
Study Group - *Madhyamakavatarama*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

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། དབྱུང་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་པོ། །

23 March 2004

Generate a virtuous motivation, thinking, 'I have to become enlightened for all sentient beings, and in order to do so I'm now going to listen to this profound Dharma, and then I'm going to put it into practice as much as possible'.

In general a virtuous pure motivation should always precede our activities, and in such a way we avoid subsequent actions becoming harmful to other sentient beings. A virtuous motivation ensures that our actions are virtuous and actually become the cause for enlightenment. In this way bodhicitta is something that is very practical. It is not only restricted to taking teachings and meditating. The motivation of bodhicitta is always beneficial regardless of what one is doing, whether it is walking about, sitting down, sleeping or just lying down.

A monk from the Tantric college once showed off stating that he was Guhyusamaya, regardless of whatever activity he was engaged in. We should do likewise with regard to bodhicitta when we are standing up, lying down, eating and so forth, always thinking we are bodhicitta. So for example when one eats one is eating in order to be able to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and so forth.

Having a pure motivation such as bodhicitta is very important. Harmful and bad actions come about because we already have the motivation or the readiness in our mind to engage in these actions. If from the very start we don't have that readiness to engage in those actions because we only have a virtuous motivation, then we also won't engage in harmful and destructive bad behaviour. Since we are all people who want to avoid harmful and destructive bad behaviour, and to increase our virtuous and wholesome behaviour, then it is really important for us to always have this virtuous motivation.

One needs to be very careful with regard to one's motivation because otherwise we get into situations where, for example, when we see somebody we don't like who is enduring great suffering and who is very miserable, and instead of generating compassion by, for example, remembering how it feels to be miserable, we will actually just wish more suffering for that person.

The very important ingredient is to have this non-discriminating love and compassion that doesn't hold some sentient beings as close and other sentient beings far. Without that attitude one won't be able to generate bodhicitta. So in order to generate bodhicitta one needs to overcome this discriminatory attitude that holds some beings closer than others. One needs to generate this non-discriminatory love and compassion for all sentient beings.

By using one's own physical and mental problems and sufferings as a reminder about how it feels to experience suffering one will be able to generate strong love and compassion for the other person. One's own experience shows what the other person is experiencing and provides insight into the depth of the other person's suffering. That's also why we say that one first needs to generate renunciation for one's own suffering.

One needs to have this strong internal refuge of a positive mind that makes it possible to overcome one's own suffering.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3. Showing That the 'Only' in Mind Only Doesn't Eliminate Outer Existence

Here we have several sub-outlines.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1. The intent behind the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* in teaching mind-only

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.2. Synchronicity of object and mind in existence and non-existence

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.3. The intent regarding Mind Only in the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1. The Intent Behind the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* in Teaching Mind-Only

This has three sub-outlines,

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1.1. Establishing that the word 'only' doesn't negate external objects with a quote from the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1.2. Establishing that very meaning with other sutras

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1.3. The word 'only' shows the mind to be crucial

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1.1. Establishing That the Word 'Only' Doesn't Negate External Objects with a Quote from the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*

Here the root text from *Introduction to the Middle Way* is,

Manifest Facing bodhisattvas

Realise the three worlds to be mere consciousness.

To realise the negation of the permanent self as creator

And to realise mere consciousness to be the creator.

This was preceded by the **Prasangika** refuting the Mind Only position of the lack of external existence saying, 'Your position of a lack of external existence contradicts worldly convention'.

The **Mind Only** reply saying 'If one were to accept external objects then one will be contradicted by the sutras, because in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*, for example, it states, 'These three realms are mere mind'. The Mind Only doubt that their point of view contains a worldly contradiction and say that in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* it states, 'These three realms are mere mind', and therefore one needs to accept the lack of external existence.

The three realms that are mere mind refer to are the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm. The Mind Only say that when it says that the three realms are mere mind, then here 'mere' is a word that cuts something off. And what it cuts off is external existence. 'By talking about mere mind the sutra says that there is no external existence and therefore the three realms are

all in the nature of mere mind, and if you don't accept that', the Mind Only say, 'then you actually contradicting the Buddha's teachings here'.

To this the **Prasangika** reply,

Take the subject '*the Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* stating these three realms are mere mind', it follows that the 'mere' doesn't negate outer existence because the teaching that the *bodhisattvas* abiding on the sixth ground *Manifest Facing* realise the three realms to be mere consciousness was taught to realise the negation of the permanent self as creator, and to realise mere consciousness to be the creator. (Mirror)

So according to the **Prasangika** 'these three realms are mere mind' was taught with the specific purpose of negating a permanent self as creator and to realise consciousness as the creator.

The root text talks about the teaching stating that *bodhisattvas* abiding on the sixth ground, *Manifest Facing*, realise the three realms to be mere consciousness. We went through the names of the ten grounds before. They are Extremely Joyful, Stainless, Luminous, Radiant, Difficult to Train, *Manifest Facing*, Gone Far, Immoveable, Excellent Wisdom and Cloud of Dharma, and the sixth ground is called *Manifest Facing*. Here it talks about the *bodhisattva* who has reached the sixth ground, and it states that this *bodhisattva* realises the three realms to be mere consciousness. This statement was made with a specific intent.

Here it states, as it will state later in other quotes, that this term 'mere mind' was coined by the Buddha in order to negate an external creator, a permanent self as the creator, and several other non-Buddhist assertions, but it doesn't negate external existence. So this idea that the 'mere' in mere mind negates external existence is a misunderstanding.

This very point is then established with other sutras.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1.2. Establishing That Very Meaning With Other Sutras

The other sutras that are referred to include the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*, and so therefore then it reads in the root text,

*Therefore, to increase awareness in those with awareness
In the Journey to Lanka Sutra the Omniscient One
Taught words in vajra nature destroying the lofty mountains
Of the Heathen, to point out his intent.
Accordingly, since the person and so forth
Propounded by the Heathen in their own treatises
Aren't seen as the creator by the Conqueror,
He taught mere mind to be the world's creator.*

Mirror:

The conqueror, not seeing the person and so forth, which are propounded by the heathen in their own treatises as creator, taught mere mind to be the creator of the world, in order to *increase* the awareness of those with the awareness able to realise suchness.

In the Journey to Lanka Sutra the Omniscient One

taught the *vajra* in the *nature* of *words*, 'the person, continuum and aggregates; likewise, conditions and particles; the primary principle and Ishvara; I declare the creators to be mere minds' to destroy *the lofty mountain* of the wrong views of the *Heathen*.

He taught this *to point out his intent* of Mind Only explained in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*.

In the previous outline we had one line from the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* stating, 'these three realms are mere mind'.

The **Prasangika** are saying that when it talks about mere mind the 'mere' doesn't negate external existence. What it negates is, for example, a permanent person as being the creator, or Ishvara as being the creator and so forth. The intent is to establish mind as the creator. In order to prove their point the **Prasangika** then quote this statement from the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*, 'the person, continuum and aggregates; likewise conditions and particles; the primary principle and Ishvara; I declare the creator to be mere mind'.

In this statement the **Prasangika** say that the Buddha elaborates on what he has stated previously in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*, which just says, 'The three realms are mere mind' and that's it. However here the Buddha says, 'I declare the creator to be mere mind', and what he is actually saying is, 'That was my point. What I was trying to say was that mere mind is the creator and not a permanent person, not a permanent continuum, not some kind of primary principle or Ishvara'.

The Buddha clarifies the intent of what he was saying in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* when he just merely stated that the three realms are mere mind. He taught this in order to destroy the lofty, the very high mountain of the Heathen wrong views. He taught this *vajra* that is in the nature of words, which is this statement, 'the person, continuum aggregates; likewise conditions and particles, the primary principle and Ishvara, I declare the creator to be mere mind'. Here it says that none of those listed are the creator, rather he says, 'I declare the creator to be mere mind', and that's it. He taught this to point out his intent of mind-only as stated in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*. You can check up whether the statement in the *Journey to Lanka Sutra* acts a statement to establish the meaning of the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*.

We also have to ask what the intent of the Buddha really is. Why does he bother to clarify his statement in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*? What is his reason for clarifying his statement in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*? This is explained in the lines saying that in order to increase awareness in those with awareness, the Buddha taught the *vajra* in the nature of words where he declares the creator to be mere mind and not a permanent person, not some kind of primary universal principle as is asserted by certain Hindu tenets, not Ishvara, but only mere mind.

The *Journey to Lanka Sutra* acts a commentary elucidating the intent of the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*, which just merely states that the three realms are mere mind. The additional commentary was provided by the Buddha in order to increase the awareness of those with the awareness able to realise suchness. In order to be able to

lead specific students of his that had the ability to eventually come to a realisation of suchness, and enter the path, he clarified the intent behind the statement, 'the three realms are mere mind'.

How does the Journey to Lanka Sutra clarify the statement from the Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi?

The root verse also states,

*Accordingly, since the person and so forth
Propounded by the Heathen in their own treatises
Aren't seen as the creator by the conqueror,*

The Buddha just didn't see all these different ideas propounded by the Heathen in their own treatises such as a permanent self, the continuum, the aggregates, external creator, and so forth, as being the creator of the world. Seeing the absence of all of those phenomena he stated that the actual creator of the world is mind.

The **Mind Only** don't accept external existence, because they think that if something existed externally then it would have to be an accumulation of partless particles, as is asserted by the Sautrantika. Because the Mind Only don't accept the partless particle, they don't accept the accumulation of partless particles, so they don't accept external existence. They feel that because there is no partless particle therefore there cannot be external existence, and they arrive at the idea of mere mind. They haven't comprehended that there can actually be external existence despite the lack of partless particles. Actually if one accepts external existence then one accepts that the consciousness is generated through the condition of the external object. For the Mind Only there is no external object and they don't accept that the consciousness arises from the cause of an external object.

Whereas those **tenets asserting external existence** assert that consciousness, for example the eye-consciousness, arises in dependence on the cause of an external object. When one asserts that the consciousness arises from the cause of an object then one really asserts external existence.

The **Mind Only** posit a reasoning that refutes partless particles. This reasoning refutes an external existence that is based upon partless particles, as is asserted by the Sautrantika for example. However this reasoning is able only to refute external existence based on partless particles, but is not able to refute external existence altogether. This is a subtle difference that one has to understand. The Mind Only's reasoning that negates external existence based on partless particles can only negate external existence based on partless particles, but it can't negate external existence altogether.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.1.3. The Word 'Only' Shows The Mind To Be Crucial

Establishing External Existence

We have been through what the 'only' in 'mind-only' refutes. On the one hand it refutes a permanent self, a universal principle, Ishvara and so forth as the creators of the world, and it refutes external existence based on partless particles. On the other hand the 'mere' establishes mind as the creator, and it actually also establishes external existence, because it establishes mind

as the creator. The creator of what? The creator of external existence, of the worlds and so forth.

The root text states,

*Similar to Buddha being called Suchness Increased,
Mere mind is the focus of sutra teachings about
Mind-only for worldly beings. Refutation of form
Is not the meaning of the sutras here.*

Mirror:

The meaning of *mind-only* taught in the *sutras* isn't the *refutation* of external *form*. Similarly to extensive awareness of *suchness* meaning buddha without clearly pronouncing the first syllable, here the *sutras* teaching *worldly beings about mind-only focus* on *mere mind*, without pronouncing 'the key' in the phrase 'out of form and mind mere mind is the key', and say 'mere mind' instead.

When we talk about the Buddha we literally talk about an awakened one or the enlightened one. In Tibetan this word is made up of two syllables *sang* (purify) and *gye* (increase). Also in English when we talk about awakening or the enlightened one this implies the increase of one's awareness. Out of all the different names and titles that one sometimes gives the Buddha, he is sometimes just referred to as Suchness Increased without necessarily saying 'increased awareness of suchness'.

Similarly to just saying 'suchness increased' but actually meaning 'increased awareness of suchness', when we talk about mind-only, one can talk about 'mere mind' while actually meaning, 'out of form and mere mind, mind is the key'. When one says, 'mere mind', then implicitly what one understands is that out of form and mind, mind is really that which is the more significant. Instead of saying, 'Oh out of form and mind, the mind is really essential', when you say, 'mere mind', meaning for example 'essentially mind', then one can say, 'essentially mind', or 'mere mind' instead of saying the whole thing i.e. 'Out of form and mind, mind is essential, or the more important. One can just say, essentially mind.

Therefore the statement in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* that the three realms are mere mind does not negate external existence.

So one can just simply refer to the Buddha as Suchness Increased without stating all the rest. Likewise, without saying that out of form and mind, mind is essential, one can just simply state 'essentially mind', and actually mean, 'out of form and mind, mind is essential'. It doesn't have to mean that in that external form is not existent.

Dependent Origination

The Mind Only hold the three realms to be inherently, intrinsically mere mind, which negates external existence. This point of view brings a lot of problems with it which then are referred to in the next verse where it says,

*In case, if having understood them explained
As mere mind, it endeavours to refute that very form,
Why would the Great One further teach that
Mind is generated from ignorance and karma?*

Mirror:

*In case, if having understood them, the three
realms, explained as inherently existing mere mind,*

so here as intrinsically mere mind, *it*, the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi*, endeavours to refute that very external form, then why would the Great One, the Buddha, further teach in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* that mind is generated from ignorance and karma?

If, as you the Mind Only say, the Buddha really have meant that the three realms are intrinsically mere mind, and endeavour to refute external form, then why would the Buddha later teach in *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* that mind is generated from ignorance and karma? First one has ignorance, and then karma is generated from that ignorance. Then one arrives at the dependent link of consciousness.

If the three realms were to exist inherently then they could neither be generated nor could they disintegrate. That is the consequence that **Prasangika** posit to the Mind Only. They say that it would follow that the three realms would lack generation and disintegration because they are intrinsically mere mind. There is a pervasion to that reason, because existing intrinsically is mutually exclusive with being generated and disintegrating.

The **Prasangika** state to the Mind Only, 'Why would the Buddha after initially teaching intrinsically mere mind, subsequently teach about karma arising from ignorance and the dependent link of consciousness arising from karma and so forth?'. Those two teachings become mutually exclusive, and it wouldn't make sense for the Buddha to teach in such a manner, because further on in the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* it does state that ignorance gives rise to karma, karma gives rise to consciousness, and so forth. So it goes through the twelve links. Here then, with the reasoning of dependent origination the **Prasangika** refute or contradict the Mind Only assertion of an intrinsically existing mere mind.

The Significance of Karma

Then the root text goes onto give the reason for mere mind to be the creator, and why there's no external creator, no permanent self as the creator and so forth.

*It is taught that mind alone creates the great variety
Of the worlds of sentient beings and environments,
That all migrators are generated from karma.
If mind is rejected then karma doesn't exist as well.*

The various environments of migrators, or sentient beings, are generated by a shared common karma, and the individual sentient beings, or migrators are generated by their own individual karma. We have here individual karma and shared karma as the cause. Individual karma acts as the cause for the individual migrators, and the common karma acts as the cause for the environment in which those migrators live. For example this teaching hall here was generated by our shared karma.

If mind is rejected then karma doesn't exist as well, as karma only functions on the basis of mind. If there's no mind then there's no karma.

Out of form and mind, mind is the more important. What is the reason for that? Mind the crucial one because mind is that which moves the person from life to life. Even though the person will have a form aggregate in certain rebirths, the form aggregate doesn't really fulfil the

function of moving the person from life to life. That is because there are certain rebirths where there is no form aggregate, such as in the formless realms, and yet the person still goes on from life to life. Out of form and mind, mind is really that which moves one from life to life and that is why it is more important than form.

The **Prasangika** say to the Mind Only, 'The fault that you pointed out that I would be in contradiction of the direct statement of the Buddha if I don't accept the non-existence of external form is incorrect. Why? Because the Buddha taught about mere mind with a certain intent. It was not for the purpose of refuting external form but in order to refute a creator other than mind'. This is stated in the last two lines of the this verse,

*Even though form exists,
It isn't a creator, like mind.
Then, a creator other than mind
Is rejected but not form.*

'Mere mind' is a teaching on rejecting a permanent self, a universal principle, Ishvara, and so forth as creator, but it is not for the purpose of rejecting external form.

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Generate the motivation of bodhicitta thinking, 'I have to attain enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, and in order to do so I am now going to listen to this profound teaching and put it into practice as much as possible'.

Last time we talked about how the 'only' in mind-only emphasises mind, and cuts off a permanent self as creator or an external creator and so forth, thus emphasising mind as being the creator of the world.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.3.2. Synchronicity of Object and Mind in Existence and Non-existence

*For those following that very point of worldly beings
Five aggregates exist according to worldly convention.
If one asserts the generation of the transcendental wisdom
of suchness,
For such a yogi those five don't exist.*

*If form doesn't exist, don't hold mind to exist;
Even if mind exists, don't hold form as non-existent.
The Buddha taught these in the Wisdom Method Sutra
As concomitant in abandoning, and in the Abhidharma.*

*Despite destroying the way of the two truths
Your substance, because of rejection, won't be established.
Therefore, because of the view's way, phenomena aren't
generated
As such from the beginning but should be known as worldly
generation.*

The commentary in *Mirror* says,

We have to say, '*if external form doesn't exist, don't hold mind to exist; even if mind exists, don't hold form as non-existent*' - because for those following that very point, the presentation of worldly beings, the five aggregates exist according to worldly convention and if one asserts the non-conceptual generation of the transcendental wisdom of suchness, then for such a yogi those five don't exist.

Take the subject '*these five aggregates*' - they are concomitant with each other in existence and non-existence - because the Buddha taught them in the sutra elucidating the method of the perfection of wisdom as concomitant with each other in abandoning inherent existence, and in the Abhidharma teachings he taught them from the point of view of their individual or general characteristics.

Take the subject '*your, the Mind Only's, inherently established other-powered substance*' - it won't be established though destroying the way of the two truths, not existing ultimately but existing in an illusory manner - because of rejection by valid cognition.

Because of the way mentioned before, phenomena aren't generated as suchness from the beginning but should be known as worldly nominal generation. In order not to degenerate the two truths, nominal existence without ultimate existence needs to be accepted.

Synchronicity of object and mind in existence and non-

existence refers to being concomitant in not existing inherently, and in existing nominally.

When the **Mind Only** say that form doesn't exist they mean that external form is non-existent, so that has to be specified. At the same time they assert that consciousness exists inherently.

This is the point of view that the **Prasangika** debate. They say that this point of view of having a lack of external form, and at the same time having an intrinsically existing consciousness is invalid because of the synchronicity of object and mind in existence and non-existence.

Here the line of reasoning about the synchronicity of object and mind in existence and non existence used by the Prasangika is to state that the object is the external object and the mind is the object possessor, and that they are concomitant in not existing inherently, or ultimately, and at the same time they are concomitant in existing nominally.

Regarding these first two lines of the first verse,

*For those following that very point of worldly beings
Five aggregates exist according to worldly convention.*

Illumination:

How do the five aggregates such as the aggregate of external form and so forth exist through worldly convention for those who abide according to the ordinary worldly presentation?

What this means is that the worldly way is to accept things without investigation or analysis - that's how phenomena are posited conventionally. The root text talks about 'that very point of worldly beings', which means the presentation of worldly beings as just accepting things without investigation and analysis. That's how things that exist conventionally exist. In such a way the first two lines show nominal, conventional, illusory existence.

The next two lines are,

*If one asserts the generation of the transcendental wisdom
of suchness,
For such a yogi those five don't exist.*

Just as the first two lines establish nominal existence, the second two lines establish the lack of ultimate existence. They do so by referring to the point that we already mentioned previously, where if illusory conventional phenomena appear to the transcendental wisdom realising suchness directly, then they would exist ultimately. So the absence of illusory conventional phenomena to the transcendental wisdom is the ultimate truth, the lack of ultimate existence.

So the first two lines show the synchronicity of object and mind in nominal existence, and the second two lines show the synchronicity of object and mind in not existing ultimately.

The first line of the second verse is, '**If form doesn't exist, don't hold mind to exist;** If external form doesn't exist then don't assert the mind to exist. Just because one holds mind to exist, don't hold external form as a non-existent.

Even if mind exists ultimately or inherently it is still unsuitable to hold external form as non-existent. The reason for this line of reasoning is that there is total synchronicity between object and mind in existence and non-existence.

Having employed this reasoning, Chandrakirti says that the synchronicity of object and mind in existence and non-existence is also supported by scriptural reference.

Proof Using Sutras

In the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* the Buddha showed that the five aggregates are concomitant in having abandoned or in lacking inherent existence. So the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* refute inherently existent five aggregates.

In the *Abhidharma* class of teachings the five aggregates are explained as being concomitant in existing either from the point of view of their specific characteristics, or their general characteristics. The *Abhidharmakosa*, or *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*, states that one should meditate on the close placement of mindfulness after having identified the specific and general characteristics of the object. In English the four close placements of mindfulness are often translated as the four foundations of mindfulness, which is a mistranslation¹.

The Four Close Placements of Mindfulness

1. Placement on Body

The first close placement is the placement of the mindfulness on the body. Here one can meditate on the general characteristics of the body such as its impermanence of the body, the pervasive suffering nature of the body, or the empty and selfless nature of the body as stated in the lines saying,

Everything compounded is impermanent,
Everything contaminated is suffering,
Everything is empty and selfless.

Those lines describe the general characteristics of, for example, the body. When one places one's mindfulness on the impermanence of, or the suffering nature of the body, one meditates on the general characteristic of the body. One can also meditate on an actual specific characteristic of the body, such as the body being in the nature of aggregates and the derivatives of aggregates, or the impurity of the body.

2. Placement on Feeling

The second of the four close placements of mindfulness is the placement of mindfulness on feeling. This is meditating on feeling as being in the nature of experience, which is that which defines feeling.

3. Placement on Mind

The third close placement is the placement of mindfulness on mind. Here the specific characteristic is the characteristic of focusing on the object.

4. Placement on Dharmas

The fourth close placement is the placement on dharmas. Here dharmas refer to the various virtuous and non-virtuous mental factors, and the placement on dharmas is placing one's mind on the individual specific characteristics of those mental factors.

One can meditate on the four close placements of mindfulness in a general way or in a specific way. So when one meditates on them in a **general** way then one always meditates on the general nature of the object such as the impermanence of the body, or the impermanence of feelings, or the impermanence of mind, or the impermanence of dharmas, here meaning the mental factors.

For example, we meditate on the impermanence of the body in conjunction with the line 'Everything compounded is impermanent', or we can meditate on the pervasive suffering nature of the body in conjunction with the second

line, 'Everything that is contaminated is suffering', or we can meditate on the empty and selfless nature of the body as stated in the third line, 'All phenomena are empty and selfless'.

One can also meditate on them in a more **specific** way. An example would be to meditate on the specific characteristic of the body in conjunction with meditating on the impure nature of the body. In such a manner one can meditate on each of the four objects of the four types of close placement of mindfulness in a general or specific way.

In the *Abhidharma* the five aggregates are explained from a specific point of view as well as from a general point of view. It explains how one meditates on them in both a specific as well as in a general manner. For example when we meditate on them in a specific way, we meditate on an individual specific characteristic or nature, like their specific identity. If meditating on the body being in the nature of impurity we would meditate on a specific characteristic of the body. Meditating on the body as being a combination of elements and derivatives of elements is also meditating on the specific nature of the body.

Despite destroying the way of the two truths

Your substance, because of rejection, won't be established.

Therefore, because of the view's way, phenomena aren't generated

As such from the beginning but should be known as worldly generation.

Mirror:

Take the subject '*your*, the Mind Only's, inherently established other-powered *substance*' - it *won't be established though destroying the way of the two truths*, not existing ultimately but existing in an illusory manner - because of *rejection* by valid cognition.

Because of the way mentioned before, *phenomena aren't generated as suchness from the beginning but should be known as worldly nominal generation*. In order not to degenerate the two truths, nominal existence without ultimate existence needs to be accepted.

Here the **Prasangika** say to the Mind Only, 'Having clearly shown through both logic as well through scriptural reference that object and mind are concomitant in existence and non-existence, even if you persist in destroying the way of the two truths your substance, truly existing consciousness, will still not be established, because it is completely rejected both by valid reasoning as well as by valid scriptural quotation'. We have already talked before about how in the Prasangika system there's no substantially existing phenomenon because they equalise it with true existence.

Therefore, because of the views that have already been explained, both through valid reasoning as well as with scriptural quotations, *phenomena are not generated* ultimately within suchness. This means that phenomena are not generated ultimately or inherently from the beginning, so they don't exist from beginningless times as being generated within suchness. Why? Because of all the reasons and quotations already given. They *should be known as worldly generation* meaning that they should be known as just being generated nominally.

'So for somebody like you, the Mind Only, who doesn't like to stay within the boundaries of the two truths and who likes to assert inherently existing consciousness while at the same time denying externally existing objects, then the

¹ *Tren-pa nyer-shag* refers to the close placement of wisdom on the body, feelings, mind and dharmas by mindfulness.

reason of the synchronicity of object and mind in existence and non-existence has to be explained’.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3. The Intent Regarding Mind Only in the Journey to Lanka Sutra

Here there are two major sub-outlines,

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1. Showing the teaching on mere mind without external object to be interpretive

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.2. Revealing the method for realising the definitive and interpretive meaning of the sutras

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1. Showing the Teaching on Mere Mind Without External Object To Be Interpretive

This has two sub outlines,

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1. Showing it to be interpretive through quotation

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.2. Showing it to be interpretive through logic

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1. Showing It To Be Interpretive Through Quotation

Here there are two outlines again,

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1.1. Actual

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1.2. Showing other similar sutras also to be interpretive

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1.1. Actual

The teaching from the sutra, ‘external objects Appear but don’t exist; varieties appear to the mind’, To counter form for those intensely attached To form, is again purely interpretive.

This was taught by the teacher to be merely interpretive And logic validates it to be merely interpretive.

We have already showed with the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* what the actual meaning of mind-only is, and we have shown that the teaching of mind-only is actually interpretative and not definitive. There is not only the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* but there are also other sutras such as the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*.

The verse begins, ‘The teaching from the sutra’, and the sutra that it is referring to is the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*. The meaning of the *Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi* has already been explained, and now the teaching from the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*, ‘external objects appear but don’t exist; varieties appear to the mind, things like the body, possessions and places, I declare to be mere mind’, is explained.

Through the condition of being intensely attached to truly existent intrinsically beautiful form, attachment, anger and pride are subsequently generated without any freedom. Through these mental fabrications one generates lots of non-virtue and engages in actions that harm one’s virtue, lessen one’s merits, harm’s ones wisdom, and so forth. Different delusions are subsequently generated because of the inappropriate way of initially grasping at the object as being something intrinsically beautiful. In order to stop the generation of the delusions that would otherwise arise relative to this intrinsically existing beautiful external object, it makes sense to say that such an external object doesn’t exist. In actuality this intrinsically beautiful external object is non-existent. Generally of course external objects are existent, but the intrinsically beautiful external object with regard to which the delusion is generated is really non-existent.

The non-existence of external form was not a definitive teaching but it was an interpretative teaching for certain disciples. It is similar to the Buddha’s teaching on skeletons

and so forth, which was taught in order to abandon attachment to external objects for those who have strong attachment.

How does one know that this quote is merely interpretative and not definitive? The Buddha himself taught that the statement that there is no external existence, and that everything that is mere mind is merely interpretative. This is established from quotations such as, ‘there’s no external existence’ and ‘everything is mere mind’.

That this sutra is interpretative is also validated by logical reasoning. So through both logical reasoning as well as through quotation the sutras teaching that there’s no external object, and that everything is mere mind, are established to be merely interpretative.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1.2. Showing Other Similar Sutras Also To Be Interpretive

This scripture shows clearly that also other Sutras in that image are merely interpretive.

Mirror:

Take the subject ‘*other sutras in the image* explained earlier asserted to be definitive by the Mind Only’ - they are interpretive - because this quote ‘Similarly to the doctor giving medicine to the patient, the Buddha clearly taught sentient beings about mere mind’ shows clearly that they are merely interpretive.

This quote, ‘Similarly to the doctor giving medicine to the patient, the Buddha clearly taught sentient beings about mere mind’, shows the teachings on mere mind to be interpretative.

When a doctor prescribes medicine they prescribe it in accordance with the patient’s sickness. They are not medicines that the doctor would necessarily take for themselves, they are tailored to the patient’s problem. Likewise when the Buddha taught sentient beings he did not always teach what he knew to be true. Rather he tailored his teachings according to the needs of sentient beings.

This quote, ‘similar to the doctor giving medicine to the patient the Buddha clearly taught sentient beings about mere mind’, is an important quote that you should memorise. It shows very clearly that the teachings on mere mind are interpretative. So when it says,

This scripture shows clearly that also other Sutras in that image are merely interpretive.

‘this scripture’ refers to this quote. The ‘other sutras in that image’ are sutras that are in the image of teaching mere mind. These lines show all of them to be merely interpretive.

What it does here is show that the sutras accepted by the Mind Only to be definitive teachings are merely interpretative. The **Mind Only** definition of whether a teaching is interpretative or definitive is not related to the subject matter of the sutra, but it is related to whether or not the sutra can be taken literally. The Mind Only say that if a sutra can be accepted literally then it is a definitive teaching, and if the sutra cannot be taken literally then it is an interpretative teaching. They don’t make a distinction between definitive and interpretative from the point of view of subject.

There are four sutras accepted by the Mind Only as definitive. They are,

- The sutra showing the lack of external existence
- The sutra showing the existence of universal mind foundation

- The sutra defining the three identities, mental fabrications, other-powered phenomena and thoroughly established phenomena, as either truly existent or lacking true existence.
- The sutra teaching about the three final vehicles.

We can get to the actual words of the sutra next time.

After those four definitive teachings according to the Mind Only comes the explanation of their meaning. It is good for you to know which teachings are accepted by the Mind Only as definitive, and which they accept as interpretative.

Review

What are the dharmas shown here? You have to think back. This question has been asked many many times before. Think back to the lines of the homage about bodhicitta and non-dual awareness. The dharmas shown here are in that homage, which says roughly, 'the mind of compassion and non-dual awareness and bodhicitta are the causes of bodhisattvas'. What are the three dharmas shown here at this time?

It seems that you are very quiet now, and that you don't have much to say. When we are giving answers to you then you are very critical and have lots to say, but now there's not much coming forth. There was a Kagyu abbot who used to always ask Geshe Jhampa Tekchok after his classes, 'Geshe-la it is exactly as you said isn't it?', and Geshe-la said, 'Well if you already know that it is exactly as I said, then why do you ask?'

Is there a difference between bodhicitta in general and the bodhicitta mentioned here in the second line of the homage where it says, 'the mind of enlightenment is the cause of the conquerors' children'?

Student: Yes

What's the difference?

Student answer: Whether or not it is generated in dependence on meditating on the seven point cause and effect method.

Is there a bodhicitta that doesn't arise from meditating on the seven-point cause and effect method? It is not possible to posit a bodhicitta that has not been generated through meditating on the seven-point cause and effect method. Should you posit a bodhicitta that is generated through meditating on the method of exchanging self and others then there is no pervasion, because when you meditate on the method of exchanging self and other, the method of the seven-point cause and effect method is implicitly included in the method of exchanging self and others.

The distinction between bodhicitta in general and that posited in the opening lines of the homage is that the former is spontaneous. The latter hasn't got to the point of being generated spontaneously. Through continual meditation on the method for the generation of bodhicitta (seven-point cause and effect or exchanging self and others) one gains a strong experience of bodhicitta, but it is still created with mental effort, and it is not a spontaneous thought. Then there comes a time when the thought of bodhicitta is a natural part of one's mind without having to go through any mental process. It will just arise naturally within one's mind without having to remember the different types of reasons, or going through a mental process of creating it. You should know difference between these two types of bodhicitta.

It is the same with compassion, where we have the same two types. Initially the strong compassion that one generates is a created type of compassion. Then through continual

meditation that will become an integral part of one's mind and will arise spontaneously. Then just by seeing another sentient being great compassion will immediately arise within one's mind similarly to the compassion that arises naturally in the mind of the mother when she sees her only child being sick.

Who is the object of the homage of the *Introduction To The Middle Way*?

Student answer: Compassion

There are three reasons why great compassion is the object of homage. What are those?

Student answer: Important in the beginning, middle and end.

What is the analogy used for compassion that is important in the **beginning**? It is like the seed. When great compassion is generated in one's mind then one's Mahayana lineage is awakened at that time. Why is it like a seed? Great compassion is like the seed from which the different grounds and paths of the bodhisattva path grow. They grow from the seed of great compassion.

Why is compassion important in the middle? Compassion is important in the **middle** in order to increase the qualities of the grounds and paths. Without great compassion the qualities of the grounds and paths can't be increased. **Finally** great compassion is important so that the disciples can enjoy the fruit of complete enlightenment.

In order to become enlightened one needs to accumulate great merit, so one needs to engage in vast and difficult duties for the benefit of sentient beings. In doing those activities one always encounters ungrateful and vicious sentient beings with bad behaviour, and then if one lacks great compassion then it is very easy to fall from the path.

For example without compassion it would be very difficult for parents to bring up a child that is badly behaved. If the parents don't have compassion for the child it would be very easy to give up on the child. Compassion makes it possible to bear the disruptive and bad behaviour of the child, while continuing to try and bring it up in the best possible way for the child.

Here one definitely needs this compassion for the other in order for one's beneficial activities not to be harmed by the person, and so that one is not discouraged and so forth. Likewise when we work for sentient beings we need to have that compassion for others in order to not experience discouragement and so forth because of their difficult behaviour.

That's how you should look at the benefit of compassion. Without compassion then if others give us problems it really creates problems for us. However if we have compassion for them, then even though they might be difficult it doesn't create problems for us.

It is similar to the relationship between a patient and the nurse. The nurse needs to have lots of compassion for their patient otherwise the relationship between patient and nurse won't turn out very well. She needs to see that the patient is already there, they have an illness and they have to stay in hospital, so it is very important to have compassion for them.

For example, the nurse looks at the patient and thinks, 'Oh they are sick. No matter how much money they have, no matter how many relatives they have, or how many children, all that is actually of no benefit, because the patient is under the control of their sickness'. Viewing the person in

such a way helps greatly in generating compassion.

The patient, despite having a wealth of friends and so forth, still became sick. Their friends, relatives and money didn't help one bit in preventing them from becoming sick. Now they are in hospital they have to experience different suffering - they have to experience exactly what they don't want. They also lack what they want. For example in hospital you have to eat many things you don't like to eat. So the person is actually deprived of all of the external means for happiness that they previously had. They are completely thrown back on themselves and on their mind. If they have never taken care of their mind, and allowed it to degenerate, be negative and so forth and then at that point, because they have neither outer nor inner resources for happiness then they will become very miserable.

It's no surprise that old people often become very, very depressed, because all the external means that they used to rely upon for happiness have all gone. They can't enjoy those external means any more for many different types of reasons, and as they have never taken care of their mind they don't have any way to be happy. So of course they will be depressed. It's not surprising.

At such a time one will feel incredibly grateful towards those who show one kindness at such a difficult time. Then one will want to give all of one's money to that person. I heard a few weeks ago about somebody who gave eleven million dollars to a neighbour who took care of them during their last days.

Some people leave all their money to their dog or cat. That's not surprising because it's the dog or cat which usually gave them some happiness in their last years, when their children and so forth were nowhere to be seen.

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Study Group - *Madhyamakavatarama*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

དབུ་མ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་པོ།

6 April 2004

Please generate the virtuous motivation of bodhicitta as usual.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1.2. Showing Other Similar Sutras Also To Be Interpretive

Last time we started with the verse that reads,

This scripture shows clearly that also other Sutras in that image are merely interpretive.

Mirror:

Take the subject '*other sutras in the image* explained earlier asserted to be definitive by the Mind Only' - they are interpretive - because this quote 'Similarly to the doctor giving medicine to the patient, the Buddha clearly taught sentient beings about mere mind' shows clearly that they are merely interpretive.

These other similar sutras are: the sutra that shows the lack of external existence, the sutra that shows the existence of a universal mind foundation, and the sutra that discerns the true and non-true existence of the three identities.

The sutra that explains the lack of external existence and the sutra that explains the existence of a universal mind foundation were covered earlier in the text. If you remember back, earlier in the text one verse starts with the question, 'what example is there for a consciousness without external object'. That is the point where the sutra explaining the lack of external objects is covered. Likewise when the text later talks about universal mind foundation the sutra that explains the existence of a universal mind foundation is also covered. The sutra that is now going to be covered is the sutra that discerns the true and non-true existence of the three identities.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1.1.2. Showing It To Be Interpretive Through Logic

That consciousness is eliminated if there is no object of knowledge

Is easily discovered, the buddhas taught

Since consciousness is refuted if there is no object of knowledge

I initially endeavour to refute objects of knowledge.

Four sutras are regarded by the Mind Only as definitive sutras: the sutra that explains the lack of external existence, the sutra that explains the existence of a universal mind foundation, the sutra that discerns the true and non-true existence of the three identities, and the sutra that teaches three final vehicles. The reason why Chandrakirti in his root text and *Self-Commentary* refutes only the first three sutras as definitive and doesn't

actually endeavour to also refute the fourth sutra as definitive is because in the *Compendium of All Sutras*¹ it is already clearly refuted.

The Four Definitive Sutras of the Mind-Only

1. Sutra Showing the Lack of External Objects

From *Elucidating the Intent of the Sutras*: 'Whatever is an object possessing form that is engaged by the concentration of the Destroyer With Qualities Gone Beyond - why is it described to be different from mind, or isn't it different?' To this the Destroyer With Qualities Gone Beyond replies, 'Jampa, it isn't different. If it is asked why, consciousness is set apart by being mere knowledge of the object, I say'.

2. Sutra Showing A Universal Mind Foundation

From *Elucidating the Intent of the Sutras*: 'The taken consciousness is profound and subtle, all seeds fall like a water stream, if conceptualised as self - this is unsuitable I say, I don't show this to the childish'.

3. Sutra Discerning The True And Non-true Nature Of The Three Identities According To The Mind-Only

From the chapter requested by Dondam Yangdag Phag in *Elucidating the Intent of the Sutras*: 'If it is asked what lacks quintessential characteristics, it is the characteristic of mental fabrication. If it is asked why, it is because it is posited through name and sign and doesn't abide through its own characteristic². Therefore it is called 'Lacking quintessential characteristics' and so forth'.

This sutra discerns the inherent and non-inherent existence of the three identities.

4. Sutra Teaching Three Final Vehicles

From *Elucidating the Intent of the Sutras*: 'Those singularly progressing towards peace don't completely awaken to highest perfect enlightenment, even if they have the help of all the buddhas and possess the essence of enlightenment ...'

Chandrakirti then establishes those four sutras to be interpretative through scriptural quotation as well as through logic.

Establishing Those Four Sutras To Be Interpretive Through Other Quotations

1. Sutra Showing The Teaching On Mere Intrinsic Consciousness Lacking An External Object To Be Interpretive

From the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*: 'Similarly to the doctor giving medicine to the patient, the Buddha clearly taught sentient beings about mere mind'.

This sutra shows that the teaching about mere mind was only meant to be interpretative. Similarly to the doctor giving medicine to the patient according to their sickness, the Buddha taught sentient beings about mere mind, without that necessarily being his personal viewpoint.

¹ The *Compendium of All Sutras* was composed by by Nagarjuna

² Inherent

2. Sutra Showing The Teaching On A Universal Mind Foundation To Be Interpretive

In the *Journey to Lanka Sutra* the Buddha teaches that all sentient beings possess a permanent, stable and immutable tathagata essence endowed with the thirty-two marks, which is clad in aggregates, spheres and sources, outshined by anger, attachment and ignorance, and tainted by over-conceptualisation, similarly to a precious jewel being clad in stained cloth. That it is permanent means it doesn't change, that it is stable means that it is always there, and being immutable means here to exist eternally since beginningless times.

By showing this teaching of the *Journey to Lanka Sutra* on the tathagata's essence to be interpretive the teaching from the *Elucidating the Intent of the Sutras* on a universal mind foundation is also shown to be interpretive.

This teaching of the *Journey to Lanka Sutra* on the tathagata's essence is shown to be interpretive by the subsequent lines in the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*³ where the Buddha says, 'Lodroe Chenbo (Great Intelligent One), my teaching on the tathagata's essence isn't the same as the heathens asserting as self, Great Intelligent One, the Ones Gone Thus, the arhats, the perfectly enlightened buddhas taught the meaning of words such as emptiness, perfect end, gone beyond misery, unborn, signless, wishless and so forth, as tathagata's essence'.

When the Buddha taught the tathagata's essence he had in mind the three doors to liberation - emptiness, signlessness and wishlessness - i.e. the selflessness of phenomena. The reason for teaching in such a way was to lead to suchness gradually the childish students afraid of selflessness, those grasping at the views of the heathen, and those who were habituated in those views.

How does establishing the teaching on the tathagata's essence as interpretive establish the teaching on a universal mind foundation as interpretive?

From *Placing the Solid Ornament*: 'The universal basis of various grounds, as well the virtue tathagata's essence, with the word 'universal basis' the tathagata's essence, is shown by the tathagatas, even though the essence is known as universal basis, those with grasping awareness don't know it'.

This and other quotes from the *Journey to Lanka Sutra* show that the Buddha taught the universal mind foundation with the tathagata's essence in mind. Even though one was taught as permanent while the other was taught as impermanent, they are the same from the point of view of their implicit meaning, since the Buddha taught the universal mind foundation with the tathagata's essence in mind. Therefore by establishing the teaching on the tathagata's essence as interpretive, the teaching on a universal mind foundation is also established as interpretive.

The emptiness of the mind is the foundation of all the grounds and paths because it is their main meditation

object. That is why it is referred to as universal mind foundation. The tathagata's essence is also referred to as virtue. Why? Because the mind that meditates on emptiness is a virtuous mind.

How the sutra that teaches a permanent, truly existent tathagata's essence shown to be interpretive is by showing that all phenomena are empty, i.e. that all phenomena lack true existence. Showing that all phenomena lack true existence directly contradicts the teaching on a truly existent essence and it directly shows it to be interpretive. By showing that teaching to be interpretive the teaching on the universal mind foundation is also shown to be interpretive.

In the commentary it states that emptiness alone is expressed by the words 'universal mind foundation' in order to accord with the nature of all phenomena.

We say it in brief that the hidden intent of the teaching on the universal mind foundation is the emptiness of the mind, and the purpose of the teaching was to subdue the students that had a disposition for the Mind Only point of view. How it is shown to be interpretive is that one establishes that there is only a six-fold collection of primary consciousness and no seventh or eighth kind of consciousness.

The hidden intent of the teaching on a permanent, stable, truly existent tathagata's essence is the three doors to liberation - i.e. the selflessness of phenomena - and the purpose of the teaching is to gradually lead to emptiness those disciples who are afraid of selflessness, those grasping at the views of the heathen, and those who were habituated in those views

So you can see that the sutra of the tathagatas' essence and the sutra of the universal mind foundation have a different hidden intent, they have a different hidden subject, they have a different purpose, and they were taught for different types of students.

3. Sutra Showing The Sutra Discerning The True And Non-true Nature Of The Three Identities According To The Mind-Only To Be Interpretive

From the *Journey to Lanka Sutra*: 'Great Intelligent One, I am showing that the meaning of emptiness, non-generation, non-disintegration and lack of inherent existence is conveyed in the sutras of all buddhas'.

By teaching that all phenomena are empty, that they lack inherent generation, disintegration, and so forth, the *Journey to Lanka Sutra* shows the teaching on the inherent and non-inherent existence of the three identities to be interpretive. How? Because it shows that the ultimate, the final or the actual thought of the Buddha is that all phenomena lack intrinsic existence. By showing that the final thought of the Buddha is that all phenomena lack inherent existence it shows very clearly that the teaching that mental fabrications lack inherent existence while other-powered phenomena and thoroughly-established phenomena are inherently existent is interpretive.

We have now gone through the four sutras that are held by the Mind Only to be definitive, and then we have gone through the three sutras Chandrakirti used to establish

³ Actually the whole section can be found in Chandrakirti's *Self-Commentary* under the same outline. The other quotes are also there.

the first three to be merely interpretive.

After showing those three sutras to be interpretative through scripture then they are shown to be interpretative through logic.

3.5.1.1.2.2.3.3.1.2. Showing It To Be Interpretive Through Logic

That consciousness is eliminated if there is no object of knowledge

Is easily discovered, the buddhas taught.

Since consciousness is refuted if there is no object of knowledge

I initially endeavour to refute objects of knowledge.

Mirror:

There is a reason why the Buddha initially refuted external objects of knowledge - because it is easy to *refute* ultimately existing *consciousness if there is no external object of knowledge. The buddhas taught it is easily discovered that truly existing consciousness is eliminated if there is no external object of knowledge.*

By refuting external objects of knowledge not only one also refutes truly existing external objects of knowledge, and then that makes it easier to refute truly existent consciousness.

3.5.1.1.2.2.3.3.2. Revealing the Method for Realising the Definitive and Interpretive Meaning of the Sutras

Having comprehended the sutra's story in such a way,

Any sutra with a content explaining non-suchness should be interpreted, having been taught and realised as interpretive,

And with emptiness content should be known as definitive.

Mirror:

In such a way should the definitive and interpretive be known, having comprehended the story of the sutras - because any sutra with a content explaining mainly the illusory non-suchness should be interpreted, having been taught and realised as interpretive, and those with an emptiness content should be known as definitive.

In the **Prasangika** system if a sutra has a primary explicit subject of emptiness then it is a definitive sutra. If a sutra has a primary explicit subject of illusory conventional truth then it is an interpretive sutra. That is what is shown in this verse. So here any sutra with content explaining non-suchness should be interpreted, and sutras with a primary explicit content of emptiness content should be known as definitive.

Whereas the **Mind Only** definition of a definitive sutra is a sutra that can be taken literally, and a sutra that can't be taken literally is an interpretative sutra.

In the **Svatantrika-Madhyamika** system, Bhavivika gives the definition of a definitive sutra as a sutra that can be taken literally and which has the primary explicit subject of emptiness. So he adds that it has to be taken literally. A sutra having the primary explicit subject of illusory conventional truth or which can't be taken literally is an interpretative sutra.

In the topic of refuting the generation from the four extremes⁴ we have now refuted generation from self and generation from other. Now we move onto refuting generation from both.

3.5.1.1.2.3. Refuting Generation from Both

Generation from both also isn't in the nature of logic because

The faults already explained rain down upon it.

It doesn't according to the world, it also isn't posited as suchness

Because proof that it is generated from each is non-existent.

The Hindu tenet that asserts generation from both is the Jain school, which is still a living school. The literal translation of the word means 'those without clothes'. Those who follow the Jain school go around naked. That is because they feel if one wears clothes then indirectly one is harming sentient beings, because the clothes have to come from somewhere, and insects are harmed in the production and preparation of the cloth. They are so strict that they use a special broom to wipe the path in front of them so that they don't kill any insects.

Mirror:

The Jain assert, 'A vase is generated from self since it is generated from clay, and it is generated from other since it is generated from a stick, string and so forth.

Take the subject 'vase' - *generation from both also isn't in the nature of logic - because the faults already explained rain down upon it. It, the subject 'generation from both', doesn't exist according to the world, and it also isn't posited as suchness - because proof that it is generated from each of self and other is non-existent.*

They say a vase, for example, is generated from both self and others, and therefore they say that the faults associated with generation from self and other individually don't apply to them.

3.5.1.1.2.3. Refuting Generation from Neither

Even though there are more verses of the root text it is actually not very difficult.

In the next two classes we will attempt to finish the rest of the major topic, establishing the selfless of phenomena, which will take us up to the start of establishing the selflessness of person. That's what you can use for the exam.

*Transcribed from tape by Mark Emerson
Edit 1 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak
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⁴ Heading 3.5.1.1.1. Refutation of the four-fold generation

Study Group - *Madhyamakavataram*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

། དབྱ་མ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་པོ། །

13 April 2004

Regarding the outline that we have reached, there was the division into establishing the selflessness of phenomena and establishing the selflessness of person. Establishing the selflessness of phenomena then was subdivided into the refutation of the generation from the four extremes. We had a refutation of the generation from self, other and both, and now we have reached the fourth one - refuting generation from neither.

3.5.1.1.2.4. Refuting Generation From Neither

The tenet that asserts generation of functionalities from neither self nor other is the tenet of the Carvakas and they say therefore all the faults that are mentioned above don't apply to them.

The Carvakas say that the different inner and outer objects arise without cause. For example there are outer objects such as the different parts of a lotus flower, the stem of the lotus flower, the petals, and so forth. They say there is nothing that causes those different parts, and their differences in texture, colour and so forth. Likewise the colours of the wings of a butterfly and the colours of other birds are also not generated by any particular cause - they just arise like that.

The Tibetan word for Carvaka means something like generating distance. What it means is they are people that generate distance between themselves and liberation and enlightenment. They place themselves far away from liberation and enlightenment. The section dealing with the Carvakas has five verses.

In case it comes to looking at being generated from no cause at all,

At that time all will be generated from everything and Worldly beings wouldn't, in order to get fruit, collect With hundreds their seeds and so forth.

In case it comes to looking at being generated from no cause at all, at that time all will be generated from everything. It follows that all functionalities will be generated from every cause and non-cause, unrelated to time or place.

First of all apple trees should arise from every other cause as well, not just from apple seeds. Then they should also grow at any odd time, and also at any place. Normally when we plant a seed in the ground, there is a certain time when that seed will grow into a sprout, which then becomes the tree. Usually that won't happen during winter, but only in spring and the summer. But if effects arise without any cause, then that should happen at any odd time. And it should also happen at any odd place. But we know there are plants that won't grow in certain places

When it says, 'At that time all will be generated from everything', it really becomes inclusive that the generation of objects shouldn't be dependent on time or place.

Then, after refuting the Carvaka point of view with this type of reasoning it says the Charvaka's point of view also contradicts what we can see directly, because we can see that in order to get a crop the farmer has to engage in a hundredfold effort.

That's what it means when it says: '*Worldly beings wouldn't, in order to get fruit, collect with hundreds of efforts, seeds and so forth*'. In order to actually get the fruit - the harvest - many hundreds of efforts are needed by the farmer. That observation directly contradicts the assertion that effects arise without any cause at all.

If migrators totally lack perception when devoid of cause,

Like the smell and colour of an utpala flower in the sky,

Because I am apprehending the extremely clear world, Know that, similar to my awareness, the world is generated from a cause.

Should migrators be without cause, then similarly to the smell and colour of an utpala flower in the sky, they would lack perception. Know that because I am apprehending with my awareness the great variety of the extremely clear external world, migrators are generated from a cause, similarly to my awareness.

One sub-culture of the Carvakas says that everything arises intrinsically from the four elements. Therefore also mind arises from the transformation of particulars of the elements, like alcohol being naturally generated in beer through the process of fermentation. Therefore there is no mental continuum of sentient beings and no past and future lives.

A Carvaka once said, 'The beautiful should be enjoyed and eaten. Gorgeous, what is past will not affect you, and the body is a mere collection. Therefore don't be afraid and don't stop.' He said this in order to get a girl (maybe his daughter) into bed. In order to overcome her objections he tried to convince her that there are no future lives to worry about.

If the object of your awareness, transformed from an entity -

The elements - doesn't possess their nature then How could those with only thick mental darkness regarding this

Come to accurately realise the world beyond in such a way?

The Carvakas say that the mind is generated from the transformation of the four elements in the embryo like alcohol is generated in beer through the transformation, i.e. fermentation, of its four elements. Here we have to think about what it means to be a substantial cause. It is ok to posit the four elements as the substantial cause for physical objects but one can't posit them as the substantial cause for the mind. One can also say that the alcohol is that which makes the mind intoxicated, but one can't say that the alcohol is the substantial cause for the intoxicated mind.

*Realise that when engaged in negating the world beyond,
One's view of the nature of objects of knowledge is distorted Because
Of having a body like a basis for views of that kind.
Like when accepting the entity of elements to be merely existent.*

You should realise that when you are engaged in negating the world beyond, i.e. future lives, then your view of the nature of objects of knowledge is distorted. Why? Because of having a body that acts as the basis for that type of views, i.e. like the view holding the elements to exist truly.

Realise that when engaged in negating the world beyond, one's view of the nature of objects of knowledge is distorted, because of having a body acting like the basis for that type of view, the denial of a world beyond. It is like accepting the entity of elements to be merely truly existent.

*I already explained how those elements don't exist in that way
Because I previously negated generation from self and other,
From both and no cause equally.
These elements not explained, look at them, they don't exist.*

These elements not explained - look at them. They don't exist truly - because I already explained how those elements don't exist in that way, truly. I previously negated generation from self and other, from both and no cause equally.

3.5.1.1.1.3. The Meaning Established Through The Refutation

*Therefore, since generation from self and other and both, and independence.
From causes are non-existent, functionalities are devoid of nature.*

Take the subject 'functionalities' - they are devoid of a quintessential nature - because they are not generated from self, other, both and they are also not independent from causes. However, even if they are not generated from the four extremes, that doesn't mean they are not generated at all. They are generated but only nominally. They aren't generated inherently but they are generated nominally.

3.5.1.1.2. Eliminating Objections To This Refutation

Here the Realists posit various objections to the Prasangika's refutation.

3.5.1.1.2.1. Actual

*Worldly beings possess thick ignorance similar to a collection of clouds,
Through which objects appear to them in a distorted way.*

The Realist's objection is that if a phenomenon doesn't exist inherently and is not generated inherently, then how could it be even apprehended. If you remember back, according to the Realists, if it exists, then it has to be the object of either a direct perception that is unmistakable with regard to the inherent appearing object or of a conceptual thought that is unmistakable with regard to the

inherent object of determination. According to them, if nothing exists inherently, how can phenomena be generated and perceived.

How is this appearance of inherent existence generated? Ordinary people who haven't realised emptiness don't have an understanding of the ultimate nature of abiding and to them, objects will appear inherently. So the mistaken appearance of inherent existence will be generated in their minds. How is that mistaken appearance of inherent existence generated in their mind? The answer to that is in the verse that talks about worldly beings possessing a thick ignorance similar to a collection of clouds and so forth (Verse 6.104cd).

Worldly beings possess thick ignorance similar to a collection of clouds. If we have really thick clouds all gathered together we get this cluster of really thick rain clouds and the whole sky becomes dark. Likewise, the mind of sentient beings is darkened by ignorance. When our mind is clouded by ignorance it becomes really dark, and the mind darkened by ignorance will not perceive suchness. However, it will still perceive illusory phenomena. How does that happen? How does the distorted appearance appear in the mind through the force of ignorance?

*In that way some, through the force of eye-defects, mistakenly
Apprehend falling hairs, two moons, eyes of a peacock's feather and bees etc.
Likewise, through the force of the fault of ignorance those not proficient
Realise with their wisdom a variety of compounded phenomena.*

This happens similarly to the generation of mistaken appearances such as falling hairs, two moons and so forth through the force of eye defects and the appearance of a wheel of fire that comes about through the whirling of a firebrand etc. Likewise, through the fault of ignorance those not proficient in emptiness realise with their wisdom a variety of inherently existent compounded phenomena.

What is actually wrong with those not proficient in emptiness perceiving inherently existent compounded phenomena?

*In case, don't doubt whether or not the teaching 'karma arises in dependence on ignorance, without ignorance it doesn't arise', was given for those not proficient.
The sages who clear the thick darkness with the sun of a pure mind
Comprehend emptiness and become liberated.*

Those that are not proficient in emptiness will say that an inherently existent effect arises from an inherently existent cause, and therefore for example, from an inherently existent ignorance then inherently existent karma is generated, and from that, inherently existent consciousness arises and so forth. Those who are proficient, however, will recognise that karma lacks inherent existence when they see that it arises from ignorance. So one shouldn't think that the teaching 'karma arises in dependence on ignorance, without ignorance it doesn't arise', was given for those not

proficient. Because those that grasp at inherent existence perpetuate their samsara while those that see the lack of inherent existence become liberated from it.

Those realising that from non-inherent ignorance non-inherently existent karma is generated will be those that realise profound independent arising and will be able to sever the continuity of the twelve links. Those who realise emptiness will clear away the darkness of ignorance with the sun of the pure wisdom and become liberated. However, if you believe that from inherently existent ignorance inherently existent karma is generated, then you will achieve exactly the opposite. You will actually not become liberated from cyclic existence, but only perpetuate cyclic existence.

Those are the benefits of realising that dependent origination does not exist inherently and also the disadvantage from believing that dependent origination exists inherently.

*If functionalities don't exist as such, then
Because they would also become completely non-
existent
Nominally, like the mule's foal,
They absolutely exist intrinsically.*

The Realists say that functionalities absolutely have to exist intrinsically because otherwise they would be completely non-existent nominally like at the mule's foal if they didn't exist ultimately. Phenomena exist nominally and therefore they have to exist inherently because without inherent existence, there would be no nominal existence. If a phenomenon appears to a nominal valid cognition but then doesn't exist the way it appears to that nominal cognition, then there is a discrepancy between appearance and existence and that object possessor would not actually be a valid cognition. For example, we have the case of the mule's foal. It can appear to the mind but it doesn't actually exist. It is the same for phenomena that appear to exist inherently even though they lack inherent existence.

*Since the falling hairs etc., that become objects
Of those having eye-defects etc., aren't generated,
For the moment I shall debate only those, then,
Subsequently those following eye-defects of ignorance.
If dreams and towns of smell eaters, the water of the
mirage,
Magic and reflections etc. are seen as unborn,
Even though they are matched in being totally non-
existent
Why is it like that for you, which is invalid.
Though it isn't born in this way in suchness
It isn't like the mule's foal,
An object not seen by worldly beings.
Therefore this statement is inaccurate.*

These verses refute the Realist idea of the that nominal existence has to be inherent. In order to achieve that aim Chandrakirti initially says he want to debate only this point of an ordinary distorted awareness such as the eye-consciousness to which falling hairs appear. Only after having debated this point does he want to move on to ignorance.

*Transcribed from tape by Bernie Wright
Edit 1 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak*

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Study Group - *Madhyamakavataram*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

དབུ་མ་ལ་འདུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་པོ།

20 April 2004

Please generate the proper motivation for listening to the teachings thinking, 'I have to attain complete enlightenment in order to be able to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings and in order to do so, I am now going to listen to this teaching. Then I'm going to practise it'.

3.5.1.1.2.1. Actual (cont.)

Last time we reached verse 108 of the root text, which says,

*Since the falling hairs etc., that become objects
Of those having eye-defects etc., aren't generated,
For the moment I shall debate only those, then,
Subsequently those following eye-defects of
ignorance.*

These four lines are an answer to a debate by the **Realists**, who say that if functionalities don't exist as such, i.e. intrinsically, then they would also become completely non-existent nominally, like the mule's foal. Therefore they absolutely have to exist intrinsically. From the Realists' point of view, if phenomena don't exist ultimately, or if phenomena don't exist inherently, then they don't have the ability to exist nominally, and in such a way they become like a mule's foal. We have already talked about the Realists' assertion that if something exists it has to be the object of either a direct perception, or a conceptual thought that is respectively unmistakable with regard to the inherently existent appearing object, or the inherently existent determined object.

Ordinarily, the term '**Realist**' refers to a proponent asserting true existence. Technically, the **Svatantrika-Madhyamakas** don't fall into that category because on the one hand they deny true existence, but on the other hand they assert inherent existence. Because they assert inherent existence they are here included in the category of Realists.

In verse 108 **Chandrakirti** advises the Svatantrika-Madhyamaka to first debate those who have eye defects and so forth, and who, as a result, have various kinds of distorted appearances.

He says, 'According to you the falling hairs and so forth that appear to people with eye-defects and so forth, are the same as a mule's foal. How does it come about then that one can see the falling hairs but not a mule's foal? Firstly talk to people who have various defects, and who experience distorted appearances because of those defects. Then later you can subsequently debate the eye defects of ignorance. Why? Because the falling hairs and

so forth that are the objects of those with eye defects are the same in not being generated as inherent existence. That is the object of those with the defect of ignorance.'

Here **Chandrakirti** says, 'Well then, take the falling hairs that appear to someone with an eye defect. It follows that they are also the same as the mule's foal, as they don't exist inherently or nominally. If they are the same as the mule's foal, and you ask somebody who has such an eye defect whether a mule's foal appears to them, then the answer is no. Falling hairs appear to their mind, but not a mule's foal. Therefore the question arises as to whether falling hairs and a mule's foal are really the same'.

From the **Realist** point of view, existence and inherent existence are the same and go hand in hand. Then **Chandrakirti** says to the Realist, 'Not only should you question this person with an eye defect, but also, ultimately, you really have to investigate your own mind. You have to debate with your own mind the way your mind apprehends things.

*If dreams and towns of smell eaters, the water of
the mirage,
Magic and reflections etc. are seen as unborn,
Even though they are matched in being totally
non-existent
Why is it like that for you, which is invalid.*

The **Realists** say that all the things listed in the first two lines are like a mule's foal, as they are all seen as unborn.

Mirror:

...then it follows it is fitting to argue that it *is invalid* that *for you* the dream house and family etc. *are* visible while the mule's foal isn't.

Even though the dream house, the family and towns of smell eaters, the water of the mirage and so forth, are all things that don't really exist, they do appear to the mind. So it is also suitable that we should be able to see a mule's foal, because the mule's foal is the same as all those phenomena in not being generated inherently and in not existing nominally.

*Though it isn't born in this way in suchness
It isn't like the mule's foal,
An object not seen by worldly beings.
Therefore this statement is inaccurate.*

Chandrakirti is saying, 'Even though something might not be generated inherently it isn't necessarily like a mule's foal - an object not seen by worldly beings. Something can be seen by worldly beings even though not being generated inherently, therefore your statement is inaccurate. Even though they don't exist inherently various reflections appear in a big and clear mirror. After analysing this more coarse phenomena, then you can move on to the more subtle ones'.

3.5.1.1.2.2. Summary

*The mule's foal doesn't have generation by its
nature
In suchness or in the world.
Likewise, all these functionalities
Aren't generated naturally in the world or
suchness.*

Basically, the position of the **Realists** is that forms and so forth exist inherently, because they are the object of nominal valid cognition. This consequence that they would exist inherently because they exist nominally, is an argument that is not accepted by the **Prasangika**. 'The mule's foal doesn't have generation by its nature in suchness or in the world', the Prasangika say, 'so similarly all functionalities also aren't generated naturally in the world or suchness'.

*Like that therefore, the Teacher taught that all dharmas
Are pacified from the beginning, lack generation
And have passed naturally beyond sorrow.
Therefore generation never exists.*

For that reason the Teacher taught that all dharmas are pacified from the beginning, lack generation and have passed naturally beyond sorrow.

From the *Cloud of Jewels Sutra*, 'When the wheel of Dharma is turned, pacified from the beginning and not generated, having gone naturally beyond sorrow, you, Protector - that's how you show phenomena.'

This verse shows how the Buddha taught that all dharmas are pacified from the beginning and so forth. When it says that they are pacified from the beginning, it means that the inherent existence is not just pacified to the transcendental wisdom realising emptiness, but that the phenomena were never inherently existent. The lack of inherent existence is not something that is just pacified by the transcendental wisdom, but it is something that has been pacified since the beginning, something that has never existed.

*Vases etc. don't exist in suchness and
Exist according to worldly convention.
Since all functionalities are like that
It doesn't follow they are like the mule's foal.*

Although phenomena don't exist in suchness, they aren't like a mule's foal, because phenomena exist conventionally. The Vaibashikas say that ultimate existence is something that cannot be divided, while those objects that can be divided form what is called conventionally illusory existence.

Here phenomena have a conventional illusory existence without having an ultimate existence.

3.5.1.1.3. Way of eliminating extreme view through dependent generation

*Since functionalities aren't born from
No cause, the cause of Ishvara etc.,
Self, other or both;
Therefore they are generated interdependently.*

Functionalities are not born from no cause, they are not generated by Ishvara and so forth, they are not generated from self, they are not generated from other, and they are not generated from both. Therefore they are generated interdependently. To the question, 'If the sprout is not generated from no cause, is not generated from both, is not generated from other, is not generated from both, is not generated by Ishvara and so forth, is it still valid to say that the sprout is generated from the seeds?', the

answer is yes.

Mirror:

Take the subject 'functionalities' - they are generated independently upon causes and conditions - because they are generated and not born from no cause, the cause of Ishvara etc., self, other or both.

So then what is the need to establish phenomena as being generated interdependently. In the lower tenets dependent origination is only understood in the context of cause and effect but here it is also applied to permanent phenomena. As we have said, if phenomena are not generated from self, other, etc. then what is the need to establish them as being generated interdependently?

*Since functionalities are generated interdependently
These ideas can't bear analysis.
Therefore, by this very reason of dependent arising
The spider web of all bad views is cut.*

Mirror:

By this very reason of dependent arising the spider web of all bad views is cut, since these ideas can't bear the analysis of the realisation that functionalities are generated interdependently.

The 'web of all bad views is cut' refers to the extreme views such as the view of eternalism and the nihilistic view. On the one hand phenomena are viewed as inherently existent, and from an inherently existent cause an inherently existent effect exists. On the other hand, there is the thought that phenomena are totally non-existent, and that no effect arises from any cause.

The two extremes are inherent existence and complete non-existence. The two extreme views are the grasping at those two extremes: the extreme of no effect, being generated from a cause and so forth.

*Thoughts arise when functionalities exist, but
How functionalities don't exist has been thoroughly examined.
Without functionalities they don't arise, for example
Like the non-existence of fire without wood.*

Mirror:

Without true grasping at functionalities they, the extreme thoughts, don't arise. Extreme thoughts arise when true grasping of functionalities exists, but how functionalities don't exist truly has been thoroughly examined, for example like the non-existence of fire without wood.

3.5.1.1.4. Identifying the fruit of becoming empowered in reasoning

*Ordinary individuals are bound by thoughts,
Yogis without thought become liberated.
Whatever reversal of the thoughts there is
Is taught by the sages as the fruit of investigation.
In the treatises it doesn't teach suchness
Because of attachment to analysis and debate,
But for the purpose of liberation.*

Mirror:

In the treatises analysis of suchness isn't done because of attachment to debate, but they teach suchness for the purpose of liberation. Ordinary individuals are bound by extreme thoughts; yogis without distorted thoughts become liberated. Whatever reversal of extreme thoughts there is, is taught by the sages as the fruit of investigation of suchness as taught in the treatises.

Those sages and experts who realise emptiness through investigation will be liberated from the two extreme views. The sages who've become experts in emptiness and arya beings will receive the fruit, but ordinary beings who cling to existence will just continue to stay in cyclic existence, as it says in the lines,

*Ordinary individuals are bound by thoughts,
Yogis without thought become liberated*

Ordinary individuals are bound by extreme thoughts, but those who have unmistakably understood emptiness, the yogis and arya beings, become liberated. Therefore the fruit of having reversed all the extreme and distorted thoughts is as explained by the aryas in the Madhyamaka treatises.

Ordinary individuals are bound by their extreme thoughts, yogis without true grasping become liberated from extreme thoughts. Whatever reversal of extreme thoughts there is, is taught by the sages as the fruit of investigation.

The treatises do not present suchness out of attachment to analysis and debate but for the purpose of liberation. They don't teach emptiness just to give the students something to debate about - the reason the treatises teach emptiness is for the purpose of liberation. Emptiness was taught in order to lead sentient beings to liberation from samsara and not just for the purpose of debate.

*In case other texts are destroyed
If suchness is presented, there is no fault.*

These lines represent the **Prasangika** refuting the Svatantrikas saying, 'The treatises were composed in order to debate with others, and that's exactly what you have been doing all the time - you've been debating and refuting us'. The Prasangikas say, 'If your text is being refuted, there is no fault because your point of view was simply the weaker one. Your point of view disappears in the bright light of my reasoning'. Chandrakirti says, 'It's not my fault, it's simply the fault of your view, because when a light is switched on the darkness disappears. Likewise, your view disappears in the light of the Prasangika reasoning.

'For example if one burns firewood in order to heat up the tea kettle, then the ashes will naturally appear. Making the ashes was not the objective, which was to heat up the tea kettle, but the ashes appear anyway. Likewise my objective here was really not to compete with your system, but somehow your system dissipated in the light of valid reasoning. That is something that just happened'. Chandrakirti says that he actually was doing all this reasoning in order to eliminate the suffering of

samsara of the opponent, not in order to compete with the other person's text. If the viewpoint of the other person's text is somehow burnt in the light of wisdom, then that might just be simply because it is a wrong view.

*Attachment to one's own view, and similarly
Agitation towards the view of others are mere
thoughts.*

*Therefore, analysis that has abandoned
attachment*

And anger becomes quickly liberated.

This verse shows why one shouldn't have attachment to one's own view and aversion to the view of others. If the teachings were done simply from the point of view of debate, then attachment to your own point of view, and aversion to the point of view of others is generated, and that poses an obstruction to the attainment of liberation. Such attachment and aversion is a samsaric path, which has to be given up in order to attain liberation.

Nagarjuna showed his teachings to his students only for the purpose of helping them to attain liberation, and not to generate attachment to one's own point of view and aversion to the point of view of others. Only by abandoning a generation of attachment to one's own point of view and aversion to the point of view of others, will one attain liberation. So Nagarjuna taught his disciples about emptiness in order for them to meditate on emptiness, and not for other reasons.

As it says in the *King of Concentration Sutra*, if one generates attachment about one point of view, and then generate aversion to hearing something else, then one is conceited because of pride. One will subsequently fall down through the force of pride, and experience many sufferings.

In the outline Establishing the Selflessness of Phenomena there were two sub-outlines, one for compounded phenomena and one for non-compounded phenomena. However because non-compounded phenomena come up again and again they are not explained separately here.

If one doesn't practice equanimity, becomes attached to the self and generates aversion for others, if one doesn't practice having an awareness of equal outlook, abandoning attachment to self and aversion to others, then through one's meditation on the different tenets one actually will just bind oneself more and more to cyclic existence. In his kindness Lama Tsong Khapa gave us this advice: if one is not careful in one's meditation on the tenets and generates attachment to one's own view and aversion to the views of others, then one will only bind oneself further to cyclic existence.

It's important to be very familiar with the presentation of the object of negation according to the Svatantrika and the Prasangika points of view. It is important to ascertain the different levels of the object of negation and it is also important to know the benefits of emptiness and the benefits that arise from emptiness being shown to a suitable disciple. These benefits are listed very clearly in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*, which describes the lack of generation from the four extremes. The different

subjects include the refutation of generation from self, generation from other etc. etc., and the different views of the Mind Only such as the lack of existent into external existence, the self knower and the universal mind foundation are refuted. One should understand all this well.

You should be aware that all these topics are present in the sixth chapter. Of the six perfections, the sixth chapter shows the sixth perfection - the perfection of wisdom. It is important that you meditate on it again and again, so that you become familiar with it. In particular, the object of negation is very important, because one wants to be able to meditate on emptiness.

The next outline is the establishing the selflessness of person.

*Transcribed from tape by Mark Emerson
Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett
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Edited Version

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DISCUSSION

BLOCK: 2
WEEK: 6

ASSIGNED: 27TH APR 04

- 1) Lord Buddha once said "the universe is merely your mind". What did he mean? (Explain both the Prasangika's interpretation and the Mind Only School's interpretation of the Buddhas intention)
 - 2) Explain why "Mainly Mind" might be a better name for the Mind-Only School. [2]
 - 3) What would be the problem with the world being *intrinsically* mere mind? [3]
 - 4) The Mind-Only School deny externally existing objects, and at the same time assert an inherently existing consciousness. How does the Prasangika School prove to the Mind-Only that they can't have their cake and eat it too? [3]
 - 5) How do you know when a teaching from Lord Buddha is to be taken literally or is to be interpreted? Using the medical example given, explain why there are interpretable and definitive Buddhist teachings. [4]
 - 6) In which two famous scriptures did Lord Buddha proclaim that form and consciousness are equal in their ontological status (how thing exist)? What was said in these two sources to prove this point? [4]
 - 7) The Buddha said 'you have always had an unmanifest fully enlightened Buddha within you. You just have to awaken it'. What was Lord Buddha's hidden intention and purpose behind saying this and why isn't the teaching on t his tatagata essence ultimately true? [3]
 - 8) List the four sutras that are taken to be definitive by Mind-only School and interpretive by the Prasangika School. [4]
 - 9) Give definitions for the following:
 1. A definitive sutra according to the Mind-only school
 2. An interpretive sutra according to the Mind-only school
 3. A definitive sutra according to the Prasangika school
 4. An interpretive sutra according to the Prasangika school
 - 10) What examples do the Charvakas use to prove that things need not have a cause? [2]
 - 11) If things aren't generated from any of these four ways (self, other, both, or neither), then how are they generated? [2]
 - 12) How does Chandrakirti convince the *realists* that nominal existence is different from inherent existence? What is the significance of this argument? [3]
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Tara Institute Study Group 2004 - 'Introduction to the Middle Way'

EXAM

BLOCK: 2
WEEK: 8
ASSIGNED: 3RD MAY 04

1) Lord Buddha once said "the universe is merely your mind". What did he mean? (Explain both the Prasangika's interpretation and the Mind Only School's interpretation of the Buddha's intention)

2) What would be the problem with the world being *intrinsically* mere mind? [3]

3) The Mind-Only School denies externally existing objects, and at the same time asserts an inherently existing consciousness. How does the Prasangika School prove to the Mind-Only that they can't have their cake and eat it too? [3]

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4) How do you know when a teaching from Lord Buddha is to be taken literally or is to be interpreted? Using the medical example given, explain why there are interpretable and definitive Buddhist teachings. [4]

5) In which two famous scriptures did Lord Buddha proclaim that form and consciousness are equal in the way they exist? What was said in these two sources to prove this point? [4]

6) The Buddha said 'you have always had an unmanifest fully enlightened Buddha within you. You just have to awaken it'. What was Lord Buddha's hidden intention and purpose behind saying this and why isn't the teaching on this tatagata essence ultimately true? [3]

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7) List the four sutras that are taken to be definitive by Mind-only School and interpretive by the Prasangika School. [4]

8) Give definitions for the following:

- I) A definitive sutra according to the Mind-only school
- ii) An interpretive sutra according to the Mind-only school
- iii) A definitive sutra according to the Prasangika School
- IV) An interpretive sutra according to the Prasangika School

9) What examples do the Charvakas use to prove that things need not have a cause?

10) If things aren't generated from any of these four ways (self, other, both, or neither), then how are they generated? [2]

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11) How does Chandrakirti convince the *realists* that nominal existence is different from inherent existence? What is the significance of this argument? [3]

12) What does it mean to be "*born in suchness*"?

13) The lower schools have been trying to argue that if things did not exist inherently then they would not exist at all, like the son of a barren woman. How does the Prasangika show that this example is indefinite?