
Study Group - *Madhyamakavataranama*

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Generate a virtuous motivation, which is the motivation of bodhicitta, by thinking, 'I have to become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings, and in order to accomplish that aim I'm now going to listen to this profound teaching. Then I'm going to put it into practice as much as possible.'

Last time we completed the outline refuting generation of other in relation to simultaneous cause and effect and now we move onto the next outline.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.1.3. Refutation through analysing the four possibilities of the result

Not only is generation from other not feasible when we analyse the cause, but when we analyse the result we find that generation from other is also untenable.

The next four lines of the root text are,

If the generator generating the generated other is a cause

Calculate what it generates, an existent, non-existent, both or neither?

If an existent why need a generator, what can it do for a non-existent?

What can it do for both, also what can it do for neither?

In the first line 'the generator generating the generated other' refers to the cause that is generating an effect.

If we have a cause that is generating an other effect then one should analyse what such a cause actually generates. Does it generate an existent, does it generate a non-existent, does it generate both, or does it generate neither?

1. If we look at the first possibility, that a cause generates an existent effect, meaning generating an inherently existent effect, then one can say,

Take the subject 'sprout', **why** does it **need** a **generator** - it follows that it doesn't - because it exists inherently.

Here the reasoning is that if an effect exists inherently then it exists independently of a cause, and then it follows that it doesn't need a cause. Here one looks at it from the point of view that if something exists from its own side, then it doesn't need a cause.

2. Then we look at it from a second possibility, what if such a cause generates a non-existent result?

If the sprout is non-existent then what can the cause do for it - it follows it is needless - because non-existence can't be generated by a cause.

A non-existent cause is like the horn of a rabbit. No

cause is needed for horn of a rabbit because the horn of a rabbit is non-existent.

3. If we look at the third possibility, what if such a cause generates something that is a combination of the first two, an existent as well as a non-existent. In such a case,

If the sprout is both existent and non-existent then what can the cause do for it - it follows it is needless - because to be both existent and non-existent isn't possible.

4. If you look at fourth possibility,

If the sprout is neither existent nor non-existent then also what can the cause do - it follows it is needless - because it is impossible to be neither existent nor non-existent.

So here Chandrakirti has refuted the generation from other by analysing the four possibilities of the result.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.2. Rejecting objections based on worldly perception against the refutation

Here there are two outlines: rejecting objections based on worldly acceptance of generation from other; and rejecting worldly objections through nominal non-existence of generation from other.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.1. Rejecting objections based on worldly acceptance of generation from other

This outline, has two sub-outlines, the first is the presentation of the objection of the Realists, and the second is the response of the Prasangika.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.1. Worldly objection

Here the Realists present objections to the refutation of generation from other based on worldly perception. They say that refutation of generation from other is also contradicted by worldly perception.

We have these four lines of the root text,

Those, abiding within their view, assert a worldly valid cognisor

Hence, what need is there for the analysing of logicians here?

Worldly beings realise that other arises from other So, generation from other exists, what need is there for proofs?

Illumination:

Whatever reason stated to prove generation from other you burned with the fire of your wisdom like dry wood that has been sprinkled with butter. Hence, even though permissible to be moved by the fuel of reasoning that inflamed your wisdom, now it isn't necessary to be influenced by it.

Just by relying upon one's worldly direct perception one can see that generation from other exists. So therefore there is no need to state any logical proofs to establish the generation from other, because it is obvious to worldly direct perception. Worldly beings realise directly that other arises from other. So since generation from other exists, then what need is there for proofs?

As *Mirror* puts it 'Worldly beings because of **abiding within their** worldly view **assert** the **worldly** perception as **valid cognisor**'. Worldly beings assert their worldly

direct perception as a valid cognisor, and with that worldly direct valid cognisor one can see that generation from other exists. Hence there is no need for any additional proofs. That is what the Realists say.

Mirror:

Here when refuting generation from other, **what need is there for the analysing by the logicians.** Here where **generation from other exists, what need is there for proofs? Worldly beings realise directly that other is generated from other.**

So the Realists make this point that worldly beings understand directly that other is generated from other, and therefore different types of analysis and so forth, are unnecessary. They say to the Prasangika, 'Your refutation of generation from other contradicts worldly direct perception'.

Then the Prasangika give a presentation of the two truths as the answer, showing that the refutation of generation from other isn't contrary to worldly perception.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2. Answer

The Prasangika's answer to the Realists is, 'Right now you are saying that my refutation of generation from other is contradicted by worldly direct perception. So in order to show you that the refutation of generation from other isn't contradicted by direct worldly perception, I first have to give you a presentation of the two truths including the object possessors that apprehend them'.

This outline has five sub-outlines: general presentation of the two truths; relating it to the present context; explaining the individual nature of the two truths; refuting worldly objections against the refutation; showing the way of worldly contradiction

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1. General presentation of the two truths

This has three sub-outlines: the two-fold division of truth; division of conventional truth based on worldly perception; and showing the mistaken determined object to be non-existent even nominally.

3.5.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1.1. The two-fold division of truth

By seeing all phenomena to be correct or false
The phenomena found hold two identities;
The object of correct perception is just that
False perception is taught as conventional truth.

Mirror:

Take the subject '**all phenomena**' (all outer and inner phenomena' refers to the phenomena not contained within the continuum of beings, and the phenomena contained within the continuum of beings) - they **hold two identities** - because there are two entities found, those **found by seeing correct** objects and those **found by seeing false** objects.

Ultimate truth is the object of the arya's meditative equipoise. **Conventional truth** is the object of the ordinary beings' conventional awareness. So here when it says that phenomena hold two identities one shouldn't think that it says one phenomenon is both truths. It

doesn't say that a phenomenon is both conventional truth as well as ultimate truth depending on which consciousness looks at it. That's not what it's saying.

What it's saying is that a phenomenon holds both identities - it has a conventional nature as well as an ultimate nature. Subjects such as 'vase' are conventional truths and hold both natures - the nature of ultimate truth as well as the nature of conventional truth.

A phenomenon such as a vase is a conventional phenomenon, but it also has the nature of lacking inherent existence. On one side the vase is a conventional object, but it also lacks inherent existence. So it also has an ultimate nature, the lack of inherent existence. In such a way vase possesses those two natures - on the one side the lack of inherent existence and on the other side the discrepancy between appearance and existence. Because it has this discrepancy between appearance and existence it is a conventional object and it has a conventional nature, and because it also lacks inherent existence it has an ultimate nature.

Therefore we have to say that a vase has the feature of emptiness; that the emptiness of the vase is an object of meditation; and that the emptiness of the vase is of one nature with the vase.

So the vase's lack of inherent existence is the vase's ultimate truth, which is the emptiness of the vase, and this is the final mode of abiding of the vase.

Conventional truth is false while ultimate truth is true. The reason for this is that a conventional phenomenon doesn't exist the way it appears to its primary object possessor. Whereas ultimate truth exists the way it appears to its primary object possessor.

We said that the vase is conventional truth, and that the vase's lack of inherent existence is ultimate truth. A vase is regarded as false is because it doesn't exist the way it appears to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase. The eye-consciousness apprehending vase is the main object possessor of vase, so it is the main subject of vase. A vase doesn't exist the way it appears to the eye-consciousness apprehending a vase. So therefore the vase is a false phenomena.

On the other hand the vase's lack of inherent existence exists the way it appears to its main object possessor, because the vase's lack of inherent existence exists the way it appears to the arya's meditative equipoise. The arya's meditative equipoise is the main object possessor of emptiness. Because the vase's lack of inherent existence exists the way it appears to the arya's meditative equipoise, its main object possessor, it is therefore regarded as true.

The vase doesn't exist the way it appears to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase. Why? Because the vase appears as truly existent to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase, which is tainted by the imprints of true-grasping, and therefore its objects appear to it as truly existent. So its objects appear to it as existing totally from their own side. So vase appears to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase as totally existing from its own side, and as truly existent. In actuality vase doesn't exist in that way. Even though the vase appears

as truly existent, and as totally independent from its own side, the vase doesn't exist in that way in actuality. So therefore the vase doesn't exist in the way it appears to its main object possessor.

The object of negation appears to the eye-consciousness, and so by analysing how objects appear to our eye consciousness we can identify the object of negation.

A vase is an object that has a discrepancy between appearance and existence, but its lack of true existence, the vase's emptiness, is a true phenomena. Why? Because it has no discrepancy between appearance and existence. Why does the vase's emptiness have no discrepancy between appearance and existence? Because it is the main object of the arya's meditative equipoise. So because it is the main object of the arya's meditative equipoise, it has no discrepancy between appearance and existence. Therefore it is regarded as true. It exists the way it appears to that equipoise. On the other hand the vase is false. Why? Because it has a discrepancy between appearance and existence. Why? Because the vase doesn't exist the way it appears to its main object possessor, the eye-consciousness apprehending vase. Why? Because it appears to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase as existing truly while in actuality it lacks true existence.

Once you have understood this reasoning in relation to the vase and its emptiness, you can apply it to all other conventional and ultimate phenomena. This is something you have to think about very well, and contemplate.

Even though it explicitly says here that the meaning found by a valid cognisor engaged in ultimate analysis is ultimate truth, and the meaning found by a valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis is conventional truth, something has to be added to that definition. Just saying that the object found by a valid cognisor engaged in ultimate analysis is the definition of ultimate truth wouldn't be correct, because there would be no pervasion. Likewise saying that the meaning found by a valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis is the definition of conventional truth again wouldn't be accurate, because again there wouldn't be a pervasion.

The valid cognisor understanding vase is a valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis. A valid cognisor understanding the vase's emptiness is a valid cognisor engaged in ultimate analysis.

If you just look at the mere words in the root text it seems to say that the object of correct perception, the object of a valid cognisor engaged in ultimate analysis, is ultimate truth, while the object of false perception, the object of valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis is conventional truth. If you think about it, does it really follow that if it is the object of the valid cognisor understanding vase that it is a conventional phenomena? If it is the object of the valid cognisor understanding vase, is there a pervasion that it is a conventional truth? Likewise, if it is the object of the valid cognisor understanding the emptiness of the vase, is there a pervasion that it is ultimate truth?

Student: No, because omniscient consciousness apprehends both truths simultaneously.

That's what it comes down to. What you say is correct. If it is a valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis there is no pervasion that its object is a conventional truth. For example if we take the omniscient consciousness understanding vase, which is a valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis - there is no pervasion that its object is a conventional truth - because as it is an omniscient mind it also realises emptiness. So we have a conventional valid cognisor, the omniscient consciousness understanding vase, that, apart from vase, also has as its object ultimate truth, emptiness. Therefore it would be wrong to give 'the object of a conventional valid cognisor' as a definition of conventional truth.

In short we have to say that if it is understood by a conventional valid cognisor there's no pervasion that it is conventional truth. Likewise, if it is understood by an ultimate valid cognisor there is no pervasion that it is ultimate truth.

You can see now that 'the object of a valid cognisor engaged in conventional analysis' is not the definition of conventional truth. Likewise it is incorrect to give as the definition of ultimate truth 'the meaning found by a valid cognisor engaged in ultimate analysis'.

This presentation here of the two truths is an answer to the Realists' debate that was presented in the previous outline. We have to think about how the presentation of the two truths becomes an answer to the Realists' objection.

The way the presentation of the two truths is a refutation of the Realists' objection is that generation from other means generation from inherently existent cause. So it means generation from an inherently existent phenomenon, and if phenomena exist inherently then they also exist ultimately. If the generation from other is established by mere worldly direct perception, then what one is saying is that mere worldly direct perception establishes inherent existence and ultimate existence. Then inherent existence and ultimate existence would become the major object of worldly direct perception, and that would actually then contradict the presentation of the two truths. So giving a presentation of the two truths counteracts the assertion that inherent generation is the object of worldly direct perception.

I think we can stop here, and we can go into the definitions of the two truths in more detail next time.

The Two Truths and the Four Noble Truths

Which are the more all-encompassing - the Four Noble Truths or two truths?

Student: The two truths.

Why? Can you give an example of something that is one of the two truths which isn't one of the Four Noble Truths?

Student: Permanent phenomena.

So in the Four Noble Truths we can't find permanent phenomena? What about the truth of cessation?

Student: Apart from that one - the truth of cessation.

Space isn't any of the Four Noble Truths, and also the emptiness of the vase isn't any of the Four Noble Truths. Did you understand that?

Etymology of Ultimate Truth and Conventional Truth

Why is conventional truth regarded as false and ultimate truth regarded as true?

Student: The reality of existence differs from the appearance.

Why is there a discrepancy between appearance and existence?

Student: It appears to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase that vase exists independently and that's not actually the case.

Why does the vase appear to the eye-consciousness apprehending vase as truly existent?

Student: Because it is stained by the affliction of grasping at true existence.

If it is an eye-consciousness apprehending vase, is there a pervasion that vase exists differently from the way it appears to that eye-consciousness?

Student: No, because it might be the eye-consciousness of a buddha.

What is the main object possessor of conventional truths? A valid cognition engaged in conventional analysis is the main object possessor of conventional truth and a valid cognisor engaged in ultimate analysis is the main object possessor of ultimate truth.

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Edited Version

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