A Study of the Karma Chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa* Commentaries by
the Eighth Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje and the Ninth Karmapa dBang
phyug rdo je with an Emphasis on *Karmaphala*

By

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

The University of Sydney

2021
In Loving Memory of His Holiness the 3rd Drubwang Penor Rinpoche
Acknowledgements

With the completion of my Master of Philosophy at the University of Sydney, I feel honoured to have had opportunities to engage in the study of Buddhist Philosophy, through both traditional and modern systems of education. For the Western way of education and research, credit goes to my lead supervisor Dr Jim Rheingans. Studying at an institution of modern education had been a wish that I had nurtured for a long time. This wish would not have materialised without his unflinching support. He opened my eyes to the Western academic approach to the study of Buddhist philosophy and to the fields of Buddhist and Tibetan studies. For me, coming from a traditional monastic background and ignorant of academic conventions and research skills, engaging in a study of this scale was a formidable task. Nevertheless, Dr Rheingans’ expertise in the field of Buddhist philosophy, philology, Tibetan history and literature, and his valuable guidance in every step of my study made my learning experience not only less intimidating, but also enjoyable. Therefore, I wish to convey my heartfelt gratitude to him.

I also sincerely thank my auxiliary supervisor Dr Mark Allon for his invaluable advice and feedback in improving this thesis. Moreover, I am deeply grateful to him for teaching me Sanskrit and for helping me parse Sanskrit texts related to this study.

For the traditional education in Buddhist Philosophy, I would like to express my immense gratitude to my root guru the late H.H. Penor Rinpoche. It was through his unrepayable grace that I was able to study Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy for nine years at his institute. His kindness of bestowing on me everything from profound teachings to everyday necessities was heart-warming to a young man in the foreign land of South India far away from home. He was both a source of hope and refuge in difficult circumstances and a reason to rejoice in good times.

Khenpo Karma Tshering proved instrumental in unravelling complex Abhidharma concepts and helping me to understand Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentaries. My spiritual friend Lopen Tsering Paljor, with his mastery of Tibetan grammar and poetry, has been a great help in tackling the nuances of Tibetan grammar. I sincerely thank them.

I am indebted to the Khyentse Foundation and Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for the substantial financial support for this study in the form of a Khyentse Foundation Grant.
(Khyentse Foundation Buddhist Studies Scholarships). I am also grateful to have been a recipient of the Khyentse Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship at Sydney during the completion phase of this thesis. Research-intensive study such as an MPhil is almost impossible to undertake without financial assistance.

I would also like to thank Dr Julian Schott for introducing me to the Sanskrit language while teaching Sanskrit at The University of Sydney. Towards the final part of my thesis-writing, Dr Bronwen Dyson proved helpful in completing the thesis with her instructions on drafting chapters, writing an abstract of the thesis, proofreading skills and so on.

I further thank Dr Lucy A Davey and Dr Peter Oldmeadow for patiently proofreading this thesis and improving my language skills. I am also thankful to Dr Oldmeadow for his remarks about the Tibetan translations into English. Gratitude is also due to Dr Jim Rheingans and Dr Mark Allon for giving input on academic writing during the earlier stages of drafting the chapters. Being a non-native English speaker, their support was invaluable in refining the language of this thesis. Lastly, but not the least, I would like to thank all the people, including my wife, friends and family members, who were involved directly or indirectly in making this enterprise a success.
**Thesis Abstract**

**Thesis Title:** A Study of the Karma Chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa* Commentaries by the Eighth Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje and the Ninth Karmapa dBang phyug rdo rje with an Emphasis on *karmaphala*.

This thesis examines the Karma Chapter of *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries written by the Tibetan Kagyu scholars Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507-1554) and Karmapa dBang phyug rdo je (1556–1603) with an emphasis on the theory of the ripening of actions or karma (Sanskrit. *karmaphala*). Authored by Vasubandhu in around 500 A.D., the *Abhidharmakośa* and its auto-commentary *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* are among the major philosophical texts studied by Tibetan Buddhist schools. Nevertheless, the Tibetan Abhidharma traditions have not been thoroughly researched, and many texts still await translation. The two highly complex and extensive commentaries analysed here (one being completely untranslated) are authored by prominent and comparatively little studied Himalayan luminaries, who lived in a period of scholastic efflorescence of their school. The theory of *karmaphala* takes a central stage in Buddhism since many doctrinal topics are discussed in relation to *karmaphala*. Using mainly philological and philosophical analysis, this research focusses on the significance of motivation in relation to other karmic dimensions in an action. This is an important aspect in the theory of action from the point of view of the Vaibhāṣika school of thought. In this thesis, findings are contextualised in the intellectual and cultural histories of the Tibetan plateau. The research will contribute to the study of Tibetan Abhidharma traditions, to the history of ideas in general and, in particular, to Tibetan interpretations of *karmaphala* theories.

The first chapter introduces the aims of this research and discusses methodologies involved. It also surveys earlier research on Tibetan Abhidharma and theories of *karmaphala* and critically examines the main Tibetan Abhidharma commentaries which serve as sources for this study. The second chapter provides an overview of the Karma Chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa* and briefly surveys its contents, contributing to the overall understanding of *karmaphala*. The third chapter studies the Karma Chapter interpretations of the two main commentarial sources, namely the ‘The Relaxation of the Joy of Accomplishment’ (*Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*) and the ‘Play of Youth’ (*gZhon nu rnam rol*) with a focus on the sections that treat the theory of *karmaphala*. The definition of motivation and its significance in the moral qualification of an action is examined according to the two commentaries, as is the issue of whether motivation overrides other karmic dimensions of an action. The fourth chapter
contextualises the two commentaries and the theory of karmaphala in the larger Tibetan Abhidharma tradition and in the context of the Tibetan understanding of karma more generally. The chapter also presents some unique characteristics of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary in relation to other Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentaries such as mChims mdzod. It considers the reasons Tibetan scholars composed Abhidharma commentaries and surveys the reception of the two commentaries of the Eighth and Ninth Karmapas by later Tibetan scholars. The fifth chapter concludes by discussing the outcome of this research regarding motivation in contrast to other dimensions of action such as the object of the action according to the understanding of the two commentaries examined. Contextualising the findings within Tibetan doctrinal developments, the thesis also shows the need for future research on the element of motivation, especially from the perspective of Tibetan Mahāyāna Buddhism.
Conventions Used in This Thesis

Transliteration and Italicisation

Tibetan technical terms and titles of Tibetan texts are provided in Wylie transliteration in order to provide readers with the original terms. Sanskrit transliteration follows the International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration (IAST). Sanskrit and Tibetan technical terms are written in italics except for some terms that have entered *Oxford Dictionary of English*, ed. by Angus Stevenson, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) such as lama, karma, guru and so on. Proper names and titles of people, for example Karmapa, are not written in italics.

Capitalization

The root letters of Tibetan proper names in transliteration are capitalised while the first letter of Sanskrit proper names is capitalised. Important concepts and terms such as Abhidharma and Triple Jewel are also capitalised.

Abbreviations of Important Tibetan Sources and Dictionaries

**Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo**


**gZhon nu rnam rol**


**mChims mdzod**

mChims ’Jam pa'i dgyangs. *Chos mngon mdzod kyi tshig le'ur byas pa'i ’grel pa mngon pa'i*

Mi pham mdzod


Thub pa'i dgongs gsal


Kun zang bla ma'i zhal lung


MW

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Chapter I: Introduction
1.1 Aims, Scope and Methodologies Employed

1.1.1 Aims and Scope

The significance of the theory of karmaphala (actions and results)\(^1\) in the field of Buddhist studies was summarised well by Etienne Lamotte (1903–1983):

> The teaching of karma, or action, forms the cornerstone of the whole Buddhist doctrine: action is the ultimate explanation of human existence and of the physical world, and it is in terms of karma that the Buddhist masters have constructed their philosophy.\(^2\)

Therefore, the theory of karmaphala serves as a foundation for Buddhist philosophical subjects. Moreover, the theory is ethical in nature since the discussion on karma revolves, either in an explicit or implicit way, around morality.\(^3\) The karma theory also forms an integral part of Buddhist practices and studies with its elements of action and result inextricably connected to them. Furthermore, the law of causality is studied in relation to various topics such as ethics, rebirth, and compassion and—in contemporary context—also in science.

The Abhidharmakośa and its auto-commentary, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya deal extensively with the theory of karmaphala and appear to be the primary resource for teachings on karmaphala. For instance, Atiśa (982–1054) is said to have relied heavily on the Abhidharmakośa with regard to theory of karma which earned him, according to Coghlan, the name ‘karma-teaching-lama.’\(^4\) The Abhidharmakośa is believed to have served as one of the bases for training of the enlightened mind (byang chub sems) for the famed Kadampa master Khag rag sgom chung (11\(^{th}\) century).\(^5\) Since the Karma Chapter of the Abhidharmakośa elaborates on discussion on the teachings on karma found in the sūtras and provides further

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\(^1\) The term is translated as ‘the fruit or recompense of actions’ in MW s.v. karman. Therefore, this compound appears to be genitive tatpurusa of two words karman (action) and phala (result). However, some scholars such as Kragh (2006: 11) understands it in a sense of dvandva compound, meaning ‘theory of action and result’. He argues that karma simply covers action and excludes result. This study will also understand karmaphala as ‘action and result’ and not simply ‘result of action’ which gives a sense of only result as a consequence of an action. I believe that the latter option is broader with the aspects of both action and result which this research covers.


\(^3\) Garfield (2015: 285) is also of the view that karma is important in Buddhist morality.


\(^5\) Ibid. p. 15.
The theory of karmaphala, especially with its multi-dimensional aspects such as the motivation and object of an action, is complex. This has led some scholars to consider the theory as the most intricate in the study of Buddhism. Eminent scholars such as Lambert Schmithausen have studied numerous issues of karmaphala, yet it continues to generate discussion due to its complexity. Despite extensive study of the subject, the role of motivation and its significance in comparison to other karmic dimensions such as the object of an action, which is the topic of this research, has to date not been studied from the Tibetan abhidharmic point of view.

The theory of karmaphala has been defined and expounded by various Indian religious traditions including Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Within Buddhism, the Tibetan model posits four philosophical tenet systems (Tib. grub mtha’ Skt. siddhānta) of Indian Buddhism which have proposed their own interpretations of karma. Karmaphala has also attracted scientific inquiry. Psychology, for instance, finds karma germane to its field of study chiefly because it covers behavioural conduct. Moreover, some investigators find the Buddhist concept of the theory of karma more approachable than the concept of a creator-God which is beyond scientific investigation.

This research will investigate the theory of karmaphala with a focus on the element of ‘motivation’ (Tib. kun slong, Skt. sammuthāna) according to the abhidharmic thought of two significant Tibetan scholars of the 16th century. The thesis thus focuses on the Tibetan reception and interpretation of Abhidharma thought about karmaphala. To that end, this project will thoroughly contextualise the Karma Chapter of two Abhidharmakośa commentaries: the Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi ’grel pa rgyas par spros pa grub bde’i dpyid ’jo [A Detailed Commentary on Abhidharmakośa: The Relaxation of the Joy of Accomplishment]
composed by the Eight Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), and the *mNgon pa mdzod kyi rnam bshad gzhon nu rnam rol* [A Commentary on the Abhidharmakośa: The Play of Youth] composed by the Ninth Karmapa dBang phyug rdo rje (1556–1603).

An important outcome of this research will be the discovery of the significance of motivation in *karmaphala* from the viewpoint of the abovementioned Tibetan scholars in the context of Tibetan Abhidharma thought. This project will also contribute significantly to the study of the Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* thought by providing selected translations and interpretations of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas’ standpoints. It will help provide a sounder overview of the largely neglected Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentarial literature. The study of Karma Chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa* will also contribute to the broader field of *karmaphala* studies.

The interpretation of *karmaphala* is never closed. Due to the fluidity of the concept, it is expected that *karmaphala* may be interpreted, reinterpreted and understood in new ways in the Buddhist commentarial traditions. As a result, it may offer innovative solutions and new insights to humankind.\(^\text{13}\)

With the ever-changing contexts of human actions, new interpretations need to be made and applied. For instance, the issue of mercy killing,\(^\text{14}\) which was not discussed in the early Buddhist texts, has been studied from the Buddhist point of view in scientific works. Reinterpretation of the theory in relation to new human actions need not suggest that the theory of *karmaphala* is flawed. It is this researcher’s contention that new interpretations and contextualisation do not damage the core concept of the theory.

Scholars suggest that the systematisation of the theory of karma and a proper attention to it began with the Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika School.\(^\text{15}\) The *Abhidharmakośa* is arguably the foremost scholarly accomplishment in the Sarvāstivāda school.\(^\text{16}\) Therefore, the study of the Tibetan interpretations of the seminal theory in the *Abhidharmakośa* is expected to contribute to the enhancement of the understanding of *karmaphala*.

This research, which studies the Karma Chapter of the commentary of the *Abhidharmakośa* by the Eighth Karmapa and the Ninth Karmapa with an emphasis on the theory of *karmaphala*, will provide interpretations and perspectives from Tibetan luminaries.

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\(^{13}\) MacKenzie (2013: 167).

\(^{14}\) Keown, D and Keown, J (1995: 267) state that the concept of euthanasia is not found in the early Buddhist canons.

\(^{15}\) Ryose (1987:3). Kragh (2006: 17) is also of the view that theory of *karmaphala* was systematised with Abhidharma writings.

\(^{16}\) Mejor (1991: 5–6).
who have been regarded both as scholars and as highly realised masters (*mkhas sgrub*) by the followers of the bKa’ brgyud pa school. Their thought and understanding of the theory are expected to result in broadening our understanding.

During the period of scholarly development in Tibet, the Eighth Karmapa was recognised by all religious traditions as a major scholar who engaged in intellectual debate with scholars of other schools such as dGe lugs pa scholar Se ra rJe btsun.\(^\text{17}\) The Third Karmapa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339),\(^\text{18}\) the Seventh Karmapa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506),\(^\text{19}\) and the Eighth Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje\(^\text{20}\) are recognised as leading scholars in the Karma bKa’ brgyud tradition.

Since the theory of *karmaphala* is vast, discussions related to it are found throughout the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas. The theory is interpreted from the standpoint of various schools of Indian Buddhism, including Vajrayāna. This research will focus on the Karma Chapter and limit its scope to the Abhidharma standpoint of Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika system.

Understanding the role of motivation will help unravel questions about the theory of action and will serve to guide future research about Tibetan interpretations of karma theories and ethical considerations. In addition, it will present to the academic community a different approach to human action.

This research will also explore the similarities and differences between commentaries of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa and see how the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary relates to the commentary of his predecessor. Unique characteristics of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary will also be briefly discussed.

This research will include some brief general discussions on the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries in order to contextualise the two commentaries in the Tibetan Abhidharma system. The rationale behind the composition of *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries by Tibetan scholars also deserves attention. This will aid understanding of the significance of the *Abhidharmakośa* in Tibetan Buddhism.

The study investigates the reception of the two commentaries of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa by later scholars of the Karma bKa’ brgyud tradition. This research also seeks


\(^{18}\) Rheingans (2017: 111) states that he was the main scholar who started to systematise the scholarly tradition of Karma bKa’ brgyud tradition. Seegers (2009: 17) also counts the Third Karmapa among the leading figures in the line of Karmapas and asserts that he initiated scholarly awareness with the meditative training.

\(^{19}\) Ibid. p. 112.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.
to show that attributing lower status to Abhidharma in the study of Buddhist philosophy, with
denunciation of it as a non-Mahāyāna concern, is unfounded, since Abhidharma was the
foundation for many higher Buddhist studies and practices.

The present chapter introduces the aims and objective of this research along with the
discussion of research methodologies. It also surveys earlier research on Tibetan Abhidharma
and theories of karmaphala. The chapter briefly delves into the history of Abhidharma in
India and Tibet and then discusses the main Tibetan Abhidharma commentaries which serve
as sources for this study.

The second chapter provides an overall view of the Karma Chapter (chapter four) of
the *Abhidharmakośa* and a brief survey of its contents. As a preparation for the third chapter
which forms the main part of the study, the definition of karma and its typology along with its
classifications are presented.

The third chapter studies the discussion of the Karma Chapter found in the two main
commentarial sources, namely the *Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo* and the *gZhon nu rnam rol*, with a
focus on those sections treating the element of motivation and other karmic dimensions such
as the object of an action. The definition of motivation and its significance in the moral
qualification of an action and whether a motivation overrides other dimensions of an action
are examined according to the two commentaries.

The fourth chapter contextualises the two commentaries within the larger Tibetan
Abhidharma discourse. To this end, some unique characteristics of the Eighth Karmapa’s
commentary are discussed while karmic dimensions of general Tibetan Buddhist thought are
also presented. The chapter also discusses the reception of two commentaries of the Eighth
and the Ninth Karmapas by later Tibetan Karma bKa' brgyud scholars. The rationale
attributed by the Eighth Karmapa for the composition of the *Abhidharmakośa* is also
presented in this chapter.

The fifth chapter concludes by discussing the outcome of this research based on the
exposition of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas regarding motivation in contrast to other
dimensions of action such as the object of the action according to the Abhidharma. It also
shows the need for future research on the karmic dimensions, especially from the perspective
of Tibetan Mahāyāna Buddhism including Varjayāna.

Translations of the selected paragraphs related to the research topic will be provided
in the appendix, in the hope that it will serve as a reference for those to whom classical
Tibetan is inaccessible.
1.1.2 Research Methodologies

This research investigates both philosophical and historical aspects. Therefore, I will employ both philosophical and historical methods, in a synthetic manner, as suggested by Beiser. The researcher will be mindful of the extremes of rejecting logic while doing history and renouncing history while arguing philosophically.

Mark Siderits categorises the study of philosophy into three principal domains: ethics, epistemology and metaphysics. This study will engage in the metaphysical analysis of the theory of karmaphala, and examine the significance and the characteristics of motivation and its ontological relations with other dimensions of an action. Motivation, which precedes and propels actions, seems a significant aspect in the action. However, its relation to other dimensions, such as the object of an action to determine their significance demands a metaphysical approach. Garfield also asserts that Western philosophy cannot be pursued in the absence of Buddhist philosophy. He suggests that Buddhism can be studied philosophically and can contribute to the field of philosophy in general.

This research will explore historical and contextual factors in relation to the composition of the commentaries. Since the establishment of the reliability of the origin is important, the research will briefly delve into the life, and mainly intellectual history, of Vasubandhu, the author of the Abhidharmakośa and the two authors of its commentaries (the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas). Biographical information, along with other elements, could enhance the understanding of these authors’ intellectual history. Biographical inquiry is expected to help in analysing and ascertaining their intellectual authority and capacity to comment on highly philosophical texts such as the Abhidharmakośa. The theory of karmaphala is philosophical in nature since it can be subjected to logical inquiry. The researcher will employ philosophical methods such as analysing rationality and organisation of an argumentation, and coherence of ideas. However, one needs to be mindful of the fact that philosophical reasons alone would be inadequate to obtain a holistic understanding. For

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21 Beiser (2016: 1) contends that the combination of historical and philosophical methods are the most desirable means to study history of philosophy. Garfield (2015:321) also appear to advocate the employment of both of the methods in reading Buddhist texts.

22 Siderits (2007: 3–4) explains the three domains of Greek philosophy in the first chapter ‘Buddhism as Philosophy’ which seem applicable in the study of Buddhist studies.

23 Reichenbach (1990:5) also asserts that the theory of karmaphala is metaphysical in nature and can be subjected to metaphysical analysis.


25 Pollock (2014: 403) mentions numerous characteristics of what he calls ‘good reading’ with regard to the ‘historicist reading.’

26 Beiser (2016: 3) states that philosophers should take consideration of these strategies.
instance, while it may sharpen the capacity of reasoning, the traditional Tibetan courtyard debate (rtsod pa) is intensely dialectic to the extent of forgoing truth to win and humiliate the opponent. Hence reasoning alone is not the only method for discovering meaning.

Since this study also involves reading, interpreting and translating classical Tibetan language texts, philological approaches are also indispensable. An accurate comprehension of terms with their contextual meaning will be attempted from the most reliable sources. At times it may necessitate the comparison among different editions to determine the obscured meaning as a result of a typographical error, the poor quality of the print and so on. Scholars such as Beiser are sceptical of the accuracy of translation.\(^{27}\) Keeping this in mind, translation will be done taking into consideration linguistic and cultural aspects. Translation of philosophical materials will apply methods of translation such as fidelity or a faithful rendering of the text and literal translation that takes into account of every word of Tibetan source texts.\(^{28}\) The source and target text of the translation will be provided for the analysis of the readers.

This study uses the plane 1 or the historicist reading described by Pollock and attempts to understand the commentaries in their historical context.\(^{29}\) Moreover, the plane 2 or the traditionist reading is also employed to see how the commentaries of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa are received in the Karma bKa’ brgyud tradition.

Cultural and religious dimensions will be studied critically by the academic researcher who has an insider’s cultural and educational background. Some argue that both ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ can be critical in the realm of Tibetan studies and vice-versa, while borders are sometimes blurry.\(^{30}\) As full objectivity on any type of subject is not possible, key points are self-awareness on the part of the researcher and adherence to a specific methodology.\(^{31}\)

With the employment of the above scholarly methods and strategies this research will show how the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas understood the theory of karmaphala from the Abhidharma standpoint.

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27 Ibid. p. 8.
28 Ruegg (2016: 198) suggests a relation between faithful and literal translation.
31 Marwick (2001: 45) argues that attainment of full objectivity in all kinds of fields is not possible.
1.2 The Abhidharmakośa, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and their Transmission in Tibet

1.2.1 Vasubandhu and the Indian Abhidharmakośa and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya

This section will briefly explore the life of Vasubandhu and historical account of the Abhidharmakośa in India in order to present some general background for the study.

There are various sources for the biography of Vasubandhu. For instance, Mejor mentions four principal biographies of Vasubandhu of which two are in Chinese and two in Tibetan and he provides a short analysis of them.\(^{32}\) This section will briefly explore the life of Vasubandhu and his intellectual impact on the Tibetan Buddhist world.

Vasubandhu is reported to hail from Purusapura which is Peshawar in present-day Pakistan.\(^ {33}\) Mejor reaches two conclusions in relation to the biography of Vasubandhu: he was the author of the Abhidharmakośa and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and that he later became a follower of the Mahāyāna. He concludes this despite the theory of two Vasubandhus which is not an issue in the traditional Tibetan Buddhist setting.\(^ {34}\)

Vasubandhu, who is traditionally counted among the Six Ornaments of the World\(^ {35}\) (‘dzam gling mde’i rgyan drug), is believed to have lived around the fifth century. Tibetan scholars often refer to him as ‘the second Buddha’ (sangs rgyas gnyis pa). Tāranātha (1575–1634) states that no one gained the fame of being as knowledgeable as Vasubandhu after the passing away of the Buddha.\(^ {36}\) Therefore, Vasubandhu is considered an indisputable intellectual colossus in the sphere of Tibetan Buddhism.

He was ordained in Nalanda and trained in the Tripiṭaka of the Śrāvakayāna (nyan thos kyi sde snod gsum). Tāranātha reports his departure to Kashmir to deepen his knowledge in Abhidharma and doctrines of the eighteen schools of śrāvakas. He studied Vibhāṣā (Bye brag tu bshad pa) and its commentaries, principally under the tutorship of Saṅghabhadra.\(^ {37}\) The account of his rigorous schooling in Abhidharma studies lends support to his credentials among the Tibetans as a bona fide expert able to compose a Vaibhāṣika treatise.

Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364) narrates an event where Vasubandhu and his half-brother Asaṅga engaged in discourse where Vasubandhu proved to be incisive in insight. Asaṅga, for his part, provided a satisfactory answer although he was somewhat less gifted in intelligence. Questioned about the cause for the good response, Asaṅga was said to have told

\(^{32}\) See Mejor (1991: 5–6).
\(^{33}\) Paramārtha (2002: 37).
\(^{34}\) Mejor (1991: 7).
\(^{35}\) Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Āryadeva, Dignāga, Vasubandhu, Dharmakīrti.
\(^{36}\) Tāranātha, rGya gar chos ‘byung, p.154:ston pa mya ngan las ’das pa’i ’og rol tu slob dpon dbyig gnyen lta bu’i mang du thos pa ni ’ga’ yang med do zhes grags so.
\(^{37}\) Tāranātha, rGya gar chos ‘byung, p.151.
Vasubandhu that he relied on Maitreya, his tutelary deity (yi dam), for answers since he lacked innate wisdom like Vasubandhu who had taken rebirth as a Paṇḍita for five hundred lifetimes.38

With regard to Vasubandhu’s religious affiliation while composing the Abhidharmakośa, Bu ston Rin chen grub, in his Bu ston chos 'byung, narrates that Vasubandhu composed it only after having developed faith in Mahāyāna. The Eighth Karmapa contends that Vasubandhu was on the Eighth Boddhisattva level but he composed the Abhidharmakośa while professing himself as a śrāvaka according to gradual engagement in the teachings of Buddha (bstan pa rim 'jug).39 The Eighth Karmapa even goes on to assert that Vasubandhu later displayed the mode (tshul bstan pa) of entering the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna path.40 Furthermore, Vasubandhu is considered one of the founders of Yogācāra in Tibetan thought.41 Kritzer, based on his analysis of Indian sources, also argues that Vasubandhu might have been already an exponent of the Yogācāra by the time he composed the Abhidharmakośaabhāṣya since his Sautrāntika arguments are similar to those found in the Yogācārabhūmi.42

After the composition of the Abhidharmakośa, the root text, it is believed that Saṅghabhadra and his students instructed Vasubandhu to write a commentary on it.43 Vasubandhu’s commentary contained many refutations of Vaibhāṣika thought.44 That led Saṅghabhadra, who was an adherent of Vaibhāṣika, to write two commentaries, which survive in Chinese, as a rebuttal to the Abhidharmakośa.45 It has been reported that Vasubandhu was even invited by Saṅghabhadra to debate with him but there is no historical account of such a debate occurring.46

Mejor lauds Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa as an unsurpassable treatise within the realm of Sarvāstivāda thought.47 It is probable that Buddhist traditions, especially those of

38 Bu ston, Bu ston chos 'byung, p.153.
39 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grab bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 1 p. 6: sa brgyad pa la gnas pa'i byang chub sms dpa' sms dpa' chen po db.yig g.yen g.yis bstan pa rim 'jug gi dbang du mdzad nas/ nyan thos sde pa'i gang zag tu zhal g.yis bzhes pai tshel sde pa de dang gi lia sgom spyod 'bras kyi grub mtha'i bstan bcos mang du brtams pa las/ re zhig chos thams kyi rtsa ba ma mo'i gzhung yin pa'i phyir/ bye brag tu bshad pa'i misho las brus pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod dam gter 'di brtams par mdzad cing.
40 Ibid.: phyi nas pha rol tu phyin pa dang / gsang chen g.yi lam la zhugs pa'i tshul bstan nas sngs rgyas kyi bstan pa la byi ba mdzad pa'i tshul bsam g.yis mi khyab mod.
42 Kritzer (1999: 3).
45 Ibid.
46 Dowling (1976: 33).
Tibetan Buddhism, hold him in high esteem largely on account of his contribution to Abhidharma in the form of the *Abhidharmakośa*. This is supported by the fact that other Abhidharma treatises are not studied as widely as the *Abhidharmakośa* in the monastic academic world of Tibetan Buddhism.

Although the number of treatises attributable to Vasubandhu differ according to scholars, and the fact of his authorship is disputed against the backdrop of the theory of two Vasubandhus, his contribution to Buddhist philosophy is not contested in Tibetan Buddhism.

### 1.2.2 A Short Account of the *Abhidharmakośa* in India

A few hundred years after the Buddha’s passing, the Buddhist community was divided into different schools including the Sarvāstivāda. Since it has been dealt with elsewhere, redoing it here is unnecessary. The respective methods of teaching and differing ideologies of the schools are maintained to have led to the development of Abhidharma texts.

Lists (*māṭṛkās*) of the Buddha’s teachings are suggested to have been instrumental in the establishment of Abhidharma texts, although the use of lists was not confined to Abhidharma. The earliest Abhidharma literature was meant to assemble, organise and condense the teachings of Buddha.

While Tibetan Buddhist tradition maintains that the schism led to the division of the community into eighteen schools, more schools have been suggested. All the seven scriptures of Abhidharma of Sarvāstivāda school are reported to survive only in Chinese and Theravāda school in Pali. Both Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda Abhidharma comprise seven scriptures though they differ in the two schools.

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48 See Mejor (1991: 7–13) under the section ‘Works of Vasubandhu.’
49 For instance, see Ryose (1987:10) and Dowling (1976: 11–22).
50 Ryose (1987:2).
51 Anālayo (2014: 24). Gethin (1992: 167) sums up that *māṭṛkās* not only helped memorising teachings but also assisted meditational practices.
54 Ibid.
55 See ibid. 39–40. He mentions the seven scriptures with their brief information. Seven scriptures of Abhidharma according to Sarvāstivāda are *Jñānaprasthāna* by Kātyāyana, *Prajñapti-sastra* by Maudgalyāyana, *Prakaranapāda* by Vasumitra, *Sangītiparvaya* by Mahākausūthila (Tibetan tradition) or by Śāriputra according to Chinese tradition, *Vijñānakāya* by Devaksema, *Dharmaskandha* by Śāriputra (Tibetan tradition or by Maudgalyāyana according to Chinese tradition, and *Dhatukaya* by Purna (Tibetan tradition) or Vasumitra (Chinese tradition). Frauwallner (1995) provides a summary of the seven scriptures of Abhidharma.
Vaibhāṣikas regarded Abhidharma scriptures as words of the Buddha while Sautrāntikas are reported to have denied it. Sautrāntikas are reported to have denied it. Vasubandhu also makes his disagreement of this position in the *Abhidharmakośa* I, 3abcd:

Apart from the discernment of the dharmas, there is no means to extinguish the defilements, and it is by reason of the defilements that the world wanders in the ocean of existence. So it is with a view to this discernment that the Abhidharma has been, they say, spoken [by the Master].

Authored by Vasubandhu around 500 A.D., the *Abhidharmakośa* which thematises contaminated and uncontaminated phenomena (zag bcas dang zag med kyi chos) is considered as the quintessence of the seven scriptures of Abhidharma (mngon pa sde bdun).

Vasubandhu is believed to have written the commentary from the Sautrāntika point of view, refuting Vaibhāṣika beliefs and theses to the disappointment of its proponents. Ryose argues Vasubandhu was Sautrāntika which accounts for the numerous criticisms of some Vaibhāṣika positions.

Even in the root text, Vasubandhu has shown some scepticism of Vaibhāṣika thought with the usage of disparaging terms such as *kila* (lo, grag, and zer in Tibetan) in the root verses on several occasions causing his disciples to raise concern about defaming their doctrine. However, it is reported that they were convinced that those words were rhetorical terms (tsig rgyan) since Vasubandhu was skilled at composition. Later his disagreements with some of the Vaibhāṣika positions were made explicitly known through his auto-commentary *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Since it was considered the essence of the seven scriptures of Abhidharma, the *Abhidharmakośa* has attracted the interest of numerous Indian

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57 Ibid. p. 57. Here Vasubandhu appears to distance himself from the viewpoint by saying ‘they say’ which arguably refers to Vaibhāṣikas.
59 Ibid.
60 MW, s.v. *kila*, suggests it to mean “probably,” “possibly,” “agreement,” “dislike,” “falsehood,” “inaccuracy,” and “reason.” It appears to mean expression of implying inaccuracy and falsehood in this context. This term is used in *Abhidharmakośa* by Vasubandhu on many occasions to disagree positions of Vaibhāṣika school. For instance, one can find it in the *Abhidharmakośa* I, 3abcd: dharmāṇāṁ pravicayam antareṇa nāsti kleśānāṁ yata upaśāntaye bhuyāpyāyaḥ / kleśāśca bhramati bhavānave 'tra lokas tuddhetor atu uditaḥ kilaiṣa śāstraḥ. Here Vasubandhu uses the term to dispute Vaibhāṣikas’ standpoint that Abhidharma treatises were taught by the Buddha.
61 rGya bod tsig mdzod: lo—lo grag zer gsum gyi ya gyal zhig ste ma rangs pa'i tshig. It is used to look at others’ viewpoints with contempt. One can also find grag and zer, to disdain others’ standpoint like lo, used in the Tibetan translation of *Abhidharmakośa* root verses.
62 It does not mention explicitly who convinced his disciples.
scholars such as Yaśomitra who commented on it. However, Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośa* and *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* have not gone without some opposition from Vaibhāṣika scholars. Even his Vaibhāṣika teacher Saṅghabhadra composed a *Samayapradīpika* and *Nyāyānusāra* commentary to counter Vasubandhu’s refutation of Vaibhāṣika doctrinal stances.\(^{63}\)

Despite some opposition and criticism, it seems that the *Abhidharmakośa* was well received in India. The *Abhidharmakośa* is said to have been promulgated by his teacher Saṅghabhadra, his student Dignāga, Sthiramati, Pūrṇavardhana, Yaśomitra and others through the composition of commentaries on it.\(^{64}\)

### 1.2.3 A Brief Survey of the *Abhidharmakośa* and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* in Tibet

Only the *Prajñaptiśāstra* (Tib. *gDags pa'i bstan bcos*), one of the seven scriptures of Abhidharma, composed by Maugalayana was translated into Tibetan.\(^{65}\) However, all the scriptures of Sarvāstivādins Abhidharma are reported to be extant in Chinese.\(^{66}\)

The *Abhidharmakośa* was translated into Tibetan and taught by Jinamitra and dPal brtsegs around 800 A.D. in Tibet according to Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–1899).\(^{67}\) They also translated and taught other Abhidharma texts and as a result produced three disciples who promulgated Abhidharma teachings in Tibet.\(^{68}\) However, the Blue Annals (*Deb ther sngon po*) composed by 'Gos lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481) reports that the Abhidharma teachings began only in the eleventh century in Tibet with Paṇḍita Smṛti.\(^{69}\)

Patt lists nine Indian *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries found in the bsTan 'gyur according to Bu ston.\(^{70}\) and seven according to Klong rdol bla ma (1719–1805).\(^{71}\) However, only the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* of Vasubandhu and the Tibetan commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa* are generally studied by Tibetan Buddhists. Stein mentions that Smṛti founded an educational centre to study *Abhidharmakośa* in Kham, Tibet.\(^{72}\) Patt reports that the first Tibetan commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa* was the *Nag ’jam* by mChims brTson

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\(^{63}\) Mejor (1991:13).
\(^{64}\) Patt (1993: 53).
\(^{65}\) Banerjee (1952: 373).
\(^{67}\) See Patt (1993:54).
\(^{68}\) See ibid.
\(^{70}\) Patt (1993: 47–50) enumerates them with names of author and translator.
\(^{71}\) Ibid. p. 51–52.
\(^{72}\) Stein (2013:198).
'grus seng ge.\textsuperscript{73} However, Coghlan asserts that the first Tibetan commentator of the 
*Abhidharmakośa* has not yet been ascertained.\textsuperscript{74}

### 1.2.4 The Status of Abhidhara in the Study and Practice of Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy

Although its numerous stances were later refuted by so called higher schools of Buddhism, Abhidharma appears to have laid the foundation of advanced doctrinal philosophy. The earlier positions or the theories appear more susceptible to being repudiated with the advancement of knowledge as is usual in many fields of knowledge including science.

Abhidharma appears not to have been accorded due recognition as equal to other major Buddhist philosophical systems such as Madhyamaka and seems to have suffered some negligence from the very early period of propagation of Buddhism in Tibet. During the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet, the translation of Madhyamaka and other philosophical texts from Sanskrit into Tibetan were given preference.\textsuperscript{75} This could be supported by the fact that only one of the seven scriptures of Abhidhara (*mgon pa sde bdun*) were translated into Tibetan while all of them are extant in Chinese.\textsuperscript{76} Coghlan suggests that Tibetan translators might have found some philosophical misconceptions in the Vaibhāṣika treatises which would account for only one of the seven scriptures of Abhidhara being translated into Tibetan.\textsuperscript{77} Bayer mentions that Tibetan rulers from the fifth century onward helped to introduce Mahāyāna Buddhism in Tibet.\textsuperscript{78} This also suggests that Tibetans preferred Mahāyāna texts over non-Mahāyāna texts such as those concerning Abhidhara. Poussin suggests that Tibetan translators felt it was unnecessary to translate all Abhidhara treatises since *Abhidharmakośa* summarised all doctrinal concepts such as ontology, cosmology, law of karmaphala and so on.\textsuperscript{79}

Disdain for the Abhidharma text in Tibet is enunciated by the words of Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug (1584–1630) in his *Abhidharmakośa* commentary:

> There are a lot of people who proceed to the result of *Avīci* hell

\textsuperscript{73} Patt (1993: 56) does not provide the source for the claim and the life date of mChims brTson 'grus seng ge.  
\textsuperscript{74} mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, trans. Coghlan (2018: 20).  
\textsuperscript{75} Banerjee (1952: 378).  
\textsuperscript{76} Mejor (1991:18).  
\textsuperscript{77} mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, trans. Coghlan (2018: 2).  
\textsuperscript{78} Bayer (2019: 3).  
\textsuperscript{79} Vasubandhu; Poussin, La Vallee; Pruden, Leo M. (trans.) 1991. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*, vol. I p. 5.
who are courageous enough to
denounce and abandon śāstras such as the Abhidharmakośa
as text and words of dialecticians (determining reality through mere abstract
reasons).  

Nevertheless, Abhidharma gained a reasonable reputation and attracted attention that resulted
later in the extensive study and composition of commentaries in Tibet. Abhidharma is
deemed to be a subject that should precede the study of Abhisamaya (phar phyin) for its
easier understanding. This led to the emergence of an oral maxim among Tibetan Buddhist
scholars: phar pyin mngon pa'i khri la bzhus (Abhisamaya sits on the throne of
Abhidharma).  

mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs (1210–1289), author of the most famous Tibetan
commentary, praises the Abhidharmakośa, wherein treatment of the classifications of the
preparatory stages (nyer bsdogs), meditative and formless absorption (bsam gan dang gzugs
med snyoms 'jug) are found, as the foundation of many virtues. Therefore, one may also
argue that study and practice of meditative techniques were first expounded in abhidharmic
treatises. mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs further commends the Abhidharmakośa as the source of
knowledge on the nature of the world and moving beings (brtan dang g.yo ba) and their
causes, birth and liberation from them. With a range of topics including cosmology, the Abhidharmakośa appears to have laid
a solid foundation for the higher Buddhist doctrines. Frauwallner argues that the origin of
Mahāyāna philosophical systems is traceable to non-Mahāyāna thought such as Abhidharma.
He argues that the Abhidharmasamuccaya was founded on the Abhidharma system. Patt too
maintains that the Abhidharmasamuccaya deals with the same topic as the Abhidharmakośa
but from the Mahāyāna point of view. Moreover, Bayer is of the opinion that the

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80 Chos kyi dbang phyug. Zhwa dmar VI, mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhad pa, p.192: mNgon pa'i mdzod gzhung lla bu'i bsatan bcos la/rto gge pa yi gzhung tshig yin zhe nas/span gzhing 'dor bar byed pa'i snying phod can/ mnar med dnyal ba chen po'i 'bras ba la/nige bar gzhol ba'i skal can shin tu mang.
81 While studying at Ngagyur Nyingma Institute in Mysore, I heard this maxim uttered by many, though its origin could not be traced.
82 mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 678: phyir yon tan rten gyur yan lag nyer bsdogs dang bcas pa'i/bsam gan dang ni gza gnas med snyoms 'jug rab dbye 'thob tshul dang /ide dag la brten yon tan ting 'dzin tshad med rnam thar sogs/ jii bzhi rtogs pa gnas 'di las yin de phyir 'di mnyan rigs/
83 Ibid.: brtan dang g.yo ba'i 'gro ba'i rang bzhiin gang yin de sgrub byed/ /skye ba dang ni skyed byed de dag rnam pa ma las lus/ rnam grol de yang de bzhiin naid yin dpag yas yon tan la/ rthogs med spogs pa'i 'byang gnas chos mngon 'di ni sangs rgyas gzungs.
85 Patt (1993: 9). Unfortunately, the writer who praised Abhidharmakośa remains anonymous.
*Abhidharmasamuccaya* applied the framework of early Abhidharma texts for its own structure.\(^{86}\)

Lists and enumerated taxonomies and definitions of the terms of Abhidharma are found in the Mahāyāna including Varjayāna texts. The cosmological description of *Abhidharmakośa*, along with Kālacakra, is reported to have formed the core idea of Buddhist cosmology in Tibetan Buddhism.\(^{87}\)

Abhidharma, with its taxonomies and definitions of contaminated and uncontaminated phenomena, provides beginners with intellectual orientation to higher philosophical knowledge. The 19\(^{th}\) century non-sectarian master, mKhan po gZhan dga’ (1871–1927) is said to have favoured the *Abhidharmakośa* over the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* in order to orient learners to Abhidharna.\(^{88}\)

Abhidharma arguably established the root for Buddhist theories; higher philosophical systems have imported them with or without modifications. Ryose has even gone so far as to claim that Abhidharma texts serve as the basis for all kinds of Buddhist philosophy although this point should be subject to further academic study.\(^{89}\) Abhidhama, it may be argued, is unrivalled by any other school of thought in terms of exposition on conventional phenomena (*tha snyad kyi chos*) on which Buddhist philosophical discourses are based.

Patt provides translation of a certain writer who extolled *Abhidharmakośa* as the sole gateway through which Buddhist doctrines can be attained.\(^{90}\) The writer mentions it in his dedicational words for serving as a scribe for Tsong kha pa’s (1357–1419) *Abhidharmakośa* commentary *Thar lam gsal byed*.

The numerous Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries lend support to the fact that scholars attached significance to the *Abhidharmakośa* in the overall study and practice of Buddhism. Many Tibetan scholars from all the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism saw doctrinal and soteriological dimensions in the *Abhidharmakośa* and its commentaries. For instance, mChims 'Jam pa’i dbyangs highlighted the philosophical and soteriological interest of the *Abhidharmakośa* and lauded it as a major source of philosophy and liberation. He notes:

> A vast ocean of Buddha’s teaching

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\(^{86}\) Bayer (2010: 29).

\(^{87}\) mChims 'Jam pa’i dbyangs, trans. Coghlan (2018:15).

\(^{88}\) Bayer (2010: 186).

\(^{89}\) Ryose (1987: 2).

\(^{90}\) Patt (1993:62).
and a vessel for proceeding to the jewel land of liberation
is Abhidharma alone.
Therefore, I take delight in its exposition.\textsuperscript{91}

Mi pham (1846–1912), a systematiser of rNying ma pa philosophy during the \textit{ris med} (non-sectarian) period, also mentions a soteriological aspect of the \textit{Abhidharmakośa} while making a pledge to the composition (\textit{rtsom par dam bca’ ba}) of his commentary:

Having understood [it], I will appropriately explain the \textit{Abhidharmakośa} of the one [Vasubandhu] who has realised seven scriptures of Abhidharma that eliminate the tree of cyclic existence, [and] which is the supreme sword likened to the petal of Utpala.\textsuperscript{92}

\textit{Mi pham mdzod} (an \textit{Abhidharmakośa} commentary by Mi pham), which is a much later work composed in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, also appears to imply the philosophical and scholastic significance of the \textit{Abhidharmakośa} by referring to it as a treatise that analyses all kinds of phenomena (\textit{shes bya}).\textsuperscript{93}

Due to its encyclopaedic nature, Abhidharma covers a wide range of topics from cosmology to Buddhist science and philosophy.\textsuperscript{94} Even the different non-Mahāyāna philosophical systems of Indian Buddhism embarked on the abhidharmic writings to demonstrate their knowledge of all the phenomena, among which Sarvāstivāda gained the greatest influence in India.\textsuperscript{95}

1.3 Tibetan Sources and Academic Literature on the \textit{Abhidharmakośa}

1.3.1 Academic Work on the \textit{Abhidharmakośa} with a Focus on Tibet

Research on the \textit{Abhidharmakośa} by Western scholars is limited, especially on its Tibetan commentaries. On one hand, the \textit{Abhidharmakośa} might have failed to attract attention from Western scholars due to the vastness of the subjects covered by it; on the other, it seems that

\textsuperscript{91} mChims’Jam pa’i dbyangs, \textit{mChims mdzod}, p. 1: 
\textit{sangs rgyas gsung rab rgya mtsho che// thar pa’i rin chen gling ’gro’i gru/} cho s m n g n y i d y i n d e y i phyir// d i ’chad pa l a d g a’ ba skyes.

\textsuperscript{92} Mi pham rgya mtsho (1846–1912), \textit{Mi pham mdzod} p. 4: 
\textit{srid pa’i ljon pa gcod byed sde bdun gyi// utpal ’dab dang mtshungs pa’i ral gri mchos/ nye bar chud pa gang gi chos m ngon mdzod/ tshul bzhiin mthong nas legs par dgrol bar bya.}

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.: d i ’dir shes bya mtha’ dag rab tu rnam par ’byed pa dam pa’i chos m ngon par mdzod d i n y i d ’chad pa l a.

\textsuperscript{94} Patt (1993:31–38).

\textsuperscript{95} Ryose (1987: 8).
Western scholars are more attracted to philosophical texts such as those of Madhyamaka, as were their Indian and Tibetan counterparts during the 8th and 9th century, or to teachings concerning Mahāmudrā, or rDzogs chen. Even in contemporary Tibetan monastic institutions in India such as Ngagyu Nyingma Institute, Abhidharma is often treated with a degree of contempt by some students mainly because they consider some Vaibhāṣika concepts such as obtainment (Tib. thob pa, Skt. prāpti) unacceptable.

This section will briefly explore the attempts made by Western scholars to study the work of traditional Tibetan scholars on Abhidharma and the Abhidharmakośa.

Patt (1993): Elucidating the Path to Liberation: A Study of the Commentary on the Abhidharmakośa by the First Dalai Lama

The doctoral thesis ‘Elucidating the Path to Liberation: A Study of the Commentary on the Abhidharmakośa by the First Dalai Lama’ by David Patt undertakes a study of the Abhidharmakośa commentary mDzod ūk thar lam gsal byed by dGe ‘dun grub (1391-1474). Patt provides a study and translation of the first five chapters of the mDzod ūk thar lam gsal byed. Patt’s thesis was aimed at intermediate learners or those of moderately higher capacity. It focused more on providing guidance for those who wished to engage with the Abhidharmakośa which is written in a condensed manner. With the discussion on the nature of Abhidharma and the description and treatment of its subject matters, Patt’s study can be used as a source and guidance for future research on Abhidharma including the present thesis.

Mejor (1991): Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa and the Commentaries Preserved in the Tanjur

The monograph Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa and the Commentaries Preserved in the Tanjur by Marek Mejor discusses the nine Indian commentaries of the Abhidharmakośa found in the bsTan ’gyur of the Peking edition. The book does not deal with the doctrinal contents of the Abhidharmakośa in depth but covers general issues such as authorship and date of its commentaries found in bsTan ’gyur. While this study casts light on the issues related to translation of Indian Abhidharmakośa commentaries into Tibetan, it does not engage in a philosophical study of the Abhidharmakośa or any particular Abhidharma theory.

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96 Patt (1993: 5) makes it clear in the section ‘The scope of the study.’
Choephel (2012): *Jewels from the Treasury: Vasubandhu's Verses on the Treasury of Abhidharma and its Commentary Youthful Play by the Ninth Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje*

*Jewels from the Treasury: Vasubandhu's Verses on the Treasury of Abhidharma and its Commentary Youthful Play by the Ninth Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje* is a translation of the Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentary of the Ninth Karmapa by David Karma Choephel. Although it is not a research and analytical study in the strict sense, it contains the translation of the whole commentary in English. While the translation could boast of being the first English translation of the Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentary, the translation is not readily intelligible and it demands consultation of the original Tibetan text as is the case with many English translations of Tibetan texts. For instance, the terms for ‘perceptible, imperceptible, percepts and impercepts’ in the following passage are not easily understandable until one refers to the original text since no Tibetan or Sanskrit equivalents are provided.

3. Perceptible and imperceptible karma

2a Those two are percepts and impercepts.

Those two, karma of body and speech, are the perceptible karma of body, the imperceptible karma of body, and the perceptible and imperceptible karmas of speech.97


In this article, Jowita Kramer provides a brief account of Indian Abhidhharma in Tibet and discusses specifically the *Pañcaskandhaka*, a treatise of Yogācāra Abhidharma composed by Vasubandhu which deals with the five aggregates of a person (*phung po lgna*). The article studies *Vijnāna (rnam shes)* and its three attributes and *ālayavijnāna* in particular according to Sthiramati’s commentary on the *Pañcaskandhaka*, the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*. Evidence of the existence of *ālayavijnāna* is given adequate attention.

Coghlan (2018): *Ornament of Abhidharma: A Commentary on Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa*

In this work, Ian James Coghlan provides an English translation of the *Chos mngon mdzod kyi tshig le'ur byas pa'i 'grel pa mngon pa'i rgyan* by mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, the Tibetan

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commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa* which is considered the most authoritative. With the footnotes and equivalent Sanskrit terms where applicable, the translation is academic in approach. Since the work includes some research on the general Indian and Tibetan background of the *Abhidharmakośa*, the translation can be a good source in the study of Tibetan Abhidharma.

### 1.3.2 Major Tibetan Commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa*

Although Abhidharma seems to have received lukewarm interest in Tibet in the initial stage of translating Buddhist texts and propagating Buddhism in Tibet as pointed out in the previous sections, it subsequently attracted the attention of many Tibetan scholars from all the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism which resulted in the composition of numerous commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa*. The principal reason for the proliferation of commentaries by different schools may have been to establish their own commentarial texts in all subject areas. This will be dealt with in brief in the fourth chapter.

To provide an overall picture and general background on the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries in the Tibetan language, this section will survey in brief some major commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa* of various schools of Tibetan Buddhism. They are considered major in the researcher’s judgment based on the prominent status of an author and the general reception of the text by their respective schools.

Among the major Tibetan commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa*, this research will study the commentaries of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa. It is reasonable to study the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary since it seems to be the most extensive among Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries.

The commentary of the Eighth Karmapa has some unique interpretations which differ from those of other Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentators, including mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs. These will be explored briefly in the fourth chapter.

It is also appropriate to study the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary since it is concise and studied as a textbook for understanding the *Abhidharmakośa* in bKa’ brgyud pa institutes. Furthermore, it appears to be a condensation of the Eight Karmapa’s commentary. Therefore, the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary is suitable for study in relation to the commentary of the Eighth Karmapa. Discussion on their commentaries is provided in the following sections.
1) mChims mdzod

Among the Tibetan commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa* in Tibet, the *mChims mdzod* of mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs (1210–1289) who hailed from bKa' gdams pa school apparently gained the most authoritative status in Tibet. That led to an axiom *mNgon pa mchims la gtugs* (mChims is the final authority for Abhidharma) among Tibetan Buddhist scholars. This saying indicates its positive reception. 98

The *mChims mdzod* has become a basis for the study, exposition and later composition for commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa*. It is reported that Tsong kha pa studied the *Abhidharmakośa* under mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs; dGe 'dun grub based his commentary on *mChims mdzod* 99 and the Eighth Karmapa also consulted the *mChims mdzod*.100

While it is used as a principal text in the dGe lugs pa institutes,101 it is also referred to extensively in the study of the *Abhidharmakośa* by all major Buddhist schools alongside the commentaries of their own.

2) Thar lam gsal byed

The *Thar lam gsal byed*, composed by dGe 'dun grub (1391–1474) is well received in the dGe lugs pa school of Tibetan Buddhism and comparable to the *gZhon nu rnam rol* in terms of scale. Patt mentions that he studied the *Thar lam gsal byed* for his doctoral thesis because of its being a condensed form of the *Abhidharmakośa*.102

The *Thar lam gsal byed* is also studied as an alternative text to the *mChims mdzod* in the dGe lugs pa institutes of Buddhist studies for those students who wish to study the compact form of the commentary.103

3) Mi pham mdzod

In the rNying ma pa school, Mi pham rgya mtsho’s (1846–1912) *Abhidharmakośa* commentary *Dam pa'i chos mngon pa mdzod kyi mchan 'grel rin po che'i do shal blo gsal dgyes pa'i mgul rgyan* [An Interlinear Commentary of Abhidharmakośa: The Precious Necklace, a Neck Ornament that Pleases the Intelligent] is widely studied as a curriculum

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98 The origin of this maxim could not be traced.
100 Rheingans (2017: 101).
101 Patt (1993: 63).
102 Ibid. p. 6.
103 Ibid. p. 63.
item in many contemporary rNying ma monastic education centres such as Ngagyur Nyingma Institute in Mysore, India. Although the title of the commentary reads as mchen 'grel (interlinear explanation) which is suggestive of being concise, it totals around 508 folios.

Mi pham’s commentary is not as polemic as the Eighth Karmapa’s Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo and seems to take an argumentative tone only when necessitated by the root texts. Unlike other Tibetan commentarial texts, it does not mention about reliance on the previous commentaries on the Abhidharmakośa. Also, it is a much later work of the ris med period.

1.3.3 The Commentaries by the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa

This section will briefly look into the biography of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa in order to shed some light on their historical and intellectual background. It will then discuss the textual sources of the Eighth and Ninth Karmapa’s Abhidharmakośa commentaries, the main sources for this research.

1.3.3.1 A Brief Biography of the Eight Karmapa

Rheingans enumerates nine autobiographical and numerous biographical sources of the Eighth Karmapa and gives a detailed analysis of his life. In this section, discussion of the life of the Eighth Karmapa will be limited to his scholarly activities to determine his credentials as a commentator on the Abhidharmakośa.

Mi bskyod rdo rje was born in 1507 corresponding to the year of the fire hare year of the Tibetan calendar. He is believed to have said ‘I am the Karmapa’ immediately after the birth although various sources report differently the number of repetitions and words spoken. The recognition of the Eighth Karmapa was undertaken rigorously beginning seven days after birth, and again after the emergence of a new claimant to the title of Karmapa in around 1508. After resolving the controversy of the reincarnation, he was enthroned in 1513.

His early education is said to have begun with rGyal tshab Rin po che. The Eighth Karmapa mentions that he had studied grammar, astrology, poetry and philosophy at the feet of many masters with much persistence. He shares that he dreamt of alphabets and vowels (dbyangs gsal) with the rays of sun and moon pervading the whole sky which led him to

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105 Ibid. p 73.
106 Ibid. p. 73,74.
107 Ibid. p. 77.
108 Ibid. p. 84.
believe that it was an omen for him to obtain the capacity to teach dharma in accordance with scripture.109

The Eighth Karmapa had four main masters who were known as rje btsun chen po rnam pa bzhi: (i) Sarings rgyas mnyan pa bKra shis dpal 'byor (1445/1457–1510/1525); (ii) bDud mo ma bKra shi’od zer (b. 15th century, d. c.1545); (iii) mKhan chen Chos grub seng ge (b.15th century); and (iv) Karma ’phrin las pa I Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1456–1539).110 He received the teachings on the Abhidharmakośa and other Buddhist philosophical texts from Karma ’phrin las pa during his stay with him for three years.111 He was reported to be intelligent and so industrious that he barely took recess even for tea during study.112

Rheingans suggests that Karma ’phrin las pa could have influenced the Eighth Karmapa to compose his own Abhidharmakośa commentary.113 Furthermore, composition of commentaries on Vinaya is also reported to have been motivated by Karma ’phrin las pa.114

It was the motivation of the Eighth Karmapa to write a commentary on four of the five major subjects of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy.115 His principal motive behind this enterprise may have been to provide the bKa’ brgyud pa school with scholarly texts of their own system when other scholastic traditions such as dGe lugs pa already had philosophical texts of their own, expounded principally by Tsong kha pa.

The Eighth Karmapa acknowledges the arousal of wisdom within him to unmistakably interpret the intended meaning of the Abhidharmakośa independent of other masters.116 From an emic point of view, this sort of statement by masters is made to subjects who have complete faith and who would receive them as truth though it may sound egotistical to outsiders.

Systematisation of the bKa’ brgyud school is reported to have begun with the Third Karmapa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339),117 a process which appears to have been further strengthened by the Eighth Karmapa. The Eighth Karmapa can be placed among Mi pham

109 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII. Karma pa mi bskyod rdo rje’i rnam thar rje nyid kyi rnam thos kyi ri bor mdzad pa fol.5a–5b (p.338–339): re zhiig rang gi rmi lam gsal ba na/ /dbyangs gsal yiig gzug nyi zla’i ’od ’bar ba/ /nam mkha’i khams kun khyab pa gsal bar mthong / /deng sang gtseg lag gzung la ma rmongs par / /dam chos gsung rab bzhiin da ston nus pa’i / /stas su’ gyur ram snyam pa’i the tshom skyes.


111 Ibid. (2021: 95).


113 Ibid. (2021:124).

114 Ibid. p. 119.

115 Ibid. (2017: 03).

116 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII. Karma pa mi bskyod rdo rje’i rnam thar rje nyid kyi rnam thos kyi ri bor mdzad pa fol. 5b (p.339): rang lo nyer bdun pa la chos mngon mdzad/ /rnam par’ grel tshe slob dpon gzhun drin g’i/ /ngag la ltos pa med par bstan bcos de’i/ /algongs don’ khrul med byed pa’i shes rab skyes.

and Tsong kha pa as a systematiser of his own philosophical system. This is corroborated by the number of his compositions,\textsuperscript{118} and the reception of them by bKa’ brgyud pa tradition. Rheingans concludes that the Eighth Karmapa’s most outstanding contribution to the Karma bKa’ brgyud is in the area of Buddhist scholarship as a highly accomplished scholar, equal only to the Third Karmapa in terms of output and impact.\textsuperscript{119}

\textbf{1.3.3.2 Commentary by the Eighth Karmapa: Textual Sources}

In the bKa’ brgyud pa tradition, the \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo} of the Eighth Karmapa appears to be the second \textit{Abhidharmakośa} commentary after the first Karma ’phrin las pa’s (1456–1539) \textit{Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi sbyor ŏik}.\textsuperscript{120} However, Karma ’phrin las pa’s commentary seems to have been lost. The author to the preface of the Sarnath edition of the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary \textit{gZhon nu rnam rol} also states that the \textit{Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi sbyor ŏik} did not come to his notice.\textsuperscript{121} However, Rheingans reports, in his publication on Karma ’phrin las pa (1456-1539), that a surviving copy of the treatise is suspected to be in Beijing.\textsuperscript{122}

Since it includes the presentation of various standpoints of many Indian and Tibetan scholars and some refutation of them, it is clear that the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo} represents a detailed treatment of the \textit{Abhidharmakośa}. Although it warrants further research it appears that the \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo} is even more detailed and polemical than \textit{mChims mdzod} in terms of refutation of others’ positions, establishment of one’s standpoint and elimination of objections to one’s stance (\textit{dgag bzhag spong gsum}).

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary which took around twelve years to complete was begun in Kong po in 1532 and completed in 1543.\textsuperscript{123} He reports that he primarily based his commentary on \textit{mChims Nam mkha’ grags'} (1210–85) \textit{Abhidharmakośa} commentary and on the \textit{Abhidharmakośabhāṣya}.\textsuperscript{124}

In the colophon to Volume II of the commentary, the Eighth Karmapa states that he started to compose his commentary at the age of twenty-six and completed at the age of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid. p. 3 reports more than thirty volumes in various spheres of study.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Ibid. p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{120} dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX. \textit{gZhon nu rnam rol}, p. vi. The preface to this edition mentions a brief account of \textit{Abhidharmakośa} commentaries by bKa’ brgyud pa scholars.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Ibid. p. xiii: rje karma phrin las dang / karma nges legs bstan ’dzin dang / khams sprul bzhi pa dang bdun pa’i chos mngon mdzod kyi ’grel pa de rnams phyag dpe dangs su mjal rgyu ma byung bas.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Rheingans (2021: 118).
\item \textsuperscript{123} Rheingans (2017: 101).
\item \textsuperscript{124} Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII. \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo}, Vol. I p. 628: rang lo nyer drug par mchims nam mkha’ grags kyi ŏi ka gzhir byas kyi dgongs pa bitus nas. See appendix for the whole translation.
\end{itemize}
thirty-seven at Yar lha sham po mountain in Lo kha. Patron bSam 'grub bde chen is reported to have provided the necessities. He notes:

Thus this commentary is completed by the one who has realised the vital and secret points of the boundless aspects of dharma of Three Baskets which consist of Three Vehicles and experienced the causal and resultant vehicle through mahāyānic ripening and liberation (smin grol); who has no hesitation in the explication [of teachings] to others; the subject of the venerable Triple Jewel; the Translator; and the Monk of Śākyamuni ; [who is] blessed with the name of Lord Karmapa; Chos drup grags pa, who gained victory over all opponents throughout all time at the early age of thirty seven starting from the age of twenty six at the neck of Yar lha sham po mountain when the patron of founding the seat bSam 'grub bde chen connected with the necessities according to dharma.125

The second volume of his commentary consists of commentary on the fourth to the eighth chapters, which includes the Karma Chapter. In the concluding remarks to the Karma Chapter, the Eighth Karmapa says that he completed the chapter at the mountain where Gangs dkar sha med (a kind of demon) lived.126

The colophon of Volume I mentions that the Eighth Karmapa completed his commentary on the first chapter while in Kong po. He mentions that he suspended writing the commentary for a while, doubting that there would be people enthusiastic for the study of the Abhidharmakośa. However, he resumed his work after the advice from his master Karma phrin las pa during his visit to central Tibet. The Eighth Karmapa reports that he resumed

125 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp'yid 'jo, Vol. II p. 815: zhes bya ba 'di ni theg pa gsum gyis bsdus pa'i sde snod rin po gsum gyi chos tshul mthas yas pa'i gnad gsang rtogs shing / kh Yad par rgyu 'bras kyi theg pa chen po mtha' dag gis smin pa dang grol ba'i myong ba phar cher nyams su bstar nas gzh an la smra ba la 'jigs pa thams cad dang bral ba/ rje btsun dkon mchog gsum gyi 'bangs su gyur pa sākya'i dge slong lo tsā ba rgyal ba karm a pa'i mthshan gyis byin gyis brilabs pa/ dpalchos grub grags pa phyogs thams cad las dus kun tu sna tshogs par nram par rgyal ba mi bskyod bzang po dga' ba'i dbyangs kyis rang lo nyer drug pa nas mgo brtsams rang lo so bdun gyi ngo mthong ba na/ gnyan chen po yar la gzh am po'i mgud du gdan chags pa'i sbyin pa'i bdag po bsam 'grub bde chen pas chos dang mthun pa'i 'tsho ba sbyar skabs su yongs su rdzogs par grub pa des.
126 Ibid. p. 287: legs par bshad pa'i spros pa rgyas pa 'di/ gangs dkar sha med bsten pa'i gangs ri mchog /dben pa'i gnas su bsam gstan byed pa'i tshel / thun mthshams bying rmugs sel ba'i nyams myong phyir / dpal ldan mi bskyod bzang pos legs par sbyar. It has been not possible to ascertain whether he refers to Yar lha sham po mountain.
writing his commentary from the second chapter at Nyug rgyal khang near g.Yas ru gtsang 'gram lha khang at the age of thirty-three.127

The colophon to the publication mentions the inability to obtain an original text of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary when the block for the print was being prepared. Therefore, the dPal spungs print had to rely on the two manuscripts from dPal spungs and mTshur phu which differed vastly in terms of wording and meaning. However, the colophon says that the dPal spungs print relied mainly on mTshur phu’s manuscript which suggests it to be more reliable than the one from dPal spungs. The colophon also mentions some minor additions made to the edition. The editor remarks:

When the block for Mi bskyod rdo rje’s mDzod ṭik was being prepared, an original print could not be obtained. Therefore, manuscripts were borrowed from dPal spungs and mTshur phu. However, they were not similar in any great degree in terms of general outline, meaning and word. Moreover, the fourth chapter onwards and the first and the second chapters in particular were utterly dissimilar and (I, the editor) did not know how great was the merit [of the manuscripts]. Nevertheless, those recognisable missing and excess [parts] were provided with minor additions. The print was relied on the mTshur phu edition.128

The colophon shows awareness of textual problems by the editors. The colophon states that they found that the manuscript of mTshur phu had retained the intended meaning of the Eighth Karmapa:

However, this manuscript [of mTshur phu] seems to have retained the intended original subject matter without altering and [the manuscript] is extremely excellent. Therefore, the editor makes this supplementary remark for various reasons such as to

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127 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpayid ’jo, Vol. I p. 628: snyoms ’jug dang po’i ’gerl pa rgyas bsdu’ tshams par kong po silod dus grub pa las/ dus kyis dbang gi ’gerl pa byas kyang don gnyen can gyi skye bo mi ’byang bar dogs pa las/ slar dhus su phyin pa na bde bar gshegs pa chen po karma phrin las pa zhabs kyi bkas bskal ba brten/ slar g.yus ru gtsang ’gram gyi lha khang dang nye bu/ hor sa skya pa yon mchod kyis gan pa’i pho brang du dbab pa’i nyug rgyal khang du rang lo so gsum pa nas gnas gnyis pa’i snyoms ’jug gnyis pa phyin gyi ’gerl par bgys pa la.

128 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpayid ’jo, Vol. II p.816: rgyal dbang brgyad pa mi bskyod zhabs kyi mdzod ti’ gi’ nyid spar du brko ba’i gnas skabs su ma phyi spar ma’ dra ni ma rneyed stabs dpal spungs rang du yod pa’ti bris ma zhi dang / mtsur phu’i phyag dpe’i khrod nas g.yar ba de gnyis kyang spyi don tshig don sogz gang thad nas khyad che ba lia bus mtshungs pa cher mi’ duag /laq don skabs bzhi pa yan chod dang / de’i nang nas kyang skabs dang po gnyis pa skor ni gian nas mi mtshungs pa lia bu red ’duag pa bcas legs cha gang che ma shes rong chad laq dmigs bsal nge shes rigs kha sab(kha bsab?) phran bu byas te spar gyi ma gzhi ni mtshur phu’i steng nas gzhi bzhag rgyu red song.
request (sgron pa) [readers] that [this text] should not be taken as something trivial and so that (ched du) [its excellent nature] is noted (shes par bya ba) as a point (gnas) the intelligent people should understand.\textsuperscript{129}

Nevertheless, one is still in need of further evidence to support the claim that mTshur phu’s print has preserved the intended meaning of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary. This kind of textual uncertainty is understandable since the print was prepared a few hundred years after the author’s passing.

The editions of the Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo are numerous. However, they appear to have been for the most part based on the dPal spungs print which was first prepared in 1925.\textsuperscript{130} This section will discuss different editions, their scope and context. The titles of the commentary differ slightly among editions.

**dPal spungs Print**


(Reproduced from a dPal spungs print from Rumtek). The dPal spungs edition has two volumes which run to 1451 folios in total. Printed in 1925, as mentioned above, it is possibly the oldest block print and more reliable in terms of orthography compared to other editions such as the Nitartha International and Lhasa editions discussed below. This research will mainly utilise this edition. The colophon of the text notes that it has relied on the two different manuscripts of the commentary as mentioned above.\textsuperscript{131}

The dPal spungs print has also been reproduced at Khren tu’u bod kyi nang bstan dpe tshogs lte ba in Chengdu, the capital of China’s Sichuan province.

**Nitartha International Print**


\textsuperscript{129} Ibid. p. 816-817. *bris ma ’di’ dang po’i skabs kyi rtsom gzhis thugs la gang dgongs ma bcos par gsungs pa lha bu’i shin tu ngo mtshar ba zhi’g tu ’dag pas ’gang chung da ma sogs ba dpyod ldan rnams kyi’i shes par bya ba’i gnas so zhes ched du sgron pa so sogs dgos pa du ma’i sliad du zhu dag mkhan pos zhar byung gi ’phros su bgyis pa’o*.

\textsuperscript{130} Rheingans (2017: 49).

\textsuperscript{131} Issues related to the source of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary are mentioned in the colophon and its translation is provided in the appendix.
The publishing note simply mentions that the edition was based on the Delhi edition although it is hard to determine if this is the case. The edition is plausibly based on the dPal spung print from Rumtek which was printed in Delhi. The publishing note also mentions emendation of text with corrections provided in parenthesis. However, these are barely noticeable in the text. Despite the addition of some explanations of the terms and footnotes on references it is not as reliable as the dPal spung edition.

Lhasa Edition

Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi ’grel pa rgyas par spros pa grub bde’i dpyid ’jo (Vol.10 and 11 of the Collected Works of Mi bskyod rdo rje) Lhasa, 2004. Two volumes contain 888 folios or 1776 pages in total. The volumes were published with the funding from the Tsadra Foundation. There is no mention of the text upon which it relied. Moreover, the text has simple and avoidable orthographical errors.

1.3.3.3 A Brief Biography of the Ninth Karmapa

The Ninth Karmapa was born in sTag bzang, Kham in Tibet in 1556 corresponding to the year of the fire dragon in the ninth sexagenary cycle. As common to all Karmapas, the life of the Ninth Karmapa is interspersed with stories of many miracles which are received well by the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

Both parents of the Ninth Karmapa are said to have had various dreams which were taken by tradition as an omen for the imminent birth of an extraordinary child. For instance, his mother dreamt of soaring into the sky and leading the crowd in recitation of the six-syllable mantra (om mani padme hum) while his father dreamt of taking a lion cub on his lap.

The child is reported to have wiped his face thrice immediately after the birth and uttered ‘I am the Karmapa’ without blinking. Moreover, the child is said to have remained in cross-legged posture (skyil krung) for a long time, and on occasion showed many hand gesticulations (phyag rgya). Self-identification is a trademark in many of the Karmapa hagiographies. For instance, the Fourth Karmapa Rol pa'i rdo rje (1349–1383) told his parents

132 ‘Jam dbyangs tshul khrims, Karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi mdzad rnam, p.169.
133 Karma nges don bstan rgyas. Chos rje karma pa sku ’phreng rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bs dus dpag bsam khri shing, p.395.
134 Rheingans (2017: 73)
135 Karma nges don bstan rgyas. Chos rje karma pa sku ’phreng rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bs dus dpag bsam khri shing, p.396.
at the age of three that he was the Second Karmapa Karma Pakshi (1206-1283). The Third Karmapa is also said to have informed his parents that he was Karmapa.

From the etic or ‘outsider’ point of view, those miraculous episodes might not lend support to the Karmapa’s credentials as a qualified commentator of the Abhidharmakośa. However, for insiders to the tradition, these narratives could have a positive impact on his credibility as a superior being capable of performing deeds beyond a normal individual’s capacity including commenting on a highly philosophical treatise.

The official enthronement of the child as the Ninth Karmapa is said to have taken place at the age of six. Karma nges don bstan rgyas mentions that dBang phyug rdo rje studied under his tutor the fifth Zhwa dmar pa dKon mchog yan lag (1525–1583). His studies included the collected works (bKa’ bum) of the past bKa’ brgyud masters (bka’ brgyud gong ma) although he does not specify them. While the Ninth Karmapa does not mention his other tutor, rNam rgyal grags pa (16th Century), he does count him along with dKon mchog yan lag as as one of his teachers and rates him as a scholar unparalleled in exposition, debate and composition in Tibet. According to the colophon of the commentary, the Ninth Karmapa took only one year to complete the commentary which he started to compose at the age of twenty.

Thinley mentions that the Ninth Karmapa had composed some significant texts, which seem to have been mainly on Mahāmudrā. However, the compositions were fewer in number than those of the Eighth Karmapa.

1.3.3.4 Commentary by the Ninth Karmapa: Textual Sources

Editions of the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary are limited. Moreover, the title of the commentary varies in different editions probably as a result of abbreviating the longer title of the text.

136 Ibid. p. 184.
137 Seegers (2009: 85).
139 Karma nges don bstan rgyas, Chos rje karma pa sku ’phreng rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdu bsam ’khris shing, p.401–402. Rheingans (2017: 69) reports that he summarised this hagiography from Si tu Pañ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas’ (1699/1700–1774) and ‘Be lo Tshe dbang kun khyab’s sGrub brgyud karma kam tshang brgyud pa rnam thar rin po ché’i rnam par thar pa rab’ byams nor bu zla ba chu shel gyi phreng ba. 
140 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p.592: gangs can ljong ’dir ’chad rtsod rtsom gsum la ’gran zla dang bral ba bi dza ya kirti te. He has used here the Sanskrit translation of his master’s name rNam rgyal grags pa as Bi dza ya kirti. He appears to mean Vijaya kirti.
141 Ibid.
The Ninth Karmapa states in the colophon of his commentary that he studied the Abhidharmakośa at the age of eighteen under dKon mchog yan lag (1525–1583). He asserts with usual boldness that the commentary was composed without relying on the hearsay of others and without self-fabrication at the insistent request of his teacher rNa mrgyal grags pa and disciples. He started to compose his commentary in 1575 and completed in 1576.

**Sarnath Edition**

The title of the commentary on the front cover is mNgon pa mdzod kyi rnam bshad gzhon nu rnam rol. However, the longer title reads as Chos mngon mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa chos mngon rgya mtsho'i snying po mkhyen brtse'i zhal lung gzhon nu rnam rol legs bshad chos mig rnam 'byed grub bde'i shing rta [A Commentary of the Abhidharmakośa: the Essence of the Ocean of Abhidharma; the Oral Instruction of Wisdom and Compassion; the Youthful Play; the Elegant Description that Opens the Eyes of Dharma; the Chariot that brings Joy of Relaxation].

This edition was produced via computer input by the Vajra Vidya Institute Library, Sarnath, 2012. (Distributed by The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taiwan). The edition, in the form of a book, has 592 pages. As a result of the limited availability of editions of the commentary, this study will primarily rely on this edition which seems better than other available options.

One page of the original print is reported to have been lost. A footnote states that the page was beyond recovery and, as a substitute, the content of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary is provided in parenthesis. The preface to the edition says that the text had become so rare as to be lost completely. While the preface to this edition mentions reliance on various original texts in the preparation of this edition, it does not specify them.

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143 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p.591: chos 'di bdag gis rang lo bco brgyad dus/ dpal ldan bla ma thams cad mkhyen pa n'i / dkon mchog yan lag zhab s kyi spyan snga ru / drung mdzad rnam bshad steng nas chos mngon mdzod / bshad lung yongs sa rdo rje'i mdzod / bskyod rdo rje'i mdzod 'grel las kha skong zhus te shad gug nang bzhag yod.
144 Ibid.: bdag gi rnam bshad gzhon nu rnam rol 'di/ yongs 'dzin dam pa rnam rgyal grags pa dang / slob bu mdo rgyud rgya mtsho la sogs kyi/ yang yang bskul nas rjes 'jug slob ma'i ched / khyams po'i zer sgros rang bzo spangs te bshad.
145 Ibid. p.176: ma dpe ngo shog geig chud zos su song zin 'dug pas rnyed thabs dang bral bas na karma pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i mdzod 'grel las kha skong zhus te shad gug nang bzhag yod.
Zhang Kang Edition

The *mdzod kyi rnam bshad chos mngon rgya mtsho'i snying po* is a modern edition printed by Zhang kang then mā dpe skrun khang at Zhang kang in 2002. It contains 383 pages. This edition does not mention its reliance on any other texts. The introduction to the edition states that spelling corrections were made only for errors about which editors were certain. Nevertheless, one can find many avoidable spelling errors.

Edition with no Bibliographical Information

The Buddhist Digital Resource Center has scanned the unpublished commentary titled *mNgon pa mdzod kyi 'grel pa chos mngon rgya mtsho'i snying po*. It does not have any information on the date and place of publication and publisher. Moreover, the edition is completely illegible including the colophon. It contains 158 pages.

1.3.3.5 General Characteristics of the Two Commentaries

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary is highly polemic in nature with the presentation and refutation of positions held by Indian Abhidharma masters as well as by Tibetan scholars including Śākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), the important Sa skya scholar who died in the year the Eighth Karmapa was born.

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary is reported to have a number of special characteristics of his own bKa' brgyud system (*rang lugs thun mong min pa'i khyad chos*). This is discussed in the fourth chapter of the thesis.

The Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa also tend to deviate from the common interpretive trend of other Tibetan scholars. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa contends that the vows of individual liberation (*so sor thar pa'i sdom pa*) cannot be limited to non-revealing form (*rnam pa rig byed ma yin pa'i gzugs*) but it has a category of revealing form (*rnam pa rig byed kyi gzugs*).

The Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa are similar in their shared interpretation of Abhidharma concepts and theories. On some occasions the Ninth Karmapa uses the Eighth Karmapa’s textual materials, a practice which is common and normal in Tibet with many instances evident in a variety of Tibetan texts. In this regard, Tibetans do not adhere to the

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146 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. vi: *Karmapa mi bskyod rdo rje'e mngon pa mdzod kyi rgyas 'grel grub bde'i dpyid 'jo 'di la rang lugs thun mong ma yin pa'i khyad chos du ma rtṣal du bton yod tshul*.

147 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo*, vol. II p.55: *'di pa rnam s ky'i 'dod pa na spyod pa spong ba gtso bor gyur pa'i lhag pa'i tshul khrims 'di la sdom pa so sor thar ces bya'।/ 'di la rig byed dag rig byed ma yin pa gnyis ka yod do*.

41
academic conventions of the modern education system. For instance, dGe ‘dun grub has utilised much material from the mChims mdzod in his commentary both with and without modification.\textsuperscript{148}

The Ninth Karmapa directs readers to refer to Mi skyod rdo rje’s commentary on certain occasions. Therefore, one can safely assume that the Ninth Karmapa relied heavily on the Eight Karmapa’s text as he admits in the colophon. However, it does not imply diminishment of his expertise on the Abhidharmakośa.

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary is for the advanced student of the Abhidharmakośa while the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary is for the beginner. One can also summarise the Eight Karmapa’s commentary as polemical while the Ninth Karmapa’s is explanatory. Their principal differences can be summed up as following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo</th>
<th>gZhon nu rnam rol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detailed</td>
<td>Concise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polemic</td>
<td>Explanatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For advanced students</td>
<td>For beginners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composed over approximately twelve years</td>
<td>Completed in one year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 How does the Ninth Karmapa’s Commentary Relates to the Eighth Karmapa’s Commentary

This study examines the commentaries of both the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa since they are related in the ways discussed in this section. Therefore, this section briefly analyses their relation in terms of the similarity of the interpretation of Abhidharmakośa theories and the reliance on the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary by the Ninth Karmapa in writing his commentary.

1.4.1 Condensation of the Eighth Karmapa’s Commentary

As pointed out in the colophon, the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary appears to condense the voluminous commentary of the Eighth Karmapa.\textsuperscript{149} Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug also maintains that the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary is a summary of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary. Zhwa dmar remarks:

\textsuperscript{148} Patt (1993: 60).
\textsuperscript{149} dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX p. 591: grub bde dpyid 'jo zhes grags bstan bcos kyi' /rnam par bshad pa'i cha kun legs bsdus nas.
Summarising thoroughly its [the Eighth Karmapa commentary’s] content, my Lord, the Omniscient One [the Ninth Karmapa] presents [his] commentary.\textsuperscript{150}

Firstly, on occasions the Ninth Karmapa simply transfers the phrases of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary verbatim. For instance, in the treatment of concomitant virtue (\textit{mtshung ldan gyi dge ba}) in the Karma Chapter, the two commentaries use the same wording and structure.

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary mentions:

\[
\text{ngo bo nyid kyis dge ba de dag dang mtshungs ldan gyi chos rnams ni/ mtshungs ldan gyi dge ba dag yin te/ dge ba'i rtsa ba dang mtshungs par mi ldan pa'i sems la dge ba nyid med pa'i phyir/ sman dang sbyar ba'i btung ba bzhin no.}\textsuperscript{151}
\]

The Ninth Karmapa’s commentary states:

\[
\text{ngo bo nyid kyis dge ba de dag dang mtshungs ldan gyi chos rnams ni/ mtshungs ldan gyi dge ba dag yin te/ dge ba'i rtsa ba dang mtshungs par mi ldan pa'i sems la dge ba dag med pa'i phyir/ sman dang sbyar ba'i btung ba bzhin no.}\textsuperscript{152}
\]

The only difference in the two texts is the usage of the emphasising particle \textit{nyid} in the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary while the Ninth Karmapa modified to the pluralising particle \textit{dag}. The particles are marked in bold in the texts cited above.

Secondly, the Ninth Karmapa does not interpret in contradiction to the intended understanding (\textit{dgongs pa}) of the Eighth Karmapa. Even in the case where he finds the meaning inappropriate, he absolves the Eighth Karmapa by suggesting them as a typographical error of a scribe.

Moreover, the Ninth Karmapa pays respect to each word and meaning of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary and holds him in high regard. This is discussed in the fourth chapter in the section on the reception of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary by later scholars. The

\textsuperscript{150} Chos kyi bbang phyug, Zhwa dmar VI, \textit{mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa}, p.462: \textit{de don nye bar bsad nas bdag gi rje/ /thams cad mkyhyen zhaps de yis rnams shes btsal/}. It appears to address the Ninth Karmapa as “My Lord” since he was his master.

\textsuperscript{151} Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, \textit{Grub bde'i dp'yid jo}, Vol. 2 p. 42.

\textsuperscript{152} dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, \textit{gZhon nu rnams rol}, p. 247.
Ninth Karmapa, on many occasions, refers to the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary and avoids further discussion. For instance, the Ninth Karmapa simply mentions that the examples of four propositions on the certainty of time (dus nges pa) and certainty of result (rnam smin nges pa) of karma according to the Sautrāntika system appear in the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary.153

Apart from some polemical and dialectical aspects, the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary can be regarded as explanatory in general. Only at some points does the Ninth Karmapa mention Śākya mchog ldan’s stance and rebukes it as a self-fabrication, but he avoids a detailed refutation saying that he would not strike the one who is already dead. The Ninth Karmapa appears to mean that the positions of Śākya mchog ldan have already been refuted in the Grub bde’i dp yi d ’jo.154 Being a condensed form of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary, it is likely to prove beneficial for the beginners of Abhidharma who are not yet ready to engage in a detailed analysis.

1.4.2. Amendment of the Eighth Karmapa’s Commentary

The Ninth Karmapa amends any explanation that appears contradictory in the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary. The Eighth Karmapa, at one point of his commentary, maintains that the uncontaminated vow (zag med kyi sdom pa) has to be non-revealing form (rnam par rig byed ma yin pa) since it is solely based on the mind.155 However, at one point in the fourth chapter of his commentary, he states that it has both the aspects of revealing and non-revealing form.156 Here the Ninth Karmapa suggests that it is a typographical error on the part of the scribes who copied the Eighth Karmapa’s text since the existence of revealing form for the uncontaminated vow is not supported by reason.157 The Ninth Karmapa’s suggestion is plausible since highly regarded scholars such as the Eighth Karmapa are unlikely to make such a contradictory remark in a single text.

153 Ibid. p.282: gzhan dpe ston pa dag gnas skabs nges la rnam smin ma nges pa/ rnam smin nges la gnas skabs ma nges pa/ gnyis ka nges pa dang / gnyis ka ma nges pa ste mu bzhi yod do zer/ mshan gzi ni ji kar byung ngo.
154 Ibid. p. 261: dpal Śākya mChog ldan gyis ston pa sangs rgyas rang byung gis bsnyen par rdzogs pa’i rang byung de khyim nas rang byung ba la’chad pa so gs rang bzo’i gza lums mang du smras pa de dag la dgag pa dpys phyin pa kar fīg grub bde’i dp yi d’jo nyid du ‘byung bas shi zin pa dag slar bsun par mi bya’o
155 Mi bkṣyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dp yi d’jo, Vol. 2 p. 177: ‘dzing ne ’dzin las skyes pa’i bsam gtan zag med kyi sdom pa ni chos can/ rnam rig byed min khow na yin te/ sms tsam la rags las pa’i phyir/.
156 Ibid. p. 55: lhaug pa’i shes rab gtsor bo rgyar pas kun nas slong ba zag pa med pa’i tshul khrims so/ /di la rig byed yin min gnyis ka yod do.
157 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 296: gong duzag med kyi sdom pa la rig byed yin min gnyis ka yod par kar fīg las gsungs pa ni khungs ma rnjed pas yi ge pa dag gi skyon nam snyam mo.
Secondly, issues relating to the original textual sources of two different manuscripts of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary also indicate that the scribes might have made typographical errors.158

1.5 Academic Research on Karmaphala

Karmaphala in general has attracted considerable attention of scholars. Many academic works have been published in the form of journal articles, monographs and master’s and doctoral theses. Academic works on karmaphala include Early Buddhist Theories of Action and Result: A Study of Karmaphalasambandha in Verse 17.1-20 of Candrakīrti’s Prasannapadā by Tim Kragh (2002), ‘A Comparative Look at Karma and Determinism’ by Kiel J. Seavers (2014), ‘Action and Its Results: A Study Based on Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla’ by Wenli Fan (2017), Theory of Karman in Abhidharmasamuccaya by Achim Bayer (2010) among others.159 However, study on karmaphala from the Abhidharma point of view, especially that done by Tibetan scholars, is limited. The current research, which will explore the role and significance of motivation in the theory of karmaphala, according to the Abhidharma from the standpoint of Tibetan scholars, is the first of its kind. A few major academic works on karmaphala or karma outside the Tibetan context will be discussed in this section.


Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa, The Treatise on Action by Vasubandhu originally attributed to Vasubandhu, was translated into French from Tibetan by Lamotte and into English from the French by Pruden.

The Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa provides a detailed treatment on karma and analyses the various theses held by different schools of Buddhism ranging from Vaibhāṣika to the Madyamaka school. The treatise is traditionally subsumed under the category of Mahāyāna by Chinese and Tibetan scholars but Lamotte identifies it as Sautrāntika.160 The issue appears similar to that of the Abhidharmakośa where some believe Vasubandhu was Sautrāntika while Bu ston implies that he was already Mahāyāna when he composed the treatise.

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158 See the translation of the colophon of the Eight Karmapa’s commentaries.
160 Lamotte (1987:15)
Cox maintains that Pruden’s translated text is meant for general readers mainly because of its being a translation and the failure of the work to follow proper academic convention.\textsuperscript{161} However, the text can be treated as a good source of information on karma, and as a guide to the original work in the Western world.

The characteristic of karma, as the method of fruition of action of various Buddhist schools are discussed, analysed and refuted. While the Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa treats karma in an elaborate manner, the role and the significance of motivation according to the Abhidharma which this research seeks to study are not explicit.

**Bayer (2010): The Theory of Karman in the Abhidharmasamuccaya**

This monograph involves a study of the theory of karman from the perspective of the Abhidharmasamuccaya, the higher Abhidharma (mgon pa gong ma). It discusses topics pertinent to the Abhidharmasamuccaya such as its Chinese and Tibetan commentaries and their editions. The study also provides a critical edition and English translation of the section that deals with karman. With the critical edition and translation of sections that deal with karma and provision of Sanskrit, English and Tibetan, and Chinese versions of them, it is a good source for the academic study of karmaphala.


This doctoral study of Ryose discusses the historical genesis of the Abhidharma system and the theory of karma in Sarvāstivāda thought. It also deals with the various aspects of karma such as its definition, and classifications in detail. Interdependence of cause and result and their affiliation with the explanation of the typology of causes and effects has also been given adequate treatment. Moreover, karma in relation to the Buddhist morality is studied. The study also includes the translation of the Karma Chapter of the Abhidharmahṛdaya, an early attempt at a systematic presentation of Abhidharma composed by Dharmasrī.

Although the study does not mention any methodology of research, the work affords some basis for the further research on karma according to the Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika in general. While the study sheds light on the theory of karma from the Indian Buddhist master

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\textsuperscript{161} Cox (1989: 407) seems to argue that translation is not a good source for academic study, that one should use the original.
Dharmaśrī’s point of view, this research seeks to study the Tibetan scholars’ interpretation on it. Furthermore, the treatment on the topic of ‘motivation’ is not comprehensive.

**Sako (1996): Karman in the Indian Philosophy and Vasubandhu’s Exposition**

This doctoral thesis by Sako covers comprehensive theories of karma adopted by non-Buddhists and Buddhists philosophical traditions of ancient India. Treatment on the theory varies from its definition to its classification and to its function. For the exposition of karma according to Buddhist philosophy, it deals with the application of the term ‘karma’ in the oldest Buddhist texts. It deals mainly with karma from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the auto-commentary of Vasubandhu, the *Madhyamakakārikā* and the *Ratnāvalī* of Nāgārjuna (150–250 CE), and provides a translation of some parts of the Karma Chapter.
Chapter II: Karma and what is the Karma Chapter of Abhidharmakośa: Setting the Background of the Study

2.1 What is Karma and what is the Karma Chapter of Abhidharmakośa?

2.1.1 Overall View of the Karma Chapter with Contents

The Karma Chapter, the fourth chapter of the Abhidharmakośa, deals extensively with the intricacies of the theory of karmaphala. It covers the whole range of issues related to the theory that include vows, classifications of karma, and methods of ripening result of karma, and so on. However, only selected significant topics will be dealt with briefly in this chapter to provide an overall view of the theory and the Karma Chapter. This chapter will use the basic outline of Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa and its auto-commentary in order to introduce the most vital concepts by providing their definitions and characteristics. This chapter will also discuss how and to what extent the two main Tibetan commentaries treat these issues, where applicable, thereby offering some understanding of the interpretations of the Karma Chapter unique to the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa and how they contrast to other Tibetan commentaries, especially the mChims mdzod. Moreover, this chapter will contribute to understanding of karmaphala in general, and particularly to the grasp of the role of motivation in relation to other karmic dimensions discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.

All kinds of actions, according to the Vaibhāṣika, can be understood and analysed in relation to karmic dimensions as discussed in the third chapter of this thesis. Therefore, the discussion on the selected classifications of karma in this chapter is expected to help in analysing them and understanding their roles in relation to karmic dimensions.

2.1.2 A General Idea of Karma

The commentary on the Karma Chapter (the fourth chapter) of the Abhidharmakośa opens with the declaration that the physical world and the inner sentient beings that exist inside the world are the result of actions. The Eighth Karmapa gives the following explanation to the Abhidharmakośa IV, 1a: Tib. ‘jig rten sna tshogs las las skyes, Skt. karmajaṃ lokavaicitryaṃ (the diversity of the world is born of karma) as following:

1 Abhidharmakośakārikā (Tibetan translation), p. 20.
2 Abhidharmakośakārikā (Sanskrit), ed. by Gokhale, p. 85.
3 In the Tibetan translation of the line from the Sanskrit, the upapada tatpurusa ‘karmajaṃ’ (born of karma) is translated as ablative case ‘born from karma (las las skyes).’ Lokavaicitryaṃ, which is a genitive tatpurusa, appears to mean ‘the variety of phenomena [that exist in the world].’ However, the Tibetan translation gives the sense of manifold worlds (‘jig rten sna tshogs), ‘the manifold worlds are born from karma.’
If asked who created the various physical world and inner sentient beings, [they were] not created through the prior thought of Īśvara and so on but the diversity of world is created by the varieties of wholesome and unwholesome actions.\(^4\)

Thus, a creator-God such as Īśvara is categorically denied not only by Vaibhāśikas, but also by other Buddhist philosophical systems in general. For instance, Candrakīrti, in his Madhyamakāvatāratabhāṣya, also states:

Mind alone creates the world of sentient beings  
and the intense variety of the container world.  
All sentient beings are created by karma, [it is] taught;  
karma also does not exist if mind is eliminated.\(^5\)

The concept of a creator-God is refuted by other Indian Buddhist scholars such as Nāgārjuna and Bhāvaviveka as well. Bhāvaviveka is reported to have argued that the prejudiced Īśvara, as indicated in the Mahābhārata, would not create an ordered and a fair world and thus suggested karma as a cause of the world.\(^6\)

From a general perspective of Tibetan Buddhism, karma is presented as the generator of the world and of the sentient beings, a force behind the present life and afterlife, happy and unhappy states, and so on. However, Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentators in general, including the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas and mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, appear to avoid a detailed treatment of the Abhidharmakośa IV, 1a ("jig rten sna tshogs las las skies"). They do not explain in detail the mechanism of producing the physical world by common karma (thun mong gi las) and sentient beings by individual karma (thun mong ma yin pa'i las).

Nevertheless, the Eighth Karmapa briefly explains the physical world and inner beings as a result of wholesome, or unwholesome actions or a mixture of both. The following paragraph captures some idea of both common and individual karma.

\(^4\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpoyid 'jo, Vol. 2, p. 3: snod bcud kyi 'jig rten sna tshogs pa' di sus byas she na/ dbang phyug sogs kyi blo sognon du biang ste byas pa ni ma yin gyi/ las dge mi dge sna tshogs la 'jig rten sna tshogs skies pa'yo.  
\(^5\) Madhyamakāvatārābhāṣya (Tibetan translation), p. 588: sems nyid kyi ni sems kyi 'jig rten dang / snod kyi 'jig rten shin tu sna tshogs 'god// 'gro ba ma las las skies par gsungs// sems spangs na ni las kyung yod ma yin.  
\(^6\) Eckel (2020: 203) presents the discussion of Bhāvaviveka’s refutation of the God.
With regard to [birth] with an inferior leper’s body in a good dwelling where saffron is grown and a superior body in a bad dwelling full of poison and thorns, these are the result of the mixture of wholesome and unwholesome karma. Beings of the form realm (gzugs khams) with seemingly happy inner beings and the physical world are the result of unmixed wholesome [action] alone and both the body and the dwelling place of lower realms are result of unwholesome [action].

The conclusion can be drawn from this paragraph that the physical environment in which sentient beings are born, the result of common karma, corresponds to their quality of karma. It also indicates that the various sentient beings such as a leper or a god are the result of individual bad and good karma.

Moreover, the Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya briefly deals with the question of the physical world and explains it as a result of the common karma of sentient beings:

With regard to the world of sentient beings, [it] is the attainment of one’s phenomena through one’s karma and afflictive emotions. The container world is the sphere of wind (rlung gi dkyir 'khor) and so on up to the inconceivable mansion of 'Og min (Skt. Akaniśṭha) produced by the common karma alone of these [sentient beings]. In this regard, that very variety [of phenomena] such as the pattern of a feather of a peacock and so on are produced by the uncommon karma of a peacock alone. Diversity [of phenomena] such as a lotus are produced from the common karma of all the sentient beings.

The text suggests that sentient beings are the result of their own individual karma while the physical world is created by the common karma of sentient beings. However, although it is an important topic, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the creation of the world and sentient beings by karma.

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7 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpayid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 3–4: de'ang snod gur gum la sogs skye ba'i yul legs po la/ la dman pa mdze can lta bu dang / yang las bzang po la snod dug dang isher mas gang ba lta bu ni 'dres ma'i las bsags pa dang / snod bcud thams can dga' dga' litir 'dug pa gzugs na spyod pa rnams ni ma 'dres par dge ba kho na'i 'bras bu dang / ngan song gi las dang yul gnyis ka ma 'dres par mi dge ba'i 'bras ba'o.

8 Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya (Tibetan translation), p.588: de la sems can gyi 'jig rien ni sems can rang gi las dang nyon mongs pas bdag gi dngos po rnyed pa rnams so/ /snod kyi 'jig rien ni de dag kho na'i than mong gi las kyi bskyed pa'i rlung gi dkyil 'khor la sogs pa'i 'og min gyi gzhal yas khang gi mthar thug pa dag go /de la rma bya la sogs pa rnams kyi mdongs la sogs pa sna tshogs pa gang yin pa de ni rma bya la sogs pa kho na'i than mong ma yin pas bskyed pa'o/ /pad ma la sogs pa sna tshogs pa ni sems can thams cad kyi las than mong bas bskyed pa yin te.
While Tibetan scholars and Abhidharmakośa commentaries appear to avoid the treatment of the etymology of the Sanskrit term karman, Western scholars have discussed it in their studies. The term is derived from the Sanskrit root √kṛ ‘to do or act.’

Karma appears to have drawn the interest of almost all Indian religions, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, which has led to its different interpretations. For instance, Jainism understood karma as a physical entity similar to dust attaching to the body and believed to be purifable through austerity. Instances of ‘karma’ referring simply to the sacrificial rites in the Veda are also reported. Vaibhāṣikas understood karma in a moral sense as both a qualifiable physical and mental entity while Sautrāntika and higher philosophical schools considered karma to be mental in nature.

According to Madhyamaka, action does not exist as an ultimately (don dam du) real entity. Madhyamaka advocates karma’s empty nature as opposed to Vaibhāṣika’s stance that karma has a truly existent physical aspect and Sautrāntika’s claim that it is a mental entity. Nāgārjuna (qua Mādhyaṃaka) maintains that, relatively, cause and result (rgyu 'bras) happen with dependent arising (rten 'brel) and are not real entities. Kragh concludes that verses 21–33 of the seventeenth chapter of Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā argue that the theory of karmaphala is functional only if action and result are considered intrinsically empty, as the Madhyamaka school argues. Thus, Madhyamaka’s interpretation of karma is likely to have been based on their philosophy of emptiness.

Candrakīrti, in his Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya, also argues that since phenomena do not originate from Īśvara, nor from any absence of cause, they arise depending on one another. Therefore, it is plausible that Madhyamaka does not adopt the mechanism of karma and fruition apart from dependent arising.

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9 This root is mentioned as a root for the term karman (MW). The root has other meanings such as to compose, construct, utter, and so on.
15 Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya (Tibetan translation), p.580: gang gi phyir ji skad bshad pa'i tshul gyis dngos po rnams kyi skye ba ngo bo nyid las byung ba yod pa ma yin la dbang phyug dang dus dang rdul dang rang bzhin dang skyes bu dang sred med kyi bu la sogs pa rnams las kyang ma yin zhing / bdag dang gzhan dang gnyis ka skye ba yang ma yin de'i phyir/ 'di la brten nas 'di 'byung ba zhiig ste/ de tsam zhiig la 'jig rten gyi tha snyad mi bcad pa'i don du brten to.
2.1.3. Identification of Karma

Two kinds of karma are identified by the *Abhidharmakośa* IV.1bc *sems pa yid kyi las yin no/des bskyed las dang ngag gi las*\(^\text{16}\) which can be translated as ‘mental action is a volitional action of mind (*sems pa yid kyi las*) [while] actions of body and speech (*lus ngag gi las*) arise from it (*sems pa*).\(^\text{17}\)

The volitional action of mind is identified as volition (Tib. *sems pa*, Skt. *cetanā*) and is accepted as mental in nature by both Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika. However, Vaibhāṣika considers intended action of body and speech as a physical entity generated by motivation while Sautrāntika regard this action to be characteristically mental in nature.\(^\text{18}\)

The Eighth Karmapa clarifies that the Sautrāntika and Yogācāra establish bodily and verbal action are the result of mental action and designated a name of cause (las or karma) to the result (bodily and verbal action).\(^\text{19}\) Bodily and verbal action are not characteristically karma according to the Sautrāntika but are simply volition (*cetanā*) since they rely on volition to become wholesome or unwholesome.\(^\text{20}\)

2.1.4 Characteristics of Karma

This section will discuss the characteristics of karma according to the Eighth Karmapa’s understanding. It is arguable from the viewpoint of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas that karma needs to be preceded by morally wholesome or unwholesome motivations in order to be qualified as either morally good or bad. Discussing the characteristics of karma here in contrast to the characteristics of karma provided by Lamotte is relevant since Lamotte has defined karma with some clarity.

Lamotte, in his introduction to the translation of Vasubhandu’s *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa*, characterises karma as follows:

\[
\text{Action is essentially thought, voluntary and conscious, and as a consequence morally}\]

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\(^{16}\) *Abhidharmakośakārikā* (Tibetan translation), p. 20.

\(^{17}\) In comparing the Sanskrit (*cetanā maṇasāṃ karma tajje vākkāyakarmaṇī*), one has to translate it as ‘volition (Skt. *cetanā*, Tib. *sems pa*) is mental action (Skt. *maṇasāṃ karma*, Tib. *yid kyi las*). The two levels of action (dual in Skt) of body and speech arise from it (*tajje vākkāyakarmaṇī*).’ However, the Sanskrit neutral nominative singular *tata* (it) in the compound *tajje* is translated in Tibetan in instrumental sense *des* ‘by it.’ Moreover, the Sanskrit root *jan* is translated in Tibetan as transitive verb *bskyed* (produce or generate).


\(^{20}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, Vol. 1 p. 129: *mdo sde pa ni lus ngag gi rang bzhin ni las ma yin te/’on kyang de dag gi dus su’ang sms pa nyid las yin te/ sms pa dge mi dger gyur na lus ngag mi dge ba dang dge bar snang yang don gyi dge ba dang sdig par ’gyur ba’i phyir.*
qualifiable as good or bad.\footnote{Lamotte (1987: 15)}

Lamotte seems to suggest four characteristics of an action. However, the dimension of being ‘essentially thought’ would not be within the realm of Vaibhāṣika according to the understanding of the Eighth Karmapa or of mChims ’Jam pa’i dbyangs since the Vaibhāṣika school espouses the existence of the material aspect of actions. With the endorsement of intended action of body as shape (Tib. dbyibs, Skt. saṃsthāna) in the form of prostration, for instance, the Vaibhāṣika asserts the existence of the physical aspect of karma, while Sautrāntika understands it to be characteristically mental in nature.\footnote{Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 5: sems kyi dbang gis lus phyag ’tshal bar bya snyam nas phyag ’tshal ba dang that mo sbyar ba lta bu lus kyi rnam par rig byed dbyibs su ’dod do.}

The dimension of karma as ‘voluntary and conscious’ is also debatable from the philosophical standpoint of the Vaibhāṣika since the school maintains the existence of a vow of individual liberation (Tib. so sor thar pa’i sdom pa, Skt. prātimokṣasamvara) even when a person is in an unconscious state such as sleep. Therefore, it appears that action needs to be motivated by the conscious mind but not necessarily conscious in itself according to Vaibhāṣika. In contrast, the dimensions of being voluntary and conscious in karma would be valid for Sautrāntikas since they accept karma to be characteristically mental in nature.

Nevertheless, Vaibhāṣikas would arguably endorse the moral characteristic of karma according to the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas. Treatment of morally neutral action is minimal in their Abhidharmakośa commentaries, and discussion of involuntary action is virtually non-existent. Moreover, the two commentaries discuss mainly morally good actions such as vows and morally bad actions such as the five actions of immediate result (\textit{mtshams med lnga}). One could conclude from this that neutral actions are not karma by this definition.

Both the Eight and the Ninth Karmapas discuss the definition of karma through the treatment of its characteristics. They understand the Vaibhāṣika to define karma as bodily, verbal or mental action which is moral in nature.

The Tibetan-Chinese bilingual dictionary defines karma as volition (Tib. sens pa, Skt. \textit{cetanā}) which is characteristically an action that drives its concomitant mind (\textit{mtshung ldan gyi sens}) to an object.\footnote{Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo: las — bya ba’i rang bzhin te rang dang mtshungs ldan gyi sens yul la g.yo zhung skal bar byed pa’i sens pa.} This definition is in line with the Sautrāntika and higher Buddhist schools’ understanding of karma as characteristically mental and which rejects the physical
aspect of karma. However, it does not speak of the moral characteristics of an action which appears to be the sine qua non of karma according to Buddhist thought.

2.2 Presentation of Karma

2.2.1 Revealing and Non-revealing Form

Revealing Form

Bodily and verbal karma has led to the bifurcation of action as revealing (Tib. rnam par rig byed, Skt. viññāpti) and non-revealing (Tib. rnam par rig byed ma yin pa, Skt. avijñāpti). Revealing action reveals the motivation which propels it while non-revealing does not. For instance, a bodily action of killing and a verbal command to kill reveal the volition to kill. The revealing action associated with intended action of body and speech is identified as shape and sound, respectively. The Vaibhāṣika’s thesis of revealing form of body as a shape is refuted extensively in the Karma Chapter of the Abhidharmakośa. The Eighth Karmapa devotes a substantial amount of commentary in its refutation from the standpoint of Sautrāntika.

The revealing action is identified as shape and sound, respectively. The Vaibhāṣika’s thesis of revealing form of body as a shape is refuted extensively in the Karma Chapter of the Abhidharmakośa. The Eighth Karmapa devotes a substantial amount of commentary in its refutation from the standpoint of Sautrāntika. Sautrāntika contends that shape cannot be substantially existent (rdzas yod) but is merely imputed to the various arrangements of colour. Sautrāntika further argues that shape could both be perceived by the eye and tactile sense faculty (lus kyi dbang po) if it were substantially existent. This would render the different functions of the sense faculties meaningless. Moreover, Sautrāntika argues that shape should be perceptible even in an atom just as colour is visible even in an atom.

Vātsīputrīya holds that the revealing action of body is a moving entity. The Eighth Karmapa refutes this thesis at length in his commentary. Dowling also discusses this position

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24 A variety of translations of the term rnam par rig byed and rnam par rig byed ma yin pa (Skt. viññāpti and avijñāpti) such as perceptible and imperceptible, revealing and non-revealing, informing and non-informing, and so on are used. All of them seem to convey the encoded message of the Tibetan term. This thesis will use the translation ‘revealing and non-revealing.’ MV, which is a general dictionary for Sanskrit, simply provides the definition for jñapti as ‘making known, apprising, informing’. Therefore, translations mentioned above appear to convey the message of informing, cognising, revealing, or manifesting volition that lie behind the action. The prefix vi intensifies the meaning (MW) and appear to be used as adverbs as ‘fully or completely’. An avijñāpti is an antonym of viññāpti. Moreover, avijñāpirūpa is defined as ‘unmanifest material force,’ or ‘hidden imprints’ in Buswell, Robert E., and Donald S. Lopez (eds.) 2013 under entry ‘avijñāpirūpa.’


26 See Dowling (1976: 82–86). He discusses in detail Vasubandhu’s refutation of this position from the Sautrāntika point of view.

27 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 12: dbyibs rdzas su yod na chos can/ mig dang lus kyi dbang po gnyis kyis bzang bar ‘gyur bar thal/ mig gi mgon sum du mthong nas shes shing / lus dbang gi reg na yang shes pa’i phyir/ dod mi nus te/ dbang po du ma don med dang / skye mched kyi rdzas misungs nyams par ‘gyur ro. It is argued that, for instance, eye faculty perceive only form, not other objects such as sound.

28 Since an atom does not have any parts and aspects, it is assumed that Vaibhāṣikas cannot accept that it has shape.
in his doctoral thesis. This position of a moving entity of revealing action is refuted by Vaibhāṣika with the argument that the instantaneous (skad cig ma) nature of action renders it impossible for the revealing action to move from one state to another since it ceases instantly each moment. This point appears crucial in the whole refutation of the thesis held by Vātsīputrīya.

**Non-revealing Form**

Dowling, in his analysis, suggests that non-revealing form serves as a medium between action and the result of the action and shares some common characteristics with obtainment (Tib. thob pa, Skt. prāpti).

Contrary to the revealing form, non-revealing form does not reveal the motivation of the action since it is imperceptible to the five senses. Non-revealing forms such as individual vows of liberation and concluding actions of killing such as skinning and consumption of the meat do not appear to reveal the motivation behind those actions.

The Vaibhāṣika asserts the substantial existence (rdzas yod) of non-revealing form while Sautrāntika denies it. The Vaibhāṣika draws on some scriptural evidence to prove it only to have them differently interpreted by Sautrāntika and higher Buddhist philosophical schools. For instance, Vaibhāṣika argues that invisible and unobstructive form (bstan med thogs med kyi gzugs) among three kinds of form mentioned in the sūtra must refer to non-revealing form. However, Sautrāntika and other higher schools contend that the invisible and unobstructive form mentioned in the sūtra does not refer to non-revealing form, but to the appearance of the human body as a skeleton as an object of concentration on repulsiveness (mi sdug pa'i ting nge 'dzin). Therefore, non-revealing form is argued to be merely an imputed existence (btags yod), not a substantially existent entity. Other arguments for the existence of non-revealing action and its refutations are discussed by Dowling, an area which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

**2.2.2 General Presentation on the Three Kinds of Karma**

**Wholesome, Unwholesome and Neutral Action**

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30 Ibid. p. 73.
31 mChims 'Jam pa'i dgyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 37: rig byed ma yin pa ni rang kun nas slong ba'i bsam pa gshan la rig par byed pa ma yin pa'i phyir ro.
33 Three forms are visible and obstructive, invisible yet obstructive, and invisible and unobstructive.
Non-revealing form does not have a neutral aspect and is either wholesome (Tib. dge ba, Skt. kuśala) or unwholesome (Tib. mi dge ba, Skt. akuśala) since it has to be generated by strong mental action. Neutral motivation is considered to be feeble (stobs chung ba) and does not appear to have strength to produce neutral non-revealing form. It appears that neutral motivation is not as resolute as wholesome and unwholesome motivation in desiring to execute an action. On the other hand, revealing forms and the motivation have all three aspects of virtue, non-virtue and neutrality.

Virtue, non-virtue and neutrality are further classified into four categories based on the basis of absolute significance (don dam), nature (rang bzhin), association (mtshungs ldan) and motivation (kun slong). Nirvāṇa is considered to be absolute virtue since it is a state where all kinds of suffering have come to cessation. The Eighth Karmapa argues that virtues by nature, association and motivation cannot be considered as absolute pleasure since they are subject to the suffering of conditioning and change (‘du byed dang 'gyur ba'i sdom bsgnal).36

Shame and decency (ngo tsha dang khrel yod) are virtues by nature; dharmas associated with virtues are virtuous by association and actions triggered by good motivations are virtuous by motivation. In a similar way, saṃsāra is regarded as absolute non-virtue; non-shame and non-embarrassment as non-virtue by nature; dharma associated with neutrality as non-virtue by association; and actions motivated by neutral motivation as neutral by motivation. Neutrality is also categorised into four: space (nam mkha’) and unexamined cessation (brtags min ’gog pa) are regarded as absolute neutral; inanimate objects such as a vase are neutral by nature; the mental state of doing craftwork is neutral by association; and craftworks, for instance, are neutral by motivation.

2.2.3 Vows, Non-vows and Intermediate Vows
Non-revealing form is classified into vows (Tib. sdom pa, Skt. saṃvara), non-vows (Tib. sdom min, Skt. asaṃvara), and intermediate vows (bar sdom). Vows are also further divided into vows of individual liberation (Tib. so sor thar pa'i sdom pa, Skt. prātimokṣa-saṃvara), vows of concentration (Tib. bsam gtan gyi sdom pa, Skt. dhyāna-saṃvara) and uncontaminated vows (Tib. zag med kyi sdom pa, Skt. anāsrava-saṃvara).

35 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp'yid 'jor, Vol. 2 p.37: rnam rig min pa chos can/ lung bstan min med de/ lung ma bstan pa'i sms ni stobs chung bas rig byed min pa'i dge mi dge'i las ni dge mi dge sms stobs ldan pas 'phen dgos pa'i phyir.
36 Ibid. p.41: ngo bo nyid dang / mtshungs ldan dang / kun nas slong bas dge ba de ni 'du byed dang 'gyur ba'i sdom bsgnal gyi mchog tu bde ba ma yin no.
2.2.3.1 Vows

Vows of Individual Liberation

Mi bskyod rdo rje describes vows of individual liberation as a moral discipline of the desire realm (ʼdod khaps) which principally emphasises abstention.\(^{37}\) The vows, as argued by the Eighth Karmapa, are mainly about abstaining from wrong deeds such as killing, rather than cultivation of good deeds such as saving lives.

Vows of individual liberation are categorised into eight: the vows of a fully-ordained monk (Tib. dge slong, Skt. bhikṣu), of a fully-ordained nun (Tib. dge slong ma, Skt. bhikṣunī), of a probationary nun (Tib. dge slob ma, Skt. śikṣamānā), a male novice (Tib. dge tshul pha, Skt. śrāmaṇera), a female novice (Tib. dge tshul ma, Skt. śrāmaṇerikā) a layman (Tib. dge bsnyen pha, Skt. upāsaka), a laywoman (Tib. dge bsnyen ma, Skt. upāsikā) and one-day vows (Tib. bsnyen gnas, Skt. upavāsa). The Eighth Karmapa asserts that one-day vows are not classified into male and female vows since they can be held even by eunuchs.\(^{38}\) However, mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs states that the one-day vow is not classified into male and female since it is of shorter duration. He does not express an opinion as to why the vow of shorter duration cannot be subjected to male-female classification.\(^{39}\)

The eight vows are characteristically grouped into four categories: fully-ordained vow, novice vow, one-day vow, and layperson vow. Male and female vows are considered characteristically the same since only the name is altered following the change of sex of a possessor of the vows. For instance, if a bhikṣu changes his sex and becomes a female, he would be called bhikṣunī. A probationary nun vow is subsumed under novice vows since it becomes a novice vow when a probationary nun changes her sex to male. However, Dowling argues that they are characteristically distinct since they are received independently.\(^{40}\)

The Vaibhāṣika hold that one can hold many vows simultaneously in a discrete manner. It is substantiated by the fact that other vows are not abandoned while giving up one vow. For instance, giving up fully-ordained monk’s vow does not lead to the loss of novice vow.

Vows of individual liberation are given up by offering the vow back, death, appearance of both the male and female sexual organ at the same time, and interruption of the

\(^{37}\) Ibid. p. 55: ’di pa rtams kyi ʼdod pa na spyod pa spong ba gtsos bor gyur pa'i lhag pa'i tshul khrims ʼdi la ni so sor thar ces bya'o.

\(^{38}\) Ibid. p. 56: bsnyen gnas ni za ma dang ma ning la yang skye bas/pho mo gnyis su ma nges pas/pho mo so sor ma bgrang ngo.

\(^{39}\) mChims 'Jam pa'i dgyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 308–309: bsnyen gnas la gnyis su ma phyed ba ni yun thung ba'i phyir ro.

\(^{40}\) Dowling (1976: 140).
root of virtue (dge ba'i tsa wa chad pa). However, the Eighth Karmapa argues that the vow of individual liberation is not lost with death. This is discussed in the fourth chapter. A one-day vow is lost, in addition to the other causes mentioned above, when the night has elapsed.

Other causes that lead to the loss of individual vows of liberation such as the transgression of four root downfalls are also reported. However, Kashmiri Vaibhaṣikas assert that the vow and immorality (tshul 'chal) can co-exist in a single person analogous to the person possessing both wealth and debt.

Vows of Concentration and Uncontaminated Vows

The vow of concentration is obtained during the preparatory (nyer bsdogs) and the actual (dgnos gzhī) mind of contaminated states of concentration (zag bcas kyi bsam gtan).

Therefore, a vow of concentration and an uncontaminated vow are concomitant with mind while a prātimokṣa vow is not since it remains even during the states of no conscious mind such as the absorption of cessation ('gog pa'i snyoms 'jug). Vows of concentration are lost through the transfer of the being from one state of concentration (bsam gtan sa) to another state of concentration.

The uncontaminated vow is obtained by exalted beings (Tib. 'phags pa, Skt. ārya) with the attainment of the mind of six uncontaminated states of concentration. It is lost through attainment of the result, advancement of calibre (dbang po sbyangs pa), and deterioration from the result.

2.2.3.2 Non-vow

From the standpoint of Mi bskyod rdo rje, a non-vow is acquired simply by undertaking the act of killing if a person belongs to the butcher caste according to Vaibhaṣika. However, a
person from another class needs to make a pledge to earn a livelihood through killing. The need for a person from another caste to make a pledge to earn a livelihood through killing to acquire a non-vow suggests that the duration of non-vows should be a whole lifetime.

In contrast to the one-day vow, Vaibhāṣika maintains that there are no one-day non-vows since one does not obtain and pledge to commit killing for only one day. However, Mi bskyod rdo rje disputes this stance by reasoning that people with vow are seen to commit a non-vow for one night or two or even a month and a year for the sake of reward from a king.\footnote{Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, \textit{Grub bde'i dpyid jo}, Vol. 2 p. 88: sdom ldan gyi gang zag de 'dra rgyal po lta ba'i bya dga'i phyir/ zha'ig gcig pa dang gnyis de bzhin zla gcig tsam lo gcig tsam la sdom min byed par khas 'che ba ma dang du mthong ba'i phyir.}

A non-vow is defeated by loss or through reception of a vow, death or the appearance of both the male and female sexual organ. Mi bskyod rdo rje clarifies, in the case of receiving three vows progressively, that one-day and layperson vows defeat non-vow, not novice and monk vows since it is already defeated by the earlier two vows (one-day and layperson vows). In the case of non-progressive receipt of a vow, it is contended that novice and monk vows would defeat it.\footnote{Ibid. p.134: de yang bsnyen gnas dang dge bsnyen gyi sdom pa thob pas sdom min gtong gi/ dge tshal dang dge stlong gi sdom pa thob pas mi glong ste/ ngar gyi gnyis pos gtong zin pa'i phyir/ 'di yang tshig gsum rim nod kyi dbang du byas pa yin la/ de ltar min na phyi ma gnyis kyi yang sdom min gtong ngo.} He also mentions that a non-vow cannot be interrupted, contrary to the case of an intermediate vow, through the disposal of the weapons and snare meant for killing animals, since there is no acquisition of vows by disposing of weapons alone.\footnote{Ibid. p.124: sdom pa sdom min gyi lhag ma bar dge mi dge'i rnam par rig byed min pa ni.}

\subsection*{2.2.3.3 Intermediate Vows}

Intermediate vows appear to be the vows that are obtained for a certain period of time in contrast to the vows which are usually observed for a lifetime. Mi bskyod rdo rje defines intermediate vows as wholesome or unwholesome non-revealing form which are different from a vow and non-vow.\footnote{Ibid. p.124: sdom pa sdom min gyi lhag ma bar dge mi dge'i rnam par rig byed pa med pa'i phyir.}

He states that intermediate vows are acquired from offering material wealth such as a monastery to superior beings such as Buddha and taking oaths such as not to eat before paying respect to Buddha, to give food to others for a month and to undertake virtue or non-virtue through intense motivation.\footnote{Ibid.: kun ra phul ba sogs rdzas las byung ba'i bsod nams bya ba'i dngos po zhang las skyes pa dang / sangs rgyas la phyag ma 'tshal bar du mi bza' ba dang / tshes sam zla gcig gam zla phyed cing rtag tu zas dag sbyin par bya' zhes pa dang / mchod byed pa lta bu yid dam bca'as te len pa dang / dge ba' i mi dge'am/ nyon mongs drag pos gus par byed pas rig byed ma yin pa 'thob bo.}
Intermediate vows stop functioning when the strong faith or affective emotions, the cause of the vow, ceases. It is reported to be analogous to a potter’s wheel and the flight of an arrow stopping after the exhaustion of their potential energy. Discontinuation of the activity pledged to be undertaken, interruption of the existence of objects such as stūpa, weapon, poison, and so on also lead to the cessation of the intermediate vow.

2.3 Karma in the Sūtras

This segment of the fourth chapter of the Abhidharmakośa discusses the references to karma made in the sūtras. It is mainly discussed in the form of fifteen classifications of karma with brief explanations on each. This section will discuss some of the classifications in brief to contribute to the general idea of karma and more particularly to the role of motivation and other dimensions of action since they also have to be preceded by motivation and accompanied by other dimensions of action. The Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa’s commentaries, in contrast to the mChims mdzod, explicitly classify actions that appear in the sūtra by result, cause and both result and cause.

A general discussion of these classifications of karma in this section will provide an opportunity to assess them in terms of their degree of wholesomeness based on motivation and other factors discussed in the third chapter.

2.3.1 Classification by Result

The following four classifications of actions, are presented by the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa through the results they produce such as pleasure and so on.

Wholesome, Unwholesome and Neutral Karma

Karma that produces happiness is classified as wholesome, karma that produces suffering is classified as unwholesome, while karma that produces neither is considered neutral. Wholesome, unwholesome and neutral actions are explained in these words by the Eighth Karmapa:

[Actions from which one] experiences temporarily the pleasant result of action (rnam smin gyi las), happiness, and that permanently protect from suffering and make one attain nirvāṇa are wholesome (dge ba). [Actions from which one] experiences the

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53 Ibid. p. 135: bar ma rig min ni/ rab tu dang ba dang nyon mongs pa’i shugs gang gis rig byed min pa ’phangs pa chad pas gtong ste/ rdza mkhan gyi ’khor lo dang mda’i ’gros bzhin no.
unpleasant result of suffering are unwholesome, and actions, other than those two, that bring neither pleasant nor unpleasant [results] and are other than wholesome and unwholesome actions, are neutral.54

Meritorious, Non-meritorious and Non-transferable Karma
The Eighth Karmapa remarks with regard to the meritorious, non-meritorious and non-transferable karma as follows:

Why is it called meritorious karma? Because of the meaning of guarding, of the meaning of protection, of the actual merit of giving refuge from [taking birth in] lower rebirths and increasing merit. Therefore, the action is also maintained as meritorious action. Or else, when merely the result [of an action] is merit, [then] the action that cultivates it (merit) is called a meritorious karma.55

The Eighth Karmapa deems it unnecessary to deal with the treatment of non-meritorious action since it is well-known as unwholesome in the world.56 The Ninth Karmapa maintains meritorious karma is a wholesome action that belongs to the desire realm since it serves as an antidote to what is not meritorious (bsod nams ma yin pa).57

Non-transferable karma belongs to the form and formless realm (gzugs med khams). It is held to be non-transferable since action at one state of concentration does not ripen its result in other states of concentration under the influences of conditions.58

54 Ibid. p. 140: re zhig las kyi rnam smin yid du 'ong ba bde ba myong ba dang gnas sdug bsngal las skyob pa myang 'das thob byed ni dge ba dang / rnam smin yid du mi 'ong ba mi bde ba myong ba ni mi dge ba dang / yid du 'ong mi 'ong skyed pa de gnyis las gzhan pa'i las ni dge mi dge las gzhan lung ma bstan no.
55 Ibid. p. 140: ci'i phyir bsod nams kyi las shes bya nu/ srung ba'i don gyi bsod nams dang / skyong ba'i don gyi bsod nams dang / ngan song las skyob cing dge ba 'phel bar byed pas bsod nams kyi las so/ de'i phyir las rang la'ang bsod nams kyi las su bzhag pa'o/ yang na 'bras ba bsod nams yin tsam na de sgrub pa'i las de la bsod nams kyi las so.
56 Ibid. p. 142: bsod nams min pa'i las la ni 'bad pas bshad mi dgos te/ 'jig rten du mi dge ba nyid la grags pa'i phyir ro.
57 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 278: bsod nams ma yin pa'i gnyen po yin pa'i phyir bsod nams ni 'dod khams su gtags pa'i dge ba'i las yin no. Vaibasikas argue that non-meritorious actions are restricted to the desire realm.
58 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 141–142: gzugs dang gzugs med pa'i rdzogs byed kyi las ni chos can/ sa gzhan du rnam par smin par mi 'gyur te/ gang phyir sa ni de dag tu las rnam rnam par smin pa'i phyir ro/ khyab ste/ rkyen dbang gis gzhan du mi g.yo ba'i phyir ro.
Three To-be-experienced Karma (*myong 'gyur gsum*)

Karma is further classified as karma to-be-experienced with respect to the pleasure, suffering or neutral results it generates. Wholesome actions in the desire realm up to the third state of concentration (*bsam gtan gsum pa*) generate pleasure while the third state of concentration and beyond generates neither pleasure nor suffering.

Karma that will lead to the experience of suffering is known as unwholesome action. Suffering is believed to existent only in the desire realm since it is the result of unwholesome action which belongs to the desire realm alone.

Presentation of the To-be-experienced Karma

Vaibhāśikas categorise karma to-be-experienced into actions that generate results which are either certain or uncertain (*nges pa dang ma nges pa*). The action, whose experience of the result is certain, is further classified into three: to-be-experienced in this lifetime (*mthong chos myong 'gyur gyi las*), to-be-experienced in the next lifetime (*skyes nas myong 'gyur gyi las*) and to-be-experienced in future lifetimes (*lan grangs gzhan la myong 'gyur gyi las*). With the addition of action of uncertain result (*myong bar ma nges pa'i las*), karma to-be-experienced is classified into four.

An action that would lead to the experience of its fruition in this lifetime (*mthong chos myong 'gyur gyi las*) is triggered by the power of action and antidote (*las dang gnyen po'i nus pa*). For instance, an action is rendered powerful by the motivation or the object (*yul*) of an action. This is analysed and discussed in the third chapter of this study.

The Eighth Karmapa maintains that all four karma whose results are to-be-experienced can be committed by a person at the same time. For instance, when killing, theft, lying and adultery are completed at the same time, then killing becomes action of whose result to-be-experienced in this lifetime; lying becomes to-be-experienced in the next lifetime; adultery turns into to-be-experienced in future lifetimes; and lying becomes action of uncertain result.  

However, contrary to the Vaibhāśika’s understanding, the Eighth Karmapa asserts that an action whose result must be experienced in the next lifetime and future lifetimes can be altered to action the result of which is to be experienced in this lifetime in line with

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59 Ibid. p. 152: *pha rol po srog gcod ma byin len rdzun la sbyar nas/ rang 'dod log la zhung nas las bzhhi po de dag gcig car mthar phyin par gyur na/ srog gcod pa lta bu ni mthong chos myong 'gyur dang / ma byin len gyis ni skyes nas myong 'gyur dang / ni tshangs spyod pa ni lan grangs gzhan la myong 'gyur dang / rdzun smra ba ni myong bar ma nges pa lta bu skad cig gcig la rdzogs pa'i phyir ro.*
Mahāyāna thought. He also argues that actions that are certain to produce a result can be altered to actions that are uncertain to generate a result.60

2.3.2 Classification by Cause

Bodily, verbal and mental actions are classified into three categories on the basis of their causes, which are three in number: dishonesty, aversion and attachment. Bodily, verbal and mental actions of three kinds of crookedness (yon po gsum) are generated by dishonesty, while three faults (nyes pa gsum) of body, speech and mind are generated by aversion, while three residues (snyigs ma gsum) of body, speech and mind are caused by attachment.61

2.3.3 Classification by both Cause and Result

Karma is also classified into four in relation to both the cause and result: black (bad) karma, white (good) karma, mixed karma, and neither white nor black karma. The Eighth Karmapa asserts that unwholesome action is black karma since it is defiled and produces an unpleasant result. The action of the form realm is white karma since it is not mixed with unwholesome action and produces a pleasant result.62

Merit (dge ba) of the desire realm is mixed karma or both white and black karma since it is mixed with the non-merit in one mind. It suggests that non-merit can be generated later in the same person. Merit and non-merit are not considered to be mixed by nature since they are contradictory.63 Neither white nor black karma is considered uncontaminated action (zag med kyi las) which does not produce karmic ripening (rnam smin).64

2.3.4 Multiple Divisions of Karma

The Eighth Karmapa explains the multiple dimensions of karma through classification of karma according to their function and actional paths (las lam). Karma classified through their function will be discussed here while actional paths will be discussed in the fourth chapter.

60 Ibid. p. 159: theg pa chen po'i lugs la ni myong 'gyur gzhan gnyis kyang mthong chos su bsgyar ba dang / rnam smin nges pa'i las kyang mi myong bar bsgyar nus par bzhes la.
61 Ibid. 165–166: gnyis pa rgya'i sgo nas dbye ba ni/mdo las/ las ngag yid kyi las yon po gsum ni gya gya sdig pa can gyi lla ba las brgyud nas byang ba'i phyir g.yo las skyes pa dang / skyon nam nyes pa gsum ni zhe sdang gi rgyu las skyes pa dang / snyigs ma gsum na chags pa'i rgyu las skyes pa'i phyir.
62 Ibid. p. 168: de las mi dge ba nyon mongs can yin pas/ rnam smin kyang yid du mi 'ong ba 'byin pa'i phyir gnag pa'i las dang / geugs su gtoogs pa'i dge ba nyid ni mi dge ba dang ma 'dres shing / rnam smin yid du 'ong ba 'byin pa'i phyir/ dkar ba'i las dang ngo.
63 Ibid. p.167: 'dres pa'i las ni rgyud gcig la dge mi dge kun tu 'byang bas bzhag gi/ ngo bo nyid kyi sgo nas 'dres pa ni ma yin te/ las sam rnam smin gyi rdzas sam skad cig la dkar po yang yin la nag po yin pa med pa'i phyir te/ dge mi dge dang dkar nag lhan cig mi gnas 'gal yin pa'i phyir.
64 Ibid. p. 168: zag pa med pa'i las ni khams su gtoogs pa'i chos rnam s kyi 'jug pa 'gog par byed pa yin gyi skyed par byed pa ma yin pas rnam par smin pa med pa yin no.
Three Karma of Silence (*thub pa'i las gsum*)

Uncontaminated bodily and verbal and mental actions of the beings who have attained the path of no more learning (*mi slob pa'i lam*) are known as actions of silence since they withstand opposing aspects of three doors and eradicate them. They are also believed to be free of afflicting emotions. The Eighth Karmapa asserts that the three actions of silences have to be a non-revealing aspect of abandoning ten unwholesome actions of body, speech and mind since revealing aspects fall within the realm of contaminated phenomena (*zag bcas*) which do not belong to the path of no more learning.65

Three Purifiers (*gtsang byed gsum*)

Virtuous mental, bodily, and verbal actions are three kinds of purifiers since these three contaminated good actions (*legs spyad zag bcas*) eliminate the stains of negative actions temporarily while uncontaminated good actions (*legs spyad zag med*) do this permanently.66 These three purifiers are shown to dispel the misconceptions held by non-Buddhists (*ṭīrthika*) such as the belief that remaining silent purifies one’s stains (*dri ma*). This appears to suggest that stains of body, speech and mind need to be purified by good actions of body, speech and mind, not through wrong means such as by remaining silent or through bathing the body.

Three Wrong Deeds (*nyes spyad gsum*)

Three unwholesome actions of body, speech and mind are known as wrong deeds of three doors since they produce unfavorable results.67

Three Wrong Deeds of Mind (*yid kyi nyes spyad gsum*)

Covetousness, ill-will, and a perverted view are regarded as three kinds of wrong deed (*nyes spyad*) although they are not considered karma or action since they fall under the category of afflicting emotions (Tib. *nyon mongs*, Skt. *kleśa*). The Eighth Karmapa argues that volition (*sems pa*), which is a mental action, is one of the five omnipresent mental factors (*kun 'gro*...
Inga) while covetousness, ill-will and perverted view are attachment, aversion and ignorance.  

Vaibhāśikas do not accept a common locus between karma and afflictive emotions and argue that they were set forth separately in the sūtras. In contrast, Sautrāntika maintains the three wrong deeds of mind are action.

**Three Good Deeds (legs spyad gsum)**

Wholesome actions, the reverse of the three wrong deeds, are considered good deeds. Three good deeds can be argued to be wholesome bodily, verbal and mental actions motivated by non-covetousness (brnab sens med pa), free from harmful intent (gnod sens med pa), and with the right view (yang dag pa'i lta ba).

**2.3.5 Three Obscurations (sgrib pa gsum)**

The Vaibhāśika consider patricide as obscuration of action (las kyi sgrib pa). Eunuchs (za ma) are considered to have obscuration of afflictive emotions (nyon mongs kyi sgrib pa) since afflictive emotions arise in them continuously. The Eighth Karmapa argues that if afflictive emotions arise occasionally, they will not obscure the noble path (Tib. 'phags pa'i lam Skt. āryamārga) since they are easier to purify. Beings of Uttarakuru and the three lower realms are regarded as having fruitional obscuration (rnam smin gyi sgrib pa). These three are known as obscuration for they obscure the noble path.

**2.3.6 Five Actions of Immediate Result (mtshams med Inga)**

Mi bskyod rdo rje describes actions of immediate results which are known as mtshams med in Tibetan which literally means ‘no barrier’ as below:

The meaning of the actions of immediate result is known as without barrier (mtshams med) since an action that could bring another fruition cannot impede the result that would be experienced after the birth. Other actions cannot overpower it [action of immediate action]. Or the person who has committed the action that has no barrier

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68 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp'yid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 248: sems pa ni kun 'gro Inga'i sens pa yin pa de las don ghian brnab sens gnod sens log lla ni chags sdang gsum yin pas rtsa nyon drag gi nang na yod pa'i nyon mongs yin no.

69 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 294: sgo gsum gyi nyes spyod las ldog pa dge ma rnam ns ni legs par spyad pa yin zhin.

70 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp'yid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 246: nyon mongs res 'ga' 'byung ba ni sgrib pa yin kyang de sbyang sla bas 'phags lam la mi sgrib ste.
takes birth in the hell realm after the death for there is no obstacle of other birth and life.  

Here the Eighth Karmapa explains that a person who has committed actions of immediate result will not be impeded by other actions and rebirths from taking birth in the hell realm. Actions of immediate result are believed to be committed only in the three
continents by male or female humans but not in Northern Continent of Uttarakuru or 
Unpleasant Sound (byang sgra mi snyan) and other realms. Moreover, Vaibhāṣikas 
maintain that eunuchs would not incur the sin of committing action of immediate result if 
they kill their parents since parents have given them an incomplete body. The Eighth 
Karmapa argues that parents would not have given adequate love to eunuchs since parents 
would not have the expectation of benefit from them. Even from the standpoint of eunuchs, 
killing their parents would not amount to actions of immediate result because they possess 
only a minimal shame and decency (ngo tsha dang khrel yod). Therefore, killing parents by 
eunuchs would not be considered an action of immediate result. However, people with a 
disability such as blindness are not exempted from committing actions of immediate result if 
they kill their parents since their disability would not prevent them from generating 
realisation (mngon rtogs) in themselves. 

Among the five actions of immediate result, creating a schism is regarded as the 
gravest since it is committed with the knowledge of dharma and non-dharma to divide the 
sangha. Four actions of immediate result are bodily while one is verbal. Patricide, matricide 
and killing an arhat are bodily action of killing while an attempt to draw blood from the body 
of Buddha is considered preparatory action of body. Creating a schism falls under the 
category of lying.

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71 Ibid. p. 248: mtshams med pa'i las kyi don ni/ rnam smin gzhan myong ba'i las gcig gis bar du gcad nas/ skyes nas myong ba'i rnam par rmin pa la bar gcad mi nus pas mtshams med ces bya ste/ las gzhan gyi zil gyis mi gnon pa'i phyir/ yang na las de byed pa'i gang zag 'di nas shi 'phos pa dang / dmyal bar skye bar 'gyur pa la mtshams med pa yin te/ 'gro ba gzhan gyi tshe gzhan gyi bar chad med pa'i phyir.

72 Eastern Continent of Sublime Body (lus 'phags) or Pūrvavideha, Southern Continent of Rose Apple Continent ('Dzam bu gling) or Jambudvīpa, Western Continent of Enjoyer of Cattle (Ba glang spyod) or Aparagodaniya.

73 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 325: re zhig gcig tu mtshams med g ling gsum dag na yod kyi byang sgra mi snyan dang 'gro ba gzhan na 'ang med pa'i phyir khams gzhan na lla smos/ de gsum na 'ang skyes pa bud med kho na la yod kyi sdom pa dang sdom min med pa'i phyir za ma dang sogs pa ma ning mtshan gnyis pa la mi 'dod do.

74 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 249: za ma sogs kyis pha ma gsod na mtshams med du mi 'gyur te/ de'i pha mas de'i lus ma tshang bar bskyod cing bu tsha des phan mi thogs par mnos te byams pa chung bas phan 'dogs pa'ang shas chung ba'i phyir.

75 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 333.
2.3.7 Five Karma Similar to Actions of Immediate Result (nye ba’i mtshams med lnga)
Actions similar to the actions of immediate result are also believed to bring rebirth in the hell realms. Ill-treatment of a female arhat who is also one’s mother through adultery is regarded similar to killing one’s mother. Killing a bodhisattva belonging to the abiding in certainty classification (nges gnas) is considered similar to patricide; killing those on the path of learning (slob pa) is similar to killing an arhat. Action similar to creating a schism is robbing the monks of their provisions for one day; vandalisation of stūpas is deemed as action similar to drawing blood from Buddha out of harmful intent.

2.3.8 Projecting and Completing Action (’phen rdzogs kyi las)
The Vaibhāṣika maintains that one action generates only one life (skye ba) and denies the possibility of generating one birth by many actions as well. With regard to this stance, a hypothetical question is raised as to whether it could be in contravention to the sūtra where Aniruddha declares his birth in the Heaven of the Thirty-three (sum cu rtsa gsum) for seven lifetimes as the result of the single action of giving alms. The Eighth Karmapa argues that his birth in this heaven had led to other actions that caused later successive births. Thus, the result of the single action of giving alms is suggested to be only one life in the Heaven of Thirty-three.

The generation of one life by one action is illustrated with an analogy of a single coin which is multiplied into a thousand coins which in turn leads to achievement of glory. It could be later claimed by the person who enjoys the result that the glory was achieved by a single coin.

Although one action projects one life, completing actions are believed to be multiple. The Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa maintain that although it is the same for all humans that one action projects one life, some obtain fine form, wealth and good health through virtuous concluding actions, while some possess an unattractive body as a result of unwholesome completing actions. This is analogous to a painter completing sketches with different colours.

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76 However, the Mi skyod rdo rje does not mention adultery. He simply says ill-treatment (sun phyung ba).
77 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu ram rol, p. 335 defines it as a bodhisattva who has started to accumulate merit to produce thirty-two major marks (mtshan bzang so gnyis) and who will attain Buddhahood in one hundred aeons from that point.
78 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’ja, Vol. 2 p. 244: las gcig gi rgyu las las mang po spyad pas skye ba mang por smin pa yin gyel las gcig rang gis skye ba du ma sgrub pa ma yin pa’i phyir.
79 Ibid.: dper na mi zhig gir对该 stong du bsgyur te/ bdag ni dong rtse gcig gir stong gi dbang phyug ’di thob par gyur to ches smras pa lta bu’o.
in a varied manner resulting in beauty or unsightliness. The Eighth Karmapa argues that if completing actions did not generate different conditions, there would be no persons without incomplete faculties (dbang po ma tshang ba). Contrary to this, Mahāyāna and Sautrāntika are reported to hold the view that one action can project many lives.

2.4 Preparatory, Actual and Concluding Phases (sbyor dngos mjug)

Patt, in his summary of the first five chapters of the Abhidharmakośa, maintains that actional paths should have preparatory (sbyor ba), actual and concluding phases. The Ninth Karmapa explains three phases in his commentary gZhon nu rnam rol:

Well then, if asked about the differences of preparatory, actual and concluding phases, it is like this: [actions of] stabbing (a creature) once or twice wielding a weapon after desiring to kill the creature while the actual killing does not occur form the preparatory phase. Revealing and non-revealing instants of killing by striking [with a weapon] are actual actional paths. Non-revealing instant of skinning, selling, cooking, and consumption, and so on is the concluding phase.

Therefore, this suggests that actions such as the motivation to kill, stabbing with weapons and so on are preparatory engagement while the action that causes actual death of a victim is the actual phase of killing. Finally, activities such as the satisfaction of killing and consumption of meat, and so on come under the concluding phase.

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80 Ibid. p. 244–245: 'phen byed las gcig gis mir skye ba mshungs kyang / kha cig ni rdzogs byed dge bas gzugs bzang ba dang / dbang po tshang ba dang / nad med pa dang / dbang thang phun sum tshogs pa yin la/ kha cig ni rdzogs byed mi dge bas gzugs ngan pa la sosgs par 'gyur ba'i phyir/ dper na ri mo mkhan gyis skya ris kyi ril ba gcig gis gzugs kyi sa bcad' 'dra bar byas nas tshon dmar ser la sosgs pa mdez mi mdez du mas yongs su rdzogs pa mi mshungs pa bzhin du rdzogs byed kyi las kis du ma 'grab kyi.

81 Ibid. p.245: rdzogs byed kyi las kis du ma mi 'grab na 'phen pas 'phangs pa 'ga' yang dbang po ma tshang ba sosgs su mi 'gyur ba yang thal lo.

82 Patt (1993:165).

83 Ibid. p. 169.

84 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 297: 'o na sbyor mjug dngos gsum gyi khyad par gang zhe na/ 'di lhar 'ga' zhig srog chags gsad par 'dod nas mtshon blangs te lan gcig gam gnyis bsnun nas dngos su srog gcod par mi byed pa'i bar ni sbyor ba'o/ bsnun pas srog gcod pa de'e tshe rig byed dang rig byed ma yin pa'i skad cig ma ni las lam dngos yin no/ de phyin chad kyi rig min gyi skad cig ma lpags pa bshu ba dang 'tshong 'shed za ba la sosgs pa ni mjug yin no.
2.5 Three Roots (rtsa ba gsum)
Unwholesome actions of four bodily and three verbal actions are caused by three roots: attachment, aversion and ignorance.\textsuperscript{85} To cite an instance, killing is caused by attachment to the flesh, by anger to take revenge and by ignorance to make sacrifices (mchod sbyin).\textsuperscript{86} Vaibhāśikas maintain that three wrong deeds of mind such as covetousness are also motivated by three roots since they come from three poisons.\textsuperscript{87}

Since all wholesome actional paths are motivated by a virtuous mind, their preparatory, actual and concluding phases are caused by non-attachment (ma chags pa), non-aversion (zhe sdang med pa) and non-ignorance (gti mug med pa).\textsuperscript{88} Abhidharmakośa IV, 69ab reads:

The wholesome [actions] along with [their] preparations and aftermath are born from non-attachment, non-aversion, non-ignorance.\textsuperscript{89}

The Eighth Karmapa argues that killing, ill-will and harsh speech are completed by aversion since killing terminates a life-force and the latter two manifest cruel mind.\textsuperscript{90} Adultery (log g.yem), theft (ma byin len pa) and covetousness are completed by attachment while wrong view is completed by ignorance. Lying (rdzun), divisive speech (phra ma) and meaningless talk (tshig kyal pa) are said to be concluded either by attachment, aversion, or ignorance.

2.6 Conclusion
This chapter has set a foundation for the next chapter on the mechanism of karmaphala by discussing the general understanding of karma according to some major representatives of

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.: las ngag gi las lam bdun sbyor ba'i kun slong mi dge ba'i rtsa ba gsum las skyes pa la dgongs te.
\textsuperscript{86} For instance, killing animals to make offerings to deities is considered killing out of ignorance.
\textsuperscript{87} Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 187: dug gsum de'i njug thog las byung ba'i phyir brnab sems la sogs pa'ang mi dge ba'i rtsa ba gsum las skyes pa yin no.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.: dge ba'i las lam sbyor ba dang njug dang bcas pa rnam ni chos can/ ma chags pa dang zhe sdang med pa dang gti mug med pa las skyes pa yin te/ dge ba'i sens kyis kun nas slong ba'i phyir dang.
\textsuperscript{89} Abhidharmakośakārikā (Sanskrit), ed. by Gokhale p. 87: kuśalā ṡaprayagyāntā alobhadvesamohajāḥ. The Tibetan translation of these lines as dge ba sbyor dang njug bcas rnam/ /chags sdang gti mug med las skyes appear precise when compared with its Sanskrit counterpart. All the Sanskrit words are translated including an indeclinable sa as bcas (together or along with).
\textsuperscript{90} Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 188: gsod dang gnod sens tshig rtsub mo ni chos can/ zhe sdang gis mthar phyin par byed de/ dang po la srog yongs su 'dor ba dang / phyi ma gnyis la rtsub po'i sens mngon du gyur pa'i phyir.
Tibetan Buddhism, and by presenting definitions, classifications and some important topics relating to karma.

The chapter has demonstrated that according to the Vaibhāṣika, karma needs to be morally qualifiable and preceded by motivation. However, the Vaibhāṣika school does not accept all kinds of karma to be characteristically ‘thought’ (mental in nature.) Karma was also shown in Tibetan Buddhist thought as the creator of our physical world and sentient beings in contrast to the idea of these being caused by a creator-God.

This chapter has also provided some explanations and interpretations of karma unique to the Eighth Karmapa. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa explained some classifications of karma through their cause, result and both the cause and the result. Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa argued that a non-vow can also be observed for a single day against the Vaibhāṣika’s viewpoint. Some Mahāyāna interpretations of the Eighth Karmapa were also presented. For instance, contrary to the Vaibhāṣikas, the Eighth Karmapa argued in line with Mahāyāna thought, that actions certain to produce fruition can be altered to actions that are uncertain to produce fruition.

With this in mind, we shall now turn our attention to the mechanism of karma where motivation and other karmic dimensions are studied in relation to their role in completing an action and determining its degree of morality.
Chapter III: Mechanisms of Karmic Dimensions in Karmaphala Based on the Two Tibetan Abhidharmakośa Commentaries

This chapter will discuss the mechanisms of karmaphala based on the Abhidharmakośa commentaries of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas. It analyses the role and the significance of motivation in comparison to other dimensions of action in order to investigate which prevails over the others in terms of moral efficacy and completion of an action. Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentators such as the Eighth Karmapa and mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs follow commentarial conventions and have naturally relied heavily on the Tibetan translation of Vasubandhu’s auto commentary, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, sometimes utilising whole passages verbatim. They do, however, often annotate extensively and differ in their elaborations and interpretations of certain topics. This at times extends the scope of the Indian materials. Accordingly, this chapter will present the Eighth Karmapa’s and the Ninth Karmapa’s exposition of the theory of karmaphala and point out their own ways of explicating it in comparison, where applicable, to explanations found in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and the mChims mdzod.

This chapter will discuss the nature of motivation and then analyse its role in an action in order to unveil the degree of significance in it. Subsequently, other dimensions of an action will also be investigated in terms of their role in the completion of an action. The ten actional paths (las lam bcu) and some other classifications of karma will be analysed to compare the significance of motivation and other karmic dimensions. Following that, conclusions will be drawn with regard to which dimensions are dominant over others.

Passages from the Tibetan texts translated or paraphrased in this chapter are provided in the footnotes, while the translation of other selected passages relevant to this study will be given in an appendix.

3.1 Defining Kun slong

3.1.1 What is Kun slong?

The Tibetan term kun slong (Skt. samutthāna), often rendered as ‘intention’ or ‘motivation,’ could be translated literally as ‘completely giving rise to action’ since ‘kun,’ which appears to be an abbreviated form of kun nas, means completely, and ‘slong’ means causing to rise, in Tibetan.1 Therefore, the term appears to literally mean ‘completely causing [action] to rise.’

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1 rGya bod tsig mdzod: kun — thams chad dang/ tshang ma/ spyi yongs. And slong is defined as sgreng ba dang ldang du 'jug pa. The Sanskrit term also appears to mean the same as the Tibetan since the latter has translated literally as Sanskrit: sum means ‘completely’ or ‘thoroughly’ while MW defines utthāna as causing to rise or
Moreover, in the rGya bod tsig mdzod, kun slong is defined as ‘focus of the mind or mode of thought that desires to accomplish an action.’ This is a generic definition across the philosophical schools covering the understanding of both Vaibhāṣika and other higher philosophical schools such as Sautrāntika and Yogācāra. Although other understandings of motivation are possible, this research will focus on the Abhidharma understanding.

From the Abhidharma point of view, kun slong appears, broadly, both the basic mind (Tib. sms, Skt. citta) and mental factors (Tib. sms 'byung, Skt. caitta) as discussed below. For instance, mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, in his treatment of the ten wholesome actional paths (dge ba'i las lam bcu) and ten unwholesome actional paths (mi dge ba'i las lam bcu), identifies kun slong with afflictive thoughts, such as desire:

With regard to the motivation (kun slong) of the first one [the preparatory phase], the preparatory phase is produced by three roots of unwholesome deeds. Because the actual actional path (las kyi lam dngos) is produced by the preparatory phase and it is in turn produced by three [roots] such as attachment [aversion and ignorance]. In this way, killing generated by attachment is killing after having craved flesh and so on. [Killing] generated by ignorance is performing sacrificial offerings and…

Here mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs appears to suggest that motivation can be simply an afflictive thought (nyon mongs) which precedes an action and without making a distinction between basic mind and mental factors.

Volition (Tib. sms pa, Skt. cetanā) shares some common characteristics with kun slong but they appear different entities according to Vaibhāṣika thought. However, an instance of identifying kun slong with sms pa is found in the Abhidharmasamuccaya, which is considered a Mahāyāna treatise by the Tibetan Buddhist system. In the discussion of

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2 rGya bod tsig mdzod: kun slong — bya ba gang zhih bsgrub 'dod pa'i sms kyi dmigs pa'am/ bsam tshul.

3 mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 355: dang po'i kun slong gi dbang du byas na sbhor ba ni mi dge ba rtsa ba gsum las skyes pa yin te/ las kyi lam dngos ni sbhor bas skyed pa yin la sbhor ba'ang 'dod chags la sogs pa gsum las skyes pa'i phyir ro/ 'di ltar srog gcod pa 'dod chags las skyes pa ni sha la sogs pa la sred nas gsd pa'o/ 'che sding las skyes pa ni 'khon gyis gsd pa'o/ gti mug las skyes ba ni mchod sbhyin byed pa rnam dang.
generosity, the Abhidharmasamuccaya explicitly mentions that kun slong which triggers generosity is sems pa.\(^4\)

The Eight Karmapa defines sems pa as follows: ‘if intention is present, having perceived the six sense objects, it fully draws the mind (sems) towards an object like iron to a magnet and conditions it.\(^5\) He also explains its function as the propeller of the wholesome actions of the three doors.\(^6\)

Sems pa is one of the five ever-present mental factors (kun 'gro lnga) that drive consciousness to an object (yul).\(^7\) In Abhidharma texts sems pa is mentioned along with the ten mind bases (sems kyi sa mang bcu) that occur with all kinds of mind.

The Abhidharmakośa II, 24 reads:

Sensation, volition, perception,
desire, contact, intelligence, recollection,
ideation, inclination and
concentration [exist] in all [kinds of] mind.\(^8\)

mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs states that sems pa is also a mental action (yid kyi las) and a mental factor that is concomitant with a mental consciousness (yid shes).\(^9\) From this it follows that sems pa which are concomitant with five sense consciousnesses such as eye consciousness do not trigger bodily and verbal action.

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\(^4\) Abhidharmasamuccaya (Tibetan), p.157: kun nas slong ba ni de dag dang ldan pa'i sems pa'o.

\(^5\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII (1507–1554), Grub bde'i dp'yid 'jo, Vol. 1 p. 265: sems pa ni gang yod na khab len lcags ltar yul drug la dnigs nas sems yul la mngon par g.yo zhi ng 'du byed pa ste.

\(^6\) Ibid. 265–266: byed las ni sgo gsum gyi dge sogs las kun nas slong byed do. Three doors are considered body, speech and mind.

\(^7\) Patt (1993: 131).

\(^8\) Abhidharmakośakārikā (Tibetan), p. 8–9: tshor dang sems pa 'du shes dang // 'dun dang reg dang blo gros dran// yid la byed dang mos pa dang // ting nge 'dzin sems thams cad la. Skt. vedanā cetanā samjñā cchandaḥ sparsō maṭiḥ smṛthritis / manaskāro 'dhimokṣaḥ samādhiḥ sarvacetasi (Abhidharmakośakārikā, ed. by Gokhale p. 79). The Tibetan translated phrase sems thams cad la, which appears a literal translation of sarvacetasi, becomes grammatically clearer only when one refers to the Sanskrit equivalent sarvacetasi. The Tibetan particle la can be understood in a locative, dative and (very rarely) accusative sense. However, in Sanskrit, cetasi is clearly understood only in the locative sense as a masculine singular locative form of cetas (mind). Moreover, it appears that Tibetans have invariably translated cetas as sems although the mind forms only one kind of cetas in Sanskrit. Cetas appears polysemous. For instance, MW, under s.v. cetas, defines it as consciousness, intelligence, thinking soul, heart, and mind.

\(^9\) mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 294: sems pa'i las ni yid shes dang mtshungs ldan las ngag gi las mngon par 'du byed pa'i sems byang yin pa'i phyir.
**Kun slong**, in a broader sense, is simply a consciousness that causes and precedes any action or a consciousness that is present during the actual execution of an action according to the understanding of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas. However, this research will focus on the *kun slong* which is a mental consciousness (Tib. *yid kyi rnam par shes pa*, Skt. *manovijñāna*) that causes and precedes an action, not all kinds of consciousness (*shes pa*).

According to Mi pham, wholesome and unwholesome *sems pa* make bodily and verbal action wholesome and unwholesome, as does *kun slong*. Therefore, both *sems pa* and *kun slong* appear to function in a similar way in relation to making actions morally qualifiable. However, the *sems pa* should be considered a mental action and one of the five omnipresent mental factors while *kun slong* can also be any kinds of consciousness (*shes pa*) including basic mind (*sems*). *Kun slong* and *sems pa* deserve further research to determine similarities and differences but that is beyond the scope of this study.

### 3.1.2 Classification of Kun slong

*Kun slong* is categorised as causal motivation (Tib. *rgyu’i kun slong*, Skt. *hetusamutthāna*) which appears to be a motivation that is the principal propeller of an action, and as concurrent motivation (Tib. *dus kyi kun slong*, Skt. *tatksaṇasamutthāna*) which is a motivation present during the actual execution of an action that aids in the production of bodily and verbal actions. The Eighth Karmapa, in line with other commentators including mChims ’Jam pa’i dbyangs, argues:

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Though propelled by a causal motivation, action would not finally (mthar thug) become a revealing form (Tib. *rnam par rig byed*, Skt. *vijñapti*) if there were no concurrent motivation. [It is] analogous to a person, who, though propelled by the thought to embark on a journey to a town would fail to reach the town if they died midway.11
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However, it appears that causal motivation is the principal determining factor of the moral qualification of an action since the Eighth Karmapa asserts that it would be inappropriate to

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10 Mi pham rgya mtsho, *Mi pham mdzod*, p. 354: *sems pa dge mi dges lus ngag kyang de ltar ’gyur ro gsungs so.*

11 Mi bskyod rdo rje, *Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpod pa’,* Vol. 2 p. 47: *dus kyi kun slong med na rgyu’i kun slong gis ’phangs su zin kyang / bya ba mthar thug rnam par rig byed du mi ’gyur te/ dper na ’ga’ zhiig grong du ’gro snyam nas ’phangs kyang bar ma dor shi na grong du mi phyin pa dang ’dra’o.*
consider virtuous actions not preceded by causal motivation as virtue by motivation (kun slong gi dge ba).\textsuperscript{12}

Meanwhile, the Sautrāntika consider the first one, causal motivation, a mental action but consider concurrent motivation to be bodily and verbal actions.\textsuperscript{13} Bodily and verbal actions are regarded as thought-motivated action (bsam pa'i las) since they are produced by volition or mental action. Causal motivation is also known as the prime mover (Tib. rab tu 'jug byed, Skt. pravartaka) which instigates an action, while concurrent motivation is a subsequent mover (Tib. rjes su 'jug byed, Skt. anuvādaka) which causes subsequent actions. A prime mover, for instance, could be a thought to give alms while a subsequent mover could be a thought to give in a certain manner such as in a polite way during the actual engagement of giving alms.

In general, a prime mover and subsequent mover are not certain to correspond to each other with regard to morality. A prime mover which is morally wholesome can be followed by a morally wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral subsequent mover.\textsuperscript{14} However, the Vaibhāṣika maintains that in the case of a fully enlightened Buddha the prime mover and subsequent mover of an action correspond to each other and that both of them are either virtuous or neutral.\textsuperscript{15} The Vaibhāṣika also presents another alternative:

Although a subsequent mover of neutral prime mover becomes wholesome, a subsequent mover of wholesome prime mover becomes solely wholesome, not neutral. This is because a Buddha’s strength does not become inferior.\textsuperscript{16}

It is argued that even a morally neutral prime mover is followed by a wholesome prime mover in Buddhas while a wholesome prime mover is followed by solely a wholesome subsequent mover since it is argued that Buddha’s strength (stobs) does not depreciate. It appears to mean that Buddha’s qualities such as gnosis (ye shes) do not diminish in strength.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. p. 74: rgyu'i kun slong sngon du ma song na kun nas slong ba'i dge ba mi rigs pa'i phyir.
\textsuperscript{13} Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p.15: dang po rgyu'i kun slong la sens pa'i las 'jug /gnyis pa dus kyi kun slong la bsam pa'i las su 'jug pa'i phyir ro.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. p. 51: rab tu 'jug byed dang rjes su 'jug byed' dra ba'i nges pa med de/ rab tu 'jug byed dge ba las dge ba dang sogs pas mi dge ba dang / lung ma bstan du'ang 'gyur la/ rab tu 'jug byed mi dge ba dang lung ma bstan las kyang rjes su 'jug byed dge ba dang mi dge ba dang lung ma bstan rnam pa gsum du 'gyur ro.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.: thub pa sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das ni rab tu 'jug byed dang rjes su 'jug byed' dra ba stel dge ba dang dge ba las lung ma bstan las lung ma bstan 'jug pa'i phyir.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.: yang na lung ma bstan gyi rab tu 'jug byed kyi rjes su 'jug byed de dge bar 'gyur gyi/ rab tu 'jug byed dge ba'i rjes 'jug dge ba kho na las lung ma bstan du mi 'gyur te/ sangs rgyas rnam s kyi stobs ni dman par 'gyur ba ma yin pa'i phyir ro.
The Eighth Karmapa contends that in most cases the subsequent mover would be morally wholesome if the prime mover is wholesome. It is argued that for some individuals, both the initial motivation (prime mover) to receive the monk’s vow and motivation to follow procedures while receiving vows (subsequent mover) are wholesome. However, for some individuals of bad temperament, even if the initial motivation (prime mover) to receive a vow is wholesome, the motivation to follow the procedure of ordination could become unwholesome in the middle (bar) through anger, or neutral motivation when aspiration (mos pa) deteriorates.17

The Eighth Karmapa describes four propositions with regard to the entities which are only a prime mover, both a prime mover and subsequent mover, solely a subsequent mover, or neither of the two. The first proposition, the entity which is only a prime mover, is suggested as a consciousness that is abandoned on the path of seeing (Tib. mthong spang, Skt. darśanaprahātavya) such as the view of holding transitory aggregates as real (Tib. jig lta, Skt. satkāyadrṣṭī). This is considered a prime mover since it is a mental process that is turned inward.18 It does not move or generate bodily and verbal actions since they are caused only by mind turned outward. Hence, it is argued not to be a subsequent mover. The Eighth Karmapa explains the other three propositions, which correspond to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and the mChims mdzod, as follows:

Secondly, the mental consciousness [that is] an object of abandonment on the path of meditation (Tib. sgom spang, Skt. bhāvanāprahātavya) is both a prime mover and subsequent mover, since [they] engage [in an object] by turning inward and outward. Thirdly, the five sense consciousnesses are solely a subsequent mover since [they are] thought-free. Non-contaminated mental consciousness (zag pa med pa'i yid kyi rnam shes) is neither a prime mover nor a subsequent mover since [it] remains in meditative equipoise (mnyam par bzhag pa), turns inward and is opposed to engagement [with an object].19

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17 Ibid. 51: phal cher rab tu 'jug byed dge ba yin na rjes su 'jug byed dge ba yin te/ la la ni dang por dge slong gi sdom pa blang snyam pa'i dge ba des gsol ba dang bzhi'i las sogs skal ba de yang dge ba la gang zag rgyud ngan kha cig ni dang po de dge ba yang bar du khong khro lta ba mi dge ba dang/ mos pa nyams nas lung ma bstan du'ang 'gyur srid pas so.

18 Translation of the original text of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary on it is provided in the appendix.

19 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 50–51: gnyis pa ni/ yid kyi rnam par shes pa sgom pas spang bya ni/ rab tu 'jug byed dang rjes su 'jug gnyis ka yin te/ kha nang dang phyi rol du bltas nas 'jug pa'i phyir/ gsum pa ni/ sgo lnga'i rnam par shes pa ni/ rjes su 'jug byed kho na yin te/ rnam par mi riog pa'i
Regarding the second proposition of being both a prime mover and a subsequent mover, a mental consciousness that is to be abandoned on the path of meditation is presented since it engages in both the inward and outward mental process. Therefore, it can serve both as a principal motivation and a subsequent motivation.

With regard to the third proposition of being solely a subsequent mover, the five sense consciousnesses are seen only as subsequent movers since they are turned outward and thought-free. It is argued that they cannot initiate actions but are simply present during the execution of actions. Although illustrations are not presented in the commentaries including the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the *mChims mdzod* and the *Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo*, it seems that they are present and support the actual execution of an action such as eye consciousness helping in seeing a bull while slaughtering it.

The fourth proposition, the non-contaminated mental consciousness is neither a prime mover, since meditative equipoise is thought-free, nor a subsequent mover because it is turned inward and does not engage with bodily and verbal actions.

Mi bskyod rdo rje’s understanding of *kun slong* from an abhidharmic point of view, in a broader sense, can be summed up as follows: regarding its conceptuality, it should be characteristically both conceptual (Tib. *rtog pa*, Skt. *vikalpa*) in the sense of being a thought, and non-conceptual (Tib. *rtog med*, Skt. *nirvikalpa*). According to the understanding of the Eighth Karmapa, it appears that a causal motivation is a conceptual thought. However, five sense consciousnesses, which are solely subsequent movers, are non-conceptual since they are thought-free.

From the above analysis of the four propositions, one can also conclude that non-conceptual mind cannot be a prime mover or the causal motivation, since it should be conceptual in nature. The conclusion can also be drawn that causal motivation or the prime mover is conceptual while concurrent motivation or the subsequent mover can have both the aspects of conceptuality and non-conceptuality.

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phyir/ zag pa med pa'i yid kyi rnam shes ni rab tu 'jug byed dang rjes su 'jug byed gnyis ka ma yin te/ mnyam par bzhag pa'i phyir dang / kha nang du blas pa'i phyir dang / 'jug pa 'gal ba'i phyir/.

20 According to the Abhidharma, conceptuality is categorised into three: 1) conceptuality by nature (Tib. *ngo bo nyid kyi rtog pa*, Skt. *svabhāvavikalpa*) which includes all kind of consciousness including five sense consciousnesses; 2) discriminating conceptuality (Tib. *nges par rtog pa*, Skt. *abhinirūpānāvikalpa*) in the form of the mental factor ‘insight’ (Tib. *shes rab*, Skt. *prajñā*) which is a wandering mind as opposed to meditative equipoise (*mnyam bzhag*); 3) recollecting conceptuality (Tib. *rjes su dran pa'i rtog pa*, Skt. *anusmaraṇāvikalpa*) which is remembrance that is present with the non-meditative mental consciousness. Conceptuality (*rtog pa*) meaning motivation, in this thesis is understood in the sense of the second kind, which is a thinking entity.
As far as the relation to the important concept of basic mind (sems) and mental factors (sems ’byung) is concerned, it can be concluded that while sems pa is restricted to mental factors (sems ’byung), kun slong is extended to basic mind (sems) since the five sense consciousnesses are also regarded as concurrent motivation.

Motivation seems to comprise both the conceptual and non-conceptual aspects in accordance with the nature of mind (sems) which it accompanies. Nevertheless, the five sense consciousnesses, which are non-conceptual by nature, are counted as the subsequent movers which are concurrent motivations.

3.1.3 Kun slong as a Forerunner of Actions

The Eighth Karmapa comments on the line from the Abhidharmakośa IV, 7d rnam rig dpyod dang bcas dag na\(^\text{21}\) (Revealing [form exists] in the [sphere where] there is a detailed thought\(^\text{22}\) (Tib. dpyod pa, Skt. vicāra) as follows:

Revealing form of bodily and verbal actions exist only in the desire realm and the first state of concentration [where] a detailed thought [exists]. But bodily and verbal actions of the second state of concentration and above are triggered by the general thought (Tib. rtog pa, Skt. vitarka)\(^\text{23}\) and a detailed thought of the first state of concentration since there is no motivation of general thought and a detailed thought [in the second state of concentration and above] and since they are preceded by the motivation of general thought and a detailed thought.\(^\text{24}\)

\(^{21}\) Abhidharmakośakārikā (Tibetan), p. 21. The Tibetan translation rnam rig dpyod dang bcas dag na of its corresponding Sanskrit text vijñaptī tattvakaracyayoh transfers the whole meaning. It has also taken into consideration of all words and grammatical features. For instance, vicārayoh, which is in masculine locative dual form of vicāra, is also translated in locative plural form in Tibetan with pluralising particle dag (Tibetans do not have separate grammatical particle to denote dual objects) and locative particle na.

\(^{22}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpod ’jo, Vol. 1 p. 279; rtog pa dang dpyod pa ni tha dad de/ don gyi ngo bo’i rnam pa dang khyad par gyi rnam pa can la ’jug pa’i sems byung rising ba dang zhib pa nyid kyi phyr. He explains rtog pa and dpyod pa as a gross and fine mental factor respectively that engage with general and particular aspects of objects. He appears to mean, for example, that rtog pa (vitarka) conceives the general characteristics of a vase while dpyod pa (vicāra) conceives the detailed characteristics and features of the vase. In Buswell, Robert E., and Donald S. Lopez (eds.) 2013, s.v. ‘vicāra’ translated as ‘sustained thought’ and ‘sustained attention.’ They explain vicāra as fixing the attention on certain objects after vitarka has directed the attention towards certain objects.

\(^{23}\) In contrast to the vicāra discussed in the previous footnote, vitarka is a thought that conceived objects without their characteristics in detail. Buswell, Robert E., and Donald S. Lopez (eds.) 2013, s.v. ‘vitarka’ explains it as ‘in ordinary consciousness, it is perhaps best translated as “applied thought” or “initial application of thought” and refers to the momentary adverence toward the chosen object of attention.’

\(^{24}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpod ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 39–40: rnam pa rig byed ni dpyod pa dang bcas pa ’dod kham dang bsam gi dang po dag kho na na yod kyi las ngag gi las ni rtog dpyod sngon ’gro can yin pas/ rtog dpyod kun slong med pas/ gnyis pa yan chad kyi lus ngag gi las kyi dang po’i rtog dpyod kyi kun slong gis bslang ngo.
The Eighth Karmapa identifies a general thought and a detailed thought with motivation in
this paragraph. However, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* does not identify them with motivation.
The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* simply comments to the line *vijñaptiḥ saviccārayoh*25 as
following:

There is *vijñapti*, bodily and a vocal action, only in the spheres of
Kāmadhātu and the First Dhyāna, where there is *vicāra*.26

The Eighth Karmapa demonstrates that an action should be preceded by conscious motivation
of general and a detailed thought. This would exclude involuntary actions, such as sneezing
and movements of one’s limbs, from being reckoned as karma from the Buddhist point of
view, and particularly the Vaibhāṣika’s standpoint. Many involuntary actions can be argued
to be spontaneous and not preceded by a detailed thought to perform them. Bodily and verbal
actions are thought, by other scholars as well, to be preceded by volition.27

The arguments and refutations directed towards the Nirgrantha school discussed in
section 3.2.1 on ‘killing’ also establish that the Eighth Karmapa is categorically explicit with
regard to the motivation preceding any morally qualifiable action.

3.1.4 Determining Factor in the Moral Qualification of an Action

Motivation appears to be the determining factor in qualifying actions as morally wholesome
or unwholesome. The Eighth Karmapa makes the following remarks with regard to the
motivation behind practising generosity:

In this case, while giving whatsoever through a good motivation is generosity, [one
 can] also give through fear, expectation of return, anger and envy. But [this] is not
accepted [as generosity] here.28

This remark of the Eighth Karmapa demonstrates that generosity, to become morally
wholesome, has to be caused by good motivation. It would also follow that all actions need to

26 Vasubandhu; Poussin, La Vallee; Pruden, Leo M. (trans.) 1991. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu*,
vol. II p. 572.
sbyin par byed pa de sbyin pa yin gyi’ jigs pa dang / lan la re ba dang / 'dod chags dang / khro ba dang / phrag
dog gis kyang sbyin mod kyi’ 'dir ni mi’ 'dod pas.
be generated by good motivation to render them morally wholesome. Other Tibetan scholars such as mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs also argue that action produced from attachment, aversion, and ignorance cannot be wholesome since it should be generated by a wholesome mind in the form of non-attachment, non-aversion and non-ignorance.  

### 3.2 General Significance of Motivation in Karmaphala

In general, motivation appears to play a significant role in the theory of karmaphala. The Eighth Karmapa also appears to endorse motivation as a determining factor in making an action wholesome, unwholesome or neutral in the explanation of the Abhidharmakośa IV, 9b ‘Because of the growth/swelling (samutthāna) of actions and the rest’ (Tib. bya ba la sogs kun slong bas, Skt. samutthānāt kriyādayah) as following:

Bodily and verbal actions and birth (Tib. skye ba, Skt. jāti), obtainment (Tib. thob pa, Skt. prāpṭi), absorption of cessation (Tib. 'gog pa'i snyoms 'jug, Skt. nirodha-samāpatti), and absorption without discrimination (Tib. 'du shes med pa'i snyoms 'jug, Skt. asamjñisamāpatti) motivated by concomitant dharmas (mtsungs ldan gyi chos) associated with those roots of virtue and so on are wholesome by motivation. It is like an indirectly beneficial act such as a son becoming free of illness by the milk that comes from a woman who has consumed fluid blended with medicine.

29 mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 356–357: ‘dod chags la sogs pa las skyes pa ni dge bar mi rung ba'i phyir darg/ dge ba dag ni dge ba'i sems las skye ba'i phyir ro.

30 Abhidharmakośakārikā (Tibetan), p. 21. Here the Tibetan line bya ba la sogs kun slong bas appears grammatically accurate when compared with its Sanskrit counterpart samutthānāt kriyādayah (Abhidharmakośakārikā, ed. Gokhale p. 85). Both kun slong bas and samutthānāt are in ablative case in the sense of ‘from motivation or because of motivation.’

31 Abhidharmakośakārikā (Sanskrit), ed. Gokhale p. 85.

32 It is one of the fourteen conditioned factors disassociated with mind (Tib. sems dang ldan pa ma yin pa'i 'du byed, Skt. cittaviprayuktasamāskāra). Buswell, Robert E., and Donald S. Lopez (eds.) 2013, under the headword cittaviprayuktasamāskāra, assert that birth (jāti) is a one of the four conditioned characteristics: birth or origination (skyi pa), subsistence (gnas pa), decay (rga ba) and disintegration ('jig pa). It further mentions ‘In the Sarvāstivāda treatment of causality, these four characteristics were forces that exerted real power over compounded objects, escorting an object along from origination, to continuance, to senescence or decay, until the force “desinence,” or death finally extinguishes it.’

33 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 42: ngo ba nyid kyi dge ba de dag dang mchung las snyoms pa'i mchung las gni dge ba de dag yin te. Here the Eighth Karmapa refers concomitant dharmas to the wholesome mind and mental factors associated with the virtue by nature such as roots of virtues (non-attachment, non-aversion and non-ignorance).

34 Ibid.: dge ba'i rtsa ba la sogs pa dang mchungs las gni chos de dag gi sbyin nas sngal ba'i bya ba las ngag gi las dang / la sogs pas skye ba la sogs pa dang / thob pa dang / 'gog pa dang / 'du shes med pa'i snyoms 'jug rnam ni kun nas slong ba'i dge ba ste/ bud med 'ga' zhi gis sman dang sbyar ba'i gung ba tungs pa'i nu zhos ba la la med pa sogs 'ong te bhrgyud pas phan pa lta ba'o.
Furthermore, it shows that motivation also generates wholesome phenomena such as the absorption of cessation, besides rendering an action morally wholesome or unwholesome. One can also safely maintain that motivation has its role in almost all kinds of bodily and verbal actions. This will be discussed below in the section 3.2.1.

Therefore, motivation serves as a foundation and determining factor for actions to become moral or immoral. Motivation, good, bad or neutral, is therefore the prerequisite for the moral qualification of any action. From the arguments made above, one can deduce that the spontaneous actions, not triggered by motivation, are morally neutral.

### 3.2.1 Presence of Motivation and its Significance in Actional Paths

From the point of view of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas, motivation is present in all kinds of karma according to the Vaibhāṣika school. This section will briefly discuss the nature of ten unwholesome actional paths (*mi dge ba’i las lam bcu*) under their respective sections and analyse the presence of motivation and its significance.

Actional path (Tib. *las kyi lam*, Skt. *karmapatha*), according to Vaibhāṣika, is a path through which volition proceeds or which serves as a support for the volition. To cite an instance, an action of killing provides a path through which the volition (Tib. *sems pa*, Skt. *cetanā*) of killing proceeds.

The ten actional paths of wholesome actions are not discussed in this thesis since they are not given enough treatment in the commentaries. For instance, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (in Tibetan translation) asserts that actions generated by non-attachment, non-aversion and non-ignorance are wholesome, and avoidance of preparatory, actual and completing phases of unwholesome actional paths become preparatory, actual and completing phases of wholesome actions. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (in Sanskrit) also reads as follows, showing how the Tibetan rendering is generally accurate in this instance.

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36 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII (1507–1554), *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, vol. 2 p. 207: srog good sogs bdun ni las kyang yin te/ lus dang ngag gis bsams pa’i las yin pa’i phyir/ las kyi lam yang yin te/ lus ngag gi las kun nas slong ba’i sems pa ’jug pa’i gzi’i am dmigs pa’am lam mam rten ni lus ngag gi las yin pa’i phyir/.
37 Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (Tibetan), p. 433: dge ba’i las kyi lam gyi sbyor ba dang / mjug dang bcas pa rnams ni dge ba’i sems kyi kun nas bslang ba’i phyir dang / de yang gdon mi za bar ma chugs pa la sogs pa dang mtshungs par ldan pa’i phyir ma chugs pa dang / zhe sdang med pa dang gli mug med pa las skyes pa dag yin no/ /de la mi dge ba’i las kyi lam gyi sbyor ba spong ba ni dge ba’i las kyi lam gyi sbyor ba yin no/ /dngos spong ba ni dngos yin no/ /mjug spong ba ni mjug yin no.
And because this [good mind] is joined with non-attachment and so on, here, inevitably, the cessation of the unwholesome preparations of actional paths is a wholesome course of action and preparation. The cessation of the [unwholesome] root is the [wholesome] root. The cessation of the [unwholesome] concluding [phase of the karmapatha] is the [wholesome] concluding [phase].  

Therefore, treatment of the unwholesome ten actional paths is felt sufficient since their reversals can be applied to unwholesome actions. 

In general, it is maintained that any wholesome action should be motivated by the motivation of non-attachment, non-aversion and non-ignorance while the reverse is the case for unwholesome actions. For instance, killing can be motivated by attachment, aversion and ignorance. The Eighth Karmapa observes:

Killing generated by attachment is killing for parts of the body such as tail, teeth, skin and so on; for sporting; taking possession of wealth; and to protect oneself or one’s friends. [Killing] generated by aversion is to kill so that when one kills an adversary, [one] is gratified and through the mere nonexistence of an adversary, animosity does not occur. [Killing] generated by ignorance is to engage in sacrificial practices.

Other actional paths are also generated by attachment, aversion and ignorance in a similar fashion to killing.

3.2.1.1 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Killing (Tib. srog gcod pa, Skt. prāṇātipāta)
The Eighth Karmapa remarks: ‘A thought of killing is a deliberate thinking “[I will] kill this one” in an unmistaken perception and to kill one other than oneself.’ In this way, the Eighth Karmapa maintains that characteristics of killing should possess three aspects. Firstly, a killer

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39 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dp’yid ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 185: srog ge’od cha’gs pa las skyes pa ni rnga ma dang so dang pags pa soogs las kyi yan lag gi phyir ram/ rtsed mo’i phyir ram/ rin gyi nor bdag gir bya ba’i phyir ram/ bdag gam mdca’ bo yongs sa bskyab pa’i phyir ge’od pa’o/’ dhe sda’ng las skyes pa dgra sod tsam na snyin phyir bya zhi’g/ dgra med tsam na mkhon mi’ ong ba’i phyir ge’od pa dang/ gti mug las skyes pa ni mchod sbyin byed pa ste.

40 Ibid. p. 191: srog ge’od pa’i bsam pa ni’/’di ge’od snyoms pas bsam bzhin du’/du shes gzhan dang/ ma nor bar ni ge’od pa’i gzh’u/ rang las gzhan ge’od pa’o.”
should have a motivation to kill; secondly, to kill the precise one he intended to kill, and thirdly, kill other than himself. The Eighth Karmapa’s explanation of these three dimensions concur with the mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya.

The Eighth Karmapa refutes the thesis of the Nirgrantha school (gCer bu pa) that advocates actions without prior motivation. The Eighth Karmapa first presents the Nirgrantha position: Nirgranthas assert that a wrongdoing of the karma of killing is incurred even without deliberately intending to kill. They provide an analogy of fire and argue that fire burns a person if he comes in contact with it whether he intends or not to contact it. The Nirgranthas contend that fire would burn even without a motivation to touch it since reality (or the natural characteristic of fire to burn) is powerful.

The Eighth Karmapa extensively refutes the Nirgrantha positions based on the analogy of fire. Mi bskyod rdo rje argues that a teacher would commit a non-dharmic action by conferring an instruction of intense austerity on students since it generates suffering in them. Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa challenges the Nirgrantha analogy of fire by saying that it would lead to non-dharma for a mother and a child in the womb since they become the cause of suffering to each other. The Eighth Karmapa goes on to argue that even the victim that gets killed would commit wrongdoing for it is connected to the action of killing, like a fire burning its support (namely firewood). While the logical arguments used here to refute the Nirganta position are found in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, the Eighth Karmapa makes annotations which clarify the argument.

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41 Translation of the source text for killing and refutation of Nirgrantha position of action without prior motivation is provided in the appendix.

42 Buswell, Robert E., and Donald S. Lopez (eds.) 2013 define Nirgrantha as ‘In Sanskrit, “free from all ties,” the term generally used in Buddhist texts to refer to the followers of Nirgrantha-Jñātīputra (P. Niganṭha-Nātaputta), the Buddhist name for the leader of the Jaina religion, Mahāvīra.’ Tibetans often refer to them as ‘the Naked Ones’ who are the followers of Mahāvīra or non-Buddhist school of Jainism.

43 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp-yid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 192: gcer bu pa rnam na re/ ched du ma bsam par srog gcud kyang byed pa po srog gcud pa'i dngos gzhi'i ltung ba dang ldan te/ me de la reg par bya snyam pas 'tshig /mi bya snyam pas reg kyang mi 'tshig pa ma yin/ reg na reg par mi bya snyam kyang 'tshig pa dang 'dra bar chos nyid dbang che ba'i phyir/ zher zer ro. See appendix for the translation.

44 Ibid.: dka' thub drag po'i lung slob ma la dbogs pa na slob dpon thams cad chos ma yin pa dang ldan par 'gyur te/ sdu gbas gsal bskyed pa'i phyir.

45 Ibid.: ma dang bu lto na yod pa dag kyang chos can/ chos ma yin pa dang ldan par 'gyur te/ phan tshun sdu gbas gsal gyi rgyu mthun du gyur pa'i phyir/ me'i dpes de na'o/.

46 Ibid.: bsad bya de la yang chos can/ bsad pa'i kha na ma tho ba dang ldan par gyur te/ gsod pa de'i bya ba dang 'brel ba'i phyir/ mes rang gi rten bsreg pa bzhin no.
From this presentation, one may conclude that motivation is one of the dimensions required to complete an action of killing, while accidental killing is exempted from the actional path of killing.

3.2.1.2 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Theft (Tib. ma byin len pa, Skt. adattādāna)
Stealing is taking wealth owned by others with the use of force or appropriating it without the knowledge of an owner. dBang phyug rdo rje states two aspects of stealing. Firstly, a thief should have the motivation to steal since taking others’ wealth without the motivation simply does not qualify as wrongdoing (nyes pa). Secondly, taking the property from a wrong owner rather than the intended one would simply incur the wrongdoing of preparatory phase. For these reasons, motivation appears one of the indispensable dimensions to complete an act of stealing. However, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya defines stealing as following:

To appropriate to oneself, through force or in secret, that which is possessed by another, when one does not confuse the person from whom one wants to steal with another person, constitutes stealing.

The Abhidharmakośabhāṣya does not precisely state the requirement of motivation in completing the actional path of stealing. On the contrary, the Eighth Karmapa explicitly mentions that the deliberate thought (ched du bsam) to steal should precede the action of theft. It follows that the action of theft would be incomplete without a motivation to steal property owned by others. mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs also explains that taking others’ property without motivation would not incur wrongdoing.

3.2.1.3 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Adultery (Tib. 'dod pa'i log par g.yem pa, Skt. kānamithyācāra)
The Eighth Karmapa, in the refutation of the Nirgrantha stance of action without motivation, asserts that adultery should be preceded by motivation. He argues that since the downfall of

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47 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 301: de’ang bsams bzhin pa dang ma nor ba gnyis ni yan gal tu dgos te/ bdag gir bya’i bsam pa med par blangs pa tsam gyis nyes par mi ’gyur la/ lhas byin gyi rdzas blang bar ’dod pa las mchod sbyin gyi rdzas nor blangs pa ni sbyor ba’i nyes pa tsam ’byung gi dngos mi ’byung ba’i phyir ro.
49 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 194: ma byin pa len pa ni gzhan gyis bdag gir byas pa’i nor ched du bsams nas ma nor bar dngos su mtha’am.
50 mChims 'Jam pa’i dbyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 359: ma bsam par bdag gi nor gyi bsreb tu gzhan gyi nor blangs pa la ni nyes pa med pa’i phyir dang.
actual killing is incurred without motivation to kill (according to the Nirgranthas), it would logically follow that one would commit the wrongdoing of adultery by merely touching and seeing another’s wife without the prior motivation of afflictive mind.\textsuperscript{51} With this argument one can conclude that the Eighth Karmapa is certain that motivation should precede adultery, although the \textit{mChims mdzod} is not explicit about it.

Therefore, it is deducible that motivation is essential in the completion of adultery from the standpoint of \textit{Vaibhāṣika} according to the understanding of the Eighth Karmapa. This argument follows the view that deliberate thought to engage in sexual activity should precede the action.

\textbf{3.2.1.4 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Lying (Tib. rdzun, Skt. \textit{mṛśāvaca})}

The Eighth Karmapa remarks that the ‘words of a lie [become a lie] when a [person] speaks them after having different thought from the sense and [when they are] understood fully [by the listener].’\textsuperscript{52} He implies that motivation to lie should precede the action deductible from the argument that a person who speaks a lie needs to adopt a thought different thought from the sense or reality. Both the \textit{Abhidharmakośabhāṣya} and the \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo} mention these two dimensions of lying. However, the \textit{mChims mdzod} states that the speaker should have a motivation to change perception in the listener.\textsuperscript{53}

With regard to the former or latter letters that become an actional path in lying, \textit{Abhidharmakośabhāṣya} identifies only letters or syllables of a word.

2. Discourse (ii.47a-b) is sometimes made up of numerous syllables. Which will be the course of action? Which will be lies? The last syllable, which is \textit{vijñāpti} and which is accompanied by \textit{avijñāpti}. Or rather, the syllable whose hearing causes the meaning to be understood. The preceeding syllables are a preparation for the lie.\textsuperscript{54}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{51} Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo}, Vol. 2 p. 192–193: de ltar nyon mongs kyi ched du gstad pa med pa’i gshan gyi chung ma mthong reg la’angchos can/’dod log gi nyes pa bskyed par thal/ ma bsam par srog geod kyang lngos ’gos pa’i phyir.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Ibid. 196: rdzun gyi tshig ni don smra ba de la ’du shes gshan du bsgyur ba’i sgo nas smra ba’i tshig de’i don mngon par go ba na yin te.
\item \textsuperscript{53} mChims ’Jam pa’i dbyangs, \textit{mChims mdzod}, p. 361: rdzun gyi tshig ni smra ba po rang gis don smra ba gang yin pa de la pha rol po ’du shes gshan du bsgyur ba’i bsam pas mi bden pa smras pas tshig de’i don mngon par go ba’o. It appears that the \textit{mChims mdzod} understands changing perception or thought (’du shes gshan du bsgyur) in the root verse as changing perception in a listener while the \textit{Abhidharmakośabhāṣya} and the \textit{Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo} understand it as differing thought from the reality in a speaker.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Vasubandhu; Poussin, La Vallee; Pruden, Leo M. (trans.) 1991. \textit{Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu}, vol. II p. 652.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
However, the Eighth Karmapa recognises both words and syllables. The Eighth Karmapa’s addition of ‘words’ arguably makes sense since understanding of a meaning usually arise from words not letters alone. He remarks:

If asked which of the former or latter words become actional path since a word is formed by many letters, [response:] a revealing form of a final word along with a non-revealing form becomes the actional path. Because former words and letters are the preparatory [phase]. Or the actional path would be a word from which the meaning is understood since the actional path is established with regard to the [arousal] of understanding in the listener. Former letters are preparatory and latter [letters] along with non-revealing forms are [part of the] concluding phase.  

3.2.1.5 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Divisive Speech (Tib. phra ma, Skt. paśunya)

Tibetan commentaries including the Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, the mChims mdzod, and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya remain brief and make interlinear explanation to the Abhidharmakośa verse that deals with divisive speech. Therefore, their treatment of the topic remains similar in content and length. In line with the focus chosen for this study, this section will present the Eighth Karmapa’s explanation.

The Eighth Karmapa asserts that divisive speech is ‘a word that is motivated by afflicting mind and spoken in an understandable and unmistaken manner to divide others [who are] in a good relationship.’ This definition shows that divisive speech needs to be generated by a prior motivation with afflicting emotions as reflected in the Abhidharmakośa IV, 76ab:

Divisive speech is [spoken] to divide others,

[which] is a word [motivated] by afflicting mind.

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55 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 196–197: yi ge mang po las tshig tu 'gyur na tshig snga phyi gang las lam du bzhag ce na'ngag tha ma rig byed dang rig byed min pa dang bcas pa las lam du bzhag ste/tshig dang yi ge snga ma rnams sbyor ba yin pa'i phyir/ yang na don gang las go ba'i ngag las lam du 'gyur te/ nyan pa pos rtogs pa la blos nas las lam du 'jog pa'i phyir ro/yi ge snga ma sbyor ba dang / phyi ma rig byed min pa dang bcas pa njug yin no.

56 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 256: pha rol mdza' ba dbye ba'i phyir don go bar nus shing ma nor bar smras pa'i nyon mongs can gyi sens kyis bslang ba'i tshig ste.

57 Abhidharmakośākārikā (Tibetan), p. 26: phra ma pha rol dbye ba'i phyir// nyon mongs can gyi sens kyi tshig Skt. paśunyam kliṣṭacittasya vacanaṃ parabhedane (Abhidharmakośākārikā, ed. by Gokhale p. 88). The term
It is understandable that the intention to create division in those who have a good relationship is necessary to complete an action of divisive speech, while not having the intention or having other kinds of intention, for example acting with a neutral mind, would not lead to the commission of the action. One can also conclude that the creation of accidental and incidental division among people through one’s words does not amount to the actional path of divisive speech.

3.2.1.6 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Harsh Speech (Tib. tshig rtsub, Skt. pāruṣya)
The Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, the mChims mdzod, and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya do not discuss this actional path in detail. The Eighth Karmapa defines harsh speech as unpleasant words spoken to others in an understandable and unmistakable manner with the desire to speak with an afflictive mind. Other commentaries including the mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya also speak in a similar vein. For instance, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya defines it in this manner:

Discourse pronounced with a defiled mind, outraging, understood by him whom one addresses, addressed to him whom one wants to address, is injurious speech.

From the phrase ‘desire to speak,’ a desire which could be propelled by anger, shows the need for the motivation to speak. From this ground, unpleasant words spoken without the afflictive emotion (nyon mongs) would not complete the action of harsh speech.

3.2.1.7 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Idle Talk (Tib. ngag kyal, Skt. bhinnalāpītā)
The Eighth Karmapa, following the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, maintains that, in general, all words generated by afflictive mind are idle talk. However, lying, divisive speech and harsh speech are discussed separately owing to the severe gravity of their wrongdoing.
Therefore, it follows that somniloquy and the words of insane persons would not qualify as idle talk since they are not generated by intentional and conscious thought of affluctive emotions. Here the Eighth Karmapa simply draws points from the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya.

3.2.1.8 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Covetousness (Tib. brnab sens, Skt. abhidhvā)
The Eighth Karmapa defines covetousness as follows:

The actional path of covetousness is a perversion, nurturing a wish to own others’ wealth after having become attached to it in a wrong manner and desiring to own it through force or theft.

From this definition, one can conclude that covetousness has to be generated by a motivation that is an attachment to own others’ property. The Eighth Karmapa appears to conform to the understanding of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya since he takes the same wording from it as the mChims mdzod does. However, he makes some elaborations including providing the longer quotation from a sūtra which is only quoted in brief in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya.

In response to a hypothetical question as to how covetousness, harmful intent and wrong view can be generated by motivation since they are motivation in themselves, mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs says that it is possible since they arise from attachment, anger and ignorance.

3.2.1.9 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Harmful Intent (Tib. gnod sens, Skt. vyāpāda)
Like covetousness, harmful intent can be generated by motivation which may be anger in this case. Mi skyod rdo rje agrees with the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya that harmful intent is an anger towards sentient beings that has the elements of harming others. Harmful intent generated
towards inanimate objects does not appear to qualify as wrongdoing according to Vaibhāṣīka thought according to the understanding of the Eighth Karmapa. Neither the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya nor the mChims mdzod discusses this topic in detail.

3.2.1.10 Presence and Significance of Motivation in Wrong Views (Tib. log lta, Skt. mthyadṛṣṭi)
The need for the motivation to precede wrong view is not mentioned explicitly in the Abhidharmakośa commentaries including the Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and the mChims mdzod. Nevertheless, the Eighth Karmapa explains wrong view in these words:

A nihilistic view towards wholesome and unwholesome action is a wrong view that denies cause. It is [mentioned] in the sutra, ‘Generosity, sacrifice, fire-offering rites, good actions, bad actions do not exist. Actions of bad and good do not have fruition of the result. The present life, afterlife, mother, father, spontaneous birth [do not exist]. An arhat does not exist in the world.’ Therefore, three denials of causal action, result and arhat are taught. With respect to that, denial of generosity up to denial of bad action and denial of the existence of father and mother are denial of cause. Denial of the existence of the result of good actions up to denial of the existence of spontaneous birth of sentient beings is the denial of result. Denial of the existence of an arhat in the world is the denial of the existence of exalted beings. Although all the three are wrong views, only the first one is shown to represent [all three].

Wrong views are taught to be of three kinds with regard to cause (rgyu), result (’bras bu) and exalted being (’phags pa). Wrong view of cause, for instance, is to profess the denial of the existence of wrong deeds (nyes par spyad pa) which function as a cause for suffering.

Rejecting the existence of father and the mother appears to mean the denial of their cause and

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65 Ibid.: las dge ba dang ni dge ba med par lta ba ni rgyu la skur pa ’debs pa’i log par lta ba yin te/ de yang mdo las/ sbyin pa med do/ mchod sbyin med do/ sbyin sreg med do/ legs par spyyad pa med do/ nyes par spyyad pa’i las dag gi ’bras bu rnam par smin par med do/ ’jig rten ’di med do/ ’jig rtenpha rol med do/ /ma med do/ /pha med do/ /sems can brdzus te skye ba med do/ /’jig rten na dgra bcom pa med do bya bas rgyu las dang/ ’bras bu dang ’phags pa la skur ba ’debs pa gsum gsungs te/ de la sbyin pa med do zhes pa nas nyes par spyyad pa med do zhes pa’i bar dang/ /ma med do pha med do zhes pa rnam sbyin pa med do zhes pa nas sems can brdzus te skye ba med do zhes pa ni ’bras bu la skur pa ’debs pa yin la/ ’jig rten na dgra bcom pa med do zhes pa ni ’phags pa la skur pa ’debs pa yin pas gsum char log lta yin mod kyi/ tshigs su bcad par ni mtshon pa’i don lu dang po tsam zhig bstan par zad do.
kindness in giving human bodies to offspring. Disbelief in the result of the wrong deeds and spontaneous birth (brdzus skyes) constitute the wrong view with regard to the result. This wrong view is likely to deny the generation of a result of wrong deeds.

As discussed above in the section dealing with covetousness, wrong view can also arguably be generated by attachment, anger and ignorance. Conversely, from this premise one can maintain that knowledge would not cause wrong view. To conclude the section, wrong view can be maintained to be produced by morally unwholesome motivation which should precede it and consequently make it unwholesome.

3.3 Significance of Motivation in Other Classifications of Karma
Having analysed the karmic dimension of motivation in the ten actional paths, this section evaluates it in some other classifications of karma as examples, to better understand the significance of motivation.

3.3.1 Role of Motivation in the Reception of Vows
The reception of a vow must also be motivated in a way which is morally wholesome. The Vaibhāṣikas, according the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa, assert that superiority in motivation leads to the superiority of a vow, while inferior motivation would generate an inferior vow. However, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya merely mentions inferior, mediocre and superior mind (sems) instead of ‘motivation (kun slong).’ The Ninth Karmapa explains it in these words:

Although there are causes for inferior, mediocre and superior vows such as a variant number of factors, the mind of motivation is the principal [factor] since [a vow] will become [superior or inferior] according to the intensity of devotion and so on.

The Eighth Karmapa further elaborates that an arhat could have only an inferior vow owing to inferior motivation while an ordinary being could possess a superior vow as a result of superior motivation. While the Ninth Karmapa specifies the motivations such as devotion

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66 Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (Tibetan), p. 389: chung ngu dang 'bring dang chen po nyid ni yang dag par len pa'i sems kyi dbang gis te.
67 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 266: sdom pa chung ngu dang la sogs pa 'bring dang chen por 'gyur pa'i rgyu ni yan lag mang nyung la sogs pa'ang yod mod kyi gtso bo ni kun slong gi yid yin pas de'i dad sogs ji lta ba bzhin du 'gyur ro/.
68 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dbyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 99: sdom pa thams cad kyang chung ngu dang la sogs pas 'bring dang chen po nyid ni len par byed pa kun slong gi yid che ba la sogs pa ji lta ba bzhin
that lead to the superiority or inferiority of vows, the Eighth Karmapa and mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs do not.

This demonstrates the significance of motivation even in the reception of a vow, since the greater intensity of an intentional mind of devotion would lead to the superiority of the vow and a lower intensity of devotion would lead to a mediocre and inferior vow.

3.3.2 Significance of Motivation in Actions of Immediate Result (mtshams med kyi las)

Motivation appears to serve as one of the determining factors in the qualification of actions of immediate result. For instances, the Eighth Karmapa argues that if a son who is a dyer [of cloth] accidentally kills his father while striking at flies on his head, it would not lead to the commission of action of immediate result, namely patricide.69 This indicates that the motivation needs to be to kill one’s father, not just to harm him, if the action is to qualify as an action of immediate result. One can thus deduce that one would not commit an action of immediate result if the action is not preceded by motivation.

Moreover, to commit the action of drawing blood from the body of Buddha, the motivation should be to assassinate the Buddha. If the motivation is simply to beat, causing bleeding from the body of the Buddha it would not lead to the commission of the action of immediate result of drawing blood from the body of Buddha.70

3.4 Conclusion on the Significance of Motivation in an Action

From the above analysis, one can conclude that action should be preceded by motivation and that motivation is a very important element in an action, contrary to the stance of Nirganthas. Secondly, one can conclude that motivation is the sole agent in the moral qualification of an action.

Having established motivation as one of the most significant elements of an action, now we shall turn our attention to the analysis of the other dimensions of an action to determine which prevails over the others.

3.5 Significance of other Karmic Dimensions in Actions

This section will analyse the significance of other dimensions of action including the object (zhing), the actual action (dgnos), and the concluding phase (mjug) in an action in contrast to

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69 Ibid. p. 256: btso blag mkhan gyis pha’i mgo la sbrang bu ’dug nas sbrang bu bryangs pas pha shi ba ni mtshams med pa ma yin pa lta bu’i phyir ro.

70 Ibid. p. 258: sangs rgyas bkrong ba’i sons kyis mtshams med du ’gyur gyi/ sangs rgyas la brdeg par sons pas khrag phyung ba la mtshams med du ’gyur ba min te/ des dkrongs par sons pa med pa’i phyir ro.
the motivation. Karma appears to be a network of dimensions where numerous factors contribute equally to the completion of an action. This section will explore those dimensions and scrutinise their role.

3.5.1 Significance of the Karmic Dimension of Object, Actual and Concluding Phases in Actional Paths

Firstly, the ten actional paths will be discussed in relation to their object to determine their role and analyse their significance in the actional paths. This section will also see how the actual phase and the concluding phase of actions are required to complete actional paths in addition to the motivation which belongs to the preparatory phase.

3.5.1.1 Significance of Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Killing

Although determination of morality or immorality depends on the motivation, the object should be taken into consideration to complete an action and to establish the gravity of its morality or immorality. In the discussion of the definitive number of actions of immediate result, the Eighth Karmapa makes the following comments:

If one asks why only killing [one’s] mothers and so on are actions of immediate result while others are not, [I answer: They are] maintained as such through abandoning by mind and engaging in annihilating or mistreating the field of benefit (phan ’dogs pa’i zhing) and field of virtue (yon tan gyi zhing). Since [our] parents produced a body conducive to liberation, [they are] a field of benefit while the other three (Buddha, saṅgha, arhat) are fields of virtue since they are a support of virtue or supreme field of merit. It is like the production of abundant fruit when a seed is sown in fertile land. These [fields] are abandoned by mind, and the first three are annihilated while the latter two are also ill-treated through engagement.

The Eighth Karmapa explains that killing of one’s mother would amount to action of immediate result, but not killing others such as one’s relatives or strangers, since she has

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71 Killing one’s father, mother and arhat.
72 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 255: ma bsad pa sogs mtshams med yin la/ gzhon dag ma yin pa ci zhe na/ phan ’dogs pa dang yon tan gyi zhing bsam pas spangs pa dang sbyor bas med par byas pa’am nyams par byas pa las der bzhag pa’i phyir ro/ de la pha ma ni lus thar pa dang mthun par bskyed pas phan ’dogs pa’i zhing yin la/ gzhon gsum ni yon tan gyi rten yin pa’am/ bsod nams kyi zhi zhing mchog tu gyur pas na yon tan gyi zhing / zhing sa gshin pa la sa bon btab na ’bras bu mang du ’byung ba bzhin no/ de rnam s ni bsam pas spangs shing dang po gsum sbyor bas dang os su med par byas la/ phyi ma gnyis kyang sbyor bas nyams par byas pa’o.
given one a body that is conducive to liberation. Parents are considered a field of merit since merit can be generated from them analogous to a fertile field producing a good yield. All objects of five actions of immediate result can be abandoned by mind through the loss of faith. The above paragraph shows that the objects of the first three actions of immediate result, namely father, mother and arhat, can be destroyed. However, the objects of latter two actions of immediate result—Buddha and Saṅgha — are susceptible to ill-treatment but they cannot be destroyed completely.

These objects of actions of immediate result illustrate the significance of an object in an action. One could also conclude that harming or benefitting different kinds of objects would give rise to different kinds of karma according to the Vaibhāṣika thought.

However, it should be noted that the giving to an inferior field such as thief would not lead to bad result in contrast to the view of the Nirgrantha sect. The Eighth Karmapa clarifies that although giving to both superior and inferior field would produce merit since the field does not determine the result, it could lead to superiority and inferiority of merit. He illustrates it with an analogy of a good seed sown in a bad field that produces the good result such as reaping grapes after having sown grapes.73

Moreover, an object of killing, according to the Vaibhāṣika, should be other than oneself. The Vaibhāṣika hold that killing oneself does not involve the wrongdoing of killing. The Mahāyāna, especially the Vajrayāna, would argue otherwise. Killing oneself does not appear to have a concluding phase since the self does not exist to see the action of one’s death and experience a sense of gratification for the action. Patt sums up the concluding phase in these words:

The subsequent stage requires that the killer actually cognizes the death, the completion of action, and take satisfaction in its completion, not regretting it immediately after the actual action.74

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73 Ibid. 280–281: gcer bu pa zhing bzang po la sbyin pa'i sa bon las 'bras bu yid 'ong can yin na/ chom rkun sogs zhing ngan pa la byin pas 'bras bu yid mi 'ong 'gyur ro zhe na/ zhing gi khyad par las 'bras bu yid 'ong mi 'ong du 'gyur ba min gyi sbyin pa'i 'bras yid 'ong gzhir byas la/ mchog dman du gyur ni 'dod de/ zhing ngan pa la yang sa bon bzang po btab pa las 'bras bu yid 'ong dman pa mi 'khrul bar 'byung la/ vid mi 'ong mi 'byung bar mthong ba'i phyir/ rgun gyi 'bras bu las rgun gyi 'bras bu mngar po kho nar skye la/ nim pa'i sa bon las ni nim pa'i 'bras bu kho na skye'o.

74 Patt (1993: 169).
The Eighth Karmapa argues that if one kills other than one’s mother after carrying out preparatory acts of an attempt to kill her, it will not lead to the commission of action of immediate result. It is also the case if one kills one’s mother after an attempt to kill someone other than her.\(^75\) This demonstrates the significance of the preparatory phase and the object as well in an action of killing.

The death of a perpetrator before the victim dies or simultaneously to the victim does not complete the action of killing. In these cases, an actional path of killing is not completed. In the explanation of the concluding phase of killing, it is mentioned that post-killing actions such as skinning, cooking, consumption and so on need to be present.\(^76\) From this one could conclude that the death of a killer before or with the victim fails to execute a concluding phase which results in the incompletion of the actional path of killing. However, the Eighth Karmapa argues that the fruition of the action of engaging in the actual action of killing is certain to generate a result according to the Mahāyāna since the mind is the principal element in all kinds of actions according to Mahāyāna thought.\(^77\) This unique argument of the Eighth Karmapa strongly indicates that he believes motivation to be more significant than other karmic dimensions while the Vaibhāṣikas argue that motivation and other karmic dimensions are of equal significance. This interpretation also differs from the Abhidharmakosabhāṣya and from other commentators such as mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs who do not present the Mahāyāna perspective on it.

Therefore, one can conclude with some certainty from the perspective of the Eighth Karmapa that the mental aspect alone appears to prevail over other dimensions according to the Mahāyāna. However, all the karmic dimensions of killing such as the object, motivation, and phases of actions are plausibly equal in significance according to the Vaibhāṣika.

**3.5.1.2 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Stealing**

Having analysed other dimensions involved in the act of killing, now we shall scrutinise the significance and the role of the karmic dimension of an object in stealing.

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\(^75\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grab bde'i dpyid 'jo,* Vol. 2 p. 256: *ma gsod pa'i sbyor ba byas nas ma las gzhann bsad pa dang / ma yin pa la sbyor ba byas nas ma bsad na'ang mtshams med du mi 'gyur te/.*

\(^76\) Ibid. p. 180: *phyugs de'i pags pa bshu ba'am bkru bshal byed/ 'tshong 'shed/ za/ tshon po zhiig byung / rdzud pa zhiig byung zer nas rjes su sgrog pa de srid kyi rig byed kyi skad cig kyang rigs yin no.*

\(^77\) Ibid. 190: *theg pa chen po ltar na/ las thams cad la yid gtsos bas/ de skabs kyi bya ba ángos gzhi la brten pa'i rnam smin yid du mi 'long ba 'byin par nges so. Unfortunately, the Eighth Karmapa does not specify which school of Mahāyāna. It is probable that he refers to Mahāyāna schools in general including Yogācāra, Madyamaka and Vajrayāna in Tibetan Buddhism with particular reference to the Abhidharmasamuccchaya.*
Similar to the actional path of killing, in the case of stealing and its moral quality one can argue that other dimensions also play an equal part in completing the action path. For instance, an object that is stolen needs to be taken into consideration in terms of value. To cite an instance, robbing a stūpa, which is owned by the Buddha,\footnote{Ibid. 194: mchod rten la ’phrog pa ni chos can/ sangs rgyas la ma byin par blangs pa yin te/ bcom ldan ’das yongs su mya ngan las ’das pa’i tshe/ de dag thams cad yongs su bzungs ba’i phyir/ grub ste/ sbyin pa po’i skyes ba la phan ’dags pa’i slad du yongs su ma bzungs na len pa med pa’i phyir mchod rten la phul ba ’bras bu med par ’gyur ba’i phyir ro.} can be graver in terms of immorality as is the vandalisation of a stūpa which amounts to the commission of an action similar to drawing blood from a Buddha. dBang pyug rdo rje asserts that stealing property offered to a stūpa, stealing treasure with no owner, and stealing the wealth of a deceased ordained monk will incur the unwholesome action of stealing since they are respectively owned by Buddha, by the king of the land, and by the spiritual community (dge ’dun). Consequently, each of these is a serious offence.\footnote{dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 302: ‘o na mchod rten la phul ba dang bdag med pa’i gter dang rab bzungs shi ba’i nor blangg na su las ma byin len du ’gyur zhe na’ dang po ni sangs rgyas dang / gnyis pa ni yul de’i rgyal po dang / gsum pa ni dge ’dun las len par ’gyur te shin tu nyes pa che ba brzhin no.}

With regard to stealing of properties from a dead monk, the Eighth Karmapa provides a detailed description on how to determine an owner of properties in contrast to Vasubandhu. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* explains:

To take the goods, the robes, etc, of a deceased monk, is to take what is not given by the Sangha of the parish, in the case when an ecclesiastical action has not been done; in the opposite case, this is to take what is not given by all the disciples of the Buddha.\footnote{Vasubandhu; Poussin, La Vallee; Pruden, Leo M. (trans.) 1991. Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu, vol. II p. 651.}

The Eighth Karmapa remarks:

If [property] is stolen from the dead monk [and] if the [monk] had performed ordination-related activities (gsol ba’i las), [it is] stolen from the spiritual community inside [the community demarcated by one] boundary. This is because the Teacher (Buddha) commanded that [the property] be owned by the spiritual community belonging inside the boundary. Moreover, if the death [of the monk] happens in
between the boundaries [of communities], [the property is] owned by [by the community] which is closer [to the monk’s body]. If the distance is equal [from the two boundaries where the monk’s body lies], [it is] owned by the [community] towards which the head [of the monk’s body] is pointing. If a [person] has not performed ordination-related activities, [the property] would be [considered] stolen from all the disciples of the Buddha.  

The Eighth Karmapa also maintains that stealing one’s parents’ property would lead to graver wrongdoing than stealing the property of ordinary persons and suggests applying this logic to other classifications of actional path as well. Vasubandhu does not make this interpretation in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Therefore, this reasoning, which appears unique to the Eighth Karmapa with regard to its presentation in the Abhidharma commentary, will be applied in the following actional paths while analysing the significance of karmic dimensions as suggested by the Eighth Karmapa. sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (1079–1153) also presented this logic in his *Lam rim thar rgyan* (*The Ornament of Liberation*) by saying that stealing from one’s lama and stealing property of Precious Ones (*dkon mchog*) is a greater wrongdoing than stealing from other persons or stealing other property.  

The Eighth Karmapa’s taking into account superior objects such as parents alone arguably establishes the fact that the various karmic dimensions, including motivation, are equally significant in the determination of the degree of morality in actions. However, other commentators do not make this kind of logical assertion with regard to the karmic dimensions.

### 3.5.1.3 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Adultery

Completion of the actional path of adultery requires a motivation to engage in sexual conduct, an object of adultery and other means of conducting it. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* classifies adultery as following:

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81 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo*, Vol. 2 p. 194–195: dge slong shi ba'i nor 'phrog na gsol ba'i las byas pa yin na chos can/ mtshams kyi nang du gtogs pa'i dge 'dun las 'phrog pa yin te/ mtshams nang du gtogs pa'i dge 'dun gyis dbang bar ston pas bcas pa'i phyir/ yang mtshams gnyis kyi bar du shi na/ gang nye ba de dbang ba yin/ nye ring mnyam na mgo nang du bstan pa de dbang ba yin no/ gsol ba ma byas pa zhiq yin na ni sangs rgyas kyi slob ma thams cad las ma byin par blang pa yin no.

82 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo*, Vol. 2 p. 278: mi phal pa las rdzas brkus pa las ni pha ma'i rdzas bskul pa le'i/ de bzhin du gzhain la yang sbyar bar bya ste.

83 sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen, *Lam rim thar rgyan*, p. 57: ma byin par len pa'i nang nas bla ma dang / *dkon mchog gi nor la ma byin par len pa sdig pa che ba' o.*
Intercourse with a forbidden woman, that is, the wife of another, one's mother, one's daughter, or one's paternal or maternal relation.\(^{84}\)

However, the Eighth Karmapa makes two classifications of adultery. He remarks:

Thirdly, adultery is [classified into] four kinds relating to the desire to engage in sexual activity with a wrong woman: the spouse of another is one [category of wrong woman], mother and daughter form one [category], paternal and maternal [relatives] related by [up to] seven generations form one [category]. [Engaging in sexual activity] in a wrong place and so on even with one’s wife is [another category]. These are the four [kinds of] adultery. Alternatively, the four [kinds of] adultery include these four: the first [one] is to have sexual activity] with a wife belonging to another, a mother, daughter, or related to parents; the second [one] is [to have sexual activity] even with one’s spouse in a wrong place; the third one is [to have sexual activity] at the wrong time; and the fourth is [to have sexual activity] in the wrong body parts.\(^{85}\)

The Eighth Karmapa enumerates categories of adultery classified according to the four grounds: inappropriate object, limbs, place and time. Inappropriate objects include others’ spouses, one’s daughter and mother, or a person related up to seven generations.\(^{86}\) However, Mi bskyod rdo rje asserts that engaging in sexual activity with another woman, mistaking her for one’s wife, would not realise the actional path.\(^{87}\)

Sexual conduct through the anus and mouth are considered inappropriate body parts which would incur the wrongdoing of adultery, even if one engages in sexual activity with the appropriate object (one’s own spouse).\(^{88}\)

Inappropriate places for the sexual conduct which could lead to adultery are places which are lit, or a place such as a stūpa or temple. An inappropriate time is considered during


\(^{85}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde'i dpyid' jo*, Vol. 2 p. gsum pa log g.yem ni/ bgrod bya min pa nyal por bya bar 'gro bar 'dod pa yis log par g.yem pa la rnam bzhi ste/ gzhan gyi khyim thab gcig /ma dang bu mo gcig_pha ma dang 'brel ba'i bdun brya/ud tshun phyogs gcig /rang gi chung ma la yang sphyod yul ma yin pa la sogs pa gcig de bzhi po de log g.yem bzhi yin no/ yang na gzhan dbang ba'i chung ma dang / ma dang / bu mo dang / pha ma'i 'brel pa tsho la gcig /rang gi khyim thab la yul min pa gnyis pa/ dus min pa gsum pa/ yan lag min pa bzhi ste log g.yem bzhi ni de'o.

\(^{86}\) Ibid. p.195: yang na gzhan dbang ba'i chung ma dang / ma dang / bu mo dang / pha ma'i 'brel pa tsho la gcig /rang gi khyim thab la yul min pa gnyis pa/ dus min pa gsum pa/ yan lag min pa bzhi ste log g.yem bzhi ni de'o.

\(^{87}\) Ibid.: rang gi chung ma'i 'du shes kyi gzhan gyi chung ma'i gan du song na las lam du mi 'gyur ro.

\(^{88}\) Ibid.: bgrod bya gyur pa rang gi chung ma yin kyang yan lag ma yin par 'gro ba kha'am rkub tu 'jug pa'am/.
pregnancy, and during the period of breast feeding or when observing a one-day vow. The mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya do not cite reasons as to why engaging in sexual activity with a woman breast feeding a child is equivalent to adultery. However, the Eighth Karmapa appears to say that it could lead to shrinkage of breast and affect the freshness of the milk.

Engaging in sexual conduct with a nun would undoubtedly lead to adultery since she is not an object of sexual conduct and it is intolerable to her. However, engaging in sexual activity with a woman other than one’s wife appears to amount to sexual misconduct since sexual activity with all other classifications of women is prohibited.

From this analysis one can conclude that adultery requires motivation and other karmic dimensions to complete the actional path.

3.5.1.4 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Lying

Dimensions other than the motivation to lie, such as understanding the meaning of the words, can be argued to be equally significant in the realisation of the actional path of lying. If the lie is not understood by the listener, the action would not be considered a lie according to the Vaibhāṣika as discussed earlier in section 3.2.1.4.

Objects to whom the lie is directed would also play a role in determining the gravity of wrongdoing although this is not mentioned explicitly in the mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya. Nevertheless, in line with the Eighth Karmapa’s logic in relation to stealing one’s parents’ property causing a more serious offence than stealing the property of ordinary persons presented in section 3.5.1.2, lying to one’s parents would also lead to the graver wrongdoing than lying to a stranger. Moreover, in the Mahāyāna Lam rim literature, sGam po pa mentions explicitly that if the lie is spoken to one’s Guru, then the wrongdoing becomes severe. While sGam po pa’s viewpoint can be argued as Mahāyāna, this appears applicable also to Vaibhāṣikas since superior fields such as parents are held in high regard in the Vaibhāṣika system.

89 Ibid.: yul min par 'gro ba snang ba'am/ mchod rten nam/ gtsug lag khang ngam/ dus min par 'gro ba sbram ma'am/ bu nu zho 'thung ba'i gnas skabs kyi bud med la mi tshangs par spyod na/ de'i nu zho skam pa'am/ de'i nu zho bu la mi gsdod pas dang / bsnyen gnas srung ba'i gan du 'gro ba'o.

90 Ibid.: bu nu zho 'thung ba'i gnas skabs kyi bud med la mi tshangs par spyad na/ de'i nu zho skam pa'am/ de'i nu zho bu la mi gsdod (sos?) pas dang. Translation is provided in the appendix.

91 Ibid. p. 196: dge slong ma'i gan du 'gro na/ su las 'dod pa'i log par g.yem pa yin ce na/ dge slong ma de nyid yul du byas nas bdag por gyur pa las log g.yem du 'gro ste/ yul des ni spyod pa de mi bzod par bya ba yin pa'i phyir.

92 sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen, Lam rim thar rgyan, p. 57: bla ma la yang rdzun tshig smras na nyes pa rnams kyi nang nas de che'o.
Even from the perspective of the three phases of action, if a person who speaks a lie die before the understanding arises in the listerner, the actional path of lying would not be completed as with the case of killing since lying needs to have a preparatory phase, where motivation belongs, an actual action of lying and a concluding phase. Through this analysis, a conclusion can be drawn that a motivation to lie alone does not complete the actional path of lying and that the degree of immorality involved in a lie depends on a variety of factors.

3.5.1.5 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Divisive Speech

This section analyses various karmic dimensions of divisive speech based on the materials and reasons cited in the earlier sections. For instance, divisive speech, similar to the three phases of killing discussed in section 3.5.1.1, can be explained in terms of preparatory, actual action and concluding phases to complete its actional path. Therefore, one can argue that actual action and conclusion are also necessary to complete an actional path of divisive speech along with the motivation to divide people.

Objects, i.e., the different category of people divided, can also be understood to play a significant part in influencing the moral quality of divisive speech. Divisive speech spoken to divide a group of ordinary people or spoken to divide exalted beings would lead to a different degree of immorality. For instance, dividing a group of monks or revered beings would lead to the greater degree of demerit, while dividing ordinary laypersons would be considered a lesser offence. The Eighth Karmapa has argued (see section 3.5.1.2), that stealing one’s parents’ property would be a more severe wrongdoing that stealing from ordinary people. Applying this logic, dividing parents through divisive speech would be a more severe wrongdoing than dividing people who have not been helpful like parents.

3.5.1.6 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Harsh Speech

This section evaluates the significance of karmic dimensions other than motivation in harsh speech based on the discussion presented in the section 3.2.1.6 since there is no explicit treatment of these in the Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, the mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya. Karmic dimensions other than motivation also appear significant and play an important role in the completion of the action. Harsh speech needs to be spoken in an understandable and unmistakable manner as discussed earlier in relation to its definition in section 3.2.1.6. This dimension of speaking in an understandable manner suggests that harsh speech should be understood by the listener to complete its actional path.

Harsh speech directed towards inanimate objects does not appear to complete an actional path and hence is harmless according to Vaibhāṣika thought since understanding of
the words does not arise in inanimate objects. Moreover, it is also plausible that difference in the object towards which harsh speech is directed would also lead to a varying degree of immorality as in the case of various objects of killing leading to the different gravity of the action as discussed earlier. One could also conclude that uttering harsh speech to an object of benefit such as parents would lead to a graver sin than speaking in this way to other normal beings.

3.5.1.7 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Idle Talk

Although discussion on it appears limited in the *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, the *mChims mdzod* and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, it would also follow that idle talk directed towards objects of benefit or suffering would also lead to a graver sin in a similar fashion to other actional paths. In the discussion of the positions held by other scholars with regard to the idle talk, the *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo* mentions several kinds of idle talk such as flattery by a monk who survives on wrong livelihood and singing out of attachment.93 The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* also enumerates idle talk in a similar fashion:

For example, a monk boasts about himself in order to obtain alms, etc; through frivolity some others sing; in the course of plays or dances, the dancers, in order to entertain the public, hold inconsiderate discourse; adopting the doctrines of bad philosophers, non-Buddhists read bad commentaries.94

However, the Eighth Karmapa clarifies that singing a song of praise to the Buddha and renunciation from samsara is not considered an example of idle talk.95

3.5.1.8 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Covetousness

In the earlier section dealing with the significance of motivation in covetousness, it was noted that covetousness needs attachment towards property owned by others and desire to own it through force or theft.

As in the case of the earlier arguments discussed for other actional paths, covetousness can also be analysed in terms of other karmic dimensions such as objects of

93 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, Vol. 2 p. 204–205: *dper na dge slong log par ’tsho ba can gyi rneyed bkur dang grags pa’i ched du rang gi yon tan dang yon tan can gyi yon tan brjod pa’i kha bsags dang / chags pas glu len pa dang*.


covetousness. Coveting one’s parents’ property or the property of other beings who have been helpful, and exalted beings’ property, would be greater in the degree of immorality in comparison to desiring to own the property of ordinary beings. Moreover, the value of objects could arguably determine the severity and lightness of covetousness. sGam po pa also asserts that desiring to rob the wealth of renunciates (yang dag par spong ba) would be graver wrongdoing than others.\(^6\)

3.5.1.9 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Harmful Intent
Discussion with regard to the karmic dimensions on harmful intent is not explicit in the Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo. Nevertheless, analysis can be made from the materials and logical arguments provided in the earlier sections. As discussed earlier in the definition of harmful intent in section 3.2.1.9, it is required that it be generated towards objects of sentient beings. Therefore, this dimension of requirement to harbour harmful intent towards living beings suggests that that harmful intent generated towards inanimate objects would not be counted as wrongdoing. Furthermore, different levels of objects would also lead to different degrees of wrongdoing. For instance, nurturing harmful intent to objects of benefit (phan ’dogs pa’i zhing) such as one’s parents would be a more serious offence than harbouring harmful intent to strangers.

Therefore, one can conclude with some certainty that other karmic dimensions are also significant in the actional path of harmful intent, especially in influencing the severity of the unwholesome nature of harmful intent.

3.5.1.10 Significance of the Karmic Dimensions other than Motivation in Wrong Views
Wrong view is explained in relation to the denial of the existence of cause and result, and denial of the arhat as discussed in section 3.1.2.10. Therefore, this section will simply analyse the role that the object plays in determining the gravity of wrong views as based on the material in section 3.1.2.10. For instance, denial of the existence of parents is considered to be the wrong view that denies the existence of cause. Denying the existence of parents suggests the significance of superior objects in the actional path of wrong view. In contrast, it is arguable that denying the existence of ordinary objects would not lead to the actional path of wrong view.

\(^6\) sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen, Lam rim thar rgyan, p. 59: brnab sms brams kyi nang nas yang dag par spong ba brams kyi rnyed pa ’phrog par ’dod pa’i sms ’di sdig che’o.
3.5.2 Significance of Various Karmic Dimensions in other Classifications of Karma

As mentioned earlier, karmaphala is complex with many karmic dimensions that have significant roles in it. This section attempts to demonstrate how karmic dimensions, which appear to vary from karma to karma, determine their significance in karma other than in regard to the ten actional paths.

3.5.2.1 Significance of Various Karmic Dimensions in Generosity

The action of generosity is also discussed in various dimensions. They are analysed in this section to further investigate the significance of aspects of karmic dimensions in action other than motivation. The Eighth Karmapa, drawing on materials from the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, discusses generosity with regard to the agent, the given material and the object of generosity. The Ninth Karmapa simply recapitulates the explanation of the Eighth Karmapa.

Agent

The Eighth Karma argues that a patron who possesses characteristics such as devotion, morality and contentment is superior in generating the results of generosity.97 This argument establishes the fact that the personal traits of a giver other than motivation also play a vital role in giving.

The Eighth Karmapa also discusses the manner of giving which will influence the action of generosity. He argues that giving with respect, in a timely fashion, and in a manner that does not harm others would also make the action of generosity superior.98

Materials

Materials of exceptional quality are thought to make the action of generosity more meritorious. The Eighth Karmapa explains that the materials of generosity should be exceptional in colour, smell, flavour and texture.99 From this one could conclude that giving an object of higher value would be more meritorious than giving property of lower value.

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97 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 273: de la re zhid dad pa dang sogs pas/ tshul khrims dang / thos pa dang / giong ba dang / 'dod chen chung ba dang / chog shes pa la sogs kyi yon tan dang ldan pa'i sbyin bdag la ni 'bras bu 'byin pa la khyad par du 'phags pa yin no.
98 Ibid.: sbyin bdag de lta bu de ni gus pas sbyin par byed pa dang la sogs pas rang gi lag nas sbyin pa dang / dus su sbyin pa dang / gzhan la mi gnod par sbyin pas khyad 'phags su 'gyur pa'i phyir.
99 Ibid.: dngos po na kha dog dang la sogs pas dri ro reg bya phun sums tshogs pa ni sbyin bya khyad 'phags yin no.
Objects or the Recipient of Generosity

The Eighth Karmapa deals with objects (yul) of generosity that are characterised by suffering, benefit and virtue. The Abhidharmakośabhāṣya appears to assert that humans are superior object or recipient of one’s generosity:

A field is excellent through the realm of rebirth. The Blessed One said, "If a person gives to an animal, the giver will receive a retribution one hundred times greater than the gift made to the animal, but if this person gives even to a human who has transgressed the precepts, he will receive a retribution one thousand times greater than the gift made to this human."100

However, the Eighth Karmapa makes further clarifications that if humans and other sentient beings (sems can) are equal in terms of suffering and benefit, giving to humans will be more meritorious. However, if an animal is suffering while a human being is not, or the animal has been more beneficial to one than the human, then it would be more meritorious to give to the animal than to the human.101 This interpretation is unique to the Eighth Karmapa, whereas other commentators such as mChims 'Jams pa'i dbyangs do not give such an interpretation. Objects of suffering are those who are sick, cold and so on, while parents are considered the objects of benefit, and those who possess vows are objects of virtue.102

3.5.2.2 Significance of Various Karmic Dimensions in Immeasurable Generosity

The Vaibhāšikas argue that certain objects of generosity make the action immeasurably meritorious. These objects are parents, even though they are ordinary beings (namely beings who are not exalted, 'phags pa), those who are ill, one’s teacher, and the Boddhisattva in his

101 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpwyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 274: sdag bsngal dang phan 'dogs yon tan mnyam pa la dud 'gro bas mi la bsod nams che/ mis phan ma btags dud 'gros phan btags na mi bas dud 'gro ba la byin pa bsod nams che/ de ka bzhin mi la sdag bsngal med/ dud 'gro shin tu sdag bsngal na/ mi bas dud 'gro la byin pa bsod nams che/o.
102 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 343: sdag bsngal gyi zhing khyad 'phags ni rdzas las byang ba'i bsod nams bya ba'i dngos po daq tu nad g.yog dang grang ba'i dus su sbyin pa lta bu'o/phan 'dogs pa'i zhing gi khyad 'phags ni pha ma dang phan 'dogs pa gzhon la sbyin pa lta bu'o/yon tan rnam s kyi zhing gi khyad 'phags ni tshul khrims dang ldan pa la byin na rnam par smin pa 'bum 'gyur du re bar bya'o ches pa lta bu'.
final birth in samsara. The Abhidharmakośabhāṣya asserts that one’s teacher is an object of benefit (phan 'dogs pa'i zhing) in these words:

To what category does a preacher belong? Among what field should he be placed? He forms part of the category of benefactors: he gives the eye of wisdom to multitudes blinded by ignorance;¹⁰⁴

However, the Eighth Karmapa clarifies that although teachers can be objects of virtue (yon tan gyi zhing), they are subsumed under the category of object of benefit since they provide an eye of wisdom to those blinded by ignorance and teach the actional paths of wholesome and unwholesome actions.¹⁰⁵

3.5.2.3 Significance of Various Karmic Dimensions in Actions of Immediate Result

While objects of five actions of immediate result were discussed earlier in section 3.3.2 in an implied manner, this section simply mentions specifically that they are determined by their position of eminence. Father and mother are considered objects of benefit while a Buddha, an arhat and the saṅgha are objects of virtue.¹⁰⁶ These objects of benefit and virtue illustrate the point that dimensions such as objects are equally significant as motivation and need to be taken into account when determining whether actions are of immediate result or not.

Moreover, the three phases of actions are also required for completion of actions of immediate result. For instance, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and the Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo assert that if one kills a woman after engaging in the preparatory actions to kill one’s mother or kills one’s mother after engaging in the preparatory actions to killing another woman, it would not lead to the action of immediate result of killing one’s mother.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2. p. 276–277: gzan yam 'phags pa min pa so so skye bo yin kyang pha ma dang / nad pa dang ni chos smra dang / skye mtha'i byang chub sms dpa' ste/ byang sms srid pa mtha' ma pa la shiyou pa byin pa ni 'bras bu'i sgo nas yon ni gzhul du med pa yin no.
¹⁰⁵ Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2. p. 277: chos smra ba ni/ 'gro ba/ sdug bsngal ba/ phan 'dogs pa/ yon tan gyi zhing gang du gtoogs zhe na/ mi yin pas mi'i 'gro bar bsdas pa yang yin/ yon tan can yin kyang phan 'dogs pa'i phyogs su gtoogs te/ de ni skye rgyu ma rig pas ldongs pa rnams la shes rab kyi mig sbiyou par byed pa dang / chos dge ba dang chos min mi dge ba'i las lam rab tu ston pa dang.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 255: de la pha ma ni las thar pa dang mthun par bskyod pas phan 'dogs pa'i zhing yin la/ gzan gsum ni yon tan gyi zhing yin pa'am/ bsod nams kyi zhing mchog tu gyur pas na yon tan gyi zhing.
¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 256: ma gsod pa'i sbyor ba byas nas ma las gzan bsad pa dang / ma ma yin pa la sbyor ba byas nas ma bsad na'ang mishams med du mi 'gyur te.
3.6 Gravity of Morality in Actions

Discussion on the gravity of wrongdoing also demonstrates the equal significance of motivation and other dimensions in an action. The *Abhidharmakośa* enumerates five karmic dimensions other than motivation in actions, and they seem equally important in determining the degree of their wrongdoing. The *Abhidharmakośa* IV, 119 reads:

Lesser and greater of these [dimensions]
[render] an action lesser or greater [in morality]:

- conclusion, object, support,
- preparation, volition and motivation.  

The gravity of wrongdoing, according to the *Vaibhāṣīka*, is determined by six factors:

- repeating the action after concluding it (*mjug*), object (*zhing*) such as parents, support (*gzhi*) for actional path which is action in itself, preparatory actions, volition that completes an actional path, and motivation (*bsam pa*).  

mChims 'jam pa'i dbyangs makes a similar interpretation to that of the Eighth Karmapa. However, the Ninth Karmapa identifies volition as an agent that causes the actional path in contrast to the Eighth Karmapa and mChims 'jam dpal dbyangs, who interpret it as an agent that completes the actional path.

Furthermore, The Eighth Karmapa argues that some actions are grave as result of preparatory acts and some owing to motivation. Therefore, one could conclude that these dimensions play an equal part in deciding the extent of morality in actions.

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108 *Abhidharmakośakārikā* (Tibetan), p. 30: *mjug dang zhing dang gzhi dang ni// sbyor dang sms pa bsam pa ste// de dag chung dang che ba las// las kyang chung dang che ba nyid*. Tibetan translation appears accurate in rendering the meaning of its Sanskrit version *prṣṭham kṣetramadhīṣṭānāṃ prayogaścetanāśayāḥ / eśāṃ mṛdvadhimātratāḥ karmamṛdvadhimātratāḥ* (*Abhidharmakośakārikā*, ed. Gokhale p. 89). However, one cannot find original Sanskrit word (*api*) for the translation of *kyang*.

109 Mi bskyod rdo rje, *Karmapa VIII*, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2, p. 277: *byas pa'i rjes la da dang byas pa stobs che bas mjug dang / gang du pha ma lta bu la phan gnod gang byas stobs ches bas zhing dang / srog gcod la sogs las lam gyi gzhi de'i don du las nag gi las byas pa sbyor ba dang / gang gis las lam mthar phyin byed sms pa dang / 'di dang 'di lta bu zhig da lta dang phyis bya'o snyam pa'i bsam pa ste drug go*.

110 dBang phyug rdo rje, *Karmapa IX*, *GZhon nu rnam rol*, p. 345: *las lam kun nas slong bar byed pa'i sms pa dang*.


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3.7 Accumulation and Non-accumulation of Actions

The concepts of accumulation (bsags pa) and non-accumulation (ma bsags pa) of action also deal with the six karmic dimensions, including motivation. Therefore, it is discussed here. Abhidharmakośa IV, 120 states:

From the thought, completion,
no regret, without antidote,
associated factors and fruition of an action,

it is known as an accumulated action.112

Pre-meditated thought or motivation is required to accumulate an action which prevents accidental incidences from qualifying as an accumulated act. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa argues that speaking a lie without a thought to lie or speaking a lie spontaneously out of habit even after the thought, is simply a commission but not the accumulation of an action (byes la ma bsags pa’i las).113 Here the Eighth Karmapa provides speaking out of habituation as an example for spontaneous lying while the mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya do not, although their interpretations appear same.

Completion of an action, not to have regret after its commission, applying no antidote to it such as confession, associates ('khor)114 and the certainty of the fruition are maintained to make an action a committed and accumulated action (byes la bsags pa’i las). Otherwise, action is argued to become commission without accumulation (byes la bsags pa ma yin pa’i las), accumulation without commission (bsags la ma byes pa’i las), or neither commission nor accumulation.

112 Abhidharmakośakārikā (Tibetan), p. 30: bsam bzhin pa dang rdzogs pa dang // mi 'gyod gnyen po med pa dang // 'khor dang rnam par smin pa las// bsags pa’i las zhes bya ba yin. Skt. saṃcetanāsamāptibhyāṃ niṣkraukṛtya vipaścataḥ / parivārādvipākācca karmopacittamucyate (Abhidharmakośakārikā, ed. Gokhale p. 89). While Tibetan translation seems to capture the meaning of Sanskrit text, one cannot find the original text in Sanskrit for the Tibetan translation bzhin pa which is a particle used to denote present continuous tense.

113 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII (1507–1554), Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2. p. 278: blo sngon du ma btang ba dang / btang yang bab col byung rgyal du kha lang du shor bas rdzun smra ba sogs kyi mi dge ba gang yin pa de byas pa yin kyang bsags pa ma yin pa’i phyir.

114 The Eighth Karmapa identifies it as rejoicing after the actions (which is one of the concluding acts), while Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (Tibetan) p. 482–483 simply says ‘khor las ji lta bu zhe na/ mi dge ba la 'khor yang mi dge ba yin no (If asked what are associates, associates are also unwholesome for unwholesome [deeds]). dBang phyug rdo rje, trans. Choephel (2012:615) translates and identifies it as mental factors (sems 'byung). However, mChims 'Jam pa'i dgyangs, mChims mdzod, p. 410, understands it to include the concluding and preparatory acts.
mChims 'Jam dpal dbyangs cites *Karmavibhaṅga (Las rnam par 'byed pa'i mdo)* with regard to four propositions of commission and accumulation of actions:

If asked what committed yet not accumulated action is, it is an action which, after its commission, generates shame, hesitation, regret, loathing, confession, abandonment, renunciation and refraining from doing it in future. If asked what accumulated yet not committed action is, it is action that needs to be completed by body but has been completed [only] by mind or even with words saying ‘this needs to be done,’ yet not committed [by body]. If asked what committed and accumulated action is, it is action which, after its commission, does not generate shame [hesitation, regret and so on] up to action not being refrained from in the future. If asked what is neither committed nor accumulated action, it is an action committed without pre-meditated thought.\(^{115}\)

This passage, which differs in wordings from the sDe dge edition of *Karmavibhaṅga*, shows that if a person generates shame or regret after committing an action, it becomes an action which is committed but not accumulated while simply a thought to commit an action without its actual performance is considered an action accumulated but not committed. On the other hand, if a person generates no shame or regret after committing an action, it becomes an action which is both committed and accumulated. This passage cites action performed without a prior thought as neither committed nor accumulated. However, the sDe dge edition of *Karmavibhaṅga* cites performing or directing others to perform actions in a dream as neither committed nor accumulated action.\(^{116}\)

### 3.8 Conclusion

According to the two commentaries studied, mental and intentional aspects do not prevail over other dimensions of action in determining the moral quality of an action. Moreover, motivation, according to Vaibhāṣika thought, appears to be accompanied by other dimensions of action such as actual action and concluding phase to complete an actional path in the three bodily actions and four verbal actions. The karmic dimension of object, for instance, has been

\(^{115}\) mChims 'Jam pa'i dgyangs, *mChims mdzod*, p. 410–411: byas la ma bsags pa'i las gang zhe na/ las gang byas nas ngo tsha ba dang ‘dzem pa ’gyod pa dang smod pa dang mthol ba dang ‘dor ba dang spong ba dang ma ‘ongs pa na sdom par byed pa/o/bsags la ma byas pa'i las gang zhe na/ las gang lus kyis yongs su rdzogs par bya ba de sms kyis yongs rdzogs par byas shing tshig tu'ang las 'di bya'o zhes smras la las de ma byas pa'o/bsags la bsags pa'i las gang zhe na/ las gang byas nas ngo mi tsha ba nas ma 'ongs pa na mi sdom pa'i bar ro/ma byas la ma bsags pa'i las gang zhe na/ las gang ched du ma bsams par byas pa'o.

\(^{116}\)Karmavibhaṅga* p. 563: de la byas kyang ma byas la bsags kyang ma bsags pa'i las yod de gang zhe na/ las gang ched du ma bsags par byas pa'/rmi lam na byas pa'am byed du bcug pa ste.
demonstrated to be indispensable along with motivation in an action. This chapter has demonstrated how various dimensions are interrelated and interdependent. For instance, it has been shown that all the three phases of actions in bodily and verbal actions are interrelated and need to be present to complete an action path.

One can also conclude that wholesome or unwholesome motivation should precede any kind of morally qualifiable action to qualify as karma according to the Vaibhāṣika school as reflected in the refutation of the Nirgantha position. From investigation of the motivational dimension of an action, one can conclude that actions conducted without proper motivation would not lead to wrongdoing from the perpectives of Vaibhāṣikas. This makes the perpetrator of wrongdoing innocent, to some extent, for accidental actions. On the other hand, it points to the significance of, and the need to consider, other dimensions such as the object while engaging in an action.

*Kun slong*, in a broader sense, was found to be any kind of consciousness that causes action or consciousness such as eye consciousness that is present during the actual execution of an action although the motivation which triggered bodily and verbal actions was conceptual mental consciousness. Therefore, as a result *kun slong*, in general, consisted of both conceptual and non-conceptual aspects of mind. As far as the concepts of basic mind (*sems*) and mental factors (*sems 'byung*) are concerned, *sems pa* (*cetanā*) was restricted to mental factors (*sems 'byung*), while *kun slong* is extended to basic mind (*sems*) since the five sense consciousnesses are also regarded as concurrent motivation which is one of the two kinds of motivation.

This chapter has also shown that the Eighth Karmapa remains within the intended meaning of the Indian source as represented by the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. However, some illustrations and further explanations are provided to elaborate points. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa presents an example of speaking out of habituation as a spontaneous lying that does not amount to the wrongdoing of lying. This appears to be the intended meaning of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.

Furthermore, the Eighth Karmapa added ‘words’ that constitute the actional path of lying in contrast to the ‘letters’ alone in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. In determining an owner of properties of a dead monk after his death, the Eighth Karmapa elaborated in detail, taking into consideration many factors. On some occasions, the Eighth Karmapa made explicit identification of ambiguous terms of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa identified obscure term ‘mind (*sems*)’ as ‘*kun slong*’ in the reception of vows as shown in the section 3.3.1.
Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa makes unique interpretations while not contradicting the intent (*dgongs pa*) of the Indian material of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. To cite an example, he interprets the level of merit in generosity in giving to an animal which is suffering or to one which has been beneficial to one, as more meritorious than giving to humans (who are not suffering or have not been of benefit to one). The Eighth Karmapa’s interpretation of stealing one’s parents’ property as a graver wrongdoing than stealing the properties of ordinary persons and his suggestions to apply this logic to other classifications of actional path provides a new way of looking at the mechanism of *karmaphala*. Moreover, he occasionally provides a quotation of sūtras which is longer than the brief quote in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. The Eighth Karmapa’s unique interpretative approach is discussed in the section 4.3 of the next chapter.

This leads to the next chapter where the theory of *karmaphala* and the Karma Chapter of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa’s commentaries will be discussed in relation to the *Abhidharmakośa* traditions in Tibet and in relation also to their reception.
Chapter IV: Contextualising the Theory of Karmaphala and the Two Abhidharmakośa Commentaries by the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa

This chapter discusses how karmaphala is understood within selected Tibetan Buddhist traditions and texts and contextualises the two commentaries by the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas within the Abhidharmakośa traditions in Tibet. In order to achieve as complete a picture as possible, the chapter utilises various approaches in its analysis.

The chapter begins by exploring the reception of the two commentaries by later bKa' brgyud pa scholars and by the bKa' brgyud tradition. It then contextualises karmaphala and karmic dimensions in the larger context of Tibetan understanding by presenting some Mahāyāna perspectives as outlined in the Stages of the Path Literature (Lam rim). The chapter explores the extent of acceptance, interpretation and adaptation of the Vaibhāṣika understanding of karmic dimensions in Tibetan Buddhist thought.

This chapter also discusses the unique characteristics of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary with a focus on the Karma Chapter. Many Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentators appear to have referred to the mChims mdzod while composing their Abhidharmakośa commentaries. As the mChims mdzod is widely considered the most authoritative commentary, it will provide a good basis for the presentation in this thesis of a Tibetan Abhidharma understanding of the Abhidharmakośa and for a discussion of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary in relation to the mChims mdzod. This chapter will also continue to present the way the Eighth Karmapa used the Tibetan translation of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya since the Indian commentarial texts are considered reliable and authoritative for Tibetan Buddhism.

The chapter also aims to examine the rationale behind the composition of Abhidharmakośa commentaries by Tibetan scholars and thus provide some general overview of the Tibetan Abhidharmakośa tradition.

4.1 Reception of the Two Commentaries in Tibetan Thought by Later Scholars

It is hard to comment on the reception of the two commentaries by later Tibetan scholars in general since the different Tibetan religious traditions generally created and followed their own commentarial tradition. However, the two commentaries appear to be held in high regard in the bKa' brgyud pa school. The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary is widely used as a reference while the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary is studied as a text book in some bKa'
brgyud pa institutes. This section will explore the reception of the two commentaries by bKa’ brgyud pa scholars.

4.1.1 Reception of the Eighth Karmapa’s Abhidharmakośa Commentary

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary appears the most extensive available Abhidharmakośa commentary in the bKa’ brgyud pa school. Its authority, at least in the Karma bKa’ brgyud pa scholastic tradition, is supported by the fact that the following generation of scholars including the Ninth Karmapa and Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug (1584-1630) speak of him highly in their commentaries. While veneration is an overall convention in most Tibetan traditions, a high degree of veneration can indicate some genuine appreciation as well.

The Ninth Karmapa praises the Eighth Karmapa’s Abhidharmakośa commentary in the following verse:

The fearless lord and the conqueror Mi bskyod [rdo rje] knows [the Abhidharmakośa] without relying on others and composed this extensive commentary.

[I] praise every word and meaning [of his commentary] with immense veneration.¹

Moreover, the Ninth Karmapa relied heavily on the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary and he frequently quotes it in his Abhidharmakośa commentary as discussed in section 1.4.1 of the first chapter of this thesis.

Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug urges the followers of Karmapa to engage in the study of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa’s commentaries.² He also rebukes intellectuals of his religious tradition for abandoning the intended meaning (dgongs pa) of commentaries such as the Eighth Karmapa’s Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo and relying on various other texts.³

The Sixth Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug profusely quotes the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary and on many occasions simply uses verbatim whole polemical paragraphs from the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary in his own commentary. For instance, he

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¹ dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 3: 'dir ni ’jigs bral ston pa mi bskyod rgyal// de yis gzhan dring med par mkhyen pa dang // brtse bu’i shugs kyis rgyas ’grel ’di mdzad de// tshig don kun la gus pa chen pos bstod.
² Chos kyi dbang phyug, Zhwa dmar VI, mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbiyig gnyen bzhed pa, p. 462: karma’i rjes ’jug shes ’dod skye bo rnam// rnam bshad so sor ’chad nyan rtsal du thon.
³ Ibid.: de lta na yang deng sang rang lugs kyil// mtshan nyid smra bar grags pa phal mo ches// rnam bshad rnam kyi dgongs pa bor nas kyang // sna tshogs yig sna rnam la blo rse giad.
cites the whole rebuttal by the Eighth Karmapa directed towards Sakya Paṅḍita’s refutation of the bKa’ brgyud pa’s contention that the prātimokṣa vow is not lost following the death of a person. This rebuttal is discussed in the section ‘Presentation of bKa’ brgyud pa Positions’ below. The quotation of the Eighth Karmapa’s texts strongly indicates that the Sixth Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug holds the commentary of the Eighth Karmapa in high regard. He also refers to the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary for further analysis and refrains from transferring passages verbatim on occasion.

Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas (1700–1774), one of the eminent 18th century scholars of the Karma bKa’ brgyud, refers to the Eighth Karmapa sparingly in his Abhidharmakośa commentary Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi tshig don mam par ‘grel pa brgya byin thog pa’i nor bu’i ’od snang [Commenting on the Words and Meaning of Abhidharmakośa: A Light of Jewel Wield by Indra]. He simply says at some points without further elaboration, for instance, that discussion on certain points appear in the Kar tiṅ (Abhidharmakośa commentary of the Eighth Karmapa). He directs the reader to refer to it for detail. This shows some acceptance of the Eighth Karmapa’s exposition.

While the Eighth Karmapa’s Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo enjoys accolades in the Karma bKa’ brgyud tradition, it is hard to say how scholars of other bKa’ brgyud schools and beyond received it since, as mentioned above, all other religious schools have their own commentaries. It is also plausible that later scholars might not have acknowledged the reference even if they had used the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary since current academic conventions were not observed by traditional Tibetan scholars.

4.1.2 Reception of the Ninth Karmapa’s Abhidharmakośa Commentary

This section discusses the reception of the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary by later bKa’ brgyud scholars and the bKa’ brgyud tradition. The commentary of the Ninth Karmapa is studied as a textbook in some bKa’ brgyud institutes such as Karma sgrub sde dpal mo chos

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4 Ibid. p. 264: kho bos bsams na/ skyob pa ‘bri gung ’jig rten gsum mgon gyi zhal snga nas/ so sor thar pa’i sdom pa ’chi ’phos pas mi giong zhes seng ge’i sgra chen po bsgrags pa las/ bdag nyid chen po sa skya pañditas dgag pa rgya cher mdzad mod kyang... The whole rebuttal is not mentioned here.

5 Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas (1700–1774), chos mngon pa mdzod kyi tshig don rnam par ‘grel pa brgya byin thog pa’i nor bu’i ’od snang p.23: kar tiṅ du skabs ’dir gzugs rung gzugs kyi mtshan nyid du bshad pa dang rdzas rdul gzugs phung du bsdu ba sogs legs bshad mang du yod kyang ’dir ma smos la. Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, Vol. 1 p.109 discusses this topic as indicated by Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas.

6 Other scholars debating the Eighth Karmapa in relation to the Abhidharma theories have not come to my notice.
kyi lding khang, a Karma bKa’ brgyud seat in Trongsa, central Bhutan. While the commentaries of the Eighth and Ninth Karmapa are received well in the bKa’ brgyud tradition in general, different branches of bKa’ brgyud use commentaries written by scholars of their own or other schools. For instance, Tago Dorden Tashithang Buddhist University, the ‘Brug pa bKa’ brgyud seat in Bhutan, studies the mNgon pa mdzod kyi mchan ’grel shes bya’i me long, the annotated Abhidharmakośa commentary of gZhan phan chos kyi snang ba (1871–1927).

The Sixth Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug states that his Abhidharmakośa commentary mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa [A General Exegesis on the Abhidharmakośa: The Intention of Vasubandhu] is based on the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary and considers it the best among Tibetan commentaries.

Moreover, the publication notes to the mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa states that it is a summary (spyi don) of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas’ commentaries. The term spyi don, which means summary, is attached to the title of the commentary and the chapters. Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug extols the Ninth Karmapa for composing the commentary thoroughly and considers him Avalokiteśvara in person with the knowledge of Mañjuśrī who has attained the secret quality of Sarasvatī’s speech.

He quotes quite often from the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary as a support for his points. As discussed earlier, Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug rates highly the Abhidharmakośa interpretations of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas as bKa’ brgyud pa positions and urges their followers to study the commentaries of these two scholars.

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7 This has been confirmed with one of nuns at the institute through correspondence.
8 The website for the university indicates that it is in the curriculum for the 1st year of the bachelor degree in Buddhist studies. However, I have been informed by a friend in Bhutan that the Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi bshad pa ’grel pa’i bstan bcos rgya bod du mang dag yod pa rnams kyi nang nas mchog tu gyur pa/rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa karma pa dgu pa’i zhal snga nas btsal ba’i rnam bshad chos mngon rgya mtsho’i snying po mkhyen brtse’i zhal lung gzhon nu rnam rol legs bshad chos mig rnam ‘byed grub bde’e shing rta’i di nyid kyi sgo nas ’chad pa’i skabs su bab
9 Chos kyi dbang phyug, Zhwa dmar VI, mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa, p. 29: de’i tshig don rnams par ’grel pa’i bstan bcos rgya bod du mang dag yod pa rnams kyi nang nas mchog tu gyur pa/rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa karma pa dgu pa’i zhal snga nas btsal ba’i rnam bshad chos mngon rgya mtsho’i snying po mkhyen brtse’i zhal lung gzhon nu rnam rol legs bshad chos mig rnam ‘byed grub bde’e shing rta’i di nyid kyi sgo nas ’chad pa’i skabs su bab
10 Ibid: mngon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa zhes bya ba ‘di ni/ karma pa dBang phyug rdo rje’i mdzod ’grel gZhon nu rnam rol gyi spyi don yin pa ma zad/karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje’i mngon pa mDzod kyi rgyas ’grel grub bde dpyid ’jo’i legs bshad snying bsuds rnams kyang brgyen te mdzad pa’o. This note does not contain page number. The writer of this note is mentioned as dGe slong Tshe ring.
11 Ibid. p. 30-31: rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa dbang phyug rdo rje chos can/khyod kyis gzhon nu rnam rol ’di nyid rtsom nas pa’i rgyu mtshan dang tshul yod del/ ngo bo bcom ldan ’das thugs rje chen po las ma yos bzhin du ’phags pa’jam dpal gi mkhyen pa dang /dbyangs can lha mo’i gsung gi gsang ba mngon par grub pa’i yon tan phun sum tshogs pa mnga’ ba’i rgyu mtshan gyis khyod kyis bstan bcos ’di lta bu rtsom nus shing nus pa litar mngon pa’i sde smod gsar du phye ba’i bstan bcos ’di khyod kyis legs par brtsams pa yin pa’i phyir.
The reception of the two commentaries in the Karma bKa' brgyud school indicate, as is the case in other schools, the value attributed to the treatises composed by scholars of one’s own school. Moreover, Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug’s direction to the adherents of the school to study the two commentaries also shows, to some extent, the perpetuation of sectarian interests in Tibetan philosophical study.

4.2 Acceptance of Vaibhāṣika’s Understanding of Karma and Karmic Dimensions in the Stages of the Path Literature of Tibetan Buddhism

This section will contextualise karmic dimensions of Vaibhāṣika thinking in Tibetan thought and explore the extent of Tibetan Buddhism’s acceptance and incorporation of the Vaibhāṣika understanding of karmic dimensions. Generally Tibetan Buddhism is characterised as Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism.**12**

Although the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, which is considered a Mahāyāna treatise by Tibetan scholars, deals with the theory of *karmaphala*, it is not suggested that it contributed novel ideas to the theory.**13** It is plausible that the *Abhidharmasummuccaya* used Abhidharma treatises, and especially the *Abhidharmakośa*, on the concepts of karma since scholars argue the former relied on the latter.**14**

The topic of how Vaibhāṣika ideas have influenced Tibetan thought is vast and would merit an intensive research project on its own. Therefore, this section will limit the analysis by discussing motivation in comparison to other karmic dimensions with the aid of some key Tibetan Buddhist instruction manuals (*khrid yig*) such as the *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung* by the non-sectarian figure O rgyan ’jigs med chos kyi dbang po (1808–1887) and the *Lam rim thar rgyan* by sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (1079–1153) and Tsong kha pa’s (1357–1419) *Lam rim chen mo*. Although we need to apply some caution, the bsTan rim and the Lam rim literature**15** as well as the mainstream instruction manuals can be considered representative of what was seen as important for general practitioners to understand and follow at the given time in a certain tradition. They have been accorded significance in Tibetan Buddhism in general as a means for the training of the mind (*blo sbyong*).**16**

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12 For instance, Samuel (1993:204) maintains Tibetan Buddhism is both sūtric and tantric Mahāyāna. Kapstein (2006: 217) also appears to suggest Tibetan Buddhism as Mahāyāna.
13 Bayer (2010:44-45) suggests that ideas of karma found in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* are traceable to older sources.
15 Jackson, D. (1996: 230) suggests bsTan rim to be mainly of Mahāyāna path while Lam rim consists of teachings for three kinds of persons (*skyes bu gsum*).
While the bsTan rim and the Lam rim literature and instruction manuals treat karma and karmic dimensions extensively, careful study of how the Abhidharmakośa influenced their exposition is merited. Tsong kha pa frequently quotes the Abhidharmakośa in the exposition of karma in his *Lam rim chen mo* (*The Treatise on the Stages of Path*). For instance, he quotes the two lines of the Abhidharmakośa verse IV, 72ab in his *Lam rim chen mo* in the discussion of karmic dimensions of killing. Tsong kha pa writes:

The completion of act [killing] is a death of other being at that time [of engagement of killing] or at other time as a result of its application. That is also mentioned in the *Abhidharmakośa*: ‘For the death of a [killer] earlier and with the [victim], there is no actual [actional path] since the [killer has] obtained another body.’ This is similar here.\(^{17}\)

The *Lam rim chen mo* discusses the actional path in the form of four dimensions: object (gzhi), thought (bsam pa), application (sbyor ba) and completion (mthar thug). Although all of them are captured in the karmic dimensions expounded by Vaibhāṣika, some differences are found. For instance, Tsong kha pa classifies thought (bsam pa) into three categories while the *Abhidharmakośabhbhāṣya* does not. He classifies thought into perception (*'du shes*), affective thought (*nyon mongs*) and motivation (*kun slong*).\(^{18}\)

sGam po pa discusses karmic dimensions in his *Lam rim thar rgyan*, but he makes reference to the *Abhidharmakośakārikā* regarding karma only twice in the sixth chapter on karma. However, he discusses ten actional paths along with their karmic dimensions.

Sakya Paṇḍita (1310 - 1358) also discusses karmic dimensions in some detail in *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, although the text mainly deals with Mahāyāna topics such as the six perfections (*phar phyin drug*). Sakya Paṇḍita deals with karmic dimensions involved in karma the result of which is to-be-experienced in this lifetime (*mthong chos myong 'gyur gyi las*) and quotes the *Abhidharmakośakārikā* verse IV, 55ab: *mthong chos 'bras bu can gyi las, zhung dang bsam pa'i khyad par las*.\(^{19}\) He notes that if the result of action is to-be-experienced in this lifetime, the action needs to be severe and executed in relation to an

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\(^{17}\) Blo bzang grags pa, *Lam rim chen mo*, fol. 88b: *mthar thug ni/ sbyor ba de'i rkyen gyis pha rol po de'i tshe'am dus gzhau gyi tshe shi ba'o/de yang mdzod las/ snga dang mnyam du shi ba la/ dngos med dus gzhau skyes phyir rol/ zhes gsungs pa ni 'dir yang 'dra'o.*

\(^{18}\) Ibid. fol. 88a: *bsam pa la gsum las.*

\(^{19}\) However, Sakya Paṇḍita quotes it as *zhing dang bsam pa'i bye brag gis/ mthong chos 'bras bu can gyi las* although it conveys the same meaning.
extraordinary object and thought. Therefore, Tibetan Stages of the Path Literature and instruction manuals appear to accept the Vaibhāṣika idea of karma and karmic dimensions. Further study is necessary to explore the extent of acceptance.

The *Kun zang bla ma'i zhal lung*, a widely used Tibetan manual instruction for Buddhist practitioners, remarks with regard to the significance of motivation:

Therefore, to listen to the teaching, firstly, the manner of listening is important. More important than it is motivation. As it is said, “[Wholesome and unwholesome action is determined] by the divisions of wholesome and unwholesome thought [motivation], [and] wholesome and unwholesome action is not determined by [how] small or big [they] appear.” Likewise, motivations aspiring for this life such as the desiring for power and fame for oneself will not turn into pure dharma however much the teaching is heard. Therefore, turning inward first and modifying the motivation is important. In this way, if [we] know how to modify motivation, wholesome actions will be infused with skillful methods (*thabs*) and turn into a path of being of great capacity (*skyes bu chen po*) [which is an] entrance to immeasurable merit.

This remark suggests that the motivation behind an action plays a significant role in the determination of morality in the action. It also indicates that actions that appear wholesome on the surface would not be wholesome if they are motivated by unwholesome motivation. Moreover, the motivation is maintained to be more significant in the determination of the extent of the morality of actions.

The *Kun zang bla ma'i zhal lung* narrates a well-known story of an innocent man called Kongpo Ben who is reported to have placed his dirty shoes on the altar of Jo wo (a statue of Buddha in Lhasa).

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20 Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan, *Thub pa’i dgongs pa rab tu gsal ba’i bstam bcos*, p. 23: dge ba’am sdig pa gang yang rang ste tshe ‘di la myong ba la/zhing bsam pa dngos po phul byung zhiig dgos te/zhing dang bsam pa’i bye brag gis// mthong chos ‘bras hu can gyi las/ches gsungs pas.

21 Or gyan ’jigs med chos kyi dbang po, *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*, fol. 4b–5a: des na chos nyan pa la’ang / dang po nyan tshul gtso che/ de bas kyang kun slong gtso che stel ji skad du/bsam pa dge dang mi dge bye brag las//dge sdig gzugs brnyan che chung rjes mi ‘gro /ches pa ltar rang nyid che ’dod dang grags ’dod la sogs pa tshe ’di don du gnyer ba’i kun slong gis’ chos ji tsam nyan kyang yang dag pa’i chos su mi ‘gro bas dang por kha nang du log ste rang gi kun slong bcos pa ‘di gtso che/ kun slong ’di ltar bcos shes na dge ba thabs kyis zin te skyes bu chen po’i lam bsod nams tshad med pa’i ’jug ngogs su ’gyur.

22 Ibid. fol. 188a: de lta bu’i dge ba dang sdig pa’i las de dag thams cad kyang las dkar nag tu byed pa dang / lci yang du byed pa thams cad kyang bsam pa kun slong kho na gtso che stel.
said to have spoken and instructed him not to do so since the innocent man had entrusted the shoes to him, the Jo wo, to look after.\footnote{O rgyan "jigs med chos kyi dbang po, Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung, fol.260a.}

While one can argue that Tibetan instruction manuals such as the Kun zang bla ma'i zhal lung, as Mahāyāna, would naturally emphasise the motivational aspect of an action, one needs to be reminded that they do not completely disregard the significance and role of other karmic dimensions in actions since there are circumstances where other karmic dimensions are regarded as significant.

Karmic dimensions such as the object of an action, similar to some extent to those of the Vaibhāṣīka, appear to be received well both by sūtric and tantric Tibetan Buddhism. To illustrate the point, objects of benefit such as one’s parents are also held in high regard as a source of merit in the Vajrayāna tradition. Moreover, a lama finds a place of eminence in the Vajrayāna practices by virtue of being a highly qualified person and a source of blessing. He is, as a result, considered the supreme object of veneration and offering where disciples are advised to see him as a real Buddha.\footnote{Ibid. fol. 208b–209a: yon tan de dag tshang ba'i bla ma rnyed nas ni sangs rgyas dngos kyi 'du shes dang ma bral bar bya dgos te.}

sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen adds another object of generosity in addition to the object of virtue (yon tan gyi zhi), object of benefit (phan 'dogs pa'i zhi) and object of suffering (sdug bsngal gyi zhi) adopted by Vaibhāṣīkas.\footnote{These three objects or recipient of generosity are discussed in the third chapter under section ‘Generosity’.} He presents an object of harm which is one’s enemy who has harmed one as an object or recipient of one’s generosity. This object is likely to have been proposed from the Mahāyāna point of view.\footnote{sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen, Lam rim thar rgyan, p. 127–128: zhi mni bzhis las/ yon tan gyis khyad par du byas pa'i zhi? n/ bla ma dang dkon mchog la sogs pa'o/ /phan btags pa'i khyad par du byas pa'i zhi? n/ /pha dang ma la sogs pa'o/ /sdug bsngal bas khyad par du byas pa'i zhi? n/ nad pa dang/ /mgon med pa la sogs pa'o/ /gnod pa byed pas khyad par du byas pa'i zhi? n/ dgra la sogs pa'o.}

The Kun zang bla ma'i zhal lung enumerates three excellences (dam pa gsum) which appear similar to the three phases of actions taught in the Abhidharmakośa. However, it has incorporated the Mahāyāna elements of bodhicitta, emptiness and dedication. Preparatory excellence of bodhicitta (sbyor ba sems bskyed dam pa) is not simply a good motivation but a mind of enlightenment that intends to bring ultimate liberation to all sentient beings, while actual action excellence of non-conceptualization (dngos gzhi dmigs pa med dam pa) requires engagement in actions with the understanding of emptiness so that the merit remains
indestructible by circumstances. The concluding dedicatory excellence (mjug bsgno ba dam pa) deals with the dedication to all the sentient beings to multiply merit.\(^{27}\)

Moreover, the execution of a seemingly wholesome action is advised to be abandoned if the motivation is not wholesome.\(^{28}\) This indicates that even in the Tibetan Mahāyāna thought as reflected in instruction manuals, there are instances where motivation alone does not lead to the completion of action in the absence of the actual action and concluding phase. Therefore, karmic dimensions such as preparatory phase similar to the Vaibhāṣīka thought, is also espoused by the Stages of the Path literature and instruction manuals. However, further study with regard to the differences between and similarities of karmic dimensions in the Vaibhāṣīka and Mahāyāna schools would be required to know the full extent of karmic dimensions.

### 4.3 Unique Characteristics of the Eighth Karmapa’s Commentary

The Eighth Karmapa notes that he refers to Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentaries such as the Abhidharmakośa commentary of mChims Nam mkha' grags.\(^{29}\) It is also evident that he referred to the Abhidharmakośa commentary of Śākya mchog ldan from the refutation of the latter’s position of Abhidharma points in his commentary. He also refers on occasions to the Abhidharmakośa commentary of master Karma 'phrin las pa, who was one of his main teachers and had inspired him to complete his own commentary.\(^{30}\) Rheingans argues that Karma 'phrin las pa was a factor in the importation of Sa skya pa scholarly knowledge into the Karma bKa' brgyud school.\(^{31}\)

This section will explore some unique characteristics of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary in relation to other Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentaries such as mChims mdzod and the Tibetan translation of the Abhidharmakośabhaṭṣya. It will be discussed briefly in the following four points.

\(^{27}\) O rgyan ’jigs medchos kyi dbang po, Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung, fol. 4a–4b: dge ba'i rtsa ba rgya che chung ji lla ba zhiig sgrub kyang / dge rtsa thams cad thabs kyis zin par byed pa shyor ba sens bskyed dam pa/ dge ba rkyen gyis mi bshig par byed pa dngos gzhi dmigs pa med pa/dge ba gong nas gong du 'phel bar byed pa mjug bsgno ba'i rgyas yongs su thebs pa ste dam pa gsum gyis rtsis zin pa 'di med pa'i thabs med

\(^{28}\) O rgyan ’jigs medchos kyi dbang po, Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung, fol. 192a–192b: cis kyang kun slong bsgyar du ma btub na dge rtsa byed pa de bshol na legs te.

\(^{29}\) It is plausible that the Eighth Karmapa refers to the Abhidharmakośa commentary of mChims Nam mkha' grags while quoting as mChims tīk.

\(^{30}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo, Vol. 2 p. 39: bdag nyid chen po Karma phrin las pa'i ti kar. For Karma ’phrin las pa’s scholarly works, also see Rheingans (2021: 109-122).

\(^{31}\) Rheingans (2021: 212) mentions that Karma ’phrin las pa studied under several Sa skya scholars. Furthermore, he also suggests that Karmapa Chos grags rgya mtsho, Śākya mchog ldan, and Karma ’phrin las pa gained benefit from each other in Buddhist teachings. See Rheingans (2021: 71).
4.3.1 Presentation of the Vajrayāna Point of View

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary presents philosophical views of different schools including the Tibetan Varjayāna system. Vasubandhu expounds the Abhidharma theories of Vaibhāṣīka, including theories on karmaphala in the Karma Chapter, and refutes them from the Sautrāntika point of view in his own Abhidharmakośaśabhaśya. Occasionally, Mahāyāna viewpoints are presented but interpretations from Varjayāna thought are not found. This is similar to other Tibetan commentators of the Abhidharmakośa such as mChims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs and dGe 'dun grub.

However, the Eighth Karmapa, apart from explicating the Vaibhāṣīka, Sautrāntika and sūtric Mahāyāna positions, occasionally presents interpretations from the standpoint of the Varjayāna systems (although he refrains from going into detail saying that they should be left secret). For instance, he explains that karma that could lead to rebirth in the six realms of cyclic existence (‘khor ba) can be deliberately experienced by Vajrayāna practitioners in a visionary experience (nyams snang) for the duration of a dream through yogic power and one can thus get rid of it. The practitioner, the Eighth Karmapa argues, would be prevented from taking rebirth in the six realms.32

Moreover, in the discussion of the mental element (Tib. yid kyi khams, Skt. manodhātu) as an empowering condition (Tib. bdag rkyen, Skt. adhipati)33 for the mental consciousness (Tib. yid kyi rnam par shes pa, Skt. manovijñāna), the Eighth Karmapa asserts that wind and mind (rlung sem) serve as an empowering condition for mental consciousness in the Vajrayāna teachings. However, he refrains from delving into the detail saying that it should be held in secret from other than the fortunate ones (lkal ldan).34

There are other instances where the Eighth Karmapa provides Vajrayāna interpretations in addition to the Abhidharma understanding in other chapters. However, it is beyond the scope of this research to thoroughly examine the two large volumes in this regard.

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32 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp.yi d'jo, Vol. 2 p. p. 159–160: ‘di dang mthun par sngags bla na med pa’i rdzogs rin gi skabs su ’gro ba drug tu smin rgyu’i las ’bras thams cad nthon chos myong gyur du byas te/’gro ba drug gi gnas sbyong nyams snang la rmi lam gyi tshad tsam du myong nas/’gro drug gi skye ba len pa’i las thams cad zad par byed pa’i sngags kyi thabs khyad par can yang yod do.
33 dBang phyug rdo rje, Karmapa IX, gZhon nu rnam rol, p. 129 explains empowering condition as one that does not obstruct the generation of a result and serves as a condition.
34 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp.yi d'jo, Vol. 1 p. 151: gsang sngags su ni yid shes kyi bdag rkyen rtsa ‘khor bzhi sogs kyi rlung sems nā da sogs kyi byed par bzhed pa ni ches ikal ldan bdag gi spyod yul las gzhan du gsar bar bya’o.
4.3.2 Elucidation and Extensive Treatment of the Tibetan *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*

**Condensed Points**

As often in Tibetan commentarial traditions, The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary serves as commentary on a commentary (’grel pa’i ’grel pa), namely Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, since he gives a fuller explanation of ideas expressed in a condensed manner in the *Bhāṣya*. The following juxtaposes explanations of sentient beings and the physical world created by karma in the beginning of the Karma Chapter of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the Eighth Karmapa’s *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* reads:

If [the physical world and the inner sentient beings] are generated from karma, and if asked why the karma of sentient beings generate exceedingly and seemingly happy [states with] saffron and sandalwood, but not with their bodies, [I answer] a mixture of karma of sentient beings creates forms which are similar to a wound with seemingly pleasurable wealth as its counteragent. Both [sentient beings and the physical world as results of] a non-mixture [of karmas] of gods are seemingly pleasurable.\(^{35}\)

The above-mentioned explanation, which appears somewhat obscure in Tibetan, is further elucidated by the Eighth Karmapa as follows:

An inferior body of a leper in a good dwelling where saffron is grown and a superior body in a bad dwelling full of poison and thorns are the result of the mixture of wholesome and unwholesome karma. And seemingly happy sentient beings and the physical world of the Form Realm are the results of wholesome [action] while both the [bad] body and the dwelling of lower realms are the result of unwholesome [action].\(^{36}\)

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\(^{35}\) Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Tibetan), p. 347: gal te las las skyes na/ ci’i phyir sms can rnams kyi las dag gis gur gum dang / tsan dan la sogs pa ches dga’ dga’ lta bur skye bar ’gyur la/ de dag gi lus ni mi yin zhe na/ sms can ’dren mar byed pa rnams kyi las de lta bu dag kho nas rma lta bur gyur pa’i lus dag dang de’i gnyen por gyur pa longs spyod dga’ dga’ lta bu dag kyang skye’i/ lha ’dren mar byed pa ma yin pa rnams kyi ni gnyi ga yang dga’ dga’ lta bu dag yin no.

\(^{36}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, Vol. 2 p. 3–4: de’ang snod gur gum la sogs skye ba’i yul legs po la/ las dman pa nguid can lta bu dang / yang lus bzang po la snod dug dang isher mas gung ba lta bu ni ’dres ma’i las bsags pa dang / snod bcud thams can dga’ dga’ ltaar ’dug pa gzugs na spyod pa rnams ni ma ’dres par dge ba kho na’i ’bras bu dang / ngan song gi lus dang yul gnyis ka ma ’dres par mi dge ba’i ’bras bu’o.
In the Eighth Karmapa’s explanation on the creation of the physical world and inner sentient beings, the idea that a mixture of good and bad karma produces mixed results is further explained. For example, the result of mixed karma presented in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* is provided with the illustration of a leprous body and a pleasant environment by the Eighth Karmapa. This point is further elucidated by the analogy of superior body in an environment covered with poison and thorns. However, the *mChims mdzod* has avoided the use of these metaphors and treatment on this issue.

Some points, which are left brief in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, are elaborated further and treated more extensively by the Eighth Karmapa which makes for a more accessible interpretation. This treatment of points in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* indicates that the Eighth Karmapa had certainly not only consulted the *Bhāṣya* while composing his commentary, but also that he did not shy away from engaging with points that seemed obscure or irrelevant for other Tibetan commentators. Due to the limited transmission of Abhidharma materials to Tibet and available Tibetan translations, one can assume that many of the more obscure Indian contexts were not applicable or not readily understandable to Tibetan interpreters.

The Karma Chapter of the Eighth Karmapa’s *Abhidharmakośa* commentary is extensive in comparison to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *mChims mdzod*. The Karmapa asserts that he has drawn the majority of the content from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and further explained it. Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa mentions that, disregarding the hardships involved in doing it, he extended the explanation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *Abhidharmakośa* commentary of Chims Nam mkha’ grags (1210–85) from the final parts of the second chapter. As noted above, the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary appears more extensive than the *mChims mdzod* in the form of two volumes in 1451 folios which is widely regarded as authoritative. To cite an instance, the Eighth Karmapa discusses at length the refutation of the Vātsīputrīya thesis of revealing action as movement. It is argued that action cannot move from one point to another since it

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37 mChims ‘Jam pa’i dbyangs, trans. Coghlan (2018: 18) reports mChims Nam mkha’ grags to be the teacher of mChims ‘Jam pa’i dbyangs although they are considered the same person by some. However, his *Abhidharmakośa* commentary could not be obtained.

38 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, Vol. 1 p. 628: de phyin gyi gnas gnyis par sngar gyi gnas dang po dang gnyis pa’i ’grel pa gang zin las/ rgyas par ’grel zhiṅ rang ’grel gyi don zhib phal mo che drangs te legs par bshad yod cing / gnas gnyis pa’i gsham tsam nas dka’ tshegs la ma bsams par ’grel bshad gnyis kyi tshig sna bsrings te legs par bshad zin pas.
momentarily perishes as a result of being impermanent. The Eighth Karmapa’s discussion of this is more elaborate than that of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *mChims mdzod*.

The Eighth Karmapa further deals with the metaphors used in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* to establish the point that phenomena (*dngos po*) perish on their own and do not need to depend on other causes of destruction (*jig rgyu don gzhan*) to perish. However, the Vātsīputrīyas argue that some things, such as firewood, are destroyed upon contact with fire, not by themselves. Hence, other causes of destruction are proposed. To counter this argument, Vasubandhu responds by asking Vātsīputrīyas whether their position is similar to a lamp and the wind and to the sound of a bell and a hand. However, Vasubandhu does not explain these metaphors further and they remain obscure. The Eighth Karmapa elaborates and argues that a lamp stops burning on its own and is not extinguished by wind. A lamp stops burning, it is argued, due to a mere cessation of the later continuum of the lamp. In a similar fashion, the sound of bell also ceases on its own, failing to produce later continuum of the sound, while a hand serves merely as an obstructive condition for it. Therefore, the Eighth Karmapa appears to suggest that if the things do not have an inherent quality of self-disintegration, then they would not be destroyed even by outer destructive circumstances.

These illustrations show that the Eighth Karmapa’s Karma Chapter further elucidates points mentioned in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Furthermore, among other topics in the Karma Chapter, the treatment of vows appears the most extensive. The Eighth Karmapa devotes eighty-four folios to its discussion.

### 4.3.3 Polemical Nature of the Commentary

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary is highly polemical in nature and engages in refutation of others’ points and in defence of his own position (*dgag sgrub*) on Abhidharma concepts. This is especially the case with the Sa skya scholar Śākya mehog ldan (1428–1507) who composed an *Abhidharmakośa* commentary *Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi dka’ ba'i gnas rnam*.

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39 Mi bskyod rdo rje. Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde'i dpyid jo*, Vol. 2. 8–9: slob dpon gyis dp Yad pa 'di ltar mdzad de/ gang zhig yod na 'bya dang ba de ni de'i rgyu can yin pa'i ma khyab pa'i phyir/ rlung dang 'brel bas mar me 'jig mod kyil/ 'jig pa de ni rlung dang 'brel bas byas pa min te/ mar me skad cig ma nyid du khas blang pa'i phyir 'jig pa rgyu med can du 'dod pa yin pas/ mar me de ni skyes nas 'jig pa'i phyir/ rlung dang 'brel ba'i phyir skad cig ma p'hyi ma gzhan ma skyes na mi snang ba yin gyi/ des bshig pa'i phyir ni ma yin no/ de bzhin du dril bu'i sgra skad cig mar 'dod pa yang lag pa dang 'brel bar yod na 'jig mod kyil/ de ni des byas pa ma yin gyi/ skad cig ma yin pa'i phyir/ dril bu'i sgra ni rang zhig la/ des gegs byas pa'i phyir gzhan ma skyes nas mi snang ba yin gyi/ des shig pa'i phyir ni ma yin no.
par bshad pa’i bstan bcos [A Commentary on the Explanation of the Difficult Points of the Abhidharmakośa].

Cabezón and Dargyay argue that polemical writing serves to make a sectarian distinction among philosophical systems in order to place one’s philosophical system in an unrivalled position through the refutation of the positions of others.\(^{40}\) While this could be applicable to some extent in the context of the Eighth Karmapa’s polemical Abhidharmakośa commentary since he wrote it in an era marked by sectarian divisions, the Eighth Karmapa does cite other reasons such as concern with the understanding of the Abhidharmakośa in Tibet as discussed in section 4.4.3.

In general, engaging in debates on Abhidharma theories among Tibetan commentators of the Abhidharmakośa appear uncommon. The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary stands apart in the way that he engages in a debate over the Abhidharma understanding with Tibetan scholars, particularly Śākya mchog ldan. The polemic way of writing seems to have been a trait of the Eighth Karmapa’s as is evident from his commentaries on other treatises such as the Abhisamayālaṅkāra.\(^{41}\) The Eighth Karmapa is generally polemical in his Madhyamaka commentary as well and known for his strong language. Instances of the Eighth Karmapa’s polemics are reported in the discussion of Vajrayāna points directed towards rNying ma pas.\(^{42}\)

Debates of the Eighth Karmapa presented in his commentary follows the three aspects of syllogism (tshul gsum) that are used in the Tibetan debate (rtsod pa). Some explanations are presented in the form of debate and dealt with extensively.

The Eighth Karmapa’s refutation of Śākya mchog ldan’s interpretation of Abhidharma theories is spread throughout his commentary. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa refutes Śākya mchog ldan’s understanding that the Buddha obtained the vow of concentration (gsam gtan gyi sdom pa) only during his six years of austerity before his enlightenment. The Eighth Karmapa argues that the Buddha was said to have obtained it from Āḷāra Kālāma and Udraka Rāmaputra who were his non-Buddhist teachers even before he started his six years of austerity. He rebukes Śākya mchog ldan by saying that it simply demonstrates his failure to have even heard of the Buddha’s twelve deeds (mdzad pa bcu gnyis).\(^{43}\)

\(^{40}\) Cabezón and Dargyay (2007: 6).
\(^{41}\) This was pointed out by Brunhölzl (2010:72).
\(^{43}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo, Vol. 2 p. 81: gzhed yang dka’ ba spyad pa’i tshe bsam gtan gyi sdom pa thob bya ba de ni bdag nyid sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa bcu gnyis rnam thar tsam yang ma thos so zhes gzhed la gsal bar ston pa’i gtam stel/ rengs byed bu lhag spyod las bsam gtan gyi sens thob par bshad
The Eighth Karmapa expresses his dissatisfaction towards Śākya mchog ldan’s understanding of *Abhidharmakośa* in these words:

Śākya mchog ldan, who is a great Paṇḍita [and who] has become old, also engaged in the strenuous activity of [study and composition] of this śāstra.
However, [his] eye of seeing accordingly [the meaning of the *Abhidharmakośa*] has become weak.
If I [the Eighth Karmapa] explain with my honest mind, [understanding] would arise in the mind of the knowledgeable one [Śākya mchog ldan].
Others do mere reading,
and although [they] put efforts in analysing the [*Abhidharmakośa*’s] meaning of root text and commentary,
the *Abhidharmakośa* has become merely a name since the darkness that covers it is thick.\(^{44}\)

The Eighth Karmapa adopts a dialectical tone throughout his commentary. He uses the patterns of debate with the explicit mention of basis of debate (*rtsod gzhi chos can*), predicate (*bsgrub bya’i chos*) and reason (*rtags*). In the following argument, he presents all the components of debate:

A mother and a child who is in the womb (basis of debate) would possess non-dharma (predicate) since both of them turn into a cause of suffering for each of them (reason).\(^{45}\)

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\(^{44}\) Ibid, p. 87: *paṇchen chen po rgyud pa śākya mchog /bgres por gyur pa des kyang bstan bcos ’di’i /phyogs la ngal zhing dabr pa’i las mdzad kyang /ji bzhin phyed pa’i spyan ni btags snyoms gyur /’bras blo gzi bos cu ngad brda spre dza /mkhyen can de yi thugs la ’char bar ’gyur /gzhana dagn rnam sbyis ’rtsa ’grel klog tas las /don la dpyod pa’i ngal ba bsten na yang /’de la sgrigs pa’i mun pa stug pa’i phyir /chos mchog mdzod ces ming gi lhag mar gyur.* The Eighth Karmapa appears to imply that Tibetan commentators of *Abhidharmakośa* have failed to understand it properly although he does not specify and mention their names.

\(^{45}\) Ibid. p. 193: *ma dang bu lto na yod pa dag kyang chos can/ chos ma yin pa dang ldan par ’gyur te /phan tshun sdu bsgal gyi rgyu mtshan du gyur pa’i phyir.*
In the refutation of the opponent’s position, he has also adopted the method of dialectical consequence (Tib. *thal ba*, Skt. *prasanga*). In these ways, he maintains a dialectical tone throughout his commentary in contrast to the *Abhidharmakośabhadhyāya* and the *mChims mdzod*.

### 4.3.4 Presentation of bKa’ brgyud pa Positions

The Eighth Karmapa also presents the viewpoint of bKa’ brgyud pa school in his commentary. It is arguably not a norm in Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries, including the *mChims mdzod*, for scholars to present the viewpoints of their own philosophical system. Their own interpretations on emptiness, for instance, are strongly posited resulting in debates among Tibetan scholars of different traditions. However, while the presentation of their own position (*rang lugs*) in Madyamaka and Vajrayāna treatises by Tibetan scholars is widely found, it appears uncommon in other commentarial genres such as in the case of the *Abhidharmakośa*.

In contrast to the general trend, the Eighth Karmapa presents some positions of the bKa’ brgyud scholastic tradition. Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug highlights many positions of the bKa’ brgyud pa sect expounded by the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary such as identification of the object of offering (*mchod yul*) in the verse of offering (*mchod brjod*) in the *Abhidharmakośa*. This is discussed in the following paragraphs of this section. He also mentions that the Eighth Karmapa offers his unique interpretation with regard to *prātimokṣa* vow and its aspect of revealing and non-revealing form among others.

Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug goes on to mention that the Eighth Karmapa has offered interpretations that are beyond the intellectual domain of Tibetans. His assertions sound plausible when one considers the unique interpretations presented by the Eighth Karmapa. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa argues that the *prātimokṣa* vow should have both the aspect of revealing and non-revealing form. Other commentators, such as mChims ’Jam pa’i dbyangs, do not state this explicitly. Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa asserts that the

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46 Ibid. geer bu pa rnams gsud de ma zhu bas shi na yangchos can/ zas shyin pa la srog gsod kyi ltung ba dngo byung bar thal/ gsod pa’i blo sngon du ma song yang ‘chi bar bya ba chos min gyi rgyu yin pa’i phyir
47 Chos kyi dbang phyug, Zhwa dmar VI, mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa, p.461: mchod brjod skabs su mchod yul ston pa dang.
48 Ibid. p.461: so sor thar dang de yisdom pa dang // de yi steng nas rnams rig yin min dang.
49 Ibid. p.462: de dag so so’i skabs su bod spyi yil/spyod yul las brgal ‘bur dod mang du mdzad.
50 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dpyid’ ja, Vol. 2 p. 55: ‘di pa rnams kyi ’dod pa spyod pa spong ba’i gtso bor gyur pa’i lhag pa’i tshul khrims ’di la sdom pa so sor thar ces bya’o’// ’di la rig byed dang rig byed ma yin pa gnyis ka yod do.
prātimokṣa vows are not lost through death according to 'Dri gung 'Jig rten mgon po (1143-1217). He remarks that although Śākya Paṇḍita has made extensive attempts to refute this position of 'Dri gung 'Jig rten mgon po, a thought to cultivate seven abandonments (spong bdun) remains even in successive lifetimes. The thought to cultivate seven abandonments, according to the Eighth Karmapa, has causal potential to propel the rebirths of gods and humans with eighteen freedoms and possessions (dal byor bco brgyad) whether it is termed a vow or not. The Eighth Karmapa seems to assert that the thought to cultivate seven abandonments that remains intact in successive lives fulfils the role of prātimokṣa vows.

Although 'Dri gung and Karma bKa’ brgyud are different traditions within the broader bKa’ brgyud tradition with their own discrete ways of interpretation, the former is said to have some influence on the latter. The acceptance of 'Dri gung 'Jig rten mgon po’s position by the Eighth Karmapa can probably be taken as one example of influence. Rheingans reports that the Eighth Karmapa spent some time in 'Dri gung and engaged with the Single Intention (dGongs gcig), a popular teaching of the 'Dri gung tradition, by writing a commentary on it.

The Eighth Karmapa also further contends that Vasubandhu has slightly hinted in his Abhidharmakośabhāṣya that the upāsaka vow of exalted beings (’phags pa) would not be lost following the death and would remain intact in successive lives. However, Vasubandhu denied it to be a vow obtained through formal undertaking (yang dag par blangs pa) fearing that this understanding could be beyond the intellectual capacity of the śrāvaka vehicle. The Eighth Karmapa concludes by asserting that, as is the case in exalted beings, the prātimokṣa vow should not be lost even in ordinary beings (so so skye bo) following death. He contends this understanding is the intention of Buddha and of 'Dri gung 'Jig rten mgon po, who was recognised as an emanation of Nāgārjuna.

51 Three unwholesome actions of body and four unwholesome actions of speech.
52 Sobisch (2002:40) mentions that the reason for Śākya Paṇḍita to declare that prātimokṣa vows are lost following death was a response to 'Dri gung 'Jig rten mgon po who understood otherwise.
53 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dp'yid ’jor, Vol. 2 p. 108–109: skyob pa ’bri gung ’jig rten gsum gyi mgon po’i zhal snga nas/ so sor thar pa’i sdom pa ’chi’ phos pas mi gtong zhes seng ge’i bsgrags pa las/ bdag nyid chen po sa skya paṇḍita bka’ gnyag gya ma mdzad mod kyang / don la bye ma smras rtogs brtags kyi sdom pa rnam rig min pa’i gugs su yod bya ba ni don la mi gnas/ spong bdun spong la’i sems pa rgyan chags bcas pa’i kha na ma tho ba dang bcas pa tshe rabs brjes kyang dran pa dang shes bzhin gnyis ma nyams par yod na.
55 Rheingans (2017: 102).
56 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde’i dp’yid ’jor, Vol. 2 p.109: ’phags pa la ’chi’ phos pas dge bsnyen gyi sdom pa mi gtong ba zhig yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sangs rgyas kyi dgongs pa yin pa de mchas mchog dbiyig gi gnyen gnis zur tsam ’grel pa mdzad kyang / yang ynan thos sde gnyis kyi blor ma shong dogs nas/ de’i sdom pa ni yang dag par blangs pa las byung ba’i sdom pa ni ma yiin no/ ’zhes ‘chad dgos byung ba yiin no/ /des na
Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa identifies the teacher (Buddha) with the dharmakāya form of the Buddha as the object of offering (mchod yul) in the following verse of offering of the Abhidharmakośa.\(^{57}\) The Abhidharmakośa I, 1abc states:

The one who has destroyed all the darkness
and who liberated sentient beings from the swamp of saṃsāra
[\(\text{I}\)] pay homage to the teacher (ston pa) [who teaches] according to the meaning…\(^{58}\)

The Eighth Karmapa reasons that the sambogakāya is not known to the Vaibhāṣika school while the body of Prince Siddhārtha is not accepted as a nirmāṇakāya since it is considered the result of karma and afflictive emotions (las nyon gyi rnam smin).\(^{59}\) This position is not discussed or held by the mChims mdzod and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya. However, Si tu Pañ cheñ Choṣ kyi byung gnas (1700–1774) appears to suggest this understanding of the Eighth Karmapa as the intended meaning of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and other Indian Abhidharmakośa commentaries such as Pūrṇavardhana’s commentary.\(^{60}\)

The Ninth Karmapa endorses this position and Zhwa dmar Choṣ kyi dbang phyug further promotes it as their own tradition (rang lugs) in his analysis of the identification of the object of offering.\(^{61}\) The Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and the mChims mdzod simply identify the term ‘teacher’ with the Buddha and do not make the distinction of dharmakāya,

\(^{57}\) Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, Grub bde'i dp.yid 'jo, Vol. 1 p. 9: ston par gyur pa ni yang dag pa rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas dang mgon po klu sgrub kyi rnam par 'phral pa skyob pa 'bri gung 'jig rten gsum gyi mgon po'i dgongs pa yin no. Sobisch (2002:329) mentions that the First Karmapa saw 'Dri gung 'Jig rten mgon po as Nāgārjuna and narrates another story in which he was identified with Nāgārjuna.

\(^{58}\) Vasubandhu, Abhidharmakośakārikā, p. 2: gang zhig kun la mun pa gtan bcom zhing // 'khor ba'i 'dam las 'gro ba 'drangs mdzad pa/ don bzhin ston pa de la phyag 'tshal nas/ chos mngon mdzod kyi bstan bcos rab bshad bya.

\(^{59}\) Ibid.: longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku ni sde pa la ma grags shing / sde pas bdad rtsi gang la thob pa'i lus rten rgyal bu don grub kyi khog pa lta bu yang sprul pa'i skur mi 'jog ste las nyon gyi rnam smin du 'dod pa'i phyir ro.

\(^{60}\) Si tu Pan chen Choṣ kyi byung gnas, chos mngon pa mdzod kyi tshig don rnam par 'grel pa brgya byin thog pa'i nor bu'i 'od snang, p. 4: 'di thad byar kyi kar 'jak grub bde ni shing rtar 'phros don du bye smra'i sde pas ston pa sangs rgyas kyi mtshan gzhi lam bden la byed pa dang / longs sprul khas mi len pa dang /_slob mi slob kyi dge 'dun yang lam bden la 'jog pa dang / shes sgrub khas len pa dang / de'i mtshan gzhi mi shes pa'i rgyu bzhis sogs la byed pa rnam bshad pa ni/ mdzod rang 'grel dang / gang spel sogs rgya 'grel rnam kyi dgongs pa ji lta ba bzhin du snang nge.

\(^{61}\) Choṣ kyi dbang phyug, Zhwa dmar VI, mNgon pa mdzod kyi spyi don dbyig gnyen bzhed pa, p.32: 'o na 'di skabs kyi mchod yul gyi ston pa de'i rang bzhin nam tshul ji lta bu zhig ce na/ 'di skabs kyi mchod brjod kyi yul du gyur pa'i rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas de'i tshul lam rang bzhin ni nges par choṣ kyi sku zhing tu 'jog pa yin te
$sAnbhogakāya$ and $nirmāṇakāya$. However, Śākyamchog Ildan discusses this point in a way similar to the Eighth Karmapa’s exposition.\textsuperscript{62}

### 4.4 Rationale behind the Composition of $Abhidharmakośa$ Commentaries by Tibetan Scholars

This section will provide some rationale for the proliferation of Tibetan $Abhidharmakośa$ commentaries in order to give some general background of Abhidharma and $Abhidharmakośa$ tradition in Tibet. It will analyse and explore the reasons for their composition.

Since, unlike Madhyamaka, the interpretation on the understanding of the $Abhidharmakośa$ did not vary much among Tibetan scholars, it is appropriate to look at the rationale which may have led scholars to compose their own commentaries.

Refutations directed towards rival Tibetans by scholars with regard to Abhidharma theories are virtually non-existent. The Eighth Karmapa is an exception. The Eighth Karmapa refutes the positions held by Śākya mchog Ildan. This led later scholars such as the Ninth Karmapa and the Sixth Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug to repeat and validate these refutations.

Phuntsho suggests that Mi pham found his own interpretation of emptiness after finding imperfections in the dGe lugs pa understanding of the original Indian thought.\textsuperscript{63} His thesis, which deals with the debates between Mi pham and dGe lugs pa scholars over the understanding of emptiness, reports substantial disparity in the interpretation of Madhyamaka between the two schools. Mathes (2016) highlights the self-empty ($rang stong$) and other-empty ($gzhan stong$) interpretations of emptiness that developed in Tibet from the time Tibet adopted Indian Buddhism up to the non-sectarian period.\textsuperscript{64} This indicates there has been substantial difference in the interpretation of Madyamaka among Tibetan scholars.

However, the disparity in the interpretation and understanding of the $Abhidharmakośa$ does not appear to be the main cause of the proliferation of its $Abhidharmakośa$ commentaries among Tibetan scholars. One can safely conclude that Tibetan scholars did not engage in disputation with regard to Abhidharma philosophical ideas in the way they did on emptiness.

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\textsuperscript{62} Śākyamchog Ildan. Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi dka’ ba’i gnas rnam par bshad pa’i bstan bcos bye brag tu bshad pa’i mtsho chen po, p. 4–5.

\textsuperscript{63} Phuntsho (2005:52).

\textsuperscript{64} Mathes (2016).
4.4.1 Doctrinal Independence of Religious Traditions

Sectarian philosophical and religious developments, among other factors, appear to have fuelled the proliferation of the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries. In general, in a climate of sectarian differentiation, scholars of various religious schools in the fifteenth and sixteenth century seem to have composed their commentaries simply to have their own philosophical texts.\(^{65}\) One can also speculate on other reasons for composing commentaries, for instance, the prestige gained from commenting on various philosophical treatises.

Various researchers, including Rheingans and the authors of papers contained in Caumans and Sernesi (2017), report that in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries Tibet saw the flourishing of philosophical studies and the formation of Tibetan schools of Buddhism.\(^{66}\) It is also argued that Tshong kha pa, who founded the dGe lugs pa school in the fifteenth century, initiated intensive philosophical activity in Tibet.\(^{67}\) As a result, many dGe lugs pa centres such as dGa ldan, Se ra, bKra shis lhun po and 'Bras spungs were founded which continue to serve today as educational centres both in India and Tibet.\(^{68}\)

The Eighth Karmapa was born, less than a century after Tsong kha pa’s death, in an era of scholarly developments in Tibet. Thus, the scholarly environment might have influenced the Eighth Karmapa to engage in intellectual enterprises such as composing the *Abhidharmakośa* commentary. The Eighth Karmapa cites many other reasons which will be discussed below.

Moreover, the period from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century was an era in Tibet marked by religious partisanship and a struggle for political supremacy in which many religious figures were involved.\(^{69}\) Self-conscious non-partisanship (*ris med*) is reported to have emerged only in the nineteenth century Tibet.\(^{70}\) Religious sectarianism was strong in Tibet before the nineteenth century with adherents bolstering their own traditions through the composition of their own commentaries.

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\(^{65}\) Heimbel (2017: 249–250) in *Fifteenth Century Tibet: Cultural Blossoming and Political Unrest* edited by Caumanns and Sernesi, for instance, reports sectarian division of Sa kya and dGe lugs in the fifteenth century. They also suggest that even biographies of scholars were composed with sectarian interest. Rheingans (2021: 41) suggests that the late 15th century and early 16th century saw intense sectarianism.


\(^{68}\) Rheingans (2017: 37–38).

\(^{69}\) Ibid. 38. Rheingans reports of incidences where different rulers supported their own religious figures. Kapstein (2006:116–123).

\(^{70}\) Bayer (2019: 5) reports mKhyen brtse dbang po (1820–1892), rDza dpal sprul (1808–1887) and 'Jam mgon Kong-sprul (1813–1899) as the founders of *ris med*. See Oldmeadow (2012: 60).
In the 15th century, the central region of Tibet was increasingly coming under pressure from the ascending dGe lugs. This ascendancy was overturned by the Rin spungs pa family who were allied to the Karmapa and Fourth Zhwa dmar pa.71 After 1642 the dGe lugs pa under the Fifth Dalai Lama dominated the central Tibetan regions, while western regions such as Amdo and Khams saw increased growth in other religious orders such as Sa skya, bKa' brgyud and rNying ma, who could operate more freely in those areas.72

This regionalised development of religious centres also suggests a sectarian force among religious traditions in Tibet with each attempting to delineate their own sectarian identity. For instance, Phuntsho argues that Mi pham, in the nineteenth century, despite being a non-sectarian figure, promoted the rNying ma philosophical systems amid growing dGe lugs pa intellectual activities which saw even some of rNying ma pas relying on dGe lugs pa texts.73 This argument seems plausible given that Mi pham was active in the period when dGe lugs pa and ris med forces were prominent in Tibetan Buddhism.74

Nobuchiyo also contends that it was the custom of Tibetan religious centres in early days to compose their own commentarial texts.75 This assertion becomes even more pertinent with regard to the composition of the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries by the Tibetan scholars against the backdrop of the understanding of Abhidharma theories that did not differ to large extent from each other. Therefore, one of the rationales and grounds for the composition of the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries by the scholars of different traditions of Tibetan Buddhism seems to have been to simply demonstrate philosophical expertise in their own tradition and to ensure the independence of their doctrinal systems.

Rheingans also mentions the Eighth Karmapa’s intention to write on the four major philosophical fields.76 The Eighth Karmapa, like Mi pham, could have had the intention to make his own school self-sufficient in terms of philosophical and doctrinal studies. This vision of making bKa' brgyud pa self-sufficient philosophically can be further supported by the fact that the Eighth Karmapa has articulated many interpretations of Abhidharma theories from the viewpoint of bKa' brgyud pa philosophical systems.

Therefore, one can conclude that the composition of *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries did not occur in Tibet as a result of significant differences in the understanding of the text in

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72 See Bayer (2019:4–5).
73 Phuntsho (2005:52).
74 Samuel (1993, 23).
76 Rheingans (2017: 3). The five fields are Abhidharma, Madhyamaka, Prajñāparāmitā, Vinaya, and Pramāṇa.
general, but more plausibly for reasons of establishing doctrinal independence and for the sake of the prestige of commenting on a highly philosophical treatise.

4.4.2 Rationale for Composition of the Eighth Karmapa’s Commentary

This section will explore the reasons presented in the commentary itself, which led the Eighth Karmapa to compose his commentary, the *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*. The Eighth Karmapa seems to have felt obliged to write the commentary owing to multiple compelling reasons which are dispersed though his commentary.

The Eighth Karmapa states that his master Karma ’phrin las pa insistently commanded him to compose a treatise on the *Abhidharmakośa* and explains, in the usual traditional fashion, that he could not resist this command.77 From the emic or insider point of view, this reason sounds valid since the words of one’s master are taken seriously by the disciples in the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.

The Eighth Karmapa asserts that he composed the commentary to preserve the *Abhidharmakośa* teachings and that this task took him to a secluded place to escape distractions while composing it. He declares:

Alas, this precious teaching is the refuge of sentient beings.
Concerned that [it] would be lost, [I] analysed this Abhidharma text through nourishing the excellent intellect with faith by avoiding distractions in the mountain cave of a solitary place.78

He also points out in his colophon that the learned ones are quite few in Tibet and even those few learned ones lack certainty over the understanding of the *Abhidharmakośa*.79 While it is beyond our means to evaluate his concern over losing Abhidharma understanding, his elaborate explanation and treatment of condensed points of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* deserve some attention.

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77 He mentions this in verse in the colophon. The translation of the colophon is provided in the appendix.
78 Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karmapa VIII, *Grub bde’i dpyid ’jo*, Vol. 2 p. 50: *kye ma/ bstan pa rin chen ’di ni ’gro ba’i mgon/ /nub par ’phangs nas dben pa’i ri sul du/ /ram g.yeng spangs nas blo gros nus pa mchog /dad pas gsos nas mgon pa’i gzhung ’dir dpyad//. It appears that the mountain referred to is Yar Iha sham po which he mentions in his colophon. See the translation of colophon.
79 See the translation of colophon in the appendix.
Moreover, arguably the Eighth Karmapa had the intention to do service to the bKa’brgyud pa school and teachings of the Karmapa in particular. In the beginning of the volume II of his commentary, he states:

This [composition of the Abhidharmakośa commentary] is a good [deed] performed for the sake of the Karmapa’s teaching after having expanded the undiminished intellect in the vast nature of knowledge.  

4.5 Conclusion

From the above presentation one can conclude that the Eighth Karmapa has added perspectives from different traditions of thought, including Varjayāna interpretations, to the Abhidharma theories in his commentary. The bKa’brgyud pa positions of Abhidharma concepts presented in the Grub bde’i dpyid’jo, as highlighted by Zhwa dmar Chos kyi dbang phyug, appear rather unusual in the general trend of Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentaries.

There is also some evidence, as discussed above in section 4.3.2, that the Eighth Karmapa elucidated and explained the condensed points of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and engaged with points that seemed obscure to other Tibetan commentators. Si tu Paṇ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas also assumed the Eighth Karmapa’s interpretation of the dharmakāya form of the Buddha as the object of offering (mchod yul) in the verse of offering to be within the intended meaning of Indian commentaries.

The refutation of other scholars’ viewpoints seems to be a rather unusual feature of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary. In the context of his life and other scholarly contributions, the tendency to strongly engage with different viewpoints seems an overall feature of the Eighth Karmapa’s approach. Furthermore, the adoption of a dialectical tone appears to be a peculiarity of his writing style.

There have also been some influences of ’Bri gung pa’s interpretation in the Karma bKa’brgyud as presented in the discussion of vows in the section 4.3.4. The Eighth Karmapa has also shown some interest in ’Bri gung pa doctrines evidenced by his commenting on the Single Intention (dgongs gcig).

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With regard to the rationale for composing his commentary, the Eighth Karmapa provides many reasons for composing the *Abhidharmakośa* commentary in contrast to other commentators who cite no reason or just a few. For instance, he says he had a concern that Abhidharma understanding could be lost and that he wanted to contribute to the knowledge of Abhidharma in Tibet. In addition to these stated reasons, he may also have desired to complete the commentaries on the five major subjects of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and provide doctrinal independence in terms of curricula to the bKa' brgyud pa in general and to the Karma bKa' brgyud in particular. Furthermore, the fame that came with the composition of commentaries could also have been a factor for his work of commenting extensively on the *Abhidharmakośa*.

From this chapter, one can also draw the conclusion that the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary can be claimed as the most authoritative in the Karma bKa' brgyud school at least in the few hundred years after the Eighth Karmapa. This is evidenced by its reception by the following generations of Karma bKa' brgyud scholars such as the Ninth Karmapa, the Sixth Zhwa dmar and even Si tu Paṇ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas who did not dispute the commentary. The Ninth Karmapa’s commentary is also received well in Karma bKa' brgyud as testified by its adoption in the curriculum by some Karma bKa' brgyud institutes and by the words of the Sixth Zhwa dmar who extolled it as the best Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentary.

The chapter has also explored the reception in terms of the history of ideas of the concept of *karmaphala* in Vaibhāṣika thought. It has shown that Tibetan Mahāyāna literature, including bsTan rim, Lam rim and instruction manuals, shares some common understanding with the Vaibhāṣika concerning karmic dimensions such as the different value of the objects of actions. Through the references in this literature to the *Abhidharmakośa* and its understanding of *karmaphala* one can conclude that the *Abhidharmakośa* has had significant influence on the understanding of the theory of *karmaphala* in Tibet.
Chapter V: Conclusion

5.1 Main Findings of the Research

This study, approached from the Vaibhāṣika understanding of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa, has examined whether motivation in an action overrides other karmic dimensions in terms of its role and significance in completing actions and determining their moral quality. Based on these commentaries, the conclusions are as follows.

Through the textual analysis in the third chapter of this thesis, this study has found that, according to Vaibhāṣika as read through the lens of the Tibetan commentaries studied, motivation does not override other karmic dimensions since they are equally significant in both completing an action and determining the degree of its moral quality. The third chapter demonstrated that, according to the texts, the actual action (dngos) and the concluding phase (mjug) of an action, along with the preparatory phase (sbyor) where the motivation belongs, are prerequisite criteria to complete an actional path of bodily and verbal actions. For instance, a killer has to see a victim die in order to complete an actional path of killing after having intended to kill and having executed the actual action of killing, for example by stabbing the victim. If a murderer dies before the death or together with the victim, then the murderer is considered free of the wrongdoing of killing. Due to these additional significant aspects of an action having been identified in Abhidharmakośa commentaries including the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, the Grub bde'i dpyid 'jo and the gZhon nu rnam rol, this thesis has demonstrated that the idea of motivation as the overriding significant aspect of an action cannot be generalised across Buddhist schools.

According to the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapas, the Vaibhāṣika understanding of karmic dimensions and the mechanism of completion and moral determination of an action are highly sophisticated and complex yet logical, as discussed in the third chapter. For instance, to determine the degree of the morality of generosity, various dimensions such as the mental characteristics of the giver, the manner of giving, and the different kinds of recipient need to be taken into account as shown in the section 3.5.2.1 of the third chapter of this thesis. While the commentary of the Eighth Karmapa appears to concur with the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya with regard to the interpretation on karmic dimensions, the Eighth Karmapa arguably provides creative interpretations of this. He argues that stealing objects belonging to persons who have been helpful would be more unwholesome than stealing from someone who has not been kind. Moreover, he also argues that helping those who have been kind to us would have a higher degree of morality than this action to those who have not. He
claims, for example, that helping a dog which has been kind to us would be more meritorious than helping a human being who has not been kind. This kind of interpretation appears creative and novel, offering a revolutionary idea of karma which is contrary to the belief that actions in relation to human beings are always more significant than those to an animal.

Moreover, the moral determination of an action seems logical since the moral quality of an action appears proportionate to both the motivational and to the other dimensional qualities of the action. The exposition of the role of karmic dimensions appears almost technical in that the various karmic dimensions are deemed to function significantly in the determination of moral efficacy and the completion of an action.1 This thesis has also shown that the mental aspect of motivation is not the sole factor in determining a degree of morality in Vaibhāṣika thought.

Furthermore, according to the Eighth Karmapa, the Vaibhāṣika’s concept of the theory of karmaphala appears concrete, rather than leaving it at the abstract level of mind and motivation. Vaibhāṣika brings various quantifiable dimensions of action into the discussion of karma. For instance, in relation to generosity, taking into account the value of property involved can be argued to make the discussion of karma more objective. The idea that the mental aspect alone is the most significant dimension appears problematic as it leaves room for equivocation about one’s actions. This understanding could also lead to excusing one’s wrong actions reasoning that the motivation had been wholesome, since the mind is intangible.

Based on strong textual evidence, this thesis has demonstrated that for action to become morally qualifiable it needs to be triggered by wholesome or unwholesome motivation. As a result, the prerequisite for the action to be preceded by motivation excludes involuntary actions from the domain of karma in Buddhism, and especially in the Vaibhāṣika school. This study demonstrated, both through textual evidence and on logical grounds, that motivation should precede action as opposed to the position of Nirganthas.

This study concludes that Vaibasika does not identify kun slong (motivation) exclusively with sms pa (volition). Vaibhāṣikas classify kun slong into causal motivation and concurrent motivation, and do not identify it exclusively with sms pa because they accept five sense consciousnesses as concurrent motivation. Kun slong, defined broadly, was any kind of consciousness (shes pa) that principally causes or aids the generation of the action whereas conceptual mental consciousness causes bodily and verbal actions.

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1 Keown (2005: 25) also believes the theory of karma is similar to the law of gravity.
This research has also pointed out the significance of Abhidharma in general and particularly the *Abhidharmakośa* in the study of Tibetan Buddhism in contrast to some neglect of it as a non-Mahāyāna text by Tibetans, as discussed in section 1.2.4 of the first chapter. That section also demonstrated that the *Abhidharmakośa* serves as a foundation for intellectual study of Buddhism according to the viewpoint of some selected Tibetan scholars.

The fourth chapter also discussed the reasons for the proliferation of the *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries in Tibetan. While some commentators on the *Abhidharmakośa* cite various reasons, some other commentators do not. One principal reason appears to be ensuring doctrinal independence in their respective religious school partly on account of sectarian forces in Tibet. This study discovered that in the case of the Eighth Karmapa we find many reasons mentioned for the composition of his commentary including the fear of losing *Abhidharmakośa* scholarship in Tibet.

While the Eighth Karmapa’s interpretation appears to concur with the *Abhidharmakośabhaṣya* and the *mChims mdzod* in general, his commentary differs from other Tibetan commentaries as discussed in section 4.4 of the fourth chapter. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa has presented Vajrayāna viewpoints in his commentary which is unusual in the Tibetan *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries. Research on the variations in interpretation and the understanding of the *Abhidharmakośa* among Tibetan scholars is limited. Although the interpretations of the *Abhidharmakośa* do not appear to differ greatly, differences especially among religious schools exist. This is demonstrated by the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary where he has presented many bKa’ brgyud pa positions such as the non-relinquishment of *prātimokṣa* vow through death. Moreover, the Eighth Karmapa presented some innovative interpretations on karma, including, for example, the higher degree of wholesomeness of beneficial action towards a helpful animal. Although these kinds of arguments are found in the Tibetan *Lam rim* literature, they are not found in the other *Abhidharmakośa* commentaries including the *Abhidharmakośabhaṣya* and the *mChims mdzod*. Also, the refutations of other scholars’ philosophical positions in his commentaries through dialectics is a rather unusual feature. In the context of his life and other scholarly contributions, the tendency to strongly engage with different viewpoints was likely an overall feature of the Eighth Karmapa’s approach.²

² Draszczyk and Higgins (2019: 28) also suggest that the Eighth Karmapa was an intellectual who did not show reluctance in engaging with any kind of opponents or doctrinal topics.
Furthermore, while the Eighth Karmapa appeared to agree with the overall intent of the Indian Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, he made that formidable text more accessible to a Tibetan audience. This is illustrated in this thesis through the juxtaposition of textual materials in the section 4.3.2. In contrast to other Tibetan scholars, such as the Ninth Karmapa and dGe 'dun grub, who kept their commentaries concise, the Eighth Karmapa also did not hesitate to discuss the cryptic and condensed points of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya and elaborated on them. For instance, the Eighth Karmapa added ‘words’ that become actional path of lying whereas the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya mentions ‘letters’ that causes understanding as an actional path of lying. The Eighth Karmapa’s addition appear to make some sense since one usually makes meaning out of words. Furthermore, The Eighth Karmapa unambiguously identified obscure term ‘mind (sems)’ as motivation (kun slong) that precedes reception of vows discussed in the section 3.3.1. On this account, one can conclude that the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary serves, to a certain extent, as commentary to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya making it somewhat unusual in the Tibetan commentarial landscape in relation to Vasubandhu’s Abhidharma texts.

The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary provides creative interpretations and metaphors in order to clarify points made in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya. For instance, he uses the illustration of spontaneous lying out of habit to establish that lying without the motivation to lie does not amount to the wrongdoing and by so doing illuminates the intent of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya.

The state of the source texts of the commentary, especially in the case of the Ninth Karmapa, presents a number of challenges for textual studies. Some pages appear to have been lost. We have also seen that the available textual sources of Mi bskyod rdo rje’s commentary rely on two significantly divergent editions.

Although Karma ‘phrin las pa’s commentary on the Abhidharmakośa is likely to be the one of the earliest in the Karma bKa’ brgyud, the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary seems to be the first extensive commentary in the Karma bKa’ brgyud tradition. It sits alongside his other monumental commentaries on Madhyamaka, Vinaya and the Abhisamayālaṅkāra. The Eighth Karmapa’s commentary appears to be the starting point of an independent Abhidharmakośa commentarial tradition in Karma bKa’ brgyud school: the Ninth Karmapa summarises it and the Sixth Zhwa dmar in turn bases his commentary on the Ninth Karmapa’s commentary. The Ninth Karmapa praised the commentary of the Eighth Karmapa and the Sixth Zhwa dmar extolled the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary as possessing many bKa’ brgyud pa interpretations.
Therefore, the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary enjoyed a reputation as an authoritative text in the Karma bKa' brgyud, at least in the following few generations. The available prints stem from the 20th century eastern Tibetan center dPal spungs. The great 18th century scholar and chief hierarch of dPal spungs, Si tu Pañ’chen Chos kyi ‘byung gnas (1700–1774), briefly mentions the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary in his *Abhidharmakośa* commentary. Also in the 20th century, the Eighth Karmapa’s monumental work was considered worthy of the substantial effort and funding required for its printing. Therefore, one can conclude that the two Karmapas’ commentaries enjoyed unquestioned acceptance in the Karma bKa' brgyud pa school. The reception of these commentaries by the wider Tibetan Buddhist scholarly community requires further study.

In this thesis, karmic dimensions according to Vaibhāṣika thought are also presented in the larger framework of Tibetan philosophical traditions and some comparisons were made with the Tibetan Mahāyāna *Lam rim* literature. There is some evidence of reliance on the *Abhidharmakośa* by the authors of *Lam rim* and *bsTan rim* literature revealed in direct quotations and implicit references. The extent of this influence is a subject for further research.

5.2 Direction for Future Research

The theory of *karmaphala* has been interpreted by all Buddhist philosophical systems and traditions. While some Tibetan Mahāyāna traditions reckon motivation to be more significant than other dimensions in general, other dimensions are also recognised as playing major roles in action. Therefore, a comparative study of the theory with attention focussed on the karmic dimensions as understood among the different schools and systems of Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, sūtric Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna would help in creating comprehensive knowledge in this field. Furthermore, study of the Sanskrit text of the *Abhidharmakośa* commentary is also desirable to broaden the knowledge of the theory. The Tibetan term *kun slong* appears vast and merits further research on its nature, function, role and significance according to the various philosophical schools. This would contribute to the understanding of karma and Buddhist ethics.

Since this study is among the initial projects to study karmic dimensions according to the Vaibhāṣika school as understood from the viewpoint of Tibetan scholarship, it could serve as foundation for further research in this area. This research also provides new translations of selected passages from the Eighth Karmapa’s Karma Chapter on *karmaphala* and karmic
dimensions. This will provide additional resources to further this study which is to date very limited.

With the discussion of the ten unwholesome actional paths as related to morality, this research can contribute to the philosophical discussion of Buddhist ethics. Academic study on Buddhist ethics has been rather limited. Findings of the present research could encourage closer consideration of various karmic dimensions in the contexts of ethics and/or karma. For instance, Keown discusses the contemporary moral issue of euthanasia and considers the significance of motivation involved in euthanasia and its role in the determination of morality. This kind of discussion can be further enriched by taking various karmic dimensions into account. For instance, the severity of the wrongdoing of euthanasia would be subjected to the assessment of karmic dimensions including its timing, the manner it is carried out, and so on. From the findings of this research, delivering euthanasia to a person at the right time and in an appropriate manner would be arguably less severe in terms of immorality or wrongdoing than carrying it out at an inappropriate time or in a cruel manner, even if, as the Vaibhāśikas contend, that would not necessarily absolve a person from wrongdoing.

While this research has studied the Tibetan Abhidharmakośa commentaries and their interpretations, it does not deal extensively with the Sanskrit editions of the commentary and the complexities of the Indian contexts, which must often be studied through sources only available in Chinese translation. The study of the Sanskrit sources of the Abhidharmakośa commentaries would also shed further light on the theory of karmaphala. Study of the Indian tradition and manuscripts could lead to the discovery of new knowledge possibly inadequately expressed in the translated versions.

Recovery of the text and improved editions of the Eighth and the Ninth Karmapa’s Abhidharmakośa commentaries would also be helpful for future research on the text and the theory of karmaphala.

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3 Keown (2005: 25) suggests karma is related to ethics.
4 Ibid. p. 45.
5 Ibid. p.122.
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Appendix: Selected Passages in Translation

This appendix provides the translation of the sections that treat the theory of *karmaphala*. Paragraphs that discuss the ten actional paths are translated, since they contain significant materials on karmic dimensions. This appendix also provides the colophons to the first and the second volume of the Eighth Karmapa’s commentary which contain important contextual information about the commentary’s textual genesis. The translations are based on the dPal spungs print and its bibliographical information is as following:


Page numbers are inserted each time the page changes to the next. I have provided headings for the easier understanding of the topics that paragraphs present.

Appendix A: Colophons

Author’s Colophon to Volume I

[p. 828] yon tan mchog dam pa dang de gang dang ldan pa'i rje btsun dam pa bla ma dang 'dra ba gang dag dang / khyad par dbrog tu med pa'i bka' drin stsal ba'i mtshungs bral dge ba'i bshes gnyen dkon mchog gsum gyi ngo bo rnams yid la legs par gsal btab nas/ ma rgyan ris med pa thams cad rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang du 'god pa'i byang chub tu sens bskyed pa'i blo sngon du 'gro bzhin par/ kho bo'i rjes su 'jug pa'i nyan thos pa dag la smras pa/ bdag gi chos mngon pa mdzod kyi sbyor tī g gi lung tsam zhig rje rin po che karma phrin las pa chen po'i zhal snga nas rang lo nyer gnyis pa zhig la thos pas rkyen nas rang lo nyer drug par mchims nam mkha' grags kyi tī g gzhir byas kyi dgon gs pa btus nas gnas dang po dang gnyis pa'i snyoms 'jug gnyis las/ snyoms 'jug dang po'i 'grel pa rgyas bsdus 'tshams par kong por sdod dus grub pa las/ kye ma dus kyi dbang gis 'grel pa byas kyang don gnyer can mi 'byung bar dogs pa la/ slar dbus su phyin pa na bde bar gshegs pa chen po karma phrin las pa'i zhabs kyi bkas bskul ba la brten/ slar g.yas ru gtsang 'gram gyi lha khang dang nye ba/ hor sa skya pa yon mchod kyis gan pa'i pho brang du btab pa nyug rgyal khang du rang lo so gsum pa nas gnas gnyis pa'i snyoms 'jug gnyis par sngar gyi gnas dang po dang gnyis pa'i 'grel pa gang zhin las/ rgyas par 'grel zhing rang 'grel gyi don zhib cha phal mo che drangs te legs par bshad yod cing / gnas gnyis pa'i gsham tsam nas dka' tshugs la ma bsams par 'grel bshad gnyis kyi tshig sna
Having properly visualised in the mind [the beings] who are like a venerable and exalted Guru who possess supreme and sublime good qualities, and particularly unsurpassable teachers who were the nature of Triple Jewel [and who] bestowed a kindness that cannot be taken away. [I] speak to my disciples [who] follow [me]: I heard the mNygon pa mdzod kyi sbyor ṭīk (Karma ’phrin las pa’s Abhidharmakośa commentary ) in the form of a mere reading transmission (lung) at the age of twenty-two from the Precious Lord Karma ’phrin las pa.

As a result, from the age of twenty-six while staying in Kong po I completed [explanations] moderate in length on the meditative absorption (snyoms ’jug) of the first [chapter] from the meditative absorptions of the first and second [chapter] by condensing the meaning based on the commentary of mChims Nam mkha’ grags. Alas, as a result, scepticism arose [in me, thinking] that there would not be enthusiastic people [to study it] even though [I] compose a commentary owing to [changing] time. Later, [when I] went to central [Tibet], the great Sugata Karma ’phrin las pa urged me to [continue with the commentary]. Therefore, [I] commented again up to the second meditative absorption of the second chapter at Nyug rgyal khang near g.Yas ru gtsang ’gram lha khang, [which was] offered [to me] as a caretaker’s residence by Hor Sa skya pa patrons and priest (Hor patrons and Sa skya pa priests).

Up to [this point] in the second chapter, the explanation of the first and the second chapter completed earlier are further explained elaborately, drawing a majority of the detailed content from the auto-commentary (Abhidharmakośabhāṣya). Moreover, disregarding the hardships [involved in doing it], [I] completed the explanation by extending the words of the two commentaries (auto-commentary and mChims Nam mkha' grags’ commentary) starting from the final parts of the second chapter. Therefore, whatever the merit of [composing this commentary], [I] dedicate it for all sentient beings [who exist in all places] pervaded by space to attain complete enlightenment.

1 Numbering of the pages is reversed in this edition although the textual materials are not.
Thus this commentary is completed by the one [the Eighth Karmapa] who has realised the vital and secret points of the boundless aspects of dharma of Three Baskets which consist of Three Vehicles; [the one who has] experienced the causal and resultant vehicle through Mahāyānic ripening and liberation (smin grol); [the one who has] no hesitation in the explication [of teachings] to others; [the one who is] the subject of the venerable Triple Jewel; [the one who is] the Translator and the Monk of Śākyamuni; [the one who is] blessed with the name of Lord Karmapa; [the one known as] Chos grub grags pa, who gained victory over all opponents throughout all time. [This commentary was completed] at the early age of thirty-seven having been begun from the age of twenty-six at the neck of Yar lha sham po mountain when the patron of founding the seat bSam 'grub bde chen connected him with the necessities in accord with dharma.

May this [commentary] turn into the ear-ornament in all the directions of the Dwag po bKa' brgyud, the holder of the life-force of the Karmapa’s teachings and the essence of the Buddha dharma, and may it abide in a non-sectarian manner. This completes the commentary of the Abhidharmakośa.

[p. 815] slar smras pa/ deng sang gangs can khrod 'di na/ /tshul ldan mang du thos pa dang / /mang du thos pa 'di nyid kyang / /rnam par dpyo don pa'i shes rab kyi/ /ji bzhin nges pa 'ga' tsam yang / /yu dum wâ ra'i me tog ltar/ /dkon par mthong nas yid pham ste/ /rgyas 'grel 'di
Concluding words

These days, among the multitude of the Snowy Land [Tibet], there are quite few in numbers like a Udomvara flower who possess a vow and [who are] extensively learned. Even the extensively learned [scholars] who have certainty [about the teachings] accordingly with discriminating knowledge are rare. Therefore, when I desisted from writing this extensive commentary, disheartened, rJe btsun Thin las pa’s insistent advice to compose the text was heavy on [my] heart. Therefore, the effort made here [in composing it], I think, could become meaningful. On the other hand, when [I, the Eighth Karmapa] later analyse words and meanings of this [commentary], [feelings arise as to] whether I have understood [the Abhidhmakośa] fully. Nevertheless, someone who possesses faith in the essence of Buddha dharma could comprehend the text in an appropriate manner even with little learning. May the virtue and glory blaze and become an ornament of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.

Editor’s Colophon to Volume II

Concluding words

These days, among the multitude of the Snowy Land [Tibet], there are quite few in numbers like a Udomvara flower who possess a vow and [who are] extensively learned. Even the extensively learned [scholars] who have certainty [about the teachings] accordingly with discriminating knowledge are rare. Therefore, when I desisted from writing this extensive commentary, disheartened, rJe btsun Thin las pa’s insistent advice to compose the text was heavy on [my] heart. Therefore, the effort made here [in composing it], I think, could become meaningful. On the other hand, when [I, the Eighth Karmapa] later analyse words and meanings of this [commentary], [feelings arise as to] whether I have understood [the Abhidhmakośa] fully. Nevertheless, someone who possesses faith in the essence of Buddha dharma could comprehend the text in an appropriate manner even with little learning. May the virtue and glory blaze and become an ornament of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
tshig don sogs gang thad nas khyad che ba lta bus mtshungs pa cher mi ’dug /lhag don skabs bzhi pa yan chod dang /de’i nang nas kyang skabs dang po gnyis pa skor ni gtan nas mi mtshungs pa lta bu red ’dug pa bcas legs cha gang che ma shes rung chad lhag dmigs bsal ngo shes rigs kha sab (kha gsab?) phran bu byas te spar gyi ma gzhi ni mtshur phu’i steng nas gzhi bzhag rgyu red song /spyir rje ’di nyid kyi bstan bcos rnam rtsom par mdzad pa’i dus dang por rang byung gi sgo nas dang /physi yang bcas mdzad rgyu sogs gang ’dra gnang ba yin rung dpe mang po rnam gcig pa lta bu’i mtshungs rgyu ni gtan nas med ’dug pa ltar ’dul ba mdo rtsa ba dang /sher phyin dang /’jug pa’i tīg chen sogs kyi bris ma dang /spar ma gnyis so sor ye mi mtshungs par ’dug kyang /spar gyi ma dpe ni spar ma thams cad la yid rton rgyu byas/ lhag par ’jug tīg gi spar ma dang /bris ma gnyis rtsom gzhi len lugs so sor lta bus mi mtshungs pa shin tu che mod/ bris ma ’di’ dang po’i [p. 817] skabs kyi rtsom gzhi thugs la gang dgongs ma bcos par gsungs pa lta bu’i shin tu ngo mtshar ba zhit tu ’dug pas ’gang chung du ma song ba dpyod ldan rnam kyis shes par bya ba’i gnas so zhes ched du sgron pa sogs dgos pa du ma’i slad du żhu dag mkhan pos żhar byung gi ’phros su bgyis pa’o.

When the blocks for Mi bskyod rdo rje’s mDzod ṭik were being prepared, an original text could not be obtained. Therefore, manuscripts were borrowed from dPal spungs and mTshur phu. However, they were not similar to any great degree in terms of general outline, meaning and words. Moreover, the fourth chapter onwards and the first and the second chapters in particular were utterly dissimilar and did not know [show] how great the merit is [of the manuscripts]. Nevertheless, those recognizable missing and excess [parts] were provided with minor additions. The print relied on was the mTshur phu edition.³

In general, the treatises of this Lord (the Eighth Karmapa) were composed (gnang ba) in different ways, for instance, spontaneously at first at the time of composition, or as a later redaction. Still (rung), among the many books, any coherence or similarity [regarding different editions] is virtually non-existent. For example, manuscript and printed editions of the Vinaya (Roots) Sūtra (Tib. ‘Dul ba mdo rtsa ba, Skt. Vinayasūtra), The Perfection of Wisdom (Tib. sher phyin, Skt. Abhisamayālaṃkāra) and the extensive commentary on the Introduction to the Middle Way (Tib. dbu ma ’jug pa, Skt. Madhyamakāvatāra) are also

² This spelling is more likely to be read as kha gsab (addition) since kha sab does not make any sense.
³ This implies that mTsur phu’s manuscript was more reliable.
entirely dissimilar. However, one should trust that the text-edition (ma dpe) used for the [first] print [was relied on] in all [later] prints.

Especially, this is illustrated in the major differences of the two traditions of manuscript and printed edition for extracting the subject matter of the commentary on the Introduction to the Middle Way.

However, this manuscript [of mTshur phu] seems to have retained without altering the intended original subject matter and [the manuscript] is extremely excellent. Therefore, the editor makes this supplementary remark for various reasons such as to request (sgron pa) [readers] that [this text] should not be taken for something trivial and so that (ches du) [its excellent nature] is noted (shes par bya ba) as a point (gnas) the intelligent people should understand.

Appendix B: Selected Passages About the Theory of Karmaphala

Killing

[p. 191] dang po srog gcod ni/ srog gcod pa'i bsam pa ni/ 'di gsdon snyoms pas bsams bzhin du 'du shes gzhon dang / ma nor bar ni gsdon pa'i gzhi/ rang las rgyud gzhon gsdon pa'o/ 'o na srog chags yin min dang / bsad bya de'am de min the tshom zos nas bsad na ci lta bu zhe na/ the tshom gyis ma yin par srog chags bsad bya 'di'i nges pa rnyed nas de la bsnun pa'i sbyor ba byed cing / sbyor ba des de srog 'dor 'dod kyi 'du shes yod na las kyi lam 'ong ste/ sems can dang bsad bya gang yin pa gdon mi za bar nges bzun du byas pa'i phyir/ phung po skad cig ma rnams rang gi ngang kho nas 'jig pa la/ 'di gzhon gyis ji ltar srog gcod pa'i dgag par byed ces 'dri ba'o/ de'i lan ni/ 'jig rten na grags pa'i srog chos can/ lus dang sems la brten nas 'jug pa'i rlung yin te/ de bcad pas kha na ma tho ba 'byung ba'i phyir/

Firstly, killing: A thought of killing is a deliberate thinking “[I will] kill this one” in an unmistaken perception and to kill one other than oneself. If this is the case, what [about] killing in doubt about the object of killing? [It] should not be in doubt, [and] engage in the act of striking [at it] after gaining certainty concerning the creature or the object of killing. And an actional path will arise if there is a thought or desire to terminate the other’s life since the creature or the object of killing is identified without a doubt. There is a question: How is [life] stopped by the killing by another since momentary aggregates disintegrate on their own? The response is this: It is because [the thing] known as ‘life’ in the world is wind whose function relies on the body and mind and the wrongdoing [of killing] is incurred through cutting that off.
Refutation of Nirgantha’s Thesis of Action Without Prior Motivation

[p. 192] gcer bu pa rnams na re/ ched du ma bsam par srog gcod kyang byed pa po srog gcod pa’i dngos gzhi’i ltung ba dang ldan te/ me de la reg par bya snyam pas ’tshig /mi bya snyam pas reg kyang mi ’tshig pa ma yin/ reg na reg par mi bya snyam kyang ’tshig pa dang ’dra barchos nyid dbang che ba’i phyir/ zhes zer re/ de ltar na nyon mongs kyi ched du gtad pa med pa’i gzhan gyi chung ma mtshong reg la’angchos can/ ’dod log gi nyes pa bskyed par thal/ ma bsam par srog bcad kyang ltung ba dngos [p. 193] gzhi ’gos pa’i phyir/ de ltar thal bas/ gcer bu pa de yang mi ’dod do/ gcer bu pa skra ’bal dang /yang na gcer bu skra ’bal ba na chos can/ chos ma yin pa dang ldan pa’i skabs srid par ’gyur te/ skra ’bal ba la sdang ba bskyed na bsod nams ’dod pa yang sdig pa dang ldan par ’gyur ba’i phyir/ rtags ’di ni gcer bu rang la log song ba yin la/ sangs rgyas pa la spyir sdang ba chos ma yin pa yin kyang /skra ’bal ba la khyad par du byas pa’i sdang ba chos min lhag par yin mi dgos so/ /yang dka’ thub drag po’i lung slob ma la dbogs pa na/ slob dpon la chos min dang ldan par thal/ slob ma la gnod ’dod kyi blo sngon du ma song yang sdug bsngal bskyed pa’i phyir/ mchan/ dka’ thub drag po’i lung slob ma la dbogs pa na dpon slob thams cad chos ma yin pa dang ldan par ’gyur te/ sdu gbsngal bskyed pa’i phyir/ gcer bu pa rnams gsud de ma zhu bas shi na yang chos can/ zas sbyin pa la srog gcod kyi ltung ba dngos ’byung bar thal/ gsod pa’i blo sngon du ma song yang ’chi bar bya ba chos min gyi rgyu yin pa’i phyir/ ma dang bu Ito na yod pa dag kyang chos can/ chos ma yin pa dang ldan par ’gyur te/ phan tshun sdu gbsngal gyi rgyu mtshan du gyur pa’i phyir/ me’i dpe des na’o’/bsad bya de yang chos can/ bsad pa’i kha na ma tho ba dang ldan par ’gyur te/ gsod pa de’i bya ba dang ’brel ba’i phyir/ mes rang gi rten sreg pa bzhin no/gzhan cig srog gcod du bcug pas gzhan pa de la srog gcod pa’i kha na ma tho ba ’ong yang /skul mkhan la chos can/ srog gcod pa’i kha na ma tho ba mi ’byung bar thal/ bdag gi me gcig mer phul bas pha rol tshig kyang rang mi tshig pa dang mtshungs pa’i phyir/ shing dang so phag dang smyig [p. 194] ma sogs kyang sdi gpa dang ldan par thal/ khyim brel pa na de dag gis srog chags ’chi bar byed pa’i phyir/ sman dpal byas pas nad pa la gnod pa’am shi ba na chos can/ sman pa la sdi gpa dang thal/ gnod pa dang gnod sens med par yang der ’gyur phyir/

The Nirghanthas say: Even if [beings are] killed without the motivation [to kill], the killer will possess the wrongdoing of the actual killing. Because it is not [that] fire burns [only] when
one thinks to touch it and does not burn [when one] does not think to touch it. Since nature is overpowering like a fire [that] burns when touched even if one thinks not to touch. If that is the case, then seeing and touching another’s wife without the deliberate aim on account of afflictive emotion would incur the wrongdoing of adultery because the [Nirganthas believe] actual wrongdoing of killing is stained [for the doer] even without a thought to kill. Since this consequence would follow, Nirganthas do not accept this. [To the] Nirganthas, a person with disheveled hair and granting spiritual instruction of intense austerity to students would incur non-dharma to all the teachers and the students since [they] cause suffering. (Interlinear annotation: Or Nirganthas [say]: When the hair is left disheveled, a moment could arise when it would possess non-dharma if anger is generated towards it. Therefore, there will be wrongdoing even in desiring merit. Response: This logic returns to you. Generally, anger is non-dharma to the Buddhists. However, anger attributable to the disheveled hair need not be exceedingly non-dharma. Furthermore, when instruction of intense austerity is imparted to a student, the teacher would possess non-dharma since suffering is produced in the student even though [the teacher] did not have prior thought to harm him [the student].

[To the] Nirganthas, even the giving of food would incur the actual wrongdoing of killing through death by belching and indigestion since [giving food] is the cause of non-dharma of death, even without the prior motivation. Even a mother and a child in the womb would possess non-dharma since [they] become the mutual cause of suffering, by [logic of] that analogy [of fire]. Even [a being] which is killed would possess wrongdoing of killing because it is connected with the action of killing like a fire burning its support [firewood]. There is a wrongdoing for killing in the person [who has] persuaded others to kill. However, [to the Nirganthas] the one who persuades [others to kill] would not incur the wrongdoing of killing since it is similar to one not getting burned although another is by making a fire.

Wood, brick and bamboo and so on should also possess a wrongdoing since these [wood and so on] kill creatures when a house collapse. Harm or death to a patient during medical examination would possess a wrongdoing to the physician since it becomes [wrongdoing] even without a motivation to harm and kill.

**Stealing**

[p. 194] ma byin len pa ni gzhan gyis bdag gir byas pa'i nor ched du bsams nas ma nor bar dngos su mthu ba'am/ lkog tu 'jab bus lha sbyin la rku'o snyam nas mchod sbyin la rku ba lta bu ma yin pa 'du shes ma 'khrul ba bdag gis byed cing len na'o/ /mchod rten la 'phrog pa ni/
chos skyong srung mas dbang du byas pa las blangs par ’gyur ro zhes zer ro/ /bdag po med pa'i gter brus na ni yul gyi bdag po la blangs pa'o/ /dge slong shi ba'i nor ‘phrog na gsol ba'i las byas pa yin na chos can/ mtshams kyi nang du gtogs pa'i dge ’dun las ’phrog pa yin te/ mtshams nang du gtogs pa'i dge ’dun gyis dbang bar ston pas bcas pa'i phyir/ yang mtshams gnyis kyi bar du shi na/ gang nye ba de dbang ba yin/ nye ring mnyam na mgo nang du bstan pa de dbang ba yin no/ /gsol ba ma byas pa zhig yin na ni sangs rgyas kyi slob ma thams cad las ma byin par blang pa yin no/

Stealing is to deliberately own and appropriate the wealth owned by others by force or stealth in an unmistaken, [that is to say in a manner which is] not stealing from Nor sbyin thinking to steal from Lha sbyin. To steal from a stupa is stealing from Buddha since [Buddha] has taken ownership of these [stūpas] during [his] parinirvāṇa. [It can be] established since if [the stūpa] is not taken into ownership [by Buddha] to benefit an offerer, the offering made to the stupa would be rendered fruitless since there would be no acceptance [of the offering]. Others say [that] stealing from a stupa would be stealing from the ownership of guardian spirits. Digging treasure of no owner would become stealing from the ruler of the land. If [property] is stolen from the dead monk [and] if the [monk] had performed ordination-related activities (gsol ba'i las), [it is] stolen from the spiritual community inside [the community demarcated by one] boundary. This is because the Teacher (Buddha) commanded that [the property] be owned by the spiritual community belonging inside the boundary.

Moreover, if the death [of the monk] happens in between the boundaries [of communities], [the property is] owned by [by the community] which is closer [to the monk’s body]. If the distance is equal [from the two boundaries where the monk’s body lies], [it is] owned by the [community] towards which the head [of the monk’s body] is pointing. If a [person] has not performed ordination-related activities, [the property] would be [considered] stolen from all the disciples of the Buddha.

**Adultery**

[p. 195] gsum pa log g.yem ni/ bgrod bya min pa nyal por bya bar ’gro bar ’dod pa yis log par g.yem pa la rnam bzhi ste/ gzhan gyi khyim thab gcig /ma dang bu mo gcig_pha ma dang ’brel ba'i bdun brgyud ishan phyogs gcig /rang gi chung ma la yang spyod yul ma yin pa la sogs pa gcig de bzhi po de log g.yem bzhi yin no/ /yang na gzhan dbang ba'i chung ma dang / ma dang / bu mo dang / pha ma'i ’brel pa tsho la gcig /rang gi khyim thab la yul min pa gnyis pa/ dus min pa gsum pa/ yan lag min pa bzhi ste log g.yem bzhi ni de'o/ /bgrod byar gyur pa
Thirdly, adultery is [classified into] four kinds relating to the desire to engage in sexual activity with a wrong woman: the spouse of another is one [category of wrong woman], mother and daughter form one [category], paternal and maternal [relatives] related by [up to] seven generations form one [category]. [Engaging in sexual activity] in a wrong place and so on even with one’s wife is [ another category]. These are the four [kinds of] adultery. Alternatively, the four [kinds of] adultery include these four: the first [one] is to have sexual activity] with a wife belonging to another, a mother, daughter, or related to parents; the second [one] is [to have sexual activity] even with one’s spouse in a wrong place; the third one is [to have sexual activity] at the wrong time; and the fourth is [to have sexual activity] in the wrong body parts.

Even [engaging in sexual activity in] the wrong body parts [such as] mouth or anus, or wrong place, [such as] in places which are lit, in a stupa or temple [even] with a women who

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4 The word gsod pa appears to be typographical error since it means ‘killing’ which does not make sense in this context.
is one’s wife, [or engaging in sexual activity] with a woman in the wrong time [such as] during pregnancy and nursing [since the sexual activity] shrinks the breast or its milk is not fresh (sos pa?) to the son, or going to the place of one observing a one-day vow (bsnyen gnas) [is considered adultery]. Some say that it is certain to incur adultery only if the wife has received the one-day vow with the consent of the husband.

‘Unmistakably’ is added to the [Characteristics of adultery]. If one proceeds near another’s wife thinking [her] to be one’s wife, [there] would not be the actional path. However, if [one] proceeds near the wife of mChod sbyin thinking [her] to be wife of lHa sbyin, some say [it should] complete the actional path since preparatory engagement is performed to another’s wife and the object [the woman] has been thoroughly used. Others say using sKya bsangs ma after desiring to use sNgo sangs ma would not complete adultery since preparatory engagement is done with others. [It is] similar to the non-occurrence of the actional path of killing for killing mChod sbyin after intending to kill lHa sbyin.

If asked from whom shall [one] commit adultery if one proceeds near an ordained nun, [it would become] adultery from the ruler of the land with regard to that nun. Because the land does not tolerate that activity [adultery]. [She] is not a woman to be [engaged in sexual activity] like one’s wife as she possesses a vow. Proceeding near a young girl [would incur adultery] from the one to whom [she] has been married to although [she] is not taken as a bride [to the groom’s house]. If [she] is not betrothed [to anyone], [one] would commit adultery with regard to [her] custodian and at least with regard to the king since he does not tolerate it.

**Lying**

[p. 196] rdzun gyi tshig ni don smra ba de la 'du shes g'zhan du bsgyur ba'i sgo nas smra ba'i tshig de'i don mngon par go ba na yin te/ ma go na tshig kyal par gyur pa'i phyir ro//rgya gar lta bu bod kyi brda la ma 'dris pa la bod kyis rdzun byas kyang rdzun du mi 'gyur bas/ go ba zhig dgos so//mu stegs kha cig_rang gi bsam pa la bdag yod par shes pa de 'du shes g'zhan du bsgyur nas bdag med smras pa de dngos po la bden kyang /'du shes g'zhan du bsgyur ba de rdzun du 'gro zer /la la na re 'du shes g'zhan du bsgyur kyang dngos po la bdag med bden par yod pas rdzun du mi 'gro/ rdzun du 'gro ba la dngos po la mi bden pa gcig dgos zer ro//yi ge mang po las tshig tu 'gyur na tshig snga phyi gang las lam du bzhag ce na/ ngag tha ma rig byed dang rig byed min pa dang bcas pa las lam du bzhag ste/ tshig dang yi ge snga ma rnams sbyor ba yin pa'i phyir/ yang na don gang las go ba'i ngag las lam du
A lying word words of a lie [become a lie] when a [person] speaks them after having different thought from the sense and [when they are] understood fully [by the listener]. If [the person] does not understand, the word becomes idle talk. Even if Tibetans lie to [persons] such as Indians [who are] not familiar with Tibetan terminology, [it will] not become a lie. Therefore, [a lie] has to be one that is understood. [Some] say [if] tīrthikas, who believe that the ‘self’ exists, speak that self does not exist after changing thought [in them], it would become a lie because of changing thought although [selflessness] is true in reality. Some say since selflessness is true to the reality of phenomena, [it] would not become a lie although the thought is changed. [They] say that [it] should be untrue to the reality of phenomena to become a lie. If asked which of the former or latter words become actional path since a word is formed by many letters, [response:] a revealing form of a final word along with a non-revealing form becomes the actional path. Because former words and letters are the preparatory [phase]. Or the actional path would be a word from which the meaning is understood since the actional path is established with regard to the [arousal] of understanding in the listener. Former letters are preparatory and latter [letters] along with non-revealing forms are [part of the] concluding phase.

**Divisive Speech**

[p. 204] phra ma gang zhe na/pha rol mdza' ba dbye ba'i phyir don go bar nus shing ma nor bar smras pa'i nyon mongs can gyi sms kyis bslang ba'i tshig ste/ de la phan pa'i phyir ma yin pa'o/

If asked what is divisive speech, [it is] a word that is motivated by afflictive mind and spoken in an understandable and unmistaken manner to divide others [who are] in a good relationship. It is not to benefit them.

**Harsh Speech**

[p. 204] tshig rtsub po ni sms nyon mongs pa can gyis tshig mi snyan pa don go zhing ma nor bar gang la smra 'dod kyi pha rol la smras pa'o/

Harsh speech is an unpleasant word spoken out of afflictive mind in an understandable and unmistaken manner with the desire to speak.
Idle Talk

All words generated by afflictive emotions are idle talk. Lies, divisive speech and harsh speech are also idle talk. However, [they are] discussed separately owing to the severe gravity of the wrongdoing.

The Second [part], a Thesis of Others

Others say that words generated by afflictive emotions other than the three [actions] of lying and so on [divisive speech and harsh speech] are idle talk. Instances of idle talk are: when a monk, who subsists on a wrong livelihood, lavishes praise on himself, expounding his own good qualities and the qualities of a learned person he has [although he does have them], for the sake of respect and fame; singing out of attachment; artists uttering idle talk to please others during a theatrical show; reciting a bad treatise after believing in its philosophy; bewailing; talk of distractions and so on; and whatever trifles spoken through the afflictive mind.

Covetousness

Others say that words generated by afflictive emotions other than the three [actions] of lying and so on [divisive speech and harsh speech] are idle talk. Instances of idle talk are: when a monk, who subsists on a wrong livelihood, lavishes praise on himself, expounding his own good qualities and the qualities of a learned person he has [although he does have them], for the sake of respect and fame; singing out of attachment; artists uttering idle talk to please others during a theatrical show; reciting a bad treatise after believing in its philosophy; bewailing; talk of distractions and so on; and whatever trifles spoken through the afflictive mind.
The actional path of covetousness is a perversion nurturing a wish to own others’ wealth after having [grown] attached to it in a wrong manner and desiring to own it through force or theft. Others say [that] all [kinds of] craving of the Desire Realm are covetousness because, with regard to the orientation towards desired things (’dod pa la ’dun pa) in the context of five obscurations (sgrib pa lnga), the sutra says:

Having done [wholesome deeds] many times with a mind free of covetousness after abandoning covetousness in the world;\(^5\) having abandoned ill-will, dullness, drowsiness, mental agitation, and transcending scepticism through abandoning doubt, it would become free of hesitation in the wholesome dharmas. Having abandoned five obscurations and so on.

Others say Cakravartins and Utturukurus would also have actional path of covetousness since all cravings of the Desire Realm are covetousness. [This] cannot be accepted since all cravings of Desire Realms are not covetousness. Even if [they are] covetousness, [they are] not an actional path. To be brief, the actional path of unwholesome deeds does not cover all unwholesome deeds. All [kinds of] covetousness are not an actional path. An actional path [of covetousness] is established through the attachment to other’s wealth

**Harmful Intent**

[p. 206] gnod sens sens can la zhe sdang ba pha rol la gnod pa'i rnam par zhugs pa'o//

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\(^5\) Here the aspiration to the Desire Realm (’dod pa la ’dun pa), which is among the five obscurations, is discussed as covetousness.
Harmful intent is an aversion [generated] towards animated beings that adopts the aspect of harming others.

**Wrong View**

[p. 206] las dge ba dang mi dge ba med par lta ba ni rgyu la skur pa 'debs pa'i log lta yin te/ de yang mdo las/ sbyin pa med do/ mchod sbyin med do/ /sbyin sreg med do/ /legs par spyad pa med do/ /nyes par spyad pa med do/ /legs nyes spyad pa'i las dag gi 'bras bu rnam par smin pa med do/ /jig rten 'di med do/ /jig rten pha rol med do/ /ma med do/ /pha med do/ /sems can brdzus te skye ba med do/ /jig rten na dgra bcam pa med do bya bas rgyu las dang / 'bras bu dang 'phags pa la skur pa 'dabs ('debs?) pa gsum gsungs te/ de la sbyin pa med do zhes [p. 207] pa nas nyes par spyad pa med do zhes pa'i bar dang / ma med do pha med do zhes pa rnam ni rgyu la skur pa 'debs pa yin cing / legs nyes spyad pa'i las kyi 'bras bu rnam smin med do zhes pa nas als can brdzus te skye ba med do zhes pa'i bar ni 'bras bu la skur pa 'debs pa yin la/ 'jig rten na dgra bcam pa med do zhes pa ni 'phags pa la skur pa 'debs pa yin pas gsum char log lta yin mod kyi/ tshigs su bcad par ni mtshon pa'i don du dang po tsam zhis bstan par zad do/

A nihilistic view towards wholesome and unwholesome action is a wrong view that denies cause. It is [mentioned] in the sutra, ‘Generosity, sacrifice, fire-offering rites, good actions, bad actions do not exist. Actions of bad and good do not have fruition of the result. The present life, afterlife, mother, father, spontaneous birth [do not exist]. An arhat does not exist in the world.’ Therefore, three denials of causal action, result and arhat are taught. With respect to that, denial of generosity up to denial of bad action and denial of the existence of father and mother are denial of cause. Denial of the existence of the result of good actions up to denial of the existence of spontaneous birth of sentient beings is the denial of result. Denial of the existence of an arhat in the world is the denial of the existence of exalted beings.

Although all the three are wrong views, only the first one is shown to represent [all three].

**Two Classifications of Motivation**

[p. 47] kun slong gnyis las dang po rab tu 'jug byed yin te/ rgyu yang yin kun nas slong ba yang yin cing 'phen par byed pa yin pa'i phyir/ gnyis pa ni de'i rjes su 'jug byed yin te/ bya ba'i dus su mtshun par 'jug pa'i phyir/ dus kyi kun slong med na rgyu'i kun slong gis 'phangs su zin kyang / bya ba mtshan thug rnam par rig byed du mi 'gyur te/ dper na 'ga' zhis grong du
From the two classifications of motivation, the first one is the prime mover (Tib. rab tu 'jug byed, Skt. pravartaka) since it is a cause, a motivation and also a propeller [of action]. The second one is the subsequent mover (Tib. rjes su 'jug byed, Skt. anuvādaka) since it engages concurrently during the time of action. If there is no concurrent motivation (Tib. dus kyi kun slong, Skt. tatkṣaṇasamutthāna), the action will not become revealing [action] even if it is propelled by the causal motivation (Tib. rgyu'i kun slong, Skt. hetusamutthāna.) since it is similar to someone, for instance, who embarks after thinking to go to a town but dies on the way and fails to reach the town.

If [it is asked] that if revealing actional path, like death, is not completed without concurrent motivation, then a non-returner (Tib. phyir mi 'ong, Skt. anāgāmin) novice, who enters absorption of cessation (Tib. 'gog pa'i snyoms 'jug, Skt. nirodhasamāpatti) after requesting for the ordination of monk’s vow to the assembly of monks, would not obtain the vow at the end of utterances (las brjod pa) [while receiving vow]. [I respond] that is a different system. For an [entity] without mind, [a vow] is obtained even without concurrent motivation. The [entity] which has mind does not obtain the [vow] without a concurrent motivation. Therefore, for the [entity] with mind, the complete presence of revealing [action] of concurrent motivation is a force that enables the vow to emerge.
There exists this kind of convention for this. If the [vow] is generated by a causal motivation that is concomitant with a lesser renunciation and by a concurrent motivation that is concomitant with greater renunciation, during the completion of actional path of vow, the vow will be lesser while the revealing [action] will be greater. And the vow generated by causal motivation of greater renunciation [but with] the neutral and afflictive mind of concurrent motivation is known as greater vow yet lesser revealing [action]. In this manner it should be categorized as lesser, middling and greater.

This also illustrates non-vow. In that instance [of lesser renunciation], an *arhat* will have only lesser pratimoksa vow and if [he] enters meditation of absorption during the time of the revealing [action], then it is possible to have neither lesser nor greater revealing [action].

**Tetralemma on Prime Mover and Subsequent Mover**

**Solely Prime Mover**

[p. 48] mthong ba'i spang bya'i rnam shes ni chos can/ rnam par rig byed rjes su 'jug byed kho na yin te/ rgyu'i kun slong rtog dpyod dag gi yang gzhir gyur pa'i kun slong yin pa'i phyir/ rjes su 'jug byed kha phyir lta'i dus na tshogs drug nyag phreng du skye bas/ kha nang lta'i sngar gyi de med pa'i phyir/ rjes su 'jug byed ni ma yin no/ yin na nyes pa gzhan yang yod de/ mthong bas spang bar bya ba de yang rjes su 'jug byed yin na chos can/ mthong spang gi sens des kun nas slong ba'i lus ngag gi rnam par rig byed kyi gzugs kyang mthong spang du thal/ ji ltar sgom spang gi sens kyis kun nas slong ba'i lus ngag gi las sgom spang yin pa dang mtshungs pa'i phyir/ de la 'dod do snyam na/ chos mngon pa la gnod par 'gyur te/ nyon mongs can min mthong spang min/ gzugs min ces gsungs pa dang 'gal ba'i phyir/ gzugs ni chos can/ mthong spang ma yin te/ 'jig lta bzhin rig pa mthong lam dang mi 'gal ba'i phyir/ bden pa mthong ba la yang gzugs yod pas so/

A consciousness to be abandoned by the path of seeing is solely a prime mover [that generates] revealing [action] since it is a motivation [that servers as a] ground for causal motivation [which is essentially] a general and detailed thought (*rtog dpyod*). During the subsequent mover [that] is turned outward, six consciousnesses arise in chain and an earlier one [prime mover] that is turned inward does not exist. Therefore, it is not a subsequent mover.

If an object of abandonment on the path of seeing (*mthong spang*) is a subsequent mover, then it would logically follow that the revealing form of bodily and verbal actions
triggered by mind that is an object of abandonment on the path of seeing should also be an object of abandonment on the path of seeing because it is similar to the bodily and verbal actions generated by the mind to be abandoned on the path of meditation (sgom spang gi sems) which are an object of abandonment on the path of meditation (sgom spang). If this is considered to be acceptable, it would harm Abhidharma since it contradicts that which says “non-afflictive is not an abandonment on the path of seeing and [it is] not form”. Form is not an object of abandonment on the path of seeing since form does not contradict with the path of seeing as does wrong view of personality (Tib. 'jig lta, Skt. satkāyadrṣṭi). Form exists even in [those who] see the truth.

**Both prime Mover and Subsequent Mover**

[p. 50] yid kyi rnam par shes pa sgom pas spang bya ni/ rab tu 'jug byed dang rjes su 'jug byed gnyis ka yin te/ kha nang dang phyi rol du bltas nas 'jug pa'i phyir/

A mental consciousness to be abandoned by meditation (sgom spang) is both a prime mover and a subsequent mover since [they] engage [in mental process both] turning inward and outward.

**3. Solely Subsequent Mover**

sgo lnga'i rnam par shes pa ni rjes su 'jug byed kho na yin te/_rnam par mi rtog pa'i phyir/

Five sense consciousnesses are solely a subsequent mover since [they are] non-conceptual.

**4. Neither Both**

zag pa med [p. 51] pa'i yid kyi rnam shes ni rab tu 'jug byed dang rjes su 'jug byed gnyis ka ma yin te/ mnyam par bzhag pa'i phyir dang / 'jug pa 'gal ba'i phyir/

An uncontaminated mental consciousness is neither [of them] since it remains in meditative equipoise (mnyam bzhag), turns inward and opposed to engagement [with mental process].

**Standard of Completing an Actual Actional Path (las lam dngos)**

[p. 189] gang gis pha rol po 'chi nges su byas nas de dang snga ba dang / de dang mgo mnyam du gsod byed shi ba na chos can/ las lam dngos med de/ sbyor ba byas la 'bras bu yang yongs su rdzogs kyang srog gsod kyi kha na ma tho bas reg par mi 'gyur ba bbla mchis
For whoever dies after ensuring another’s death and dies [himself] before or simultaneously to that [victim] there is no actual actional path of killing. Because it is said ‘[When asked] is there a non-commission of killing even after engaging [in killing] and completing fully the killing? the [Buddha] Commanded, yes this is so. [It is] like a death of a killer before or simultaneously [with the victim].’ Without the preparatory engagement, [it is] implied there is no concluding phase since the concluding phase is preceded by the preparatory engagement. There is no wrongdoing of killing for a killer while the [victim] to be killed is alive since the victim has not been killed. The death of a killer without the death of a victim also does not incur the wrongdoing [of killing] since the body that initiated the preparatory engagement has ceased and the [new] body of the dead obtained is one which is a different body [that is of] a different class and unequal status [belonging to a being] who is not the initiator [of the killing].

In this case if it is properly analysed, one may think if the person (gang zag) who performs wholesome or unwholesome action is posited as a continuum of being (rgyun), it is possible for the agent of the preparatory engagement to incur the actional path [even in the case of]
death of a [agent] before or together with the victim and death of the victim later since the continuum of the person has not ceased [even after the death]. Well, the person is simply an imputed entity attributed to the aggregates (*phung po*) and an actional path is not incurred in connection to the bodily aggregate of form [which is a] basis of imputation [for the person] since the actual death of the victim does not occur during the death or before and together with [the victim]. Moreover, the actual actional path does not occur in the subsequent [different] body of the killer since [that body] had not engaged in the preparatory actions [of killing] the victim [whose killer] died before or together with [it]. If it is analysed in this manner, it is possible that the actual actional path of unwholesome bodily action would not occur. However, according to Mahāyāna, mind is principal [dimension] in all [kinds of] karmas. Therefore, it is certain to produce a bad result for the actual action [of killing].

**Three Phases: Preparatory Phase, Actual Action and Concluding Phase**

sbyor dngos mjug rang ji tsam yin snyam na/ phyugs gsod par 'dod la khri sog's las ldang / rin len/ 'gro bar byed/ tsho mi tsho blta ba'i phyir nom par byed/ [p. 180] phyugs nyo bar byed/ khrid par byed/ lcag gis brabs par byed/ khyim du 'jug par byed/ gnon par byed/ mtshon len/ mtshon lan gcig gam gnyis 'debs pa nas srog mi gcod pa'i bar du sbyar (sbyor?) ba'o/ /bsnun pas srog gcod pa de'i tshe rig byed dang de'i skad cig ma'i rig byed ma yin pa ni las lam dngos yin no/ /bsad pa'i sbyor ba mtshon brgyab kyang ma shi ba las kyi lam dngos med gsod sms kyi sbyor ba ma byas par gsod sms tsam gyis shi ba yang las kyi lam dngos med/ 'o na sbyor ba dang 'bras bu yongs su rdzogs pa'i rgyu gnyis kyi chos can/ srog gcod kyi kha na ma tho bas reg ste/ sbyor ba byas pa'ang de'i 'bras bu rdzogs nas srog chad pa'i phyir ro/ /de phyin gyi rig min gyi skad cig ma rnams kyang mjug yin la/ phyugs de'i pags pa bshu ba'am bkru bshal byed/ 'tshong / 'tshed/ za/ tshon po zhig byung / rdzud pa zhig byung zer nas rjes su sgrog pa de srid kyi rig byed kyi skad cig kyang mjug yin no/ /de bzhin du gzhan drug la sbyar ba ni/ dper na kha cig gzhan gyi nor rku bar 'dod la/ khri las ldang bar byed/ mtshon cha len par byed/ gzhan gyi khyim du 'gro bar byed/ gnyid log gam 'on te ma log ces nyan par byed/ gzhan gyi nor la nom par byed nas ji srid gnas nas ma dpags pa (spags pa?)⁶ de srid du sbyor ba yin no/ / skad cig ma gang la gnas nas spog par byed pa de'i tshe rig byed dang de'i skad cig gi rnam par rig byed ma yin pa gang yin pa de ni las kyi lam dngos yin no/ /rgyu gnyis kyi ma byin par len pa'i kha na ma tho ba la reg par 'gyur te/ sbyor ba dang 'bras

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⁶ *spags pa* appears to be correct spelling since it is perfect tense of *spog pa* which means to remove.
If [it is] wondered what are preparatory, actual and concluding phases, [I say that] rising from a seat and so on after desiring to kill cattle, collecting the money to pay for it, proceeding, holding it to see whether it is alive or not, buying the cattle, taking [it] along, whipping it with a lash, taking it home, pushing [it] down, taking the weapon, and up to striking it [with the weapon] once and twice until it is dead, is the preparatory phase (sbyor). The revealing and non-revealing moment of death by striking is the actual actional path. Even the striking, the preparatory engagement of killing, that does not lead to the death does not incur the actual actional path. Even the death occurring merely through the motivation to kill without the preparatory engagement of the motivation to kill does not incur an actual actional path.

Well then, the two causes of actual engagement and the full completion of the goal [of killing] incur the wrongdoing of killing since the life [of the victim] ceases by executing the engagement and completing its goal [of killing]. Non-revealing moments thereafter are the concluding phase. Skinning that cow and washing, sale, cooking, and consumption up to the revealing moments of stating that [the meat] has been fat or thin are the concluding phase. Likewise, application to the other six [actional paths]: For instance, someone rising from a seat after desiring to steal other’s wealth, taking a weapon, proceeding to another’s house, listening to see whether [owners] are asleep or not, holding another’s wealth till the wealth is not removed from [its] location is the preparatory phase. Revealing and non-revealing moments of removing it from the location is the actual actional path, the two causes of preparatory engagement and the full completion of the goal [of stealing] incur the wrongdoing of stealing. Non-revealing moments thereafter are the concluding phase. Likewise, apply [it] to other five [actional paths].