
Study Group - Bodhicharyavatara

བྱང་ལྷན་སེམས་དཔའི་སྣོད་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་བཞུགས་སོ།

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

2 August 2005

Please generate the virtuous motivation thinking, 'I have to attain complete enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. In order to achieve this aim I am now going to listen to this profound Dharma, and put it into practice as quick as I can'.

2.2.2.1.4. Close placement by mindfulness on phenomena

Last time we dealt very briefly with the close placement by mindfulness on phenomena.

*In such a way the generation of all phenomena [105cd]
Is not realised.*

These two lines explicitly show the selflessness of compounded phenomena. They say that the inherent generation of compounded phenomena is not realised, because compounded phenomena disintegrate moment by moment. The reason non-compounded phenomena are not explicitly included is because by realising the selflessness of compounded phenomena, one can easily understand the selflessness of non-compounded phenomena as well.

Compounded phenomena lack inherent generation. One reason for this is that compounded phenomena follow the three steps of generation, abiding and disintegration. They have no choice: initially they are generated, then they abide, and finally they disintegrate. If one is trying to take some meaning from inherent existence: if compounded phenomena were generated inherently they should be empowered to abide according to choice, and there would be no need for involuntary disintegration.

2.2.2.2. REFUTING OBJECTIONS TO THE TWO TRUTHS

The **Realists** say that the presentation of the two truths becomes invalid if compounded and non-compounded phenomena do not exist inherently. This objection is refuted in three steps.

2.2.2.2.1. Refuting the improbability of the two truths

2.2.2.2.2. Refuting the improbability of valid reason

2.2.2.2.3. Refuting the consequence of infiniteness

2.2.2.2.1. Refuting the improbability of the two truths

*In case, 'in such a way the illusory does not exist; [106ab]
How could both truths exist on it?*

The **Realists** ask, 'How can the two truths possibly exist if the conventional illusory does not exist? How can the conventional illusory exist if compounded and non-compounded phenomena do not exist inherently? It cannot as there is no basis. If there is no basis for conventional illusory existence then there is no basis for ultimate truth, which is the selflessness of conventional illusory existence'.

If phenomena do not exist inherently then the

conventional illusory phenomena, such as vases and so forth, do not exist, and if they do not exist then also their suchness cannot exist. Therefore there would be no two truths. The consequence is that there are no two truths if phenomena do not exist inherently.

*If it is illusory because of another, [106cd]
How can sentient being go beyond misery?*

The **Realists** say to the **Prasangika**, 'You accept that forms, sounds and so forth are illusory because, while appearing as true to the illusion grasping at inherent existence, they lack true existence from their side'.

The **Realists** continue by saying, 'You accept that forms, sounds and so forth exist only conventionally because, while appearing as true to the illusion grasping at inherent existence, they lack true existence from their side. If we look at this then your conventional existence is no different from the existence of the snake for the mind that grasps at the rope as snake - it is a mere elaboration by another awareness. In that case it follows that sentient beings cannot conventionally go beyond misery, because all conventional existence is a mere elaboration by a distorted awareness'.

*This superstitious mind apart [107ab]
Is not our illusion.*

What the **Realists** assume is that the mind through which nominal truth is posited is true grasping, because that is the mind relative to which one talks about truth. This is refuted here by the **Madhyamaka** who say, 'The object that appears to the superstitious conceptual mind of true grasping is not our conventional truth. That is not what we assert as nominal truth'.

Then the **Realists** ask, 'What then is your way of positing a nominal truth?'

*If this is ascertained subsequently it exists, [107cd]
If it is not it is not even an illusion.*

This shows the presentation of subtle nominal truth as asserted by the **Prasangika**. It says that subtle conventional truth is only realised after having realised emptiness. When it says it is 'ascertained subsequently it exists' this means that if, after having realised emptiness, the illusory object is ascertained as being able to perform functions and actions, then that illusory object is subtle conventional truth. If, after having realised emptiness, the illusory object is not ascertained as possessing a function and activity, then it is not even an illusion, it is not even a conventional truth, and does not even exist nominally.

We have been over this before but we can repeat it once more. One should not think of the lack of inherent existence as non-existence. When we think of an object lacking inherent existence we should think of the object as existing interdependently and relative to other objects. In such a way one is able to combine appearance and emptiness. That is how one can understand the **Prasangika** presentation of subtle conventional truth. Initially one has to understand emptiness. Subsequently to realising emptiness one analyses illusory phenomena, and if these illusory phenomena possesses characteristics such as being able to perform functions, and the activities of coming and going and so forth, then they are conventional truths.

If a phenomenon does not possess those characteristics then it is not even a conventional illusory truth. It is completely non-existent. To understand this presentation of the subtle conventional truth one needs to be able to unify appearance and emptiness. As was said before, when one thinks of a phenomenon as lacking inherent existence, one should not think of the phenomenon as being completely non-existent. Rather one should think of it as being a dependently arisen phenomenon, a phenomenon that exists in dependence on, or relative to, other phenomena.

In such a way one has understood that being empty is not contradicted by appearance. When one reflects on the phenomenon as existing interdependently, then one can understand that the phenomenon lacks inherent existence, and in such a way one can understand that its appearance is not contradicted by the emptiness of the object. In such a way one is able to unify appearance and emptiness.

When you say that form lacks inherent existence you have to think about what is implicit in the lack of inherent existence of form. You should reflect upon this. *[pause for reflection]*

When we say that a phenomenon is a dependent arising then what can we understand that is implicit in that. You should reflect on this for a minute. *[pause for reflection]*

By reflecting on dependent arising one understands the lack of total independence, and by understanding the lack of total independence one understands the lack of inherent existence. *[pause for reflection]*

It is very important to be able to unify appearance and emptiness, and to understand that the appearance of the object does not contradict its lack of inherent existence, or its emptiness, and that the emptiness of the object does not contradict its appearance.

Lama Tsong Khapa says that if one does not understand this unification of emptiness and appearance one will not understand the thought of the Buddha.

2.2.2.2.2. Refuting the improbability of valid reason

Conceptual thought and that imputed [108ab]
Are both mutually reliant.

The imputing thought and the object that is being imputed exist relative to each other. They are mutually interdependent and therefore they do not exist from their own side in the slightest degree.

Just as in dependence on renown [108cd]
All investigations are called

The imputing thought and that which is imputed are both mutually reliant, and therefore do not exist from their own side. They do not exist inherently and therefore they exist through renown as merely imputed phenomena to nominal valid cognition. Similarly, the all phenomena exist only nominally, in mere name.

The worldly way is to accept without question the reality with which one is presented. For example, one accepts without questioning that this object on the table is a clock, because it is renowned as a clock, and labelled as a clock. The worldly way is to just accept what one is presented with without investigation and analysis. The Prasangika

say that the way nominal truth exists in mere name is that it is posited without investigation and analysis.

2.2.2.2.3. Refuting the consequence of infiniteness

At the time when the investigating [109]
Intelligence analyses,
If the analytical intelligence is
Subsequent to intelligence then it is infinite.

'At the time' refers to the time of investigating the lack of true existence. This verse is asking whether, when an investigating intelligence analyses and ascertains the lack of true existence of all phenomena, another investigating intelligence is needed to understand the lack of true existence of the first investigative intelligence? Or is no other investigative intelligence needed? If another investigative intelligence is needed subsequent to the investigative intelligence that understands the lack of true existence of all phenomena, then one arrives at the consequence that one would need an infinite number of investigative intelligences, each one realising the lack of true existence of the previous one and so forth.

To express it more simply, if we have the wisdom that realises the emptiness of the aggregates then is another wisdom needed to realise the emptiness of that wisdom or not? If it is the case that one needs a subsequent wisdom that realises the emptiness of the initial wisdom, then logically one needs a limitless amount of wisdoms in order to be able to realise the emptiness of all phenomena.

Having investigated the analysed object [110ab]
There is no basis for investigation.

If a separate wisdom is not needed to realise the emptiness of the initial wisdom, then one can also say that there is no wisdom needed to realise the emptiness of that which is initially investigated, such as the aggregates. If nothing is needed to investigate the investigator, then also there is nothing needed to investigate that which initially investigated. If no second wisdom is needed to investigate the initial wisdom, then the investigation by the initial wisdom of the initial object of investigation is also not needed since all phenomena would be the same in not lacking inherent existence.

Since there is no basis it is not born [110cd]
This is also called going beyond misery.

The answer is that no second wisdom is needed to investigate the true nature of the initial wisdom, because when the initial wisdom realises the lack of inherent existence of its analysed object, such as the aggregates, there is no appearance of true existence to that wisdom. Therefore at that time there is no basis for further investigation into the lack of true existence at that time.

Also, as long as the realisation of the lack of true existence of all phenomena is active there is no object that is characterised by the analysis of whether or not the object exists truly or not, because as soon as one's consciousness starts to think that way, one immediately remembers that all phenomena lack true existence.

Also, the realisation of the lack of true existence of all phenomena overcomes any type of intellectually acquired true-grasping. Further, if the object lacks true existence, then both the object possessor and the object lack true

existence and are not generated inherently. This lack of inherent existence of the object and the object possessor is also called 'going beyond misery', which is their natural nirvana. By meditating on the natural nirvana one will attain the nirvana that is the abandonment of the adventitious obscurations.

It is good to think that by meditating on natural nirvana, one will attain the actual nirvana that is the abandonment of the adventitious obscurations. Let's say the meditator meditates on the emptiness of form. After having refuted the object of negation, truly existent form, and realising its emptiness, then by meditating on the emptiness that is realised, the meditator will attain the nirvana that is the abandonment of the adventitious afflictions.

At that time one does not go on to investigate the emptiness of the mind that realises the emptiness, which would be an unnecessary investigative activity. When one has arrived at the realisation of the emptiness of one object then does not go on and investigate the emptiness of the mind realising emptiness. At that time it is sufficient to stop with the emptiness of the present object. Later, of course, the emptiness of the object possessor will also be investigated. This is how one attains the actual liberation.

*Transcribed from tape by Jenny Brooks
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Study Group - Bodhicharyavatara

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Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

9 August 2005

As usual generate the motivation of bodhicitta thinking, 'I have to attain complete enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings. In order to be able to do that, I am going to listen to this profound teaching, and then I am going to put it into practice as much as possible'.

2.2.2. THE ELABORATE EXPLANATION OF SELFLESSNESS (CONT)

In talking about the two selflessnesses, we had reached the selflessness of phenomena. This included how one meditates on the selflessness of the body with the close placement by mindfulness; how one meditates on the selflessness of feelings with the close placement by mindfulness; how one meditates on the emptiness of the mind with the close placement by mindfulness, and how one meditates on the emptiness of phenomena with the close placement by mindfulness.

2.2.2.3. ELIMINATING MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE REASONING THAT ESTABLISHES SELFLESSNESS

This comes in two points:

2.2.2.3.1 Refuting the reasonings of Realists

2.2.2.3.2. Positing the reasoning of those asserting emptiness

2.2.2.3.1. Refuting the reasoning of the Realists

*Which ever way one looks at it, [111ab]
That these two are true is extremely problematic.*

'Which ever one looks at it' refers to the ways in which the **Realists**, the Vaibhashika, the Sautrantika and the Mind Only tenets and so forth, look at the two truths. In the second line 'these two are true' refers to the object and the consciousness. The Realist tenets assert that both the object and the consciousness of that object exist truly.

To this the **Madhyamaka** state, 'It is problematic to say that both object and consciousness exist truly, because there is no valid reason with which one can establish this premise'.

*If, 'The meaning is established through the power [111cd]
Of consciousnesses', what basis is there for mere
existent consciousness?*

In response the Realists say that 'the object is established through the power of the consciousness.' The Realists say that the true existence of the object is established through the force of the truly existent valid cognition that realises it. Their reasoning is that the true existence of the object is established through the true existence of the consciousness, and thus the six types of truly existent consciousness establish the six types of truly existent objects.

*Then, 'Consciousness is established from the object of
knowledge.' [112ab]*

*What basis is there for the existence of the object of
knowledge?*

To this the **Madhyamaka** reply, 'What basis is there for mere truly existent consciousness?' This line means that if the true existence of the object is established through the truly existent consciousness, then what is the supporting valid cognition that establishes the true existence of consciousness?

The **Realist's** answer to this is that truly existent consciousness is established from the truly existent object. Their argument has come full circle!

Initially, on being asked, 'What is the supporting basis for the truly object?' the Realists said that the true existence of the object is established from the true existence of the consciousness. The **Madhyamaka** then asked, 'What then is the basis for the true existence of the consciousness?' The **Realist's** answer to this was that truly existent consciousness is established from the truly existent object.

*Both exist through their mutual force, [112cd]
Both again are non-existent.*

Since both the object as well as its consciousness exist through their mutual force, i.e. they exist in mutual interdependence, they are non-truly existent. Things don't exist truly because they are dependent arisings: they exist in mutual interdependence. **Nagarjuna** states in *Root Wisdom* by that if two things exist in mutual interdependence, then they cannot exist truly.

*If there is no son there is no father [113]
Then from where does the son arise?
Without a son there is no father,
Likewise these two do not exist*

These four lines show the meaning of mutual interdependence. Regarding the first line, 'If there is no son there is no father', the father is posited relative to the son. If there is no son, then one cannot posit the father. So father and son exist in mutual interdependence. Since there can be no father when there is no son, then from where does the son arise?

Without the son there is no father, therefore these two are interdependent and do not exist truly. Likewise, form and consciousness also do not exist truly. If two objects exist from their own side, then they cannot exist in mutual interdependence; they cannot exist relative to each other. If two objects exist relative to each other, then they cannot exist from their own side. So existence from its own side and interdependent origination are mutually exclusive.

Here the **Realists** attempt a comeback by saying:

*The sprout is generated from the seed [114]
And the seed is realised through it.
Likewise, why should one not realise the existence of
The object of knowledge from the consciousness
generated from it?*

The intrinsic sprout is generated from the intrinsic seed, so the intrinsic generation of the sprout comes from the seed. And one can realise that the seed is inherently generated from the inherent generation of the sprout. Similarly, why should one not realise the inherent

existence of the object of knowledge through the inherent existence of the consciousness, which is generated from that object of knowledge? Like before, the inherently existent object of knowledge generates the inherently existent consciousness, so therefore why should one not be able to realise the inherent existence of the object of knowledge from the inherent existence of the consciousness, which was generated from it?

In actuality, one can infer the existence of the cause through the effect. For example, we can infer the presence of fire because of the presence of smoke and so forth. But one can not infer the existence of the effect from the existence of the cause.

*If the existence of the seed is realised [115]
Through a consciousness apart from the sprout,
From what does one realise the existence
Of the consciousness realising that object of
knowledge?*

The **Madhyamaka** reply that there is a problem with having a truly existent consciousness as that which establishes a truly existent form. What establishes the truly existent consciousness? If the true existence of the seed is realised through a consciousness that is intrinsically other, then from what does one realise the existence of that intrinsic consciousness realising the intrinsic object? One possibility is that the self-knower does the realising, but that, of course, was refuted earlier, and there is nothing else that establishes that consciousness exists truly.

Summary

The **Realists** have tried in different ways to establish true existence: with quotation, valid reason, and through the consciousness itself. The Mind Only say that the both object and consciousness, for example form and the eye-consciousness, exist truly. They say that the true existence of the object of form can be established through the true existence of the eye-consciousness.

To this the **Madhyamaka** said first of all, that the reasoning is not valid. You can't posit a truly existent consciousness to establish the premise of truly existent form. There are many counter arguments refuting this premise.

Initially the **Realists** said that the true existence of the six types of objects is established through the true existence of the six types object possessors - the six types of consciousness. Upon being asked what basis, valid reason, or supporting valid cognition, they have for the true existence of the six types of consciousness, they say the six types of consciousness exist truly, because the six types of objects exist truly. So they have gone full circle.

*Transcribed from tape by Bernii Wright
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Study Group - *Bodhicharyavatara*

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Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

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Generate a virtuous motivation thinking, 'I have to attain complete enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings. In order to achieve this aim, I am going to listen to this profound teaching, and then I am going to put it into practice as much as possible'.

2.2.3. STATING THE REASONS ESTABLISHING SELFLESSNESS

After refuting the arguments of those asserting that things exist inherently comes the assertion of the arguments of those positing the lack of inherent existence.

2.2.3.1. Analysis of the cause - the vajra sliver reasoning

2.2.3.2. Analysis of the nature - the reasoning of dependent arising

2.2.3.3. Analysis of the result - the reasoning of the generation and ending of existence and non-existence

2.2.3.1. THE DIAMOND, OR VAJRA, SLIVER REASONING

The *vajra* in vajra sliver reasoning refers to a particular kind of vajra called the space vajra, which can destroy anything. Nothing can stand in its way, it even has the power to destroy Mount Meru and so forth.

The vajra sliver reasoning is an analysis of the cause. We went through this reasoning, which eliminates generation from the four extremes, in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*¹. It is referred to as the vajra sliver reasoning because it destroys the four views of extreme generation:

2.2.3.1.1. The object is generated without any cause

2.2.3.1.2. The object is generated from other

2.2.3.1.3. The object is generated from self

2.2.3.1.4. The object is generated from both

2.2.3.1.1. Refuting Generation from No-Cause [Carvaka]

If it is asked, 'by which different causes?' [117]

Of course by the preceding different causes.

Why can a cause generate an effect?

From the preceding cause's mere force.

The **Carvakas** assert that objects such as the sun, the moon, sharp thorns, the colours on a butterfly's wings and so forth are generated from no cause, and exist out of their own nature. They say, 'I have not seen anybody creating these objects, so therefore they must have risen out of themselves'.

Right now, the direct perception of worldly beings [116ab]

Sees all causes.

Shantideva says, 'Right now, to refute this view of yours I am not going to use any type of ultimate analysis. I am only going to refute you with a worldly nominal reasoning. For the time being, I am not going to use any ultimate reasoning, I am just going to use nominal reasoning.'

Worldly beings see most of the different causes that produce the different worldly effects such as a harvest. If they did not see the causes that produce the harvest then they would not engage in the manifold activities that produce a crop. But, because they can see that planting seed produces a crop, they engage in the effort of planting seed to get a harvest. The different categories of effects are generated by different categories of causes.'

The different petals of the lotus

[116cd]

Are generated by different causes.

Carvakas: 'From which diverse causes are the different results generated?'

Shantideva: 'The different categories of results such as the different petals of the lotus, the different colours on the butterfly's wings and so forth, are all generated by different preceding causes.'

Carvakas: 'Why can diverse causes generate diverse effects?'

The **response** is because of the force of the preceding causes. Secondly, one can say that all compounded phenomena are generated from a cause, because they are only generated occasionally. Because compounded phenomena are only generated when all the causes and conditions come together, this shows that they are generated from a cause. If they were actually generated from no cause at all, then there would be no reason for their occasional nature. They would always be there.

2.2.3.1.2. Refuting generation from a permanent cause apart

2.2.3.1.2.1. Refuting a creator god (Ishvara) [Particularists, Logicians and Enumerators, or Vaisheshika, Naiyayika, Samkya]

Here **Ishvara** is asserted as a creator god that precedes all of existence. This is asserted by the Particularists or Vaisheshikas, the Logicians or Naiyayikas, and the Samkya Enumerators. Not all enumerators assert **Ishvara** as the creator god, though. One section asserts **Ishvara** as the creator god, and another section doesn't.

The idea is that initially one has **Ishvara**, the creator god who is naturally generated out of himself. Then he creates all the different categories of awareness and objects of knowledge, the different worlds and the beings therein and so forth, through movement of his consciousness. They assert that **Ishvara** is both permanent, omniscient, and that movement of his consciousness precedes the different categories of objects of knowledge, the different worlds, and the beings in those worlds.

If Ishvara is the cause of migrators

[118ab]

What is posited as the entity of Ishvara?

Initially the basic question, 'What is the meaning of **Ishvara**?' is asked. One can learn a lot from this approach. **Shantideva** does not immediately enter into an argument designed to refute **Ishvara** as the creator of all of

¹ Chapter 6, *Introduction to the Middle Way*, verses 6.8c to 6.113, 15 April 2003 to 20 April 2004.

existence, but asks 'Exactly what do you mean when you refer to Ishvara?' This is a very useful approach. Instead of immediately contradicting the other person's view, one first asks, 'Exactly what is your thesis?'

*If you say, 'the elements,' it might be like that. [118cd]
Why get strung out over a name?*

Because the elements can be seen as a source from which everything arises, the possibility that Ishvara is the elements is examined. The **Madhyamaka** say, 'We agree that the increase and decrease in the elements produces the increase and decrease of the effects. Therefore, from this point of view, if you refer to the elements as Ishvara the creator god, then there is really not much to debate, as it's just a discussion about how to label the same thing.

*However, since earth and so forth are many, [119]
And impermanent, they are not immutable, not god.
Since they are stepped upon and impure
They are not Ishvara.*

Madhyamaka: You assert Ishvara as partless and immutable, having consciousness that establishes the worlds merely by thinking about them, being pure, being god, and also being outstanding. Therefore the elements of earth and so forth cannot be Ishvara, because Ishvara is partless, and they are diverse. The elements are impermanent, therefore they are not immutable, nor are the elements a god. Also, the elements are stepped upon and impure, and therefore they are not Ishvara.

*Space is not Ishvara because it is immutable. [120]
That the self is not Ishvara has been proven earlier.
Even a creator beyond thought,
What good is it to describe that beyond thought*

Space is not Ishvara because space is immutable, while Ishvara has to have a movement of consciousness that precedes all of existence. And it has been proven earlier that the self is not permanent or partless.'

To this the **Carvaka** reply, 'All of that does not really matter to us, because Ishvara is beyond comprehension anyway'.

To this **Shantideva** replies, 'If Ishvara is beyond comprehension, then essentially you are talking about something that you don't comprehend. So what are you doing expressing a creator beyond thought? If Ishvara the creator god is incomprehensible, then it is not known by you, it is not known by us, it is not known by anybody. Stop talking about something you do not comprehend.'

2.2.3.1.2.2. If it is permanent it is unsuitable to have conditions and to be the cause of all

*What does he want to create? [121abc]
Isn't the nature of the self,
Earth and so forth, and Ishvara permanent?*

As was also explained earlier the Vaisheshika, Naiyayika and Samkya assert a permanent self. Here, the 'earth and so forth' does not refer to the coarse elements, but to the particles that form these elements. While the elements are impermanent, the particles of the elements are permanent. They also, of course, assert that Ishvara itself is permanent. Hence, what does Ishvara create? Ishvara is permanent, the self is permanent and also the particles that make up the elements are permanent. All of these are unsuitable to generate a result because of being

permanent.

*Consciousness is generated from the object of
knowledge [121d]
And the beginningless happiness and sufferings from
karma. [122ab]
Tell, what is generated by him?*

These tenet holders are not nihilists, because they do assert karmic cause and effect. Rather they are eternalists. **Shantideva** asks, 'What is generated by Ishvara? Can you come up with anything?' The objects arise from the elements, and the consciousness of the objects arises from the objects. For example, eye-consciousness arises from visual form. The beginningless happiness and sufferings that one experiences in cyclic existence arise from karma. Hence Shantideva asks the Carvaka, 'Please tell me, what is left that is generated by Ishvara? It is not possible to posit an effect that is generated by Ishvara!'

These reasonings are very good to keep in mind, because it seems that there are many followers of Ishvara in the West, who follow the Hindu Tantric sex system. It is quite good to understand this reasoning so as to be able to refute Ishvara.

*If there is no first cause, [122cd]
How could there be a first result.*

This refers to the feelings of happiness and suffering that one experiences at the present time. If one asserts Ishvara as the direct cause for those feelings of happiness and suffering, then logically, since Ishvara has existed since beginningless time, those feelings of happiness and suffering should have existed since beginningless time.

*Why should he not always produce, [123]
He does not rely on other conditions.
If there is nothing not produced by him
How could he rely on these?*

'Why should Ishvara not continuously produce the present causes and conditions? He produces all effects and does not rely on any other conditions. This follows because if there is no effect not created by Ishvara then what conditions would Ishvara need to produce his effects. If there were simultaneously acting conditions then they would also have to be created by Ishvara.'

Ordinarily a cause needs concurrently acting conditions to produce a result. Consider, for example, the generation of the sprout. Ordinarily a whole group of causes and conditions, including a seed, is needed for the generation of the sprout. But what concurrently acting conditions would Ishvara have, since those concurrently acting conditions would also have to be generated by him. Therefore it follows that he would generate all the effects all the time.

*If he relies then the aggregation [124ab]
Is the cause and not him.*

Actually it is the completion of the causes and conditions that is the cause for the generation of the sprout. If the completion of all the conditions is not the cause for the sprout to be generated, and it depends solely on the wish of Ishvara, then the sprout should be generated at any time that Ishvara wants, even when the causes and conditions are not complete. If the generation depends on all the causes or conditions being complete, then the

aggregation of causes and conditions is the cause and not Ishvara.

If there is aggregation he is powerless to prevent generation. [124cd]

If there is no aggregation he has no power to generate.

One can observe that the sprout will definitely be generated whenever all the causes and conditions are complete. If the causes and conditions are not complete, then without any independence on their part, the sprout will not be generated. It does not depend on Ishvara's wishes.

If he creates despite not wishing to do so [125]
The he is under the power of other.
Even though wishing he depends on the wish.
Though acting, how can he be Ishvara?

Carvaka: 'The suffering of the lower realms is generated through the force of karma, without his intention.'

Shantideva: 'In that case he is not omnipotent. If he creates, even though not wishing it, then he is under the power of other and not omnipotent. If Ishvara's creation of existence depends on his wish, then he is under the control of his wish and therefore also not independent. In fact his wish would become Ishvara, but wishes are impermanent. In any case, how can he be the creator of everything? If he creates the sufferings of sentient beings, then how could Ishvara be regarded as superior? How could anybody who creates suffering for sentient beings be regarded as superior?

If one's happiness and suffering was determined by the wish of Ishvara, then one would be without freedom, and be completely under the control of Ishvara. We refuted the assertion of particles as being permanent earlier, when we refuted the assertion of partless particles.

Transcribed from tape by Bernii Wright
Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett
Edit 2 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak
Edited Version

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Study Group - *Bodhicharyavatara*

བྱང་ལྷན་སེམས་དཔའི་སྣོད་པ་ལ་འདྲུག་པ་བཞུགས་སོ་

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

23 August 2005

You need to generate a virtuous motivation of wanting to attain complete enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings, thinking, 'In order to attain that state I am going to listen to the profound teaching, and then I am going to put it into practice as much as possible'.

2.2.3.1. ANALYSIS OF CAUSE - THE DIAMOND SLIVER REASONING (CONT)

We have refuted generation from no cause and generation from other.

2.2.3.1.3. Refuting generation from self

2.2.3.1.3.1. Refutation of generation from a permanent primary principle

2.2.3.1.3.2. Actual refutation of generation of self

2.2.3.1.3.1. Refutation of generation from a permanent primary principle

That a permanent principle is the cause [126cd]
Of migrators is asserted by the Samkya.

In English, Samkya is translated as Enumerators. They are called that because they classify phenomena into twenty-five categories of objects of knowledge. One of these is the primary principle, which has the six qualities of permanence and so forth. This permanent primary principle is the cause of twenty-three categories of phenomena, but it is not the cause of the self. These twenty-three categories are expressions, or effects, of the primary principle.

The Tibetan term *dro-wa* in the second line is usually translated as migrators. Here however it refers to that which comes from the primary principle. The primary principle is the cause of its expressions.

Then the question is asked, 'If this permanent principle with six characteristics is the cause of all its different expressions, then what is exactly this primary permanent principle?'

The equilibrium of the qualities of [127]
Courage, particle, and darkness
Is strongly asserted as principle
And their imbalances are its expressions.

The Samkya assert that this primary principle is the equilibrium of the qualities of courage, particles and darkness. The imbalances of these three qualities are the results or expressions of the primary principle. For the Samkya the three terms root nature, primary nature, and primary principle are synonymous.

The primary principle has six qualities:

- The quality of creation because it creates existence.
- It is permanent because it does not change.

- It is a solitary unit that is partless.
- It is all pervading.
- It lacks the quality of clarity. For this tenet the quality of clarity is associated with awareness. The primary principle is an object and not awareness.
- The quality of the equilibrium of courage, particles and darkness. These three qualities of courage, particle and darkness can refer respectively to happiness, suffering and equanimity. They can also be related to the afflictions whereby then darkness is ignorance, particle is anger and courage is attachment.

The twenty-five categories of objects

- Of the twenty-five categories of objects the primary principle is the only object that is a cause but not an effect.
- The next seven categories are the five mere forms of visual form, sound, smell, taste and tactile sensations plus awareness and pride. These are both cause and expression so they are both cause and effect.
- Then we have the eleven faculties and the elements which are solely expressions. They are solely effects and not causes. They are:
 - The five faculties of awareness, which refers to the five sense-consciousnesses. For the Enumerators the five faculties of awareness are not the physical faculties, but are the five sense awarenesses.
 - The five physical faculties: the mouth, or sometimes the speech (1), the hands (2), feet (3) and the two lower body openings (4 & 5).
 - The five elements: earth, water, fire and wind and space.
 - The mental faculty.

That makes eleven faculties and five elements. Of the twenty-five categories of objects of knowledge these sixteen are only expressions or effects, but not causes.

- The person, who is neither a cause nor an effect, neither a cause nor an expression. The Samkya assert that the person, or the self, has the five qualities of engaging, permanence, not being created, lacking qualities, and lacking action. This was explained previously in *Introduction to the Middle Way*¹.

Initially the negation of the primary principle focuses on the refutation of a partless principle.

For one to have three natures [128]
Is invalid. Hence it does not exist.
Likewise, qualities do not exist
Because they each have three aspects.

Shantideva: One quality of the primary principle is that it is the equilibrium of the qualities of courage, particles and darkness. At the same time it is said that the primary principle is partless, and that it pervades all of its

¹ Teaching of 18 May 2004

expressions. But to say one partless object has three natures is invalid. Therefore the principle cannot be a truly existent, single, partless entity.

Further, since everything possess the three natures in this partless way, because of being pervaded by the principle there is nothing that can be 'one'. And if there is no 'one' then there is no 'many', because one and many are mutually interdependent. 'One' exists only relative to 'many', and vice versa.

Further, the individual three qualities themselves cannot exist as truly existent single objects, because each also possesses the three qualities in the same way.

*If there are no qualities then also the existence
Of sound becomes very far fetched.* [129ab]

If the three qualities don't exist then the primary principle cannot exist, and if the primary principle does not exist then the expressions of the primary principle, such as the five mere forms of visual forms, sounds and so forth, also cannot exist.

*It also becomes impossible for non-sentient
Clothes and so forth to have happiness etc.* [129cd]

Clothes and so forth is a reference to the five objects of tactile sensations, and so forth. The Samkya say that the five mere objects of visual form, sound and so forth are both expressions of the primary principle as well as causes themselves. Therefore, if the primary principle does not exist then none of these five mere objects can exist, because they are all expressions of the primary principle.

Another reason why they cannot be expressions of the primary principle is because they are non-sentient, and do not possess mind, which makes it impossible for them to possess the three qualities of happiness and so forth. Non-sentient objects such as clothes and so forth cannot be a single unit that possess three qualities of happiness and so forth for the very reason that they are non-sentient. They don't have awareness, and therefore cannot possess the qualities of happiness and so forth.

*If functionalities have a causal nature -
Haven't we already analysed functionalities?* [130ab]

If functionalities are in the nature of truly existent causes haven't we already refuted truly-existent functionalities?

The five types of objects are asserted to be both cause as well as expression. If happiness and so forth is generated from cloth and so forth, then since subsequently cloth and so forth do not exist, the primary principle (which is the equilibrium of happiness and so forth) would also not exist.

*Your cause is happiness and so forth -
From that cloth and so forth does not arise.* [130cd]

*Happiness and so forth arise from cloth etc. -
Because it does not exist happiness etc. does not exist.* [131ab]

If happiness were to be generated from cloth and so forth, then as the cloth and so forth would be non-existent, there would be no primary principle possessing the equilibrium of happiness and so forth. It is impossible to have an effect without cause. The text goes on to say to the Samkya, 'However, you cannot actually accept this

because you accept the primary principle to be a permanent functionality'.

*Happiness and so forth as permanent
Is absolutely not an object.* [131cd]

It follows that the nature of happiness and so forth is not permanent, because it is not the object of valid cognition perceiving it as permanent.

Samkya: Happiness is a permanent functionality.

*If happiness exists only when clear,
Why is it not apprehended at the time of experience?* [132ab]

Shantideva: The quality of clarity is only associated with awareness. If the clarity of happiness exists as a permanent functionality, then it should follow that the experience of happiness is apprehended at the time when suffering is generated.

Samkya: When suffering is generated the experience of happiness becomes a subtle one. The coarse experience of happiness ceases, and what is left is a subtle experience of happiness.

*If it becomes subtle then
How can it be coarse or subtle?* [132cd]

*Since it becomes subtle upon discarding the coarse
The coarse and subtle are impermanent.* [133ab]

Shantideva: It is not possible for happiness to cease being coarse and go to a subtle state, because you say happiness is permanent. If you say that at the time of suffering the coarse state of happiness is abandoned and becomes a subtle one, that is too difficult to apprehend, then that indicates that happiness is impermanent. Its nature changes from A to B.

*Similarly, why do you not assert
All functionalities to be impermanent?* [133cd]

*If the coarse is not distinct from happiness
Then happiness is clearly impermanent.* [134ab]

Similarly, why do you not assert all functionalities to be impermanent for the very same reason, because their nature changes from A to B?

Further, do you assert that the coarse is a separate, distinct, substantial entity from happiness, or do you assert that it is not a distinct, substantial entity from happiness?

In the first case, even though coarse happiness ceases one still experiences happiness, which therefore negates that the experience of happiness is coarse.

In the second case, if the coarse is not a distinct, substantial entity from happiness, then happiness becomes very clearly impermanent, because when coarse happiness ceases then also the happiness ceases. If you accept this, then the permanent nature of happiness and so forth has been refuted.

2.2.3.1.3.2. Actual refutation of generation from self

*In case you say whatever is non-existent
Can not generate because of not existing,* [134cd]

*You are firm on generation of the unclear,
Though not accepting it.* [135ab]

Samkya: If something does not exist within the cause

from the start, then it cannot subsequently generate, because it is not possible for something to generate newly.

Shantideva: What do you assert as the meaning of the generation of the sprout?

Samkya: The meaning of the generation of the sprout is the manifestation of the non-manifest sprout that is present in the seed. At the time of the seed the sprout is present in the seed in a non-manifest unclarified form. When the sprout clarifies, or manifests, then that is the generation of the sprout. But for that to happen the sprout has to be already present in an unclear or a non-manifest form within the seed.

Shantideva: If you say that then you affirm the generation of the new, because you are saying that something that did not exist earlier does exist later. So your understanding of the meaning of generation is the same as ours, even though you do not label it as such. You assert as generation that that which does not exist earlier, the manifest clear sprout, does exist later. Although you don't accept our terminology for that process, we both accept the same thing from the point of view of meaning.

You can see how the Samkya actually open themselves to the Madhyamaka argument. Initially they say they do not accept the generation of something new. They say that that which does not exist earlier cannot be subsequently newly generated. But then, when they actually give the meaning of generation, they contradict themselves. They say that the meaning of generation is that the unclear, non-manifest sprout that is present in the seed subsequently becomes manifest, or clear. What they are saying is that the manifest sprout, which did not exist earlier at the time of the seed, does exist subsequently. That is when the Prasangikas say, 'Well, if that is the case, then you assert exactly the same as us. Basically, you have contradicted yourself'.

*If the effect abides in the cause then [135cd]
One would eat faeces while eating cooked food.*

*One would have to pay the price of cloth [136a]
For the seeds.*

Samkya: Excrement is the result of cooked food, so it has to be present in the cause. The result is of a partless, single nature with the cause, and therefore excrement becomes of a partless single nature with the causal food.

Shantideva: In a similar vein, one could just go to the market, sell one's clothes, and then for the money buy cotton seeds and wear those cotton seeds. The cotton grows from the cotton seeds, so the cotton seeds are the causes of the cloth. So the cloth has to be present within the cotton seeds. Therefore one could wear the cotton seeds in the same way as one would wear the cloth itself.

Samkya (being a little stung by the argument): Worldly beings because of their ignorance do not see that the cloth is already present in the seeds, and therefore nobody would do such a thing.

Transcribed from tape by Jenny Brooks

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DISCUSSION

BLOCK: 5
WEEK: 5

ASSIGNED: 30TH AUG 05

1. The **Realists** say that the presentation of the two truths becomes invalid if compounded and non-compounded phenomena do not exist inherently. What is the logic behind this objection?. [3]
2. Suggest three reflections that would help in understanding the unification of the appearance of an object and the emptiness of that object. [3]
3. What is natural nirvana? What is actual nirvana? [2]
4. What kind of proof for selflessness does the Madhyamaka use in response to the Realists position of a 'truly existing object established through the power of a truly existing consciousness'?[2]
5. What analogy appears in the text that supports this kind of proof of selflessness? [1]
6. Describe the major problem that arises for the Realists view of having to rely on a truly existent consciousness in order to establish a truly existent object? [2]
7. Give the name of the proof used to examine the true nature of causes and explain the meaning of the name. [2]
8. Present an argument for the non-existence of a creator god. [5]
9. What according to the Samkya school is the 'primary principle'? If the Madyamika's refute this, what then is suggested to take its place? [5]

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EXAM

NAME:

BLOCK: 5
WEEK: 6
ASSIGNED: 6TH SEPT 05

/25

MARK:

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