

Friday evening, 30 June 2006

Generate a good motivation wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose to listen to the teachings.

Engaging in the Deeds of a Bodhisattva says:

Thus, if contact does not exist,
From what do feelings arise?
For the sake of what is there this fatigue?
What is it that harms what? (97)

Here other tenets are debating with the Madhyamikas. If a form, a power, and a consciousness do not meet inherently how can contact arise? From what does feeling arise? If the causes do not exist truly how can a result that is truly existent arise? If feeling that is inherently existent does not exist, then what reason would there be for putting effort into obtaining happy feeling? It would be meaningless. For the purpose of abandoning inherently existent suffering, we should bear difficulties. There would be no person or being who causes harm because there is no inherently existent suffering.

Someone thinks that if suffering feeling that exists inherently or by way of its own characteristics does not exist, why also put effort into trying to obtain a happy feeling that also does not exist? Sometimes we experience suffering feeling due to cold and so stay in the sunshine whereby the suffering of cold is reduced and we experience happy feeling. In this way we seek to experience happy feeling. But is it like this? If we stay in a hot place, although the suffering feeling of cold comes to an end, eventually the suffering feeling of hot will arise. Therefore, we need to completely abandon the root that is the cause of suffering.

When there is no one who feels and
Feelings also do not exist,
Having seen this situation,
Why do you not turn away from craving? (98)

Since the beings who experience feelings do not exist inherently and the feelings that are experienced do not exist inherently or truly, that is, having understood that the objects that are experienced, the experience of feeling, and the beings who feel do not exist inherently, why do we not eliminate craving? We want to have happy feelings, that is, we wish for pleasure, meaning that we crave happiness. Also when we experience suffering, we crave to be free from this suffering. The mind that apprehends all phenomena as truly or inherently existent produces the craving that wishes to have happiness and the craving that wishes to be separate from suffering. In short, all this comes about due to the mind apprehending all phenomena to be truly or inherently existent.

Apprehending observed objects to be inherently existent is to be refuted. *Engaging in the Deeds of a Bodhisattva* says:

Even though they are seen or touched,
Their nature is similar to a dream or illusion. (99ab)

The eye consciousness or eye sees forms. The body consciousness touches tactile objects. Due to this, feeling arises. However, such objects do not exist inherently but are like dreams and illusions. Similarly, the feelings that arise in our mind do not exist inherently but are like dreams and illusions. We can dream of many things, sometimes we dream of things that are nice, sometimes we dream of things that are ugly. Either way, when we wake up none of them exist. A magician creates illusions, for example, sometimes we see magic shows on TV. The things that magicians show do not actually exist. Based on a particular substance and mantra, our eyes become contaminated due to which we see certain things that are illusions and do not actually exist.

Just as objects do not exist inherently, neither do feelings. Such inherently existent objects and feelings are refuted by the Madhyamikas.

Therefore, because they are produced simultaneously
With the mind, feelings are not seen by it. (99cd)

The mind and feelings arise simultaneously. Therefore, feelings do not see the mind. The mind and the feeling that arises simultaneously with it do not exist inherently or as different substances, otherwise they could not be related to each other.

Also, due to being produced before or after them,
It remembers them but does not experience them.

If a feeling is produced before or after the mind, it can be remembered in the future but it cannot be experienced. This is because if the feeling arises prior to the mind it has already disintegrated and because a future feeling has not yet arisen. Therefore, this feeling cannot be experienced, it can only be remembered by the mind. A feeling that arises prior to the mind and a feeling that arises after the mind cannot be experienced.

They do not experience themselves,
Nor are they experienced by other. (100)

Feeling does not experience its own nature, that is, it does not experience itself. This is because a self-knower is refuted by the Madhyamikas. It is also not experienced by other, that is, an inherently existent feeling is not experienced by other. An inherently existent object that is experienced and an inherently existent feeling that experiences it would be completely unrelated.

Since there is no one who feels,
There are no feelings themselves.
Thus, by what is there harm
To this selfless collection? (101)

That there is no inherently existent being who feels was already mentioned before. Inherently existent beings do not exist. Likewise, inherently existent or truly existent feelings do not exist. So how can this collection of aggregates that is without a self be harmed or helped? In other words, if it does not exist inherently how can it be harmed and how can it be helped. It does not experience suffering because suffering does not exist inherently. We should take non-inherently existent feeling as an object and meditate on the close placement of mindfulness on feelings. We should try to meditate on the four close placements of mindfulness.

The ninth chapter of this text is rather difficult. But we should not become agitated – ha-ha! Slowly, slowly you will understand. It is difficult to understand it immediately but slowly one can come to understand it and to meditate on it. From the Prasangika point of view, phenomena do not exist inherently or from their own side. All phenomena are only merely imputed by thought and

name. Svatantrika Madhyamaka differentiates truly existent and inherently existent and existent by way of its own characteristics. From their point of view, all phenomena do not exist truly but exist from their own side.

Saturday, 1 July 2006

Develop a good motivation wishing to attain enlightenment and for this reason listen to the teachings. We should always try to develop love and compassion in our mind for all sentient beings. Our motivation should always be to develop a good heart toward all sentient beings. Between ourselves and others, we should think that others are more important than us. In this way, we should give up the self-cherishing mind and develop the mind that cherishes others.

This section of the text emphasizes the need to develop mindfulness and conscientiousness. Here we are talking about the fact that the mental consciousness also does not exist inherently.

The mental does not abide in the powers,
Not in forms and so forth, nor in between.
Inside there is no mind, outside there is none, and
Elsewhere it is also not found. (102)

The mind or mental consciousness does not abide inherently in the six powers, nor does it abide in the six objects, forms and so forth, nor does it abide in between. It does not abide in the collection. The mental consciousness does not abide inherently in the six powers – the eye power, ear power, nose power, tongue power, body power, and consciousness power. In other words, the mentality or mental consciousness does not exist in them inherently. The sense powers are lucid form that are not coarse forms, not consciousness, and not non-associated compositional factors. The mental consciousness has as its object forms, sounds, odors, tastes, tactile objects, and phenomena. But it does not abide in them inherently. The mental consciousness also does not abide between them. It does not abide inside nor does it abide outside. Therefore, an inherently existent mentality cannot be found.

It is not the body, it is not other,
It is not mixed with it, nor is it at all separate from it.
It is not in the slightest; therefore,
A sentient being is a nirvana by nature. (103)

The mental consciousness is not mixed with the body. Nor does it exist separate from the body, off to one side. Therefore, the mental consciousness is not established inherently. The mind that is empty of inherent existence is a nirvana by nature. Terminologically there are four types of nirvana, this one being a nirvana by nature. The four types are: a nirvana by nature, a nirvana with suffering, a nirvana without suffering, and a nirvana that does not abide in cyclic existence or solitary peace. Therefore, that a sentient being is a nirvana by nature means that in nature they are empty of inherent existence. It does not mean that sentient beings have attained the nirvana that is a state of liberation. We should try to understand in what way sentient beings abide. Conventionally a being abides within the five aggregates or abides in dependence on the five aggregates – the form aggregate, feeling aggregate, discrimination aggregate, compositional factors aggregate, and consciousness aggregate. On the basis of these aggregates, the I or being is imputed.

Next it is said that the consciousness does not exist inherently. *Engaging in the Deeds of a Bodhisattva* says:

If the consciousness existed before the object to be known,
Through observing what would it be produced?
If the consciousness and the object to be known are simultaneous,
Through observing what would it be produced? (104)

Now we examine whether consciousness in relation to the object to be known. If the consciousness exists before the object to be known, for example, the eye consciousness exists before a form, then through observing what would the consciousness be produced? The consciousness does not exist before the observed object condition. If there is no object, even though the eye consciousness looks it cannot see it. If the consciousness and the object to be known are simultaneous, how can the consciousness be produced? Therefore, it is not correct that they arise simultaneously. First the observed object condition exists, then through looking at it an eye consciousness is produced.

If the consciousness and the observed object condition were to arise simultaneously, it would be meaningless for the observed object condition to exist. For example, first we plant a seed, and then the result arises. The seed and the sprout cannot arise simultaneously. Causes and conditions arise previously, and then the result. This debate shows that the cause does not exist inherently, the condition does not exist inherently, and the consciousness does not exist inherently.

The time of the cause and the result are different, they cannot occur at the same time. There exists a gap between the cause and conditions and the result, that is, there is a difference in time between cause and result. In other words, there is no cause and result without a gap in time between them. For example, father and son do not arise at the same time, there is a gap in time between their arising. Likewise, mother and daughter do not arise at the same time, otherwise there would be a doubt about who is the mother and who is the daughter. There is a question about which came first – the chicken or the egg? Without the egg, the chicken cannot arise. If there is no chicken, the egg cannot arise.

Well then, if it exists after the object to be known,
From what is consciousness produced?
Hence, the production of all phenomena
Is not to be realized. (105)

The production of any phenomenon whatsoever cannot be realized or understood. All phenomena – the compounded and un-compounded – do not exist inherently or are not established inherently. We need to realize this. All phenomena are empty of inherent existence. If a phenomenon were to exist from its own side, it could not be realized or understood. Inherently existent phenomena do not exist, like the horns of a rabbit. These horns cannot be found on the head of a rabbit. We can only find their long ears which could be confused with horns. Likewise, if we look for an ushisha on the head of a human being we probably would not find it. Also there is talk of a third eye located between the brows. I am joking.

Someone says that the two truths – the conventional truth and the ultimate truth – cannot be established.

If, like this, they would not exist conventionally.
How could there be two truths with respect to them? (106ab)

If the object and object-possessor that are previous and later do not exist from their own side or by way of their own characteristics how can they exist conventionally? If they do not exist as conventional truths, then the two truths cannot exist. If the conventional truth and ultimate truth do not exist, how can it be said that conventionally there exist forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects? For those who apprehend conventional truths to exist inherently or by way of their

own characteristics, phenomena exist in this way but from their own side they do not exist in this way.

Moreover, if they are conventional due to other,
How could sentient beings pass beyond sorrow? (106cd)

If they exist in the perspective of the mistaken mind, even conventionally sentient beings cannot attain nirvana. All the effort that is made to attain nirvana or liberation by analyzing and so forth becomes meaningless.

This is a conceptualization of another's mind,
It is not one's own all-obscuring [mind].
Later, if ascertained, it exists;
If not, it does not exist conventionally. (107)

The conceptualization that apprehends another's mind to be truly existent, according to the Prasangika system does not exist conventionally. Why? The Prasangika, our own system, says that realizing all phenomena as suchness or thusness is correct view. The realization of phenomena as empty of inherent existence is produced in dependence on causes and conditions. From the Madhyamaka point of view, this exists conventionally, that is, it exists as a conventional truth. That results arises from causes and conditions exist validly and conventionally is accepted by the Prasangikas and is asserted by them to be conventional truth. The realization of emptiness is correct view. Because it is produced from causes and conditions, it is a conventional truth. That it depends on causes and conditions shows that it is a dependent-arising and does not exist independently. Therefore, all phenomena are empty of inherent existence. This kind of emptiness is ultimate truth.

There are different kinds of emptiness such as emptiness of the inner, emptiness of the outer, emptiness of both and so forth. There are sixteen or twenty types of emptiness and so forth. You can read about this in different texts.

Many conceptualizations arise in our mind. Why? Today perhaps we are relaxed, but tomorrow we are agitated. Why does this happen? We should examine this. Due to favorable causes and conditions our mind becomes happy, but due to unfavorable causes and conditions our mind becomes agitated and unhappy. Our mind goes up and down like this? Check whether or not it is like this.

That which investigates and that which is investigated,
These two, are mutually dependent.
Thus, in dependence on renown,
All the thoroughly analyzed are expressed. (108)

From the Prasangika point of view, the mind that investigates or analyzes and the object that is investigated or analyzed are dependent upon each other. Therefore, there is no object that exists inherently or from its own side. "Renown" refers to how something is talked about by ordinary beings, even ordinary beings talk about how things depend upon each other. For example, ordinary beings sew seeds in the ground in order to eat the resultant fruit. Another example is that ordinary beings work in order to receive a salary. If someone is lazy and does not want to do anything other than gossiping, sleeping, and eating, he will not gain any money. Money does not rain down from the sky without doing anything.

We need to try to understand this. There are people who want to immediately realize emptiness and to attain high realizations and liberation or nirvana. However what we desire does not come without effort. Therefore, we need to make effort. We need to have long-term plans and not think that things will happen immediately. These things are difficult to obtain, therefore we need to make

a project that extends to our future lives such that gradually we will get better and better. We should think in this way and try to study and meditate a bit, without getting frustrated when the result does not arise immediately and giving it all up. This is not right. We should TRY to be more relaxed! We should think less. Perhaps it would be better to sleep!

Saturday afternoon, 1 July 2006

Try to develop a good motivation wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose to listen to the teachings. We should try at all times to develop love and compassion for all sentient beings. If we can do something to benefit others, we should do it. If we cannot do anything to benefit them, we should at least avoid harming them.

If analyzed by the thorough analysis
Of the thoroughly analytical,
Because also the thoroughly analytical
Would be thoroughly analyzed, it would be endless. (109)

If the object analyzed – all phenomena – and the analyzer were inherently existent, it would be endless. Therefore, when all phenomena are analyzed as to whether they exist truly or inherently, it is found that all phenomena are empty of true existence and inherent existence. In this way emptiness is found. Therefore, there is no need to again analyze the analyzed as to whether it is truly existent or not, as otherwise it would be endless. For example, because all phenomena are realized by a valid cognizer to be empty of true existence, there is no need to analyze the analyzer, the valid cognizer itself, as to whether it is truly existent or not.

When that to be analyzed is thoroughly analyzed,
The thoroughly analytical does not have a support.
Because it lacks a support, it is not produced.
That too is said to be nirvana. (110)

When the object to be analyzed is analyzed by a valid cognizer as to whether it exists truly or inherently, the object of apprehension of the valid cognizer is found to not exist truly. When someone realizes that all phenomena are empty, he does not need to analyze whether phenomena exist truly. Because all phenomena lack a support, how can it be said to be produced or not? Emptiness is called nirvana by nature. When one realizes this nirvana by nature and familiarizes with it, it becomes a condition to abandon all the afflictive obscurations and obscurations to knowledge whereby one achieves an actual nirvana.

According to them, the two would be truly existent.
To abide in that is very difficult.
“The object is established from the sense power of the consciousness.”
What can be supported on an existent consciousness? (111)

All objects or objects to be known and all object-possessors or knowers do not exist truly because they cannot be proved to exist truly. While the lower schools – the Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas – assert the object and object-possessor to be truly existent or truly established, the Prasangikas say that they cannot establish or prove this. The lower schools say that since knowers or valid cognizers are truly established, also objects are established to be truly existent. A truly existent knower is not a support of a consciousness because a self-knower does not exist. They say that an other-knower is its support. However, this would mean that a consciousness is supported on an other-knower, which in turn is supported on an other-knower, and so forth and so on endlessly.

The lower schools say that object and knower are truly existent because the object is established by a direct perceiver. However, it is not like this.

“Well then, the consciousness is established from the object to be known.”
What can be supported on an existent object to be known?
Existing by the force of one another,
Both are also non-existent. (112)

Objects of knowledge exist as the support of what? The object and the consciousness mutually support each other and therefore they exist truly. However, this is not right since both do not exist inherently. For example, long and short exist in dependence on each other. Long depends on short and short depends on long. They do not exist from their own side. For example, fat and thin also depend on each other, as do father and son. One man can be called both father and son. In dependence on his father he is a son, and in dependence on his son he is a father. Father does not exist truly or from its own side, likewise son, mother, daughter, and so forth do not exist from their own side. They do not exist truly. They are dependent-relations and exist conventionally. We should try to understand this. In this way, according to the Prasangikas, all phenomena are established to be dependent-relations.

If he is without a son, he is not a father.
From where would that son arise?
Without a son, there is no father;
Likewise the two do not exist. (113)

If a son does not exist, someone cannot be called father. In other words, to be called “father” depends on having a son. If the father does not exist, from where would a son arise? He would not arise because the cause, the father, does not exist. If there is no son, there is no father. They exist in mutual dependence. Similarly, objects and object-possessors or knowers do not exist truly.

Just as a sprout is produced from a seed and
The seed is realized by just that, since, likewise,
Consciousness is produced from an object to be known,
Why is its existence not realized? (114)

Since the result, the sprout, is produced from an inherently established seed, it too is inherently existent. Likewise, why are the object to be known and the consciousness or knower not realized to be established inherently?

By a consciousness that is other than sprout,
“The seed exists” is realized:
But by what is a consciousness
Realizing an object to be known realized to exist? (115)

A consciousness that is a different substance from the sprout realizes “The seed exists.” But by what is a knower realizing a truly existent object to be known realized to exist? A knower realizing a valid cognizer does not exist because a self-knower has already been refuted, and you do not accept an other-knower. In short, a consciousness cannot be seen by an other-knower, according to your tenets it can only be known by a self-knower and that has already been refuted. You lower schools do not accept that a knower is established by an other-knower. From the Prasangika point of view there is no need for a knower to be established by a self-knower.

Sometimes by a direct perceiver of
Worldly beings, all causes are seen.
The diversity of the stems of lotuses and so forth
Are produced by a diversity of causes. (116)

“By what is the diversity of causes made?”
It comes from the diversity of previous causes.
“Why is a cause able to produce a result?”
That comes from the very strength of the previous cause. (117)

Here there are many refutations of the Charvakas who assert that results arise without cause. They say that, for example, the beautiful colors of a peacock’s plumage are not made by anyone, nor are the petals of a lotus. Therefore, they arise without a cause. Likewise, the fact that thorns are sharp is not made by anyone. This happens without cause. We can see these directly. Because no one created them, they exist by nature.

We worldly people can directly see a sprout arises from a seed, and that all external and internal phenomena arise from causes and conditions. In other words, worldly beings can see that it is like this. For example, lotuses with different colors, different leaves, and so forth arise from various causes. In other words, due to different causes, different results are produced. For example, if we examine, we will see that it is a fact that different causes produce different results. Therefore, a diversity of previous causes produce a diversity of results. Therefore, phenomena do not arise without causes. They exist in dependence on causes and conditions. They exist in different places and different times, and sometimes do not arise at all. This is normal, we can see this for ourselves.

Another school thinks that a permanent cause can yield a result. This too is refuted since this cannot happen.

If Ishvara is the cause of migrating beings,
Who is this one you call ‘Ishvara’?
“He is the elements.” It is indeed like that,
So why tire yourself out even for a mere name? (118)

Some, the Samkyas and Naiyayikas, assert Ishvara to be the cause or creator of migrating beings. they think that Ishvara thinks whereby things arise immediately. Therefore, if he thinks of sentient beings, they arise. For example, if Ishvara were to think “Now a pizza will arise on this table,” immediately a pizza will appear on the table! These schools accept this. There is debate that says: if someone wants his wife to get pregnant, it is enough for him to ask Ishvara to make his wife pregnant. These schools say that this is different. There are many people in Varanasi who uphold this assertion.

If Ishvara created all migrating beings, then who is this one called “Ishvara”? Who is he? To this question, these schools respond “He is the elements.” The elements are the earth element, water element, fire element, and wind element. From them there indeed arise many results. the Prasangikas says that the elements increase and decrease, therefore what need is there to call them by name “Ishvara”? It is meaningless to tire yourself out for him. It makes no difference whether Ishvara is impermanent or permanent because he does not exist.

These schools say that since the earth element and so forth are different substances and different entities, they can produce impermanent results. However, for this to happen, it needs to be preceded by a movement of Ishvara’s mind.

Well then, since earth and so forth are many,
Impermanent, without movement, not a god,

To be walked on and unclean,
They are not Ishvara himself.

(119)

The phenomena created by a movement of Ishvara's mind are many, are impermanent, are without movement, are not a god, are to be walked on, and are unclean. Therefore, how can they be Ishvara himself? They are not Ishvara. Some say that Ishvara is like space. We will stop here with Ishvara as Buddhists do not accept Ishvara.

No teachings Sunday, 2 July 2006, due to the initiation of Lion-face Dakini.

END