

B. THE IDENTITYLESSNESS OF PHENOMENA

1. Close Placement of Mindfulness on the Body

(79) 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.

(80) 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?

(81) 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 loere 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 fora (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 setup 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 mill 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. (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 nonexistent. 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) Charvakas 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. 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' (rajah), and 'darkness' (tamah), 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? 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 how 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). 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. Summary

(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?

Dedication

1

Through the virtue of having composed this work,
A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life,
May all living beings come to engage
In the Bodhisattva's conduct.

2

May all beings everywhere
Plagued with sufferings of body and mind
Obtain an ocean of happiness and joy
By virtue of my merits.

3

For as long as they remain in cyclic existence
May their (mundane) happiness never decline,
And may all of them uninterruptedly receive
Waves of joy from Bodhisattvas.

4

May all embodied creatures,
Who throughout the universe
Experience hellish realms,
Come to enjoy the bliss of Sukhavati.

5

May those feeble with cold find warmth,
And may those oppressed with heat be cooled
By the boundless waters that pour forth
From the great clouds of the Bodhisattvas' (merits).

6

May the forest of razor sharp leaves
Become a beautiful pleasure grove,
And may the trees of knives and swords
Grow into wish-fulfilling trees.

7

May the regions of hell become places of joy
With vast and fragrant lotus pools
Beautified with the exquisite calls
Of wild ducks, geese and swans.

8

May the heaps of burning coals change into heaps of jewels,
May the burning ground become a polished crystal floor,
And may the mountains of the crushing hells
Become celestial palaces of worship filled with Sugatas.

9

May the rains of lava, blazing stones and weapons
From now on become a rain of flowers,
And may all battling with weapons
From now on be a playful exchange of flowers.

10

By the force of my virtues, may those caught in the fiery torrents of acid,
Their flesh eaten away, revealing their lily-white bones,
Obtain the bodies of celestials
And dwell with goddesses in gently flowing rivers.

11

“Why are the henchmen of Yama, the unbearable buzzards and vultures afraid?
Through whose noble strength is joy brought upon us and darkness dispelled?”
Looking up, they behold in the firmament the radiant form of Vajrapani!
Through the force of their joy may they be free from evil and find his company.

12

When they see the lava fires of hell extinguished
By a rain of falling flowers mixed with scented water,
Immediately satisfied, they wonder whose work this was:
In this way may those in hell behold Padmapani.

13

“Friends, don’t be afraid but quickly gather here,
What need is there to flee when above us is
the youthful Manjughosha to dispel our fears,
The tender Bodhisattva who protects all living things,
Through whose might all suffering is removed and the force of joy abounds.

14

Behold him in an enchanting palace resounding with
hymns sung by a thousand goddesses,
With the tiaras of a hundred gods being offered to his lotus feet.
And a rain of many flowers falling on his head,
the eyes of which are moist with kindness.”
Upon seeing Manjughosha in this way, may those in hell cry out loud with joy.

15

Likewise having seen, due to the roots of my wholesome deeds,
The cool and sweet-smelling rain falling from joyful clouds
Created by the Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra and Sarva-nirvarana-vishkambhi,
May all beings in hell be truly happy.

16

May all animals be free from the fear
Of being eaten by one another;
May the hungry ghosts be as happy
As the men of the Northern Continent.

17

May they be satisfied
By a stream of milk pouring from the hand
Of the Noble Lord Avalokiteshvara,
And by bathing in it may they always be cooled.

18

May the blind see forms,
May the deaf hear sounds
And just as it was with Mayadevi,
May pregnant woman give birth without any pain

19

May the naked find clothing, The hungry find food;
May the thirsty find water And delicious drinks.

20

May the poor find wealth,
Those weak with sorrow find joy;
May the forlorn find new hope,
Constant happiness and prosperity.

21

May all who are sick and ill
Quickly be freed from their illness,
And may every disease in the world
Never occur again.

22

May the frightened cease to be afraid
And those bound be freed;
May the powerless find power,
And may people think of benefiting one another.

23

May all travelers find happiness
Everywhere they go,
And without any effort may they accomplish
Whatever they set out to do.

24

May those who sail in ships and boats
Obtain whatever they wish for,
And having safely returned to the shore
May they joyfully reunite with their relatives.

25

May troubled wanderers who have lost their way
Meet with fellow travelers,
And without any fear of thieves and tigers
May their going be easy without any fatigue.

26

May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wildernesses—
The children, the aged, the unprotected,
Those stupefied and the insane—
Be guarded by beneficent celestials.

27

May beings be free from all states of no leisure
And be endowed with faith, wisdom and kindness;
With food (obtained in a proper manner) and excellent conduct,
May they be mindful throughout their lives.

28

May all beings be without want for wealth
Just like the treasury of space,
And without (it being the source of) dispute or harm
May they always enjoy it as they wish.

29

May those who have little splendor
Come to be endowed with majesty;
And may those whose bodies are worn with toil
Find magnificent and noble forms.

30

May all lower life-forms in the universe
Take (rebirth) in higher forms;
May the lowly obtain grandeur
And may the proud be humbled.

31

By the merits I (have accumulated),
May every single being
Abandon all forms of evil
And perpetually engaged in virtue.

32

May they never be parted from the Awakening Mind
And may they always engage in the Bodhisattva's conducts;
May they be cared for by the Buddhas
And relinquish the actions of devils.

33

May sentient beings have lives
Inconceivably long (when in fortunate realms);
May they always live in contentment,
Unfamiliar with even the word 'death'.

34

May there abound in all directions
Gardens of wish fulfilling trees
Filled with the sweet sound of Dharma
Proclaimed by the Buddhas and their Sons.

35

And may the land everywhere be pure,
Smooth and devoid of any rocks,
Level like the palm of the hand,
And of the nature of lapis lazuli.

36

For all the circles of disciples,
May many Bodhisattvas
Dwell in every land
Adorning them with their excellent (manifestations).

37

May all embodied creatures
Uninterruptedly hear
The sound of Dharma issuing from birds and trees,
Beams of light and even space itself.

38

May they always meet with Buddhas
And their sons the Bodhisattvas,
Then may these spiritual masters of the world
Be worshipped with endless clouds of offerings.

39

May celestials bring timely rains
So that harvests may be bountiful.
May kings act in accordance with Dharma
And the people of the world always prosper.

40

May all medicines be effective
And the repeating of mantras successful;
May dakinis, cannibals and the like
Be endowed with compassionate minds.

41

May no living creature ever suffer,
Commit evil or ever fall ill.
May no one be afraid or belittled,
Or their minds ever be depressed.

42

In all temples and monasteries
May reading and recitation flourish and remain;
May the Sangha always be in harmony
And may their purposes be accomplished.

43

May monks desiring to practise
Find quiet and solitary places,
And through having abandoned all wandering thoughts
May they meditate with flexible minds.

44

May nuns be materially sufficient,
Abandon quarrelling (with each other) and be unharmed:
Similarly may all ordained ones
Never let their morality weaken.

45

Having repented any moral falls
May evil always be eradicated,
And thereby obtaining a happy state of birth
May spiritual conduct not decline even there.

46

May the wise be honored
And may they receive alms;
May their minds be completely pure
And may they be renowned in all directions.

47

May beings not experience the misery of lower realms
And may they never know any hardships;
With a physical form superior to the gods
May they swiftly attain Buddhahood.

48

May sentient beings again and again
Make offerings to all the Buddhas,
And may they constantly be joyful
With the inconceivable bliss of the Buddhas.

49

Just as they have intended
May the Bodhisattvas fulfill the welfare of the world,
And may all sentient beings receive
Whatever the buddhas have intended for them.

50

Similarly may the Pratyeka-buddhas
And the Sharvakas find happiness.

51

And until I reach the level of the Joyous One
Through the kindness of Manjughosha,
May I be mindful throughout my lives
And always obtain ordination

52

May I live and be sustained
By simple, common foods,
And in all my lives may I find
The ideal solitude (for practicing Dharma).

53

Whenever I wish to see something
Or even wish to ask the slightest question,
May I behold without any hindrance
The Lord Manjughosha himself.

54

In order to fulfill the needs
Of beings who reach unto the ends of space,
May my way of life
Be just like that of Manjughosha.

55

For as long as space endures
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may I too abide
To dispel the misery of the world.

56

May all the pains of living creatures
Ripen (solely) upon myself,
And through the might of the Bodhisattva Sangha
May all beings experience happiness.

57

May the teachings, which are the sole medicine for Suffering
And the origin of every joy,
Be materially supported and honored
And abide for a very long time.

58

I prostrate to Manjughosha
Through whose kindness wholesome minds ensue,
And I prostrate to my spiritual masters
Through whose kindness I develop.