

The Homology of Emotionality and Rationality

(Part I*)

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Abstract

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The well-known dichotomy between emotionality and rationality can be traced back to Plato who noticed two ground principles – the one was the rational which he called logos and deemed male, and the other emotional and instinctual called eros, and deemed female. But failing to note an important distinction, he quite arbitrarily claimed the male to be good and the female evil. This misconception, reflecting his personal as well as the ancient Greeks' general attitude of misogyny, was to have disastrous consequences for the evolving social, cultural and political institutions that became increasingly hostile and contemptuous of the female.

From the Buddhist point of view, both emotionality and rationality are obscurations of the individual – obscurations of the omnipresent experiencer-qua-practitioner's original luminous being. Rationality obscures the lumen naturale by attempting to deal with the complex and the complicated nature of reality through introducing a separation between subject and object, dealing with both egologically and egocentrically, in the assumption that the model of the world so created is absolutely valid; what is not covered by the assumption is of no relevance. Emotionality obscures the lumen naturale by responding to the demands of the rational by either aiding or curtailing it. Both rationality and emotionality are biological phenomena: rationality becomes an

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intellectual obscuration and emotionality a kind of instinctual obscuration, and both are felt to be poisoning the whole atmosphere.

Tibetan rdzogs-chen 'ultimate completeness' thinking starts from the idea of Being, which – as Martin Heidegger has shown – is not something, and is consequently not quantifiable. It views all objects of experience from the vantage point of the integral unity of wholeness that, in its lighting-up, unfolds its inner dynamic that operates spontaneously as a holo-movement, displaying itself and enhancing its performance and beauty.

Basing himself on the sources pertaining to the emergence of rdzogs-chen thought, and elaborating the ideas of Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Arisingha (the Daoist Hva-shang Mahayana), the scholar-poet kLong-chen rab-byams-pa (1308–64) has given a most lucid interpretation of the homology of rationality and emotionality.

Homology is “*the same organ in different animals under every variety of form and function.*”

— Richard Owen (1843)

The well-known and customary dichotomy between emotionality and rationality can be traced back to Plato (428–347 BCE) who noted the presence of two ground principles in the nature of things. The one was the rational and formal principle that he called *logos* and deemed to be male, the other was the emotional and instinctual principle that he called *eros* and deemed to be female. But failing to note an important distinction, he quite arbitrarily branded the male as good and the female as evil. This arbitrary judgment, if not to say, misconception, reflecting his personal as well as the ancient Greeks' general attitude of misogyny, was to have disastrous consequences for the then evolving Western socio-cultural-political institutions—which in the wake of this thinking and under the impact of the equally male-oriented Judeo-Christian ideology, became increasingly hostile to and contemptuous of women. This rationalist prejudice is still strong today, especially among rabid fundamentalists.

By contrast, from the Buddhist point of view, rather than being irreconcilable contrasts, ‘emotionality’ and ‘rationality’ are obscurations (Skt. *āvaraṇa*, Tib. *sgrib*) of the individual's original luminous being—which here is the omnipresent experiencer-*qua*-practitioner. Rationality obscures this *lumen naturale* by attempting to deal with the complex and complicated nature of reality (whatever that may mean) by introducing a separation between subject and object. It further obscures by imposing on the allegedly ‘objective’ world the ‘subjective,’ egologically and egocentrically circumscribed speculations that reflect the metaphysical assumptions that the

model of the world so created is absolutely valid, and that what is not represented in or by it is of little or no relevance. ‘Emotionality’ obscures this *lumen naturale* by responding instinctively to the demands of the rational mind by either aiding or curtailing its ideas. Both rationality and emotionality are biological phenomena (pertaining to a live organism) and differ from each other in the sense that rationality as a kind of intellectual obscuration (Skt. *jñeyāvaraṇa*, Tib. *shes-grib*) refers to one aspect of human activity, while emotionality as a kind of instinctual obscuration (Skt. *kleśāvaraṇa*, Tib. *nyon-sgrib*) refers to the quality (or lack of quality) in human activity. In its failure to arrive at an understanding of what concerns a human individual most, the meaning of his life, rationality becomes indistinguishable from emotionality sensed as an abysmal darkness and downright dullness.

A brief exegesis of the key terms in this context may substantiate this statement. The Sanskrit word *avidyā* (usually mistranslated as ‘ignorance’) intimates, as its Tibetan translation by *ma-rig-pa* ‘not-quite (*ma*) an optimal excitability/excitation (*rig-pa*)’ makes clear, a diminished excitability, not a total absence, and as such is equivalent in meaning to the Sanskrit word *moha* (Tib. *gti-mug*) meaning ‘delusion,’ ‘a groping in the dark,’ as well as ‘intellectual stagnation.’ This word often occurs in the triad, i.e., unitrinity, of *gti-mug ma-rig mun-pa* ‘delusion ↔ diminished excitability ↔ darkness.’

In the West, from Plato’s misconception onward, emotionality and the welter of discrete emotions have been viewed as agitating forces that disrupt the static image of the cosmos¹ as postulated by reason, unwilling to allow the intrusion of such sensibilities as friendliness (Skt. *maitri* from *mitra* ‘friend,’ Tib. *byams-pa* ‘kindness’) and regard for others (Skt. *karuṇā*, Tib. *snying-rje*).² By contrast, Buddhist thinkers distinguished between emotions as obscuring forces that quite literally ‘poison’ (Skt. *ativiṣa*, Tib. *dug*) and ‘pollute’ (Skt. *kleśa*, Tib. *nyon-mongs*) the relationship between individuals, as well as ‘catalysts’ (Skt. *apramāṇa*, Tib. *tshad-med*) such as friendliness/kindness and regard for others in their own right, whose efficacy is quite immeasurable. As we may readily observe, a friendly word or a helpful deed can do wonders. Because of this important distinction and differentiation I shall henceforward use the term ‘emotion-pollutants’ instead of the rather imprecise term ‘emotions.’³

Tibetan rDzogs-chen thinking that—as its name ‘Ultimate Completeness’ or ‘Completeness *par excellence*’ implies—starts from the idea of ‘Being’ (*gzhi*), the ground and reason for there being ‘beings’ (which ‘Being,’ as Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) has shown, is not some thing and consequently not even *a* thing), views all aspects of experience from the vantage point of the integral unity of wholeness. This wholeness, being inherently ‘intelligent’ in the sense of an ever-present excitability (*rig-pa*), unfolds or lights-up (*snang*) through its inner dynamic (*rtsal*) that operates

spontaneously (*lhun-grub*), ‘of its own accord’ (from late Latin *spontaneous*, from Latin *sponte*, ‘voluntary’). In other words, Being’s lighting-up, a ‘holomovement,’ occurs spontaneously because of its inner dynamic (*rtsal*) that presents itself (‘presences’) as a unitrinity involving itself and its amusing (itself with its displaying itself) (*rol-pa*) and its beautifying (its whole performance) (*rgyan*). Graphically this whole pattern can be presented in the following diagram:

gzhi ↔ *gzhi-snang* (‘↔’ signifies Being as a holomovement)
 ◇ (‘◇’ signifies the holomovement’s spontaneity)
lhun-grub = *rtsal* (‘=’ signifies the spontaneity’s qualification
 as dynamic)
rol-pa ↔ *rgyan* (‘↔’ signifies mutual inclusion)

Each facet in this complexity has fascinated rDzogs-chen thinkers because this complexity involves, that is to say, affects the ubiquitous experiencers in their attempt to fathom themselves. Basing himself on older sources, the scholar and poet Klong-chen-rab-‘byams-pa (1308-1364), the foremost rDzogs-chen representative, says the following about the holomovement (*gzhi-snang*) and what its inner dynamic (*rtsal*) implies:⁴

The emergence of the holomovement from (the ground-*qua*-ground)
 Is like the emergence of light out of a crystal.
 In the emergence of the holomovement from out of the vibrancy of
 the ground-*qua*-ground
 This ground has a triple inner dynamic:
 The inner dynamic of (this ground’s) [nothingness-]*Wesen* (*ngo-bo*)
 is an opening for things to be.
 In this very vibrancy of the conceptless sky-space-*spatium*
 (Its) eigenbeing’s (*rang-bzhin*) inner dynamic is a pentad of hues
 That emerges as a differentiation of the (five) pristine awareness
 modes’ (*Urwissen*) outward-directed glow.
 (This ground’s) suprasensual concern’s (*thugs-rje*) inner dynamic is a
 mere ‘intelligence’⁵ (that)
 Emerging in the manner of being able to make distinctions
 concerning (one’s) situation (in life)
 Is the ground and reason for (one’s) becoming free⁶ (*grol*) and for
 (one’s) going astray (into mistaken identifications) (*’khrul*),
 (and as such Being’s)
 Indeterminate spontaneity.

No less intriguing is the exegesis of *rol-pa*, corresponding to the Sanskrit

words *līlā* and *lalita*, both of which mean a ‘fascinating play whose outstanding feature is rhythmic motion.’ In highly poetic language Klongchen-rab-‘byams-pa has this to say:⁷

In brief, as whatever form, be this *samsāra* or *nirvāṇa*, the *rol-pa*’s
inner dynamic has emerged
From spontaneity’s vast bed, the dimension of (meanings stored or in
statu nascendi),
From their very emergence onward *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* have not
been experienced as particular existents.
Whatever kinds of dreams have emerged out of sleep’s inner dynamic
They actually⁸ are (Being’s) No/nothing (*med*), one’s own
excitability’s bed of happiness,⁹
The overarching rafter in the ultimate vastness that is spontaneity’s
self-sameness.

In his auto-commentary, the *Lung-gi gter-mdzod*, he elaborates this stanza as follows:¹⁰

Although whatever items such as *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, the visible world of ours and its probabilistic interpretation, and so on, may emerge from out of the excitability’s vibrancy, apart from merely emerging by themselves as the *rol-pa*’s ceaseless flux of ideas at spontaneity’s gate, they actually can be shown to have no validity whatsoever (of their own), (which is to say that) whatever pleasant or nightmarish dream images may emerge, they are not (something other) becoming inferior to one’s own excitability sleeping in its bed.

Lastly, in his *Theg-mchog mdzod*, he emphasizes the *rol-pa*’s potency by resorting to the use of the following impressive analogies:¹¹

Although in (Being’s meaning-rich) field no impurity/opacity exists, it is when an outward-directed stirring occurs that out of (Being’s) holomovement incomprehensively anything whatsoever may emerge. That is to say, out of the *rol-pa* of the low-level excitability (*ma-rig-pa*) there emerges mentation (*sems*) [as one’s ontic foundation], out of mentation’s ornamentation (*rgyan*) [of itself] there emerges the egological mind (*vid*), out of the egological mind there emerge the emotion-pollutants (*nyon-mongs*). In this context, *rol-pa* is a mere outward-directed glow that has originated from what is like a potency, an inner dynamic, or a ray of light. It’s like a shoot coming out of a seed and a face’s shape emerging as its simulacrum in a mirror.

While the third topic, *rgyan*, in spontaneity's unitrinity of *rtsal*, *rol-pa*, *rgyan*, is rather tersely referred to by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa in his *Theg-mchog mdzod* in the statement, "*rgyan* means the emergence as the (*rol-pa*'s) maturation target, (in size) a mere fraction of a grain, like a flower from its seed or the carving on a seal."¹² This is impressively described by g.Yung-ston-rdo-rje dpal-bzang (1284-1365) in two passages of his *dPalgSang-ba-snying-po'i rgyud-don gsal-byed me-long*. The one laconically states, "The meaning of *rgyan* is to beautify."¹³

The other passage highlights the difference between a mundane-secular and a trans-worldly-intuitive perspective in a triadic pattern. It has this to say:¹⁴

- (1) A secular person's¹⁵ *rgyan* is such that one is satiated by looking at it, the *rgyan* of the *Urwissen*'s lighting-up by itself is such that one is not satiated by looking at it,
- (2) A secular person's *rgyan* is such that none of it makes one look for more, the *rgyan* of the *Urwissen*'s lighting-up by itself is such that it makes one look for more,
- (3) A secular person's *rgyan* is such that one (ornament) eclipses the other, the *rgyan* of the *Urwissen*'s lighting-up by itself does not only not eclipse the other, but, by making it more radiant, is something very special.

It is obvious that what for all practical purposes appears as the difference between an 'unexcited state' (*ma-rig-pa*) and an 'excited state' (*rig-pa*), with all of their consequences, has its source in Being's spontaneity (*lhun-grub*) that as Being's very lighting-up (*snang-ba*) in what is otherwise called Being's holomovement (*gzhi-snang*) is marked by fluctuations of intensity. This is clearly stated in the *Rig-pa rang-shar*, dating back to Vimalamitra, a contemporary of Padmasambhava (8th century CE). There we read:¹⁶

In the lighting-up of (Being's) superdiaphanous symbolic pregnancy there exists neither (an individual's) low-level excitability (*ma-rig-pa*) nor (an individual's) psychic background (*sems*) nor even (an individual's) egological mind (*vid*). It is in (Being's) spontaneity's inner dynamic (*lhun-grub-kyi rtsal*) that a low-level excitability originates, that from this low-level excitability (an individual's) psychic background originates, that from the psychic background's ornamenting (itself) (*rgyan*) the egological mind [or 'subject'] originates. From the egological mind's ('objective') domain the five poisons originate. From the five poisons the sixteen emotions-pollutants (*nyon-mongs*) originate. From these sixteen twenty-five

(emotions-pollutants) originate. From them there originate fifty-one (emotions-pollutants), and from them the eighty thousand emotions-pollutants originate.

Apart from displaying the Indian fondness for numbers, this passage is unique in differentiating between ‘poisons’ (*dug*) and ‘emotions-pollutants’ (*nyon-mongs*) of which the individual’s low-level excitability is the leading one. As such it is co-present with the individual’s psychic background constituted by the individual’s sediments of experiences in the light (or dark) of which he makes fresh experiences. In other words, he (that is us) carries the past with him. This presence of the past is the low-level excitability (*ma-rig-pa*) that introduces a directedness or vector that intimates the direction into which the individual is going to move and set up a new level of structuration. This new level is the ‘old’ low-level excitability as a proto-perspective in which a multiplicity of possible perspectival aspects is interwoven in the manner of an ongoing process. The complexity of these aspects is intimated in the *Rig-pa rang-shar* by six salient features, which in the words of Michael S. Schneider, are “... both the sum *and* product of it divisors, the first three terms (1, 2, and 3). Thus, to the ancients, six represented the parents (1 and 2) of all numbers with their firstborn (3), thus making a complete whole...” and “...in fact, the divisors of six (1, 2, and 3) compose the *only* set of three integers wherein each number divides the sum of the other two.”¹⁷

The *Rig-pa rang-shar* lists the six facets of an individual’s low-level excitability, on a par with his psychic background, as follows:¹⁸

Psychic background (*sems*) means that it is the ground and reason for each and every sediment of experience (*bag-chags*) to persist, and (since it is difficult to make them stop), they make (the whole’s) lighting-up by itself diminish (in luminosity). Since (this psychic background) abides together with (the whole-*qua*-individual’s) low-level excitability, this low-level excitability, too, is as follows:

- (1) (Its) basis (*rtsa-ba*) is the low-level excitability (that constitutes the individual’s) psychic background (*sems*);
- (2) (Its) errancy mode (*'khrul-pa*) is the low-level excitability’s objectification domain (*yul*);
- (3) The ground and reason for this errancy mode (*'khrul-gzhi*) is Being-*qua*-being’s low-level excitability (*gzhi'i ma-rig-pa*);
- (4) (Its) egocentric apprehending (*'dzin-pa*) is the dichotomizing low-level excitability (*rtog-pa'i ma-rig-pa*);
- (5) (Its) improvement (attempt) (*bcos-pa*) is the (individual’s)

going (his) way low-level excitability (*lam-gyi ma-rig-pa*), and (6) (Its) not-quite-perceptive (feature) (*ma-shes-pa*)¹⁹ is the (individual's) delusion low-level excitability (*rmongs-pa'i ma-rig-pa*).

As such the six kinds of a low-level excitability have originated, (the upshot of which is) that one does not see one's own luminescence.

Hidden in this compact passage is the basic idea of Buddhism as being a three-phase process, couched in static terms descriptive of a ground or starting point (*gzhi*), a way (*lam*), and a goal (*'bras-bu*). Thus, the topics (2) and (4) are related to each other in the sense that wherever there is an 'objective' dimension, there also is a 'subjective' apprehending, a grasping, of it. This is the familiar subject-object dichotomy. Similarly, the topics (3) and (5) are related to each other in the sense that wherever there is a 'ground' or 'starting point,' there also is a 'way,' a 'going.' The topics (1) and (6) are related to each other in the sense that what is called the 'psychic background' with the emphasis on its ground (*gzhi*) character, a dynamic low-level excitability, climaxes in what is called the 'goal' (*'bras-bu*) and described as 'delusion.' This three-phase process can be said to be the low-level excitability's self-intensification.

Concentrating on the low-level excitability's delusional character is conspicuous in the majority of humankind, which leads Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa to specify each of its six nuances as follows:²⁰

- (1) The primal supraconscious ecstatic intensity, by not recognizing itself as what it is, becomes deluded by its mistaken identification of itself as something other,
- (2) The delusion that does not recognize (the fact that) the phenomenal's 'stuff'/*Wesen* (*ngo-bo*) has no eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*),
- (3) The delusion that is like the errancy mode mistaking a cairn for an individual due to the modifiers of the causal momentum (in the errancy mode),
- (4) The delusion that is, although concerning the supraconscious ecstatic intensity's 'stuff'/*Wesen* that has nothing to do with a Self, by having become deluded of its visibly felt presence as a Self and saying of it "this is the Self's (my) home,"²¹
- (5) The delusion that does not hand over the fraud that poses as if it were a path (*lam-ltar*) and (this fraud's) antidote, once they have turned into poison, (to the experience of how it feels if everything) drops off (*gro!*),²² (and)
- (6) The delusion of having to roam about in *samsāra* forever due

to (one's) not recognizing one's existential reality (*don*) to be (Being's) ownmost brilliance.

The *Rig-pa rang-shar* continues detailing an individual's psychic background (*sems*) as having originated from Being's low-level excitability/excitation (*ma-rig-pa*) in the sense of the one being already and always co-present, if not to say, identical with the other. Its author/compiler tells us in suggestive metaphors:²³

- (1) Gathering all sorts of things – a water-like psychic background,
 - (2) An unconcern for cleanliness or dirtiness – a pig-like psychic background,
 - (3) Impetuosity – a tiger-like psychic background,
 - (4) Gentleness – a feather-like psychic background,
 - (5) Agitatedness – a breeze-like psychic background,
 - (6) Madness – a swamp-like psychic background,
 - (7) Contagiousness – a spark-like psychic background,
 - (8) Licentiousness – a rooster-like psychic background,
 - (9) Expansiveness – a branch-like psychic background,
 - (10) Difficulty to stop – a dancer-like psychic background, (and)
 - (11) Aimlessness – a drunkard-like psychic background.
- These are the eleven variations of an (individual's) psychic background.

In what is meant as a paraphrase of this list, Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa presents a remarkably enlarged and more detailed version.²⁴

In this connection it may not be out of place to draw attention to Erich Jantsch's *The Self-organizing Universe* and to point out certain similarities between the rDzogs-chen conception of what I have called the individual's psychic background on the basis of the quotes above and what he calls the "organismic mind."²⁵ The psychic background is not a thought process in the strict sense of the word, and therefore, cannot be said to be a mind in the usual sense. Like the "organismic mind," the psychic background does not reflect, but expresses itself in a rich spectrum of behavioral patterns that are metaphorically described by references to various animals.

This metabolic information and communication network is tied in with what is described as five elemental forces (*'byung-ba*) that are of two kinds, specified as founded (*brten*) and named after their effects as 'earth,' 'water,' 'fire,' 'wind,' and 'sky/space' which constitute the external world. As the founding (*rten*), these constitute the individual's inner world, particularly in its aspect of light values, expressive of the *Urwissen* modes of (the whole's) radiance. In this respect, the elemental forces are spoken of as *'byung-ba-*

chen-po 'elemental forces *par excellence*' and described, to give only one example, as 'non-solid earth.' Whether we speak of a common person in the grip of his psychic background (*sems-can*) or an *erlichtet* (spiritually awakened) one, either is founded on the whole's radiance, with the difference that a *sems-can* tends to fritter himself away in going astray into mistaken identifications of the elemental forces as 'realities,' while an *erlichtet* being is settled in the dimension that is the elemental forces *par excellence*'s luminosity.²⁶ As being expressions of the whole's vibrational energy (*rlung*), itself a symmetry transformation of the *thig-le*²⁷ and carrying with it its source's 'intelligence,' each of the five elemental forces has a cognitive capacity which enables them to associate with their own kind and exchange information in the dynamic structure of any system, and to regulate the development of the organism, such as a human being. Inasmuch as these forces 'know' what they have to do, it is quite appropriate to speak of them in terms of mentality and/or psychic background (*sems*), which after all is a biological phenomenon and not some sterile metaphysical postulate. But while metabolic information and communication is rather slow, neural information and communication takes only a fraction of a second, and thus prefigures what Jantsch has called the "reflexive mind."²⁸ This 'new' level in the individual's evolution is the *yid*, the egological 'mind' active in the construction of an 'I'/self, and an environment on which it imposes its 'rationality.' Its 'operation,' if this is an appropriate description, involves six quiverings ('*gyu-ba*'), detailed as follows:²⁹

The quivering of the reflexive/egological (*yid*) is of six kinds:

- (1) Through the quivering of this *yid* searching everywhere, the causal momentum and its modifiers, as well as the functions and their results concerning the different karmic blunderings and the affective vagaries are brought into play,
- (2) Through the quivering of this *yid* coming to a decision by quivering throughout the external and internal, (the notions of an) I, of a self/Self, of both (an I and a self/Self), and of neither these two, are called forth,
- (3) Through the quivering of this *yid* determining [its decision] by thinking about one, two, and so on, (it) goes into each and every aspect of its ownness, otherness (from itself), (its) phenomenality-*cum*-nothingness, without mixing up each (aspect's) details, and apprehends it subjectively,
- (4) Through the quivering in the *yid-qua*-perception by its singular cognitiveness operative concerning the difference of dissimilar objects, it imagines a variety of lighting-up modes and generates *hesitancies*/doubts³⁰ and so on (concerning

them),

- (5) Through the quivering of the emotions-pollutants tainted *yid*, desire, infatuation, irritation, attachment, craving, gawkishness and so on with their causal momentum and its modifiers, its *Wesen* and specifics come about,
- (6) Through the quivering of this *yid* holding on to the perpetuation of this quivering, the past and the future and the things of the present (are set up) and in the aftermath of this quivering *samsāra*'s blundering and its varied maturations are piled up.

Here and elsewhere Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa presents and develops an approach that investigated the biological roots of the reflexive/egological mind to account for its operational complexity. In the same way as the five senses have their specific domains of sensory data, so also the reflexive mind has as its specific domain the welter of ideas and notions. In dealing with an *appreciated* world, it performs what I shall call the 'compound function' of cognition (*yid* as such) and evaluation that, in this capacity, is called the 'affectively toned ('polluted') reflexive mind' (*nyon-yid*). This does not mean that the purely 'cognitive' reflexive mind is superior to the 'affectively toned ('polluted') reflexive mind.' In actual life, the one is already and always with the other, and their separateness is established only for descriptive purposes.

The whole complex is tied to its biological roots, the matter-system made up by the elemental forces (*'byung-ba*) described in terms of their physical-material effects. These elemental forces, themselves presenting a frequency spectrum of the whole system's vibrational energy, act as 'carriers,' likened to swift-running horses, of the various operational modes of the reflexive mind. Its 'searching' operation is carried by the 'wind' force carrying it anywhere; its 'making a decision' is carried by the 'earth' force ensuring the solidity of what has been searched; its 'determining' operation is carried by the 'water' force ensuring the coherence of the emergent cognitive pattern; and its 'consciously judgmental' operation is carried by the 'fire' force spreading and consuming whatever comes into its orbit. The 'compound function' of the 'cognitive' reflexive mind and the 'affectively toned ('polluted') reflexive mind' is carried jointly by the 'water' and 'earth' forces, while its function of perpetuating the samsaric situation marked by and expressive of the 'affectively toned ('polluted') reflexive mind' is carried jointly by the 'fire' and 'wind' forces.

Inasmuch as the emotions-pollutants (*nyon-mongs*) play a significant, if not to say, overwhelming role, it should not come as a surprise that they have been investigated in relationship to each other and classified numerically. Here the three numbers 'six,' 'sixteen,' and, 'infinite' are most conspicuous.³¹

All of them reveal a way of counting that includes the individual in his low-level excitability/excitation (*ma-rig-pa*) and in this respect, epitomizes the emotions-pollutants. Against the earliest counting of only three emotions-pollutants, traditionally, five are listed of which the first three emphasize the instinctual stratum of the individual as a participant in the evolutionary process, and the last two his growing sense of 'I.' Thus this pentad of 'poisons' consists of

1. desire/attachment (*'dod-chags*)
2. irritation/aversion (*zhe-sdang*)
3. dullness/bewilderment (*gti-mug*)
4. arrogance/self-importance (*nga-rgyal*)
5. jealousy/envy (*phrag-dog*)

However, because the individual's low-level excitability/excitation (*ma-rig-pa*) pervasively encompasses all five poisons, this low-level excitability/excitation has been counted as a sixth emotion-pollutant. The decisive feature that distinguishes low-level excitability/excitation from the other pollutants that allow themselves to be dealt with separately, is that it is never something solitary. It becomes, in the course of its emergence, the molding force of an individual's psychic background, as a mixture of (i) vibrational energy (*rlung*), (ii) elemental forces (*'byung-ba*), and (iii) the effulgence, outward-directed glow (*gdangs*) of the individual's original and endogenous psychophysical intensity (*thig-le/rig-pa*). The former two are the 'carriers' and the latter is the 'message' or *in*-formation/self-organization.

In this process of gathering and holding together the ingrained tendencies of ordinary everyday experiences in the emergent reflexive mind the familiar subject-object dichotomy comes about. Together the above three facets constitute low-level excitability/excitation, which is seen and felt as a triune process structure of the following kind:

The low-level excitability \Leftrightarrow the overall setting (*ma-rig-pa*)

The psychic background \Leftrightarrow the biological (*sems*—the metabolic and neural organismic mind)

The egological 'closure' \Leftrightarrow the reflexive mind (*vid*)

The number 'sixteen' relates to what is called 'proximate emotions-pollutants' (*nye-ba'i nyon-mongs*) marking the transition from a pre-ontological, pre-egological, and pre-conscious status that has nothing to do with the 'unconscious' in earlier (Western) psychoanalytic writings (which

could not break away from the static container conception of the universe and the conception of the unconscious as a repository of ‘archetypes’ and repressed images, to a more pronounced egological and egocentric status³²).

The number ‘infinite,’ described as “emotions-pollutants that (proceed) from their subtleness (through their) expansiveness and radiance (to their) infinity” (*phra-rgyas-gsal-ba mtha'-yas-pa*), covers the three ‘numbers’ twenty-five, fifty-one, and eighty-four thousand. Not counting the basic encompassing low-level excitability/excitation (*ma-rig-pa*), the number ‘twenty-five’ is arrived at by conceiving of each of the five encompassed poisons as a pentad (5x5) having distinct qualities or nuances.³³ The number ‘fifty-one’ is arrived at by conceiving of twenty-five emotions-pollutants as ‘object’-related, and twenty-five as ‘subject’-related, with the basic low-level excitability/excitation thrown in for good measure.³⁴ The number ‘eighty-four thousand’ is arrived at by conceiving of twenty-one thousand emotions-pollutants as deriving from desire/attachment, of another twenty-one thousand as deriving from irritation/aversion, a further twenty-one thousand as deriving from dullness/bewilderment, and of a still another twenty-one thousand as deriving from the equal contribution of the above three, thus resulting in eighty-four thousand emotions-pollutants.³⁵

After this excursion into the numerical assessment of the emotions-pollutants and their roots in the transformations of the whole’s vibrational energy as elemental forces that outline the whole’s (i.e., Being’s) holomovement in which Being as pure potential breaks its instability threshold and becomes *its* ownmost intensity or actuality as a holistically closing-in-onto-itself thereness. In mathematical diction this symmetry-break presents two dynamic possibilites. The one giving in to its momentum and leading to further symmetry-breaks is called ‘errancy mode’ (*'khrul-lugs*), and implies both the ‘distance’ of how far the individual is moving away or has moved away from what was his ‘perfect symmetry’ (or, to be exact, ‘near-perfect symmetry’ because of its incipient closing-in onto itself), his excitability (*rig-pa*) and radiance (*'od-gsal*), as well as the depth of what turns out to be his low-level excitability (*ma-rig-pa*) with its ‘infinite’ emotions-pollutants (*nyon-mongs*) in which he is going to find himself, his *Da-sein* or thereness (*gnas-lugs*). The other is his ability to link himself to or maintain his link with his original being, experienced as a falling off of all that has prevented him from ‘being himself.’ Its technical, and strictly speaking, untranslatable term is *grol-lugs*, best descriptively paraphrased as the ‘mode of how one feels when what was so restrictive just dissipates.’³⁶ Both *'khrul-lugs* and *grol-lugs* have their origin in the holomovement’s inner dynamic (*rtsal*) that, on the one hand, as *rtsal-(qua-rtsal)* (‘innerness’) is as yet indeterminate, but on the other hand, because of its very ‘dynamic,’ assumes the character of a ‘what’ (*'khrul*) and the character of a ‘how’ (*grol*), thus

displaying the principle of complementarity. However, it is the *grol* as a dynamic principle that leads to and/or is felt. This Jantsch calls the “*self-reflexive mind*.”³⁷ Its similarity with what the holistic process-based and process-oriented rDzogs-chen thinkers called *rang-rig*, a dynamic notion that may best be paraphrased as an ‘awareness (*rig*) that in its intensity (*rig*) is autonomous (*rang*), not dependent on other factors, and in its cognitiveness (*rig*) carries with it its own meaning as a sense-bestowing (*dgongs-pa*) on its own unfolding dynamic,’ is startling.

This emphasis on the autonomous character of what is spoken of as Being’s closing-in onto itself and setting up its own energetic field as a process is clearly expressed in what is technically referred to as the *Kun-tu-bzang-po*’i *grol-tshul* or *Kun-tu-bzang-po*’i *grol-lugs*, specifically in the three descriptors *rang-snang rang-shar rang-grol*,³⁸ explicated as follows:³⁹

rang-snang (‘lighting-up by itself’) is said so because (Being’s) field (character) (*dbyings*), thinking’s thinking (*sems-nyid*), a radiant light (‘*od-gsal*), has lit up (showing) its own face,

rang-shar (‘lit up by itself’) is said so because the very excitability/excitation (*rig-pa de-nyid*) lights-up in this manner,

rang-grol (‘dissipating by itself’) is said so because, (during) the excitability/excitation period, the excitability/excitation is understood as an ultimate primordial being itself (*ye-yin-chen-po*) with no auto-errancy (mode) existing (in it).

However, a major problem pertaining to both the *Kun-tu-bzang-po*’i *grol-tshul* and the *Kun-tu-bzang-po*’i *grol-lugs* despite their apparent similarity in diction, pertains to the qualifier *Kun-tu-bzang-po*. In an attempt to unravel what is implied by this code term, let us start with its exegesis by Klong-chen-rab-‘byams-pa in his *Tshig-don mdzod*:⁴⁰

The meaning of the *Kun-tu-bzang-po*’i *grol-lugs* is (as follows): when at the (emergence of the first) phase space (this mode) rises above the ground (the *gzhi*, i.e. the *Urgrund/Ungrund*), (this) holomovement’s spontaneity (*gzhi-snang lhun-grub*) (aspect) as eight gates has lit-up as (the holomovement’s) lighting-up by itself (*rang-snang-du shar-ba*), which is to say that, without taking (this lighting-up by itself) as something other (than itself), the witnessing intellect recognizes it as (this lighting-up’s) own outward-directed glow; [in other words,] in recognizing this first phase space (emergence) in its decidedly quivering (nature) (‘*gyu-ba*) is (something that) has lit-up as (the holomovement’s) lighting-up by itself (*rang-snang-du shar-*

ba), an understanding/innerstanding (*rtogs-pa*) is born, (whereby) a differentiation (between the holomovement and (its) spontaneity) is introduced. In the second phase space (emergence) by errancy having gone and *Urwissen* (modes) having spread, the ‘ground’ has matured into its ‘goal,’ (which is to say that) by understanding (Being’s, the whole’s) ‘stuff’/*Wesen* to have been a primordial (pre-beginning) having-gone-cum-having-spread (*ye-sangs-rgya*), one speaks of an ‘over and again having-gone-cum-having-spread (experience)’ (*yang-sangs-rgyas-pa*). Once this lighting-up by itself has subsided in (Being’s, the whole’s) symbolic pregnancy (*ka-dag*), the Teacher/revealer who having-gone-cum-having-spread before there was a *seinsmässig* wholeness (*gzhi-thog-tu kun-gyi sngon-rol-na sangs-rgyas-pa*) is called *Kun-tu-bzang-po*.

In this exegesis of the code term *Kun-tu-bzang-po* a number of other interrelated terms are introduced, foremost among them the *gzhi*, ‘the ground’ as a sort of summary of multivalent notions from a dynamic perspective, and the as yet subliminal movements in it, referred to as a ‘quivering’ (*gyu-ba*), a ‘trembling *qua* centrifugal trend’ (*g.yo-ba*), and an ‘emission (of light)’ (*phro-ba*). Let us begin with what Klong-chen-rab-‘byams-pa has to say in his *mKha*’-‘gro yang-thig’.⁴¹

(Concerning) the primordial ground (*gdod-ma’i gzhi*) existing as an inner radiance of the unitrinity of ‘stuff’/*Wesen* (*ngo-bo*), eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*), and suprasensual concern (*thugs-rje*), (its ‘stuff’/*Wesen*’s) *Urwissen* modes as functions of its supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa’i ye-shes*), having moved away from (its ‘stuff’/*Wesen*) (*g.yos-pa*), is made a [swift-running] horse by the life-force vibrational energy with its four branchings (*srog-rlung [yan-lag] bzhis*), and together with its having lit-up as the suprasensual concern’s excitability (*thugs-rje rig-pa*) as a [tiny] sprout, (it is) from (it as its) eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*) [so emerged] that the supramundane realms with (their) corporeal patterns and *Urwissen* modes (*sku dang ye-shes-kyi zhing-khams*) radiate like the rising sun, and that by being acutely aware of the suprasensual concern’s (*thugs-rje*) inner glow (*rang-mdangs*), having lit-up as an exteriority (*phyir*) [as a consequence of] the clarity in its lighting-up by itself (*rang-snang-du wal-gyis*), an understanding/innerstanding (*rtogs-pa*) is born whereby in the first phase space (of this process) (*skad-cig*): the exaggeration (*sgro*-‘dogs) of *nirvāṇa*’s lighting-up as an external radiance (i) (having a) Gestalt character and (ii)(being) a brilliance’s lighting-up, and the detraction’s (*skur*-‘debs) lighting-up as

samsāra's gate, the ground and reason for the emergence of the six kinds of living beings (in the form of the) opaque seed (phonemes) *a nē pre du su tri* and so on, are reverting by themselves to their own symbolic translucency (so that) divested (of both its overrating and its underrating (*bral*)) in the second phase space (of this process), each and every external radiance (*phyir-gsal*) subsides in the (ground's) interiority; (which is to say that) without becoming invariant at a later stage and (continuing) in the state it had been before (the ground) persists in (its) ultimate internal brilliance (*nang-gsal-chen-po*) such that the ground (*gzhi*) has matured into its goal ('*bras-bu*), and that the goal has taken up its legitimate dwelling of authority (*btsan-sa zin*), (which is to say that) not reverting to becoming a causal momentum it persists like the fruit of a tree from which lacquer (*bse-shing-gi 'bras-bu*) is produced.

If the question should be raised of where the primordial ground's maturing into its goal originated, the answer is that by knowing the critical-appreciative acumen (*shes-rab*), abiding like a spark (in the) suprasensual concern's excitability, an inner radiance, externally made a [swift-running] horse⁴² by the life-force vibrational energy with its four branchings and emitting light ('*phros-pa*), to be the inner glow of the identity of the brilliant radiance that lights-up by itself (*rang-snang-gi 'od-gsal*) and (its) 'stuff'/*Wesen*, the (above mentioned) critical-appreciative acumen having matured into a corporeal pattern (*sku*) and its *Urwissen* modes (*ye-shes*), persists on the level of (its) 'stuff'/*Wesen* as before as the ultimate conceptless meaning-structure [of us as its experiencers] (*chos-sku rtog-med chen-po*). Acutely aware of the defects and virtues of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* by its *Urwissen* mode that is sensitive to each and everything (*thams-cad mkhen-pa'i ye-shes*), (Being-*qua*-experiencer) does not identify itself with either *samāśra* or *nirvāṇa* at (some) later stage, but, not moving away from the vibrant dimension of the *chos-sku*, is active by its suprasensual concern on behalf of the sentient beings according to their interests.

Admittedly this exegesis of the primordial ground (*gdod-ma'i gzhi*) is even more intricate than the preceding one. It therefore may come as a relief that in the same work a version is found that looks like a commentary on this (see Appendix I below).

The phrase *Kun-tu-bzang-po grol-gzhi*, incidentally as it were, mentioned here, is elaborated by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa in his *Zab-mo yang-tig*, a collection of essays of which the *sNyan-brgyud* (*Oral Transmission*) trilogy is of particular interest in the present context.⁴³ The relevant passage,

resembling in certain respects what he had said about the ‘envelopes,’ symmetry transformations as phase spaces in Being’s closing-in onto itself (note 150), is an excerpt from a section in his *sNyan-brgyud don-gyi me-long* that specifically deals with the injunction of (having to) come face to face with oneself through an understanding/innerstanding (*rtogs shing grol-ba ngo-sprod-kyi gdams-pa*) of which its first phase is to settle definitively the ground/starting-point-way-goal/climax (*gzhi lam ’bras-bu*) problem of which the first topic involves three disquisitions. These three are the discussion about the ground/starting-point in terms of its own modality, the discussion of the way in terms of its firsthand experience/practice, and the discussion of the goal/climax in terms of its unloosening modality.⁴⁴ In Appendix II, we can read what he has to say about the first topic in what may be said to be a sub-triad of the first triad.

He discusses the process of Being’s closing-in onto itself with the emphasis on the first phase space, the locale (*yul*), an approximation symmetry of the perfect symmetry, Being’s brilliance (*’od-gsal*), in its transformation into the dimension of meanings (*chos-kyi dbyings*), intimating that we (as omnipresent experiencers) are luminous beings, specifically when we are *erlichtet* (*sangs-rgyas*) and have realized what is called ‘limpid clearness and consummate perspicacity’ (*byang-chub*): *byang-chub-pa* and *sangs-rgya-ba/sangs-rgyas-pa* are synonymous in what we may prosaically and poetically call a ‘waking-up’ (Skt. *bodhi*) and/or a ‘being awake’ (Skt. *buddha*).⁴⁵ However, there is one snag with ‘Being’s closing-in onto itself’ in and through phase spaces imaged as ‘envelopes’ (*sbubs*). Each closure, phase space or envelope is marked by a progressively diminishing luminescence. Thus, the very locale (*yul*) as a dimension of meanings (*chos-kyi dbyings*) as one’s *Da-sein* (*gnas-lugs*), even as one’s meaning-structure (*chos-sku*) or Preciousness envelope (*rin-chen-sbubs*) is, in spite of its luminosity and luminescence, already a diminished brilliance, the whole’s or Being’s *Lichthaftigkeit*.⁴⁶ Similarly, the second phase space is, in spite of its proto-light pattern(s) (*’od-kyi sku*) and its being a Proto-light envelope (*’od-kyi sbubs*) and one’s *longs-sku* (the *Gestalt* character of one’s already and always being-with-others), a kind of energy condensation approximating materiality called one’s live body (*lus*). Lastly, the third phase space, in spite of its being spirit/spirituality (*thugs*) in terms of ontological diction, and of its being the *sprul-sku* (a phasmic gestalt) in terms of experience, is designated as the *bag-chags sbubs* (the Sediments envelope) that, summarily speaking, is one’s mentation (*sems*) moving in the direction of ‘pure’ symbolic expressiveness (*dag-pa*) and ‘impure’ non-symbolic expressiveness (*ma-dag-pa*). Concerning a living individual who is the final closure, the ‘pure’ is a guiding image by virtue of the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*) being alight in and radiating through it, transfiguring its experiencer and his environment,

the 'impure' is the obnoxious peddler of idiosyncracies in which no light can be detected.

Appendix I⁴⁷

When the first phase space (*skad-cig*) has lit-up from out of the primordial ground, [it so happens that] since (i) its lighting-up (*snang-ba*) is (its) spontaneity, (ii) (this its) spontaneity (*lhun-grub*) is (its) lighting-up by itself, (iii) (this its) lighting-up by itself (*rang-snang*) is (its) *Urwissen*, (iv) (this its) *Urwissen* (*ye-shes*) is (its) dissipativeness since its beginningless beginning, (v) (this its) dissipativeness since its beginningless beginning (*ye-grol*) is (its) ownmost ecstatic excitability/ intensity, (vi) this ownmost ecstatic excitability/intensity (*rang-rig*) is (Being-qua-experiencer's) meaning-structure (*chos-sku*), it is by understanding this hexad through the (underlying) suprasensual concern's excitability that (in its) outward-radiating phase space has lit-up as a mere sprout, that the six unexcitability modes as overlays of the (suprasensual concern's excitability's) 'stuff'/*Wesen* are in themselves symbolically expressive (in their translucency, *rang-dag*), so that the (ground's) lighting-up by itself, once what lights up as the apprehendable-apprehending (duality) has fallen off by itself (*rang-grol*), radiates in utter clarity (*wal-gyis*) as (one's) corporeal pattern and its *Urwissen* modes whereby each and every kind of a going into darkness due to its own [cognate] unexcitability has gone away (*sangs*). Although this (one's) ownmost ecstatic excitability by having come about in [what is its] utter clarity, in this second phase space has entered into [what is] an ultimate inner radiance right on top of the primordial ground, and, without there existing any bruise, has realized its pellucidity and consummation (*byang-chub*) in its gestalt of an ever youthful vessel (*gzhon-nu bum-pa'i sku*) like an oil flame in a vessel, whereafter having arrived at the limit of the primordial ground by having divested itself (*bral*)⁴⁸ of expectation and fear, the two gates (opening into) the superposition of overrating nirvana's lighting-up (in its)having (actually) lit up (*sgro-dogs*) and into the superposition of underrating *samsāra*'s lighting-up (*skur-pa 'debs-pa*), it abides as invariant as the sky. At that time each and every kind of errancy (superimposed on) (one's) ownmost ecstatic excitability/ intensity has (been restored to) its symbolic expressiveness (*rang-dag*), (which is to say that) though the cognitiveness of the one who is acutely aware (*rig-mkhan-gyi shes-pa*) in (its) first phase space is (as yet) unpredictable as to good and evil, has originated as a mere sprout, its very outward-directed radiance subsides within (itself) in the second phase space which is said to be its collapsing by itself (*rang-brlags*), because this very acute awareness (*rig-pa de nyid*) is felt as not having been able to find a place (to settle down). At that time by being acutely aware (of the fact that) this outward-directed radiance does not go astray into [and identifies itself with] (something) inanimate, it differentiates between the inanimate and the animate (*bem-rig*), [in other words] the external lighting-up (as) the lighting-up of the five proto-lights, in this very phase-

space, subside in the internal proto-lights' eigenbeing, [an event that as] the ground as a primordial lighting-up-cum-(its)-ecstatic intensity (*snang-rig*) is called the reunion of a mother and her child (*ma bu 'phrad-pa*). Therefore, like by the (basic) cognitiveness (*shes-pa*) having arrived at the top of the primordial ground, the darkness of unexcitability has gone, and by the lighting-up (*snang-ba*) having arrived at the top of the primordial ground, the sun having risen over Ri-bo-ta-la⁴⁹, (Being's) nothingness-'stuff'/Wesen (*ngo-bo*), the blue dimension of meanings (stored or in *statu nascendi*), has immersed itself in the 'Preciousness envelope' (*rin-po-che'i shubs*) as (Being's) eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*), the lighting-up of (its) brilliant light in corporeal patterns and their *Urwissen* modes, while (Being's) suprasensual concern (*thugs-rje*), an inwardly radiating ecstatic intensity's *Urwissen*, (as) a thematically-conceptually-undivided (and) sensitive-to-everything intentionality of concern whereby experience is given a wider range of significance (*dgongs-pa*) coils itself up in this very dimension and shines like the sun in the cloudless sky of autumn. Such an inwardly radiating pentad of proto-lights is (already) endowed with (Being's) suprasensual concern, such that when its nothingness-'stuff'/Wesen (*ngo-bo*) enters into [emerges as] its 'Spontaneity' (*lhun-grub*) *qua* its 'Preciousness envelope' its creativity (*chos-nyid*) is called the 'symbolically expressive pre-beginning outward-directed glow' (*dag-pa'i ye-gdangs*) whose ecstatic intensity having a halo of proto-lights enters into [emerges as] (its) lighting-up of infinite proto-lights. ...⁵⁰

In brief, the primordial *Kun-tu-bzang-po* has in a single phase space introduced different thematic-conceptual notion and become one in whom (darkness) has gone and (light) has spread (*sangs-rgyas*). ...

Thus there are in the *grol-ba'i Kun-tu-bzang-po* three self-originated factors. (These are):

- an injunction that has not originated from a promise,
- a having become *erlichtet* that has not originated from mentation, and
- a goal/climax that has not originated from a cause.

The first (factor) means that the having become *erlichtet* (*sangs-rgyas*) has come about by the auto-lighting-up of a self-originated understanding/ *innerstanding* without there being a Supreme being (*bla-ma*) who makes this promise. The second (factor) means that the supraconscious ecstatic intensity without being endowed with the eight perceptual operations with their ontic foundation and in their wake not going astray into *samsāra*, by knowing itself to be self-liberating realizes (its) pellucidity and consummation (*byang-chub*). The third (factor) means that without having built up the slightest amount of what is good and wholesome (leading to) the two accumulations of (higher) knowledge (*ye-shes*) and merits (*bsod-nams*), by seeing the ground's *Da-sein* (*gzhi'i gnas-lugs*) the three kinds of insight⁵¹ are acquired, (which is to say that) in the vibrancy of the ground as an 'as-is' its pre-beginning 'as-is' is spontaneously there. Since this *Kun-tu-bzang-po grol-gzhi* is a topic that is difficult to understand in its utter clarity I have tried to explicate it

clearly and properly, to the best of my understanding.

Appendix II⁵²

The first sub-triad is shown to comprise the (1) the general ground (*spyi-gzhi*) of the 'beginning,' (2) the unloosening ground (*grol-gzhi*) of the 'Kun-tu-bzang-po,' and (3) the 'unexcitability/unexcitation' *qua* an (unthinking) thinking individual's going- astray ground (*'khrul-gzhi*).⁵³

The first item (in this first sub-triad) [describes the following]: before (Being) had lit up as the status of one who has become *erlichtet* through his understanding/*innerstanding* and before there had originated the status of an (unthinking) thinking individual through his non-understanding/*innerstanding*, (Being's) locale (*yul*), the dimension of meanings (stored and/or in *statu nascendi*) (*chos-kyi dbyings*), was in its nothingness as an opening a clearance (for thoughts and things to be) like the orb of the luminous (*feinstofflich*) sky, in its luminosity not moving away (from its being) like the depth of the ocean, in its radiance, an unblocked clearance, like the surface of a polished mirror, and as the core intensity in the vortex of (Being's) creativity, the ecstatic intensity apprehending/holding to its ground, abided as the (uni)trinity of nothingness-'stuff'/*Wesen* (*ngo-bo*), eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*), and suprasensual concern (*thugs-rje*). Furthermore, not broken-up into *samsāra*, but as the unblocked clearance for the emergence of *samsāra*, it was like camphor and not broken-up into nirvana, but as the unblocked clearance for the emergence of nirvana it was like camphor, its nothingness-'stuff'/*Wesen*, though not broken-up into anything, becoming (a multiplex of) differentiations under suitable conditions (the modifiers of the causal momentum). While the ground (Being) is without defects and virtues, but to the extent of its having originated as the mere ground and reason for their emergence with respect to whatever one desires, like the Wish-granting Jewel, it abides as the ultimate source of the All...(which is to say [by way of summing up what has been said] that the nothingness-'stuff'/*Wesen* (*ngo-bo*) of this self-originated *Urwissen* because of its pre-beginning spontaneity is like a Jewel (*nor-bu*), that while in its not being broken-up into an optional *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, as an unblocked clearance for the emergence of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* under the suitable conditions of an understanding/*innerstanding* or non-understanding/*innerstanding*, it is like camphor (*ga-bur*) (whose) nothingness-'stuff'/*Wesen* is not (something) broken-up into (something) either beneficial or harmful, rather, it is like an unblocked clearance (*go ma-'gags-pa*) for the emergence of something distinctly beneficial and/or harmful under the individual conditions of hot and cold diseases. When this very ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa nyid*) that is not found as something anywhere is made the ground and reason for the emergence of anything under suitable conditions, it is called the *gzhi'i gnas-lugs* ('*seinsmässiges Da-sein*') in view of its actually having nothing to do with good and evil, transmigration and transformation. Indeed, a marvel.

The second item (in this first sub-triad) [describes the following]: by having

come face to face with oneself [i.e., recognized oneself in one's beingness] right on top of the ground, one has become *erlichtet* (one in whom (darkness) has dissipated and (light) is spreading [in the sense that the dissipation of darkness *is* the spreading of light] such that in this glorious Kun-tu-bzang-po (experience) three self-originated facets stand out, namely, (a) (one's status of) being *erlichtet* that has lit-up from the vibrancy of (Being's) calling (*man-ngag*) that has not originated from a promise/prediction (*lung*), but is the ecstatic intensity that by itself knows that there is no Supreme Being that makes a promise/prediction, (b) (one's status of) being *erlichtet* by knowing by itself that this being *erlichtet* has not originated from mentation (which) is a knowing by itself that Being has nothing to do with body, speech, and mind, (c) (one's status of) being *erlichtet* due to this status as being a climax [of one's growth] is not a climax that originated from a cause (which) is a knowing by itself that Being-*qua*-the three corporeal patterns has nothing to do with suitable conditions. Moreover, the three *gzhi-gnas-kyi ye-shes* ('*seinsmässige Urwissen* modes') have been born as the three corporeal patterns as the climax [of one's growth] through the power of (one's) critical-appreciative acumen (*shes-rab*) in (one's) ecstatic intensity. Furthermore, in this Kun-tu-bzang-po (experience) there are three *grol-gzhi*: (i) the locale's *grol-gzhi* (*yul*), the self-cognition through (Being's) lighting-up by itself (*rang-snang*), (ii) the corporeal pattern's *grol-gzhi* (*sku*), the self-cognition as (being the) visible 'gestalts' of (Being's) lighting-up by itself, and (iii) the spirit/spirituality's *grol-gzhi* (*thugs*), the self-loosening [of what has fettered one], once the *Urwissen* mode that is sensitive (to each and everything, [*thams-cad*]-*mkhyen-pa'i ye-shes*) has lit up. (Lastly) by an understanding/*inner*standing that knows by itself that this status of being *erlichtet*, through its eigenbeing being spontaneously there, as the *ngo-bo-nyid-kyi sku* ('the corporeally seen and felt (presence) of Being's very nothingness-'stuff'/*Wesen*') has not moved away (*ma-g.yos-pa*) (got up) from its bed (and) as the being *erlichtet* as (one's) Kun-tu-bzang-po meaning-structure (*chos-kyi sku*) is (one's) realization of limpid clearness and consummate perspicacity (*byang-chub-pa*) right on top of Being-*qua*-being.

The 'unexcitability/unexcitation' *qua* an (unthinking) thinking individual's going-astray ground means (one's) going-astray by not recognizing Being's lighting-up (*gzhi-snang*) as (one's) own being, which is to say that (a) by not recognizing the locale (*yul*) errancy ground as being the site of (Being's) brilliance ('*od-gsal*) one goes astray, (b) that by not recognizing the body (*lus*) errancy ground, the five proto-lights as corporeally seen and felt patterns to be one's own body, one goes astray, and that (c) by not recognizing the mentation (*sems*) errancy ground to be (one's) ecstatic intensity, one goes astray.

(Part II in *CJBS*, Number Two, 2006)

NOTES

- ¹ From the Greek word *kosmos* meaning 'order,' hence the idea of the world or universe as an ordered system. Its opposite is the word *chaos* meaning 'utter disorder.' The compound term 'chaos theory,' used in various branches of science, refers to an order that underlies apparently random phenomena.
- ² It is interesting to note that Skt. *karuṇā* is derived from the same root as Skt. *karman* (Anglicized as karma). But while *karman* describes a person's blundering activity, the *u*-element in *karuṇā* specifies this activity as 'showing regard for other persons.' This connotation is brought out by the Tibetan term *snying-rje* that literally means, 'one's heart (*snying*) is the lord (*rje*).' This shows that the translation of this term by 'compassion' and/or 'sympathy' is, to say the least, misleading because it stresses the notion of 'suffering' and does nothing to alleviate any such mental or physical suffering.
- ³ For a detailed account of the 'catalysts' see Herbert V. Guenther, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us* (U.S.A.: Dharma Publishing, 1975), Part One, chap. 7, 106-122.
- ⁴ Thod-rgal-gyi yang-yig nam-kha' klong-gsal [in: Bla-ma yang-tig, Part I, columns 295-296].
- ⁵ *shes-rig*. This compound describes the ground's (Being's) cognitiveness (*shes*) becoming its excitedness (*rig*). It is the prerequisite for what in we would call culture.
- ⁶ *grol* is a 'neutral' verb, neither transitive nor intransitive. It describes how it 'feels' when everything that has fettered us (literally and figuratively) falls off.
- ⁷ *Chos-dbyings mdzod*, Ka, following 5a.
- ⁸ *don-la*. The term *don* short for *don-dam* refers to the experiencer's higher-order *existential* reality that, experientially speaking, is irreducible to concepts about it, as emphatically stated by Padmasambhava's No (*med*) that transcends the dualism of a Yes and No.
- ⁹ This No is, paradoxically speaking, the whole's and one's own cognitiveness-*qua*-excitability (*rig-pa*) felt as utter happiness (*bde-ba*) likened to a comfortable bed.
- ¹⁰ *Loc.cit.*, *Chos-dbyings mdzod*, following 12a.
- ¹¹ sDe-dge edition, vol. *Kha*, Following 228a.
- ¹² *Loc.cit.*, vol. *Kha*, Following 228a. *Ibid.*
- ¹³ g.Yung-ston-rdo-rje dpal-bzang, *dPalgSang-ba-snying-po'i rgyud-don gsal-byed me-long*, following 20b.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, following 23a.
- ¹⁵ *'jig-rten-pa*. Literally, 'pertaining to the founding stratum of the

perishable,' this term is according to our Aristotelian categories both a noun and an adjective. In its Tibetan sociocultural usage it refers to anyone who is not a 'cleric.'

¹⁶ *Ati*, volume I, column 679-680.

¹⁷ Schneider, Michael S., *A Beginner's Guide to Constructing the Universe* (U.S.A.: Harper Paperbacks, 1995), 181 and 182, respectively.

¹⁸ *Ati*, volume I, column 676.

¹⁹ There is a fundamental difference between *mi-shes-pa* and *ma-shes-pa*.

The first term is epistemologically descriptive of a person's 'not knowing/perceiving something,' the second term is ontologically descriptive of a person as being 'not-quite perceptive.' In view of later Buddhism's mentalistic position, a human being, by virtue of his/her being the whole and yet only a part of it is 'perceptive, but not quite.' Only the whole or Being is 'perceptive' or, if one prefers, 'intelligent.'

²⁰ *Theg-mchog mdzod*, volume *Kha*, fols. 228ab.

²¹ The use of the phrase *bdag-gi khyim* is significant in highlighting the 'home' or 'dwelling' of the overevaluated egological self, usually intimated by the expression *nga/bdag* 'I/self,' and pertaining to the level of the 'non-quite excitability/excitation' (*ma-rig-pa*). As a pseudo-home it differs from supraconscious ecstatic intensity's 'legitimate dwelling' (*rang-sa*).

²² On the exact meaning of this 'neutral' verb see note 6.

²³ Columns 675-676.

²⁴ sDe-dge edition, vol. *Kha*, following 228b. These (variations of an individual's psychic background) are in the above order:
 Because of its gathering sundry subject matters and (their experiential) sediments (it is like) water,
 Because of its being deluded concerning what to accept and what to reject (it is like a) pig,
 Because of its irritability and haughtiness (it is like a) tiger,
 Because of its floating into many regions and being indecisive as to settling on one place (it is like a) bird's feather,
 Because of its intangibility concerning its (subtle) quivering (it is like a) breeze,
 Because of its intoxicatedness due to its ardent desire for (concrete) things (it is like a) swamp,
 Because of its spreading from one to many notions (it is like) fire,
 Because of its desire to get involved with (its) mates (it is like a) rooster,
 Because of its steadily moving reflection on a (given) topic due to its cognitive capacity's inner dynamic expanding (it is like a tree's) branches,
 Because of its having come under its power once its ecstatic intensity

has been captured by the situation (it is like a) dancer,
Because of its whimsical cognitive capacity drifting aimlessly about (it is like a) drunkard.

All the above features can, according to (a given) situation [the causal momentum, *rgyu*] and (the circumstances) their causal modifiers (*rkyen*), be subsumed under the triad of a wholesome, unwholesome, and unpredictable psychic background.

²⁵ Jantsch, *The Self-organizing Universe* (Oxford; Toronto: Pergamon, 1980), 163.

²⁶ *Theg-mchog mdzod*, vol. *Kha*, following 257b.

²⁷ This word is one of the most difficult code terms to decode as it spans different realms of meaning. The closest one in the present context would be 'bioenergetic information.'

²⁸ Jantsch, *The Self-organizing Universe*, 163.

²⁹ *Theg-mchog mdzod*, volume *Kha*, fols. 208a-b.

³⁰ *vid-gnyis*, literally 'of two minds.'

³¹ *Theg-mchog mdzod*, vol. *Kha*, fols. 228b-229a.

³² *Ibid.*, following 228a.

³³ *Ibid.*, following 229ab.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, following 229b.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, following 229b. Klong-chen-rab-'byams adds that the number 'infinite' points to the fact of making infinite subdivisions.

³⁶ On the exact meaning of *grol* see above note 6.

³⁷ Jantsch, Erich, *The Self-organizing Universe*, 163 and 164:

It designs actively a model of the environment in which the original system, which we also may call self, becomes involved in the creative interpretation and evolution of the image...[and]...With the self-reflexive mind, a new and very essential element is called into play, *anticipation* - in a passive sense as expectation and anticipated experience, in an active or creative (goal-setting) sense as creative design of the future... It is of great importance here that the processing and organization of information become independent not only of metabolic processes, but also of direct sensory impact. The self-reflexive mind may now become totally emancipated and set out on its own course of evolution. It is not "we" who think, but "it" thinks in us. Mind becomes a creative factor not only in image-forming, but also in the active transformation of outer reality. This role of the self-reflexive mind blossoms fully in the human world.

³⁸ *gZhi-snang ye-shes sgron-me* (in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's *Bla-ma yang-tig*, part II, column 13). They are part of a hexad qualifying *Kuntu-bzang-po*.

³⁹ *Loc.cit.*

⁴⁰ Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, Tshig-don mdzod, Vol. *Ga*(2), following 14a.

- 41 Part 2, columns 109-110.
- 42 This recurrent image (see below) is highly favored by Padmasambhava. See Herbert Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 1996), 118-120.
- 43 This trilogy composed by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa under his pseudonym sNa-tshogs-rang-grol consists of the following three works: the *sNyan-brgyud thugs-kyi me-long*, the *sNyan-brgyud don-gyi me-long*, and the *sNyan-brgyud-kyi rgyab-chos chen-mo zab-don gnad-kyi me-long*.
- 44 *Zab-mo yang-tig*, Part II, column 102.
- 45 According to our Aristelian categories, *bodhi* is a noun, not so much in the sense of standing for some *thing* as in the sense of being a descriptor for a *process*, and *Buddha*, the past participle of the verb *budh*, is an adjective.
- 46 Its full designation is '*od-gsal rdo-rje snying-po*, each component having its own meaning and together forming a unitary idea. Untranslatable in the ordinary sense of the word, this Tibetan may be paraphrased as "(Being's) radiant light *qua* (Being's) adamant nature (indestructibility) *qua* (Being's) core intensity."
- 47 Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, *sNyan-brgyud don-gyi me-long*, columns 116-118.
- 48 This term is closely related to the term *grol* that we have already encountered several times. While *grol* describes how it feels when that which has limited and 'fettered' one's real being, *bral* describes one's 'status' when that which has limited and fettered one's real being no longer exists.
- 49 This is the name of the Southern continent/island floating on the ocean imaged as the foundation of what we would call 'the Universe.'
- 50 There are three "envelopes" of which here only two have been singled out. The one is the "Preciousness envelope" (*rin-po-che'i sbubs*, its short form being *rin-chen-sbubs*). The other is the one traditionally called the "Proto-lights envelope" ('*od-kyi sbubs*). Here its luminous/luminescent character is associated with "creativity" (*chos-nyid*) that, abstractly speaking, intimates *ex-tensity* as complementary to "thinking's thinking" (*sems-nyid*), intimating *in-tensity*. While *sems-nyid/rin-chen-sbubs* is associated with the *chos-sku*, *chos-nyid/'od-kyi sbubs* is associated with the *longs-sku* (short for *longs-spyod rdzogs-pa'i sku*). The third one is the "Sediments of past-experiences-as-potentialities-of-future-experiences envelope" (*bag-chags-kyi sbubs*). As such it refers to the totality of the analytical postulates of ratiocination/mentation (*sems*) and hence is said to be (our) usual unexcitability/unexcitation (*ma-rig-pa* "not-quite-excited/alert") and

(our) going astray into mistaken identifications (*'khrul-pa*).

The “...” here, as well as once again later, refers to quotations from rDzogs-chen texts to substantiate what has been said.

⁵¹ These are the insight of the limit situation of a past, the insight of the limit situation of a future, and the insight of (one's) having done with what is collapsing (the belief in transmigration and rebirth).

⁵² Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, *sNyan-brgyud don-gyi me-long*, columns 102-105. Here the “*rang-lus-su*” is obviously a blockcarver's mistake.

⁵³ In these three compounds the words in inverted commas are ‘adjectives’ according to our Aristotelian categories that do not apply to non-Indoeuropean languages. Exactly, though clumsily, these three facets may be rendered as ‘the ground and reason in general for there being a beginning,’ ‘the ground and reason for an unloosening process having a thoroughly wholesome character,’ and ‘the ground and reason for a going-astray having the character of unexcitability/unexcitation (not-quite excitable) and thus being the status of a ‘thinking’ individual who is not actually thinking.’