mtha'*), the subsequent one negates the extreme

of non-existence owing to superimposition (*sgro-'dogs-kyi med-mtha'*). In sum, the investigation by analytical reasoning may be outlined as follows:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| <p>1. True existence (<i>bden-pa</i>), i.e. X's substantiality is not found. It is negated.</p> <p>The extreme of substantialism is negated.</p> <p>= Non true-existence (<i>bden-med</i>),¹⁵ i.e. X's unsubstantiality, emptiness <i>is</i> found and is apprehended. It is affirmed. If X's unsubstantiality (= emptiness) were negated, X's substantiality would be affirmed.</p> | <p>=</p> <p>=</p> <p>↔</p> | <p>1. True existence, i.e. X's substantiality does not withstand (or is not found to withstand) investigation by analytical reasoning. It is negated. The extreme of substantialism is negated.</p> <p>Non true-existence, i.e. X's unsubstantiality <i>is not</i> investigated whether it exists or not, since at this moment mere emptiness appears in the mental continuum without any secondary thoughts.</p> |
| <p>2. The true existence of non true-existence (<i>bden-med bden-par yod-pa</i>), i.e. X's substantial unsubstantiality, substantial emptiness is not found. It is negated.</p> <p>The unique extreme of nihilism /non-existence (<i>sgro-'dogs-kyi med-mtha'</i>) is negated, which results from the superimposition of real existence onto non-existence. Thus the emptiness of emptiness is found.</p> | <p>=</p> <p>=</p> | <p>2. The true existence of non true-existence, i.e. X's substantial unsubstantiality does not withstand investigation by analytical reasoning. It is negated.</p> <p><i>Sgro-'dogs-kyi med-mtha'</i> is negated.</p> |

Presumably, Tsong-kha-pa intentionally wanted to give gradual teachings about this difficult topic, and systematically revealed more and more subtle details with respect to it. This is attested by the fact that he makes cross-references in his works. For instance in *Legs-bshad snying-po* he not only refers back to *Lam-rim chen-mo*, but also foretells his planned discus-

sion related to our issue. He remarks that he will expound in *The Great Commentary of Mūlamādhyamakārikāḥ* (i.e. in *Rigs-pa'i rgya-mtsho*) that the existence of the non-existence of self-nature (*rang-bzhin med-pa yod-pa*) is not established by a cognition arising from analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes*).¹⁶ The statement that “the existence of the non-existence of self-nature (or of the absence of self-nature) is not established” has the same meaning as the one that Yotsuya examined, namely that “the non-existence of self does not withstand investigation by analytical reasoning”. Since, as mentioned above, a negation during the investigation by analytical reasoning is directed exclusively at true existence, or existence through self-nature, therefore if it is stated in any context that something (either positive or negative phenomenon) “does not withstand investigation by analytical reasoning”, it must be interpreted as “something having

yin-no / [...'di ni] *sgro-'dogs-kyi med-mtha'o* / (*Rigs-pa'i rgya-mtsho*, p. 15: 15–20, *dGongs-pa rab-gsal*, p. 354: 38.)

On the two kinds of the extremes of non-existence (*sgro-'dogs-kyi med-mtha'* and *skur-'debs-kyi med-mtha'*) distinguished by Tsong-kha-pa, see Fehér (2003).

¹⁵ Naturally, instead of “true existence” and “non true-existence” any of their synonyms might be said: self-nature (*rang-bzhin*, *svabhāva*) – absence of self-nature; self (*bdag*, *ātman*) – selflessness; real existence (*yang-dag-par yod-pa*, *sadbhāva*) – non real-existence and so forth.

¹⁶ *Legs-bshad snying-po*, p. 245: 14–15.

true existence does not withstand investigation by analytical reasoning”.

With such an approach, the synonymy of the three negative expressions (1) “X is not found by analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes-kyis ma rnyed*)”, or in other words “X is not established by analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes-kyis ma 'grub*)” and (2) “X cannot withstand analytical reasoning (*rigs-shes-kyis dpyad mi bzod*)” is indisputable. Actually, nothing withstands an investigation by analytical reasoning having the afore-mentioned distinctive feature, therefore the affirmative form “X withstands analytical reasoning” (*rigs-shes-kyis dpyad-bzod*) has never any truth-value.

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