

A GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE

Sanskrit: Bodhisattvacharyavatara

Tibetan : Byang. chub. sems. dpai'. spyod. pa. la. jug. pa

by

ACHARYA SHANTIDEVA

Translated into English by Stephen Batchelor

LIBRARY OF TIBETAN WORKS & ARCHIVES
DHARAMSALA

Wisdom

(For the sake of clarity the entire ninth chapter—with the exception of the introductory and concluding verses — will be presented in the prose form of a dialogue. The dialogue takes place between the Madhyamaka school, represented by the author Shantideva, and various other Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools. A brief explanation of the tenets of the different schools will be given as they are introduced. The root text of the author is indicated by the passages in italics all the additional material, including the outline, is drawn from the commentary of T'og-me Zang-po. The entire outline in the form of an index can be found appended to this text. The numbers in brackets indicate the individual stanzas of the root text.)

(1) *All of these practices were taught
By the Mighty One for the sake of wisdom.
Therefore those who wish to pacify suffering
Should generate this wisdom.*

1. Recognition of the Nature of Wisdom

A. ASCERTAINING THE TWO TRUTHS

(2) Deceptive truths, so called because they are truths established from the point of view of deceived minds that obscure the real meaning, and ultimate truths, so called because they are truths comprehended by a Superior's wisdom to which no (deceptive truths) appear, *are accepted as the two truths. Ultimate truths are not objects experienced by the mind; but here "the mind" is to be understood as the deceptive (mind) that obscures one from seeing ultimate truths.*

(3) *Two types of person are seen to experience these two truths: yogis* endowed with the concentraton of superior insight and calm abiding, *and common people* who are not so endowed. *Common people* consider the body to be a unit, the mind to be permanent and so forth. *Yogis*, however, *contradict* (these views) with reasonings such as: "The body is not a unit because it has many parts", and, "The mind is not permanent because it changes into something else".

(4) *Furthermore, among the yogis*, i.e. the Proponents of External Existence,³⁵ the CTiittamatrins³⁶ and the Madhyamikas, there are *differences* in their *understanding* of the nature of knowable entities. Thereby those with *the higher views* progressively *contradict* those with *lower views*. With examples such as the magician's illusion, which are *accepted* as unreal by both yogis and common people, it is proven to the Proponents of External Existence that although something may appear to their minds it does not have to be real. Thus if the minds of (these yogis) can be established

as deceptive, it goes without saying that the same can be established about the minds of the common people.

Refuting Objections Concerning Deceptive Truths

Question: If all phenomena were not truly existent, there would be no attainment of Awakening from the practices of giving and so forth. Therefore what reason would there be to practise them for that purpose?

Answer: Although phenomena do not exist ultimately (i.e. truly), *because, unanalysed*, they do exist deceptively, it is not contradictory to engage in the practices of giving and so forth *for the sake of obtaining the fruit of Awakening*.

Question: Since phenomena appear to both yogis and common people, why should there be any dispute over them?

Answer: (5) Although they are similar in appearance, *common people behold forms and other such things and conceive of them to be really existent; they do not understand them to be like an illusion*. But since yogis do understand them to exist in such a way, it is *here that the yogis and the common people disagree*.

Question: Since (6) *forms and so forth* are established by *true perception*, isn't it contradictory to say that they are false?

Answer: There is no contradiction, because *such things are merely worldly conventions, but they are not true for a valid cognition (of an ultimate truth)*. *This is just like the unclean body being known deceptively as clean*. In fact, *such a cognition is false*.

Question: If all phenomena have no (true) nature, why did the Buddha say that things have a momentarily impermanent nature?

Answer: Such statements have to be interpreted. Having in mind their mere apparent nature, (7) *the Protector Buddha taught things to be impermanent for the sake of progressively guiding ordinary people who conceive of true existence (towards a correct understanding)*. *But in actuality such things are not truly momentary*.

Question: But because this momentary nature does not appear to ordinary people, *is it not a contradiction to say it even exists deceptively*?

Answer: Although it does not appear to the common person, because it appears to those (8) *yogis who have merely seen personal identitylessness*, there is *no mistake* in its being a *deceptive truth*.

Question: But doesn't this contradict the statement that to see the momentary (nature of things) is to see Truth itself?

Answer: Compared to the worldly view of things as permanent and so forth, the yogi's vision of momentariness is posited as *a vision of Reality* itself. Otherwise, if in comparison to the yogis, the common people saw Reality, then *the yogis' definite understanding of the uncleanness of a woman's body would be contradicted by the worldly person's apprehension of it as clean.*

Question: If all phenomena were not truly existent, then since the Buddha too would be false, would no merits occur from worshipping him?

Answer: (9) *In the same way that, for you, truly existent merits occur from worshipping a truly existent Conqueror, similarly, for us, illusion-like merits are obtained from worshipping an illusion-like Conqueror.*

Question: But if sentient beings were like an illusion, then after they die, how would they be reborn?

Answer: (10) *For as long as the necessary conditions are assembled, for that long even illusion will occur.* Although they are unreal, they are similar to sentient beings in the fact that they arise from conditions. *Why merely by their longer duration, should sentient beings be more real than illusions?* Then it would follow that illusions that last a long time are more real than those that last a short time.

Question: Nevertheless, if this were the case, would not the killing of a sentient being by another sentient being and the killing of an illusory person by another illusory person be equivalent evils? And would not charity between sentient beings and charity between illusory people be equivalent virtues?

Answer: (11) *Because an illusory person who kills or gives something to another illusory person has no mind, no evil or virtue accrues from his actions.* Whereas if such actions are committed by a sentient being *endowed with an illusion-like mind*, since the agent has a mind which can love and hate, *merits and evils do accrue from his actions.* (12) *Because the mantras and so forth that cause illusions do not have the ability to produce minds, illusory minds are not produced from them, whereas the causes for sentient beings do have the ability to produce mind.* Although false, the different (illusions that) result depend upon different causes: in this way *the illusions that arise from a variety of different conditions also vary.* They are produced from different causes but (13) *nowhere is there one condition which has the ability to produce all the effects.*

Question: If, ultimately, all sentient beings are by nature in the state beyond, sorrow (i.e. Nirvana)³⁹ although *deceptively* they are in *cyclic existence*, then for the same reason,

(14) *since, in terms of appearance, the Buddha would be in cyclic existence, what would be the use of the Bodhisattva's way of life?*

Answer: If their conditions are not discontinued even illusions will not cease to be. Likewise, since sentient beings have not discontinued the conditions for cyclic existence, they are in cyclic existence, but (15) since the Buddha has discontinued these conditions, even deceptively he does not exist with the nature of one in cyclic existence.

2. Refuting the Objections of the Chittamatrins Concerning Ultimate Truths

(The Chittamatrins are the followers of the idealist "Mind-Only" school of Mahayana Buddhism who maintain that no external objects exist. For them the mind is not conditioned by an object of a different nature than itself, rather the mind and its object are one in nature and are only nominally distinct. The mind is regarded as truly existent whereas external objects are denied. To establish the true existence of consciousness they posit self-cognition, a non-deceived aspect of mind that has the function of being conscious of only consciousness itself.)

Chittamatrin: If no deceived consciousnesses exist, then what (mind) can refer to the illusion like appearances?

Madhyamika: (16) But if illusion-like (external) objects are not real for you, what can be referred to?

Chittamatrin: Although (external) objects do not really exist, consciousness does truly exist. Therefore since the images (of objects) which appear (to consciousness) are the mind itself, they are suitable to be referred to (by consciousness).

Madhyamika: (17) If the mind itself and the illusion-like objects are one substance, then, since there would be no beholder and no behold, what (object) would be beheld by what (mind)? It has been said by the Protector of the World himself that the mind does not have the ability to behold the mind. (18) Just as the blade of a sword cannot cut itself, likewise the mind cannot behold itself.

Chittamatrin: Just as a light completely illuminates itself, so does the mind know itself.

Madhyamika: (19) The light does not illuminate itself because something that is to be illuminated has to first of all be unilluminated, but as soon as the light is lit it is never obscured by any darkness, i.e. unilluminated.

Chittamatrin: Take for example two kinds of blueness: blueness that appears in dependence upon another blue coloured object, like the blue reflected in a clear piece of

glass, and blueness that does *not* appear in dependence upon something else, like the natural colour of blue in lapis lazuli. (20) Likewise some objects such as jugs depend upon other things, such as lights that illuminate them and consciousnesses that know them, whereas such things as lights and feelings of pleasure and pain are beheld without any such dependence.

Madhyamika: This is not so because, since the blueness of lapis lazuli is established as blueness as soon as it comes into being, *it is not something which previously, having not been blue, makes itself blue*. Therefore this example is unsuitable to illustrate self-illumination and self-cognition.⁴¹ Conventionally, (21) *upon being perceived by consciousness, it can be said that a light illuminates itself*, but ultimately, *upon being perceived by what can it be said that the mind illuminates itself?* Thus the example and what it illustrates are not comparable. Since ultimately neither self-cognition nor other-cognition are established (as truly existent), (22) *no mind at all can behold* (a truly existent consciousness). Thus *it is meaningless to discuss whether such a mind has the quality of illuminating itself or not*. This would be like discussing whether the looks of the daughter of a barren woman are attractive or not.

Chittamatrin: (23) *If self-cognition did not exist, how would we be able to have a memory of consciousness?* Since we could have no such memory, the existence of self-cognition is established by the reason of (its being a necessary factor in the process of the recollection of consciousness).

Madhyamika: There is no certainty of this; without (the consciousness) experiencing itself, *it is remembered from its relationship to the experiencing of other objects such as forms*. For example, although the (hibernating) bear does not experience being poisoned (when bitten) *by a rat*, later, from hearing the sound of thunder (in spring-time, he awakens and) experiences pain. From this he indirectly remembers (that he must have been poisoned. The means whereby consciousness is recalled is) *similar* (to this).

Chittamatrin: (24) *If someone with the necessary causal conditions such as concentration can see the consciousnesses of others from afar, therefore it must be possible to clearly behold one's own consciousness which is so near*.

Madhyamika: This is not necessarily so, because although *from application of an eye-lotion* (consecrated by) *powerful attainments, treasure vases can be seen far beneath the earth, the eye-lotion itself, which is much closer, cannot be seen*.

Chittamatrin: If self-cognition were non-existent, other-cognitions would also be non-existent.⁴² Therefore there would be no such things as seeing, hearing and so forth.

Madhyamika: (25) The mere appearances of seeing, hearing and perceiving are not being negated here. It is the conception of them as truly existent that is to be reversed since this is the cause for suffering.

Chittamatrin: (26) These illusion-like objects are not external objects other than the mind, yet although not other, they cannot be considered as being the mind itself. Thus they are phenomena which are indescribably other than the mind.

Madhyamika: If something is a thing, how can it be neither the mind nor other than it? It has to be one or the other; but if you say that it is neither one nor the other, then it would not be a thing because such a thing could not possibly exist. (27) Just as in the Chittamatra system illusion-like objects are not truly existent but can still be seen, similarly, although the mind is not truly existent, conventionally it can appear as the beholder.

Chittamatrin: Cyclic existence, (the state in which subject and object) appear as two (substantially distinct things), has as the basis of its deceptive appearance something real, namely a truly existent, non-dual consciousness.⁴³ Other-wise, if it did not have something real as its basis, it would be just like space and would not (be a state which) could appear as real subjects and objects.

Madhyamika: (28) If the dualistic state of cyclic existence depended upon something real, how could it have the function of appearing as real subjects and objects? It would follow that it could not because real, (truly existent) things do not exist. Thus in your tradition whatever is mind would become a solitary non-dual consciousness unassisted by any object (29) If it were true that in this way the mind existed separately from its objects, then all sentient beings would become Tathagatas. Therefore what advantage is there in considering the basis of cyclic existence to be merely mind?

B. Establishing as the path the knowledge that deceptive truths are like illusions

Question: (30) Even if one knows that all phenomena are like an illusion, how will disturbing conceptions be turned away? For instance, a magician who creates an illusory woman can still have desire for her.

Answer: (31) The creator of this illusion has not abandoned the tendencies of the disturbing conception of desire towards knowable entities such as women. Therefore when he sees the illusory woman, the tendency (to see her) emptiness is very weak. Although the illusion may be understood to be empty (of being a real woman), through not understanding phenomena to be empty (of true existence), the tendencies of desire are aroused. (32) But through developing the tendency to know all phenomena as empty,

the tendency of apprehending things as truly existent will be abandoned. And through familiarizing oneself with the fact that no phenomena—emptinesses as well as (deceptive truths)—are established (as truly existent), in the future the apprehension of emptinesses as well as false phenomena (to be truly existent) will be abandoned. At this time it will be impossible for any disturbing conceptions to occur. (33) When it is said that no things exists, this means that that the thing to be negated (true existence) which is under examination is not to be apprehended. At that time, since (true existence), the basis in dependence upon which no true existence is posited, is removed, how can no-true existence remain before the mind as truly existent? Just as the son of a barren woman does not exist, neither does his dying. (34) Once neither a thing nor a no-thing (its emptiness) remains before the mind, then as there is no other alternative, such as something being both a thing and a nothing, or being neither a thing nor a no-thing, finally the mind that apprehends (truly existent) objects will cease and be totally pacified.

Question: If this were the case, then because he would not reflect, "I shall do this," how could the Buddha act for the benefit of others?

Answer: (35) *Wish-fulfilling trees and wish-granting gems*, although they have no conceptual motivations, *completely fulfil hopes* because of their own power and the merits accumulated by people. *Likewise, through the force of both the purity of the disciples' minds and the prayers a Buddha makes to work for their welfare while he is a Bodhisattva, the physical body of a Conqueror appears and benefit is forthcoming.*

Question: Since the prayers of the Bodhisattva cease when he attains Buddhahood, wouldn't it be impossible for them to have any effect at that time?

Answer: (36) *For example, although the Brahmin Sanku passed away a long time ago, the Garuda Reliquary which he consecrated with the force of his mantra is still able to neutralise poisons. (37) Similarly the reliquary of a Conqueror's body is formed in accordance with his actions and prayers when he was a Bodhisattva. Although the Bodhisattva has now passed beyond sorrow into the non-abiding Nirvana, and his conceptual desire to accomplish the welfare of others has ceased, he still accomplishes all that is of benefit for them.*

Shravaka: (38) *If the Buddha has no (conceptual) mind, can meritorious fruits occur from worshipping him?*

Madhyamika: There is no fault *because it has been explained that the merits from worshipping a Buddha while he is alive and from worshipping his relics when he has passed beyond sorrow are exactly the same. (39) It is established through scriptural authority that fruits occur both from worshipping a Buddha who has no conceptual mind as well as from a Buddha who (is considered) deceptively to have a conceptual mind and ultimately to be truly existent. For example, just as you accept that a truly existent fruit*

of merit occurs *from* worshipping a *truly existent Buddha* endowed with a mind, we too accept that false, (non-truly existent) merits occur from worshipping a false, (non-truly existent) Buddha.

C. Establishing as the path the knowledge that ultimate truths are emptinesses

Vaibashika: (40) *Through* cultivating a direct *vision of* the aspects of the Four (Noble) Truths, such as impermanence and so forth, *one will be liberated* from disturbing conceptions: *so what is the point of* cultivating a *vision of* an *emptiness* that is not established as anything?

Madhyamika: It is necessary to behold emptiness, *because it is taught in the 'Perfection of Wisdom' scriptures* (Prajnaparamita Sutras) *that without the path of* the wisdom that understands emptiness, there will be no resultant Awakening.

Vaibashika: (41) *But since the Mahayana* (teachings) are not the word of Buddha, *they are not established* as a credible scriptural authority for us.

Madhyamika: But then *how are your scriptures established* as credible?

Vaibashika: They are credible *because they are established* as the word of Buddha for both of us.

Madhyamika: Then *at first*, prior to your acceptance of your tenets, your scriptures cannot have been the word of Buddha, because at that time they were *not established* as the word of Buddha *for you*.

Vaibashika: Nevertheless they are still credible because we learn about them from a pure unbroken lineage.

Madhyamika: (42) *But this reason for which you believe in your scriptures is equally* (applicable) *in the Mahayana*, because we too have an unbroken lineage of teachers. Furthermore *if you accept something as true simply because two people accept it*, then you should *also accept the Vedas and other non-Buddhist scriptures as true*, credible scriptures.

Vaibashika: (43) *The Mahayana scriptures are not credible because they are disputed*.

Madhyamika: But since all your scriptures are disputed by the non-Buddhist and some of them by other Buddhist schools, you should reject your own scriptures too. (44) You accept any teaching which can be classified into the three scriptural categories (Tripitaka) as the word of the Buddha, according to whether it discusses the higher training of

moral discipline, concentration or wisdom. *If this is so*, since these three trainings are taught in *most Mahayana scriptures* such as the 'Samdhinirmocana Sutra', they are therefore *similar to your scriptures*. *Why then do you not accept them* as the word of the Buddha? (45) *If, because of your not recognizing one scripture* such as a 'Prajnaparamita Sutra' as having the complete characteristics of Buddha's speech, you say that *all Mahayana texts are corrupt*, then, for the same reason, *because one text* such as the 'Samdhinirmocana Sutra' *is similar to your texts* in having all the characteristics of Buddha's speech, *why not say that all Mahayana texts were spoken by the Conqueror?*
Vaibashika: If Mahayana texts such as the 'Prajnaparamita Sutras' were the word of Buddha, surely the Great Kashyapa and the other Arhats would have understood them. Since they did not, they cannot be the word of the Buddha.

Madhyamika: Since they are extremely profound, (46) *even the Great Kashyapa and the other Arhats could not fathom the depths of what was expressed in the teachings of the Mahayana scriptures*. Therefore, just *because you do not understand them*, *who would regard this as a reason for not accepting them* as the word of the Buddha? You say that (47) *the monk Arhat is the root for establishing the presence of the Buddha's teaching*, but it would be hard for those whose minds still apprehend (true existence) and have not understood emptiness *to be monk Arhats*, because they could not have fully abandoned their disturbing conceptions. Therefore, since they would not have abandoned suffering, *it would be hard for them to have attained the state beyond sorrow (Nirvana)*.

Vaibashika: Although they do not understand such an emptiness, (48) *they are freed from suffering because they have abandoned their disturbing conceptions by means of meditating upon such things as impermanence and personal identitylessness*.

Madhyamika: 'However, because of having abandoned their misconceptions, *do they become devoid of suffering as soon as they attain the state of an Arhat with residue?*⁴⁷ Although those Arhats have no disturbing conceptions, it was clearly taught that *through the latent force of their previous actions*, Arhats such as Maudgalyayana experienced suffering.

Vaibashika: Although they (49) *temporarily are not freed from suffering*, as soon as they abandon their disturbing conceptions, they will be freed when they leave their bodies because *they definitely do not have any craving for the aggregates of body and mind*, which is a *principal condition* for conditioned existence.

Madhyamika: But *while they still have a form of craving that is a completely undisturbing state of confusion*,⁴⁸ *why would they not take rebirth with aggregates contaminated by actions and disturbing conceptions?* (50) They would, *because the causal condition of having feelings associated with the apprehension of true existence definitely produces craving*, and these (so-called) Arhats do have such feelings. Since a mind *that lacks the*

understanding of emptiness is a mind that still apprehends (true existence), it will still conceive of some objects (as truly existent). (51) Although its manifest (disturbing conceptions) may temporarily cease, they will nevertheless arise again in the same way that during the equipoise of non-discernment⁴⁹ (disturbing conceptions) temporarily cease only to arise again later (when the period of equipoise is over). Therefore those who wish to put an end to all suffering should meditate on emptiness. When one understands emptiness, compassion should arise (52) for those who experience suffering as a result of being confused about emptiness. Then, while remaining in cyclic existence, to accomplish inconceivable benefit for others by means of liberating them from the two extremes of desiring the happinesses of cyclic existence and fearing suffering, is the fruit of meditating on emptiness.

(53) The remedy for the darkness of the obscurations of distributing conceptions as well as the obscuration to the knowable, is_ meditation on emptiness. Therefore why do those who wish to quickly obtain omniscience not meditate on emptiness? (54) Since understanding emptiness has such advantages and not understanding it has such disadvantages, it is quite invalid to aim criticism in the direction of emptiness. Therefore without any doubts as to whether it is the path of the Buddha or not, one should meditate on emptiness.

Objection: But I do not want to meditate upon emptiness, because it frightens me.

Reply: (55) *It would be correct to be afraid of that which actually produces suffering, the apprehension of true existence, but why be afraid of meditating on emptiness if it pacifies all suffering?*

11. INTRODUCING THE OBJECT OF, MEDITATION: IDENTITYLESSNESS

A. The identitylessness of the person

1. General Refutation of Personal Identity

(56). if a (truly existent) self existed, it would be justifiable to be afraid of any object at all, but since such a self does not exist, who is there to become afraid?

(57) Teeth, hair and nails are not the self, the self is not bones nor blood; it is neither mucus nor is it phlegm; nor is it lymph or pus. (58) The self is not fat nor sweat; the lungs and liver also are not the self; neither are any of the other inner organs; nor is the self excrement or urine.

(59) Flesh and skin are not the self; warmth and energy-winds are not the self; neither are bodily cavities the self; and at no time are the six types of consciousness the self. The reason for this is because all six psycho-physical categories are impermanent, multiple and not autonomous.

2. A Refutation of the self postulated by the Samkhya School

(The Samkhya school is a non-Buddhist tradition of philosophy founded in ancient India by the Rishi Kapila. The followers of this system believe that all phenomena—except the permanent and unchanging self—are created from an all-pervading primal substance (*Prakṛti*). When the self comes into contact with this primal substance a series of manifestations such as the intellect, the sense faculties and the objects of the senses issue forth from it and are then experienced by the self. The primal substance is a permanent, partless and universal material which creates and is the nature of phenomena in the experienced world. The self is the unchanging consciousness principle that becomes bound to the world through its false identification with the manifestations of the primal substance.)⁵⁰

Madhyamika: (60) *If the consciousness that apprehends sound were a permanent (self), there would be a conscious apprehension of sound at all times even when sound was absent. But since the consciousness of sound is dependent upon sound, if there were no sound as an object of consciousness, for what reason and through the cognition of what object could it be called a consciousness that apprehends sound?* (61) *If there can be a consciousness that apprehends sound even though there is no consciousness of sound, it would (absurdly) follow that even a piece of wood could become a consciousness of sound. Therefore without an object of consciousness remaining close by we can definitely say that there is no consciousness that apprehends it.*

Samkhya: When there is no sound, it does not mean that there is no apprehender of it because, at a later time when no sounds are present, (62) *the previous consciousness of sound, becomes consciousness of visual-forms* and so forth. These two consciousnesses are one thing.

Madhyamika: *In this case, at the time of that consciousness of visual-form why is no sound heard?*

Samkhya: It is not heard *because no sound exists in the proximity.*

Madhyamika: *Therefore a conscious apprehension of it could not possibly exist. (63) How can something whose nature it is to apprehend sound ever apprehend visual-forms? It could not because their aspects are mutually exclusive.*

Samkhya: Their aspects are mutually exclusive but in; relation to two objects occurring at different times it is not contradictory to say that it is one (consciousness) apprehending them. This is *like one person who, in relation to his father and his son respectively, is posited as a son and a father.*

Madhyamika: But in your tradition it is not really true to consider a father and a son as one person because (64) in this case the truly existent matter (primal substance) which you accept as a non-appearing, equally balanced state of *purity* (sattva), *activity* (raja) and *darkness* (tama) could be neither a father nor a son (because it has true, independent existence.)" The apprehension of a visual-form does not exist as an apprehension of sound because if it existed with that nature it would surely be apparent, whereas it is never seen as such (by a valid cognition).

Samkhya: For example, (65) just as one actor has many different roles, the previous apprehension of sound is later seen in another way, i.e. as an apprehension of sound is seen in another way, i.e. as an apprehension of visual-form.

Madhyamika: But then the consciousness can no longer be permanent because it keeps on changing into something else.

Samkhya: Although (the consciousness) appears in other ways, its nature remains the same as before and is permanent.

Madhyamika: But such a oneness (of nature) is a type of oneness that you have never asserted before.

Samkhya: Consciousness appears (66) in other ways, and although the (different modes) are not true, (their nature) is one and true.

Madhyamika: But please tell us, what is this nature that is one and true?

Samkhya: It is the nature of merely being conscious that is one and true.

Madhyamika: In that case it would follow that the minds of all different individuals are one because they too are similar in merely being conscious. Furthermore (67) the self that has intentions and the primal substance that has no intentions would also become one, because they are similar in merely being existent knowable entities. When particular consciousnesses—the apprehensions of sounds, visual-forms and so forth—are mistaken and untrue, how can they have one true general-aspect, namely a similar basis of merely being consciousness? They cannot because it is illogical for the general-aspect of something to be true when all the particular aspects are false.

3. A Refutation of the Self Postulated by the Naiyayika School

(The Naiyayikas accept a permanent, partless, material phenomenon within the being of an individual as the self. This self is claimed to be able to experience objects because it is endowed with a separate mind.)⁵²

Madhyamika: (68) Furthermore, a non-mental phenomenon cannot be the self that experiences objects because it lacks the nature of mind, just like a jug.

Naiyayika: Although it itself is not of the nature of the mind, it does experience objects because of being endowed with a separate mind.

Madhyamika: This is illogical, for when a self, by nature not conscious of objects, comes to be conscious of them through being endowed with a mind, it absurdly would follow that (in becoming a conscious self) the non-conscious self would perish and hence no longer be permanent (as you assert). (69) Even if the self were unchanging then how, through being endowed with a mind, could a self that is not conscious of objects come to be conscious of them? This would not be possible. Thus, if you accept as the self something that is not conscious of objects because it is matter, and separated from the function of producing effects because it is permanent, then space would also be a self.

4. Rejection of Arguments concerning Identitylessness

Question: (70) If the self were not permanent, the relation between the action and its effect, i.e. the doer of the action coming to experience the results of the actions committed, would not be maintained. This is so because the doer would perish as soon as the action was committed and would not exist at the time when it came to experience the effects (of his action). Therefore whose action would that be (to experience)?

Answer: (71) The basis for the causal action—the aggregates of this life—and the basis for the ripening effect—the aggregates of the future life—are distinct states- of being. And since in both these states it is established both for you, because you accept a permanent self, and for us, because we accept identitylessness, that the self neither commits the action nor experiences the effect, is it not meaningless to argue on this point?

Objection: But what about actions whose fruits will be experienced in this life? They do not have different bases (aggregates) upon which the causal action is committed and the result is experienced.

Answer: Nevertheless, in the (same) moment (72) it is impossible to see the aggregates of someone committing a causal action being subject to the experience of its result; just as a father and his son cannot be born at the same time.

Objection: But it says in one scripture. "How will someone else experience the results of the actions one commits? O monks, the actions you commit and accumulate will not ripen on such things as the external earth element, but upon (your future) aggregates

grasped (by consciousness.) Thus, does not your assertion contradict this statement that the doer of the action must experience its results himself?

Answer: This statement is to be interpreted as follows: while actually *considering the same continuity* (of the individual, the Buddha) *taught that the doer of the action is the experiences of the result* in order to prevent people denying the law of karmic cause and effect. Actually this is not so because a permanent self is non-existent.

Question: But why is there no permanent self? *Answer:* (73) *Neither the mind of the past nor the mind of the future are the self because they are non-existent; one has ceased and the other has not yet been produced.*

Question: *But isn't the mind of the present (moment), which has been produced but has not yet ceased, the self?*

Answer: (If this were the case), then in the next moment, *when it had perished, it would no longer be the self.* With this reasoning all five aggregates are rejected as being the self. (74) *For example, when the trunk of a plantain tree is split into parts there is no essence found at all. Likewise, when analytically searched for with reasoning, a truly existent self cannot be found (among the aggregates).*

Question: (75) *If there were no sentient beings, towards whom could compassion be developed?*

Answer: Although sentient beings do not truly exist, deceptively one should develop compassion *for those imputed* (as sentient beings) *by the confused mind which has promised to practise the (Bodhisattva) way of life in order to lead them to the goal of liberation.*

Question: (76) *But if sentient beings do not exist, who will obtain the results of developing compassion?*

Answer: Although ultimately *it is true* (that there are no truly existent sentient beings, compassion or results), deceptively, *from the point of view of a mind confused about phenomena, we accept the existence of merely apparent results arising from merely apparent compassion developed towards merely apparent sentient beings.*

Objection: Since compassion is both a subjective state to which things appear in a false way and a mind confused about phenomena, surely it is equally fit to be rejected as is confusion about the self.

Answer: *In order to completely pacify suffering one need not and cannot reject compassion. Therefore one should not reject this merely apparent confusion about the*

results. But (77) *the confusion about the self* should be rejected because it *increases* such things as *self-importance* which are *causes for suffering*.

Objection: But there are no means to reject this confusion.

Answer: There are because the supreme remedy for it is meditation upon identitylessness.

B. The Identitylessness of Phenomena

1. Close Placement of Mindfulness on the Body

(78) *The body is neither feet nor calves; thighs and the waist are not the body; the abdomen and back are not the body; and neither are the chest and shoulders the body.*

(79) *The ribs and the hands are not the body; armpits and the nape of the neck are not the body; all inner organs are not the body; neither the head nor neck are the body. Therefore, what truly existent body is there among these parts?*

(80) *If the body abided, in all its limbs equally in all directions, indeed I could say that all the parts of the body abide in the parts of its limbs, but where could the partless, truly existent body itself abide? (It would have to exist independent of its parts and unrelated to them).* (81) *And if the entire, truly existent body abided separately in each of the individual parts such as the hands, then there would 'have to be as many bodies as there were parts.*

(82) *If there is no truly existent body outside or within, how could the hands and so forth have such a body at all? And since it is not something different from the hands and other parts, how could a separate body, unrelated to its parts, exist? Therefore (83) the body is not truly-existent, but, through being confused about its hands and other parts, a mind that mistakes them for a (truly existent) body arises.*

But the body does not truly exist in the way it is apprehended by that mind. It is like the mind apprehending a pile of stones as a man because of their being set up in a fort similar to a man's.

(84) *In the same way that a pile of stones will appear to be a man for as long as the causal conditions to mistake them as a man are assembled, so will the hands and so forth appear as a (truly existent) body for as long as the causal conditions to mistake them for a body are present* (85) *Just as the body as a whole is not truly existent, how can the hands be truly existent? They are only a composite of fingers. The fingers too are not truly existent because they are a collection of joints, and the joints in turn, by being divided into their parts, are also found to be not truly existent.*

(86) *Likewise when these parts are divided into atomic particles and the atomic particles into their directional parts, they are revealed as multiples and thus cannot be truly existent units. Even when the directional parts are divided up they are found to be devoid of truly existent parts. Hence they are found to be as empty as space, and so even atomic particles can have no true existence. Thus although the body appears to be truly*

existent, in fact it is not. (87) *Therefore who, having analyzed it, would be attached to this dream-like form? And when in this way the body is not truly existent, how can the distinction be made into (truly existent) male and female bodies?*

2. Close Placement of Mindfulness on the Feelings

Madhyamika: (88) *If feelings of pain truly existed, then since they would never end, why would they not affect feelings of great joy and happiness, making it impossible for them to ever arise? Conversely, if happiness had true existence, why do those suffering greatly from grief and sickness not find any joy in delicious foods and the like? They should, if happiness had true independent existence, but they clearly do not.*

Answer: Indeed pain really exists, but (89) *when a strong feeling of pleasure occurs, the pain is not experienced because it is overridden by the pleasure.*

Madhyamika: But, simply because it lacks the defining characteristic of a feeling, namely experience, *how can something which is not of the nature of an experience be a feeling?*

Answer: It is a feeling because (90) *there is an experience of a very subtle pain. Surely only the gross aspect of suffering is dispelled by the strong pleasure. The nature of this subtle pain is a slight, weak feeling of happiness distinct from the gross sensation of pleasure.*

Madhyamika: But *this subtle experience cannot possibly be a form of pain because you now say it is a form of happiness. (No experience can be simultaneously pleasurable and painful) (91) If pain is not occurring in someone's mind because its opposite is occurring, then to consider what has not occurred to be a feeling is surely what could only be called a mistaken conception. (92) Therefore, as a remedy for such mistaken conceptions one should cultivate the wisdom which analyses the non-true existence of all phenomena. The state of absorption that arises from the field of what is examined by this mind is the nourishment that sustains the yogi's understanding of the way things exist.* (There now follows a refutation of the non-true existence of contact, the cause of feeling. In the first three stanzas (93-95), the argument is directed against those who assert partless atomic particles).

Madhyamika: (93) *If there were space between the sense faculties such as the eyes and the objects such as visual-forms, how could the two ever meet? They would be like a mountain in the east and a mountain in the west. But if there were no space at all, then since they would become one unit, what could meet what? There would be no meeter and nothing to be met with. Furthermore (94) the (partless) atomic particles of the sense faculty and the (partless) atomic particles of the object cannot meet on all sides because they cannot enter into one another, i.e., they cannot merge into one another.*

This is so because atomic particles have *no space* inside *and* are completely *equal* in size. Were they to meet, they would have to do so in this way because *without* one (partless) atomic particle *entering* into another there could be *no mixing* of the two *and without this mixing there could not possibly be any meeting* on all sides. (95) *But how would it be logical for* those who accept the existence of a *partless* atomic particle to *say that it is met* on one particular side by another (partless) atom? If that were the case, the partless atomic particle would have one part which is met with and another part which is not met at all. (Hence it would no longer be partless). *But if you ever see* an atomic particle *that has no parts but can still be met with*, please would you show it to us! It also follows that (96) *it is illogical to meet consciousness because it is not physical* (Something physical cannot possibly meet something non-physical).

Objection: Although there is no physical meeting, there does exist a mere aggregation (of the sense faculty, the object and consciousness) to produce the effect (of a cognition).

Answer: This is invalid *because, just as we analysed before, an aggregation is not found to be a truly existent thing.*⁵³ (97) *If in this way contact, the cause for feeling, is not (truly) existent, from what do (truly existent) feelings, the effect, arise?* Thus *what is the purpose of tiring oneself out for the sake of obtaining pleasurable feelings? And likewise, whose mind could be caused any harm by what painful feelings?* Both the pleasure which is obtained and the pain which harms have no true existence. (98) *When there is no (truly existent) identity of the person that feels and no (truly existent) feelings either, having seen this situation, why do I not turn away the craving to obtain pleasure and to be separated from pain?* Since the sense objects that (99) *I see and touch appear to me but have no true existence, their nature is like a dream and an illusion.* Therefore the subjective feelings of them can also have no true existence. *Feelings are not seen (or experienced) by the mind which arises simultaneously with them because, since they are produced simultaneously with it, they would be (causally) unrelated to it.* (100) *Likewise previous feelings and later feelings can be remembered and wished for but they cannot actually be experienced by the mind because they have either ceased or are yet to be produced. Because there would be no experiencer and no experienced, they cannot experience themselves, and if (one's own mind) of the past, present and future (cannot experience them), nothing else can experience them either* (101). *Therefore no (truly existent) experiencer of feelings exists and thus no truly existent feelings exist either.* So *how can this identityless collection of aggregates be benefitted by pleasurable feelings and harmed by painful ones?* It cannot because beneficial and harmful feelings do not truly exist.

3. Close Placement of Mindfulness on the Mind

(102) *A (truly existent) mental consciousness does not abide in the sense faculties such as the eyes, it does not abide in the objects such as visual-forms, and it does not abide in*

between the two. Neither does a (truly existent) mind exist either inside or outside the body, and it is not to be found elsewhere. (103) This (mind) is neither the body nor truly other than it; it is not mixed with it nor entirely separate from it; the mind is not in the slightest bit truly existent. Therefore all sentient beings have from the very beginning been in the natural Nirvana (i.e. their minds have always been devoid of true existence).

Question: Although the mental consciousness may exist in that way, don't the five sense consciousnesses truly apprehend their five objects?

Answer: Well, let us first consider whether they exist prior to, simultaneously with or after their objects. (104) *If we said that the five sense consciousnesses existed before the five objects of which they are conscious, then, having referred to what objects, could those consciousnesses arise? At that time there could be no objects because they would still have to be produced. Even if the consciousness and what it is conscious of arose simultaneously, still, having referred to what object, could the consciousness arise? In this case, when the consciousness is yet to be produced so is its object, and once it has been produced there would be no need for it to be produced by an object.*

(105) *And if the consciousness came into existence after the object of which it is conscious then from what object could it arise? Since the object would have ceased by the time the consciousness arose, the consciousness would have no object.*

4. Close Placement of Mindfulness on Phenomena

In this way, by means of the above reasoning, one will come to understand that all phenomena do not truly arise.

5. Rejection of Arguments

Objection: (106) *If, in this way, all phenomena do not arise, since there would be no deceptive truths which arise and perish; how could two truths be presented in the Madhyamika tradition? Furthermore, if all phenomena existed in this way and deceptive truths were posited merely through being imputed as arising and perishing entities by beings who have a deceived mind, how could sentient beings pass from sorrow into Nirvana? They could not, because even though some beings have entered (the unchanging state of) Nirvana, it could become a (changing) deceptive truth through others simply imputing it to be an arising and perishing entity.*

Reply: In reality it is unchanging, but through not understanding this it can be misconceived of as arising and perishing. But just because it is posited as a deceptive truth with regard to that particular (false) conception, this does not imply that it ceases to exist (as an unchanging state). That (false conception) cannot cause Nirvana to no longer exist because another person cannot make something else a deceptive truth out of his own deception. (107) *This deception is a distorted conception*

in the mind of *someone* who has not passed into the state beyond sorrow; *it is not the deceptive mind of one* who has passed beyond sorrow. Later, when the state of Nirvana is attained, *if that* deceptive conception *were ascertained* to exist, (Nirvana) *would exist* (as) a (changing) *deceptive truth*; but *since this* (deceptive conception) *does not exist* (in the mind of one who has attained Nirvana), *Nirvana does not exist* (as a changing) *deceptive truth*.

Objection: (108) *Since the examining mind and the examined object are mutually dependent upon one another, if the object is not established the mind too would be non-existent. Therefore your analysis (of non-true existence) would be invalid.*

Reply: Indeed, because the object does not truly exist the mind does not truly exist, but this does not mean that the analysis is invalid, because *all analytic minds* are spoken of as conventional consciousnesses and *are said to be dependent upon reasoning which is accepted* in the world. (109) *If it were necessary to analyze the analytic mind with another truly existent analytic mind, then that analytic mind too would have to be analyzed by yet another analytic mind. Therefore, since this process would never reach an end, the basic object of analysis would never be ascertained.* (110) *When the object of analysis has been analysed and established to be empty, the analytic mind is found not to have a (truly existent) object as its basis (or referent). Thus because (it is understood that) there is no truly existent object, even without analysis (it is understood that) a truly existent analytic mind cannot arise from it. This state of peace in which no truly existent objects nor consciousnesses arise is called Nirvana, the state beyond sorrow.*

III. NEGATING THE CONCEPTION TO BE ELIMINATED: THE APPREHENSION OF TRUE EXISTENCE

A. Refuting the True Existence of Subject and Object

(111) *According to the Realists (54) both the object and the consciousness of it have true existence. But they are in a very difficult position because there is no proof for their assertion, whereas it can be refuted.*

Realist: The true existence of the object is established from the truly existent sense faculties of consciousness.

Madhyamika: But *what can be established as truly existent in dependence upon a truly existent consciousness?*

Realist: (112) *On the other hand we can also say that consciousness is established (as truly existent) from the objects it is conscious of.*

Madhyamika: But *what can depend upon a (truly) existent object of consciousness? If they mutually (truly) existed through the force of one another, then when one is not established (as truly existent) the other will also not be (so) established. And in that case they would both be non-(truly) existent.* For example, (113) *if someone has no son he cannot be established as a father and also if there is no one established as the father, where can the child come from? In this way since without a child there is no father and without a father no child, in both cases there can be neither. Likewise the object and the consciousness cannot exist independently of one another.*

Realist: On the contrary, through dependence we can establish things as truly existent. For example, (114) *since a sprout is produced from a seed we can understand the (true) existence of the seed from the sprout even though the sprout depends upon it. Likewise why can we not understand that there is a (truly) existent object of consciousness from the consciousness which is produced from it?*

Madhyamika: This is not the same thing. (115) *The existence of the seed can be understood by seeing the sprout (that resulted from it) with a consciousness that is other (than the sprout). But what mind can understand a truly existent consciousness that understands (and has arisen from) a truly existent object of consciousness? It is impossible to cognise a truly existent consciousness (since such a thing does not exist).*

B. Establishing Emptiness of True Existence from the view Point of the Cause

1. Refuting Production from No Cause

The (non-Buddhist) Charvakas⁵⁵ assert that all things are produced because from no cause in one of their scriptures it states, "All things such as the rising of the sun, the flowing of water downhill, the roundness of peas, the sharpness of thorns and the tail feathers of the peacock were not made by anyone; they arise from their own nature."

Madhyamika: This assertion is unacceptable because (16) *sometimes the production of an effect from the collection of all its causes can be seen even by the true perceptions of worldly people. (Furthermore) it is understood through inference that the variety among effects, such as the different stems of lotus flowers, is produced because of their having a variety of causes.*

Charvaka: (117) *But by what has this variety of causes been made?*

Madhyamika: *By a variety of previous causes.*

Charvaka: *But for what reason is a distinct cause able to produce a distinct effect?*

Madhyamika: *This comes from the force of its previous cause.*

2. Refuting Production from a Permanent Cause

The (non-Buddhist) Naiyayikas and Vaisheshikas believe the cause of everything to be the god Ishvara. He has five qualities, namely: divinity, purity and being worthy of veneration, permanence, oneness and being the creator of everything.

Madhyamika: (118) If you accept Ishvara to be the cause of all beings, then, one moment please who exactly is Ishvara?

Naiyayika: He is the great elements of earth, water, fire air and space.

Madhyamika: Indeed these elements are the cause of whatever is formed from them, but why tire yourselves out over the mere name 'Ishvara' that you have given to them? This is not worth arguing about. In any case, with this assertion you contradict your own definition of Ishvara because (119) since earth and the other great elements are multiple, impermanent, without conscious movement, not divine, something trodden upon and unclean, they cannot be Ishvara. (120) Space too is not Ishvara because it is unmoving, and the self is not him either because it has already been refuted above. Furthermore, if we cannot conceive of the creator Ishvara, what is the point of trying to describe this inconceivable entity? Moreover, exactly (121) what effects is Ishvara asserted to produce?

Naiyayika: He creates the self, the atomic particles of the earth element and so forth, as well as the later continuity of himself.

Madhyamika: But don't you accept the nature of these things to be permanent? If you do, it is contradictory to say that they are produced. Consciousness (is not produced by Ishvara); its particular states arise from the various objects of consciousness and its mere cognitive nature arises from (122) a beginningless series of previous cognitions. Pleasure and pain too are produced from wholesome and unwholesome actions respectively. Therefore please tell me what effects are produced by Ishvara. If the cause, Ishvara, the permanent producer of effects, has no beginning, how can the effects of pleasure and so forth have a beginning? Similarly, since Ishvara also has no end, (123) why would pleasure and pain not always exist? According to you they should exist in this way, but in reality they are clearly occasional phenomena.

Naiyayika: It is not necessary that Ishvara always produces effects, because although he is permanent, he depends upon other, occasional conditions in order to produce them.

Madhyamika: But it would follow that Ishvara cannot depend upon anything else because there are no phenomena other than those that have been created by him. Therefore upon

what does his production of effects depend? (124) If he depended upon a group of other conditions, it would follow that those conditions themselves would become the cause instead of Ishvara. This is so because, once the causes and conditions were assembled, Ishvara would have no power not to produce the effects and without these (other causes and conditions) he would have no power to produce effects. (125) If effects were produced without the desire of Ishvara, it would follow that they were under the power of something other than him. Even if effects were created according to his desires, their production would be dependent upon his desires. And if his creation were dependent, upon his desires. And if his creation were dependent, what would become of (your permanent, independent) Ishvara? He would be under the power of impermanent desires. (In addition) (126) the Vaisheshikas assert that both the animate and inanimate worlds are produced by permanent atomic particles. This assertion cannot be accepted because we have already refuted permanent atomic particles above.⁵⁰ The Samkyas believe that all knowable entities can be classified under the conscious self and the material primal substance (together with its manifestations). Among these two, the self is neither a cause nor an effect whereas the permanent, partless, material, invisible and all-creating primal substance is asserted to be the cause of the world. (127) They speak of a balanced state of the three qualities (triguna) of equanimity, pleasure and pain, called (in their system) 'purity' (sattva), 'activity' (raja), and 'darkness' (tama), as being the primal substance. And they speak of imbalanced states of these three qualities,, i.e. all states that manifest from the initial imbalance of the primal substance, as being the world.

Madhyamika: (128) This primal substance you accept cannot be existent because it is impossible for something that is truly partless to truly exist with a threefold nature. Likewise the qualities cannot truly exist as three because each of them has three aspects. This latter reason is established because you accept that every truly existent (manifest) phenomenon has the nature of the three qualities. Furthermore (129) if the three qualities the cause—do not (truly) exist, the existence of the phenomena, such as sound, that are manifested from them as effects becomes extremely far-fetched. It is not possible for clothing and the like, (i.e. tactile sensations, visual-forms, sounds, etc.), to have the same nature of pleasure and so forth because they have no conscious quality. (They are manifestations of the primal substance which is matter).

Samkhya: (130) Things such as clothing have (the nature of) pleasure and so forth because they truly are of the nature of their cause, namely (the qualities of) pleasure, pain and equanimity (from which they became manifest).

Madhyamika: But things such as clothing are similar to the body (in being composed of parts), and have we not already refuted (the true existence) of the body with our analysis?⁵¹ Furthermore, in your tradition the cause for clothing and so forth is asserted to be the three qualities of pleasure and so forth. (But how can this be?) Woolen cloth does not arise from pleasure. (On the contrary), even conventionally, it is seen that (131)

pleasure arises from woolen cloth. Moreover, upon analysis, the woolen cloth —the cause—(is found to) have no true existence and therefore pleasure, its effect, can also have no true existence. Pleasure and the other feelings can never be (validly) apprehended as permanent because they are occasional phenomena. (132) If pleasure were always manifestly present, then why is it not also experienced at times when pain is produced?

Samkhya : When pain is produced, pleasure is not experienced because *it becomes very subtle. Madhyamika.- But hoio can something permanent be sometimes gross and sometimes subtle? (133) Since it becomes subtle upon ceasing to be gross, this alternately gross and subtle feeling must be impermanent. For similar reasons, why do you not accept that all manifest things are impermanent?*

Samkhya: Although the various gross and subtle states of pleasure are impermanent, the nature of pleasure itself is permanent.

Madhyamika: (134) *Since the gross (and subtle) forms of pleasure are nothing other than pleasure itself, and since they are impermanent, pleasure itself clearly must be impermanent as well. You accept that something cannot be produced from nothing because it does not exist (in the nothingness), just as oil can never come from sand. (135) Thus while you do not accept the production of manifest entities that were previously non-existent, you do claim that (manifest entities) must abide (at the time of their cause) because, although at that previous time they are in an un-manifest state, later (at the time of the effect) they arise in a manifest form. But if the effect abided in the cause, to eat food would be to eat excrement, and (136) you should purchase and wear cotton seeds with the money you pay for clothing.*

Samkhya: Although things do exist in this way, *the confused people of the world* do not wear cotton seeds because they *cannot see* clothing in them.

Madhyamika: But even Kapila, (the founder of your tradition), *whom you accept as a Knower of Truth*, wore clothing and not cotton seeds. Thus *this* must have been *true* for him as well. Furthermore, because in your tradition (137) *a Knower of Truth — the effect — would exist in a worldly person — the' cause — why do worldly people not see clothing in cotton seeds? It follows that they should.*

Samkhya: Indeed a Knower of Truth does exist in its cause, a worldly person, but at time of being a cause *all the states of mind of worldly people are invalid*. Therefore they do not understand (that clothing exists in cotton seeds).

Madhyamika: In that case even the effects (such as food, clothing, Knowers of Truth etc.) *that they clearly see would be untrue*, because they too would be objects of deceived minds.

Samkhya: (138) If, according to you Madhyamikas, even valid cognitions are not valid, i.e. deceived, wouldn't the emptiness they understand also be false? It must be. Therefore meditation upon the ultimate (truth) of emptiness is surely incorrect.

Madhyamika: (139) Without contacting, i.e. apprehending, the true existence which the mind has imputed, one will not apprehend its non-true existence (its emptiness).⁵⁸ In the same way, without having thought of the son of a barren woman, one cannot consider his death. And because non-true existence is dependent upon true existence, the non-true existence that is a negation of the false existence also is clearly false (i.e. it has no true independent existence). Nevertheless it is quite valid to meditate on emptiness because it is the remedy that eliminates the apprehension of true existence. For example, (140) when his child dies in a dream, the dreamer's thought of the child's non-existence causes the thought of the child's existence to cease. But although the thought of his non-existence is false, it still has the ability to abandon the thought of his existence.

3. Summary⁵⁹

(141) Therefore, when such an analysis is made with these reasonings, no impermanent thing (is found to) exist with no cause, and no individual cause or condition or any assembly of conditions (is found to) have existed from the very beginning. (142) Since (truly existent phenomena) do not come anew from (somewhere or something) else, in the beginning they are not produced, in the middle they do not remain, and in the end they do not go elsewhere upon cessation. How, then, are all these things, which under analysis are not established, although they are apprehended as true by confused minds, not different from illusions? They appear to be truly existent, whereas in fact they are not.

4. Establishing that Phenomena Conventionally arise from Causes

(143) Whatever horses and elephants have been made manifest through a (magician's) illusion and whatever visual forms and so forth have been made manifest by causes and conditions should be examined as to where they first came from, where they abide in the meantime and where they go to in the end. Upon examination they will be found to be similar in not truly coming and going. (144) An effect will only be seen because of its being closely connected with a cause, but without that cause it will not be seen. Since it is a product of causes and conditions, it is similar to a reflection in a mirror; so how can it have true (independent) existence?

C. Establishing Emptiness of True Existence from the Point of view of the Effect

(145) *What would be the need of a cause for a thing that (truly) existed? (If it truly existed), it would already exist. And what would be the need of a cause for it if it didn't exist at all? (If it didn't exist), it would not be the effect of anything.*

Objection: Although a cause cannot make a non-existent arise *into a non-thing*, it can change it into a thing.

Reply: This is illogical: (146) *Even by means of a hundred million causes a non-thing cannot be transformed into anything else because it is permanent. If it were able to change, it would have to do so either while retaining its non-thingness or through discarding it. In the former instance how could it become a thing as long as its condition remained unseparated, from being a non-thing? And in the second instance what is there that could (first) separate itself from the state of a non-thing and then (proceed) to become a thing? This is an impossibility. (147) Furthermore, if the condition of a non-thing is not discarded, it will be impossible for a thing to exist at the same time. In which case when could a thing ever come to exist? Also (a further consideration should be made) in the case of a non-thing becoming a thing Upon having first discarded the condition of a non-thing. Without actually becoming a thing, a non-thing cannot be separated from the state of a non thing, and (148) if it has not become separate from this state, it is impossible for the state of an existent thing to arise. Similarly, a (truly existent) thing does not become a non-thing upon cessation because it would absurdly follow that something with one nature would become twofold, i.e. both a thing and a non-thing. (149) In this way there is no cessation or production of (truly existent) things. Therefore all beings never have a (truly existent) birth nor a (truly existent) cessation. They are pacified (of true existence) from the very beginning, and by nature in the state beyond sorrow (i.e. in a state devoid of true existent). (150) Although sentient beings appear, they are not truly existent, just like a dream. And since they are found to have no essence upon analysis, they are also like a plantain tree. Therefore in their being (empty of true existence) there is no difference between the state beyond sorrow — Nirvana — and the state not beyond sorrow — cyclic existence.*

IV. THE RESULTS OF WISDOM

151

What is there to gain and what is there to lose

With things that are empty (of true existence) in this way?

Who is there to pay me respect

And who is there to abuse me?

152

From what are pleasure and pain derived?

What is there to be happy or unhappy about?

When I search for the ultimate nature,

Who is there to crave and what is there to crave for?

153

Upon analysis this world of living beings (is found to have no true existence).
Therefore who can die here?

What is there to come and what has been?

Who are friends and who are relatives?

154

O you (who are investigating reality),
Please recognize as I have done that all is just like space!

Those who wish to be happy

Are greatly disturbed by causes for conflict

And overjoyed by the causes for pleasure.

155

But, not finding happiness, they suffer,

And in order to find it they exert themselves.

They argue with others, cut and stab one another;

With many evil deeds they live in a state of great hardship.

156

Even though they repeatedly come to happy existences

And experience much pleasure there,

Upon dying they fall for a long time

Into the unbearable sufferings of lower realms.

157

Within conditioned existence the chasms (of suffering) are many

And the (liberating comprehension of) ultimate truth is absent.

Furthermore (the apprehension of true existence and the understanding of emptiness) mutually contradict one another.

But if, while in conditioned existence, I do not (realize) this ultimate truth

158

I shall (continue to experience) a limitless ocean of misery,

Unbearable and beyond analogy.

Likewise (through not having realized emptiness) I have little strength (for virtue)

And my human life (of leisure and endowment) is indeed very short.

159

Also, I strive hard to live long and avoid illness,

I am (concerned with) hunger, rest and sleep;

I am injured by others

And keep meaningless company with the childish.

160

Therefore this life swiftly passes with no meaning

And it is very hard to find the chance to investigate reality.

In this state, where is there the means to reverse

This beginningless habit of grasping at true existence?

161

Furthermore devils are exerting themselves
To cast us into vast unfortunate realms,
They show us many mistaken paths
And it is hard to resolve doubts about the perfect way.

162

It will be hard to find the leisure (of a human life) again,
And extremely difficult to find the presence of the Buddhas.
It is hard to forsake this flood of disturbing conceptions.
Alas, sentient beings will continue to suffer!

163

O indeed it is worth feeling sorrow
For those adrift in the river of pain, who
Although they experience great misery
Are unaware of the sufferings they go through.

164

For example, some (ascetics) wash themselves again and again
And others repeatedly enter fires,
But although they thereby suffer greatly
They pride themselves in being content.

165

Similarly, those (who mistake their suffering for joy)
And live as though there were no ageing or death
Are first of all killed (by the lord of death),
And then experience the unbearable misery of falling into lower realms.

166

When shall I be able to extinguish
(The pains of) those tormented by the fires of suffering
With the rain of my accumulated happiness
That has sprung from the clouds of my merits?

167

And by having, in the manner of not referring (to true existence),
Respectfully gathered the accumulation of merit,
When, by referring to others, will I be able to reveal emptiness
To those who are wretched and sad?