

The Two Truths Theory of the Bonpo Me ston Shes rab 'od zer (1058–1132 or 1118–1192)

—A Comparative Study—

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0 Introduction

In Tibetan Buddhism, the title *dBu ma bden gnyis* refers to either the *Satyadvayavibhaṅga* (*SDV*) of Jñānagarbha (8th cen.) or its autocommentary, the *Satyadvayavibhaṅgavṛtti* (*SDVV*).

Concerning the Bon religion, modern studies have regarded the title *dBu ma bden gnyis* as referring to two treatises as follows:

- (1) *dBu ma bden gnyis kyi gzhung* (*bDen gnyis*) by Me ston Shes rab 'od zer (also known as Yar me Shes rab 'od zer, 1058–1132 or 1118–1192).
- (2) *Theg pa chen po'i dbu ma bden gnyis kyi 'grel ba* (*bDen gnyis 'grel ba*) by mNyam med Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1356–1415).

The autocommentary of the *bDen gnyis*, that is to say the *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* is listed in the catalogue of Nyi ma bstan 'jin (b. 1813),⁽¹⁾ but it is one of the rare treatises whose whereabouts have not been known for a long time. It was found only recently in *BKT*.⁽²⁾ This is strangely not referred to by mNyam med Shes rab rgyal mtshan in his *bDen gnyis 'grel ba*. This may suggest that mNyam med did not have access to it. If that is the case, it must have remained unknown to some Bonpo authors before its present publication in *BKT*.

The *bDen gnyis* is a short treatise composed of two hundred and forty pādas (or sixty verses).⁽³⁾ It has been difficult to grasp Me ston's theory of "two truths" (*satyadvaya*, *bden gnyis*) in detail through this text alone. However, the discovery of its autocommentary, the *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* makes it possible to understand his theory more precisely. In this paper we examine how Me ston, a Bonpo thinker in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, came to learn Buddhist theories of "two truths."

1 Four ways appearances are perceived

Me ston presents the following four ways a person may perceive appearances:

- (1) To "one who has defective eyes" (*mig skyon can*) things appear in double form.⁽⁴⁾
- (2) An "ordinary person" (*byis pa so so'i skye bo*) sees various things and becomes attached to

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them.⁽⁵⁾

(3) “One who attains the wisdom at the post-meditation of the holy one”⁽⁶⁾ (*dam pa'i rjes shes*) understands that appearances are false like an illusion.⁽⁷⁾

(4) “One who obtains the meditative equilibrium of the enlightened one and holy one”⁽⁸⁾ (*sangs rgyas dam pa'i mnyam bzhag*) has no discursive thought nor does he perceive any [duality of subject and object].⁽⁹⁾

The above theory had already been given by Indian Buddhist thinker Candrakīrti (ca. 600–650).⁽¹⁰⁾ Indeed Me ston quotes Candrakīrti's *MAvBh* concerning the relation between the theory of “two truths” and persons who perceive appearances.⁽¹¹⁾ From this point, we can understand that Me ston was willing to adopt Buddhist doctrine and he was influenced especially by the position of Candrakīrti concerning the relation between the “two truths” theory and the subject of perception.

Here I wish to mention the problem of the date of Me ston. There are two possibilities. Kværne [1971: 230] gives one: 1058–1132, and Martin [2001: 75–76] gives another: 1118–1192. As we saw above, Me ston quotes the *MAvBh*. The translator of the *MAvBh* was Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (b. 1055). [1] Following Kværne's dates, Me ston would have been contemporary with Pa tshab. In this case, we can imagine that Me ston must have managed either to obtain a copy of the Tibetan translation itself or a source that was closely related to it. [2] On the other hand following Martin would mean that, Me ston would have been about sixty years younger than Pa tshab. In this case, he might have obtained the text from a late adherent of Pa tshab.

It is also possible that Me ston got a copy of the *MAvBh* just after it was translated into Tibetan. However it seems more likely that Me ston did not obtain a copy of the *MAvBh* until the translation had become famous in Tibet. In conclusion then Martin's theory seems more likely.

2 “Conventional truth” (*saṃvṛtisatya, kun rdzob kyi bden pa*)

2.1 Me ston's theory of “conventional truth”

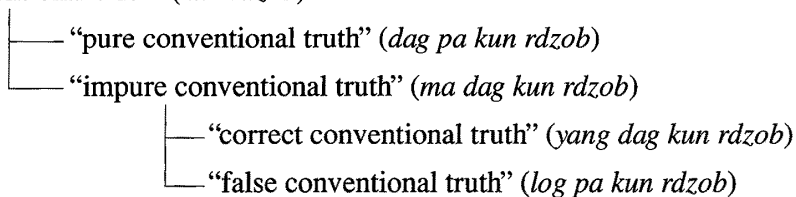
- Now we summarize Me ston's theory of “conventional truth.”
- Definition of “conventional truth”: “appearance of the object which does not exist [as true].”⁽¹²⁾
- Word meaning of “conventional truth”: “that which has characteristics covering over [the way of existence] by conception.”⁽¹³⁾
- Relation with logical analysis: the saṃsāric “conventional truth” is not established through the logical analysis because it appears to be false [if it is analyzed logically]. If it were established, it would become the nirvāṇa without any negation. If it is not examined [logically], it appears to be pleasing. If it is examined [logically], it cannot withstand the power [of logical analysis].⁽¹⁴⁾
- Other explanation of “conventional truth”: “all deceptiveness,”⁽¹⁵⁾ “that which is postulated in the side of the knowledge of ordinary person,”⁽¹⁶⁾ “saṃsāric dharmas,”⁽¹⁷⁾ “that which is like an

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illusion”⁽¹⁸⁾

- Subdivision of the “conventional truth”⁽¹⁹⁾:

“conventional truth” (*kun rdzob*)



[Table 1]

The explanation of each subdivision of “conventional truth” is as follows:

- “pure conventional truth”: “appearance which is regarded as a dream or illusion and which does not cover over the [true] meaning.”⁽²⁰⁾
- “impure conventional truth”: “saṃsāric dharmas which appear as various subjects and objects of grasping, which are regarded as true according to their appearances, and which obscure the understanding of the way of existence.”⁽²¹⁾
- “correct conventional truth”: “that which is grasped by ordinary persons whose objects and sense organs are not polluted [by delusion].”⁽²²⁾
- “false conventional truth”: “appearance to one who has defective objects and sense organs like double appearance for one who has defective eyes.”⁽²³⁾

Me ston presents, as an opponent’s theory, the following four characteristics of “correct conventional truth”⁽²⁴⁾ in order to distinguish it from the “false conventional truth,” and then he refutes this theory.

- [1] “that which is produced from cause and condition” (*rgyu rkyen las skyes*)
- [2] “that which appears commonly [to ordinary persons]” (*mthun par snang*)
- [3] “that which has the ability to perform a function” (*don byed nus*)
- [4] “that which does not exist when it is examined [logically]” (*brtag na dben*)

2.2 Influence of the Buddhist philosophy on Me ston’s theory of “conventional truth”

We now examine the influence of the Buddhist philosophy on Me ston’s theory of “conventional truth.”

2.2.1 Surface similarity between his subdivision of “conventional truth” and those of late Mādhyamika thinkers

Me ston’s theory is similar to those of late Mādhyamika thinkers such as Śāntarakṣita (ca. 725–788) and Atiśa (ca. 982–1054), in that they all subdivide the “conventional truth” into two stages. But we also must notice that they are similar merely on the surface. Me ston’s subdivision of “conventional truth” is essentially similar to that of Candrakīrti as explained in the next section.

Śāntarakṣita’s subdivision of the “conventional truth” in his *SDVP*⁽²⁵⁾ is as follows:

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- “conventional truth” (*kun rdzob*)
 - “correct conventional truth” (*yang dag pa'i kun rdzob*)
 - “incorrect conventional truth” (*yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob*)
 - “that which has conception” (*rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa*)
 - “that which has no conception” (*rnam par mi rtog pa*)

[Table 2]

Atiśa's subdivision of the “conventional truth” in his *SDA*⁽²⁶⁾ is as follows:

- “conventional truth” (*kun rdzob*)
 - “correct conventional truth” (*yang dag kun rdzob*)
 - “false conventional truth” (*log pa kun rdzob*)
 - “moon reflected on the surface of water” (*chu zla*)
 - “thought of false doctrine” (*grub mtha' ngan pa'i rtog pa*)

[Table 3]

2.2.2 Similarity between Me ston's subdivision of “conventional truth” and Candrakīrti

In fact the subdivision of the “conventional truth” of Me ston corresponds to that of Candrakīrti. Moreover, Me ston quoted the *MAvBh* concerning the relation between the subdivision of “conventional truth” and the four different ways of perceiving appearances. He therefore seems to be strongly influenced by Candrakīrti. The correspondence between the subdivision of the “conventional truth” of Me ston and that of Candrakīrti can be seen in the table below.

subject	Me ston's subdivision	Candrakīrti's subdivision
[1] <i>'phags pa</i>	<i>dag pa kun rdzob</i>	<i>saṃvṛtimātra (kun rdzob tsam)</i> ⁽²⁷⁾
[2] <i>so so'i skye bo</i>	<i>yang dag kun rdzob</i>	<i>lokasaṃvṛtisatya ('jig rten gyi kun rdzob kyi bden pa)</i> ⁽²⁸⁾ <i>lokataḥ satya ('jig rten nyid las bden)</i> ⁽²⁹⁾
[3] <i>mig skyon can</i>	<i>log pa kun rdzob</i>	<i>alokasaṃvṛti ('jig rten kun rdzob bden pa ma yin pa)</i> ⁽³⁰⁾ <i>lokato mithyā ('jig rten nyid las log pa)</i> ⁽³¹⁾

[Table 4]

2.2.3 Influence of late Mādhyamika thinkers concerning the relation between the “conventional truth” and logical analysis

As we saw, Me ston explains that the “conventional truth” cannot be established by correct logical analysis because it appears to be false if it is analyzed logically. This explanation concerning the relation between the “conventional truth” and logical analysis seems to be influenced by the *SDVV* of the Buddhist thinker Jñānagarbha, etc.⁽³²⁾

Me ston also says that the “conventional truth” cannot withstand the power of logical analysis if it is examined logically. This statement is quite close to what is found in the *MAVri* of Śāntarakṣita.⁽³³⁾

Me ston further explains that the “conventional truth” appears to be pleasing if it is not examined logically. This explanation also seems to be influenced by the expression, “that which is pleasing insofar as it is not examined [logically]” (*avicāraikaramaṇīya, ma brtags gcig pu na nyams dga' ba*) stated by late Indian Mādhyamika thinkers such as Śāntarakṣita.⁽³⁴⁾

Thus Me ston seems to be strongly influenced by the Indian Mādhyamika thinkers concerning his understanding of the relation between the “conventional truth” and logical analysis.

2.2.4 Word meaning of the “conventional truth”

As we have seen, Me ston explains the “conventional truth” as the “thing which has the characteristics covering over [the way of existence] by the conception” (*kun tu brtags pas sgrib par byed mtshan ma'i dngos po*). This explanation also seems to be influenced by Buddhist philosophy.

Candrakīrti uses the word: “to cover over”⁽³⁵⁾ but he does not use the expression: “by the conception.”

Jñānagarbha regards the “false conventional truth” as “that which is conceptualized” (*parikalpita*). He also considers the “conventional truth” as “that which covers the truth by the conceptual mind.”

⁽³⁶⁾ From these facts Jñānagarbha's explanation seems to be closer to that of Me ston.

2.2.5 Influence of Buddhist logicians concerning the “ability to perform a function”

(*arthakriyāsamartha, don byed nus pa*)

As we saw above, Me ston presents, as an opponent's theory, four characteristics in order to distinguish the “correct conventional truth” from the “false conventional truth,” and then he refutes this idea.⁽³⁷⁾ In one among these four, “that which has the ability to perform a function” is given as a means of distinguishing the “correct conventional truth” from the “false conventional truth.” This mode of analysis had been already adopted by Indian logicians such as Dharmakīrti (ca. 600–650),⁽³⁸⁾ and also Indian Mādhyamika logicians such as Jñānagarbha.⁽³⁹⁾ Thus while Me ston does not accept such a theory as his own position, he nevertheless presents it as his opponent's, and we can therefore say that he was in this regard indirectly influenced by Indian Buddhist logicians.

3 “Absolute truth” (*paramārthasatya, don dam bden pa*)

3.1 Me ston's theory of “absolute truth”

Now we summarize Me ston's theory of “absolute truth.”

- Definition of “absolute truth”: the “absolute truth” without discursiveness has no definition essentially. But it is defined as “that which is without discursiveness” in order to explain for disciples.⁽⁴⁰⁾
- Word meaning of “absolute truth”: “that which is an object and is also excellent”⁽⁴¹⁾ (*karmadhāraya* compound) or “the object of one who is excellent”⁽⁴²⁾ (*tatpuruṣa* compound).
- Demonstration of “absolute truth”: there is neither object to be demonstrated nor any demonstration concerning the “absolute truth.”⁽⁴³⁾
- Other explanation of “absolute truth”: “that which has no deceptiveness,”⁽⁴⁴⁾ “that which cannot be thought of or described,”⁽⁴⁵⁾ “that which cannot be thought, described, compared, or seen, is not an object to be conceptualized, and is not to be regarded as anything,”⁽⁴⁶⁾ “that which, like space, is not characterized.”⁽⁴⁷⁾

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- Subdivision of “absolute truth”:
- The “absolute truth” without discursiveness is not established as anything, so there is neither number nor subdivision.⁽⁴⁸⁾
- The distinction between the “categorized absolute truth” (*rnam grangs pa'i don dam pa'i bden pa*) and the “uncategorized absolute truth” (*rnam grangs ma yin pa'i don dam pa'i bden pa*) is a mere method for leading disciples, so it is the “conventional truth” in a very real sense.⁽⁴⁹⁾

3.2 Influence of the Buddhist philosophy on Me ston's theory of “absolute truth”

We now examine the influence of the Buddhist philosophy on Me ston's theory of “absolute truth.”

Bhāviveka (ca. 490–570) gives the three interpretations of the compound “absolute truth,” that is to say [1] *karmadhāraya*, [2] *tatpuruṣa*, and [3] *bahuvrīhi*.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Candrakīrti adopts only two: [1] *karmadhāraya* and [2] *tatpuruṣa*.⁽⁵¹⁾ As we have seen, Me ston also gives only two: [1] *karmadhāraya* and [2] *tatpuruṣa*. This fact might also be evidence that he was influenced by Candrakīrti's theory.

Me ston does not admit the subdivision of the “absolute truth” into the “categorized absolute truth” and the “uncategorized absolute truth,” and he considers the “absolute truth” as unique. In this respect, he seems to have been influenced by Atiśa who admits a unique “absolute truth.”⁽⁵²⁾

4 Conclusion

Here we summarize the examination, mentioned above, of Me ston's “two truths” theory and how it is influenced by Indian Buddhist theories.

The structure of Me ston's theory of “two truths” is as seen in the table below.

- “two truths” (*bden gnyis*)
 - └ “absolute truth” (*don dam*)
 - └ “conventional truth” (*kun rdzob*)
 - └ “pure conventional truth” (*dag pa kun rdzob*)
 - └ “impure conventional truth” (*ma dag kun rdzob*)
 - └ “correct conventional truth” (*yang dag kun rdzob*)
 - └ “false conventional truth” (*log pa kun rdzob*)

[Table 5]

[1] Concerning the “conventional truth”

- The surface structure of Me ston's subdivision of the “conventional truth” seems to be similar to that of Śāntarakṣita and Atiśa.
- On the other hand the actual contents of the subdivision seems to be similar to that of Candrakīrti.
- His explanation of the relationship between the “conventional truth” and logical analysis seems to

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- have been influenced by Indian Buddhist Mādhyamika thinkers. (eg. *avicāraikaramañīya*)
- He seems to present some theories of known Buddhist logicians as his opponents'. (eg. the concept: “existence of the effective function” (*arthakriyāsamartha*, *don byed nus pa*) as the proof of the “correct conventional truth,” in order to distinguish it from the “false conventional truth”)

[2] Concerning the “absolute truth”

- Me ston seems to be similar to Candrakīrti in that they both present only two interpretations of the compound of “absolute truth”: a *karmadhāraya* compound and *tatpuruṣa* compound. Unlike Bhāviveka, neither mentions the possibility of interpreting it as a *bahuvrīhi* compound.
- Me ston seems to have been influenced by Atiśa in that they both refute the possibility of subdividing the “absolute truth,” unlike Bhāviveka, Jñānagarbha, Śāntarakṣita, etc.

[3] Concerning the entire structure of the “two truths”

- The surface structure of Me ston’s “two truths” theory seems to be similar to that of Atiśa.
- On the other hand the actual contents of Me ston’s “two truths” theory seems to be similar to that of Candrakīrti. (eg. citation of the *MAvBh*)
- His explanation of some technical terms seems to have been influenced by the theories of Indian Buddhist Mādhyamika thinkers.
- From these facts we can say that Me ston composed a new theory of “two truths,” by collecting various theories of Indian Buddhist thinkers.

In this paper I have outlined how Me ston incorporates Buddhist theories into his own theory, but it is possible that he might have adopted them according to a Tibetan tradition from his teachers rather than directly from Indian Buddhist texts themselves. In any case he truly shows a Bonpo original theory of “two truths,” but his theory does not seem to have been followed by other Bonpo thinkers who created various other theories of “two truths.” As I have shown in another paper,⁽⁵³⁾ though these Bonpo thinkers classify the “conventional truth” in a variety of different ways, we can identify two main ways in which they subdivide the “absolute truth.”

[A] The tradition that regards the “absolute truth” as unique: the *bDen gnyis* and the *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* by Me ston, and the *bDen gnyis 'grel ba* by mNyam med.

[B] The tradition that divides the “absolute truth” into two: the *Theg 'grel* which is anonymous (rediscovered in the fifth “cycle” (*rab byung*), i.e. 1267–1326), the *Bon sgo gsal byed* by Tre ston rGyal mtshan dpal (14th cen.), and the *Sa lam rang 'grel* by mNyam med.

Me ston’s *bDen gnyis* and *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* seem to be the earliest source in the Bonpo tradition which adopts the position of a singular “absolute truth.”

Abbreviations

- BKT* *Bon po bKa' brten* published by Sog sde bsTan pa'i nyi ma in Lhasa (no date). The copy of this edition preserved in the library of the Graduate School of Letters of Kyoto University bears the accession number: Buddhism, A-III-341.
- CBKT* *A Catalogue of the New Collection of Bonpo Katen Texts*, Bon Studies 4, Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2001.
- D* Tibetan Tripiṭaka, sDe dge Edition.
- JIBS* *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*. (『印度学仏教学研究』)
- Otani* *The Tibetan Tripitaka Catalogue and Index*, Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1961. (repr. *The Tibetan Tripitaka Catalogue and Index*, Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., 1985.)
- P* Tibetan tripiṭaka, Peking edition.
- Tohoku* *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons* edited by Hakuju Ue, Munetada Suzuki, Yenshō Kanakura, and Tōkan Tada, Sendai: Tohoku Imperial University, 1934.

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- MAVri* Śāntarakṣita: *Madhyamakālamkāravṛtti*; *dBu ma'i rgyan gyi 'grel pa*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3885; P: *Otani* No. 5285. Tib. ed. Ichigo [1985].
- MAv* Candrakīrti: *Madhyamakāvatāra*; *dBu ma la 'jug pa*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3861; P: *Otani* No. 5261. Tib. ed. De la Vallée Poussin [1912].
- MAvBh* Candrakīrti: *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*; *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3862; P: *Otani* No. 5263. Tib. ed. De la Vallée Poussin [1912].
- PPr* Bhāviveka: *Prajñāpradīpamūlamadhyamakavṛtti*; *dBu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa shes rab sgron ma*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3853; P: *Otani* No. 5253.
- PrasP* Candrakīrti: *Prasannapadā nāma Mādhyamikavṛtti*; *dBu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba*.
Skt. ed. De La Vallée Poussin [1913]. D: *Tohoku* No. 3860; P: *Otani* No. 5260.
- PV* Dharmakīrti: *Pramāṇavārttika*; *Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa*.
Skt. / Tib. ed. Miyasaka [1971–72]. Skt. ed. Tosaki [1979], [1985]. D: *Tohoku* No. 4210; P: *Otani* No. 5709.
- SDA* Atiśa (Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna): *Satyadvayāvatāra*; *bDen pa gnyis la 'jug pa*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3902, 4467; P: *Otani* No. 5298, 5380. Tib. ed. Lindtner [1981], Ejima [1983].
- SDV* Jñānagarbha: *Satyadvayavibhaṅgakārikā*; *bDen pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3881. Tib. ed. Eckel [1987].
- SDVP* Śāntarakṣita: *Satyadvayavibhaṅgapañjikā*; *bDen pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa'i dka' 'grel*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3883; P: *Otani* No. 5283.
- SDVV* Jñānagarbha: *Satyadvayavibhaṅgavṛtti*; *bDen pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel pa*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3882. Tib. ed. Eckel [1987].
- TJ* Bhāviveka: *Madhyamakahrdayavṛttitarakajvālā*; *dBu ma'i snying po'i 'grel pa rtog ge 'bar ba*.
D: *Tohoku* No. 3856; P: *Otani* No. 5256.

Tibetan sources

- Theg 'grel* Unknown authorship (rediscovered in the fifth Rab byung, i.e. 1267–1326): *Theg pa'i rim pa*

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- mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud kyi 'grel pa. Bonpo Grub Mtha' Material.* Dolanji: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1978, pp. 387–599.
- bDen gnyis Me ston Sher rab 'od zer (1058–1132 or 1118–1192):*
 [A] *dBu ma bden gnyis kyi gzhung in Sa lam rnam 'byed 'phrul sgron rtsa 'grel theg chen gzhi lam 'bras bu rtsa 'grel dbu ma rtsa 'grel skor gyi gsungs pod bzhungs*, vol. 2 Kha, (Kathumandu, 1991), No. Cha. (5 folios, *dbu can* script)
 [B] *dBu ma bden gnyis kyi gzhung* edited by Yam Lama and Samtin Jansin, Delhi, 1961. (6 folios, *dbu med* script)
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Notes

- (1) Kværne [1974: 117 (T35-2)].
- (2) I am grateful to Dr. Dangsang Namgyal, a Bonpo monk of Triten Norbu Tse monastery in Kathmandu, who gave me a copy of the *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* and Professor Shinichiro Miyake of Otani University who taught me its bibliography.
- (3) *bDen gnyis* [A5a6, B6b4–5]: *Theg pa chen po dbu ma bden gnyis gsal bar byed pa'i tshigs su bcad pa drug cu pa rdzogs so //*
- (4) *bDen gnyis* [A1b4, B2a2–3]: *mig skyon can la mig yor snang / dag pa nyid la gtan ma grub /*
- (5) *bDen gnyis* [A1b3, B2a1]: *byis pa so so'i skye bo la / sna tshogs snang zhing bden par zhen /*
- (6) According to the *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* [6b2–3], “the wisdom at the post-meditation of the holy one” (*dam pa'i rjes shes*) means the “wisdom at the post-meditation of the holy saint” (*'phags pa dam pa'i*

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- rjes shes*).
- (7) *bDen gnyis* [A1b3–4, B2a1–2] *dam pa'i rjes shes snang ba rnams / sgyu ma bzhin du rdzun par rtogs /*
- (8) According to the *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* [6b4–6], the “meditative equilibrium of the enlightened one and holy one” (*sangs rgyas dam pa'i mnyam bzhag*) means “individually discriminating wisdom of mere appearance without truth” (*bden pas stong pa'i snang ba tsam so so rtogs pa*), the “thought of the enlightened one” (*sangs rgyas kyi dgongs pa*), the “thought of the meditative equilibrium of the saint” (*'phags pa'i mnyam bzhag gi dgongs pa*).
- (9) *bDen gnyis* [A1b4, B2a2]: *sangs rgyas dam pa'i mnyam bzhag la / spros med cir yang mthong mi 'gyur /*
- (10) Concerning the relation between the theory of “two truths” and the subject of perception stated by Candrakīrti, see Kishine [2001: 66–67].
- (11) *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* [6a6–b2]: *'Jug 'grel las / de la so so skye bo rnams kyi don dam pa gang yin pa de'i 'phags pa'i snang ba bcas pa'i spyod yul rnams kyi kun rdzob tsam yin la / de'i rang bzhin stong pa nyid gang yin pa de ni de rnams kyi don dam pa yin pa'o / zhes gsungs so /*
MAvBh, chap. 6, v. 28 (De la Vallée Poussin [1912: 108.13–16]; *Tohoku* [No. 3862, 'A, 255a5]): *de la so so'i skye bo rnams kyi don dam pa gang yin pa de nyid 'phags pa snang ba dang bcas pa'i spyod yul can rnams kyi kun rdzob tsam yin la / de'i rang bzhin stong pa nyid gang yin pa de ni de rnams kyi don dam pa'o //*
- (12) *bDen gnyis* [A2a5–b1, B2b5]: *kun rdzob bden pa'i mtshan nyid ni // yod pa ma yin don snang ba'o //*
- (13) *bDen gnyis* [A2a1, B2a4–5]: *kun tu brtags pas sgrub par byed // mtshan ma'i dngos pos bden pa 'o //*
- (14) *bDen gnyis* [A2b1–2, B2b6–3a1]: *'khor ba kun rdzob bden pa la // yang dag rigs pas 'grub mi 'gyur // kun rdzob rdzun par snang phyir ro // grub na mi gnod myang 'das 'gyur // ma brtag nyams dga' ltar snang ba // brtag na rigs pas sbungs mi bzod //*
- (15) *bDen gnyis* [A1b3, B1b4]: *'khrul pa thams cad kun rdzob la //*
- (16) *bDen gnyis* [A2b2–3, B3a1–2]: *kun rdzob byis pa'i shes ngo la // ltos te rnam par bzhag pas na // gang la bden rdzun grub tshod la // sgrub byed rig (sic, read rigs) pa'i tha snyad gdags //*
- (17) *bDen gnyis* [A2b4, B3a3–4]: *'khor ba'i bon rnams kun rdzob dang //*
- (18) *bDen gnyis* [A2b4, B3a4]: *sgyu ma lta bur ston pas gsungs //*
- (19) *bDen gnyis* [A2a2, B2a6]: *kun rdzob dbye ba gnyis su 'dod // dag pa dang ni ma dag pa'o //*
bDen gnyis [A2a3, B2b1–2]: *ma dag kun rdzob rnam gnyis te // log pa dang ni yang dag go //*
- (20) *bDen gnyis* [A2a3, B2b1]: *snang ba rmi lam sgyu ma bzhin // der mthong don la 'grib mi 'gyur //*
- (21) *bDen gnyis* [A2a2, B2a6–b1]: *sna tshogs gzung 'dzin 'khor ba'i bon // snang bzhin bden mthong 'grib par byed //*
- (22) *bDen gnyis* [A2a4, B2b3]: *yul dang dbang po ma bslad pas // 'jig rten pa yis gang bzung ba // de ni yang dag kun rdzob yin //*
- (23) *bDen gnyis* [A2a3, B2b2]: *mig skyon can la mig yor sogs // dbang po yul la skyon ldan pa // skyon med la ltos log par bzhag //*
- (24) *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* [14b2–4]: *kha gcig na re / rgyu rkyen las skyes / mthun par snang / don byed nus / brtag na dben / de ltar mtshan nyid bzhi dang ldan pa yang dag pa'i kun rdzob yin la / de bzhin mi ldan pa log pa'i kun rdzob yin zer te /*
- (25) *SDVP* (*Tohoku* [No. 3883, 27a7]): *de ltar na kun rdzob ni rnam pa gsum du bstan te / yang dag pa'i kun rdzob ni rnam pa gcig go // yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob la ni rnam pa gnyis te / rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa dang rnam par mi rtog pa'i bye brag gi phyir ro //*
- (26) *SDA*, k. 2–3 (Lindtner [1981: 190]; Ejima [1983: 361–362]; *Tohoku* [No. 3902, 72a4–5]): *kun rdzob rnam pa gnyis su 'dod // log pa dang ni yang dag go // dang po gnyis te chu zla dang // grub mtha' ngan pa'i rtog pa'o // ma brtags gcig pu nyams dga' ba'i // skye ba dang ni 'jig pa'i chos // don byed nus dang ldan pa ni // yang dag kun rdzob yin par 'dod //*

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- (27) *MAvBh*, chap. 6, v. 28 (De la Vallée Poussin [1912: 108.11–19]; *Tohoku* [No. 3862, 'A, 255a4–6]): *de ltar na re zhig bcom ldan 'das des kun rdzob kyi bden pa dang kun rdzob tsam du gsungs pa yin no // de la so so'i skye bo rnams kyi don dam pa gang yin pa de nyid 'phags pa snang ba dang bcas pa'i spyod yul can rnams kyi kun rdzob tsam yin la / de'i rang bzhin stong pa nyid gang yin pa de ni de rnams kyi don dam pa'o // sangs rgyas rnams kyi don dam pa ni rang bzhin nyid yin zhing / de yang slu ba med pa nyid kyis don dam pa'i bden pa yin la / de ni de rnams kyi so sor rang gis rig par bya ba yin no //*
- (28) *PrasP*, chap. 24, v. 8 (De la Vallée Poussin [1913: 493.5–6]): *loka-saṃvṛtyā satyaṃ loka-saṃvṛti-satyam / sarva evāyam abhidhānābhidheya-jñāna-jñeyādi-vyavahāro 'śeṣo loka-saṃvṛti-satyam ity ucyate /*
Tohoku [No. 3860, 163b2–3]: *'jig rten gyi kun rdzob tu bden pa ni // 'jig rten kun rdzob bden pa ste // brjod bya dang / rjod byed dang / shes pa dang / shes bya la sogs pa'i tha snyad ma lus pa 'di dag thams cad ni / 'jig rten gyi kun rdzob kyi bden pa zhes bya'o //*
- (29) *MAv*, chap. 6, k. 25 (Cited in *BCAP*, chap. 9, v. 2: De la Vallée Poussin [1901/1912: 353.13–16]):
vinopaghātena yad indriyāṇāṃ saṅgāṃ api grāhyam avaiti lokāḥ / satyaṃ hi tal lokata evaṃ śeṣaṃ vikalpitam lokata eva mithyā //
De la Vallée Poussin [1912: 104.4–7]; *Tohoku* [No. 3861, 'A, 205a7]:
gnod pa med pa'i dbang po drug rnams kyis // gzung ba gang zhig 'jig rten gyis rtogs te // 'jig rten nyid las bden yin lhag ma ni // 'jig rten nyid las log par rnam par bzhag //
- (30) *PrasP*, chap. 24, v. 8 (De la Vallée Poussin [1913: 493.2–4]): *atha vā timira-kāmalādy-upahatendriya-viparīta-darśanāvasthānās te 'lokās teṣāṃ yā saṃvṛtir asāv aloka-saṃvṛtiḥ / ato viśiṣyate loka-saṃvṛti-satyam iti /*
Tohoku [No. 3860, 162a7–b1]: *rab rib dang ling tog sngon po dang / mig ser la sogs pas dbang po nyams pas mthong ba phyin ci log la gnas pa de dag ni 'jig rten ma yin te / de dag gi kun rdzob gang yin pa de ni / 'jig rten kun rdzob bden pa ma yin pas // 'jig rten kun rdzob bden pa dang // zhes de las khyad par du byas so //*
- (31) See footnote 29.
- (32) *SDVV*, v. 21ab (Eckel [1987: 173.7–10]; *Tohoku* [No. 3882, 10a7]): *ji ltar snang bzhin ngo bo'i phyir // 'di la dpyad pa mi 'jug go // (k. 21ab) ci ste kun rdzob ni ji ltar snang ba bzhin yin te / de la ni ji skad bshad pa'i dpyad pa'i gnas med pa nyid do //*
- (33) *MAvri*, v. 64 (Ichigo [1985: 202–204]; *Tohoku* [No. 3885, 70b7–71a1]): *kun rdzob 'di ni sgra'i tha snyad tsam gyi bdag nyid ma yin gyi mthong ba dang 'dod pa'i dngos po rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba rnams ni brtag mi bzod pas yang dag pa'i kun rdzob ste /*
- (34) According to Akahane [2003: 51–52], the expression “that which is pleasing insofar as it is not examined logically” (*avicāraikaramaṇīya, ma brtags gcig pu na nyams dga' ba*) is attested in Avalokitavrata's *Prajñāpradīpatikā* (*Tohoku* [No. 3859, Za, 84a6, Sha, 245b7]) for the first time among Buddhist texts. But Avalokitavrata uses this expression merely as the adjective of the “illusion” which is an example of the “conventional truth.” He did not have the intention to use it as the definition of the “conventional truth.”
This expression is used for the definition of the “conventional truth” in Śāntarakṣita's *MA* (k. 64a: Ichigo [1985: 202], *Tohoku* [No. 3884, 55a6]) for the first time, and then later thinkers started to use it: Kamalāśīla's *Madhyamakālamkārapañjikā*, Śrīgupta's *Tattvāvatāravṛtti*, Atiśa's *SDA* etc.
- (35) *PrasP*, chap. 24, v. 8 (De la Vallée Poussin [1913: 492.10]): *samantād varaṇaṃ saṃvṛtiḥ /*
Tohoku [No. 3860, 163a5]: *kun nas sgrib pas na kun rdzob ste /*
- (36) *SDV*, k. 15ab (Eckel [1987: 171.1–2]; *Tohoku* [No. 3881, 2b1]): *gang zhig gis sam gang zhig la // yang dag sgrib byed kun rdzob bzhed //*
SDVV, v. 15ab (Eckel [1987: 171.1–2]; *Tohoku* [No. 3882, 9a2–3]): *blo gang zhig gis sam blo gang zhig la yod na yang dag pa sgrib par byed pa 'jig rten na grags pa de lta bu ni kun rdzob tu bzhed de /*

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- SDVV, v. 8d (Eckel [1987: 160.25–28]; *Tohoku* [No. 3882, 5b6–7]): *yang dag min ni kun brtags yin // (k. 8d) yang dag par skye ba la sogs pa gang yin pa de ni rtog pa'i bzos sbyar ba ste / de ni yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun rdzob kyi bden pa'o //*
- (37) See footnote 24.
- (38) PV, chap. 3, k. 3 (Miyasaka [1971–72: 42–43]):
*arthakriyāsamarthaṃ yat tad atra paramārthasat /
 anyat samvrtisat proktam te svasāmānyalakṣaṇe //*
don dam don byed nus pa gang // de 'dir don dam yod pa yin //
gzhan ni kun rdzob yod pa ste // de dag rang spyi'i mtshan nyid bshad //
- (39) SDV, k. 12 (Eckel [1987: 163.21–24]; *Tohoku* [No. 3881, 2a4–5]): *snang du 'dra yang don byed dag // nus pa'i phyir dang mi nus phyir // yang dag yang dag ma yin pas // kun rdzob kyi ni dbye ba byas //*
- (40) *bDen gnyis* [A2b1, B2b5–6]: *don dam mtshan nyid rnam par chad // 'on kyang spros pa rnams dang bral // bDen gnyis rang 'grel* [12a6–b2]: *gnyis pa don dam gyi mtshan nyid yin te / don dam pa la mtshan gzhi dang mtshan nyid dang / mtshan med la sogs spros par 'gyur bas bzahag tu med pa'o / 'on kyang gdul bya la mtshon pa tsam spros pa'i mtha' thams cad bral ba yin zhes pa tsam mo /*
- (41) *bDen gnyis* [A2a1, B2a5]: *don yin dam pa yin pa 'am //*
- (42) *bDen gnyis* [A2a1, B2a5]: *dam pa rnams kyi yul yin la //*
- (43) *bDen gnyis* [A2b4–5, B3a4]: *don dam bsgrub bya rnam par chad // de la sgrub byed ji ltar yod //*
- (44) *bDen gnyis* [A1b3, B1b4–2a1]: *'khrul pa thams cad kun rdzob la // de yis dben pa don dam nyid //*
- (45) *bDen gnyis* [A4b2, B5b4]: *don dam bsam brjod yul min kyang //*
- (46) *bDen gnyis* [A4b3–4, B5b5–6]: *bsam med brjod med dpe med pa // bltar med rtog pa'i yul min te // cir yang mthong ba med pa la // de nyid mthong zhes tha snyad gdags //*
- (47) *bDen gnyis* [A4b5–6, B6a2]: *don dam nam mkha' bzhin du ni // mtshan ma med pa gsal rtogs pa'i //*
- (48) *bDen gnyis* [A2a4–5, B2b3–4]: *don dam spros pa rnams dang bral // cir yang grub pa med pa la // grangs dang dbye ba rnam par chad //*
- (49) *bDen gnyis rang 'grel* [11b5–12a1]: *rnam grangs don dam pa'i bden pa dang / de ma yin pa gnyis su 'dod pa dang / skye ba med pa dang / rang bzhin med pa la sogs bshad pas so / zhe na / de ni gdul bya drangs pa'i don yin te / mdzub mo'i rtse mo la zla ba med kyang / byis pa la mtshon nas bstan pa dang 'dra'o /*
bDen gnyis rang 'grel [12a3]: *sangs rgyas kyi (sic, read kyis) sems can drangs don du don dam pa'i skad ston pa yin te / don du kun rdzob bo /*
- (50) As Ejima [1980: 102–105] has pointed out, Bhāviveka presents three types of interpretation of the compound of the word “absolute truth” (*Skt. paramārtha, Tib. don dam*), that is to say [1] *karmadhāraya* compound, [2] *tatpuruṣa* compound, and [3] *bahuvrīhi* compound.
PPr (*Tohoku* [No. 3853, Tsha, 228a3–4]): *don dam par (sic, read pa) ni [1] de don kyang yin la / dam pa yang yin pas don dam pa'am / [2] rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dam pa'i don yin pas / don dam pa ste /*
PPr (*Tohoku* [No. 3853, Tsha, 228a5–6]): [3] *rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes de'i yul can yang yul med pa'i tshul gyis don dam pa ste / de la don dam pa yod pa'i phyir ro // de 'gog pa dang rjes su mthun pa skye ba med pa la sogs pa bstan pa dang / thos pa dang / bsams pa dang / bsgoms pa las byung ba'i shes rab kyang don dam pa ste / don dam pa rtogs pa'i thabs kyi phyir phyin ci ma log pa'i phyir ro //*
TJ, chap. 3, v. 26 (*Tohoku* [No. 3856, Dza, 59b1]): *don dam pa zhes bsdu ba ni [1] de don yang yin la dam pa yang yin pas don dam pa'o // [2] yang na dam pa'i don te rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dam pa'i don yin pas dam pa'i don to / [3] yang na don dam pa dang mthun pa ste don dam pa rtogs pa dang rjes su mthun pa'i shes rab la don dam pa de yod pas don dam pa dang mthun pa'o // don dam par na zhes bya ba ni don dam pa de nyid du'ang (P: 'am) don dam par ro //*
- (51) Concerning Candrakīrti's interpretation of the compound of the word “absolute truth,” See Kishine

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[2001: 103–104].

PrasP, chap. 24, v. 8 (De la Vallée Poussin [1913: 494.1]): *paramaś cāsāv arthaś ceti paramārthaḥ / MAVBh*, chap. 6, v. 23 (De la Vallée Poussin [1912: 102.16–17]; *Tohoku* [No. 3862, 'A, 253a6- 7]): *de la don dam pa ni yang dag par gzigs pa rnam kyī ye shes kyī khyad par gyi yul nyid kyis bdag gi ngo bo rnyed pa yin gyi /*

- (52) As Lindtner [1981: 189] and Ejima [1983: 370–373] have observed, Atiśa seems to adopt a unique “absolute truth.” He rejects the subdivision of the “absolute truth” into two in his *SDA* (k. 4, Lindtner [1981: 190]; Ejima [1983: 362]; *Tohoku* [No. 3902, 72a5]): *dam pa'i don ni gcig nyid de // gzhan dag rnam pa gnyis su 'dod // cir yang ma grub chos nyid de // gnyis dang gsum sogs ga la 'gyur //*
- In his recent study, Miyazaki [2009: 129–130] focuses on especially Atiśa's theory of “conventional truth” and points out its similarity to Śāntarakṣita's theory of “conventional truth.” Before Miyazaki [2009], modern scholars emphasized the similarity between Atiśa and Candrakīrti. Miyazaki [2009: 130–132] also states that there seems to be a similarity between Atiśa and Śāntarakṣita concerning the theory of the “absolute truth.” That is to say he implies that Atiśa also admits the “secondary absolute truth” in relation to the “correct conventional truth” like Śāntarakṣita because Atiśa shows four syllogisms to demonstrate the “absence of self-nature,” one of which is Śāntarakṣita's.
- However as mentioned above, Atiśa categorically stated that there is only one “absolute truth” by rejecting the subdivision of “absolute truth” into two. Miyazaki's suggestion seems to be very interesting but it seems to be better to keep provisionally the theory of Lindtner and Ejima: “There is a unique absolute truth,” until we can solve this contradiction completely.
- (53) Kumagai [forthcoming] has already outlined the history of the development of Bonpos' theories of “two truths.”

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to professor Katsumi Mimaki and professor Izumi Miyazaki of Kyoto University who directed my study and especially professor Samten Karmay of CNRS who gave me a lot of useful suggestions. I am also grateful to Mr. Eric Greene of UC Berkeley who improved my English.

(This research was supported in part by a Grant-in-Aid for JSPS fellows)