

A Discussion Between Self-Grasping and the Wisdom Realizing Selflessness

Arising Out of an Identification of the Nature
of Basis, Path and Resultant Mahamudra



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Happy Monks Publication

The root text was composed by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen, translated by Fedor Stracke. © Fedor Stracke

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I inserted additional commentary by Yongdzin Losang Jinpa, translated by Fedor Stracke. © Fedor Stracke

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Master Chandrakirti in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*:

Seeing with awareness that all afflictions and faults arise [6.120]
from the view of the transitory collections,
and having realized the self to be its object,
yogis strive to negate the self.

Translator's Introduction

Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen elucidates in this text, *A Discussion Between Self-Grasping and the Wisdom Realizing Selflessness*, the right way of meditating on the view of emptiness by going through every possible mistake one could make in the process, both in Sutra and in Tantra. He does this in a lively, and at times robust, first-person dialogue between wisdom and ignorance.

The root text is in verse form, and has 667 verses. There is only one printed commentary by Yongdzin Losang Jinpa, which is very brief. Venerable Chöden Rinpoche gave the main commentary used in this book in Vajrapani Institute, but due to conditions, he covered only the first third of the text.

Therefore, for the moment, I am publishing only the first third of the root text with Chöden Rinpoche's commentary, complemented with parts of Yongdzin Losang Jinpa's explanation and outlines. I see this edition as a step to a complete book with a commentary covering all 667 verses, but it would be sad to wait until then before publishing anything of the text at all.

It is an exceptional text, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama is quoted as saying that he only understood emptiness after reading it. Lama Zopa Rinpoche, who was present during Venerable Chöden Rinpoche's teachings, wanted this text to be translated and published.

The full root text also has a tantric section and is restricted, but one can download an adjusted version from the HappyMonksPublication website for free.

A few words concerning a choice in terminology:

A central and repeated term in this book is *illusory truth*. The more standard version of this term is *conventional truth*, but the consensus these days among teachers and translators is that this is a misrepresentation of the Tibetan term *Kundzob Denpa*. It neither conveys the meaning nor fits the word explanation given in the treatises. There are other alternatives, such as *concealer truth* or *truth for a concealer*, but these, while literally correct, never felt satisfactory to me. One reason is that I do not find them easily relatable. In a meeting with Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche in Vajrayogini Institute in 2009, I started to present my argument for the use of illusory truth to Rinpoche, somewhat apprehensively, to seek permission to use this translation in the FPMT. To my surprise, I did not need any further argument, because Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche immediately and decisively said that this term can be used.

Kundzob Denpa literally means truth of ignorance. An illusion can be an outer object such as a mirage, but it can also be a confused mental state with regards to our self or our environment. We have illusions about ourselves and others, and sometimes we become disillusioned. Ignorance is an illusion we have concerning the true nature of ourselves, others, and our environment. Hearing the term *kundzob denpa*, or its translation, a discrepancy between appearance and existence is supposed to appear to the mind, rather than some reaffirmation of a truth.

The First Dalai Lama Gyalwa Gedün Drub:

Take the subject “yogis aspiring towards liberation” - there is a reason why they strive to negate the self as inherently established - because seeing with awareness that all afflictions such as attachment, among others, and all faults such as birth, aging, sickness and death arise from the view of the transitory collection, and because of having realized the self to be the focal object of this transitory view, they wish to abandon the transitory view.

A Discussion Between Self-Grasping and the Wisdom Realizing Selflessness, Arising out of an Identification of the Nature of Basis, Path and Resultant Mahamudra

I prostrate to the youthful Manjushri.

The meaning of the excellent treatise known as *A Discussion Between Self-Grasping and the Wisdom Realizing Selflessness*, I explain in a limited way in three parts: Introduction to the Explanation, A Clear Elucidation of the Explanation and Actions Concluding the Explanation.

The Introduction to the Explanation

Expression of Homage

I prostrate to my guru, the extraordinary deity.

There is a purpose to the homage. Divine beings, before engaging in critical white actions such as composing treatises, pay homage to holy objects. Similarly, Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen also pays homage, to accord with the actions of holy beings, to pacify obstacles to the composition of the treatise, and to be able to complete the composition.

Pledge of Composition

Basis, path and resultant mahamudra, [1ab]
this is an identification of their nature.

Sages, before engaging in a white action such as composing a treatise, initially analyze thoroughly whether they can complete the action or not, and only start the action if they find they can complete it. If they find they cannot complete it, then they do not start the action. To accord with the holy beings, the omniscient Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen makes this pledge of composition.

A Clear Elucidation of the Explanation

Explaining the Mahamudra of Basis, Path and Result

Explaining the Mahamudra of the Basis According to the Sutra System

The very minds of the three realm sentient beings, [1cd]
and specifically one's own very mind,

since time beginningless and nonabiding, [2]
from whence ignorance came into being,
have been abiding naturally with the mind's nature.

This is the mahamudra of the basis.

The mind's clear and knowing nature in the continuum of all sentient beings in general, and in particular of practitioners practicing the path, has been there from its side since time beginningless and nonabiding. Simultaneously with the existence of mind, although unknown to and unrealized by it, has been its mode

of abiding, i.e., emptiness, which has been existing and abiding simultaneously with it. This is the mahamudra of the basis, according to the sutra system.

Explaining the Mahamudra of the Basis According to the Tantra System

From the tenth ground to an ant, [4bcd]
the mother clear light at the time of death
is also the mahamudra of the basis.

When the coarse body of the elements ceases, the stages of death set in, starting with the inner sign that the earth element dissolves into the water element, the mirage-like vision, via the sign of appearance dissolving into near attainment, up to the seventh sign, a clear autumn sky pervaded by the darkness of dusk, at the end of which one briefly falls unconscious. After this brief unconscious state at the end of the preceding seven signs, has cleared, the mother clear light, the clear light mind of death, which has eliminated all dualistic appearances aside from the aspect ascertaining the sky of a clear autumn morning, free from the three conditions of arising, as empty of its hue, arises.

In the tantric system, this mind of clear light is the mahamudra of the basis for all sentient beings, from the bodhisattva on the tenth bhumi down to ants and other insects.

Explaining the Mahamudra of the Path According to the Sutra System

They who have not realized this, grasp at true existence [3]
and have been wandering in cyclic existence up to now.
The direct antidote to this is the wisdom
that explicitly realizes this selflessness.

There is no antidote apart from it. [4a]

As Panchen Chökyi Gyaltzen explained earlier, although emptiness, the mode of abiding of the mind, started to exist at the same time mind came into existence, the migrators who have not realized this, grasp at any object that appears to the mind, as truly existent. Motivated by this true-grasping, they accumulate karma and have wandered in cyclic existence up to now. The direct antidote to this is the wisdom that explicitly realizes the mind and all other phenomena as empty of inherent existence, that realizes them to be selfless. Apart from this, there is no antidote to the grasping at self.

Explaining the Mahamudra of the Path According to the Tantra System

When, having mixed it with the clear light of meditation, [5abc]
one abides naturally in meditative equipoise,
then it is the mahamudra of the path.

When one can abide naturally in the meditative equipoise that mixes the earlier explained mahamudra of the basis and the clear light that arises through the

force of meditation, then this is the mahamudra of the path.

Further, while abiding in meditative equipoise, [5d]
the meditation on wisdom without elaboration [6ab]
is called the view of path mahamudra.

Further, while abiding in the meditative equipoise on emptiness, the meditation on the wisdom free from all extreme elaborations, i.e., realising emptiness, is the meditation on the view of the mahamudra of the path.

Explaining the Mahamudra of the Result

When this alone manifests without distortion [6cd]
it is called resultant mahamudra, the path of seeing.

Just this, stabilized and increased, is the path of meditation. [7]

These are called the paths of meditating and training.

When the obscurations to knowledge are purified
the result of no more learning manifests.

When just this, the direct realization of emptiness, is repeatedly meditated upon, stabilized, and its power increased, then it is called the *path of meditation*. The paths of accumulation, preparation, seeing, and meditation are called the *learner paths*. Once a bodhisattva attains the path of seeing and then increases the realization, one refers to the attained realizations as the first ground, second ground, and so forth, up to the tenth ground. The different grounds are labeled relative to their level of realization.

Due to these differences in their strength, the different grounds sequentially reduce and abandon the different levels of self-grasping up to the seventh ground, and as a result, the bodhisattva is free from self-grasping on the eighth ground. Self-grasping and the afflictions it induces are called *afflictive obscurations*. As one has been habituated to self-grasping for a long time, although one has abandoned self-grasping from the eighth ground, there are latencies and imprints placed by the self-grasping left on the mind, and the appearance of true existence is also still there. These are called *obscurations to knowledge*.

At the time of the eighth, ninth, and tenth ground, the bodhisattva relies on the antidotes to the obscurations to knowledge to purify them sequentially, so that at the culmination of the tenth ground the obscurations to knowledge become extinct. The moment after they are purified and simultaneously buddhahood, the state of no more learning, manifests.

Buddhas have perfectly completed all qualities, [8]
and show a multiplicity of actions.

Although they see all phenomena directly,
like a gyurura in their hand's palm, they do not

waver from emptiness. The body unifying bliss and emptiness [9abc]

that abides immutably on suchness
is called and labeled truth body.

Having abandoned the obscurations to knowledge and attaining the resultant state of a buddha is simultaneous. Concurrent, the qualities of a buddha, such as the ten powers and the eighteen unshared dharmas of a buddha, are perfected, and they see all of existence directly, like a *gyurura*¹ in the palm of one's hand. Although they see all phenomena directly, like a gyurura in the palm of one's hand, they do not waver from the direct realization of emptiness, which is something only a buddha can do. When bodhisattvas enter the concentration that nondually meditates on emptiness, all nominal appearance ceases, and they are not able to give teachings. They cannot be in meditative equipoise on emptiness and act in the nominal world at the same time, but a buddha can combine meditative equipoise with the post-meditation period.

The term *body unifying bliss and emptiness* comes from tantra. All winds absorb into the indestructible drop, resulting in the very subtle mind, and the great bliss that arises simultaneously with that clear light mind that realizes emptiness directly. Supreme simultaneously arising bliss that realizes emptiness directly is referred to as engaging profound emptiness. The body at the learner's stage, such as the impure illusory body, ceases and therefore is not called vajra body or unifying body. At the stage of no more learning the body does not cease and is therefore called *vajra body* or *unifying body*. Therefore, the body that immutably abides on suchness, which meditates in single-pointed equipoise on emptiness and does not arise from that meditation, is labeled with the name *truth body*, i.e., *dharmakaya*. That without dualistic appearance due to the meditation on the earlier mentioned equipoise, i.e., when it has become the direct realization of emptiness, untainted by dualistic appearances, is called the *resultant mahamudra* in the sutra system, the path of seeing. In general, the path of seeing is not a resultant dharma, but here the name *resultant mahamudra* is applied from the path of seeing up to the path of no more learning.

The path that is meditating by increasing the two practices of the space like meditation in equipoise, and the illusory like meditation during the subsequent attainment, to stabilize and increase the direct realization of emptiness, is called *path of meditation* and *learner path*. When one attains the eighth ground through this meditation, then one has abandoned the afflictive obscurations and attained the state of a foe destroyer. When, through sequential meditation, one directly counteracts with the uninterrupted path of the tenth ground the imprints of the afflictive obscurations, i.e., the obscurations to knowledge, and they are wholly purified, it is called *having manifested the state of unification*, the result of no more learning. When one has attained the unification of no more learning, then one has attained the omniscient transcendental wisdom that realizes all illusory phenomena while abiding in direct meditative equipoise on emptiness, and this wisdom is labeled the *dharmakaya*.

¹ Ven Jampa Kaldan: *Tib-Eng Dict of Tib Medicine & Astrology* gives this name for the fruit *Emblica officinalis*. It is used to make pickles and in Indian medicine.

Explaining the Way Ignorance Debates with Wisdom

The Connection to the Text Above

Compassionate prayers and the wishes [9d]
of those to be subdued, due to this collection of causes, [10]
the truth body, enjoyment body, emanation body,
as well as the grounds, paths, qualities, activities and so forth,
exist, but only in mere appearance.
They are not seen as existing in reality. [11]
Hence, that a self exists in reality
is even more mistaken than mistaken.
Therefore, from now on, at all times,
I shall abandon you, the mistaken self-grasping. [12abc]
Without generating any aversion,
go wherever you have to go to!

Wisdom explains:

The dharmakaya that never arises from emptiness is the transcendental wisdom of bliss and void in single-pointed equipoise on emptiness.

Motivated by Sakyamuni Buddha's compassion and in dependence on the prayers of the disciples, i.e., those to be subdued, it arises in the appearance of a physical body according to their wishes and aspirations.

Because of the aggregation of the three conditions of compassion and the disciple's prayers and wishes, it arises in various aspects, such as in the aspect of the emanation body, enjoyment body, the twenty-seven enlightened activities, and many more. The differences in the aspirations of the disciples cause it to appear to some in the aspect of Yamantaka, while appearing to others in the aspect of a bikkhu like Sakyamuni Buddha. To others, to which it cannot appear in any of these aspects, it appears as the virtuous friend.

From Sakyamuni Buddha's side exists no thought of, "I shall appear like this to this person," or, "it is unsuitable to appear to that person like that." For example, when the moon shines in the sky, it appears differently in different bodies of water. The moon appears in different grades of clarity according to the different purities of the water, yet the moon from her side has no thought of, "Here I shall appear clearer and here not," but relative to the clarity of the water the moon appears in some bodies of water clearer as in others. Similarly, also Sakyamuni Buddha appears differently to different disciples according to their minds and dispositions.

The qualities of the grounds and paths, i.e., the ten grounds and five paths contained in the disciples' continuum and the enlightened activities, do not at all exist from their side but are a mere appearance to conceptual thought, a mere imputation by name. They are not seen as existing in meaning. Any virtue that is generated in the disciples' continuums is regarded as the enlightened activity

of the buddhas.

All phenomena, starting from the dharmas on the level of enlightenment down to the phenomena contained in cyclic existence, do not exist truly, they do not have a self, they do not exist from their own side. If one asks how they exist, they exist as mere appearances to thought, as mere imputations by name, and in no other way. Because our mind is habituated to grasping at a self since beginningless time, it is at the moment challenging to imagine this, and one should make prayers to realize it as soon as possible.

The wisdom realizing selflessness scolds the self-grasping, “Hence, as all phenomena lack existence from their own side and exist only as appearances to conceptual thought, as mere imputations by name, the grasping at a real self by you, the self-grasping, is so mistaken that it is mistaken beyond mistaken. Therefore, from now on, as I have identified you as mistaken, I shall abandon you at all times. Therefore, leave and go wherever you have to go to, without generating any aversion to me!

All phenomena of cause and effect, such as the Mahayana basis, path, result, exist only in mere name, only in mere appearance, and in reality not even one atom of existence from their own side is detected. Therefore, to grasp at existence from its own side as reality is mistaken even beyond mistaken, and from now on, at all times, I shall abandon the mistaken self-grasping from the root. Hence, without generating any aversion, go wherever you have to go to!”

Wisdom is stating here that the apprehended object of ignorance needs to be negated. If one wonders how, from the *Auto commentary to the Introduction* by Master Chandrakirti:

Since it becomes empty by comprehending the selflessness of the self,...

This is showing that the apprehended object of ignorance needs to be negated by practicing the wisdom that realises the lack of inherent existence, i.e., the selflessness of the self that is the focal object of the innate self-grasping.

The Actual Debate

This has three points: Short Presentation, Extensive Presentation, and the Summary.

Short Presentation**How Self-Grasping Cherishes the Person in Whose Continuum It Exists**

The self-grasping says in return: [12d]

From the very moment it came into existence [13]

I have accompanied the mind,
taking its side and arguing for it.

Like a father and mother loving their child,

I lovingly gave support, food and clothing. [14]

I lead it through the door of the dharma of
the three poisons of desire and so forth.

If I do not overcome the enemy of the accumulation of virtue

then who will overcome this enemy? [15a]

“From the very moment mind came into existence, I have accompanied it. When the “I,” i.e., the person, needed someone to take its side, then I did it. When it needed someone to defend it against enemies, then I defended it and stopped the enemies. Like a father and mother that love their child, I lovingly gave support, food, and clothing.”

Attachment, hatred, and ignorance are generated through the force of self-grasping. Just as one is inducted into virtuous Dharma by the virtuous teacher, here self-grasping argues: “I am the one that induces the person to walk through the door of non-virtuous dharma. I am the one that brings forth attachment, hatred and ignorance.”

Since these afflictions destroy the accumulation of virtues, it further says, “I am also the one that destroys the enemy that is virtue. If I do not this, then who will? If I am not there then nobody will do it. I have generated attachment and through that I achieved what was needed. I produced anger and through that conquered enemies. I am also the destroyer of patience and love, which are the enemy. I am of greatest benefit for the mind. Having accompanied the mind of sentient beings at all times, I lovingly supported them, like good-hearted parents cherish and support their child, doing what needs to be done. In this life, I assisted them with arguments against others, to get food and clothing, and through leading them through the door of dharma by causing the various actions of pretension and dissimulation to arise in the three times. I support them by overcoming harming enemies, and if I would not do this, then who would? Nobody!”

In this way, self-grasping pretends to be a dragon-like friend.

Wisdom Destroys that Notion

The wisdom says in return: [15bcd]

Because the mind, since first coming into existence,

has never been experienced as existing ultimately,
who did you abide together with? [16]

Since you too are completely nonexistent
from an absolute point of view,
who is taking whose side, who is, among other things,
defending and supporting whom? [17ab]
Go where you have to go and do not return!

“That called mind has not been experienced as having a self or being established as having a self since its very first coming into existence. Since you nevertheless grasp at it as having a self and insist on having accompanied the mind since beginningless time —with whom exactly did you abide together with simultaneously all this time? Further, from the point of view of absolute existence, i.e., ultimate existence, also you, the self-grasping, are wholly nonexistent. Therefore, from the point of view of absolute existence, neither the mind nor you do exist.

While you say you grasp at the mind as having a self, it does not have a self. Hence, who is taking the side of whom? Who is defending and supporting whom? You would need to take the side of a mind with a self and defend it, but such a mind does not exist. Your whole concept is unrealistic and unacceptable. Stop talking, go wherever you have to go, and do not return!

Sentient beings fell under the control of mind, and the mind, in turn, fell under the control of you, the self-grasping. Due to this they started to be seduced by distractions, to be attached to praise and fame, friends and relatives, to be consumed by the actions and activities of this life, to be attached to the side of self and have hatred for the side of other due to the unrealistic conception, thus start fights and arguments, and be sidetracked by the meaningless and harmful actions of this life. However, since you are not experienced as existing ultimately, with whom do you exist together? Since you do not exist at all in an accurate ultimate way, who is defending whom with arguments, and who is looking after whom?

In short, the one who generates every nonvirtue and suffering and destroys any virtue and happiness is you alone, the self-grasping.

Hence, since your determined object is refuted, you are exorcised from the root. Go wherever you have to go to, and never return!”

Extensive Presentation**Debating Whether the Apprehended Object of Self-Grasping Exists Nominally or Ultimately****The Self-Grasping Presents How Its Apprehended Object Exists Nominally**

The self-grasping says in return: [17cd]

If you too are completely nonexistent
in an absolute way, like me, [18]
then whose side are you taking?

If there is not even one particle of an existing phenomenon,
do you assert coming and not coming?

I arrived simultaneously with the mind [19]
in a mere nominal way.

If you do not assert a really existing "I,"
and deny nominal existence,

have you not fallen into the extreme of nihilism? [20]

Cause and effect, dependent arising, action and activity
are thoroughly pervaded by me.

Therefore, you go wherever you have to go to!

"Since you also do not exist from an absolute point of view, i.e., an ultimate point of view, then whom do you support, whose side are you taking? Since there is not even one particle of a truly existing phenomenon, one also cannot posit the difference between coming and not coming. I may not exist ultimately, but I moved simultaneously with the mind in a relative manner. If we look at the way we exist, you, the wisdom, do not exist ultimately, and did not come together with the mind ultimately, and likewise also me, the ignorance, do not exist ultimately, and I also did not come together with the mind ultimately. I exist together with the mind in a relative or nominal manner. If one views real phenomena to be nominal, then it is denial, and to deny nominal phenomena means one has fallen into the extreme of nihilism. Therefore, have you not fallen into the extreme of nihilism? The phenomena of cause and effect, dependent arising, and action, agent and activity are nominal phenomena, and I pervade their appearances."

Self-grasping argues that since cause and effect, dependent arising and action and activity always appear truly, their appearance is always pervaded by it. Since it pervades all their appearances, it will stay, and that wisdom is the one who should go wherever it has to go to!

You are unsuitable to remain here [21]
amongst our nominal actions and activities.

You, the one without ultimate true existence,
since you contradict me, begone!

"Without true existence the actions and activities of cause and effect are not

possible. We, i.e., myself the self-grasping and the mind, nominally perform actions and activities, which would not be possible without true existence. Without true existence nominal actions would be impossible, yet nominal actions and activities exist and I, the true-grasping, nominally perform actions and activities. Hence, you the wisdom, are unsuitable to remain amongst us. You without ultimate truth, you contradict me. Begone!

Myself and my apprehended object, while not existing ultimately, we do exist nominally. Our nominal existence makes all actions and activities of cause and effect and dependent arising possible, and if we did not exist nominally, then the same would be true for all other phenomena. From this point of view, you, who is denying our nominal existence, has fallen into the extreme of nihilism.”

Wisdom Refutes It To Exist Nominally and Ultimately

The wisdom says in return: [22]
You do not exist ultimately anyway,
and since you also do not exist nominally,
you do not hold any sway over

interdependency, action and activity, cause and effect. [23]
What is the reason for this?
In your school compounded phenomena are
established independently, out of their own nature.

“True-grasping, of course nothing exists ultimately, the way you grasp, but also nothing exists conventionally in such a way!

Regarding your earlier statement that you hold sway over cause and effect, dependent arising, actions and activities, since you do not exist either ultimately or nominally, you do not have any power over dependent arising, actions and activities and cause and effect.”

Not depending on something else, [24]
their nature not changing into something else,
they exist truly and absolutely,
they exist ultimately and inherently,

they are permanent, stable and unchanging, [25ab]
abiding immutably with a nature that does not disintegrate.

“What is the reason for this? According to you, according to the point of view of your system, compounded phenomena are established independently from causes and conditions, independently from parts, out of their nature. They would be independent of something else and naturally unchanging. Thus they would become truly existent, or perfectly existent, ultimately existent or inherently existent, which are only synonyms for true existence.

If it exists ultimately and inherently then it needs to be permanent, it needs to

be a stable phenomenon that does not change into something else; it needs to exist unchangingly since beginningless times. Their nature does not disintegrate, and they abide immutably. If your view were correct, then these faults would have to be observable in impermanent phenomena. Action and activity of adventitious dependently arisen phenomena is not possible according to your view. According to you, dependent origination that is dependent on causes and conditions has to be nonexistent because action and activity and dependent arising have to depend on causes and conditions. For the result to come into existence, it has to depend on a cause. Since you assert independent existence out of its own nature, it is not possible for dependent arising to exist in your system. As dependence and independence are directly mutually exclusive, if something depends on causes and conditions, it has to be non-independent.

Since dependence and independence are directly mutually exclusive, and since you posit independence, it is not possible to have dependent arising in your tenet.

You dwell at the centre of this, hence [25cd]

interdependency, action and activity, which depend

on adventitious causes and conditions, do not exist for you. [26]

Depending and not depending are direct opposites and

your awareness and my awareness

engage with directly opposed modes of apprehending,

they are mutually exclusive, like hot and cold. [27a]

“Your mind and my mind have directly opposite modes of apprehending. You are true-grasping and grasp at true existence, and I am the wisdom realizing selflessness, apprehending objects as lacking true existence. We are like, e.g., hot and cold, which are mutually exclusive and cancel each other out. If it is hot it cannot be cold, and if it is cold it cannot be hot. They cannot exist together in the same space. If the heat is stronger, it will cancel out the cold, and if the cold is stronger, it will cancel out the heat.

True-grasping and the wisdom realizing selflessness are mutually exclusive in the same manner.”

With this in mind the *Commentary on Valid Cognition* states: [27bcd]

It is antithetical due to seeing selflessness.

Without refuting the object

one cannot abandon it. [28]

From Shantideva’s *Introduction to Bodhisattva Actions*:

Without touching upon the imputed object,

one will not apprehend its non-truth.

To abandon self-grasping or true-grasping, one first needs to recognize its mode of apprehending, and then its apprehended object needs to be annihilated. Upon the annihilation of the apprehended object one can abandon true-grasping, but

without annihilation one cannot abandon true-grasping, regardless of which path one meditates on. True-grasping and the wisdom realizing selflessness are of a different mode of apprehending. From the *Commentary on Valid Cognition*:

It is antithetical due to seeing selflessness.

Self-grasping and the wisdom realizing selflessness have a mutually exclusive mode of apprehension. Without refuting the object of true-grasping, one is not able to abandon true-grasping, and the awareness seeing selflessness refutes that object and thus abandons true-grasping. Shantideva stated in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*:

Without touching upon the imputed object,
one will not apprehend its non-truth.

Non-truth refers to non-true existence. In order to apprehend non true existence one needs to identify the object of the mode of apprehension of true-grasping. One needs to identify the object of negation that is held by this awareness. Without identifying this object of negation one will not be able to identify its non-truth.

From the *Commentary to the Four-Hundred Stanzas*: [29]

A nature of phenomena independently of others,
the absence of that is selflessness, it is taught.
For that reason you and

I do not abide simultaneously. Hence, [30abc]
without remaining in the slightest,
go wherever you have to go!

The *Four Hundred Stanzas* were taught by Aryadeva and the *Commentary* was composed by Chandrakirti. It is explaining that that called *self* refers to the independent nature of phenomena and the absence of this is selflessness.

“Therefore,” says the wisdom realizing selflessness to true-grasping, “for the reasons stated in the *Commentary on Prime Cognition*, in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara* and in the *Commentary on the Four-Hundred Stanzas*, my mode of apprehension and your mode of apprehension are directly mutually exclusive, and we cannot abide simultaneously in the same place.

Hence, without remaining in the slightest in the mind, go wherever you have to go to!”

Debating Who Has Accompanied the Mind the Longest

Self-grasping argues it has been accompanied the mind for a long time:

The self-grasping says in return: [30d]

Since I have accompanied the mind for a long time [31]

I do not dare to part from it,
and I also have no confidence to go anywhere.
Out of affection I shall stay right in the center of the heart.

If I do not exist within the mind [32]
 then it becomes desireless
 and I will not obtain any food or clothing.
 Will the mind not be unwilling to abandon me?

In case it does become willing, then, [33]
 as it does not have friends from before,
 it shall not find friends after, when searching,
 and without a sense of embarrassment

the thought to tie itself to me will come to it. [34a]

“I have accompanied the mind since beginningless time, while you have been around only adventitiously. As I have accompanied the mind for such a long time, I cannot separate from it. I also have no confidence about going somewhere else. Therefore I will stay right in the center of the heart out of compassion.”

Self-grasping has accompanied the mind for a long time, and due to projecting a self onto the mind, attachment, anger, and the other afflictions are generated. If there is no self-grasping in the mind then neither attachment nor any of the other afflictions will be generated.

Therefore the self-grasping thinks, “I am needed in the mind, because without me there would be no desire, and without desire it will not find food and clothing. The mind is not able to abandon me, to give me up. In case it is able to give me up, then it will not make new friends, and it does not have friends from before. It will regret having abandoned me.”

Having newly befriended you, the wisdom, [34bcd]
 it is confused and wants to evict me.

Although there are many people who say, “evict, evict,”
 there has never been anybody who did evict me. [35]

Due to me giving my blessing,
 till now, nobody was able to evict me.
 What is the reason for this?

“The mind is mistaken if it thinks, “Now I have the new friend of wisdom and can abandon my old friend true-grasping.” Although many announce that they want to abandon true-grasping, there has never been anybody that did abandon me. Due to the blessing of my stain on the mind, till now nobody was able to abandon me, and also nobody will be able to do so in the future.”

Even the courageous superior beings, [36]
 due to the stability of my blessing,
 have me for company up to the seventh ground.
 Since the stains of my meditation

accompany them up to the tenth ground, [37]
what need is there to mention ordinary individuals?

Although it is called wisdom, it exists merely adventitiously,
and with my continuous company
wisdom does not arise. [38a]

“The reason is that even great superior bodhisattvas, due to the stability of the blessing of my contamination, are not able to abandon me up to the seventh ground. They have me as companion till then. Although I am abandoned on the seventh ground, the stains placed by me accompany them up to the tenth ground. If it is like this for the courageous superior bodhisattvas, then what need is there to mention ordinary individuals? That called *wisdom* is merely adventitious, while I am present continually, and wherever I am present, wisdom does not arise.”

They who belong to my retinue, [38bcd]
which is dominated, among others, by the three poisons,
jealousy, miserliness, pretension, dishonesty, conceit,

the sixty-two corrupt views, [39]
pride, laziness, non-conscientiousness and others,
such as great desire, I send them out continuously.
Just to subdue them is hard, even without severance.

I am the essential person in the continuum, [40a]

“Also, I am not alone since I possess a highly diverse entourage, which I send out continually, like the different mental factors that are dominated by true-grasping and the other root afflictions, such as attachment and anger.

I send them out, and it is tricky even to subdue a little those that are like me, i.e., which do not contradict me but agree with me: Jealousy, miserliness, pretension, dishonesty, conceit, the sixty-two appalling views, pride, laziness, non-conscientiousness, and the like. There is also great desire, which has never enough, no matter whatever or how many possessions one has, which always wants more. It is difficult to just subdue or lessen these a little, without even addressing being free from them from the root.”

Self-grasping argues that wisdom has accompanied the mind only briefly

you, wisdom, are the adventitious one. [40bc]
If someone goes, then it is your kind.

“I am the essential central person in the continuum, and you, wisdom, are the adventitious one. Hence, if someone has to go, then it is your kind.”

The analogy of the earthen fireplace tossed due to quarrel [40d]

and the later generated horn is wonderful.² [41a]

“It is unsuitable to tear down the earthen stove that has been there for a long time and replace it with horn, which as only been generated recently. Similarly, I have been here in the mind for a long time, and you wisdom, are new. If you were to replace me, that would be like the new horn replacing the long present stove.”

Since I took birth, through karma, [41bcd]

simultaneously with the mind,

even the combined power, ability and magical emanations

of all the three times buddhas [42abc]

cannot evict me? How could it be?

If they could, nothing would be left in their mind.

“That I, the self-grasping, came together with the mind, came about through karma. Therefore, even if all the three time buddhas manifest all their power, ability and magical emanations, they cannot evict me. In case they were able to evict me, then, since the only thought in the mind of the buddhas is to free the minds of all sentient beings from true-grasping, there would be nothing left in their minds.”

Wisdom counters with the argument of investigating suchness

The wisdom says in return: [42d]

Searching for the donkey while riding it³ [43]

—that you remained here by way of

birth is antithetical to perception.

Sentient beings have been primordial buddhas

since the time their mode of abiding [44abc]

existed simultaneously with their mind.

Yet, this is obscured by temporary stains.

“This is like searching for the donkey while riding it. You do not have the right to stay here merely because of the reason of birth. This is a mistaken perception.

The mode of abiding of the mind, the lack of true existence of the mind, abides simultaneous with the mind, it comes into existence the very moment mind is established. Since the lack of true existence accompanies the mind, you do not have a chance to stay, as you grasp at true existence. The mode of abiding of the mind, i.e., its lack of true existence, abides together with the mind. Hence, from beginningless time the mind is a buddha, i.e., the stains of the defilements are not present in its nature. Instead, the suchness of the mind is obscured by temporary obscurations.”

² A Tibetan proverb showing that it is unsuitable to throw out the old but stable object, and replace it with something that may be new, but which is feeble.

³ *Tibetan Dictionary of Phrases* says this is an expression of stupidity.

You destroyed the earthen fireplace with dispute, [44d]

you produced that later generated horn. [45a]

Earlier, ignorance had argued that it was the one that had been together with the mind the longest, and if it would be replaced by wisdom, that would be like the new horn replacing the old earthen fireplace. In reply the wisdom says that the mode of abiding of the mind, emptiness, accompanied the mind since its existence. Hence the wisdom realizing emptiness has accompanied the mind the longest, and if it were to be demanded that the wisdom should leave, then the wisdom would be like the old earthen fireplace that is evicted, and the new horn would be the ignorance.

While I am here [45bcd]

what will you take as a place to stay,
as a base, as a stake in the ground?

If you still say, "I am staying," [46abc]

when I investigate in this manner,
do not argue against your own mistakes!

The mode of apprehension of wisdom is to apprehend the lack of true existence. This lack of true existence, or the mode of abiding, existed from the moment of inception of the mind. While the wisdom realizing the lack of true existence and the lack of true existence are present, the ignorance grasping at true existence does not have a place to stay. "You do not have a base nor a stake to which to tie yourself to. If you, the ignorance, who claims that the mind exists truly, still insists, "I stay," then I shall investigate true and non-true existence, and when I thus expose your faults, do not argue against them!"

From the crown of the head down to the feet [46d]

the continuum of the collected aggregates is not you, [47]

the collection is not and also none of them individually.

All of these are not you as well.

I investigate also with the reasoning of dependent arising,

which has been established extensively elsewhere. [48a]

"If there were a truly existent mind, a truly existent "I," a truly existent person, then it would have to exist on the continuum of the collection of aggregates, it would have to exist independently from the collection of aggregates or from the continuum of the collection of aggregates.

From the crown of the head down to the feet, neither the collection of aggregates nor the continuity of the earlier and later moments of the aggregates are the truly existent mind or the truly existent "I." Also, the aggregates individually are not the truly existent "I." So neither the collection, nor the continuity or all of them are you. If there is a truly existent "I," then it should be findable on the basis of imputation. If it is findable on the surface of the basis of imputation, then it

should be findable on the aggregates, their collection, or continuity, but it is not.”
 The *King of Reasons* is the reasoning of dependent arising, and one needs to also investigate with this reason whether phenomena exist truly or not, a method that has been explained extensively by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen in his other texts.

“The collection of the aggregates, or individually, etc. are not you. But neither is the collections of parts of the mind, or the parts individually, and you are also not those parts.”

The collection of parts is also not you, [48bcd]
 nor are they individually and you are also not them.

The earlier and later moments of mind
 are not you and you are also not them. [49]

Thus the earlier and later moments
 and their earlier and later moments,
 and lastly the earlier and later

moments of the smallest moment of time, all of these [50ab]
 are not you and you are not them.

“If it is continuity, it comes down from one moment to the next. If the mind were truly existent, then it should be findable in the earlier and later moments of the continuity of mind. But the earlier moment of mind is not the truly existent mind, and the later moments of mind are not the truly existent mind. Even if we expand the moment, the earlier and later moments are not you, and also, if we reduce the moment of mind, the earlier or later moments of that continuity are not the truly existent mind. Also, if we go to the smallest moment in time, the sixty-fifth part of a finger snap, the earlier smallest moment is not the truly existent mind, and the later smallest moment is also not the truly existent mind.

Further, when we analyze the mental continuum, then a truly existent mind cannot be found, even if the earlier and later moments are prolonged. When the earlier and later moments are shortened and analyzed, also then the earlier moment is not the truly existent mind and also the later moment is not the truly existent mind.

Lastly, also if we analyze the earlier and later moments of the shortest moment, one cannot find a truly existent mind. And also you, the truly existent mind, is not those earlier and later moments.”

So, when hair tips are split a hundred thousand ways, [50cd]
 and the nature of the mind

does not exist inherently in any way, [51]
 then your faults are revealed,
 the mistaken self image is destroyed,

the root of the mind is cut,
the tree of poisons falls, [52]
the lord of all the mental afflictions
is put to rest in the burial ground,
the root of all afflictions is cut,
all phenomena of the afflictions and the like [53ab]
will never be generated.

“If we analyze the earlier and later moments of the mental continuum as profoundly as if we were splitting a hair end one hundred thousand times, and we cannot find that the nature of the mind exists inherently, then the bubble of your basis, the truly existent mind, has burst.

When the inherent or non-inherent existence of the mind is analyzed in such a subtle way, and no inherent existence can be found, then it does not exist inherently! Now, since the lack of inherent existence is realized, your basis has been shattered. The mistaken self-image is destroyed because the self appears mistakenly, and once this mistake is identified, the mistaken self-image is destroyed. The root of the mind is cut as the actual mode of abiding of the mind is its lack of true existence. The poisonous tree has fallen, as the poisonous tree of true-grasping, which generates all the afflictions and sufferings, is cut when the lack of true existence is realized.”

True-grasping is the lord of all the mental afflictions that it can call forth, but by realizing the lack of true existence, it is buried in its grave, the place of death. By realizing selflessness one cuts the root of all afflictions, as the wisdom realizing selflessness cuts self-grasping; i.e., one cuts the root of the branches and leaves of the other afflictions, and also the appearance of true existence and the sufferings induced by self-grasping will never be generated again. By investigating the mind and seeing its lack of inherent existence, one sees the actual meaning of the mode of abiding of the mind.

That called *truly existent mind* is not experienced as something primordial. The truly existent mind does not exist in the nature of the mind. By seeing that the truly existent mind has not existed from the beginning, one sees the actual face of the mind, the ultimate nature of the mind. The mind has two natures, its nominal illusory nature and its ultimate nature. By seeing that the mind has never existed inherently one sees the ultimate nature of the mind.

One sees one meaning, the mode of abiding, [53cd]
it has not been experienced as existing primordially,
it does not exist in nature, [54]
it does not exist inherently from the beginning,
one sees the actual face of the mind.
It is the great oxidation of the mode of abiding,

When one realizes the lack of inherent existence of the mind, this lack of inherent existence is the mode of abiding of the mind. The non-finding of inherent existence of the mind upon analysis of its nature is called the *great oxidation*. The great oxidation is also called the *non-primordial existence of the mind*.

it is the view without anything to view, [55]

it is the seeing without anything to see,

it the meditation without anything to meditate on,

it is a meaning that cannot be expressed,

it is beyond objects of words and thought, [56]

even the Pandit himself is beyond words and thought.⁴

even the very antidote is naturally liberated

the object of the all-conceptual mind is pacified.

These are synonyms, [57]

through unifying they become the great equality;

it makes many to be of one taste;

it makes samsara and nirvana indivisible.

The view of the non-primordial existence of the mind is the view without anything to see; conceptual thought or dualistic awarenesses can not see it. It is the meditation without anything to meditate on. It cannot be seen by the mistaken illusory thought and cannot be meditated upon by such a thought, but it is seen by the uninterrupted path of seeing, meditation and no more learning. The way a direct perception sees the mode of abiding cannot be expressed in words.

It is beyond objects of words or thought because even though it is expressed and thought about, it cannot be expressed in the way it is directly realized. Even the abbot that analyses emptiness is beyond words or thoughts, i.e., his mode of abiding is beyond objects of sound or thought. First, one realizes the lack of true existence and sees the lack of true existence as it is, and then one opposes true-grasping.

To this end, at first a powerful antidote, a strong effort to oppose true-grasping, is needed, but as time progresses and true-grasping weakens, the effort one needs to put into the antidote also becomes less. The object of placement of the conceptual thought of true-grasping is true existence, and realizing the lack of true existence pacifies the object of the conceptual mind. When one realizes the lack of true existence, phrases like “One sees the actual face of the mind” and “The object of the conceptual mind is pacified” become a list of synonyms. Mixing all of these, and labeling all phenomena together in emptiness, is called the *great equality*.

Although there are many different illusory nominal phenomena, they are all of the same taste of the lack of true existence, and so one arrives at many objects that are of one taste.

Also, because the phenomena of cyclic existence and liberation that has gone

⁴ Lama Zopa Rinpoche: Even the emptiness on the observer is beyond thought or expression.

beyond cyclic existence are the same in lacking inherent existence, one says that samsara and nirvana are indivisible.

Meditate in equipoise on the meaning of these. [58]

In the perception of the placement of the equipoise
you, the true-grasping, do not exist and neither does the Buddha.

There is no Dharma, no Sangha, no grounds and paths,
no manifesting of a result, [59]

nothing true and nothing false.

If not even the truth body is present,
how could you, the self-grasping, exist?

When one meditates in single-pointed equipoise on the meanings of the lists of terms given before, i.e., emptiness, then no illusory nominal object appears to the face of this equipoise, i.e., the perception of emptiness in single-pointed equipoise is not mixed with any illusory object.

“You, the true-grasping, do not exist there, and neither does the Buddha, the Dharma, Sangha. There are no grounds or paths, and therefore also no manifesting of a result. Within this perception exists only the mere non-affirming negation of true existence and nothing else, not even true or false, and not even the truth body. If there is not even the truth body, then how could you, the true-grasping, exist, and what need is there to mention the other illusory phenomena?”

What need is there to mention illusory phenomena? [60]

Upon arising from that concentration
the reflection of illusory appearance arises
within the mirror of the empty mind.

Since it has no existence beyond mere appearance, [61]
there is no place for true-grasping to remain.

Wisdom Counters with illusory existence without investigation and analysis

The mirror of the empty mind
and the illusory appearance of dependent arising
are a mere appearance of collected causes and conditions; [62]
when not investigated they are, when investigated not.

Only the appearance that is adventitiously imputed
and not analyzed is posited as cause and effect.

If one is not satisfied with that, [63ab]
and searches, then there is nothing to posit.

“Having spent time in meditative equipoise, the yogi arises from this concentration, and during the subsequent attainment, illusory phenomena appear to the

mind like a reflection of form in the mirror. Even Buddha, Dharma and Sangha do not exist for the perception of emptiness in meditative equipoise, but now, during the time of the post meditational attainment, when illusory phenomena appear to the mind, they are realized to be a mere appearance to the mind, without the slightest existence from their side. Since they exist only in mere appearance and do not have the slightest existence from their own side, there is no place for you, true-grasping. You grasp at the objects as existing from their side, but because the object completely lacks existence from its side, there is no place for true-grasping.

Similar to the illusory appearance of the true image, the reflection of form in the mirror appears because of a meeting between form and the mirror. In the same way, illusory nominal appearance comes about through a meeting between the mirror of the empty mind and external objects such as forms. Thus comes about a mere illusory appearance that does not exist truly. At the time of no investigation and analysis, it seems to exist inherently, but when investigating as explained earlier, then no inherent existence is found.

Whatever illusory appearance there is to the mind, it is a mere appearance to the mind; it is merely adventitiously imputed by the mind; it is imputed by conceptual thought. That presentation of cause and effect, action and activity, and so forth needs then to be posited, at the time of non-investigation and non-analysis into inherent existence. That mere appearance to conceptual thought needs then to be posited as cause and effect. One needs to be satisfied with the presentation of that mere appearance at the time of non-investigation and non-analysis as cause and effect. If one is not satisfied with the mere appearance and looks for inherently existing cause and effect, then one does not find anything.”⁵

That action and activity, although dependent on conditions, [63cd]
appear to exist truly is weird enough,

but the grasping at true existence is even more absurd, [64ab]
and to hold onto something that is absurd is very exhausting.

“Although depending on causes and conditions, there is the appearance of existing independently from cause and condition, which is actually impossible and very surprising. The grasping at the true existence that appears is even more comic, to grasp at that which exists in dependence on causes and conditions to exist independently from causes and conditions.”

Although it is inappropriate to grasp at true existence, one has been doing so since beginningless time. When one considers this it should make one very tired.

A child becomes a senior through aging. [64cd]

The one that is senior right from birth
equals the appearance of existence [65ab]
and the very grasping at it.

⁵ Lama Zopa Rinpoche: One needs to be satisfied with cause and effect that is defined by mere appearance and mere imputation.

“The appearance of any object as truly existent and the grasping at that true existence do not conform to reality, as the object does not exist truly. This unrealistic appearance of and grasping at true existence is like the grasping at a child as an old person. The child becomes an old person through the process of aging and is not an old person at young age.

If the seniors existed from their own side, then they would become old independently from anything. If that is the case, then they should be old from the very moment of birth. But old age comes gradual over months and years, in dependence on causes and conditions.”

In the sky of the empty mind [65cd]
a cloud formation of an illusory body takes shape.

Motivated by a multitude of conceptual thoughts [66]
a vast rain of action and activity falls,
yet nobody sees that they arise
from the causes and conditions of mind and appearance.

When analyzed, then the three —rain, cloud, and mind— [67abc]
although arising, arising from space itself;
although dissolving, dissolving into space itself.

Any action and activity depends on causes and conditions. When clouds accumulate in the sky and rain falls, it is due to causes and conditions and does not exist from its own side. Similarly, the mind is empty of true existence, and in dependence on this empty mind, karma is accumulated and a body established. Upon the existence of the body, diverse conceptual thoughts appear [in the empty mind], and through them one accumulates white and black karmas. This process also does not exist inherently but is established adventitiously, like the rain that falls adventitiously. If the accumulating of clouds and the falling of rain existed inherently, then they would have to exist independently from anything. In that case they should have a place where they came from and a place where they go to, which is not the case. In dependence on causes and conditions, the clouds form adventitiously in the sky, and they also disappear back into the sky, which is the reason why they do not exist inherently.

The lack of obstruction and contact defines space. Similarly, the lack of true existence defines emptiness. For this reason, space is given as an example of emptiness. If one explains the lines “Arise, but arise from space; they dissolve, but dissolve from space” by relating space to emptiness, these lines have the same meaning as “form is emptiness, emptiness is form” from the *Heart Sutra*. Various objects, such as forms or sounds, appear to the mind, and these objects were generated in dependence on causes and conditions. If they did not come into existence in dependence on causes and conditions, then they would exist truly, in which case they could not cease. If truly existent form is generated from causes and conditions, then these causes and conditions would exist simultaneously with form. Because form is empty of true existence and there is no gen-

eration of form independently from causes and conditions, then the form is generated in dependence on causes and conditions. Hence “emptiness is form.” From within emptiness appears form, i.e., form appears whilst being empty.

If it is asked whether form is empty of inherent existence: If form exists independently from anything, then it should be findable on the basis for labeling form. However, upon investigating its parts, one cannot find anything, and therefore form is empty of inherent existence.

Previously someone remarked that they had no problem with “form is emptiness,” but they felt uncomfortable with “emptiness is form.” If it would mean that emptiness is form, then there is reason to feel uncomfortable, but it does not mean that. “Emptiness is form,” means that because of the reason of being empty, form exists.

Form and emptiness are not of a different nature, and if form is analyzed, then one finds that form is empty of inherent existence.

In the mirror of the empty mind [67d]

appears the reflection of a dream body. [68]

Through causes and conditions, dependent arising and sleep,
and through the imprint of prior habituation
one will master all actions of cause and effect.

Everybody sees them only in mere appearance, [69abc]

but at the time of analysis and deconstruction

I do not see them as existing in reality.

Here the reflection of the face in the mirror and the dream body are given as examples for phenomena that do not exist truly but perform function and activity. If we look in the mirror, we see the reflection of our face there. This reflection is but an appearance, and our face is not there in the mirror. Likewise, when we dream of horses and elephants, these dream horses and elephants do exist as an appearance to our mind, but there is no real horse or elephant there. Similarly, no phenomenon exists from its own side but is posited as existent from the point of view of being appearances.

When the face that appears in the mirror is analyzed, then one finds that there is no real face there, just an appearance of a face. Likewise, when the horse and elephant in the dream are analyzed, one finds there is only the appearance of horse and elephant and no real horse and elephant. Similarly, when we analyze and deconstruct other objects such as a vase, then one finds that also they exist just in mere appearance. If we analyze whether the mouth, bottom or belly of the vase is the vase, then no vase is findable. Since a vase should be findable if it existed inherently, this proves that there is no inherent vase.

In which way does the vase then exist? It is a mere appearance to the labeling conceptual thought that labels vase on the basis of imputation, the bottom, body, and mouth of the vase. It is merely labeled by name on this basis. It is the same with every other phenomenon.

Although arising, arising from the mind itself, [69d]

although dissolving, dissolving into the mind itself, [70]

karmic cause and effect are posited as mere appearance.

In the water of the empty mind itself,

the reflection of the wisdom moon arises,

and clears the darkness of wrong views. [71]

Reality is understood through the dependent arising
of the water of the empty mind and the reflection of
the wisdom moon —everybody sees that.

The nominal is posited as mere appearance, [72]

yet I do not see the analyzed meaning as established.

Although they arise, they arise from mind.

Although they dissolve, they dissolve into empty mind itself.

In the empty stone mountains of this mind, [73]

a sound reverberating with dharma appears.

This dharma sound, superimposing the mode of abiding,
spreads like the sound of an echo.

The great sound of empty words and [74abc]

the great rock face, through the combination

of these causes and conditions, empty sound spreads.

Here Panchen Chökyi Gyaltzen gives further similar examples. The combination of the moon shining and the water generates a reflection of the moon. If one analyzes the appearance of the moon in the water, then there is no moon to be found. It is only an appearance, but there is no real moon to be found with analysis. Similarly, an appearance of sound is generated with the echo due to the conditions of a big cave and a sound, but if one examines to which basis the label of sound should be applied, one cannot find the basis among the reverberating echo, one cannot find the coming or going of the sound.

In the same way, all phenomena lack existence from their own side when analyzed, and only exist as mere appearances. Since they are all but appearances to the mind, they arise within the mind, and when they dissolve, they also have nowhere else to go—they are empty of inherent existence—and they dissolve back into the mind that is empty of inherent existence.

It is the lamp eliminating the darkness of ignorance. [74d]

Listening and contemplating is done in mere appearance, [75]

I do not see it as existing when analyzed.

Although arising, arising from mind itself,

although dissolving, dissolving into mind itself.

Hence, as two of us [76]
 have antithetical ways of apprehending,
 there is no place where we can abide simultaneously.
 Go wherever you have to go to!

Then wisdom replies to true-grasping:

“According to you, one would have to apprehend phenomena as existing from their own side, independently. However, I have shown with many reasons their lack of intrinsic existence, that they exist dependently on many causes and conditions, and apprehend them therefore as non-inherently existent. Therefore, we two have directly opposing ways of apprehending, and there isn’t space anywhere for us to abide simultaneously. Therefore, be gone true-grasping.”

Debating the Strength of Its Power and Ability

True-grasping argues that meditators cannot harm it due to a lack of knowledge

The true-grasping says in return: [77abc]
 Whatever empty words you say,
 when I send out the eight dharmas there is clarity.

“You claim that phenomena lack inherent existence, that they lack true existence. That this is empty talk will become clear when I send out my minions, the eight worldly dharmas.”

The eight worldly dharmas are: liking happiness and disliking suffering, liking praise, disliking criticism, liking pleasing words and disliking unpleasant words, liking gain, and disliking loss. These are the entourage of true-grasping, and worldly beings follow these eight dharmas. They are under the control of the eight worldly dharmas and obsessed with them. True-grasping elaborates fame and the other objects into something truly existent, which leads to craving.

I also accept that you and me [77d]
 have antithetical ways of apprehending. [78a]

“I also think that you and I have directly opposing ways of apprehending. If there is no place in the universe where we could co-exist, then it should be you that goes somewhere else! You threaten that you are going to evict me, yet you cannot. Before you, there were already many great yogis meditating on wisdom, who tried exactly that, but without success. Rather, instead of becoming an antidote, their meditation became a conducive condition for me.”

If one does not meditate correctly in a mode contradicting the mode of apprehending of true-grasping directly, then one cannot oppose it, and many faults ensue. If one meditates on the lack of inherent existence, then it harms true-grasping, but if one does not know how to meditate correctly and does not meditate on the lack of true existence, then it does not harm true-grasping and instead becomes its support.

If there is no place where to coexist, [78bcd]
then it should be you that goes somewhere else.

I am the essential inner person,
you are only an adventitious brief moment. [79]
This friendship between me and the mind
will remain unmovable
like the king of mountains, Mt. Meru.

You are like momentary lightening, [80]
I am like the great ocean,
staying, without generation or decrease.
You are like a mere moment of a dream,

I am like the continuum of the ocean. [81]
You are like one blink of an eye,
I am like the love of a mother for her child.
You are like an unloved guest.

You say you will evict me. [82]
You are like the great yogis
who practice meditation.
They call it meditation on mind itself,

not following the earlier moment, [83]
not going to meet the later moment,
this meditation without alteration or purpose
on consciousness abiding naturally,

although it is nothing but a meditation on mind itself, [84]
it is a meditation on me alone.

Because the mode of apprehension agrees with me,
you yourself do not get to meditate.

How could it harm me? [85ab]
You have not entered there.

“Some claim they meditate on the nature of the mind. They say they meditate on the antidote of true-grasping, but in reality, they meditate on the nominal nature of the mind. They meditate by concentrating on the present nominal nature of the mind, without purposeful alteration and without thinking about the past or the future, and claim this is the antidote to true-grasping.”

However, meditating in such a way is just a meditation on the mind itself and does not become directly opposed to the mode of apprehension to true-grasping, and therefore does not become the antidote to true-grasping. True-grasping says it is not harmed by it. As it does not counteract the mode of apprehension to true-grasping, it is not a meditation on emptiness.

“Therefore, such a yogi that meditates on the nature of the mind does not harm me. Also, there do you, wisdom, not meditate at such a time. I am there in the meditation, and it is difficult for you to evict me.”

Some meditate with ceased attention, [85cd]
without bringing anything to mind.

Their mode of apprehending and mine [86]
are not antithetical, so it does not harm me!
How could it be a meditation on you alone?
You have again not entered there.

“Some meditators meditate on non-recognition, stopping all attention to objects, and propound this to be the antidote. Their view is that any conceptualization, regardless of whether it is virtuous or non-virtuous, should be avoided, and that both types of thoughts have to be cut. They say that both the white and black clouds obscure the sun, and that one should therefore stay free from any conceptualizations and thought.

Although there are meditators who cultivate non-recognition in this way, it is not a meditation that does me any harm. To harm me, the mode of apprehension of the meditation would need to be directly opposite to my way of apprehending. That means, as I am apprehending everything as truly existent, the yogi would have to apprehend the lack of true existence. Because the meditation on non-recognition does not harm true-grasping, one cannot say that this yogis meditate on emptiness. You, the wisdom, have not entered in their meditation.”

Some, when looking for a mind that is form, [87]
meditate on its non-findability.

This does not exist even in my system,
why mention antithetical ways of apprehending?

Since it also does not exist on your side, [88]
why should it harm me?

Some meditate on the non-artificial
natural bare nature of the mind.

This is meditation on mind itself, [89]
indeed, it does not transcend meditation on me alone.

Meditation on me is my support
how could it be meditation on you alone?

You did not enter it and it does not harm me. [90a]

“Some, when contemplating the nature of the mind, investigate whether it has shape or color, whether it has a square or round shape, or whether it is of yellow or blue color. Upon finding the absence of shape or color of the mind, they assert this to be the seeing of the nature of the mind.

This meditation does not even exist on the side of true-grasping and certainly does not harm me. It also does not exist on your side, wisdom, and therefore, as it does not become directly opposite to me in its mode of apprehension, it does not harm me and therefore cannot evict me.

Some meditate on the non-artificial bare mind itself. They say if one places the mind on this, it is seeing the nature of the mind. But this is a meditation on the mind itself, and since the mind is an illusory conventional phenomenon, it appears as truly existent, and so one meditates on the appearance of true existence. Since one meditates on true appearance, it is like meditating on me, it is like meditating on true existence. How could this be meditating on wisdom, how could this be meditating on emptiness? At this time, you emptiness, have not even entered there. Meditating in such a way cannot harm me.”

Some say the mind is translucent. [90bcd]

They stop appearances to the mind
and meditate on the meditation without attention.

This also does not harm me in any way. [91]

As it did not even cross over to the side
of an antidote against me,
how could it be a meditation on you alone?

Also there you did not enter. [92]

Meditations without listening mostly
are introduced by a passable introduction
with profound and famous words.

I also possess such meditations. [93]

Once they commenced meditation in equipoise
it is mostly a meditation on my very self,
without differentiating between me and existence.

Although some say they meditate on my nonexistence, [94]

without drawing even one distinction between
my nonexistence and nonexistence,
most are meditating solely on nonexistence.

These are my enlightened activities. [95]

If you did not go even into this direction,
then at that time where did you go?

Without arriving there even for an instant,

to evict me becomes the source of laughter. [96a]

“Some meditate on the translucent mind by stopping appearances to the mind and stopping attention to any object. This meditation clearly also does not harm me as it is not opposed to my way of apprehending. Consequently, it does not

become a meditation on emptiness, and also you, the wisdom, have not entered this meditation.

Some do not study with listening and contemplating and instead meditate only on oral instructions, thinking this to be superior. When they become introduced to the subject of emptiness, it is with profound and famous words, but when it comes to meditation in equipoise, then most of them meditate on true existence. Until the realization of emptiness, one is not able to distinguish between true existence and existence and also not between nonexistence and non-true existence. Because one is not able to make this distinction, one thinks one is meditating on the lack of true existence but in reality meditates on nonexistence. This type of meditation does not harm me. Many meditators say they will evict me, but none of them actually can. For most of them, their meditation becomes a meditation on true existence, it becomes a mistaken meditation, and I, the true-grasping, claim responsibility for such a mistaken meditation, it is part of my enlightened activity. Further, as all these meditations are mistaken, you the wisdom have not entered there, and therefore wanting to evict me becomes a joke.”

Those who have studied a lot claim they meditate on you. [96bcd]

Having done much affirming and analyzing
regarding the upper and lower limits,

the searching for a fault in the meditation develops. [97]

Looking for a fault in the object of placement and
also analyzing repeatedly the meditation,
analyzing also the analyst,

and also analyzing the analyst of that - [98]

since the antidotal analysis is inexhaustible,
if one keeps analyzing infinitely
one will be bound by the great net

of tiring conceptions and there will be no meditation. [99]

At the time of analysis it seems like development,
but in equipoise this meditation is never possible.
Sometimes they meditate on me,

sometimes they meditate on nothing, [100]

sometimes they meditate without attention.

Once placed on the correct meaning,
a meditation on reality with a mode of apprehending

antithetical to mine is like a daytime star. [101abc]

If one does not go beyond such ways,
one should not claim to evict me.

Above the way of meditating by those without listening was explained. There

are others, who, with much listening, engage in extensive analytical meditations. They practice analytical meditation on many crucial topics, e.g., the beginning and end of cyclic existence. When analyzing past lives, in dependence on valid reasoning, they find that consciousness has no beginning. To prove the thesis of past lives, they use this reasoning:

Take the subject consciousness that is generated during conception, it follows that it is preceded by an earlier moment of consciousness, because it is consciousness. If it is consciousness, it needs to be preceded by an earlier moment of consciousness. Therefore consciousness has no beginning. Consciousness also does not have an end. Take the subject the consciousness of an ordinary person — it follows it goes to a future life — because it is consciousness with attachment. The consciousness of the ordinary person has no end and goes from life to life.

In the earlier stages of Buddhism in Tibet, there was a time when those engaged in the analysis would disparage meditation, saying that it would become an elaboration, similar to true-grasping, and that listening and analyzing is more critical. Likewise, yogis would disparage scholars engaged in analytical meditation, saying that scholars are mainly occupied with external objects, and that it does not facilitate the internal focus of the mind. Like this, meditation and listening were held to be mutually exclusive, those following listening criticized meditation, and vice versa.

However, Lama Tsong Khapa taught that these steps supported each other and were not contradictory, that listening leads to analysis, and that as the culmination of the analysis, one practices placement meditation on what was understood through the analysis.

Nevertheless, not seeing the essence of these instructions, scholars following listening look for the faults in the meditation and the placement. They analyze and analyze that called *meditation* and then also analyze the analyzer. In this way, there is no end in sight to the analysis, many conceptual thoughts are generated, and they are caught in the net of conceptualizations. Those following analyses can identify emptiness somewhat while analyzing, but when they try to meditate on it single-pointedly, they lose the analysis.

Some, when meditating, meditate on true existence. Some, not discerning between nonexistence and non-true existence, meditate solely on nonexistence. Others again meditate on non-recognition, blocking all appearances to the mind. In this way, most meditators elaborate and do not harm true-grasping. Skillful practitioners who meditate correctly on the real meaning, the mode of abiding, which becomes the opposite to the mode of apprehension of true-grasping, are as rare as a star at daytime, something almost impossible.

Those that want to evict me have to meditate on the reverse mode of abiding, and therefore one should not claim to evict me if one does not go beyond such ways.

You are just like the *Udumwara* flower, [101d]

a singular occurrence when means are perfect. [102]

But for that one needs, for boundless eons,

to build up an unequalled great accumulation,
which again arises from pleasing the teacher.

I do not need such things. [103]

I am the owner, continually.

Only the definite presence of
an unmistakable wisdom that is the antidote

and has an antithetical way of apprehending to me [104ab]
can evict me.

“My dear wisdom realizing emptiness, you are just like the *Udumawa* flower, that occurs very rarely, only when the conditions are excellent, and a Buddha comes to the world. This flower only sprouts when a Buddha takes residence in the womb, it blooms when the Buddha attains enlightenment and teaches, and it wanes when the Buddha goes into parinirvana. Thus the *Udumawa* flower is a singular occurrence, and likewise also you, the real wisdom realizing emptiness, are a singular occurrence. The reason for that is that to realize emptiness, one needs to build up the accumulations for boundless eons.”

In order to become an antidote against true-grasping it needs to be directly opposed in its mode of apprehension to true-grasping.

Whatever other antidotes there may be generated, [104cd]
as I do not believe in any of them,

they only become my support. [105]

When they become my support there is no liberation.

Unless contact and being tight with me is given up,
the meditation on non-conceptual consciousness,

without “this is” and “this is not,” [106]

is accepted as meditation on the mode of abiding.

I have to laugh at heart.

Some take luminosity as the mind

and decide that the mind is empty. [107]

Having made the empty illusory,

they meditate on the illusion as lacking inherent existence,
and assert this as meditating on the mode of abiding.

This is only conventional, [108]

if done well it is merely a meditation on the illusory.

If one meditates on my absence it harms me,

“I” and nonexistence of “I” are a dichotomy.

It did not become a meditation on my nonexistence. [109]

Since its mode of apprehension is not antithetical to mine,

how can it harm me?

Some think of the empty space

as not having limits or a middle, [110]

and meditate on it as unified with the mind.

They posit it as the space-like view

and the space-like meditative equipoise.

Why is space with no limits or middle [111]

antithetical to the apprehension of me?

The mind has no limits or middle,

I see no limit since it is formless.

As for me, I posture on the mind. [112]

If it does not make contact with me,

then it is mistaken that it is my antidote.

Some, when (disturbing) thoughts are generated,

being brought to them by mindfulness [113]

look them directly in the face

and they disappear on their own accord.

Having thus been introduced to the truth body

merely due to more (disturbing) thoughts, [114]

there will be more truth body, and

the disturbing thoughts will not need to be stopped.

This is called *transforming into the truth body*,

it is asserted as meditating on the mode of abiding. [115]

Not seeing thoughts as form,

not seeing the mind as form,

as its way of apprehending is not antithetical to mine,

it does not become a meditation on the mode of abiding. Hence, [116]

why even mention seeing the truth body?

My eviction? That's a laugh!

Some, through purely performing

the analysis of one and many, [117]

meditate on the non-findability at the time of analysis.

Here again, if one meditates on the directional property,

one does not meditate on the thesis of non-"I,"

it does not become opposite to my way of apprehending, [118]

and so it is again not a meditation on my nonexistence.

Some, when nothing is found by analysis

through the lack of one and many,
 and due to the conception of mere nominal imputation, [119]
 think that I do not exist.
 This meditation is a meditation on an affirming negation,
 it is not a meditation on a non-affirming negation and
 is not antithetical to my way of apprehending. [120]
 Without abiding in an antithetical way of apprehending
 how will they be able to evict me?
 If it does not harm me,
 how does it become a meditation on wisdom? [121]
 Some, when not finding anything through the
 analysis of one and many,
 say "I am meditating on emptiness,"
 and meditate while in this state. [122]
 This is the way to be far from emptiness.
 Without understanding the way
 how they are naturally empty,
 they engage emptiness in front of them, [123]
 yet, without understanding the way something is empty.
 The wisdom that becomes my antidote,
 it cannot send me anywhere.
 If there is no antidote, why should there be harm? [124]
 What else would be appropriate for me, but to stay?
 Some, when having strongly purified with
 the analysis of one and many,
 say that since the analysis comes first, [125]
 at the time of meditation there is no object at all,
 and assert it as an equipoise
 where the mind thinks of nothing.
 It is strange that this nonexistence of something to bring to mind [126]
 should be of antithetical mode of apprehending to myself.
 If no meditation on non-"I" is induced,
 then however much one is labelling *profound meaning*,
 it does not even go into the direction of harming me. [127]
 A meditation on wisdom? What a joke!
 Some, because of not finding anything
 with the analysis of one and many,

place their mind as much as possible on the continuity [128]
of the inferential cognition realizing
that I do not exist truly,
and call this *meditation on the mode of abiding*.

Consciousness is renowned as an illusory truth, [129]
they assert the mediation on illusory truth as mode of abiding.
Ha ha, I myself meditate on this strange wisdom,
it is my friend.

Some, having ascertained the non-true existence [130]
of myself with the reason investigating
the lack of being one or many,
assert the equipoise on the continuum

of the ascertaining consciousness as the mode of abiding. [131]
This is not different from the above,
forget an antithetical mode of apprehending!
It has indeed not gone beyond a meditation on me,

how could it become a meditation on wisdom? [132]
Some, through the reasoning investigating
the lack of being one or many, ascertain
that I do not exist truly.

Then, not understanding the purity of their nonexistence, [133]
they meditate, searching aside
from the emptiness to be meditated upon,
and are singularly distant from emptiness.

Since there is the mind of true-grasping at emptiness [134]
it becomes a meditation on myself, and
you should consider whether or not there is the antidote
that has a mode of apprehending antithetical to mine.

What is the reason for that? [135]
Without understanding my nonexistence
you search for emptiness elsewhere.
Anyone can show off,

but few actually meditate on my nonexistence. [136]
Some ascertain the non-true existence of the very "I,"
by analyzing with the reason of one and many,
then place their minds as much as possible

on the continuity of the mode of apprehension [137]

of the ascertaining consciousness.

They assert this to be meditation on the mode of abiding.

It is a little better than the others,

and although it even harms me a little, [138ab]

how could it become a perfect harm?

Many claim that they meditate on emptiness, but the reality is that very few practitioners realize emptiness. What one refers to as the self of person is the inherently existent person, the inherently existent “I,” and the grasping at the “I” as entirely independent is the grasping as the self of person. What is identified as person is the “I” that is labeled in mere name on the collection of the aggregates; the name “I” that is labeled on the collection of the aggregates. The grasping at the true existence of the “I” that is labeled on the collection of the aggregates is called the grasping at the self of person. This truly existent person, if it existed, should be findable as truly existent one or truly existent many.

But when this is analyzed with the reasoning of one and many, then one finds it cannot exist as truly existent one or truly existent many. As it does not exist in either of these ways, one realizes the lack of its true existence. The apprehended object of the inferential cognition realizing the lack of true existence is the non-affirming negation of the mere lack of true existence. If one meditates on this mere negation, it is better than the above cases, and it harms the self-grasping to some degree.

What is the reason for that? [138cd]

In dependence on the mere collection of the aggregates

the mind thinking “I” is generated. [139]

This mind thinking “I,”

upon focusing on the focal object “I,”

is grasping at the aspect of true existence.

To be true in this way is true-grasping, [140]

to cling in this way is clinging at true existence,

to appear in this way is true appearance.

It will follow up through the ten grounds,

the name *knowledge obscuration* is given as well. [141a]

The grasping at true existence upon having focused on the object of “I” is called true-grasping. The clinging at the object as truly existent is called *true-clinging*, and the appearance of true existence is called *true appearance*. The appearance of true existence reaches up to the tenth ground and is called *obscuration to knowledge*. True-grasping or true-clinging is abandoned on the eighth ground and is called afflictive obscuration. All superior beings need to realize emptiness directly, and when they are in meditative equipoise on emptiness, only the appearance of the lack of true existence arises and there is no appearance of true existence.

Here we can related these lines to three situations:

- 1) There is true appearance but no clinging to true existence,
- 2) there is both true appearance and clinging to true existence, and
- 3) there is neither true appearance or clinging to true existence.

During the subsequent attainment of superior trainees [141bcd]
there is true appearance but no true-clinging.

In the face of meditative equipoise both are nonexistent.

The buddha ground lacks equipoise and subsequent attainment, [142ab]
for ordinary individuals there are both.

A superior trainee necessarily has a direct realization of emptiness. When they are not in meditative equipoise and engage in activities such as teaching, during the post-meditational attainment, then although there is true appearance, there is no clinging to that true appearance, due to the direct realization of emptiness. When the superior trainee is in meditative equipoise on emptiness, because at that time the emptiness appears mixed with the equipoise, there is neither true-appearance nor clinging at true-existence. In the case of an enlightened being, since they are always in equipoise on emptiness, there is no distinction made between meditative equipoise and post-meditational attainment, and there is never any true-appearance or clinging at true existence. Ordinary individuals that have not realized emptiness directly have both true-appearance and clinging at true-existence

Just the Selflessness of Person Does Not Harm

If, in dependence on the mere collection of aggregates, [142cd]
the “I” appears as true

to the awareness thinking “I,” [143]

then, from the reasoning that establishes

it as neither truly existent one

nor truly existent many, this very “I”

is ascertained as lacking true existence. [144]

Although one says, “I train

in the continuity of the mode of abiding of that ascertainment,”

the harm to myself is certain to be minimal.

The meaning of these verses is similar to the ones above. We have the “I” that is labeled in dependence on the aggregates, and then there is the true-grasping that clings at that “I” as truly existent. Although the realization that this “I” does not exist the way it is apprehended, harms true-grasping to some degree, it does not harm every true-grasping. It gives some small harm but does not harm all modes of apprehension of true-grasping.

The root of cyclic existence is true-grasping, which comes in two forms:

1) the true-grasping at person and

2) the true-grasping at phenomena, i.e., true-grasping at the aggregates.

The root of true-grasping at person is the true-grasping at aggregates. True-grasping at person depends on the true-grasping at the aggregates. If one realizes the lack of true-existence of the aggregates, it harms all types of true-grasping.

True-grasping: The realization of selflessness harms me, but it is rare

What is the reason for that? [145]

I need to be refuted as truly existent
on the aggregates.

Since I, who exists on the aggregates,
and who is focused on the aggregates, [146abc]

am not refuted as truly existent,

I am posturing on the aggregates.

If one grasps at true existence upon focusing on the aggregates, then the true-grasping is posturing on the aggregates. If one only realizes the lack of true existence of the person but does not realize the lack of true existence of the aggregates, then one cannot harm the true-grasping at the aggregates, and thus the true-grasping postures on the aggregates.⁶

Having separated me from the aggregates, [146d]

however much one meditates on the lack of true existence, [147ab]
the mode of apprehending is not antithetical.

What Really Harms True-Grasping

If one brings forth the prime cognition which ascertains [147cd]
that the appearance of true existence,

to me, after having focused on the aggregates, [148abc]
is not established the way it appears,
this alone harms and nothing else!

Attaining Superior Insight

Focusing on the aggregates one says "I." [148d]

Make the mere non-affirming negation [149]
of true existence of this, the object of apprehension.

If then, without weakening strength, but with clear intensity,
free from mental sinking, excitement and apprehending characteristics,
one is skillful in training in the mode of apprehending, [150]
where, upon having focused on the aggregates,

⁶Lama Zopa Rinpoche: ... exists arrogantly on the aggregates.

my nonexistence appears as object,
then this is the mode of apprehending antithetical to me.

Then one is able to evict me. [151ab]

However, this is like a mere daytime star.

One thinks “I” relative to, i.e., in dependence on, focusing on the aggregates. One eliminates this mode of apprehension in relation to the aggregates, refuting truly existent aggregates, and then one holds that mode of apprehension, the mere lack of true existence, without adding anything. The apprehended object is the mere lack of true existence and one has realized emptiness. This is then combined with calm abiding, which is free from mental sinking or excitement and endowed with clear intensity. If one finds a person that is skilled in this way, this person can harm true-grasping and can evict true-grasping. But such a person is as rare as a star in daylight.

Fault of Not Having Identified the Object of Negation

Ascertaining the objects of the “I” continually, [151cd]
the people who claim they have evicted the “I,”

without actually having set their sight on the “I,” [152]

are like someone directing a ritual towards the western door
while the demon resides in the eastern door;
they are like someone recognizing the thief

without have identified the thief; [153]

they are like someone shooting an arrow
without seeing the target;

they are like someone with hopes in search of jewels,

without knowing what a jewel is; [154]

wisdom, you are not in the picture,
and I am the ruler of all.

I achieve my aims comfortably.

“If one wants to evict true-grasping, then one needs to identify the object of true-grasping as well true-grasping itself. Those who say they are going to refute true existence without having identified the object of negation are like someone wanting to catch a thief without having identified the thief, wanting to evict a demon without having seen the demon, making prayers to a precious gem and pinning one’s hopes on that stone without having identified what a precious stone is and the like. Hence, you, the wisdom, are nowhere to be seen, and I am the ruler of all and achieve my aims comfortably.” Here the ignorance is gloating.

Faulty Sevenfold Analysis

Some claim they are going to evict me [155]

by training in the continuity of the mode
of apprehending of the ascertaining consciousness
that realizes me as lacking true existence on the aggregates,
through the sevenfold analysis. [156]

If this mode of apprehending is ascribed
to the continuity of consciousness
then, since it is a meditation on myself
it will not harm me, [157ab]
and the awareness will be illusory as well.

“If the person exists inherently, then it should be findable when looked for with the sevenfold reasoning, which it is not. However, there are those, who, upon not finding the person during analysis, proceed to meditate on the continuity of the ascertaining consciousness.”

The Sevenfold Reasoning First in Relation to the Example of the Chariot

If the chariot existed inherently, then it should be findable with the seven-point analysis on the collection of its different parts, such as the wheels, axle, the wood on top of that, and more. If the chariot exists truly, then one needs to analyze whether it exists as one with its parts of different from its parts. The chariot is merely labeled; it exists as merely labeled. The merely labeled chariot is not the object of investigation. Instead, it is the not merely labeled chariot that exists from its own side that is being investigated.

If the chariot exists truly, then faults arise. If it is truly existent and exists 1) separate from its parts, it would have to be completely unrelated to the parts, such as a horse and an ox are unrelated. In that case, the chariot would exist independently from its parts.

If the chariot is separate from its parts, then it becomes unrelated to its parts. If it is not separate from its parts, then 2) they become one, if it exists truly. If it exists truly then it needs to be partless. In reality the chariot is of one nature with its parts, so there is the feature of being of one nature, but being nominally different. But this is impossible if the chariot exists truly. In that case the chariot is either of different nature from the parts, becoming completely unrelated to the parts, or it becomes one with its parts.

This covers two points. Then, 3) if one says the chariot is endowed with parts: If the way of being endowed with parts is like a human possessing an ox, then they become two unrelated phenomena, which does not work. If it is like Devadatta having matted hair, this would be the way of being endowed by way of one nature, and this is also not possible.

If one asks whether 4) the chariot depends on the parts, this is not possible for a truly existent phenomenon, and if one ask whether 5) the parts depend on the chariot, this is also not possible for a truly existent phenomenon.

6) If one were to ask whether the collection of the parts of the chariot without being

assembled would be the chariot, then also here the answer would be negative.

7) If one analyzes if the shape is the chariot, the shape would have to exist also before the parts are assembled, and therefore also the chariot would have to exist before the parts have been assembled.

If one searches for the chariot in these seven ways, then the chariot is not findable. But if one were then to say that the chariot does not exist, this would also be wrong. The chariot does exist. How it exists is as merely labeled on the parts and as a mere appearance to the mind.

The Sevenfold Reasoning in Relation to the Meaning of the Person

The analysis concerning the person and the aggregates is performed in relation to the example of the chariot and its parts. Are they one or many, are they endowed, do they depend on each other one way or the other, is the mere collection of the aggregates the person or is the shape of the body the person?

When analyzing in this way the person is not findable. If one asks whether the person does therefore not exist at all, this is also not the case. The person exists as being labeled in dependence on the aggregates, as a mere appearance to the awareness. This person can walk, work, and achieve different aims.

Applying the seven-fold reasoning has many advantages to it. If one does not find the imputed person at the time of analysis, it means the person does not exist truly. It is not as if the person is nonexistent at all. On the basis of the person being labeled in dependence on the aggregates, one can establish the person as existent and being able to perform the great varieties of functions.

The non-findability of the person at the time of analysis is the meaning of the person being empty of true existence, or the meaning of the selflessness of person. The apprehended object of the investigating mind is the mere non-affirming negation of true existence. The way the object is apprehended at that time is as unfindable in the seven ways it is looked for, so what appears to the mind is a non-affirming negation of true existence that is established through one's own efforts. The yogi then meditates on that mere lack of true existence.

If: "It lacks inherent existence. [157cd]

This will not cause complete harm,

harm to me will be minimal." [158]

If: "The mode of apprehension is a non-affirming negation,"
what do you refer to as non-affirming negation?

Space is without limits or centre,

and the meaning of it lacking limits or centre [159]

likens the meaning of not being established as form.

Hence, if it is not focused on me

how could it become an antithetical way of apprehending?

It is not in the category *harmful to me*. [160]

If: "It refers to seeing blue,"
 but blue is the complexion of Mount Meru,
 and it does not touch the meaning of space,
 why mention an antithetical mode of apprehending? [161]

This is supposed to be harmful? What a laugh!
 If: "I take it as mere cessation
 of coarse obstruction," this it is indeed. Yet,
 what will you regard as continuity? [162]

If: "I relate it to the ascertainment."
 Since this is the continuity of the ascertainment
 they abide in meditation on myself alone.
 An antithetical mode of apprehending is absurd. [163]

If: "It refers to the lack of inherent existence,"
 that may be, but what is the continuity of the non-affirming negation?
 Is it taken as one or as not one?
 If it is not one, then it needs to be identified. [164]

The mere non-affirming negation of space is imputed
 on the mere lack of coarse obstruction.
 Similarly, the continuum of the non-affirming negation
 that is the mere negation of true existence, [165]

is labeled of course a non-affirming negation
 that is the object or mode of apprehension
 of the above ascertaining consciousness.

Nevertheless, one fears investigating this very meaning, [166]
 and at the time of meditative equipoise
 there is sinking, fogginess and unclarity,
 it is without intensity and strength.

It is clouded and blank action, [167]
 with excitement, drifting, wandering and so forth.
 When, at the time of need, I apply these,
 what will you do? You are uncertain.

"If one meditates on the non-affirming negation of the lack of true existence, then that is real meditation. Although it is real meditation, there are few that can meditate in such a way. There is obstruction to investigating suchness and in reality one would also need to be free from mental sinking and mental excitement." The self-grasping says that if there is someone meditating in such a way then it can send various obstructions such as sinking, fogginess, unclarity, excitement and so forth. "Wisdom, at that time you are uncertain and cannot harm me."

I am sending forth evanescent apparitions and the like, [168]
hollow, without accumulation or essence.
Because of being mistaken you grasp at them
—you are asleep under the power of my blessing.

Hence I do not receive any harm. [169]
Not only during investigation but also during equipoise,
one needs to continually, with strength and vivid clarity,
engage the focal object that is the non-affirming negation of

the “I” that is projected on the aggregates, [170]
that object of negation — true existence—
with uninterrupted non-forgetfulness and
non-degenerating non-distractedness.

If one meditates like this in equipoise, one is proficient, [171]
but since this just a mere possibility,
I will be able to sleep well for a long time.
Wisdom, you will be very restlessness,

“If one meditates devoid of mental sinking and mental excitement then that is very good of course. However, since this is extremely rare it cannot harm true-grasping and I am going to sleep happily for a long time.”

and merely establish lots of things. [172]
Yet, all great meditators agree with me,
and hence, without exhausting yourself,
better rest in the mode of abiding.

“Wisdom, you have indeed many different things to say, but all meditators actually are on the same page with me because they follow true-grasping and true-appearance. Therefore it would be better for you if you would just have a sleep.”

Reasons Why It Is Hard to Evict Ignorance

Although many say they will evict me, [173]
there are all these reasons
why they do not harm me.
Hence you, wisdom, should listen well.

“Although there are many that say they will evict me, many reasons arise why this does not come about, and you should listen now well to them.”

In general all sentient beings [174]
become servants under my power.
Hence, when I shoot my five arrows

at those wishing for liberation,
 how can they transcend in liberation? [175]

Out of those following a tenet and those who are not,
 those following are like the Udumwara flower.
 Within these again there are non-Buddhists and Buddhists.

Out of these the non-Buddhist are much more numerous, [176]
 and although they do have many tenets,
 if summarized they are Nihilists and Eternalists.
 The worldly Charvakas

accept only the here and now [177abc]
 and do not accept earlier and later lives.
 They do not have liberation, the Triple Gem and so forth.

“Although there are those who have generated the thought of definite emergence and aspire for liberation, if I shoot the five arrows, which have the power to cause a deluge of afflictions, at them, their afflictions increase. Even though they aspire towards liberation, because they are under the power of the afflictions due to true-grasping’s increase, they cannot attain liberation, they cannot transcend cyclic existence.

In general, there are two kinds of sentient beings, those accepting tenets and those who are not. The meaning is, those that accept religion and those that do not. Out of these, the ones that do not accept religion are all definitely my subjects. Those that do follow a religion are as rare as the Udumwara flower, and within these are non-Buddhists and Buddhists, but the non-Buddhists are in the majority. As the non-Buddhist tenets are mistaken, all those that follow them are also the subjects of true-grasping.

Out of those following tenets and not following tenets, those not following tenets are in the majority and therefore the subjects of true-grasping. Out of those following tenets, there are those following the inner, i.e., Buddhist tenets, and those following the outer, i.e., non-Buddhist tenets, and the non-Buddhists can be summed up in the Nihilists and the Eternalists.

The worldly ones Putting Themselves Afar⁷ do only accept this life and do not accept earlier and later lives. They also do not accept liberation or the Triple Gem. They accept only what can be perceived with direct perception and therefore do not accept past and future lives, karmic cause and effect, liberation, and omniscience. Hence they have a strong view of denial and are Nihilists.”

Although the Creationists accept [177d]

the mere existence of a later self, [178]

they do not have liberation and omniscience.

Although others, like the Enumerators and so forth,

⁷ Hedonists, who do not accept cause and effect and past and future lives.

accept liberation, they do not have omniscience.

They assert generation of a result from permanence. [179]

They attain the four mental stabilizations
of the Extremists, clairvoyances and magical powers.

By meditating on their view

one does not attain forbearance [180]

or even progress to heat and peak.

Since there is no meditation on wisdom,
why should they be harmful to me?

“There are those that are called the *Propounders of Permanence*. They propound a permanent self of person and some also assert a permanent creator god such as a permanent Ishvara or Brahma. Some say the creator god or the self is in nature permanent but does change adventitiously when meeting with conditions.

Within the Propounders of Permanence some accept liberation, but they do not assert that self-grasping is the root of cyclic existence and at the root of the truth of origin, karma and afflictions, and that it has to be overcome with the wisdom realizing selflessness in order to attain liberation.

Although in order to attain liberation one has to subdue the mind by increasing the virtuous mental factors and decreasing the afflictive mental factors, these non-Buddhists believe they can attain liberation through extreme ascetic practices such as piercing their bodies, setting fire to their limbs or jumping onto an upright trident, believing they can attain liberation if the trident pierces their crown.⁸ However, these practices have no purpose for attaining liberation.

Although non-Buddhists attain stable concentration and the mental stabilizations and clairvoyances, but also these are not a path to liberation and enlightenment because they do not become a meditation on wisdom. Therefore they do not harm me.”

Having stopped feelings, recognition, intention and so forth [181]

and also mental application,

they meditate for eons in equipoise without activity.

This also does not harm me.

Out of the eight inopportune states in existence this is the rebirth as a long-life god. One condition for this type of rebirth is meditation on the absorption without recognition, where the meditator stops feelings, recognition, intention and so forth and meditates on that for many eons. Even thought, it does not harm true-grasping.

It is the view of total nonexistence, [182]

this view that stops the recognition

⁸ If the trident pierces their whole body and comes out by the crown.

which investigates the way things exist.
 Since it lacks wisdom that is the antidote,
 it does not harm me, despite eons of meditation. [183]
 It is the view of non-recognition.
 By meditating in such a way, recognition also
 is not existent and not nonexistent.

Meditating for eons without thinking about [184]
 existence or nonexistence, also does not harm me.
 It is lacking the antidote that harms me.
 It is the view of nonexistence and non-nonexistence.

By meditating in such a way one is completely oblivious [185]
 to the characteristics of forms and the like.
 They meditate in equipoise for innumerable eons
 on the mere clear and knowing of the thought that

does not bring to mind anything. [186]
 Although such a consciousness
 does not possess any suffering
 apart from pervasive compounded suffering,

this is due to not meeting with the conditions. [187]
 There is not even a hint of harm by an antidote
 to stop me from staying right there.
 What need is there to mention meditation on wisdom?

This is the view of the formless realm. [188a]

“Above the form realm is the formless realm where one meditates without the recognition of any form characteristic. By meditating on these absorptions, one attains the highest state in cyclic existence called the peak of existence. Some, mistaking the peak of existence for liberation, remain there in meditative equipoise for many eons. In this state manifest suffering does not exist. There is no feeling of suffering and also no suffering of change, the experience of contaminated happiness that changes into suffering, the going back and forth between contaminated happiness and suffering. There are only the imprints of the suffering tendencies, but no suffering. These tendencies abide with them in the equipoise for all those eons and therefore also “I,” the true-grasping, abides there. Hence these states do not become an antidote to me and do not become a meditation on wisdom.”

Most contemporary meditations, [188bcd]
 no matter how many auspicious
 and well-sounding nicknames one gives them,

at the time of meditating [189]
they do not go beyond meditating on me.
There is nobody that realizes my nonexistence.
As both myself and wisdom

have directly opposed modes of apprehending, [190]
a meditation that does not abide in an opposite
mode of apprehending cannot harm me.
It needs to be like light, which is the antidote to darkness.

Anything else will not work. [191]
They posit the view that, when the aggregates disintegrate,
the mind apprehending them does not generate;
but as mere clear and knowing is not abandoned

they do not go beyond the meditation on consciousness. [192abc]
Them like that are called Vaibashika.
They do not even come close to harming me.

“Most contemporary meditators, while being given auspicious names and being attributed pleasant views, during meditation they are not free from the faults mentioned above. In fact they meditate on nothing else but these views and hence cannot refute true existence and therefore cannot harm true-grasping.

There are four Buddhist tenets: The Vaibashika, the Sautrantika, the Cittamatra and the Madhyamaka. Out of these the Vaibashika is regarded as the lowest. Since they are a Buddhist tenet, their aim is to attain liberation, what they want to abandon are the afflictions and the method for them is to meditate on selflessness of person. However, since they do not realize the lack of true existence, they do not harm true-grasping. In the Vaibashika view the person becomes an arhat when they abandon the afflictions, and when the arhat dies their continuum is severed. When their continuum is severed then, on top of having abandoned the afflictions, also their non-afflictive obscurations disintegrate due to the reason that their basis, the aggregates, have disintegrated.

Regarding what happens after death, again we have propounders of two different views: Those who say that the continuity of consciousness is totally severed, and those who say that the continuity of the contaminated consciousness is severed, but an uncontaminated clear and knowing consciousness continues.

Here the view that an uncontaminated clear and knowing mind continues is expressed. Meditating on that clear and knowing is meditating on consciousness, and meditating on consciousness equals meditating on true appearance, which does not harm me, the true-grasping.”

The particles lacking directional parts, [192d]
while coming close, have no contact and do not stick together. [193]

Through the power of single-pointed
 equipoise on them abiding individually
 all appearances become unidentifiable,
 and hollow, lacking accumulation and essence. [194]

When seeing them as independent
 mountains, the iron fence, houses
 and walls become non-solid,
 lacking obstruction and contact. [195]

Although possessing these and boundless other qualities
 such as leaving hand and foot prints in stone,
 since they do not possess the antidote directly opposite
 in its mode of apprehending to myself, they do not harm me. [196]

As most great meditators of the present time
 hold these as supreme when they arise,
 what point is there to mention meditation on wisdom?
 My intent has been accomplished. [197]

Why? Because there is there no antidote against me.
 However, when one generates them
 one should meditate on them, merely because
 they cause conviction in the meditation on emptiness. [198a]

By meditating in this way one may get experiences of mountains, walls and so forth becoming immaterial, without obstruction or contact. One even may become able to leave one's hand and foot prints in stone through the power of the meditation, but because the meditation does not possess a mode of apprehension opposite to true-grasping, it does not become an antidote to true-grasping. "In these days most meditators, when they achieve such realizations, hold them as supreme and my intent has been accomplished."

How has the intent of true-grasping be accomplished is because no antidote against true-grasping was generated. However, if one has these realizations, then it is still good to meditate on them because they cause conviction in the lack of true existence of phenomena.

However, they are not able [198bcd]
 to destroy my true existence.

By destroying true existence they are not able
 to posit cause and effect, action and activity of functionality. [199]
 Because they follow the same tenet as myself,
 all hope of harming me is lost.

True-grasping: None of the lower tenets harms me, they do not even lead to liberation

The hearer Sautrantikas,
however much they meditate in equipoise, [200abc]
they cannot even reach the heat or peak level,
How could they generate forbearance?

By accepting the tenets of the Vaibashika and Sautrantika and then meditating on their views, it is not possible to attain the path of preparation because for this the realization of emptiness is needed. They can reach the path of accumulation, but not higher. The Vaibashika and Sautrantika are the lowest of the Buddhist tenets. They accept the selflessness of person but do not accept the selflessness of phenomena. Above them are the Mind Only and the Madhyamaka, who both accept the selflessness of phenomena additionally to accepting the selflessness of person.

The Mind Only and Autonomists [200d]
appear to take as valid the presentation [201]
of phenomena that exist out of their own nature,
that exist inherently,
that exist intrinsically,
that exist substantially. [202]

Additionally, the Mind Only Realists
accept truly existent functionalities
and if one meditates in accordance with this view
then not only does it not harm me, [203]
it becomes the very meditation on me,
and meditation on me is my friend.

Forget about omniscient consciousness,
just to attain liberation becomes difficult. [204]
Because they do not know how to posit cause and effect
for something that does not exist inherently,
the two truths become nonexistent and also liberation.

“For those straying from the teachings of Acharya Nagarjuna [205]
There is no method for peace.
They transgress the illusory and suchness truths
And for those lapsed from the two truths there is no attainment of liberation.”

These words are said to be my treatises. [206a]

Both the Mind Only and the Autonomists accept phenomena that exist out of their own nature, exist inherently, intrinsically and substantially. What is different is that the Autonomists do not accept that if it exists inherently that it has to exist truly. In the Mind Only school, if something exists inherently then it has to exist

truly as well. Therefore for them functionalities and emptiness exist truly.

“Because the view of the Mind Only accepts truly existent functionalities, it accords with the view of true-grasping and is therefore my friend. In dependence on this view one cannot attain liberation and omniscient consciousness.”

For the Vaibashika, Sautrantika, Mind Only and Autonomists it is impossible to function as cause and effect and to have action and activity if it does not exist inherently and intrinsically. For that reason they say that functionalities have inherent and intrinsic existence. Because they cannot posit non-inherent cause and effect they cannot posit ultimate truth or illusory conventional truth. In this way they have lapsed from the two truths and can therefore not attain liberation.

Even the Autonomists, [206bcd]

although not accepting true existence,

do not know how to posit action, activity, cause and effect,

if inherent existence

[207]

does not exist nominally.

Going without giving up these views,

irrespective of which vehicle,

it is difficult to generate a superior's path in one's continuum.

[208]

If even the great holy beings are permeated by it

and do not divert from it in the slightest,

then most of those practicing meditation

who do not know anything and are unschooled

[209]

rely on the darkness of

a dark hole even darker than

the darkness of cloudy ignorance?

There are many practitioners following the Vaibashika, Sautrantika, Mind-Only or Autonomist tenets and who have generated the wish for liberation, the thought of renunciation. Because of this thought they are great holy beings. But even though they are holy beings, because they have not consciousness of an opposite mode of apprehending they cannot realize the lack of true existence. If it is like this for even these holy beings, then most of those practicing meditation in these days rely on a darkness even darker than darkness, the darkness of a dark corner in a dark place, and cannot harm true-grasping.

Being oblivious and mentally blank, [210]

which does not contradict my mode of apprehending,

this is called non-meditation and non-view.

If there is no familiarity with clear and knowing,

as the definition of consciousness,

[211]

the meditation without wandering from clear and knowing

is seen as the pinnacle of placement meditation.
If one does not even attain liberation,
then omniscient consciousness is a joke. [212]
If meditation on clear and knowing
while being oblivious to anything else,
is meditation on mind itself,

since the mind and myself are inseparable [213]
it becomes a meditation on myself alone.
As the result of meditating on me,
not only is there no attainment of liberation,
the only thing that will happen, [214ab]
is that I will become stronger, nothing else.

Some meditate on nothing else but the clear nature of the mind, without thinking or conceptualization. But because mind is an illusory conventional object, it comes with true-appearance, and therefore meditating on it will only strengthen true-grasping and does not benefit the attainment of liberation.

Out of those known as Madhyamaka [214cd]

none are higher than the Prasangika.
But their view is again only the view of superiors [215]
during the post-meditation attainment.
Every buddha gives it up again.
If: "What is the reason for that?"

The Prasangika assert [216]
labels, imputed existent and mere name,
but on the buddha ground the characteristics
of name and meaning do not exist.

That equipoise and subsequent attainment exist [217ab]
was explained in the *Stainless Continuum* and the like.

The final tenet in Buddhism is the Consequentialist Middle Way School, where real existence from its own side, completely independent from anything else, does not exist. By investigating this existence, it is found to not exist, and they arrive at its pure absence, which marks the generation of the Consequentialists' view. So phenomena do not exist inherently, from their own side. But does this mean that they do not exist? No, it does not mean that. Everything exists as merely imputed by name; it exists as mere appearance to the mind.

When attaining enlightenment one never arises again from the meditative equipoise on emptiness, and on the face of the meditative equipoise on emptiness

there is no characteristic of being merely labeled and existing in mere appearance. The reason why the Buddha taught the different tenets is to lead all students to the final view of the Consequentialists, as not all students would be able to comprehend this final view from the start.

If we summarize, true-grasping says: “There are few that follow tenets, and out of those there are more following outer tenets than Buddhist tenets. Even within those following the Buddhist tenets, aside from the Consequentialists, those who meditate do not harm me, only become my friend and therefore cannot evict me.”

Wisdom replies in a compact manner

Wisdom says in return: [217cd]

Even those that merely have faith in me

will pacify all negativities. [218]

even those that doubt me

will tear apart existence.

If meditated upon, there is no doubt you will be evicted.

By meditating on me, liberation is attained; [219]

you are the enemy that throws one into cyclic existence.

If you are not expelled through debate,

then the repetition of cyclic existence will have no end.

“Those that have faith in me, meaning faith in emptiness, will pacify their negativities. Even just to doubt, thinking how things could be empty, will tear apart existence, because it harms the root of existence. Therefore, there is no need to mention that if I am cultivated and meditated upon, that the yogi will be able to evict you, the self-grasping.”

True-grasping acts as the root for us to cycle in cyclic existence, and hence to have belief in emptiness is like doubting that grasping at true existence. It is similar to doubting for the first time the advice of a false friend to whom we have listened for a long time and whom we have regarded as our friend for a long time, but who secretly was set at harming us. When we start to doubt this person, it acts as a protection for us, and that person will be less able to deceive us. Similarly, having belief in emptiness protects us and lessens the harm given by true-grasping. In this way, just to have doubt tending towards emptiness already has great benefits and the greatest of the Buddha’s teachings are those that explain emptiness, the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*. The Buddha told Ananda: “If you forget the words of the other teachings that I gave then I will not think much of it, but if you forget even one word of the teachings on emptiness, then I feel that you do not regard me well and I will be unhappy.” In this way the Buddha placed emphasis on the teachings on emptiness.

“By meditating on it, one will attain liberation, but true-grasping is the enemy who throws one into cyclic existence, and if one does not evict it with arguments, then the circling in existence will never have an end.”

Debating the Scope of Their Power and Activities

Self-grasping argues that it reigns all sentient beings

True-grasping says in return: [220]

Regarding my eviction,
this will be difficult just because of being ordered,
without meditation on the antidote.

If the antidote's mode of apprehending is not opposite, [221]

even if all the sentient beings favoured by the Three Jewels
rise up as enemies,
wear armor and bear various weapons,

and become slashing and killing enemies, [222]

and no matter how many there are,
with power and magical abilities,
if it only strengthens my side,

then where will you go to, wisdom? [223]

If you are not even turned into my direction,
then the talk of "evicting" is lamenting.

What need is there to mention the sentient beings

that are under my control? [224]

They work only half heartedly
for the liberation belonging to your class.

Philosophers, tantrics and meditators

almost always say from the mouth [225]

"I have given up this live."

But in their heart, they are my hearer-listeners alone,
giving up actions they have many other actions and activities.

Especially scholars, virtuous ones and secret ones, these three, [226]

if they have to choose between me and you, the wisdom,
then they will most likely choose me.

For what reason? You are not:

Something to eat and not something to wear, [227]

you do not exist on the objects that one can see,
and wherever one goes next, one will not be separated.

I am an immediate necessity.

Good and bad tea, beer or food, [228]

great and small praise and reverence
good and bad offerings, the attainments

of these and others are directly realized through me.

Hence, I create good and bad plantings and harvests, [229]

I create all happiness and joy;

if I introduce the eight dharmas as friends

Then at that time where will you go?

For everything small, intermediate and great [230]

I am needed directly and close by.

You are a distant advice.

Wisdom, you should listen to this:

Although the doubt in you [231]

destroys existence completely,

the signs for not having belief in you:

Dharma is sold for the purpose of food,

leaving the place of practice they wander around town, [232]

giving up the vows they take a wife,

giving up morality they work to achieve their desires,

giving up the hermitage they engage in worldly disruptions,

not giving up desire they abandon shame, [233]

not giving up cyclic existence they give up liberation,

not giving up the eight worldly dharmas they give up mental stabilization,

not giving me up they give up emptiness.

Once one has made the determination to evict true-grasping, upon recognizing that without doing so, liberation from cyclic existence will be impossible, it replies that liberation not possible without an antidote, and this antidote needs to be of opposite mode of apprehending. Even though that is so, there are very few that meditate in this manner.

“Then, without meditating in such a manner, even if all sentient beings favoured by the Triple Gem rise up as enemy, wearing armor and carrying weapons, and become the slashing and killing enemy, and no matter how many there are with powers and magical abilities, they will only make my side stronger. Your pronouncement to evict me is therefore nothing more than wailing.

What need is there to mention the sentient beings controlled by me. Even the sentient beings that take your side, and pretend to work for liberation, such as philosophers, tantrics and meditators, who profess from the mouth to have given up this life, they will choose me when put before the choice of you or me. The reason for that is that you do not have anything to eat or wear.”

All the daily necessities such as food, drink, clothing etc., and also the enjoyments such as dancing and so forth are seen as related to true-grasping. Also the preservation of the eight worldly dharmas is done by true-grasping.

“I am needed for all small, medium and immediate aims, while you are a distant

aim that is only realized through the accumulation of merits. Furthermore, although you say that even just to have doubt tending in your direction will destroy cyclic existence, there are many signs that those that do even that are few. Examples of such signs are: Selling the Dharma for the sake of food, practitioners that leave the place of practice to roam around town, those with vows that give them up to take a spouse.”⁹

They sell initiation to a square of cloth, [234]
they sell permission to a ritual of oath,
they sell the here and the after to a death liturgy.

A great many of these and other lists exist indeed,
if they are all my enlightened activity [235]
then were will you go at that time?
Do not recite the wailing of eviction.
Further, wisdom, listen to this:

If one does not remember death from the heart, [236]
Then no matter how much one labels *Dharma practitioner*,
what is it suitable to be, aside from this life?

If one does not generate from the heart
the mind wishing for liberation through contemplating the general [237]
and particular faults of cyclic existence,

then how could one even attain the liberation of a hearer?
Not generating from the heart the mind of loving compassion
for all sentient beings, like for an only child, [238]

and if one does not carry the burden of superior intention,
then how can one enter the ranks of the Mahayana?
If, in dependence on the power of calm abiding,

one does not attain the pliancy inducing [239]
superior abiding through analysis,
meditating on you, wisdom,
which is of an opposite mode of apprehending to myself,

then how could it become meditation on superior insight? [240]
Hence, do not say that you will evict me!
Although there are many insisting they will evict me

I have accompanied the mind before,
I am accompanying the mind now, [241]
where have you been in the past?
You did not arise in my space,

⁹ Lama Zopa Rinpoche: Leaving the monastery, they roam around town, giving up ordination they take a wife.

yet you still pretend to be active.

Those that became a superior before
are as rare as the Udumwara flower. [242]

The method of mere individual clever statements
is called by the name of *ignorance*.

The illumination of ignorance is called *awakening*. [243]

Self-grasping argues that the 84000 Dharmas are its support

Therefore, out of you and me
I was indeed the one accompanying the mind first.
The afflictions I have as my entourage

are eighty-four thousand, [244]
to which eighty-four thousand antidotes were taught,
it is said. Although all say this,
they do not know their number or nature.

What need is there to mention the introduction to the antidote! [245]
Even if all antidotes are brought together,
since they cannot overcome
the one affliction asserted by me,

to do all the others becomes a source of amusement. [246]

Wisdom: Those who accept inherent phenomena cannot posit samsara and nirvana

Wisdom says in reply:

Your instructions are wholesome,
the saying "kill the father" exists also with regard to the son,
you speak through the pepper on your tongue, [247]
what you say is false,
it obscures the right seeing.

Although the ignorant have a lot to say,
much of it is contradictory. [248]

Those muddled regarding the path and aim,
compulsively speak incomprehensible gibberish,
and there is not even one meaningful word.

Likewise, you are also completely non-sensical. [249]

Then, understanding what you say
as something mostly to be abandoned,
if you say that you accept logic,

how could you have such contradictions? [250]
The dharmas of afflictions and disturbing thoughts are indeed many,
and there are no thoughts regarding the absolute meaning.
The chatter of all the streams is loud,
where should the chatter of the ocean reverberate? [251]
The Buddha teaches the truth,
how could he possibly teach something false?
Not matter how many falsities there are,
they are nonexistent as true meaning. [252]
Even truth does not exist as true meaning,
if you say that you have been abiding
together with the mind since time beginningless:
Do you say the mind is permanent or impermanent? [253]
If you say “permanent,” that contradicts generation.
If you say “non-generated,” that belies direct perception.
If you say “impermanent,” does the mind
have earlier and later moments or not? [254]
If you say “it has earlier moments,”
then the mode of true appearance
of that earlier moment of mind
does not exist simultaneously with the mind. [255]
It does not change inherently into something else,
and becomes stable and unchanging. In that case
it contradicts the point of view of ignorance.
It cannot change into a later moment and [256]
also does not exist in the present, hence it contradicts.
Something truly existent does not possess change,
if it possess change then it excludes true existence.
If a latter moment is accepted, [257]
the latter has not come and is yet to arise,
the meaning of *arise* is to generate.
That called *later* is labeled
in dependence on the first. [258]
Do you not realize that it is a direct contradiction
to accept truly existent independence,
unchangeability and non-generation,
stable permanence and eternity, [259]

that do not depend on something else,
on the presentation of adventitious dependence and generation?
If you are simultaneous with the present,
that also has earlier and later moments, [260]
to which the earlier reasoning of preceding and subsequent applies.
If also their present exists simultaneously with them,
then again its earlier and later moments equal those above.
Investigate in this way, as long as they are not exhausted, [261]
the smallest amount of time and the present.
The time for generating the present has come and gone,
there is nothing to abide simultaneously with, and
if there is not one existing phenomenon observed, [262]
then with what do you abide simultaneously?
Since it is a truly existent that does not change
into another nature, where did it go?
Do you not see the direct contradiction? [263]
When anger, the prime of the three poisons
generated by you, is generated,
and if that anger exists the way it appears,
as truly existent, [264]
then its nature does not change into something else.
Hence, if hatred is indeed suitable to be accepted as self-existent,
it contradicts the generation of attachment and so forth.
When attachment and so forth is generated [265]
they abide in a truly existent nature, unchanging,
of stable permanence and eternity.
It is suitable to be unchanging permanent attachment,
for which it is contrary to change into something else. [266]
Where can ignorance and the like exist?
If you say: "simultaneously with ignorance,"
then the earlier
faults apply here as well, without change. [267]
If you say: "I abide simultaneously
with the mind alone,"
then, since the way the mind appears as truly existent,
is as not changing into something else, [268]
not depending on something else,

as independent, stably permanent and unchanging,
then the fifty-one mental factors arising
as the entourage of the mind [269]
possess the fault of nonexistence.
It is contradictory for them to arise as the entourage of mind.
It would be also contradictory for the eighty-four thousand
afflictions to arise from the root of mind. [270]
Also virtue, nonvirtue and non-predicted actions
either do not exist or are in contradiction to arising from mind.
If the mind exists inherently,
then virtuous and negative karmas and their results [271]
cannot accumulated newly and cannot be experienced.
There is no cyclic existence and no liberation,
there are no eight-four thousand heaps of Dharma,
also the three Jewels of Refuge do not exist, [272]
there are no three poisons and no eight-four thousand
afflictions generated from them.
In short, if everything is nonexistent,
then it becomes a great heap of contradictions. [273]
To accept the eighty-thousand afflictions
as the entourage of the “I,”
as accepted by you above,
and to accept that all have the blessing of the “I,” [274]
to not see that all these acceptances are contradictory
means to be blind,
to be lying or to be crazy.

SARVA MANGALAM



**“The very minds of the three realm sentient beings,
and specifically one’s own very mind,
since time beginningless and non-abiding,
from whence ignorance came into being,
have been abiding naturally with the mind’s nature.
This is the mahamudra of the basis.”**



Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen elucidates in this commentary the right way of meditating on the view of emptiness by going through every possible mistake one could make in the process. He does this in a lively, and at times robust, dialogue between wisdom and ignorance.

Self-grasping states:

“Sometimes they meditate on me, sometimes they meditate on nothing, sometimes they meditate without attention. Once placed on the correct meaning, a meditation on reality with a mode of apprehending antithetical to mine is like a daytime star.”

Wisdom replies:

“Even those who merely have faith in me will pacify all negativities. Even those who doubt me will tear apart existence. If meditated upon there is no doubt you will be evicted. By meditating on me liberation is attained.”



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