

A Ship on the Sea of Emptiness

The Wisdom of Nagarjuna



*written by Choney Lama,
Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748)*

*translated by
Geshe Michael Roach*

**A Ship on the Sea of Emptiness
The Wisdom of Nagarjuna**

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A Ship on the Sea of Emptiness

[1]

,DBU MA RTZA BA SHES RAB KYI RNAM BSHAD RIGS PA'I RGYA MTSOR 'JUG PA'I GRU GZINGS ZHES BYA BA BZHUGS SO,,

Herein lies *A Ship on the Sea of Emptiness: An Explanation of “The Middle Way, The Root Text on Wisdom.”*¹

[2]

[f. 1b] DBU MA RTZA BA SHES RAB KYI RNAM BSHAD RIG {RIGS} PA'I RGYA MTSOR 'JUG PA'I GRU GZINGS ZHES BYA BA,

What you find here is a ship for entering that sea of reasoning which is an explanation of the “Middle Way, the Root Text on Wisdom.”²

Bowing down, and promising

[3]

¹ *A Ship on the Sea of Emptiness:* We will be including details of editions used in this translation within the bibliography found at the end. For this title, see bibliography entry %B1, ACIP digital text S00028.

² *A ship for entering the sea:* A couple of things are going on here, in the title that Choney Lama has chosen for his work. He is first indicating that his own commentary upon Arya Nagarjuna’s most famous work is meant to help us cross the great sea of the more extensive commentary by the illustrious Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419); the latter treatise is about three times longer and much more difficult—and is itself entitled *A Sea of Reasoning in Explanation of “Wisdom,” Root Verses upon the Middle Way* (see bibliography entry %B2, ACIP digital text S05401). The fact that Choney Lama has chosen the word “entering” in his full title (Tib: ‘jug-pa) is an allusion to the famed explanation of Nagarjuna’s classic by Master Chandrakirti (c. 650AD), which is named *Entering the Middle Way*. “Middle Way” is itself a common nickname of Nagarjuna’s work, since it is the crowning jewel of the philosophical view of a middle way between accepting the world as it seems to be, or rejecting its reality altogether.

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BCOM LDAN 'DAS 'JAM DPAL GZHON NUR GYUR PA DANG RJE BTZUN BTZONG
KHA PA CHEN PO DBYER MI PHYED PA'I ZHABS LA GUS PHYAG 'TSAL ZHING
SKYABS SU MCHI'O,,

In deep respect, I bow down at the holy feet of both the Conqueror, Gentle Voice, in his youthful form; and to the Lord, the Revered One, Tsongkapa—indivisible one from the other. In you do I seek my protection.

[4]

BRTE BAS RJES SU BZUNG NAS ZAB DON RDZOGS PAR RTOGS PA'I BLO'I MCHOG
SBYIN MDZAD DU GSOL LO,,

And I beg you, in your love, to take me after you; and grant me that highest of all states of mind: the one where I realize, in its entirety, the deepest of all things in the universe.

[5]

,TSOGS GNYIS STOBS BCU'I LUS RTZAL RAB RDZOGS SHING,
,GZUNGS SPOBS TING 'DZIN MI 'JIGS MCHE SDER 'BAR,
,SO SO YANG DAG RIG BZHI'I G-YU RAL CAN,
,SMRA BA'I SENG+GE THUB DBANG DE LA 'DUD,

I bow myself to those lions among all teachers;
To the Lords of the Able Ones.
The dance of your holy bodies
Is complete in every way:
The two collections, and all ten powers.

You show the fiery fangs and claws
Of the courage of holy words,
And fearless meditation;
You shake your mane of midnight blue:
The four knowledges of purity.³

[6]

³ *Lord of the Able Ones:* The original Sanskrit for “Able Ones”—a reference to the Buddhas of the universe—is *Muni*, which can also refer to a saint who favors the practice of *mauna*, or spiritual silence. Here they are being compared to the lion; an ancient Indian poeticism for which is “the one with a mane of midnight blue,” or simply “the one with locks.” The “two collections” are the accumulations of wisdom and merit, which produce the mental and physical parts of an enlightened being, respectively. The ten powers and “four knowledges of purity” are elements of the 21 components of enlightened wisdom.

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,RAB 'BYAMS RGYAL BA KUN GYI MDUN SA CHER,
,ZAB DON SGROGS LA 'GRAN ZLA MA MCHIS PAS,
,MKHYEN PA'I GTER CHEN SMRA BA'I DBANG PHYUG ZHES,
,YONGS SU GRAGS PA'I ZHABS LA PHYAG 'TSAL LO,

You stand mighty at the forefront
Of a galaxy of all the Victors—
Incomparable in the way
You proclaim that deepest idea of all.

I bow at your holy feet,
To the one that all proclaim
The very god among all Teachers,
Vast goldmine of knowledge.⁴

[7]

,RGYAL BA NYID GYIS {KYIS} ZAB MO'I DON 'GREL BAR,
,LUNG BSTAN JI BZHIN SHING RTA'I SROL PHYE NAS,
,THUB BSTAN GSAL MDZAD KLU SGRUB LHA ZLA BA,
,RGYAL BA GNYIS PA YAB SRAS BCAS LA 'DUD,

I bow down to the second victorious Buddha
To walk in this world; and to his spiritual son:
To the divine angel, to Nagarjuna—

Whom the Victor himself foretold
Would invent the spiritual wheel,
Commenting upon that deepest thought,
Clarifying the teachings of the Able;

⁴ *Very god among all Teachers*: A reference to our own Buddha, Shakyamuni; but note that Choney Lama has snuck in here, twice, a piece of Je Tsongkapa's ordination name—and a piece which he happens to share with the great commentator, Chandrakirti.

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And I bow as well to the Moon.⁵

[8]

,RJE BTZUN BLA [f. 2a] MA'I GSUNG RAB RGYA MTSO NAS,
,LHUN PO MCHOG LTAR MNGON PAR 'PHAGS GYUR PA,
,t'IG {%-t'IK} CHEN RIGS PA'I RGYA MTSOI DGONGS ZAB GNAD,
,RNAM DPYOD DAD BAS {%-PAS} MDOR BSDUS BRI BAR BYA,

In deepest faith, and with critical analysis,
I will now make a summary presentation
Of the most profound points of the true intent
Of the “Great Commentary,” the “Sea of Reasoning”—

A work which towers high, like the ultimate Peak,
Rising from that veritable sea of all holy words
Written by the Holy One, our Lord and Lama.⁶

How Arya Nagarjuna gave his commentaries

[9]

⁵ *I bow to the Moon:* A reference to Master Chandrakirti, whose name literally means “well-known as the moon.” Arya Nagarjuna is counted, along with Arya Asanga (350AD) and sometimes Je Tsongkapa as well, as one of the very rare masters in the history of this planet who was able to present the traditional teachings of Lord Buddha in a completely new and yet still completely authentic way—thus earning the name of “The One Who Invented the (Spiritual) Wheel,” or more literally, “Who Invented the Wooden Horse,” or “Carriage.” The image is of one who helps the whole world forever find a better way to carry heavy loads, than to do so on our own backs. Such masters must have seen emptiness directly; must be bodhisattvas (beings who work for total enlightenment in order to be of benefit for all beings); and must be predicted by the Buddha himself; see for example the definition of such a master by Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568) at f. 6a, Volume 1, of his *Dialectic Analysis of the “Jewel of Realizations”* (%B3, S00001).

⁶ *That ultimate Peak:* A reference to Mt Meru, a mythical mountain said to be the center of our world, and rising some 80,000 *yojana* (about 120,000 miles) above the water line of the great oceans that cover the planet. See lines 190-203 of the geographical presentation in Chapter 3 of the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge* by Master Vasubandhu (c. 350AD) (f. 8b, %S2, TD04089). The “Great Commentary” is a common nickname for Je Tsongkapa’s extensive explanation of *Wisdom*; he is of course the “Lord & Lama” mentioned here. The poetical sections up to here constitute the traditional obeisance to the lamas of the lineage, and pledge to compose the work, found at the beginning of almost any classical Buddhist commentary.

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~,DE LA 'DIR BDAG CAG GI STON PA DE NYID KYIS YUM RGYAS 'BRING BSDUS PA GSUM SOGS GSUNG RAB DU MA NAS STONG NYID ZAB MO JI SKAD GSUNGS PA'I DON 'PHAGS PA KLU SGRUB KYIS LAGS {LEGGS} PAR GTAN LA PHAB PA BZHIN RJE NYID KYIS GSAL BAR MDZAD PA LTAR 'CHAD BAR BYA STE

Now our Teacher himself described this deepest thing of all—emptiness—in a great many of his high teachings, such as the more extensive, medium-length, and briefer presentations of the Mother. The meaning of these teachings was then organized, perfectly, by the realized one, Nagarjuna; and then our Lord himself offered us further clarifications of all of them. This then is what I shall undertake to explain here.⁷

[10]
'DI LA GNYIS, 'PHAGS PAS JI LTAR BGRAL BA DANG, SKABS KYI DON BSHAD PA'O,,

We will proceed in two steps: an explanation of how the Arya⁸ gave his commentaries; and then an explication of each section of the text of *Wisdom*.

[11]
DANG PO NI, SPYIR 'PHAGS PAS MDO SNGAGS KYI BSTAN BCOS DU MA MDZAD CING, KHYAD PAR DU ZAB DON 'GREL BA LA DBU MA RIGS PA'I TSOGS DRUG MDZAD DO,,

Here is the first of these. The Arya, in general, composed a great many classical commentaries upon both the open and the secret teachings. More particularly, he wrote a collection of six different “treatises on the reasoning of the middle way,” in explanation of that most profound of all truths.

[12]
DES? {DES} ZAB DON LUNG RIGS GNYIS KYI SGO NAS GTAN LA 'BEB PAR MDZAD DE, DE YANG LUNG GI SGO NAS GTZO BOR SGRUB PA LA MDO KUN LAS BTUS PA DANG, RIGS PA'I SGO NAS GTZO BOR SGRUB PA LA [f. 2b] DBU MA RTZO {RTZA} BO {BA} SHES RAB SOGS GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,

⁷ *I shall undertake to explain:* The “Mother” mentioned here refers to a body of teachings on the perfection of wisdom by Lord Buddha, of greatly differing lengths. The “Lord” here is, again, Je Tsongkapa.

⁸ *The Arya:* The Sanskrit word *arya* refers to one of those rare persons who has seen ultimate reality directly. Master Nagarjuna’s teachings on this reality are considered so fundamental in this world that he is often referred to simply as “The Arya.”

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In these works, he set forth the meaning of this truth utilizing both scriptural authority and logical reasoning. The text in which he primarily used scripture to establish emptiness was *A Compendium of All the Sutras*; whereas it was in “*Wisdom, The Root Text on the Middle Way*” and other such titles that he primarily used clear reasoning to establish this truth.

[13]

PHYI MA GRUB STE, RTZA BA SHES RAB KYIS YUL RANG BZHIN MED PA'I STONG NYID RIGS PAS GTZO BOR SGRUB, ZHIB MO RNAM 'THAG GIS ZAB DON RTOGS PA'I YUL CAN GYI YE SHES DE THAR PA DANG THAMS CAD MKHYEN PA GNYIS KA THOB BYED KYI RTZA BAR BSTAN, STONG NYID BDUN CU BAS {%-PAS} RANG BZHIN MED PA LA BYA BYED 'THAD TSUL SPYIR BSTAN NAS, RTZONG {%-RTZOD} BZLOG GIS BYE BRAG TU DGAG SGRUB 'THAD TSUL BSTAN, RIG {%-RIGS} PA DRUG CU PAS MTHA' GNYIS SPANGS PA'I LTA BA DE THAR PA THOB BYED KYI RTZA BAR BSTAN NAS, RIN CHEN PHRENG BAS LTA BA DE THAMS CAD MKHYEN PA THOB BYED KYI RTZA BA YANG YIN NO ZHES BSTAN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

The latter of these two statements is itself established by the following facts:

- (1) His composition entitled *Wisdom: The Root Text* uses, primarily, clear reasoning to establish that none of the objects of our perception has any nature of its own;
- (2) His *Smashing Wrong Ideas to Dust* demonstrates that wisdom—the subject state of mind in which we realize this profound truth—is the very foundation which allows us to attain both freedom and the state of omniscience;⁹
- (3) *Seventy Verses on Emptiness* presents, in a general way, how the normal working of things is still completely reasonable, even with things that have no nature of their own;
- (4) *Putting an End to All Argument* demonstrates that—more particularly—how denying certain ideas and establishing other ideas still works very reasonably;
- (5) *Sixty Verses on Reasoning* shows that the viewpoint in which we reject two different extremes is the foundation for achieving freedom;¹⁰ and
- (6) *The String of Precious Jewels* shows that this same viewpoint is, as well, the foundation for achieving the omniscience of enlightenment.

⁹ *Freedom and the state of omniscience*: A traditional Buddhist dichotomy; the former refers to nirvana, or the permanent ending of all negative emotions; whereas the latter refers to going further, into total enlightenment.

¹⁰ *The two extremes*: That is—primarily—the two ideas that everything and everyone around us exist just as they seem to; and that if they do not, then they cannot exist at all.

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[14]

DE RNAMS LAS RTZA SHE NI LUS LTA BU DANG, GZHAN LNGA NI DE LAS 'PHROS
PA'I YAN LAG LTA BU'I BSTAN BCOS SO.,

Of these six, *Wisdom* is like the main body; while the other five are all commentaries which expand upon it, and so are like the limbs of the body.

[15]

ZAB DON LA THOS BSAM BYAS PA'I PHAN YON NI RDOR GCOD SOGS LAS GSUNGS
PA MDO KUN LAS BTUS SU DRANGS PA LTAR RJE'I GSUNG LAS KYANG 'BYUNG
STE GO SLA'O.,

The benefits of studying and contemplating that most profound truth are described in the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, as we see it cited in *A Compendium of All the Sutras*, and referenced as well in the works of Lord Tsongkapa. These benefits are easily understood.¹¹

The meaning of the name

[16]

｀,GNYIS PA LA GSUM, MTSAN GYI DON, GZHUNG GI DON, MJUG GI DON NO.,

Here we begin our explication of each section of the text of *Wisdom*. This will be done in three broad sections: a discussion of the name of the text; a commentary to the main body of the work; and then an explanation of how the work is completed.

[17]

(title)

¹¹ *Benefits described in the “Diamond Cutter”*: See ff. 205a-205b of the *Compendium* (%S8, TD03934); the citation of course carries extra weight since this work was itself composed by Arya Nagarjuna. We see the same reference made by Je Tsongkapa in, for example, his famed *Illumination of the True Thought* (f. 78b, %B4, S05408).

Prajñā Mūlamadhyāmaka Kārikā¹²

Prajna Mulamadhyamaka Karika.

[f. 1b] #, ,RGYA GAR SKAD DU,
,PRA DZNY'A N'A MA M'U LA MA DHY'A MA KA K'A RI K'A ,

In Sanskrit, the title of this work is:

Prajna Nama Mulamadhyamaka Karika.

BOD SKAD DU,
,DBU MA RTZA BA'I TSIG LE'UR BYAS PA SHES RAB CES BYA BA,

In Tibetan, this is:

Uma tsaway tsik-leur jepa Sherab chejawa.

In English, it is:

Wisdom: The Root Text on the Middle Way, Set in Verse

[18]

DANG PO NI {mtsan gyi don}, BSTAN BCOS 'DI'I MTSAN LA, RGYA GAR GYI SKAD DU, PRA DZNY'A N'A MA MU LA M'ADHYAM {M'ADHYA MA} KA K'A RI K'A ZHES 'BYUNG ZHING,

Here is the first of these three sections. The title of this classical commentary, in Sanskrit, appears as *Prajna Mula Madhyamaka Karika*.

[19]

¹² *Prajñā*: We will be including the root text of Arya Nagarjuna's original in bold both as it is treated in Choney Lama's commentary, and altogether in the appendix. We will include the original Sanskrit (in both technical transcription and simplified pronunciation); Chinese translation of @\$\$\$; and Tibetan translation. We have edited the Sanskrit to the best of our ability—but there are many questions and versions, and our work can probably be improved on by later generations with more resources. We have followed primarily J. W. De Jong, as revised by Christian Lindtner; as well as Ye Shaoyong and @ MacDonald's more recent work (see bibliography entries %E1 & %E2). The Tibetan presented *in situ* by Choney Lama sometimes differs from the Tengyur edition; we will leave it as is, with corrections from the latter, or as evidently required. Given that the Tibetan of the Derge carving of the Tengyur is so well edited, we will favor the readings of this edition in both the Tibetan and the selection of the corresponding Sanskrit.

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DE BOD SKAD DU BSGYUR NA, PRADZNY'A NI SHES RAB, M'ADHYAM {MADHY'A MA} KA NI DBU MA, M'U LA NI RTZA BA, K'A RI KA NI TSIG LE'UR BYAS PA, N'A MA NI ZHES BYA BA'O,,

Here is how we translate the pieces of this title. *Prajna* means *wisdom*. *Madhyamaka* is *middle way*, and *mula* is *root text*. *Karika* means *set in verse*, while *nama* is *known as*. [And so, altogether, we have *The Classical Commentary known as “Wisdom”: The Root Text on the Middle Way, Set in Verse.*]

[20]

DON YANG SHES RAB NI SHER PHYIN STON PA DANG, DBU MA NI RTAG CHAD GNYIS DANG BRAL BA'I DBU MA'I DON STON PA DANG,

When we say “wisdom” here, we’re talking about the perfection of wisdom. “Middle way” refers to a way in the middle, in the sense that we are free of the extremes where nothing can change, or else everything grinds to a stop.¹³

[21]

RTZA BA NI DBU MA'I BSTAN BCOS GZHAN KUN GYI GZHI LTA BU [f. 3a] DANG, TSIG LE'UR BYAS PA'I DON TSIGS BCAD DU BYAS PA DANG, N'A MA NI ZHES BYA BA STE MING DE SKAD CES BYA'O,,

The words “root text” are to indicate that this work by the Arya is like the foundation for all other classical treatises upon the middle way. “Set in verse” conveys to readers that the work is in poetry; and “known as” is meant to indicate that the rest is a name for the text.

An obeisance by the Tibetan translator

[22]

[(translator's prostration)
'JAM DPAL GZHON NUR GYUR PA LA PHYAG 'TSAL LO,

I bow down to Gentle Voice, become young.¹⁴]

¹³ *Free of the extremes*: Both extremes are a logical consequence which would obtain if things were coming from their own side.

¹⁴ *Translator's prostration*: This line is included in our root text as found in the Tengyur, but not in Choney Lama’s commentary; we have added it for the reader.

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Chapter 1 An Analysis of Conditions

Chapter 1 An Analysis of Conditions

Praising the Teacher, for dependence

[23]

GNYIS PA LA GSUM, STON PA LA RTEN 'BYUNG GSUNG BA'I SGO NAS BSTOD PA,
RTEN 'BYUNG MTHA' BRGYAD DANG BRAL BAR 'GREL TSUL, STON PA'I BKA' DRIN
DRAN PA'I PHYAG GO

This brings us to our second major section—a commentary to the main body of the work. This itself consists of three parts: a praise of the Teacher, for his enunciation of the principle of dependence; the way in which we interpret this dependence in terms of it being free of eight different extremes; and a prostration for the purpose of remaining mindful of the kindness of our Teacher.

[24]

,DANG PO LA GNYIS, SPYII DON DANG, YAN LAG GI DON NO,,

We will cover the first of these in two steps: a general explanation of the praise, followed by ancillary points.

[25]

DANG PO LA, RTEN 'BYUNG MTHA' BRGYAD DANG BRAL BA NI 'DI'I BRJOD BYA,
'DI LA BRTEM NAS DON DE KHONG DU CHUD PA NI DGOS PA, SPROS PA THAMS
CAD NYE BAR ZHI BA'I MYANG 'DAS MTHAR THUG NI NYID DGOS, CHOS GSUM
PHYI MA SNGA MA LA 'BREL BA NI 'DI'I 'BREL BA'O,,

Here is the first. This opening praise contains four parts. First, the mention of the principle of dependence free of eight different extremes reflects the subject matter of our text. Second, the immediate goal is that we come to grasp this principle, by relying upon the Arya's work. Third, the ultimate goal is that we attain the ultimate form of nirvana, where we put to rest each and

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every fantasy we now possess, about how things exist. Fourth, there is a crucial interrelation here, where each succeeding step of the first three relies upon the step which precedes it.¹⁵

[26]

DON LA DE LTAR YIN KYANG SKABS 'DIR MCHOD BRJOD KYIS DE LTAR YIN TSUL
DNGOS SU STON PA NI MIN NO,,

This is the point of this offering of praise, but at the same time it's not as if the wording itself at this juncture directly reveals this fact.

[27]

THEG DMAN GYI MDO LAS KYANG STONG NYID MDOR BSDUS BSTAN MOD, THEG
CHEN DU RIGS PA'I RNAME GRANGS DU MAS RGYAS PAR STON PAS KHYAD PAR
YOD DE,

Now it is admittedly the case that—even in the sutras of the lower way—the principle of emptiness is presented, albeit in an abbreviated way. But this is vastly different from the approach here in the greater way, where we cover this subject utilizing a large quantity of different logical proofs.¹⁶

[28]

MGON POS,
,DE PHYIR DE NI THEG CHEN LAS,
,KHYOD KYIS TSANG BAR BSTAN PA LAGS,
,ZHES GSUNGS PAS SO,,

As our Protector himself has put it,

And so you taught these things
In their entirety,

¹⁵ *A praise in four parts:* Here, Choney Lama is fitting the opening praise of Lord Buddha into the traditional opening of a classical Buddhist commentary, where the text is demonstrated to have four qualities—traditionally known as “the four of an immediate goal and the rest”—which make it worthy of our time, in this precious short life.

¹⁶ *Vastly different in the greater way:* The teachings of Buddhism are divided into two great approaches: that of the “greater way,” where the emphasis is upon the pursuit of full enlightenment in order to be of service to countless numbers of beings; and that of the “lower way,” where we are satisfied simply with our own, personal freedom from the suffering of normal existence.

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Within the greater way.¹⁷

[29]

RTEN 'BREL GYI DON NI, DE'I SKAD ? {SKAD DOD} LA, PRA TI AI TI {TYA} MA {no MA} SA MUD {MUT} PAD {P'A DA} ZHES YOD PA LA, RKYEN GYI DBANG GIS PRA TI {T'I} TY'A {TYA} SA MUD {MUT} P'A DA ZHES PA STE PHRAD PA DANG BRTEM PA DANG BLTOS NAS 'BYUNG BA'I DON GSUM LA 'JUG CING,

Now what do we mean when we speak of the “principle of dependence”? The original Sanskrit here is *pratitya samutpada*. We use this term to refer to something that occurs by *force of factors* –which can refer to three different ideas: something which occurs because things make contact with each other; or which occurs because things are depending upon each other; or which occurs because things are relying on each other.

[30]

BRTEM NAS 'BYUNG BA'I DON NI,
,BYED PO LAS {karma} LA BRTEM BYAS SHING,
,LAS KYANG BYED PA PO NYID LA,
,BRTEM NAS 'BYUNG PA MA GTOGS PAR,
,GRUB PA'I RGYU NI MA MTHONG NGO,,
ZHES 'BYUNG BA LTAR,

What it means when we say that “something occurs because things depend upon each other” is described in the following lines:

An agent comes into being
Dependent upon an action;
And the action in turn occurs
Through dependence upon the agent;
We see no other cause than this

¹⁷ *Taught in their entirety*: This is from a very brief work by the Arya entitled *A Praise of That Which Transcends the World*; see f. 69b, %S9, TD01120. The wording here is slightly different, and the entire context translates as:

You stated that freedom cannot be
For those who have yet to enter
That state where things
Have no qualities of their own.
As such, you described
The state of suchness
In every teaching of the greater way.

That can ever make things occur.¹⁸

[31]

CHOS THAMS CAD PHAN TSUN GCIG CIG SHOS LA BRDEN NAS [f. 3b] 'JOG DGOS BA'I {%-PA'I} DON YIN GYI, RGYU RKYEN LAS 'BYUNG BA'I DON TZAM MIN NO,,

And so the point of the “principle of dependence” here is not just that things occur through causes and conditions; but rather that all objects in the universe can only be established through a process of mutual interdependence.

The eight impossibles

[32]

GNYIS PA NI,

This brings us to our second step from above: ancillary points in the praise, expressed in the following lines of the root text.

[33]

(I.1-2)

Anirodham anutpādam anucchedam aśāśvatam,
Anekārtham anānārtham anāgamam anirgamam,
Yah pratītyasamutpādam prapañcopaśamaṁ śivam,
Deśayāmāsa Saṁbuddhas taṁ vande vadatāṁ varam.

*Anirodham anutpadam anuchedam ashashvatam,
Anekartham ananartham anagamam anirgamam,
Yah pratityasamutpadam prapanchopashaman shivam,
Deshayamasa Sambuddhas tan vande vadatan varam.*

,GANG GIS RTEN CING 'BREL BAR 'BYUNG,
, 'GAG PA MED PA SKYE MED PA,
, CHAD PA MED PA RTAG MED PA,
, 'ONG BA MED PA 'GRO MED PA,
, THA DAD DON MIN DON GCIG MIN,
, SPROS PA NYER ZHI ZHI BSTAN PA,

¹⁸ *We see no other cause:* This verse comes later in the root text—in Chapter 8, “An Analysis of Agents & Actions.”

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,RDZOGS PA'I SANGS RGYAS SMRA RNAMS KYI,
,DAM PA DE LA PHYAG 'TSAL LO,,
ZHES PA'O,,

I bow down to that highest of teachers;
To the fully Enlightened One,
Who teaches us to reach that peace
Where our fantasies about how things exist
Are put to a final rest.

I bow to the one who taught us
That things happen in dependence:
Nothing ends, and nothing begins;
Nothing stops, but nothing
Ever lasts forever.
Nothing comes, and nothing goes;
No two things are different,
Nor are any two the same.

[34]
DON NI, PHYAG 'TSAL LO ZHES DRANG NGO.,

As for the import of these first lines, we can begin from the words, “*I bow...*”¹⁹

[35]
GANG LA NA SMON {%-STON} PA GANG GIS RTEN CING 'BREL BAR 'BYUNG BA
BSTAN PA'I THUB DBANG RDZOGS PA'I SANGS RGYAS DE LA'O.,

To whom does Nagarjuna bow? To *the Teacher*: to the Lord of the Able Ones—to *the fully Enlightened One who taught us that things happen in dependence*.

[36]
JI LTAR NA RTEN 'BYUNG DE NI MNYAM GZHAG ZAG MED KYI YUL GYI RANG
BZHIN LA LTOS NAS SKAD CIG MAR 'JIG PA'I 'GAG PA DANG, RANG GI NGO BO
THOB PHYIR SKYE BA DANG SNGA MA RGYUN CHAD PA DANG MI 'JIG PA'I RTAG
PA DANG TSUR 'ONG BA DANG PHAR 'GRO BA DANG DGOS {%-DE GO SA?} SOGS

¹⁹ Begin from the words, “*I bow*”: Choney Lama will be weaving the words of Arya Nagarjuna’s root text into his commentary; this sometimes makes the Tibetan feel a bit stilted, and that will be reflected, in turn, with the English. We will italicize the weaving in our translation, and bold out the corresponding weaving in the Tibetan.

KYI DON SO SO BA'I THA DAD PA DANG **DON** SO SO BA MIN PA'I **GCIG** PA RNAMS NI MED DO ZHES DGAG TSIG MTHAR SBYAR RO.,

And how did he teach us this dependence? He stated that the fact of dependence—as an object of that immaculate state of meditation²⁰—is none of the following, at least with regard to any nature this object could have of its own. Thus we are to add words of negation—“*nothing*”—to the each member of this list:

- 1) Something that could ever *end*, in the sense of blinking out of existence, moment by moment;
- 2) Something that could ever *begin*, in terms of taking on some identity of its own;
- 3) Something that could ever *stop*, as the flow of how it has existed up to now is discontinued;
- 4) Something that could ever *last forever*—never be destroyed;
- 5) Something that could ever *come*, from there to here;
- 6) Something that could ever *go*, from here to there;
- 7) *Two things* that could ever be *different* from one another, in senses such as occupying some separate space; and
- 8) *Two things* that could ever be *the same* as each other, insofar as not being separate in those same senses.

[37]

RTEN 'BYUNG GI CHOS NYID 'PHAGS PA'I YE SHES KYIS JI LTAR GZIGS PA'I GZIGS DOR {NGOR} SKYE 'GAG LA SOGS PA'I **SPROS PA** THAMS CAD **NYE BAR ZHI BA DANG**,

The nature of all things, within their dependence, represents a point where—to the perceptions of a realized being,²¹ to *their* state of wisdom—all *fantasies about how things exist are put to a final rest*.

²⁰ *Immaculate state of meditation*: Referring to the direct perception of emptiness.

²¹ *To the perceptions of a realized being*: We are translating the Sanskrit word *arya* as *realized being*—meaning that they are a being who has perceived emptiness directly. Again, the description here is referring to the period during which this being is undergoing this direct perception.

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[38]

DER SEMS DANG SEMS BYUNG GI RNAME RTOG GI RGYU BA MED BAS SKYE RGA SOGS KYIS NYE BAR 'TSE BA THAMS CAD DANG BRAL BA'I PHYIR **ZHI** BA'O,,

We can also describe this as *peace*, since—because at this point both our main mind and our mental functions are free of any circulation of mistaken thoughts about things—we are freeing ourselves from the damage done to us by rebirth, aging, and the rest.²²

[39]

RTEN 'BYUNG GI DE NYID RDZOOG PA'I SANGS RGYAS NYID KYIS JI LTA BA BZHIN DU MNGON SUM DU GZIGS NAS GZHAN LA LEGS PAR **BSTAN PAS SMRA** BA **RNAMS KYI DAM PA** ZHES BYA'O,,

This true nature of dependence is something that only a fully Enlightened One can see, directly, in just the way it is. They then *teach it* to others perfectly—which makes them *the highest of all teachers*.

[40]

'DIR 'GAG SOGS BRGYAD GSUNGS PA NI RANG GZHAN GYI RTZOD PA'I GZH'I [f. 4a] GTZO BO YIN PA LA DGONGS LA, DE YANG 'GAG SOGS BRGYAD NI 'PHAGS PA'I MNYAM GZHAG GI GZIGS NGOR MED KYANG THA SNYAD DU YOD DO,,

Now why are these particular eight—of ending and the rest—selected for mention in these first lines? The idea is that, first of all, these are the main points that we would tend to argue about with others. Secondly, we can say that—to the perceptions of a realized being who is inside the direct experience of emptiness—none of these things can be seen to exist; although, on a conventional level, they certainly *do* exist.

[41]

'GAG PA MED PA NI SKYE BA MED PA ZHES PA'I SNGON DU 'BYUNG BA RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB NA SKYE 'GAG GO RIM MA NGES PAR 'GYUR BAR STON PA'I CHED DO,,

Now why does Arya Nagarjuna mention *ending* before *beginning*? He wants to make the point that—if these things *were* to exist through some nature of their own—then we could never say with certainty whether things would begin first and then end; or end first and then begin.

²² *Rebirth, aging, and the rest:* The list is traditionally fourfold, with the addition of illness and death.

The two kinds of self-nature that were never there

[42]

GNYIS PA LA GNYIS, RAB BYED KYI GZHUNG NYAMS LEN GYI RIM PAR BSGRIG PA DANG, GZHUNG RNAMS SO SOR BSHAD PA'O,,

This brings us to the second part promised above: on the way in which we interpret this dependence in terms of it being free of eight different extremes. This will be treated in two steps of (1) a presentation of the different chapters arranged in an order in which they might actually be put into practice; and then (2) our explanation of the actual subject matter of each of these chapters.

[43]

DANG PO LA, DMIGS PA GANG ZAG LA DMIGS NAS RNAM PA RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS GRUB BAR 'DZIN PA'I BLO NI GANG ZAG GI BDAG 'DZIN DANG,

Here is the first. Now when our mind takes, as its object, a person; and then holds it, as its aspect, to exist in and of itself; we call this “the tendency to believe that a person exists as a person.”

[44]

DMIGS PA GANG ZAG MA YIN PA'I PHUNG SOGS KYI CHOS LA DMIGS NAS RNAM PA RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS GRUB PAR 'DZIN PA'I BLO NI CHOS KYI BDAG 'DZIN TE,

And when our mind takes, as its object, things that are not the person themselves—things like the five parts to a person; and then holds these things, as their aspect, to exist in and of themselves; then we call this “the tendency to believe that things exist as things.”

[45]

BLO SNGON MAS BZUNG BA LTAR MED PA NI GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED YIN LA, PHYI MAS BZUNG BA LTAR MED PA NI CHOS KYI BDAG MED DO,,

And what we call the “lack of any self-nature to the person” is the simple fact that what the former state of mind thinks it sees cannot exist; while the “lack of any self-nature to things” is the fact that what the latter state of mind thinks it sees cannot exist, either.

[46]

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DES NA MED RGYU'I BDAG CIG GANG ZAG GI STENG DU BKAG PA GANG ZAG GI
BDAG MED DANG, CHOS KYI STENG DU BKAG PA CHOS KYI BDAG MED YIN BAS
{%PAS} DGAG GZHI SO SO YIN YANG DGAG BYA'I BDAG LA KHYAD PAR MED DO,,

So what's happening here is that we're considering a single kind of self-nature that could never exist. When we deny it with reference to a person, then we call it "the lack of any self-nature to the person"; and when we deny it with reference to things, then we call it "the lack of any self-nature to things." And so although we deny this nature with regard to two different referents, it's not that there's any difference in the two self-natures we are denying.

[47]

DE'I PHYIR BDAG MED GNYIS MA {%LA} PHRA RAGS KYI KHYAD PAR MED
KYANG GANG ZAG GI STENG DU NGES SLA ZHING CHOS KYI STENG DU NGES
DKA' BA'I KHYAD PAR NI YOD DO,,

As such, we can't really say that one of these two lacks of any self-nature is more or less subtle than the other; nonetheless, there is a difference in the relative difficulty of perceiving the two. That is, the fact that nothing is itself is easier to recognize with respect to a person; and more difficult to recognize with respect to things in general.

[48]

'JIG LTA NI GANG ZAG GI BDAG 'DZIN GYI BYE BRAG STE, DE YANG RANG RGYUD
KYI NGA LA DMIGS NAS NGA DANG NGA YIO SNYAM DU RANG GI MTSAN NYID
KYIS GRUB PAR 'DZIN PA ZHIG GO

Now what we call the "view of destruction" is a particular variant of the tendency to believe that a person is themselves. This state of mind focuses on the "me" that relates to my own continuum, and holds that it is either "me" or "mine"—but in a way where these exist in and of themselves.

[49]

,DES NA 'DIR [f. 4b] 'GOG RGYU LA YUL 'GOG PA DANG YUL CAN 'GOG PA GNYIS TE,
DE LA BLO DE GNYIS KYIS YUL JI LTAR BZUNG BA'I DON LA RIGS PA'I GNOD PA
BSTAN NAS YUL CAN GYI 'DZIN PA YANG 'GOG PA'O,,

As such, there are two divisions to what we need to deny here: we need to deny the object, and we need to deny the subject. In this regard, we can also deny how the subject state of mind holds to its object, when we demonstrate how what those two states of mind think they see can be thrown into question by clear reasoning.

[50]

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DE'I TSE YUL CAN DE DAG GIS JI LTAR BZUNG BA'I DON THA SNYAD DU YOD PA 'GOG KYANG YUL YUL CAN DE DAG THA SNYAD DU YOD PA MI 'GOG GI, THA SNYAD KYI DBANG GIS BZHAG TZAM MA YIN PAR YOD PA 'GOG STE YOD PA THAMS CAD LA 'DRA'O,,

At this point, we are disproving that what these subject states of mind think they see could exist, in any conventional sense. We are not though denying that—conventionally speaking—the subject and object could not exist at all. All we are doing is disproving that anything could ever exist, unless it were established as existing through the power of the words we use, and nothing more. This methodology remains the same, no matter which of the existing objects in the universe we have taken under consideration.

[51]

SKYES SAM MA SKYES 'ONGS SAM MA 'ONGS ZHES SOGS DPYOD PA NI THA SNYAD DU KHAS LEN KYANG, DE TZAM GYIS MA TSIM BAR THA SNYAD BTAGS PA'I BTAGS DON DE JI 'DRA BA ZHIG TU GRUB PAR BTZAL BA NA RNYED PAR KHAS MI LEN TE

Let's look at how we analyze whether any of these things ever begins, or never begins; how they come, or never come. We do accept that, in a conventional sense, such things do exist. But what we're saying is that we do not accept that—if a person refused to be satisfied with this description of things, and instead insisted upon seeking out the thing that they have named with their names—they would ever find anything.

[52]

SNGA MA NI THA SNYAD KYI DPYOD PA YIN LA, PHYI MA NI DON DAM LA DPYOD PA YIN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

The former process we would call an “analysis of the conventional nature of things”; and the latter an “analysis of the ultimate nature of things.”

[53]

TSUL 'DI LA RIGS PAS DPYAD MI BZOD PA DANG RIGS PAS GNOD PA DANG RIGS SHES KYIS MA RNYED PA DANG, DES BKAG PA RNAMS SO SOR BYED {PHYED} PA DGOS SHING,

When we're going through these different processes, we need to learn to distinguish between: (1) deciding whether or not something will stand up under logical analysis; (2) whether or not something is drawn into question by logic; (3) whether or not something can be located by a state of mind acting in a logical mode; and (4) whether or not it is actually disproven by this same state of mind.

[54]

YID BDAG GNYIS DANG BDAG MED GNYIS LA ZHUGS MA ZHUGS KYI KHYAD BAR {PAR} YANG SHES PAR BYA'0,,

We also need to learn to identify when the mind is engaged in one of the two types of a supposed self-nature; and when it is engaged in one of the two types of a lack of any such self-nature.

A summary of the topics of the chapters

[55]

RAB BYED RNAMS KYIS JI LTAR BSTAN PA'I BSDUS DON NI,

Let's move on to a summary of the topics presented in each of the chapters of the Arya's masterpiece.²³

[56]

DE LA THOG MAR BDAG DANG BDAG GIR 'DZIN PA'I MA RIG BA'I {PA'I} ZHEN YUL MED PAR GTAN LA DBAB DGOS PAS DE RAB BYED BCO BRGYAD PAS STON,

The 18th chapter, “An Analysis of the Person and of Things,” could be considered before any of the other chapters, since our very first job is that we have to establish how what misunderstanding believes in—what the tendencies to believe in some *self*, or *something of a self*, believe in—could never even exist.

[57]

GANG ZAG LA RANG BZHIN MED NA 'JIG RTEN PHA ROL NAS 'DIR 'ONG BA DANG 'DI NAS PHA ROL TU 'GRO BA DANG LAS DGE SDIG BYED PA MI [f. 5a] 'THAD SNYAM PA 'GOG PA LA 'GRO 'ONG PA RTAG {%'ONG BRTAG} PA DANG BYED PA PO BRTAG PA GNYIS,

Once they hear that the person possesses no nature of their own, someone might start to wonder how such a person could *come* into this life from some other life; or *go* into another life from this one. They might also wonder, then, about the workings of karma itself: good deeds and bad deeds. And so these topics are covered in Chapter 2—“An Analysis of Going & Coming”; and in Chapter 8—“An Analysis of Agents & Actions.”

²³ *Summary of the topics:* In the list which follows, we will be supplying the full names of the chapters, and their numbers, to ease the reader's task.

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[58]

BYED PA PO RANG BZHIN MED PAR BSTAN PA LA LEN PA POR MI RUNG NGO SNYAM PA 'GOG BAR {PAR} SNGA ROL NA GNAS PA BRTAG PA,,

Once they have listened to a presentation on how the agents of actions have no nature of their own, people might begin to think that there could never be anyone who *took* a rebirth. And so to prevent this idea, the 9th chapter is presented: “An Analysis of Who Might Have Been There, Before.”

[59]

NYE BAR LEN PA PO LA RANG BZHIN YOD PAR SGRUB PA'I DPE DGAG PA NI BCU PA DANG,

The 10th chapter then—“An Analysis of Fire and Firewood”—is devoted to denying a certain metaphor which people have employed, in an attempt to prove that the one who takes on the different parts of a person at rebirth could possess some nature of their own.

[60]

DE'I RTAGS 'GOG PA LA BCU GCIG PA DANG BCU GNYIS PA,

Next we have Chapter 11, “An Analysis of a First Beginning, or a Final Ending, to Things,” and Chapter 12, “An Analysis of Whether Pain was Created by Itself, or by Something Else.” These are meant to disprove the reason given in the metaphor just mentioned.

[61]

CHOS KYI BDAG 'GOG PA LA SKYE BA RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD PA 'GOG PA LA RAB BYED DANG PO,,

In seeking to disprove that things could be themselves, we need to show how nothing could begin through any nature of its own—thus, the first chapter: “An Analysis of Conditions.”

[62]

LUNG LAS PHUNG SOGS LA RANG BZHIN YOD PAR GSUNGS SO SNYAM PA LA SKYE MCCHED BRTAG PA SOGS GSUM {Ch. 5: khams brtag pa; other 2 must be Ch. 3 “DBANG PO BRTAG PA” and Ch. 4 “PHUNG PO BRTAG PA”},

Someone though might object, thinking to themselves: “But scripture itself describes how the parts to the person, and so on, do have a nature of their own.” To address this idea, we have three chapters, beginning with Chapter 5, “An Analysis of the Categories,” and including Chapter 3, “An Analysis of the Powers,” and Chapter 4, “An Analysis of the Parts to a Person.”

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[63]

CHAGS SOGS DANG SKYE 'JIG GNAS GSUM DANG DE'I RGYU LAS DANG BYED PA
PO YOD PAS DE DAG LA RANG BZHIN YOD DO SNYAM PA 'GOG BAR {PAR} 'DOD
CHAGS BRTAG PA SOGS GSUM,

Another thought might occur to some: “Given that we see emotions such as desire; and the three stages of beginning, ending, and staying—as well as the causes for these, karma and agents of action—can’t we say that *they* have some nature of their own?” Denying this idea is the task of three chapters beginning with Chapter 6, “An Analysis of Desire & Attachment”; along with Chapter 7, “An Analysis of Beginning, Staying, & Ending,” and Chapter 13, “An Analysis of Factors.”

[64]

GANG ZAG DANG CHOS LA RANG BZHIN YOD PA'I SGRUB BYED DU CHOS RNAMS
KYI 'PHRAD PA DANG SKYED PA'I RGYU RKYEN NYE BAR LEN PA DANG GCIG NAS
GCIG TU 'KHOR BA YOD CES SMRA BA 'GOG PA LA PHRAD PA DANG RANG BZHIN
DANG BCINGS THAR BRTAG PA GSUM,

Some might posit—as proof that both the person, and things, do possess a nature of their own—that things do make contact with each other; and that causes and conditions do lead to their corresponding results; and that beings do circle from one birth to another. To refute these attempted proofs, we have Chapter 14, “An Analysis of Contact between Things”; Chapter 15, “An Analysis of a Nature to Things”; and Chapter 16, “An Analysis of Bondage, and Freedom from Bondage.”

[65]

'KHOR BA LA RANG BZHIN YOD PA'I SGRUB BYED LAS 'BRAS KYI 'BREL BA'I RTEN
YIN PA 'GOG PA LA LAS 'BRAS BRTAG PA,

Others assert that the cycle of pain does have its own nature; as proof of this, they cite the very foundation of the connection between karma and its consequences. To deny this position, we see Chapter 17: “An Analysis of Karma & Consequences.”

[66]

DNGOS PO LA RANG BZHIN YOD PA'I SGRUB BYED DU DUS GSUM GDAGS BA'I
{PA'I} RGYU YIN PA'I PHYIR ZHES 'GOG PA LA DUS BRTAG PA,

Still others assert that working things do possess a nature of their own, since this is what allows us to apply the names to the three times; to dispel this belief, we have Chapter 19: “An Analysis of Time.”

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[67]

DUS LA RANG BZHIN YOD PAR SGRUB PA LA 'BRAS BUI BYED RKYEN DANG 'BYUNG 'JIG GI RGYU YIN BA {%-PA} 'GOG PA LA TSOGS PA DANG 'BYUNG 'JIG BRTAG PA GNYIS,

Some say that time must have a nature of its own, since it acts as the factor that produces results; and is further the cause for things to occur and to pass away. To refute this position we see Chapter 20, “An Analysis of the Convergence of Causes & Conditions”; as well as Chapter 21, “An Analysis of How Things Occur, & Then Pass Away.”

[68]

[f. 5b] SRID RGYUN RANG BZHIN MED BAR BSTAN PA NA DE'I RGYUN DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA DANG NYON MONGS YOD PAS MI 'THAD DO SNYAM DU DOGS PA 'GOG PA LA DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA BRTAG PA DANG PHYIN CI LOG BRTAG PA GNYIS,

Others assert that—when we teach that the flow of being has no nature—we must be mistaken, for Those Gone Thus do possess such a flow; as do the negative emotions. To address this doubt, we see Chapter 22, “An Analysis of Those Gone Thus,” and Chapter 23, “An Analysis of Error.”

[69]

RANG BZHIN GYIS STONG BA LA BDEN BZHI SOGS MI 'THAD SNYAM PA LA BDEN PA BRTAG PA,

Some may think that principles like the four truths²⁴ could not apply, if things are empty of any nature of their own; to counter this idea we have Chapter 24: “An Analysis of the Higher Truths.”

[70]

DE LA MYANG 'DAS MI 'THAD SNYAM PA 'GOG BAR {%-PAR} MYANG 'DAS BRTAG PA,

The idea that, for the same reason, nirvana would not be possible is disproven in Chapter 25, “An Analysis of Nirvana.”

[71]

RTEN 'BYUNG MTHONG NA DBU MA'I LAM MTHONG BAR GSUNGS PA'I DON STON PA LA RTEN 'BREL BRTAG PA,

²⁴ *The four truths:* The four famous facts of suffering; the cause of suffering; freedom from suffering; and the path to this freedom.

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The chapter where we analyze dependence itself—Chapter 26, “An Analysis of the Twelve Links of Suffering Existence”—presents what the Buddha meant when he said that “Someone who sees dependence sees the middle way.”

[72]

RTEN 'BYUNG GI DE NYID RTOGS NA LTA BA NGAN PA THAMS CAD LDOG PAR STON PA LA LTA BA BRTAG PA GSUNGS TE,

Chapter 27, finally, is devoted to “An Analysis of Viewpoints,” in order to indicate that—once we realize the true nature of dependence—then we are able to stop each and every mistaken viewpoint we might ever entertain.

[73]

THAMS CAD KYANG RANG RGYUD LA THAR LAM BSKYED PA DANG BRTAN PA DANG 'PHEL BAR BYA BA'I CHED DU YIN GYI GZHAN DANG RTZOD PA TZAM GYI PHYIR MIN TE,

Now the point of all these different analyses is not simply to engage in dispute with others about their ideas; rather, the purpose of each and every one of these chapters is to first give birth to the path to freedom within our own heart; and then make this path more firm; and further to bring it to increase.

[74]

DBU MA 'JUG PA LAS,
,BSTAN BCOS LAS DPYAD RTZOD LA CHAGS PA'I PHYIR,
,MA MDZAD RNAM GROL PHYIR NI DE NYID BSTAN,
,ZHES GSUNGS PA LTAR RO,,

As *Entering the Middle Way* puts it,

The classical commentary does not engage
In analysis, or debate, out of any attachment
To these methods in themselves;
Rather, they are presented for the sole purpose
Of helping us attain liberation.²⁵

Nothing could ever grow

²⁵ *The sole purpose of liberation:* See f. 210a of Master Chandrakirti's masterpiece (%S10, TD03861).

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[75]

GNYIS PA LA GSUM, RTEN 'BYUNG RANG BZHIN GYIS STONG PAR BSTAN PA, DE RTOGS MA RTOGS LAS 'KHOR BAR LDOG 'JUG BYED TSUL, RTOGS NA LTA NGAN LDOG TSUL LO,,

This brings us to our second step from above—an explanation of the actual subject matter of each of these chapters. We proceed in three parts: a demonstration that dependence itself possesses no nature of its own; how the question of whether we escape or engage in the cycle of pain depends upon whether we realize this truth or not; and finally a description of how—if we do realize it—we can put a stop to every mistaken viewpoint.

[76]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, DNGOS DANG, RTZOD SPONG NGO,,

The first of these parts has two sections of its own: the actual demonstration; and then a refutation of argument concerning it.

[77]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, BDAG MED GNYIS MDOR BSTAN PA DANG, RGYAS PAR BSHAD PA'O,,

The first of these sections, in turn, covers two points: an abbreviated presentation of the way in which things and people cannot be themselves; and then a more detailed treatment of this same point.

[78]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, RGYU 'BRAS KYI BYA BYED LA BRTAGS NAS CHOS LA RANG BZHIN DGAG PA DANG, 'GRO 'ONG GI BYA BYED LA BRTAG NAS GANG ZAG LA RANG BZHIN DGAG PA'O,,

The abbreviated presentation proceeds in two steps: an examination of the workings of cause & effect, which leads to disproving that things could have any nature of their own; and then an examination of the workings of going & coming, which leads to disproving that the person could have any nature of their own.

[79]

DANG PO LA GSUM, RAB BYED KYI GZHUNG BSHAD PA, NGES DON GYI LUNG DANG SBYAR BA, MTSAN BSTAN PA'O,,

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We'll cover the first of these, in turn, in three sections: an explanation of the text of this chapter; connecting the chapter to literal presentations of these topics in scripture; and then a presentation on the chapter's name.

[80]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, 'BRAS BU LA SKYE BA'I RANG BZHIN DGAG [f. 6a] PA DANG,
SKYED BYED LA RKYEN KYI RANG BZHIN DGAG PA'O,,

The first of these sections comes in two parts of its own: denying that results could have any nature of growing; and then denying that what produces these results could have any nature of being a condition.

[81]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, MTHA' BZHI'I SKYE BA DGAG PA DANG, GZHAN SKYE BKAG
PA LA LUNG 'GAL SPANG BA'O,,

The first of these has two parts too: denying that things could grow in any of the four extreme ways; and then proving that the idea that things cannot grow from something other than themselves could never contradict, in any way, the teachings of the Buddha.

[82]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, SKYE BA 'GOG PA'I DAM BCA' BA DANG, DE 'GOG PA'I RIGS
PA'O,,

The first of these as well has two parts: the assertion where we deny that anything could grow; and then the logic behind this denial.

[83]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, DNGOS DANG, 'PHROS DON NO, ,DANG PO NI,

Finally then the first of these comes in two parts: the actual assertion; and then additional points raised by this assertion. The first is expressed in the following lines of the root text:

[84]

(I.3)

**Na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyan nāpy ahetutah,
Utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kva cana ke cana.**

*Na svato napi parato na dvabhyan napyahetutah,
Utpanna jatu vidyante bhavah kva chana ke chana.*

,BDAG LAS MA YIN GZHAN LAS MIN,
,GNYIS LAS MA YIN RGYU MED MIN,
,DNGOS PO GANG DAG GANG NA YANG,
,SKYE BA NAM YANG YOD MA YIN,
.ZHES GSUNGS,

Nothing grows from itself;
Nothing grows from something else;
Nothing grows from both;
And nothing grows without a cause.
There is nothing at all that grows at all.

[85]

DON NI, PHYI NANG GI DNGOS PO GANG DAG CHOS CAN, BDAG LAS YUL DANG DUS DANG GRUB BA'I {PA'I} MTHA' GANG NA YANG SKYE BA NAM YANG YOD PA MA YIN TE, BDAG LAS SKYEN {SKYE NA} SLAR YANG SKYE BA DON MED PA DANG SLAR YANG SKYE BA THUG BA {PA} MED BA'I NYES PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR RO,,

Here is the point that's being made:²⁶

Consider all the *things* there are—whether they exist within us,
or outside of us.

There is nothing at all that grows at all from itself—regardless of the place,
or the time, or the point of view we consider;

Because—if things were to grow from themselves—then there would
be two problems: (1) it would be pointless for them to grow
once more; and (2) their growing once again would be endless.

[86]

JI LTAR NA MYU GU CHOS CAN, SLAR RANG GI RGYU'I SKAD CIG GNYIS PAR SKYE BA DON MED PAR THAL, RANG GI RGYU'I DUS NA RANG GI BDAG NYID DU RDZOGS PAR GRUB ZIN PA'I PHYIR,

²⁶ *Here is the point:* Choney Lama here breaks into the classical debate mode which has been followed for some 25 centuries; it is a favorite device of his, recalling his early career as one of the fiercest public debaters of his time. In instances we will supply the standard responses of his hypothetical opponent, as these would be assumed by an educated monastic reader.

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And how is that?

Let's consider a sprout.

It must *too* be the case that it would be pointless for the sprout to grow again, in the second moment of its existence.

Why do you say that?

Because, according to you, it would already have come into complete existence even in the moment of its cause.

[87]

MA KHYAB NA, DE CHOS CAN, KHYOD SLAR YANG SKYE BA THUG PA MED PAR THAL, RANG GI RGYUI DUS NA RANG GI BDAG NYID THOB ZIN KYANG SLAR YANG SKYE BA DON YOD PA'I PHYIR,

Just because the sprout would already have come into complete existence even in the moment of its cause doesn't necessarily mean that it would be pointless for the sprout to grow again, in the second moment of its existence.

Well then, let's take this same sprout. Are you saying that it would continue to grow, again and again, endlessly?

Why do you say that?

Because it has already come out completely at the time of its cause, and yet—according to you—there *is* some point to its growing once again.

[88]

DNGOS PO GANG DAG CHOS CAN, GZHAN LAS YUL DUS GRUB MTHA' GANG NA YANG SKYE BA NAM YANG YOD PA MA YIN TE, GZHAN LAS SKYEN {SKYE NA} KUN LAS KUN SKYE BAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

And let's take any of these working things, once more.

It is *never* the case that *any* of them could at all *grow from something else*—something other than itself—regardless of the place, or the time, or the point of view we consider;

Because if any of them *were* to grow from something else,

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then everything there is could grow from everything else there is.

[89]

JI LTAR NA, SA BON CHOS CAN, MYU GU DANG 'BREL MED DON GZHAN DU THAL,
MYU GU DANG LTOS MED KYI GZHAN YIN PA'I PHYIR,

And how is that?

Consider a seed.

It must be a thing which is totally other than, and disconnected from, its sprout.

Why do you say that?

Because it is something *other* than the sprout which in no way relies upon the sprout.

[90]

'DOD NA, KHYOD LAS [f. 6b] MYU GU SKYE BA LTAR RDO SOL SOGS THAMS CAD SKYE BAR THAL, MYU GU KHYOD DANG 'BREL MED DON GZHAN YIN YANG SKYE BA'I PHYIR

Well then, I agree: A seed is a thing which is totally other than, and disconnected from, its sprout.

If you do agree, then it must be the case that—in the same way that a sprout can grow from this seed—then things like stones or lumps of coal can also grow from it.

Why do you say that?

Because—even though the sprout is totally other than, and disconnected from, the seed—it can still grow from it.

[91]

RTAGS KHAS BLANGS,

Well! I disagree with this reason!

But you've already *accepted* the reason!

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[92]

DE BZHIN DU DNGOS PO GANG DAG CHOS CAN, RANG GZHAN **GNYIS LAS YUL**
DUS GRUB MTHA' GANG NA YANG SKYE BA NAM YANG YOD BA {PA} **MA YIN TE**,
BDAG LAS KYANG MI SKYE, GZHAN LAS MI SKYE BA'I PHYIR TE, RIGS PA BSTAN
ZIN PA'I PHYIR,

Just so, let us consider any of those working things.

Neither are they something which could ever be *a thing* that
grew, at all, *from both* themselves and from something else—
regardless of the place, or the time, or the point of view we
consider;

Because they neither grow from themselves, nor from something
else; we have already showed you the relevant reasoning!

[93]

DNGOS PO GANG DAG CHOS CAN, **RGYU MED LAS YUL DUS GRUB MTHA' GANG**
NA YANG SKYE BA NAM YANG YOD PA **MA YIN TE**, RGYU MED DU SKYE NA YUL
DUS SO SOR NGES PA MI 'THAD CING, RGYU SGRUB PA RNAMS DON MED PAR
'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

Consider, finally, any of those same working things.

Neither are they *something* that could *grow without a cause* at all;
regardless of the place, or the time, or the point of view we
consider;

For if these things could grow with no causes, then it would be
incorrect to assert that certain things have to grow in certain
places, or at certain times; moreover, it would be pointless
then to try to provide them the proper causes for their growth.

[94]

JI LTAR NA, MYU GU CHOS CAN, RGYU MED DU MI 'BYUNG STE, YUL DUS SO SOR
DES {NGES} PA'I SKYE BA MTHONG PA {BA} DANG, 'BRAS BUI DON DU RGYU
RTZOL BAS SGRUB BA {PA} YANG MTHONG ZHING DON YOD PA'I PHYIR,

And how is that?

Consider a sprout.

It cannot occur without any cause at all;

Because, first of all, we can see with our own eyes that certain things grow only in certain places, and at certain times. Secondly, we can see with our own eyes that when we labor to provide the causes for a certain result, then that result *does* come about—that there is a point served by all this effort.

Choosing the right negation

[95]
GNYIS PA NI,

This brings us to the second part from above: additional points raised by the assertion that nothing ever grows.

[96]
'DIR DGAG PA GNYIS KYI KHYAD PAR SHES DGOS PAS DE'I TSUL NI RGYAS PAR GZHAN DU BSTAN ZIN PA LAS SHES PAR BYA LA, BSDU NA,

Now in general there exist two different types of negation; and at this point our reader needs to know the difference between the two. I have already presented the details of how this works in other writings, so I would advise you to refer to those. I will though here give you just a brief review.

[97]
MED DGAG NI, BLOS DGAG BYA DNGOS SU BCAD NAS CHOS GZHAN MI 'PHEN PA ZHIG STE, RANG BZHIN MED PA DANG, DNGOS PO MED PA LTA BU'O.,

The first type of negation is a simple absence of something. This is where—incidental to the mind denying one thing—it is not the case that another thing is understood. Examples would be the fact that there exists no nature which is inherent to a thing; or the fact that some objects simply don't exist.

[98]
MA YIN DGAG NI BLOS DGAG BYA BCAD NAS CHOS GZHAN 'PHEN PA ZHIG STE, BUM PA MA YIN PA LAS LOG PA DANG, BUM MIN YOD PA LTA BU,

The second type of negation is where we say that something is not something. This is where—incidental to the mind denying one thing—it *is* the case that another thing is understood. Examples would be the opposite of everything which is not a water pitcher; or the presence of something which is not itself a water pitcher.

[99]

GZHAN YANG JI SKAD DU,
,DGAG PA DON GYIS BSTAN PA DANG,
,TSIG GCIG SGRUB PAR BYED PA DANG,
,DE LDAN RANG TSIG MI STON PA,
ZHES 'BYUNG BA LTAR BZHI STE SLA'O.,

We also see the following lines, where four different kinds of this second type of negation are listed—and these are easily understood:

There are types of negation
Where one thing implies another;
Where a single expression asserts another;
Where both together are the case;
And where the word itself implies nothing.²⁷

[100]

²⁷ *These four are easily understood:* Not really! The ultimate source for the verse appears to be a series of lines from a Sanskrit grammar text found translated in the Tengyur; it is entitled *Verses for a Brief Description of Negation* (see f. 251a, %S11, TD04293). We get some help on the verse from the autocommentary, *A Commentary to the “Brief Description of Negation,”* also in the Tengyur (see f. 256b, %S12, TD04294); but, as usual, it’s Je Tsongkapa who nails the point down—this time, in his renowned *Essence of Eloquence, on the Art of Interpretation* (see ff. 109a-109b, %B5, S05396).

Examples here are easiest; and we draw them from Tsongkapa. A “negation where one thing implies another” is where we say something like, “That monk John, the chubby one, never eats during the day”—implying that (illegally, for a monk) he indulges at night.

A “negation where a single expression asserts another” is where we say something like, “When a thing comes into existence, it does not grow from itself”—meaning that, in a single expression, we have both denied one thing and asserted another.

A “negation where both together are the case” is where we say something like, “That monk John, the chubby one, never eats during the day; and he is here, no slender fellow!”

A “negation where the word itself implies nothing” is where we say something like, “There’s a single person I’m thinking of; and he is—with question—either of the royal caste, or of the Brahmin caste. And I tell you, he is no Brahmin.” *But*, we say this to a person who doesn’t happen to know the difference between the two castes.

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'DIR BSTAN PA'I DAM [f. 7a] BCA' BZHI'I ZHEN DON MED DGAG YIN LA, MYU GU RANG BZHIN MED PA YANG MED DGAG YIN PAS, RIGS SHES KYIS MYU GU RANG BZHIN MED PAR GRUB KYANG RANG BZHIN MED PA YOD PA NI DNGOS SHUGS GANG RUNG LA GRUB PA MIN NO,,

The thing that we think is there, in the four assertions described in this verse of the Arya's root text, is a simple absence of something—while the fact that a sprout has no nature of its own is also a simple absence of something. A state of mind where we are reasoning clearly can conclude that the sprout has no nature of its own; but the existence of the fact that there is no nature of its own is not something it concludes—neither directly, nor implicitly.

[101]

'ON KYANG BAR DU TSAD MA GZHAN BRGYUD PA LAM {LA MA} BLTOS PAR RIG {RIGS?} SHES KYI STOBS LAS MYU GU RANG BZHIN MED PA DE MED PAR DOGS PA'I SGRO 'DOGS DANG 'DZIN STANGS DNGOS SU 'GAL BAI BLO BSKYED NUS SHING,

Nonetheless, one can—even without relying upon another, intervening perception which is accurate; all through the force of a state of mind where we are reasoning clearly—give rise to a mental state which is in direct contradiction to the way in which a mental overestimation of things holds to its object, as it entertains a suspicion that the fact that a sprout has no nature of its own is itself something that cannot exist.

[102]

DE NYID KYIS SGRO 'DOGS DE GCOD NUS TE, 'DI CUNG DKA' BA'I GNAS YIN PAS ZHIB TU DPYAD DGOS SO,,

This in itself though is not enough to cut off this tendency towards overestimation. All this is a somewhat difficult point; as such, it requires some careful examination.

[103]

'DI LEGS PAR MA SHES RNA {NA} LTA BA SKYONG BA'I TSE, RANG BZHIN MED PA'I MED DGAG NYID BLO'I 'DZIN STANGS KYI YUL DU MI BYED BAR {PAR} MA YIN DGAG BLO YUL DU SGRUB PAR BYAS NA LTA BA RNYED PA'I GEKS SU 'GYUR RO,,

If we fail to understand these points well, then as we work to maintain a correct viewpoint of the way things are, we fail in turn to take that simple absence as the object of how we are thinking of these points; rather, we posit—as the object of our mind—a negation of the second type, where we say that something is not something else. And this then becomes an obstacle in our attempts to arrive at an accurate view of reality.

The logic behind the denial

[104]

GNYIS PA LA GNYIS, BDAG SKYE 'GOG PA DANG, GZHAN SKYE 'GOG PA'I RIGS PA'O,,

This brings us to the second part in our denial that things could grow in any of the four extreme ways—where we present the logic behind this denial. This itself comes in two steps: the logic behind denying that things could grow from themselves; and the logic behind denying that things could grow from something other than themselves.

[105]

DANG PO NI, SANGS RGYAS BSKYANGS KYIS DNGOS PO RNAMS BDAG LAS SKYE BA MED DE, DE DAG GI SKYE BA DON MED PA NYID DU 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR DANG SKYE BA THUG PA MED PA NYID DU 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR, ZHES GSUNGS PA LA,

Here is the first. Master Buddhapalita made the statement as follows:

Things cannot grow from themselves, because—if they did—then their growth would be entirely pointless; and that growth would as well be entirely endless.

[106]

SLOB DPON LEGS LDAN 'BYED KYIS SKYON BRJOD PA DANG, ZLA BAS SKYON DE SPONG BA'I TSUL RNAMS NI DBU MA'I GZHUNG LAS SHES PAR BYA STE 'DIR MANG DU DOGS NAS MI BRJOD LA,

Master Bhavaviveka then criticized this position; and Master Chandrakirti, in turn, overturned that criticism. The history here is something you can learn from the great books of the middle way; I shall not present it here, for fear that my work would then go on too long.

[107]

GNYIS PA GZHAN SKYE BKAG PA LA YANG SKYON BRJOD TSUL DANG DE SPONG TSUL YANG GZHAN DU SHES PAR BYA'O,,

The parallel history—where the way in which things growing from something other than themselves was denied; and where that denial was criticized; and that criticism was itself overturned—is again something you can learn more about from other sources.

[108]

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MDOR NA RTZA BA'I GZHUNG 'DI DAG GIS MTHA' BZHI'I SKYE BA MED PA'I DAM BCA' DNGOS SU MDZAD NAS SCRUB BYED DNGOS [f. 7b] SU MA BSTAN KYANG GZHUNG 'OG MA RNAMS KYI SKABS PHAL CHAR {CHER} DANG 'GREL PA LAS GSAL BAR BSTAN PA LTAR RO,,

To put it briefly, the lines of the root text here present—directly—the assertion that nothing can grow in any of the four extreme ways; but in doing so, they do not present, in any direct sense, corresponding proofs that something else *is* the case. Nonetheless, we are following the way in which these latter points are quite clearly made in the great majority of the lines of the root text to follow; and in the commentary as well.²⁸

[109]

MTHA' BA ZHI'I {BZHI'I} SKYE BA KHAS LEN PA RNAMS KYIS SKYE RGYU'I DNGOS PO RNAMS RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PAR BZUNG STE MTHA' BZHI GANG RUNG LAS SKYE BAR 'DOD PA YIN LA,

Those who do believe that things could grow in one of these four extreme ways take the position that the things that grow exist, themselves, through some nature of their own—and then they say that these kinds of things must grow in some one or more of the four different ways.

[110]

'DIR DNGOS BO {PO} RNAMS RGYU RKYEN LA BRDEN NAS SKYE BA NYID KYIS MTHA' BZHI'I SKYE BA 'GOG BA {PA} YIN TE,

Here in Nagarjuna though we would say that the very fact that things grow based upon their causes and conditions itself disproves that these things could grow in any of the four, extreme ways.

[111]

'DI LTAR RGYU MED LAS SKYE BA NI 'GOG SLA ZHING, RGYU YOD KYANG RANG DANG NGO BO GCIG PA DANG THA DAD PA'I RGYU GANG RUNG LAS SKYE DGOS PAS,

How does this go? We can easily disqualify the idea that things could ever grow without any causes at all. Now assuming that they do have to have causes, then they would either have to grow from causes that were one with them, or causes that were distinct from them.

[112]

²⁸ *Points made in the commentary:* Referring no doubt to Master Chandrakirti's masterwork.

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RANG DANG NGO BO GCIG PA'I RGYU LAS SKYE BA 'DOD TSUL NI BDAG SKYE
'DOD TSUL YIN PAS DE SLAR YANG SKYE BA DON MED DU THAL BA SOGS KYIS
'GOG LA,

Saying that things could grow from causes that were one with them is tantamount to saying that things could grow from themselves; which again we deny because it would be pointless for these things to grow once more—and so on.

[113]

RANG DANG NGO BO THA DAD BA'I {%-PA'I} 'BREL MED DON GZHAN LAS SKYE
BAR 'DOD PA NI GZHAN SKYE 'DOD TSUL TE, DE NI THAMS CAD LAS THAMS CAD
SKYE BA 'GOG PA'I RIGS PAS 'GOG PA'I PHYIR GNYIS KA LAS SKYE BAR 'DOD PA NI
RIGS PA DE RNAMS KYI SA {%-KYIS} 'GOG NUS SO,,

Saying that things could grow from causes that were distinct from them—from other things with which they shared no connection—is what it means when we say that someone accepts the idea that things could grow from something else. This idea is itself denied by the logic with refuses that everything there is could grow from everything else there is. And all this logic is enough, in turn, to disprove any belief that things could ever grow both from themselves, and from other things, at the same time.

Arguments in favor of things growing from something else

[114]

GNYIS PA LA GNYIS, RTZOD PA DANG, LAN NO,,

We turn now to the logic behind denying that things could grow from something other than themselves. This begins with an argument, and continues on to our response to the argument.

[115]

DANG PO NI, RANG SDE DNGOS SMRA BA RNAMS NA RE, RANG GI RGYUI BDAG
NYID LAS SKYE BA MI 'THAD PAS BDAG SKYE MI RIGS SHING, DE MI RIGS PAS
GNYIS KA LAS SKYE BA YANG MI RIGS LA, RGYU MED LAS SKYE BA NI SHIN TU
THA CHAD PAS MI RIGS NA'ANG, GZHAN LAS MIN ZHES GZHAN SKYE 'GOG PA 'DI
MI 'THAD DE, RGYAL BAS RKYEN BZHI GZHAN DU 'GYUR BA KHO NA 'BRAS BU
RNAMS KYI SKYED BYED DU GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,

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Here is the first. The functionalist group²⁹ among our own Buddhist schools makes the following statement:

Saying that things grow from themselves is incorrect, since it would be wrong to say that anything could grow from a unit including both the result and its cause. Given that this would be wrong, it would also be wrong to say that something could grow both from itself and from something else. Saying that anything could grow without any cause at all would be wrong as well, since that would simply be way beyond possible.

Saying though that things cannot grow from something other than themselves—“nothing grows from something else”—could never be correct; for the victorious Buddha himself stated that the four types of conditions (and these only as things *other than* their results) are what act to cause results to grow.

[116]
DE YANG GANG ZHE NA,

“What then,” you may ask, “*are* these four different conditions?” The answer is found in the following verse.

[117]
(I.4)
**Catvārah pratyayā hetur ārambaṇam anantaram,
Tathaivādhipateyam ca pratyayo nāsti pañcamah.**

*Chatvarah pratyaya hetur arambanam anantaram,
Tathaivadhipateyan cha pratyayo nasti panchamah.*

,RKYEN RNAM BZHI STE RGYU DANG NI,
,DMIGS PA DANG NI DE MA THAG
,BDAG [f. 8a] PO YANG NI DE BZHIN TE,
,RKYEN LNGA PA NI YOD MA YIN,
ZHES SO,,

²⁹ *Functionalist group*: This group consists of the first three of the four classical Buddhist schools of ancient India: the Detailist; Sutrist; and Mind-Only Schools—all of whom believe that the way things perform a function is something inherent to them. They would say, for example, that the fact that fire burns things is inherent to fire. See for example the explanation of the group’s name by Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche (1901-1981) in his outline to the middle-length version of Je Tsongkapa’s “Steps to the Path” (ff. 224a-224b, %B6, S00271).

The different types of conditions
Are four: the causal condition,
And just so then the object condition;
The condition for what comes immediate after;
And finally the dominant condition.
There is no fifth kind of condition.

[118]

'DI LTAR **RKYEN NI RNAM PA BZHI STE**, 'BRAS BU GANG GI SGRUB BYED SA BON GYI NGO BOR GNAS **RGYU'I RKYEN DANG, YANG DE BZHIN DU DMIGS PA GANG GIS SEMS SEMS BYUNG GAR {GANG} SKYE BAR 'GYUR BA DMIGS PA'I RKYEN DANG,**

The different types of conditions, then, *are four*. First there is *the causal condition*, which exists in the form of a seed which acts to bring a particular result into being. *And just so then* there is *the object condition*—referring to any particular object of the mind which acts to produce a particular main mind, or mental functions.

[119]

RGYU 'GAG MA THAG GANG GIS 'BRAS BU SKYED PAR BYED PA **NI DE MA THAG PA'I RKYEN DANG, GANG ZHIG YOD NA GANG RANG DBANG DU SKYED PA BDAG PO'I RKYEN YIN LA,**

Next there is *the condition for what comes immediately after*—the one which produces a result just after that cause has ended. *And then finally* there is *the dominant condition*: the one which, if it is present, will of its own accord produce something.

[120]

DER MA 'DUS PA'I **RKYEN LNGA PA NI YOD PA MA YIN TE, MING MI MTHUN PA'I RKYEN MTSAN NYID PA RNAMS NI BZHI PO DER 'DUS LA, GZHAN GYIS BTAGS PA'I DBANG PHYUG RTAG PA SOGS NI RKYEN DU MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR, DES NA GZHAN SKYE BKAG PA LUNG DANG 'GAL ZHES ZER RO,,**

There is no fifth kind of condition: one which is not included among the four just mentioned. Which is to say, actual conditions with names other than the ones you see here can be grouped into the four; whereas things that other groups just call “conditions”—a creator being who is unchanging, for example—could never truly *be* conditions. And because these actual types of conditions do exist—says the opponent here—you are contradicting the word of the Buddha when you deny that things could grow from something other than themselves.

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A response denying growth by nature

[121]

GNUIS PA LAN LA GNYIS, RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA 'GOG PA DANG, RANG BZHIN GYIS GZHAN YIN PA 'GOG PA'O,,

Our response to these arguments proceeds in two steps: a denial that things could grow through any nature of their own; and a denial that things could even *be* something else, through any nature of their own.

[122]

DANG PO NI,

The first of these is expressed in the following verse of the root text:

[123]

(I.5)

Na hi svabhāvo bhāvānām pratyayādiṣu vidyate,
Avidyamāne svabhāve parabhāvo na vidyate.

*Na hi svabhavo bhavanam pratyayadishu vidyate,
Avidyamane svabhavo parabhavo na vidyate.*

,DNGOS PO RNAMS KYI RANG BZHIN NI,
,RKYEN LA SOGS LA YOD MA YIN,
,BDAG GI DNGOS PO YOD MIN NA,
,GZHAN DNGOS YOD PA MA YIN NO,,

ZHES SO,,

**The nature of things is not something
That exists in their conditions or such;
If there is no thing that's a thing itself,
Then there is no thing that's something else.**

[124]

'BRAS BUI DNGOS PO RNAMS KYI RANG BZHIN TE NGO BO MYU GU LA SOGS PA NI CHOS CAN, SA BON LA SOGS PA'I RKYEN TSOGS PA DANG KHA YAR BA DANG GNYIS KA SOGS GANG LA YANG RANG SKYES PA'I SNGA ROL TU NGO BO THA DAD PA'I TSUL DU BRTEM NAS YOD PA MA YIN TE, DE LTAR YOD PA NI DMIGS RUNG MA DMIGS PAS KHEGS SHING, SLAR YANG SKYE BA DON MED PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

Let's consider *the nature*, or essence, *of things*—of results: things like sprouts or the like.

It is not something that exists in their conditions—in their seeds, or whatever the case may be—whether we consider these conditions as they convene; or as they exist individually; as both of these, *or any such* possibility. That is, this nature is not something which could exist before the result itself had grown, in a form where it depended upon these conditions as things which were essentially separate from it.

And that is impossible because—if that were the way things were—it would be something that we could observe in the world; but in fact we do not. Moreover, it would in that case be pointless for the result to grow over again.

[125]

'BRAS BUI **BDAG GI DNGOS PO** MYU GU SOGS CHOS CAN, [f. 8b] RANG RGYU SA BON DON GZHAN LAS 'BYUNG BA'I **DNGOS** POR NGO BO NYID KYIS **YOD PA MA YIN PAS GZHAN LAS SKYE BA MED DE**, RANG RGYU SA BON GYI DUS NA **YOD PA MA YIN PA'I PHYIR**,

And let's consider a thing *that's a thing*—a result—*itself*: the sprout, or whatever it may be.

It is *not a thing* which could ever grow from something else, for it is not something which could ever *be there* as a thing that existed in and of itself, and which came from *something* that was *other* than itself: from a seed, for example, acting as its cause.

And that's true because it is *not something* which even exists, at the time of its cause—at the time of the seed.

[126]

KHYAB STE, SA BON DON GZHAN LAS NGO BO NYID KYIS SKYES NA SA BON GYI DUS DER YANG BYA BA'I RTEN DU YOD DGOS PA'I PHYIR,

Just because something doesn't exist at the time of its cause doesn't necessarily imply that it is not a thing which could ever grow from something else, for the reason you've stated.

And yet it does necessarily imply that; for if something were to grow, in and by itself, from a seed that was an object separate from it, then it would have to exist as well—as a basis of the event—at the time of its seed.

[127]

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DER THAL, RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB NA, GRUB PA'I DUS THAMS CAD RTEN BRDEN
PAR YOD DGOS SHING, DE MED NA RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA'I DON MA TSANG
BAS THA SNYAD DU YOD PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

I disagree that that is the case.

And yet it is *so* the case, because—if these things existed through some nature of their own—then for all the time that they did exist they would have to exist as a basis and what rests upon that basis. And if they did not exist in this way, then some part of what it means to “exist through some nature of their own” would be missing; and in that case, they would have to exist only nominally.

[128]

DE YANG MYU GU SKYE BA'I BYA BA NI RTEN DANG MYU GU NI BRDEN PA'AM
BYED PA POR 'JOG PA YIN LA, RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA LAN CIG RTEN BRDEN
PAR SONG NA DUS THAMS CAD DU DER 'GRO DGOS SO,,

In this argument, we are referring to the event of the sprout’s growing as the “basis”; in which case we identify the sprout as what rests upon this basis—or the thing which in this case is acting. And if these things were to exist through some nature of their own, then if they acted even once as the basis and as what rests upon this basis, then they would have to do so at every other point in time as well.

[129]

MYU GU RANG GI SA BON LAS SKYE ZHES BRJOD PA'I TSE SKYES PA'I MYU GU DE
SA BON GYI DUS SU MED CING, SA BON GYI DUS SU YOD PA'I MYU GU ZHIG SKYE
BAR MIN MOD,

Now when we say that “a sprout has grown from a seed,” it’s admittedly the case that the sprout does not exist at the time of the seed; and not the case that a sprout which did exist at the time of the seed then grew.

[130]

THA SNYAD DU SKYE 'GYUR LA LTOS NAS MYU GU SA BON LAS SKYE ZHES
BRDZOD {BRJOD} PA NI 'THAD PAS SKYE BZHIN PA'I BYA BA BYED PA PO'I MYU
GU YOD LA,

Relative though to something which, nominally, is going to grow, it is alright to say that “the sprout grows from the seed”—and that there does exist a sprout which performs the act of being in the process of growing.

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[131]

RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE NA MYU GU RANG GI SA BON LAS SKYE ZHES BRJOD PA LTAR MYU GU DE RANG GI SA BON GYI DUS SU YOD BZHIN DU SKYE DGOS KYI, MED NA SKYE BA MI 'THAD PAS BDAG SKYE YOD PAR 'GYUR RO,,

If though things grew through some nature of their own, then as we word it when we say “a sprout is growing from its seed,” then the sprout would have to be growing in a way where it also existed at the time of its seed. If on the other hand it did not, it would be incorrect to say it was growing—and thus, things growing from themselves would have to be something that did exist.

[132]

RANG LUGS NI, MYU GU RANG GI SA BON GYI DUS SU MED KYANG DE LAS SKYE BAR 'DOD CING DE NI BRDZUN PA'I TSUL LA MI 'GAL YANG BDEN PAR GRUB PA LA 'GAL LO,,

Here is our own position on this issue. It is *not* the case that the sprout does exist at the time of its seed; nonetheless, we *can* agree that it *does* grow from that seed. This kind of thing is no contradiction in a world where things exist in a deceptive way; but it would be a contradiction in a world where things existed as something real.

[133]

GZHAN LAS SKYE NA'ANG 'BRAS BU NI SA BON LA LTOS MED YAN GAR DU SKYE BAR 'DOD DGOS PAS

And even where a person agrees that things could grow from something other than themselves, you would have then to agree that they grew in such a way that they were discrete, separate entities from their seeds—and no longer relied upon them.

[134]

RGYU 'BRAS DUS MNYAM PAR 'GYUR BA SOGS SHES PAR BYA STE, RIGS PA'I [f. 9a] GNAD 'DI MGON { %MA GO NA } 'OG TU DGAG SGRUB MDZAD PA'I DON LEGS PAR MI GO BAS

Try to understand that, in this case, there would arise certain problems; such as the cause and its result having to be simultaneous. If you fail to comprehend this crucial point in the reasoning process here, then later on in the text you will fail to grasp, perfectly, points that are made in the process of denying certain ideas and asserting others.

[135]

SHES PAR BYA'O,,

Do make an effort, then, to absorb these ideas, here at this point.

A response denying something else by nature

[136]

GNYIS PA NI, GZHUNG SNGA MA'I MIN NA ZHES PA'I NA ZHES GNAS GZHI DANG SBYAR LA, 'DIR NA ZHES DUS KYI BDUN PA DANG SBYARO {[%SBYAR RO},,,

Here is that second step: a denial that things could even *be* something else, through any nature of their own. Let's look at the particle "if" in the verse of the root text covered earlier in this section. It's parallel to the particle "in" that came just before it, which is a locative: *where* something is happening. The "if" though should be understood as a locative (seventh of the classical declensions) in the sense of time: *when* something is happening.³⁰

[137]

'BRAS BUI DNGOS PO RNAMS KYI RANG BZHIN NAM NGO BO CHOS CAN, SA BON SOGS RKYEN TSOGS PA DANG KHA YAR GANG YANG RNAM PAR MA 'GYUR PA'I {[%BA'I]} DUS NA YOD PA MA YIN TE, DE LTAR YOD PA MA MTHONG BA'I PHYIR DANG YOD NA RGYU MED DU 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR RO,,

Let's consider then the nature, or essence, of things which are results.

They are not something which can exist at a point in time where their conditions—seeds or whatever, considered either once they have convened, or as separate entities—have not yet undergone some transformation;

For we never observe the existence of any such result; and even if we did, it would then occur without a cause.

[138]

YANG 'BRAS BU BDAG GI DNGOS PO MYU GU CHOS CAN, RANG RGYU SA BON LAS NGO BO NYID KYIS GZHAN GYI DNGOS PO NYID DU YOD PA MA YIN PAS

³⁰ *Seventh of the declensions:* Choney Lama is commenting on the closeness of the corresponding Tibetan particles—*na* here for *if*, and *la* for *in*—which often overlap; he is also taking the opportunity to impress on us emptiness over both space *and* time. In a presentation of seven, the classical declension of nouns in Tibetan (which reflects that of Sanskrit) is given as: (1) nominative; (2) accusative; (3) instrumental; (4) dative; (5) ablative; (6) genitive; and (7) locative—which can indicate either place or time. The root text verse last listed (I.5) has said “*If [Tib: na] there is no thing...*” and just before that “*in [Tib: la] their conditions.*”

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GZHAN LAS SKYE BA MED DE, RANG RGYU SA BON RNAM PAR MA 'GYUR PA'I
{%BA'I} DUS NA YOD PA MA YIN PA'I PHYIR ZHES KHYAB PA NYID BSGRUB PO,,

Again let us consider this thing—the sprout—which is itself a result.

It does not exist as this sheer thing which is—in and by itself—something else than its cause, the seed; and thus there is no such thing as something which could grow from something other than it.

Because it is not something which can be present in the time that its cause—the seed—has yet to undergo any transformation. Which is to say, the necessary relationship between the result and the quality to be proven in our argument does hold true.

[139]

DE LTAR NA BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS RKYEN BZHI GSUNGS PA LTAR 'DOD KYANG,
GZHAN SKYE YOD MI DGOS TE, 'BRAS BU RANG DANG 'BREL MED DON GZHAN
PA'I RGYU LAS NGO BO NYID KYIS SKYE BA KHEGS PA'I PHYIR,

And so even if we accept the four conditions, as they were described by the Conqueror, it's not the case that things can grow from something other than themselves. And that's because we deny that a result can grow, in and by itself, from a cause which is a discrete entity from it, and with which it shares no relationship.

[140]

DER THAL, GZHAN SKYE 'DOD PA DAG GIS 'BRAS BU RNAMS RANG GI MTSAN
NYID KYIS GRUB PA'I RGYU GZHAN LAS SKYE BAR 'DOD PAS DE LTAR NA RGYU
'BRAS GNYIS SO SOR 'BREL MED DU 'DOD DGOS NA'ANG DE 'DRA MI 'THAD PA'I
PHYIR,

And that in turn is the case because those who assert that things do grow from something other than themselves assert that results grow from causes which exist by definition, and thus must in turn assert that the cause and its result are individual entities which share no relationship—and even just accepting this is incorrect.

[141]

'DI DAG GIS RIGS PA GSUM BSTAN TE, GZHAN DANG SKYE BA'I GZHI MTHUN
DANG SKYE BA DANG RGYU 'BRAS GNYIS NGO BO NYID KYIS GZHAN YIN PA LA
GNOD BYED BSTAN NAS 'GOG PA'O,,

These sections are presenting three different reasonings, denying what they do by presenting problems with accepting (1) any one thing that could be both a growing and a case where cause

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and its result are different from one another; (2) the fact of the growing itself; and (3) a cause and its result where the two could be different from each other, in and by themselves.

[142]

DGAG BYA YANG SPYIR NI RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA CES 'BYUNG BA DE YIN LA,
DE NI GSAR DU BCOS PA MA YIN PA DANG, RANG GI NGO BO GZHAN LA [f. 9b]
BLTOS NAS BCOS PA MIN PA DANG, PHYIN CHAD GZHAN DU MI 'GYUR BA'I KHYAD
CHOS GSUM TSANG DGOS TE,

What we are denying, stated in general terms, is the very fact that anything could occur in a way where it existed through some nature of its own. If such a thing could ever be, it would have to possess, complete, three different characteristics: (1) it could never be something which was a fresh creation; (2) its essential nature could never be something which was created fresh, through reliance upon something other than itself; and (3) it could never, in all time subsequent to the present, transform in any way.

[143]

RAB BYED BCO LNGA PAR,
,RANG BZHIN DAG NI BCOS MIN DANG,
,GZHAN LA BLTOS PA MED PA YIN,
,ZHES ,DANG,

As the 15th chapter of *Wisdom* itself puts it,

These natures would have to be things
That could never be created,
And never relied upon something else.

[144]

,RANG BZHIN GZHAN DU 'GYUR BA NI,
,NAM YANG 'THAD PA MA YIN NO.,
ZHES GSUNGS PA LTAR RO.,

And from the same chapter:

The transformation of a nature
Into something else
Could never be correct.

[145]

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KHYAD CHOS DE GSUM TSANG BA TZAM GYIS RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB MI DGOS KYANG, RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB NA KHYAD CHOS DE GSUM PO TSANG DGOS TE,

Now it's not the case that—just because these three different characteristics all apply—then the object in question must exist through some nature of its own; but if something did exist through a nature of its own, then it would have to possess all three, complete.

[146]

RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB NA DUS THAMS CAD DU DE LTAR GRUB PA DANG, GZHAN LA MA LTOS PAR DE LTAR GRUB PA DANG, DANG PO NAS DE LTAR GRUB DGOS PAS 'GOG PA'I TSE GNAD DE LTAR DU BSAMS NAS 'GOG DGOS KYI, THA SNYAD DU GNAS PA'I DON NI MI 'GOG GO

This is true because—if something did exist by nature—it would have to exist that way in all the time that it existed; and it would have to exist that way without ever relying on something other than itself; and it would, from the very beginning, have to exist that way. And when we deny that something could exist by nature, we need to make our denial with these descriptions in mind. It is not though the case that we are denying an object which could exist in names alone.

[147]

,BUM PA LTA BU RANG BZHIN GYIS GCIG TU GRUB NA BUM PA GRUB TZAM NYID NAS CHA THAMS CAD NAS GCIG TU GRUB DGOS PAS BUM PA'I STENG NA THA DAD PA'I CHA YIN PA MI SRID DGOS PA DANG,

If we were to take the example of something like a water pitcher, we can say that—if it existed as a single object, through some nature of its own—then in the moment that the water pitcher came into existence, each and every one of its constituent parts would have to exist as that one single object. Which means that it would have to be impossible for there to be any discrete parts of the pitcher.

[148]

SA MYUG GNYIS RANG BZHIN GYIS THA DAD NA DE SO SO'I STENG DU GCIG YIN PA MI SRID PA SOGS SU 'GYUR TE, DE DAG LA GCIG DANG THA DAD YIN PA'I CHA MI 'DRA BA SRID NA NI BDEN PAR GRUB PA'AM RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA'I DON MA TSANG NGO.,

And if these two—the seed and the sprout—were distinct from each other through any nature of their own, then with respect to each one individually it would be impossible for either to be a single thing—and there would be other such problems. If either one of the seed or sprout could possess discrete aspects of being either or of being separate, then the requirements for it to exist in truth, or to exist through some nature of its own, would no longer be complete.

[149]

TSUL 'DI NI GNAD DU CHE STE, 'OG NAS 'CHAD PA'I LAM GSUM LA BA GOM {BGOM} PA RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA 'GOG PA SOGS LA NUS PA CHE'O,,

It's crucial to understand how all this works; these ideas are very powerful at points covered later on in the presentation—such as where we deny that stepping on any of the three parts of a path could exist through any nature of its own.³¹

[150]

MDOR NA RIGS PA'I 'PHUL MTSAMS PHRA BA RNAMS LA SNGAR BSHAD PA'I KHYAD CHOS GSUM MAM GANG RUNG GI SPYI SHAR BAR BYAS NA NGES PA CHEN PO STER BAR 'GYUR GYI, GZHAN DU TSIG TZAM ZHIG TU 'GRO'O,,

In sum, it imparts to us a firm grasp of these topics if—at delicate points in the flow of the logic—we can recall the three characteristics just presented; or even just the general import of any one or two. Otherwise it will all be just words to us.

**Nothing is a condition
simply because
it causes things to grow**

[151]

GNYIS PA LA GSUM, RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN THUN MONG DU DGAG PA, SO SOR DGAG [f. 10a] DGAG {only one DGAG} PA, 'GOG TSUL GZHAN BSTAN PA'O,,

Having denied that results could possess any nature of growing, we now move on to denying that what makes these results grow could possess any nature of being a condition. For this, we proceed in three steps: (1) denying that, as a group, the four conditions could possess any nature of being conditions; (2) denying that, individually, they could possess any such nature; and (3) a presentation of other, relevant denials.

[152]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, BYED PA'I SGO NAS RKYEN DU RTOG PA DGAG ,LAS KYI SGO NAS DER RTOG PA DGAG PA'O,,

³¹ *Three parts of a path:* Covered by Choney Lama in folios 14a-14b of his commentary, below: (1) that part of a path upon which we have finished stepping; (2) that part on which we are currently stepping; and (3) that part upon which we have yet to step.

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The first we discuss in two parts of its own: denying the idea that something could be a condition from the point of view of its doing anything; and then denying the idea that something could be a condition from the point of view of the associated action.

[153]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, SKYE BA'I BYA BA SGRUB PA'I SGO NAS RKYEN RTOG PA DGAG ,BRAS BU SKYE BA'I SGO NAS RKYEN DU RTOG PA DGAG PA'O,,

The first of these has two parts of its own: denying the idea that something is a condition because it accomplishes the act of growing; and denying the idea that something is a condition because a result does grow.

[154]

DANG PO NI,

The first of these two is expressed in following lines of the root text:

[155]

(I.6-7)

Kriyā na pratyayavatī nāpratyayavatī kriya,
Pratyayā nākriyāvantah kriyāvantaś ca santyuta.
Utpadyate pratītyemān itīme pratyayāḥ kila,
Yāvan notpadyata ime tāvan nāpratyayāḥ katham.

*Kriya na pratyayavati napratyayavati kriya,
Pratyaya nakriyavantah kriyavantash cha santyuta.
Utpadyate pratityeman itime pratyayah kila,
Yavan notpadyata ime tavan napratyayah katham.*

,BYA BA RKYEN DANG LDAN PA MED,³²
,RKYEN DANG MI LDAN BYA BA MED,
,BYA BA RKYEN DANG MI LDAN MIN,
,BYA BA LDAN TE 'ON TE NA,
,DI DAG LA BRTEM SKYE BAS NA,
,DE PHYIR 'DI DAG RKYEN ZHES GRAG
,CI SRID MA SKYE DE SRID DU,
,DI DAG RKYEN MIN JI LTAR MIN,

³² *lDan-pa med*: The Derge Tengyur here wrongly reads *ldan-pa yin*.

ZHES SO,,

**There is no act
Which has a condition;
And there is no act
Which has no condition.**

**If the act did have it,
And in that case
Conditions were called
What they are because
It had grown depending upon them,**

**Then until such time
As it had grown,
How could it be that they were not
Something that wasn't a condition?**

[156]

DE YANG SPYIR MTHO GANG TZAM GYI DU SKYE BA'I MYU GU YOD LA, DES RANG GI SKYE BA'I BYA BA BRTZAMS NAS MTHO GANG TSAD DU MA SKYES KYI BAR RANG NYID SKYE BA'I BYA BA BYED BZHIN PAR BZHAG DGOS KYANG,

Now generally speaking, there does exist such a thing as a sprout which grows to a height of a single handlength.³³ And we would have to say that—from the time that the act of growing is initiated, and on up to the point where the sprout is a handlength long—it is in the act of growing.

[157]

SKYE BZHIN PA'I DUS SU NI, BYED PA PO MYU GU MED CING, SKYES PA'I TSE SKYE BA'I BYA BA 'GAGS PAS SKYE BZHIN PA YANG MED DE,

During this time though—in which the sprout is in the act of growing—there is no finished sprout which can be the agent of the action. But by the time the sprout *has* finished growing, then the *act* of growing has ended; as such, there can be no such thing as “the sprout being in the act of growing.”

[158]

³³ *One handlength:* That is, a *mtho-gang*, classically defined as the length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger, as the fingers are spread out wide.

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'BRAS BU SKYE BA LA MNGON DU PHYOGS PA DANG RGYU 'GAGS PA LA MNGON DU PHYOGS PA GNYIS DUS MNYAM, 'BRAS BU SKYES ZIN PA DANG RGYU 'GAGS ZIN PA'I BYA BA GNYIS KYANG DUS MNYAM PA'I PHYIR RO,,

This is because the point at which the result is approaching having grown, and the point at which the cause is approaching having ended, are simultaneous. And the point at which the result has finished growing, and the point at which the cause has finished ending, are also simultaneous.

[159]

DE'I TSE MYU GU LTA BU RANG GI BYA BA SKYE BZHIN PA DANG 'GAG BZHIN PA GNYIS LA THUN MONG DU BRTEM PA YIN GYI BYA BA GNYIS SO SO LA THUN MONG MA YIN PA'I MYU GU RE RE BRTEM PA MA YIN TE,

During this process, something like a sprout depends, mutually, upon these two acts: of one ongoing process of growth, and of another ongoing process of ending. But it's not as if there are two separate sprouts where each depends upon its own isolated act, from among the two.

[160]

YIN NA MYU GU SKYE BZHIN PA'I DUS NA'ANG MYU GU YOD DGOS PAS MYU GU'I CHA THAMS CAD NAS SKYE BZHIN PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR MYU GU SKYES MA ZIN PAR 'GYUR LA,

This is because, if that were the case, then—since the finished sprout would have to be present even during the period in which it was in the act of growing—then each and every component part of the sprout would have still to be in the act of growing; in which case the sprout itself could not have finished growing.

[161]

MYU GU LTA BU RANG GI SKYES ZIN GYI BYA BA KHO NA LA BRTEM NA MYU GU SKYE BA'I BYA BA BYED PA PO'I MYU GU MED PAR [f. 10b] 'GYUR BA SOGS YIN PA'I PHYIR,

And if something like a sprout depended only upon its having finished growing, then for example there could be no sprout which was the agent in the growing of a sprout.

[162]

DE BZHIN DU MIG GI RNAM SHES SOGS LA'ANG SBYAR RGYU YIN NO,,

This same reasoning can be applied to something like visual consciousness.

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[163]

DE LTAR GO BAR BYAS NAS GZHUNG GI DON NI, MIG GI RNAM SHES CHOS CAN,
KHYOD SKYE BA'I **BYA BA** RANG GI NGO BOS GRUB PA'I MI {MIG?} SOGS LA
RKYEN DANG LDAN PA'I SGO NAS SGRUB PA **MED** DE, KHYOD MA SKYES PA
SKYED PA'I BYA BA DON DAM PAR MED CING, SKYES ZIN SLAR SKYE BA'I BYA BA
YANG MED PA'I PHYIR,

Once we have understood these points, we can turn to the import of the verse here:

Consider visual consciousness.

There is no act of its growing which is accomplished through its having a condition—such as the eye, for example—which exists in and of itself;

Because there is no act of its growing where a version of itself which is yet to grow is made to grow, in any ultimate sense; and yet neither is there any act where a version of itself which has already finished growing grows once again.

[164]

DE CHOS CAN, KHYOD SKYE BA'I **BYA BA** **RKYEN DANG MI LDAN PA'I** SGO NAS
BSGRUB PA YANG **MED** DE, DE LTAR 'BYUNG BA MI SRID PA'I PHYIR,

Consider this same consciousness.

*Neither is there an act of its growing which is accomplished through its **not** having a condition;*

Because it's impossible for that to happen.

[165]

DE CHOS CAN, MIG SOGS SKYE BA'I **BYA BA** DON DAM PAR **MI LDAN PAR** KHYOD
KYI RKYEN DU RANG BZHIN GYIS MED DE, DE'I TSE MIG SOGS THA SNYAD DU
KHYOD KYI RKYEN YIN YANG DON DAM PA'I **RKYEN MA YIN PA'I** PHYIR,

Consider this consciousness once again.

The eye and such could *never* serve as its *conditions*, through any nature of their own, if they *involved no act* of growing, in an ultimate sense;

Because in that case the eye and so forth—even though they were

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serving as its conditions in a nominal sense—would not be conditions in any ultimate sense.

[166]

DE CHOS CAN, MIG SOGS RKYEN GYIS BYA BA SGRUB PA'I SGO NAS KYANG DON DAM PAR MI SKYE STE, KHYOD SKYED BYED KYI **BYA BA** RANG NGOS NAS LDAN PAR YOD PA NI MA YIN PA 'ON TE KHON {**%KHO NA**} MA YIN PA'I PHYIR,

Once more consider the consciousness.

Neither is it something which could ever grow, in any ultimate sense,
through the conditions of the eye and so forth accomplishing
this act;

Because the *act* that they cause to grow is not something that could ever exist in a way where these conditions *had* it from their own side;
that is, this could never be *the case*.

[167]

RANG LUGS NI BRGYUD RGYU DANG DNGOS RGYU GNYIS KAS 'BRAS BU SKYE BA'I BYA BA SGRUB PAR BYED PAS BYA BA RKYEN LDAN YIN YANG, 'DIR BYA BA RKYEN LDAN LA RANG BZHIN 'GOG PA'O.,

Our own position is that—because both indirect causes and direct causes function to accomplish the act of a result growing—then we can say that acts have their conditions. The purpose of these lines of *Wisdom* though is to deny that an act which is involved with conditions could ever have any nature of its own.

[168]

DE YANG MIG SOGS RNAMS 'BRAS BU RNAM SHES SOGS SKYE BA'I BYA BA SGRUB PA'I RKYEN TE, MTHAR DES BSGRUBS PA'I BYA BA'I KHYAD PAR CIG LAS 'BRAS BU SKYE BAR 'DOD DGOS SO.,

And the eye and so forth are conditions which accomplish the act of the growing of their results —things like the visual consciousness. This is because, in the end, we would have to agree that the results had grown through some aspect of an act that these conditions had accomplished.

**Nothing is a condition
just because a result does grow**

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[169]
GNYIS PA NI,

Here next is the second part of our denial that something could be a condition from the point of view of its doing anything; that is, denying the idea that something is a condition because a result does grow.

[170]
MDO SDE PA SOGS NA RE, BYA BA RKYEN DANG LDAN MI LDAN GYI DPYOD PA
'DIS CI BYA, MIG SOGS RKYEN '**DI DAG LA BRTEM** NAS MIG GI RNAM SHES SOGS
SKYE BAR MTHONG **BAS NA**, RGYU MTSAN **DE'I PHYIR** MIG SOGS '**DI DAG** RANG
DBANG GIS RNAM SHES KYI **RKYEN** DU 'JOG [f. 11a] GO **ZHES GRAG** PA STE ZER
RO,,

Now groups like the Sutrists make the following claim:

What's the use of examining here whether or not acts involve conditions? We can see with our own eyes that things like visual consciousness *grow*, through a process where they *depend upon these* conditions; upon the eye and so forth. And it's *because* of this—for this very reason—that the eye and such *are called what they are*: are established, all of their own accord, as being the *conditions* of consciousness.

[171]
DE LTAR SMRA BAR MI RIGS TE, SA BON LAS **JI SRID** DU 'BRAS BU **MI SKYE** BA
STE SKYE BA'I BYA BA DNGOS SU MA MTHONG BA **DE SRID DU** SA BON '**DI DAG**
'BRAS BUI **RKYEN MIN** PA **JI LTAR MIN** TE RKYEN MIN PA KHO NA YIN PA'I PHYIR
TE,

And yet it's a mistake to make this kind of statement. *Until such time as the result has grown* from the seed—that is, until such time as we have seen, directly, the act of growing; then *how could it be that they—the seeds—would not be things that weren't conditions?* That is, they could *never* be conditions.

[172]
'BRAS BU SKYE BA LA MNGON DU PHYOGS PA'I DUS SU RKYEN RNAMS BYA BA
DANG LDAN GYI, DE'I SNGON DU MI LDAN PAR KHYOD KYIS KHAS BLANGS PA
LTAR 'THAD PA'I PHYIR,

And that's because you yourself have accepted the idea that—during the time that the result is approaching having grown—the conditions involve an act; but before that, do not. And of course, that idea must be correct!

[173]

DER THAL, BRGYUD RGYUI DUS SU 'BRAS BU DE SKYE BA'I BYA BA SGRUB KYANG DE DA DUNG MA SKYES SHING, BYA BA DE DNGOS RGYUI DUS KHO NAR YOD PA'I PHYIR,

And that *is* the case, because—when we're considering an indirect cause—then during the time of the cause the act of the result growing is being accomplished; but the result has not yet *grown*; and that same act can only exist in the time of the direct cause.

[174]

DES NA RKYEN YIN NA RANG DUS SU 'BRAS BU DE SKYE BA'I BYA BA DNGOS SU YOD MI DGOS SO,,

As such, it is not the case that—just because something is a condition for a certain result—the act of the result growing must actually be present within its own time.

Conditions for what?

[175]

GNYIS PA NI,

This brings us to the second part of our denial that the four conditions could possess any nature of being conditions: denying the idea that something could be a condition from the point of view of the associated action.

[176]

(I.8)

**Naivāsato naiva sataḥ pratyayo ‘rthasya yujyate,
Asataḥ pratyayah kasya sataś ca pratyayena kim.**

*Naivasato naiva sataḥ pratyayorthasya yujyate,
Asataḥ pratyayah kasya satash cha pratyayena kim.*

,YOD DAM MED PA'I DON LA YANG,³⁴
,RKYEN NI RUNG BA MA YIN TE,

³⁴ *Yod dam med*: The Tengyur version reverses the order here—*med dam yod*; Choney Lama follows the former in his commentary.

,MED NA GANG GI RKYEN DU 'GYUR,
,YOD NA RKYEN GYIS CI ZHIG BYA,
ZHES SO,,

**How could a thing ever be
A condition for something,
Whether that thing existed or not?**

**For if it didn't exist,
What would the condition
Be a condition for?**

**And if it did exist,
What would be
The use of the condition?**

[177]
'DI LA BRDEN NAS 'DI SKYE'O ZHES PA'I 'BREL PA 'DI YOD PAS 'DI 'DI'I RKYEN DU
'JOG GO ZHE NA,

Now someone might say the following:

When there is a relationship between two things—and we can say that one of them has grown, based on the other—then that suffices to say that one is a condition for the other.

[178]
DE YANG MI 'THAD DE, SA BON LA BRDEN NAS SKYE'O ZHES PA'I 'BREL PA YOD
PAS RKYEN LAS RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA MI 'GRUB PA'I PHYIR TE, SA BON GYI
DUS SU YOD PA DANG MED PA'I DON GANG LA YANG DON DAM PAR RKYEN DU
NI RUNG BA MIN PA'I PHYIR,

And yet that cannot be correct; for there can be a relationship between two things—“this thing has grown, depending upon that condition”; but that doesn’t prove that something has grown, through some nature of its own, from a condition. For *how could a thing ever be*, in any ultimate sense, *a condition for something, whether or not that thing already existed* at the time of its seed?

[179]
DAM ZHES PAS RKYEN DU YOD NA DE GNYIS GANG RUNG DU YOD DGOS PA
DANG, TE ZHES PA LHAG MA 'DREN PA'O,,

The expression “whether or not” in the verse here is meant to indicate that—if something is a condition for something else, then that other thing must either be something which exists, or

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something which doesn't exist. And the word "for" in these lines is meant to indicate that more information is coming.

[180]

RTAGS SGRUB PA NI, RANG RGYU SA BON GYI DUS SU 'BRAS BU YOD PAR RANG
BZHIN GYIS MED CING, MED PAR YANG RANG BZHIN GYIS MED DE,

Here is how we prove the reason given here. We say first that a result could never exist, through some nature of its own, within the time of its cause—the seed; and secondly, that it could never not exist, through any nature of its own, within this same time period.

[181]

SA BON NI 'BRAS BU SKYES PA'I SNGA ROL NA **MED** PAR RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB
NA SA BON DE 'BRAS BU **GANG GI RKYEN DU 'GYUR** BAR MED PA'I PHYIR,

If the result were something that didn't exist before it had grown—and if its seed were something that existed through some nature of its own—then what would the condition be a condition for? There wouldn't be any result for it to be a seed for.

[182]

[f. 11b] GAL TE SA BON GYI DUS SU **YOD NA'ANG** DE LA 'BRAS BUI RKYEN MI
'GRUB STE, GRUB ZIN PA LA SLAR 'GRUB BYED KYI **RKYEN GYIS CI ZHIG BYA**
STE MI DGOS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And even *if* the result *did exist* in the time of its seed, the seed could never be the condition for the result—for *what would be the use of the condition*, if all it had to do was help something that had already come out come out? There'd be no need for it.

Denying that a causal condition has any qualities of its own

[183]

GNYIS PA SO SOR DGAG PA LA BZHI, RGYU RKYEN GYI MTSAN NYID DGAG PA
DANG, DE BZHIN DU DMIGS RKYEN DANG, DE MA THAG RKYEN DANG, BDAG
RKYEN GYI MTSAN NYID DGAG PA'O,,

Which brings us to the second step from above: denying that, individually, the four conditions could possess any nature of being conditions. We proceed through four sections: denying the defining characteristics of a causal condition; the same for an object condition; for the condition for what comes immediately after; and for the dominant condition.

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[184]
DANG PO NI,

The first of these is expressed in the following lines of the root text:

[185]
(I.9)

**Na san nāsan na sad asan dharmo nirvartate yadā,
Kathaṁ nirvartako hetur evam̄ sati hi yujyate.**

*Na san nasan na sad asan dharmo nirvartate yada,
Katham nirvartako hetur evan sati hi yujyate.*

,GANG TSE CHOS NI YOD PA DANG,
,MED DANG YOD MED MI 'GRUB PAS,
,CI LTAR SGRUB BYED RGYU ZHES BYA,
,DE LTAR YIN NA MI RIGS SO,,
ZHES SO,,

Where something that neither exists,
Nor doesn't exist,
Nor both does and doesn't exist
Cannot be produced,
How can you call something a cause
That worked to produce it?
It would be wrong,
If that's the way it is.

[186]
GAL TE RGYU RKYEN GYI MTSAN NYID YOD PAS RGYU RKYEN DON DAM PAR
YOD DO ZHE NA,

Someone may come now and assert the following:

Causal factors do exist in an ultimate way, because they do possess certain defining characteristics.

[187]

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DE NI MI RIGS TE, **GANG GI TSE 'BRAS BUI CHOS NI RANG GI RGYU RU YOD PA DANG MED PA DANG YOD MED GNYIS KAR DPYAD NA DON DAM PAR RGYUS MI 'GRUB PAS DE'I PHYIR TE,**

And yet that's wrong. *Where* we check to see whether *something*—the result—does *exist* in its cause; *or doesn't*; *or both does and doesn't*; we find that it *cannot be produced*, in any ultimate sense, by a cause.

[188]

RTAGS DE LTAR NA **JI LTAR SGRUB PAR BYED PA'I RGYU'I MTSAN NYID RANG GI NGOS {NGO BOS} YOD PA YIN ZHES BYA BAR MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR,**

As such, it would be a mistake to call—*how could you call—something a cause that worked to produce* this result; that is, a cause in the sense of its possessing the defining characteristics of a cause, in and by itself.

[189]

RGYU MTSAN **DE LTAR YIN NA STE YIN PA DE'I TSE RGYU RKYEN DON DAM PAR YOD CES SMRA BA DE MI RIGS SO,,**

If that's the way it is—meaning, for this reason, since that *is* the way it is—*it would be wrong*, in this circumstance, to say that the causal condition existed, in any ultimate way.

[190]

DE YANG RGYU DUS SU YOD PA RGYUS SGRUB NA NI SKYE BA DON MED THUG MED DU 'GYUR LA,

If the result were something that existed within the time of the cause, and were still brought about by the cause, then its growing would be pointless; and also repeated endlessly.

[191]

RGYU DUS SU MED PA'I DNGOS MED RGYUS SGRUB MI NUS KYANG, DE'I TSE 'BYUNG 'GYUR TZAM ZHIG RGYUS SGRUB PAR BYED DO,,

On the other hand, a completely non-existent entity—a result that was *not* present within the time of its cause—is not something that a cause could ever bring about. Note though that we can say that, at this point in time, a result *which is going to come into being* is being brought about by its cause.

**Denying that an object condition
has any qualities of its own**

[192]

GNYIS PA NI,

The second section here, denying defining characteristics for a causal condition, is presented in the next verse of the root text:

[193]

(I.10)

**Anārambaṇa evāyam̄ san dharma upadiśyate,
Athānārambaṇe dharme kuta ārambaṇam̄ punah.**

*Anarambana evayan san dharma upadishyate,
Athanarambane dharme kuta arambanam punah.*

,YOD PA'I CHOS 'DI DMIGS PA NI,
,MED PA KHO NA NYE BAR BSTAN,
,CI STE CHOS NI MED DMIGS NA,
,DMIGS PA YOD PA GA LA 'GYUR,

ZHES SO,,

**You take something which already exists
And invariably refer to it
As not yet having an object.
And if you say, “Well then,
It does not exist,” then how
Could entities of perception
Ever possess an object?**

[194]

GAL TE RNAM SHES KYI GNAS DMIGS RKYEN RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD DO SNYAM NA,

Now some may think to themselves, “The locus of a state of consciousness—the object which is its condition—must exist through some nature of its own.”

[195]

'O NA DMIGS RKYEN DE RANG GI DMIGS BYA DMIGS PA'I SNGA ROL NA YOD PA DANG MED PA'I SHES PA GANG LA 'DOD,

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In reply we ask, “Well then; let’s consider the object condition here. Does it exist, as an object of its perception, before the state of mind which perceives it? Or does it not?”

[196]

[f. 12a] DANG PO MI RIGS TE, **YOD PA'I CHOS SEMS LA SOGS PA 'DI DMIGS PA NI MED PA KHO NAR KHYED RANG 'DOD KYIS DMIGS PA DANG BCAS SO {%**
ZHES} NYE BAR BSTAN PA TZAM DU ZAD PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR TE, DMIGS RKYEN DE DMIGS BYA DMIGS PA LA MA LTOS PAR DE'I SNGAR YOD PAR KHAS BLANGS PA'I PHYIR,

The first of these options cannot be the case, because you yourselves *take something which does already exist*—a state of mind, and so on—and invariably refer to it as not yet having an object of perception; and then you say, “Now it has taken on an object.” And that’s precisely because you believe that the object condition exists prior to the perception of the object of perception—and thus need not rely upon it.

[197]

CI STE BRTAG PA PHYI MA LTAR DMIGS RKYEN DE DMIGS BYA DMIGS PA'I SNGAR MED CING PHYIS YOD PAR 'DOD DO ZHE NA,

“*Well then,*” you may say in return, “Then it must be the way that you said it in the second option: the object condition *does not exist* prior to the perception of the object of perception; rather, we would have to say that it exists after this perception.”

[198]

DE YANG MI 'THAD DE, DE LTAR NA **DMIGS PA'I CHOS SEMS SEMS BYUNG LA NI DMIGS PA YOD PA GA LA 'GYUR TE MI 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR TE, DMIGS PA'I BYIS {%**
PHYIS} YOD PA NYID DMIGS RKYEN DU KHAS BLANGS PA'I PHYIR,

But that would also have to be incorrect; for in that case, how could the *entities* which did the *perceiving*—the main mind and associated mental functions—ever possess an object of their perception? It would be impossible. Because then you would be accepting that something which occurred after the perceiving could be an object condition.

[199]

KHYOD LTAR NA DMIGS BYA DMIGS BYED GNYIS MA 'BREL TE, DMIGS BYAI DUS SU DMIGS BYED MED CING DMIGS BYED KYI DUS SU DMIGS BYA MED PA'I PHYIR,

According to you, the object being perceived and the state of mind doing the perceiving could never have any connection. Because that state of mind could never exist within the time of what

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it was perceiving; while the thing being perceived could never exist within the time of what was perceiving it.

[200]

'DIR DMIGS PA TZAM THA SNYAD DU DGAG MI NUS PAS BLTOS MED DAM DON
DAM PAR GRUB PA 'GOG PA'O.,

Denying that the object of perception *per se* existed in a nominal way is something which would be impossible; as such, what we are denying here is that it could exist without relying upon anything else: that it could exist in an ultimate way.

[201]

MDO SDE BA SOGS KYIS SHES PA DE'I DMIGS RKYEN NI RANG GI SNGA ROL TU
'BYUNG BAR 'DOD DE CUNG DKA' BA'I GNAS SO.,

The assertion of groups such as the Sutrist School that the object being perceived by a state of mind must exist prior to that state is a point which presents some difficulty.

**Denying that a condition
for what comes immediately after
has any qualities of its own**

[202]

GSUM PA NI,

The third section—a denial that the condition for what comes immediately after it could have any qualities of its own—is presented in the next verse of *Wisdom*:

[203]

(I.11)

**Anutpanneṣu dharmeṣu nirodho nopapadyate,
Nānantaram ato yuktaṁ niruddhe pratyayaś ca kah̄.**

*Anutpanneshu dharmeshu nirodho nopapadyate,
Nanantaram ato yuktan niruddhe pratyayash cha kah.*

**,CHOS RNAMS SKYES PA MA YIN NA,
'GAG PA 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR RO,**

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,DE PHYIR DE MA THAG PA'I RIGS {[%THAG MI RIGS]},³⁵
'GAGS NA RKYEN YANG GANG ZHIG YIN,
ZHES SO,

**If things had not yet grown, then it
Would be incorrect for them to end.
Thus the idea of the one for what
Comes immediately after is wrong;
If it were to end, then how
Could it ever be a condition?**

[204]

GAL TE DNGOS PO GZHAN 'GAGS MA THAG PA LAS 'BRAS BU GZHAN SKYES PAS
DE RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD DO ZHE NA,

Now someone might come and say, “Just after one entity ends, a result which is something other than it grows; thus we can say that such conditions exist through a nature of their own.”

[205]

MYU GU SOGS 'BRAS BUI **CHOS RNAMS** CHOS CAN, RANG RGYU SA BON 'GAGS
MA THAG PA DE KHYOD KYI DE MA THAG ,RKYEN DU **MI RIGS TE, SKYES PA MA**
YIN NA STE SKYES PA'I SNGA ROL DU KHYOD KYI SA BON 'GAGS PA [f. 12b]
'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR BA DE'I PHYIR,

Let's consider then *things* that are results—things like sprouts.

It would be *wrong* to say that some seed for them—their cause—
which had ended just before them could ever be this type of
condition which is *for what comes immediately after* it;

Because *if a result had not yet grown, then it would be incorrect* to say
that its seed had already *ended*, before the growth occurred.

[206]

DER THAL, KHYOD SKYES PA DANG KHYOD KYI SA BON 'GAGS PA DUS MNYAM
PA'I PHYIR,

³⁵ *Thag mi-rigs*: An important correction from the Derge Tengyur to the root text as it is presented in Choney Lama's commentary. Since the wording in the latter often seems to be correct in such cases, it seems possible that the root text was added to his work subsequently by a less qualified editor.

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I disagree that this would be incorrect to say.

And yet it would; for the sprout's growing, and the ending of its seed, should be simultaneous.

[207]

GAL TE KHYOD KYI LTAR 'GAG PAR 'DOD NA NI MI 'THAD PAR THAL, DE LTAR NA,
'BRAS BUI'R KYEN YANG GANG ZHIG YIN TE MED PA'I PHYIR,

And if someone were to agree that this seed *were to end* in the way you describe it, that would further be incorrect,

Because—if that were the case—*then how could it ever be a condition* for the result? It wouldn't even exist!

[208]

RANG LUGS NA {NI} RNAM SHES SNGA MA 'GAG KHA MA PHYI MA'I DE MA THAG RKYEN DU 'DOD KYI, 'GAGS ZIN DER KHAS MI YIN? {LEN} NO.,

Our own position is that the consciousness of the moment before—the one which is just about to end—is what we call the “condition for what comes immediately after” it: the next moment of consciousness. We don’t agree though that a previous moment of consciousness which had already ended could ever act as such a condition.

[209]

GZHUNG 'DIS GZUGS LA'ANG DE MA THAG RKYEN 'DOD PA'I RGOL BA ZHIG BSTAN TE BYE SMRA ZHIG LA DGONGS SO.,

These lines of the root text are also referring to those who hold an opposing position which says that instances of physical form can also act as conditions for what comes just after them. What the Arya had in mind when he wrote the lines is certain members of the Detailist School.

**Denying that a dominant condition
has any qualities of its own**

[210]

BZHI PA NI,

Our fourth and final section here is a denial that the dominant condition could have any qualities of its own. This is covered in the next lines of the root text:

[211]

(I.12)

**Bhāvānām niḥsvabhāvānām na sattā vidyate yataḥ,
Satīdam asmin bhavatītyetan naivopapadyate.**

*Bhavanān niḥsvabhavanān na satta vidyate yataḥ,
Satidam asmin bhavatītyetan naivopapadyate.*

,DNGOS PO RNAMS KYI RANG BZHIN NI,
,YOD PA GANG PHYIR YOD MIN NA,
,'DI YOD PAS NA 'DI 'BYUNG ZHES,
,BYA BA 'DI NI 'THAD MA YIN,
,ZHES SO,,

**Things though do possess a nature,
For if it were the case they didn't,
The statement made where it was said
That “This will happen, if that is there”
Could never have been correct.**

[212]

GAL TE BDAG RKYEN RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD DO ZHE NA,

Someone may come, finally, and make the following statement: “Dominant causes do though exist through a nature of their own.”

[213]

SHES BYA CHOS CAN, RGYU 'DI RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD PAS NA 'BRAS BU 'DI RANG DBANG DU 'BYUNG NGO ZHES BYA BA 'DI NI BDAG RKYEN GYI MTSAN NYID DU 'THAD PA MA YIN TE, RGYU MTSAN GANG GI PHYIR NA DNGOS PO RNAMS KYI YOD PA NI RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD PA MA YIN PA'I PHYIR TE,

Consider all knowable things.

It could not be correct to say that “that cause is there through some nature of its own; and thus, this result will happen, all of its own accord.” Making this kind of statement could never have been correct, where it was said as a description of some qualities of its own that the dominant condition could ever

possess.

And this is *for* the reason—this is because *it's the case*—that the existence of *things* is *not* something that could ever *be there*, through any *nature* of its own.³⁶

[214]

RTEN 'BREL LA RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA KHEGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And that's because we deny that dependence itself could ever exist through any nature of its own.

Concluding remarks on results that never grow

[215]

GSUM PA LA GNYIS, 'BRAS BU LA SKYE BA BKAG PA'I MJUG BSDU BA DANG, SKYED BYED LA RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN BKAG PA'I MJUG BSDU BA'O,,

With this, we have reached the third step in our denial that what makes certain results grow could possess any nature of being a condition. This is a presentation of other, relevant denials. That presentation itself comes in two parts: a wrap-up to our refusal that results could ever grow; and a similar wrap-up to our refusal that things which cause things grow could ever possess any nature of being a condition.

[216]

DANG PO NI,

The first of these is expressed in the next lines to appear in the root text:

[217]

(I.13-14)

**Na ca vyastasamasteṣu pratyayeṣvasti tat phalam,
Pratyayebhyah kathām tac ca bhaven na pratyayeṣu yat.**

³⁶ *Through any nature*: The verse as it appears in *Wisdom* would seem to be a statement of a position which opposes our own; but Choney Lama re-organizes the elements of the verse here into a statement of our own position. He has been playing with the root text in similar ways intentionally, to increase our understanding of the points being made. It's a useful exercise for the careful reader to work out the differences between the two presentations.

**Athāsad api tat tebhyaḥ pratyayebhyaḥ pravartate,
Apratyayebhyo 'pi kasmān nābhipravartate phalam.**

*Na cha vyastasamasteshu pratyayashvasti tat phalam,
Pratyayebhyah kathan tach cha bhaven na pratyayeshu yat.
Athasad api tat tebhyaḥ pratyayebhyaḥ pravartate,
Apratyayebhyo'pi kasmān nabhipravartate phalam.*

,RKYEN RNAMS SO SO 'DUS PA LA,
'BRAS BU DE NI MED PA NYID,
,RKYEN RNAMS LA NI GANG MED PA,
,DE NI RKYEN LAS JI LTAR SKYE,
,CI STE 'BRAS BU DE MED KYANG,³⁷
,RKYEN DE DAG LAS SKYE 'GYUR NA,
,RKYEN MIN RNAMS LAS 'BRAS BU NI,
,CI YI PHYIR NA SKYE MI 'GYUR,
ZHES SO,,

**There cannot be any result at all
In the convening of each
Of the individual conditions.**

**How could something grow from conditions
If it had never been in those conditions?**

**For if the result were to grow from these
Conditions without being in them,
Then why couldn't the same result
Begin to grow from things
That weren't conditions?**

[218]

GAL TE RKYEN LAS 'BRAS BU 'BYUNG BA [f. 13a] MTHONG BAS DE LA DE YOD DO ZHE NA,

One may begin like this: “We can see, with our own eyes, that results come from conditions; and so those results must be there, in the conditions.”

³⁷ *Ci ste 'bras-bu:* The Derge Tengyur, for this line, reads *ci ste de ni med-par yang*; and two lines below in the Tibetan reads *rkyen ma-yin-pa dag las kyang*.

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[219]

**SNAL MA LA SOGS PA'I RKYEN RNAMS SO SO BA DANG 'DUS PA CHOS CAN,
KHYOD GANG LA YANG 'BRAS BU SNAM BU DE NI MED PA KHO NA NYID YIN
PAR THAL, DE LTAR DMIGS RUNG MA DMIGS PA'I PHYIR,**

Let's consider then *the convening of each of the individual conditions*
for something; for example, the way many lines of yarn
go into an entire length of woolen cloth.

It must then be the case that *there can never be any result at all*—any
such length of wool cloth—with in the ball of yarn;

Because if there were, it should be something we can observe there;
but we cannot.

[220]

**RKYEN RNAMS LA NI GANG MED PA'I SNAM BU DE NI CHOS CAN, RKYEN SNAL
MA SOGS LAS RANG DBANG DU JI LTAR SKYE STE MI SKYE BAR THAL, DE LA
MED PA'I PHYIR,**

Consider then *it*—this length of wool cloth—the one which *has
never been in those conditions*.

How could it ever grow from the conditions, from the yarn
and such, all of its own accord? It could in fact
never do so.

Because it has never been in them.

[221]

**CI STE 'BRAS BU DE NI RKYEN RNAMS LA MED KYANG RKYEN DE DAG LAS
RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BAR 'GYUR NA SNAM BU DE CHOS CAN, RKYEN MIN PA
'JAG MA LA SOGS PA RNAMS LAS KYANG SKYE BAR 'GYUR BAR THAL, DE LTAR
NA DE DAG LAS KYANG CI YI PHYIR NA SKYE BAR MI 'GYUR TE SKYE RIGS PA'I
PHYIR TE, RKYEN LA MED KYANG RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA'I PHYIR,**

Consider what would happen *if the same result*—the length of
woolen cloth—*were to grow*, through some nature
of its own, *from these conditions, without being in
them*—in the conditions.

It would then have to grow *from things that weren't
conditions* for wool cloth: from things like the *kusha*

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grass that is sometimes woven into mats;

Because *why couldn't* the wool cloth then *begin to grow*, even from these other things? It would be perfectly appropriate for it to do so—for, despite the fact that it wasn't there in its conditions—it would still be growing through some nature of its own.

[222]

RKYEN RE RE KHO NAS SNAM BU GCIG PA SKYED { %GCIG BSKYED) PAR BYAR MI NUS TE, NUS NA SNAM YUG GCIG NYID DUM BU MAR { %DUM BU DU MAR} SKYE BAR THAL BA'I PHYIR DANG,

Individual conditions acting on their own could never create an entire single length of woolen cloth, for if they could then a single length of the cloth then would have to grow into multiple whole bolts of it.

[223]

RGYU RKYEN TSOGS PA LA MA BLTOS PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

Moreover, all this would no longer have to rely upon the convening of the necessary causes and conditions.

[224]

GAL TE SNAM BU DE NI RKYEN TSOGS PA LAS NGO BO NYID KYIS SKYE'O ZHE NA,

And suppose someone at this point said, “The length of woolen cloth grows, in and by itself, from the convening of its conditions.”

[225]

DE YANG MI 'THAD PAR THAL, RKYEN CHOGS { %TSOGS} PA LA'ANG SNAM BU NGO BO NYID KYIS MED PA'I PHYIR,

But that couldn't be correct, because—even if its conditions do convene—a length of such cloth could never even exist in and by itself.

[226]

DPER NA BYE MA TSOGS PA LA TIL MAR MI 'BYUNG BA BZHIN NO,,

After all, you don't get butter when grains of sand have convened.

Concluding remarks on causes with no nature

[227]
GNYIS PA NI,

Here is our second part from above: another wrap-up, this time to our refusal that things which cause things grow could ever possess any nature of being a condition. It is expressed in the final two verses of the first chapter:

[228]
(I.15-16)

**Phalam ca pratyayamayam pratyayāścāsvayaṇmayāḥ,
Phalamasvamayebhyo yat tat pratyayamayam katham.
Tasmān na pratyayamayam nāpratyayamayam phalam,
Samvidyate phalābhāvāt pratyayāpratyayāḥ kutah.**

*Phalan cha pratyayamayam pratyayashchasvayamayah,
Phalamasvamayebhyo yat tat pratyayamayan katham.
Tasman na pratyayamayan napratyayamayam phalam,
Sanvidyate phalabhavat pratyayapratyayah kutah.*

, 'BRAS BU RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN NA,
, RKYEN RNAMS BDAG GI RANG BZHIN MIN,
, BDAG DNGOS MIN LAS 'BRAS BU GANG,
, DE NI JI LTAR RKYEN RANG BZHIN,
, DE PHYIR RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN MIN,
, RKYEN MIN RANG BZHIN 'BRAS BU NI,
, YOD MIN 'BRAS BU MED PAS NA,
, RKYEN MIN RKYEN DU GA LA 'GYUR,

[f. 13b] ZHES SO,,

Suppose you assert that results
Constitute a nature
Of their conditions;
But conditions are not things
With a nature of their own.

**And so how could those,
Regardless of how you look at it,
Be some nature of their conditions?
Because there is none
With the nature of its conditions.**

**Neither is there a result
That could have a nature
Of not being its condition.
Since results cannot exist,
How could something not a condition
Ever act as a condition?**

[229]

**GAL TE 'BRAS BU RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN NAM RNAM 'GYUR YIN PAS SNGAR
GYI RIGS PAS MI GNOD DO ZHE NA,**

Suppose someone comes and asserts the following:

Results constitute a nature—or we can say, manifestation—of their conditions. Therefore the logic that you have been presenting up to here does nothing to throw our points into question.

[230]

**DE YANG MI RIGS TE, SNAL MA SOGS RKYEN RNAMS BDAG GI NGO BOS GRUB
PA'I RANG BZHIN DU YOD PA MA YIN PA'I PHYIR TE,**

But that too is mistaken, for the conditions themselves—the lines of yarn and so on—are not things which exist as a thing having some self-existent nature of their own.

[231]

**DE RNAMS NI RANG RANG GI CHA SHAS TSOGS PA LA BTAGS NAS BZHAG PA
TZAM YIN PA'I PHYIR,**

And that's because these lengths of cloth are nothing more than the results of projections imposed upon the combination of their parts.

[232]

**BDAG GI DNGOS PO STE NGO BO NYID KYIS GRUB PA MIN PA'I SNAL MA SOGS
LAS BYUNG BA'I 'BRAS BU SNAM BU SOGS GANG YIN PA DE NI CHOS CAN, JI
LTAR YANG RNAL {SNAL} MA LA SOGS PA'I RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN DU NGO**

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BOS YOD PA MI RUNG STE, **RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN CAN DU NGO BOS GRUB PA'I 'BRAS BU YOD PA MA YIN PA DE'I PHYIR TE,**

Let's consider all these *things that are results*—bolts of cloth which have come from lines of yarn, or the like—*objects which themselves are no self-contained things*: not things which exist in and by themselves.

It could never be right, *regardless of how you look at it*, to say that they existed—in and by themselves—as *some kind of nature of their conditions*; of their lines of wool, or whatever the case might be.

And that's *because there is no such thing as a result which has the nature of its conditions* and is, at the same time, something which exists in and by itself.

[233]

DE SKAD DU 'ANG BZHI BRGYA PA LAS,
,SNAM BU RGYU LAS GRUB 'GYUR ZHING,
,RGYU YANG GZHAN LAS 'GRUB 'GYUR NA,
,GANG ZHIG RANG GIS GRUB MED PA,
,DES GZHAN SKYED PAR JI LTAR 'GYUR,
,ZHES GSUNGS PA LTAR RO,,

As the *400 Verses* puts it,

Lengths of cloth are made
From causes of their own;
And in turn these causes
Are made from something else.
Nothing then can ever come
In and of itself; how so could it
Ever make something else instead?³⁸

[234]

GAL TE **RKYEN YIN PA'I RANG BZHIN DU GRUB PA'I 'BRAS BU NI YOD PAR 'DOD NA'ANG RIGS PA MA YIN TE, DE 'DRA MI SRID PA'I PHYIR,**

³⁸ *Lengths of cloth are made*: See f. 15b of the text (%S13, TD03846) by Arya Nagarjuna's spiritual son, Master Aryadeva. The version in the Derge Tengyur reads "water pitcher" (*bumpa*) for the "length of cloth" (*snam-bu*) here; but by the time of Master Buddhapalita's commentary we see the latter reading, attributed to Aryadeva. Master Chandrakirti includes the lines this way as well in his *Clarification of the Verses* (f. 30a, %S14, TD03860).

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One may assert as well that there *could* be a *result* which *had a nature of not being* its condition; but that's *neither* is that correct; for such a thing is not even possible.

[235]

KHO NA RE, RKYEN DANG RKYEN MA YIN PA'I NGES PA YOD DE, TIL LAS 'BRU MAR 'BYUNG GI 'O MA MI 'BYUNG, ZHO LAS MAR 'BYUNG GI 'BRU MAR MI 'BYUNG, BYE MA LAS DE GNYIS KA MI 'BYUNG BAS RKYEN DANG RKYEN MIN RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD DO ZHE NA,

Someone may respond with the following:

But there is a certainty as to what can be a specific condition, and what cannot. You get sesame butter from sesame seeds; but you don't get cow's milk from them. And you get butter from curds; but you don't get sesame butter from them. And you don't get either one from grains of sand. Therefore, things which can be conditions and things which cannot be conditions both exist through a nature of their own.

[236]

RKYEN DANG RKYEN CAN GYI 'BRAS BU RANG BZHIN GYIS MED PAR BSHAD ZIN PAS NA 'DI NI 'DI'I **RKYEN DU** YOD DO, , 'DI NI **RKYEN MIN** NO ZHES PA'I NGES PA RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD PAR **GA LA 'GYUR** TE, RKYEN DANG RKYEN MIN GNYIS PHAN TSUN BLTOS [f. 14a] NAS 'JOG PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And yet we have already explained why conditions, and the things which possess these conditions—that is, their *results*—*cannot exist* through any nature of their own. *How then could* there *ever* be then any certainty, which existed through some nature of its own, where you could say “This can *act as a condition* for that”—or “This *cannot act as such a condition*. ” For these two—things which are conditions, and things which are not conditions—can only be posited through mutual reliance.

Connecting the chapter to scripture

[237]

GYNIS PA NI,

Here next is the second section from above: connecting this chapter to literal presentations of these topics in scripture.

[238]

RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA MED BZHI RIGS PA TZAM GYIS BSGRUB PA MIN GYI,
RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE MED STON PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD NAS BSHAD PA'I

DON RAB BYED 'DIS STON NO ZHES PHYOGS TZAM MTSOM PA NI 'PHAGS PA DKON MCHOG 'BYUNG GNAS KYI MDO DRANGS PA STE, 'OG MA RNAMS LA'ANG DE LTAR SHES PAR BYA'O,,

Now these four ways in which things never grow through any nature of their own are not ideas that we establish only by using clear reasoning; rather, “what this chapter presents is nothing less than the import of each and every high teaching which describes how nothing can grow through any nature of its own.” To make this point, in just a “small representative example,”³⁹ an excerpt from *The Sutra on the Source of the Jewels* has been used—and you should understand that the same was done for subsequent chapters as well.⁴⁰

[239]

DE LTAR MDZAD PA THAMS CAD NI RGYU RKYEN LA SOGS PA'I 'KHOR 'DAS KYI BYA BYED KYI RNAM GZHAG THAMS CAD BTAGS DON MA BTZAL BAR MING GI THA SNYAD KYI DBANG GIS BZHAG PA TZAM YIN PAI PHYIR, DON RANG GI YUL STENG NAS NGO BOS GRUB PA'I TSUL GYIS MIN NO ZHES GO BA'I CHED DE MTSOM PA TZAM MO,,

This is just a little taste of all these teachings, which are meant to help us understand that the entire structure of all the workings of things in the world—whether we’re talking about the cycle of pain, or what is beyond this cycle; things like causes and conditions—are something that is established by nothing more than the power of terms, in the sense of names...and there is no use in trying to seek out the object the names refer to, independent of them. The fact that any object in the universe has any meaning is not because that meaning applies to the object in a way that exists in and of itself.

The name of the chapter

[240]

GSUM PA NI,

Which brings us to the third and final section of our examination of the workings of cause & effect, which leads to disproving that things could have any nature of their own. This is the presentation of the name of the chapter.

³⁹ *Nothing can grow*: Choney Lama snips the bits in quotation marks directly from Je Tsongkapa; see f. 51a of *The Sea* (%B2, S05401).

⁴⁰ *Excerpt from the “Sutra on the Source”*: We have included this first excerpt, as a sample, in an appendix below entitled “An Excerpt from *The Sutra on the Source of the Jewels*,” as this has been covered by Je Tsongkapa himself.

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[241]

(chapter title)

Pratyayapari#ks%a#

**,RKYEN BRTAG PA ZHES BYA BA STE
RAB TU BYED PA DANG PO'O,,**

**Here ends the first chapter of *Wisdom*:
“An Analysis of Conditions”**

[242]

**RKYEN BRTAG PA ZHES BYA BA RAB BYED DANG PO STE DE'I RNAM PAR BSHAD
PA'O,,**

And this concludes our explication of the first chapter of *Wisdom*: “An Analysis of Conditions.”

Chapter 2

An Analysis of Going & Coming

Chapter 2 An Analysis of Going & Coming

[243]

~,GNYIS PA 'GRO 'ONG GI BYA BYED LA BRTAG PA GANG ZAG LA RANG BZHIN DGAG PA LA GSUM, GZHUNG DON BSHAD PA, LUNG DANG SBYAR BA, MTSAN BSTAN PA'O,,

Here secondly is an analysis of the workings of going & coming—a denial that the person could have any nature of their own. We proceed in three steps: an explanation of the import of the text; drawing connections to scripture; and finally presenting the name of the chapter.

Cancelling three parts to a path

[244]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, RGYAS PAR BSHAD PA DANG, MJUG BSDU BA'O,,

There are two parts to our explanation of the text: an expanded explication, followed by a concluding summary.

[245]

DANG PO LA BZHI, LAS LA BRTAG NAS DGAG PA, DE BZHIN DU BYED PA PO LA, BYA BA YOD PA'I SGRUB BYED LA, BYA BA'I NGO BO LA BRTAG NAS DGAG PA'O,,

The explication has four parts: (1) denying any nature to the person, by analyzing the action; (2) the same, by analyzing the agent; (3) by analyzing proofs for the existence of the act; and, finally, (4) undertaking this denial by analyzing the essence of the act.

[246]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, LAM GSUM LA BYA BA SPYIR DGAG PA DANG, BGOM BZHIN PA LA BYE BRAG TU DGAG PA'O,,

The first of these has two sections of its own: denying the act in general, with regard to the three parts of a path; and denying, more particularly, being in the process of stepping.

[247]

DANG PO NI, SPYIR 'DI LAM DU 'GRO'O ZHES BRJOD PA NA BYED PO LAM DU 'GRO BA PO GCIG DANG, DE LAM GANG DU 'GRO BA'I BYA BA YANG GCIG YIN GYI DU MA MIN NO.,

Here's the first. Now generally speaking, when we say that "this person is going down the path," we are referring to a single agent—a single person going down the path; and we are referring as well to a single act—going down the path to a certain place. It's not that these would be more than one.

[248]

'GRO [f. 14b] MA'I {%-SA'I} LAM NI GSUM STE, SONG ZIN PA DANG 'GRO BZHIN PA DANG MA SONG ZHING BYA BA MA RTZOM PA'O.,

Now the path on which we're going has three parts: there's the part that we've finished going down; there's the part that we're going down now; and there's the part that we haven't travelled yet: where we have yet to undertake that act.

[249]

'DIR SONG MA SONG GNYIS LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA THA SNYAD DU 'GOG CING, DER BGOM BZHIN PA LA DGAG BYA SBYAR NAS 'GOG BA {%-PA} YIN TE,

We deny, even in a nominal sense, that the two of the having gone, and the yet to go, could be acts of going. And then we deny as well the being in the process of stepping—but by applying the concept of the thing that emptiness denies.

[250]

SONG BA LA BYA BA 'GAGS ZIN LA, MA SONG BA'I BYA BA MA BRTZAM PA LA BYA BA MA SKYES SHING, DA LTA BGOM BZHIN PA LA BYA BA 'JOG PA'I PHYIR, DE YID LA BZHAG NAS,

In the case of having gone, the act has already stopped. In the case of not yet having gone—where we have not yet undertaken the act—the act has yet to begin. What we *do* say is an act is where we are, at present, in the process of stepping. Keep these points in mind as we proceed here.

[251]

(II.1)

Gatam na gamyate tāvad agataṁ naiva gamyate,

Gatāgatavinirmuktam̄ gamyamānaṇ na gamyate.

*Gatan na gamyate tavad agatan naiva gamyate,
Gatagatavinirmuktan gamyamanam na gamyate.*

,RE ZHIG SONG LA MI 'GRO STE,
,MA SONG BA LA { %LA'ANG } 'GRO BA MIN,
,SONG DANG MA SONG MA GTOGS PAR,
,BGOM PA BYED PAR MI 'GYUR RO,,

ZHES SO,,

**First of all, having gone
Is not going;
Neither is not having gone
Going.
And yet except for having gone
And not having gone,
You can never be stepping.**

[252]

RE ZHIG NI DGAG PA'I RIM PA STON PA YIN LA,

The words *first of all* in this first verse of the second chapter are meant to indicate that our denial is going to go in stages.

[253]

**SHES BYA TSES { %CHOS } CAN, 'GRO BA PO GANG ZHIG 'GRO BA'I BYA BA 'GAGS PA
SONG BA'I LAM LA MI 'GRO BA STE 'GRO BA'I BYA BA MED CING,**

Consider all the knowable things in the universe.

A person who is going down a path is not going down the part
of the path where they *have already gone*—where their
act of going has already drawn to an end;

Because there *is no act of going* there.

[254]

**'GRO BA'I BYA BA MA SKYES PA MA SONG BA'I LAM LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA YOD PA
MA YIN TE, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA NI DA LTA BA NYID YIN PA'I PHYIR,**

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*Neither is there any act where they are going down the part
of the path that they have not gone down yet;*

Because the act of going is something that belongs to the
immediate present.

[255]

GAL TE 'GRO BZHIN PA'I LAM LA BYA BA RANG MTSAN PA YOD DO ZHE NA,

And suppose someone says: “But there does exist a definitive act of this kind with regard to the part of the path on which we are currently going.”

[256]

DE YANG MED DE, BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM RANG DBANG DU MED PA'I PHYIR TE,
RKANG PAS **SONG** BA'I CHA 'GA' ZHIG GI BYA BA 'GAGS PA **DANG**, DES **MA SONG**
BA'I CHA 'GA' ZHIG GI BYA BA MA SKYES PA **MA GTOGS PAR BGOM** BZHIN PA'I
LAM BDEN PA BA TSAD MAS SHES PAR **MI 'GYUR** BA'I PHYIR TE,

But the fact is that not even that exists—for there is no part of the path upon which we are presently going, and which exists in isolation. We have some sections of the path down which we *have already gone*, with our feet; and that action has ended. *And* then we have some other parts of the path that we *have not yet gone* down, with our feet; and that action has yet to begin. *Except for* these two, though, there *is never* any truly existing path upon which *you can* be in the act of *stepping*: no such thing can be confirmed by a state of mind which is an accurate perception.⁴¹

[257]

RKANG PA LA CHA DU MA YOD PA'I RKANG PA'I SOR MO'I RGYAB KYIS MNAN PA'I
CHA NI DES SONG BA'I KHONGS SU GTOGS LA, RTING BAS MNAN PA'I MDUN GYI
PHYOGS NI DES MA SONG BA'I KHONGS SU GTOGS PA'I PHYIR,

After all, the foot has a great many parts, doesn’t it? As you step forward, the part of the path behind, where your toes are pushing off, has to be counted as a section that you *have gone* down; and the part ahead, where you’ve yet to set down your heel, has to be counted as a part of the path where you *haven’t* yet *gone* down.

[258]

⁴¹ *No such thing can be confirmed:* The definition of “existing thing” in Buddhism is, of course, “that thing which can be confirmed by an accurate perception.”

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[f. 15a] 'ON KYANG BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM MED PAR MI 'DOD DE, RKANG BA'I {PA'I} CHA DANG CHA CAN GANG GIS MNAN PA'I PHYOGS DE DE'I BGOM BZHIN PAR THA SNYAD DU 'JOG RIGS PA'I PHYIR TE,

But then we'd have to say that there's no part of the path that you *are in the process of going down*: in the end, we could never apply this expression to parts of the path being pressed underfoot, by parts of a foot and a foot made of those parts.

[259]

MI 'JOG NA GANG LA BLTOS TE SONG MA SONG YANG BZHAG MI NUS PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR RO,,

And if we could never apply the expression, then we'd be left with no means at all by which we could ever decide, either, which parts of the path we'd gone down, and which we'd yet to go down.

[260]

RIGS PA DES SONG MA SONG BGOM BZHIN PA GSUM LTOS NAS GRUB PAR SHES TE DE GSUM RANG BZHIN GYIS MED PAR SHES PAR 'GYUR LA, DE SHES NA LAM DE GSUM DU 'JOG PA'I RKANG PA DANG DES 'GRO BA PO RANG BZHIN MED PAR SHES PAR 'GYUR RO,,

Using this kind of clear reasoning, we can come to the realization that having gone, and having yet to go, and being in the process of going—all three—are things that exist only relative to one another. That is, we finally understand that this triad cannot exist through any nature of its own. Once we understand that, then we come to realize that the feet, and the person who uses these feet to go—that is, the two things which define the three parts of the path—have no nature of their own either.

Cancelling stepping

[261]

GNYIS PA LA GNYIS, PHYOGS SNGA MA DANG, DE DGAG PA'O,,

This brings us to our second point from above: denying, more particularly, being in the process of stepping. We proceed in two steps: a presentation of our opponent's position; and then a refutation of that position.

[262]

DANG PO NI,

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The first of these is expressed in the next verse of *Wisdom*.⁴²

[263]

(II.2)

**Ceṣṭā yatra gatis tatra gamyamāne ca sā yataḥ,
Na gate nāgate ceṣṭā gamyamāne gatis tataḥ.**

*Cheshta yatra gatis tatra gamyamane cha sa yatah,
Na gate nagate cheshta gamyamane gatis tatah.*

,GANG NA G-YO BA DE NA 'GRO,
,DE YANG GANG PHYIR BGOM PA LA,
,G-YO BA SONG MIN MA SONG MIN,
,DE PHYIR BGOM LA 'GRO BA YOD,

,CES SO.,

Wherever one is in motion,
There is going.
And why is that so?
When we are stepping,
The motion is not having gone,
Nor is it not having gone.
And so there is going
Where there is stepping.

[264]

KHO NA RE, **BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA YOD TZAM MIN PAR NGO BOS YOD DE, YUL GANG NA RKANG PA 'DEGS 'JOG LA SOGS PA'I LUS G-YO BA DE NA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA YOD LA, G-YO BA DE YANG 'GRO BA PO GANG GI PHYIR DU BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM LA YOD KYI, G-YO BA DE SNGAR LTAR SONG ZIN MIN PA DANG MA SONG BA'I LAM DU YOD PA MIN PA DETI PHYIR ZHE NA,**

Someone may come and make the following assertion:

⁴² *The next verse of Wisdom:* In Arya Nagarjuna's style of writing, we often get a verse expressing an opposing position, followed by a verse refuting that position—this is very useful to keep in mind, so we don't drop into the pitfall of thinking that every verse he wrote is expressing his own beliefs.

The act of *going* down a path that we are in the process of *stepping* on doesn't just exist; rather, it *exists* in and of itself. Here's the reason *why that is so*. The act of *going* does *exist*, in whatever location *where one is in motion*: where we are doing things like raising our foot, and then setting it down.

And so because we have that motion going on, and we have as well someone who is going, then there we have a path upon which the *stepping* is in process. But this *motion is not* something that consists of *having gone* down the path; *nor* does it consist of *not yet having gone* down the path—it is not something that is found on those parts of the path.

Words with a meaning of their own

[265]

GNYIS PA LA GSUM, LAS TSIG DON DANG BCAS NA BYA BA'I TSIG DON GYIS STONG PA, DE LAS LDOG PA, GNYIS KA DON DANG BCAS NA HA CANG THAL BA'O.,

The second point here—a refutation of the position just expressed—comes in three parts. First, we'll demonstrate that if something embodied the meaning of the word “action,” then it would have to exhibit a lack of the meaning of the word “act.” Then we'll demonstrate the opposite: if something embodied the meaning of the word “act,” then it would have to exhibit a lack of the meaning of the word “action.” Finally, we'll demonstrate how it would exceed the bounds of reason if anything were to embody the meanings of both words.

[266]

DANG PO NI,

The first of these three is expressed in the next verse of *Wisdom*:

[267]

(II.3)

**Gamyamānasya gamanam katham nāmopapatsyate,
Gamyamānam vigamanam yadā naivopapadyate.**

*Gamyamanasya gamanan kathan namopapatsyate,
Gamyamanan vigamanan yada naivopapadyate.*

**,BGOM LA 'GRO BA YIN PAR NI,
JI LTA BUR NA 'THAD PAR 'GYUR,**

,GANG TSE 'GRO BA MED PA YI,
,BGOM PA 'THAD PA MED PHYIR RO,,

ZHES SO,,

**How could it be correct to say
That there was going
Where there was stepping?
For it would never be correct
To say there was a stepping
Where there was no going.**

[268]

**BGOM BZHIN PA'I [f. 15b] LAM LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA RANG NGOS NAS GRUB PA
YIN PAR NI TSUL JI LTA BUR NA 'THAD PAR 'GYUR ZHES PA MI 'THAD DE,**

How could it be correct to say—that is, it would be incorrect to say—that there was some way that, on a part of the path where we are in the process of stepping, anything there could be an act of going that existed from its own side.

[269]

**GANG GI TSE STE GANG GI PHYIR 'GRO BA'I BYA BA TSIG GI DON DU MED PA YI
BGOM BZHIN PAI LAM ZHES PA NI 'THAD PA MED PA'I PHYIR,**

For—since—it would never be correct to say there could be a path where we are in the process of stepping, but where there was nothing present that embodied the meaning of the expression, “the act of going.”

[270]

BYA BA PA {BYA BA} YOD DE, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA DE BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM
{LAS} ZHES PA'I LAS TSIG GI DON DU YOD PA'I TSUL GYIS NGO BOS YOD NA,
BYA BA DE 'GRO'O ZHES PA'I BYA TSIG GI DON DU MED DGOS KYANG DE'I DON DU
YOD PA'I PHYIR TE,

And yet there is the act. If the act of going existed in and by itself, in a way where it embodied the meaning of the words for the action—“an action where they are stepping”—then it would be

impossible for it to embody as well the meaning of the words for the act: “they go.” But in fact the act of going *does* embody, as well, the meaning of these latter words.⁴³

[271]

YOD KYANG BYA BA DE DE 'DRA'I LAS TSIG GI DON DU NGO BOS GRUB NA LAM {LAS} GYI NGO BOR GRUB DGOS LA, 'GRO ZHES PA'I BYA TSIG GI DON DU GRUB NA 'GRO BA PO'I NGO BOR GRUB DGOS PA LAS, BYA BA NGO BOS GRUB PA GCIG NYID GZHI SO SO LA BLTOS PAR 'GAL BA'I PHYIR RO,,

And even though it does embody them, if the act embodied the words of such an action in a way that existed in and of itself, then it would have to *be*, in essence, the action. The fact though is that when something embodies the words for the act—“they go”—then it would rather have to *be*, in essence, the goer. It could not be some other way: it would be a contradiction to say that a single entity which existed in and of itself relied upon two bases that were separate from each other.

Meanings with a word of their own

[272]

GNYIS PA NI,

Which brings us to our second part from above, where we demonstrate the opposite: if something embodied the meaning of the word “act,” then it would have to exhibit a lack of the meaning of the word “action.” This part is expressed in the next verse of *Wisdom*:

[273]

(II.4)

**Gamyamānasya gamanam yasya tasya prasajyate,
Rte gater gamyamānam gamyamānam hi gamyate.**

⁴³ *Be, in essence, the action:* The manuscripts of Choney Lama’s commentary available to us begin, at this point, to display a serious carving error, where in multiple, critical instances the word *lam* (*path*) is mistakenly substituted for the word *las* (*action*). In Tibetan writing, the two words have some visual similarity; and because both are critical to this chapter, we might easily miss the substitution, struggling unnecessarily in a section which already requires some struggle. The incorrect substitution of the word *bsgom* (*to meditate*) for *bgom* (*to step*) in some of the manuscripts should also be watched for and sidestepped.

*Gamyamanasya gamanan yasya tasya prasajyate,
Irte gater gamyamanam gamyamanan hi gamyate.*

,GANG GI BGOM PA LA 'GRO BA,
,DE YI BGOM LA 'GRO MED PAR,
,THAL BAR 'GYUR TE GANG GI PHYIR,
,BGOM LA 'GRO BA YIN PHYIR RO,,

ZHES SO,,

Where there is a going
Where there is a stepping,
The stepping would
Of a necessity
Lose the going—
For there is a going
In a stepping.

[274]

RGOL BA GANG GI LTAR NA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA DE 'GRO'O ZHES PA'I BYA TSIG GI DON DU NGO BOS GRUB PA'I SGRO {%-SGO} NAS BGOM PA LA 'GRO ZHES BRJOD PA DE YI PHYOGS LA CHOS CAN, BGOM PA'I LAM ZHES PA'I LAS TSIG GI DON LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA MED PAR THAL BAR 'GYUR TE, RGYU MTSAN GANG GI PHYIR NA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GCIG LAS MED CING, GCIG PO DE BGOM PA LA 'GRO BA ZHES PA'I BYA TSIG GI DON DU NGO BOS YOD PA YIN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

Consider the position of this particular person: *where* a debater who says that *where there is a stepping*, then *there is a going*; in the same way that the act of going is, in and of itself, the meaning of the expression “they go.”

The act of *going* must *of a necessity* be *lost*, as one of the meanings of the expression used to express the action here: “a path down which one *steps*”;

And this is because—for the reason that—*there is* no more than a single act of *going*; and that one embodies, in and of itself, the meaning of the expression “going” *in reference to a stepping*.

[275]

'DI YANG NGO BOS GRUB PA 'GOG GI ,THA SNYAD DU BYA BA GCIG NYID TSIG DE GNYIS KYI DON DU YOD PA MI 'GOG STE, THA SNYAD DU DE LTAR 'DOD PA MI 'GAL [f. 16a] BA'I PHYIR,

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What we are denying here is an embodiment which exists in and of itself; we are not though saying that—nominally speaking—a single act could not be what both of these two expressions refer to. And that's because—when we're speaking nominally—it's no contradiction to accept that they could.

[276]
'DI NI,

,GANG DAG RANG MTSAN NYID KYIS SO SO BA,
,DE DAG RGYUD GCIG GTOGS PAR RIGS MA YIN,

This recalls the following statement:

It would be wrong to say that things
Which were separate by definition
Could ever be combined
Within the single stream of a being.⁴⁴

[277]

.ZHES GSUNGS PA LTAR RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS GRUB PA LA CHOS GCIG
THUN MONG DU BRDEN PA 'GAL BA'I DON NO.,

What this is saying is that—in a case where things existed by definition—it would be a contradiction for them to refer, mutually, to a single object.

**Single meanings
for multiple words
of their own**

[278]
GSUM PA NI,

Here third is our demonstration of how it would exceed the bounds of reason if anything were to embody the meanings of both the words, for the act and the action; this is expressed in the following two verses of the root text:

[279]
(II.5-6)

⁴⁴ *Separate by definition:* See f. 207a of Master Chandrakirti's *Entering the Middle Way* (%S10, TD03861).

Gamyamānasya gamane prasaktam̄ gamanadvayam,
Yena tad gamyamānam̄ ca yac cātra gamanam̄ punah.
Dvau gantārau prasajyete prasakte gamanadvaye,
Gantāram̄ hi tiraskṛtya gamanam̄ nopapadyate.

*Gamyamanasya gamane prasaktam̄ gamanadvayam,
Yena tad gamyamanan cha yach chatra gamanam̄ punah.
Dvau gantaraū prasajyete prasakte gamanadvaye,
Gantaran hi tiraskirtya gamanan nopapadyate.*

,BGO { %BGOM } LAM { %LA } 'GRO BA YOD NA NI,
'GRO BA GNYIS SU THAL 'GYUR TE,
,GANG GIS DE BA GOM { %DE BGOM } GYUR PA DANG,
,DE LA 'GRO BA GANG YIN PA 'O,
'GRO BA GNYIS SU THAL 'GYUR NA,
'GRO BA PO YANG GNYIS SU 'GYUR,
,GANG PHYIR 'GRO BO MED PAR NI,
'GRO BA 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR RO,

ZHES SO,,

If there existed a going
With the stepping,
Then there would have to be
Two goings:
The one where one was stepping,
And the one where that was going.

And if there had to be two goings,
Then there would have to be
Two goers too; for it would never be
Correct to say there was a going
Where there is no goer.

[280]

GAL TE 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GCIG PO DE **BGOM** PA DANG 'GRO ZHES PA'I TSIG GNYIS KA'I DON DU NGO BOS **YOD** DO ZHE NA,

Now suppose someone comes and asserts the following —

The fact is that a single act of going can *exist*, in and of itself, which is what both the expressions “stepping” and “going” refer to.

[281]

DE YANG MI RIGS TE, DE LTAR NA DE'I TSE LAM {LAS} DANG NGO BO GCIG PA'I '**GRO BA'I** BYA BA DANG, LAM {LAS} LAS NGO BO THA DAD PA'I '**GRO BA'I** BYA BA **GYNIS SU** YOD PAR **THAL** BAR '**GYUR BA'I** PHYIR TE,

But this option too is mistaken. If this were the case, *then at that point there would have to be two different acts of going*: one which was one with the action; and another which was distinct from the action.⁴⁵

[282]

JI LTAR NA, BYA BA **GANG GIS** BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM {LAS} **DE BGOM** ZHES PA'I THA SNYAD 'THOB PAR '**GYUR BA'I** BYA BA DE LAM {LAS} DANG NGO BO GCIG PA DANG,

And how is that? It's because the act which is an act which was referred to as the action of being in the process of stepping—"they are *stepping*"—is the act that would be one with the action.

[283]

LAM {LAS} **DE LA 'GRO** ZHES PA'I THA SNYAD BYA BA'I TSIG GI DON DU GYUR PA'I BYA BA **GANG YIN PA** DE 'GRO BA PO'I {DE'I} NGO BOR YOD CING LAM {LAS} GYI NGO BOR MED PA'I PHYIR DANG,

And the act which is an act which was said to refer to the action—"we call it *going*," where the action is the meaning of the word for the act—is the act which would be, in its essence, that same going;⁴⁶ and not, in its essence, the action.

[284]

BYA BA DE GNYIS RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA'I SO SO BAR KHAS BLANGS PA'I PHYIR,

And this would have to be the case; for our opponent has accepted that the act and the action are, through a nature of their own, distinct from one another.

⁴⁵ *Distinct from the action*: Here again, in multiple editions, we repeatedly see the deadly carving error replacing *las* with *lam*.

⁴⁶ *That same going*: Despite what we see here in the various editions ('*gro-ba-po'i*), the sentence only makes sense if that is a carving error for '*gro-ba-de'i*'.

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[285]

KHYAB STE, RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA CIG GZHI SO SO GNYIS LA BRDEN PA MI 'THAD PA'I PHYIR TE, 'THAD NA DE'I TSE '**GRO BA PO YANG** NGO BO THA DAD PA GNYIS SU 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR TE,

And the one does imply the other—for it would be incorrect to say that a single thing which existed through some nature of its own rested upon two separate bases; because if that could happen, *then there would have to be two goers too*—each one distinct from the other.

[286]

RGYU MTSAN **GANG GI PHYIR** NA RTEN '**GRO BA PO MED PAR** BRDEN PA '**GRO BA'I BYA BA** 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR RO,,

And this is true *for* the reason that—*without* that thing which is relied upon, a *goer*—*it would never be correct to say that there was* something that relied upon it: *an act of going*.

[287]

GAL TE SKYON MED DE, GANG ZAG GCIG NYID KYIS SMRA BA DANG 'DUG PA DANG LTA [f. 16b] BA'I BYA BA GSUM DUS GCIG TU BYED PA LTA BU YIN PA'I PHYIR ZHE NA,

Now someone might come and say,

But there's no such problem. It's just the same as where, for example, a single person can undertake three acts at the very same time: speaking, sitting, and looking at something.

[288]

MI MTSUNGS TE, GANG ZAG GCIG LA DUS GCIG TU LCE LA SOGS PA'I NUS PA'I BYED PA PO GSUM LAS SMRA BA LA SOGS PA'I BYA BA GSUM 'BYUNG BA MI 'GAL YANG,,

The case here though is not the same. It's true that there's no contradiction for three different acts to be occurring with a single person, at the same time, where three agents which have the capacity to do so—the tongue and so on—are speaking, and such.

[289]

LAM {LAS} GYI STENG DU 'GRO BA'I BYA BA LAM {LAS} DANG NGO GCIG MI GCIG , {no comma} GNYIS RKANG PA GCIG GIS DUS GCIG TU BYED MI NUS PAS, DE LTA BUI BYA BA GNYIS DUS GCIG TU YOD NA BYA BA DE BYED PA PO YANG GNYIS SU 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR RO,,

But when we're talking, with reference to an action, about acts of going which are either one with the action or not one with the action, these are not both something that a single foot would have the capacity to do at a single point in time. And this means that—if both acts were present in the same moment of time—then there would have as well to be two agents performing the acts.

Going makes no goer

[290]

GNYIS PA BYED PA PO LA BRTAGS NAS DGAG PA LA GSUM {%,} 'GRO BA PO'I {%,PO} BYA BA'I RTEN DU YOD PA DGAG ,RNAM GRANGS GSUM GYI GANG ZAG LA 'GRO BA SPYIR DGAG ,GRO BA PO LA 'GRO BA BYE BRAG TU DGAG PA'O,,

This brings us to our second part from above: denying any nature to the person, by analyzing the agent of an action. We proceed in three steps: denying that there is a goer who is based upon the action; denying going, in general, with a person—using three different variations; and denying, more specifically, going with a goer.

[291]

DANG PO,

The first of these is expressed in the following verse of *Wisdom*:

[292]

(II.7)

**Gantāram cet tiraskṛtya gamanam̄ nopapadyate,
Gamane ‘sati gantātha kuta eva bhaviṣyati.**

*Gantaran chet tiraskirya gamanan nopaladyate,
Gamane'sati gantatha kuta eva bhavishyati.*

,GAL TE 'GRO BA {%,PO} MED GYUR NA,
'GRO BA 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR TE,
'GRO BA MED NA 'GRO BA PO,
,YOD PA NYID DU GA LA 'GYUR,

ZHES SO,,

**Now going could never be correct
In a case where there's no goer;**

**For how could there ever be
The goer themselves,
In a case where there's no going?**

[293]

GAL TE LHAS BYIN 'GRO'O ZHES PA'I THA SNYAD 'THAD PA LAS NA {%-NI} 'GRO BA PO DMIGS LA, DE'I PHYIR 'GRO BA'I BYA BA YANG NGO BOS YOD DO SNYAM NA,

Now someone may come and say:

When it is appropriate to use the expression, “John is going,” then we can say there is a goer present. This proves that the act of going too is something that exists in and of itself.

[294]

SNGAR 'GRO BA PO MED CING BSAL BAR GYUR NA DE LA BLTOS PA'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA 'THAD BAR {%-PAR} MI 'GYUR TE,

If it's the *case* that at first *there's no goer*, and then they manifest; then the act of *going* that relied upon this person *could never be correct*.

[295]

DPYAD PA'I TSE 'GRO BA MED NA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA RANG MTSAN DANG LDAN PA'I SGO NAS 'GRO BA PO YOD PA NYID DU GAL {%-GA LA} 'GYUR TE MI 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

For if we really examine the question, then—in a case where there's no going—how could there ever be the goer themselves, in the sense of someone who was undertaking some definitive act of going? The fact is that there could never be.

[296]

MI 'GYUR TE, 'GRO BA DANG 'GRO BA PO GNYIS PHAN TSUN BLTOS PA'I RTEN BR滕 PA YIN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And that's because going and a goer rely upon each other: each is the basis of the other, and each is what rests upon the basis of the other.

None of three “possibilities”

[297]
GNYIS PA NI,

This brings us to the second point in our denial of any nature to the person, through analyzing the agent of an action; that is, denying going, in general, with a person—using three different variations. This is presented in the next verse of *Wisdom*:

[298]
(II.8)

**Gantā na gacchati tāvad agantā naiva gacchati,
Anyo gantur agantuś ca kas tṛṭīyo 'tha gacchati.**

*Ganta na gachati tavad aganta naiva gachati,
Anyo gantur agantush cha kas tirtiyo tha gachati.*

,RE ZHIG 'GRO PO MI 'GRO STE,
'GRO BA PO MIN 'GRO BA MIN,
'GRO PO 'GRO PO MIN LAS GZHAN,
,GSUM PA GANG ZHIG 'GRO BAR 'GYUR,
ZHES SO,,

**First of all, no goer goes;
But neither does someone
Who's no goer go.
How so too could someone go
Who was some third possibility:
Someone besides a goer, or not?**⁴⁷

[299]

⁴⁷ *First of all, no goer goes:* For this verse, we have used the Tibetan from the Derge Tengyur, which seems to match both the Sanskrit and Choney Lama's commentary. The verse in the carving available to us appears to be seriously corrupted, or a different translation from the Sanskrit, perhaps even from a different original (albeit it also comes out one line too long in the Tibetan); this verse reads instead: *,re-zhil 'gro-po 'gro'o zhes, ji-ltar 'thad-pa nyid du 'gyur, ,gro-ba-po min 'gro-ba min, ,gro-po 'gro-po min pa las, ,gsum-pa gang-zhig 'gro-bar 'gyur.* There are also problems with the carving of the last part of this section, which as the reader can see we've corrected.

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RE ZHIG 'GRO BA PO CHOS CAN, ,NGO BO NYID KYIS 'GRO'O ZHES PA [f. 17a] JI LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR TE MI 'GYUR BAR THAL, BSHAD PA DANG 'CHAD PA'I RIGS PAS GNOD PA'I PHYIR,

Let us consider, *first of all*, a goer.

How could it ever be correct to say that they were *going*, in and
and of themselves? It would *never* be—

Because this idea is thrown into question by the clear reasoning
already presented, and still to be presented.

[300]

'GRO BA PO MIN PA CHOS CAN, 'GRO BA MIN TE, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA MED PA'I PHYIR,

Let's consider as well *someone who is no goer*.

Neither do they ever *go*;

Because with them there is no act of going.

[301]

'GRO BA {%'GRO BA PO} DANG 'GRO BA PO {DANG 'GRO BA PO MIN PA} DE LAS PHUNG GSUM PA ZHIG 'GRO BAR 'GYUR BA MI 'THAD DE, DE 'DRA MI SRID PA'I PHYIR TE 'GRO BA DANG 'GRO MIN DNGOS 'GAL YIN PA'I PHYIR,

And it would be incorrect to say that *some third possibility* between the two—*someone besides* someone who was *going* and someone who was *not*—was doing the going. That's because such a thing would be impossible, since being going and not being going are mutually exclusive, and cover themselves all possibilities.

Going can't involve goers

[302]

GSUM PA LA GSUM, BYED TSIG DON DANG BCAS NA BYED PA PO'I TSIG DON GYIS STONG PA, DE LAS LDOG PA, GNYIS KA DON DANG BCAS NA HA CANG THAL BA'O,,

With this we have reached the third part in our analysis of the agent: denying, more specifically, going with a goer. This comes in three sections: showing that if something embodies the

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meaning of the term for going, then it must exhibit a lack of the meaning of the term for the goer; showing next the reverse; and then demonstrating finally how it would exceed the bounds of reason if anything were to embody the meanings of both terms.

[303]
DANG PO NI,

The first of these is found in the next verse of the root text:

[304]
(II.9)

**Gantā tāvad gacchatīti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vinā gantā yadā naivopapadyate.**

*Ganta tavad gachatiti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vina ganta yada naivopapadyate.*

,GANG TSE 'GRO BA MED PAR NI,
'GRO BA { %PO } 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR NA,
,RE ZHIG 'GRO BO { %PO } 'GRO'O ZHES,
,JI LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR,
ZHES SO,,

**In a case where there's no going,
It would never be correct
For there to be a goer.
And so how could it ever
Be correct to say
That a goer now was going?**

[305]
'DIR 'GRO BA PO 'GRO ZHES PA'I SNGA MA BYED PA PO'I TSIG DANG PHYI MA BYED
TSIG YIN LA, DE YANG 'DI 'GRO BAR BYED CES PA'O.,

Now when we say “A goer is going,” the former term expresses who is doing something; while the latter expresses what they are doing. We could also say it as: “They are doing some going.”

[306]

DES NA, RE ZHIG 'GRO BA PO 'GRO'O ZHES PA'I DON NGO BOS YOD PA JI LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR BA MI 'THAD DE, GANG GI TSE 'GRO BA'I BYA BA TSIG GI DON DU MED PAR NI 'GRO BA PO ZHES PA'I BYED PA PO'I TSIG 'DI 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR,

And so *how then could it ever be correct to say* “one who is *a goer now is going*,” where the meaning of this phrase exists in and of itself? It would in fact be incorrect, because *in such a case where there was nothing that embodied the meaning of the term for the act of going, it would never be correct for there to be* this term for someone who is doing something: “one who is *a goer*.”

[307]

DER THAL, 'GRO BA PO 'GRO ZHES PA'I DON RANG NGOS NAS GRUB NA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GCIG PO DE 'GRO BA PO ZHES PA'I TSIG GI DON DU MED CING, 'GRO ZHES PA'I TSIG GI DON DU YOD DGOS KYI, TSIG DE GNYIS KYI DON DU NGO BOS GRUB PA'I TSUL GYIS YOD PA MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR,

And this is indeed the case, for if the meaning of the phrase “the one who is a goer is going” existed from its own side, then the act of going alone could not be what the term “one who is a goer” referred to; and it would have to be what the term “is going” refers to. But it would be inappropriate for the act of going alone to be what both these terms refer to, in a way where it existed in and of itself.

[308]

DER THAL, 'GRO BA PO ZHES PA'I TSIG GI DON DU YOD NA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA BYED PA PO LA YOD DGOS LA, 'GRO ZHES PA'I TSIG GI DON DU YOD NA LAM {LAS} LA YOD DGOS PAS, NGO BOS GRUB NA GZHI SO SO [f. 17b] PA {BA} LA BYA BA GCIG THUN MONG DU BRTEM PA MI RIGS PA'I PHYIR,

And that would so be the case, because if something embodied the meaning of the term “the one who is a goer,” it would have to be there with the one doing the act of going; whereas if it embodied the meaning of the term “is going,” then it would have to be there with the action. Therefore, if a single act were to exist in and of itself, it would be inappropriate for it to apply, in common, to two different referents.

Goers can't involve going

[309]

GNYIS PA NI,

Which brings us to the second section, where we demonstrate the reverse of the point we just made. This is expressed in the lines of *Wisdom* which follow next:

[310]

(II.10)

**Pakṣo gantā gacchatītī yasya tasya prasajyate,
Gamanena vinā gantā gantur gamanam icchataḥ.**

*Paksho ganta gachatiti yasya tasya prasajyate,
Gamanena vina ganta gantur gamanam ichatah.*

,GANG GI PHYOGS LA 'GRO BA PO,
'GRO BA DE LA 'GRO MED PA'I,
'GRO BO {PO} YIN PAR THAL 'GYUR TE,
'GRO BO {PO} 'GRO BAR 'DOD PHYIR RO,
ZHES SO,,

**In any position that says
That a goer is going,
There would have to be
A goer that wasn't,
Because you'd be saying
That the goer was going.**

[311]

GAL TE RGOL BA GANG GI PHYOGS LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA DE 'GRO BA PO'I TSIG GI DON DU NGO BOS YOD PAR 'DOD PA DE LA CHOS CAN, 'GRO ZHES PA'I TSIG GI DON DU 'GRO BA'I BYA BA MED PA'I 'GRO BA PO YIN PAR THAL BAR 'GYUR TE, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GCIG LAS MED LA, GCIG PO DE 'GRO BA PO ZHES PA'I TSIG GI DON DU YOD PA'I SGO NAS 'GRO BA PO 'GRO BAR 'DOD PA'I PHYIR RO,,

Suppose that a debater takes a *position* in which it is said *that* there is an act of *going*, in and of itself, within what the term “one who is a *goer*” refers to.

In such a case, though, the person going would have to be someone where the term “going” applied to them had no meaning of an act of going.

And that's *because* there is no more than a single act of going; and *you'd be saying* then *that the goer was going* in a way where this one going is there in what the expression “the one who is going” refers to.

[312]

RTAGS KHYAB SNGAR BZHIN BSGRUB PAR BYA'O,,

The reason given here, and the necessary relationship between the reason and the quality we seek to prove, are both confirmed in the same way they were before.

Neither both goer & going

[313]

GSUM PA NI,

The third section here—demonstrating, finally, how it would exceed the bounds of reason if anything were to embody the meanings of both terms—is presented in the next verse:

[314]

(II.11)

Gamane dve prasajyete gantā yadyuta gacchati,
Ganteti cājyate yena gantā san yac ca gacchati.

*Gamane dve prasajyete ganta yadyuta gachati,
Ganteti chajyate yena ganta san yach cha gachati.*

,GAL TE 'GRO BO { %PO } 'GRO 'GYUR NA,
'GRO BA GNYIS SU THAL 'GYUR TE,
,GANG GI { %GIS } 'GRO BOR { %POR } MNGON PA DANG,
'GRO BOR { %POR } GYUR NAS GANG 'GRO BA'O,

ZHES SO,,

If the goer were going,
Then there would have to be
Two goings: one which
Specified the goer,
And the other the going
Once one was a goer.

[315]

**GAL TE 'GRO BA PO ZHES DANG 'GRO ZHES PA'I TSIG GNYIS KYI DON DU 'GRO
BA'I BYA BA NGO BOS YOD PAR 'GYUR NA NI**

Now suppose *if* the act of going embodied, in and of itself, the meaning of both the terms “*goer*” and “*going*. ”

[316]

'GRO BA PO'I STENG NA RANG GI NGO BOR GYUR PA'I '**GRO BA'I BYA BA DANG RANG LAS NGO BO THA DAD PA'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GNYIS SU YOD PAR THAL BAR 'GYUR TE,**

In that case *then there would have to be* two different acts of *going*. First there would be the act of going that applied to the goer, and was inherent in them. And then there would be a second going which was distinct from the goer.

[317]

'GRO BA'I BYA BA **GANG GIS 'GRO BA BOR {POR} MNGON PA STE BRJOD PA'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA 'GRO BA PO'I NGO BOR GYUR PA DANG, 'GRO BA POR GYUR NAS 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GANG ZHIG BYED PA'I TSIG GI DON DU GYUR PA'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA DE 'GRO BA PO LAS NGO BO THA DAD PA'I TSUL GYIS YOD PAR 'GYUR BA LAS**

The one act of going *which allowed us to specify*—that is, to express—*the goer* would be the act of going which was inherent in the goer. *And the other* act of going is *the act of going* which embodied the meaning of the term which expressed how someone undertook to go, *once they were the goer*; this is the one which would exist in a way where it was distinct from the goer.

[318]

DE LTAR MI RUNG BAR BSGRUBS ZIN PA'I PHYIR,

But we have already demonstrated why these would not be possible.

[319]

DE NI BYA BA DE GNYIS LA BLTOS PA'I '**GRO BA PO NGO BO THA DAD GNYIS KYANG YOD DGOS PA'I SKYON STON PA'O,,**

These lines are expressing the problem that there would have to be two distinct goers, each relying upon one of those two acts of going.

[320]

RANG LUGS NI, TSIG GNYIS KA'I DON DU BYA BA GCIG YOD KYANG THA [f. 18a]
SNYAD PA'I YOD TSUL DU 'DOD PAS MI 'GAL LO.,

Our own position is that there is no contradiction; for we would say that—even though there is only a single act which embodies the meaning of both terms—they can both still be there, albeit in a nominal manner.

Going is impossible

[321]

GSUM PA BYA BA YOD PA'I SGRUB BYED LA BRTAGS NAS 'GOG PA LA GNYIS, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA YOD PA'I SGRUB BYED 'GOG PA DANG, DES GNAS PA'I BYA BA YANG RANG MTSAN PA KHEGS PAR BSTAN PA'O.,

This brings us to our third part from above: denying any nature to the person, by analyzing proofs for the existence of the act. We proceed in two steps: denying attempted proofs for the existence of the act of going; and showing how this denial, in turn, already disproves a definitive act of staying as well.

[322]

DANG PO LA BZHI, THOG MA'I RTZOM PA DGAG , 'GRO BA'I LAM DGAG , 'GRO BA'I GNYEN PO DGAG , THA MA'I LDOG PA DGAG PA'O.,

The first of these two will have four sections of its own: denying that anyone could, at the outset, undertake to go; denying that there could be a path down which we go; denying that there could be an alternative to going; and denying that there could be, in the end, a turning back.

[323]

DANG PO LA GNYIS, RTZOM PA NYID DGAG PA DANG, GANG DU BRTZAM PA'I LAM DGAG PA'O, ,DANG PO NI,

The first of these has two further parts: denying the undertaking of a going itself; and then denying that there could be a part of the path where we do the undertaking of a going. The first of these is expressed in the next verse of *Wisdom*:

[324]

(II.12)

**Gate nārabhyate gantum gantum nārabhyate 'gate,
Nārabhyate gamyamāne gantum ārabhyate kuha.**

Gate narabhyate gantun gantun narabhyate'gate,

Narabhyate gamyamane gantum arabhyate kuha.

,SONG LA 'GRO BA'I RTZOM MED DE,
,MA SONG BA LA'ANG 'GRO RTZOM MED,
,BGO {BGOM} LA RTZOM PA YOD MIN NA,
,GANG DU 'GRO LA {BA} RTZOM PAR BYED,
.ZHES SO,,

You cannot undertake to go
Where you've already gone;
Neither can this be done
Where you've yet to go.
If the undertaking is not something
That could ever be there with stepping,
Then where could you ever
Undertake to go?

[325]

KHO NA RE, SKYES BU SDOD PA BTANG NAS 'GRO BAR RTZOM PAR BYED PAS
'GRO BA'I BYA BA NGO BOS YOD DO SNYAM NA,

Someone may come and express the following thought:

When a person decides to stop staying and does something to undertake to go, there is an act of going there which exists in and of itself.

[326]

SHES BYA CHOS CAN, SKYES BU 'GRO BA'I BYA BA 'GAGS PA SONG BA'I LAM LA
DE'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA RTZOM PA MED CING, DE MA SONG BA'I LAM LA'ANG
DE'I 'GRO BA'I RTZOM PA MED DE,

Consider all the knowable things in the universe.

You cannot undertake the act of going somewhere along that part of the path where you have already gone—where this person has discontinued the act of going. Neither can this be done along that part of the path where you have yet to go.

[327]

'GRO BA'I BYA BA 'GAGS PA NI 'DAS LA, MA SKYES PA NI MA 'ONGS PA YIN PAS DE
GNYIS DANG 'GRO BAR RTZOM BZHIN PA'I BYA BA DA LTAR YIN PA RNAMS 'GAL
BA'I PHYIR,

That's because the act of going has been discontinued, and so is in the past. And the act of going which has yet to begin is in the future. This means that it would be a contradiction to say that these two, and being in the process of undertaking to go, could be something of the present time.

[328]

'GRO BZHIN PA'I BGOM PA LA YANG 'GRO BA'I RTZOM PA THA SNYAD DU YOD KYANG NGO BOS YOD PA MA YIN TE, BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM {LAS} RANG MTSAN PA MED PAR SNGAR BSTAN ZIN PA'I PHYIR,

Now there can exist, nominally speaking, the undertaking to go *with stepping*—where we are in the process of going; but this *undertaking* *cannot* be something which *could ever be there* in and of itself. That's because—as we have already demonstrated—there is no definitive action of being in the process of stepping.

[329]

DE LTAR NA GANG DU 'GRO BA LA RTZOM PAR BYED PA'I LAM RANG BZHIN GYIS MED PAS DER 'GRO RTZOM BYED PA RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA MED DE, DE LTAR YOD PA 'GAL BA'I PHYIR,

There is no part of the path *where you could ever undertake to go* and which exists through some nature of its own. Thus too there is no undertaking to go which can exist through some nature of its own.

The path has no spots to go on

[330]

GNYIS PA NI [f. 18b],

This brings us to the second point here: a denial that there could be a part of the path where we undertake to go. This is found in the next verse of the root text:

[331]

(II.13)

**Na pūrvam̄ gamanārambhād gamyamānaṁ na vā gatam,
Yatrārabhyeta gamanam agate gamanam̄ kutah.**

*Na purvan gamanarambhad gamyamanan na va gatam,
Yatrarabhyeta gamanam agate gamanan kutah.*

, 'GRO BA RTZOM PA'I SNGA ROL NA,
, GANG DU 'GRO BA RTZOM 'GYUR BA'I { %BA },
, BGOM PA MED CING SONG BA MED,
, MA SONG 'GRO BA GA LA YOD,
.CES SO.,

**There exists no spot for stepping—
Where they are undertaking to go—
Before they have undertaken to go.**

**Neither does there exist a spot
Where they have already gone.**

**And how could a person undertake
To go down a spot
That they hadn't gone down yet?**

[332]

SKYES BU 'GRO BA RTZOM PA'I SNGA ROL BSDAD PA'I GNAS SKABS NA SKYES
BU GANG 'GRO BAR RTZOM PAR 'GYUR BA'I PA GOM { %BA'I BGOM } PA'I LAM
MED CING, ,DE SONG BA'I LAM YANG MED DE, DE'I TSE LAM GYI NGO BO DE
GNYIS MA SKYES PA'I PHYIR,

At that point when a person is standing still—*before they have undertaken to go somewhere—there exists no spot* of the path where they are *stepping: where they are undertaking to go*. *Neither does there exist a spot* of the path down which *they have already gone*—for at that point, there is nothing that has already begun and possesses the nature of a path.

[333]

KHYAB STE, NGO BO NYID KYIS 'GRO BAR RTZOM PAR BYED PA ZHIG YOD NA
'GRO BAR RTZOM PA'I SNGA ROL TU YOD DGOS PA'I PHYIR,

And it would have to be this way; because if there were an undertaking to go somewhere which existed in and of itself, it would have to exist before we undertook to go.

[334]

DER THAL, 'GRO RTZOM BYED PA'I LAM NI RANG DUS SU YOD PAR 'JOG DGOS PA'I
PHYIR TE,

And that's true because we'd have to say that the path down which we undertook to go would have to be there, by its own time.

[335]

DE LTAR MIN NA, DUS KUN TU 'GRO RTZOM BYED DGOS PAR 'GYUR BAS, 'GRO RTZOM MI BYED PA MED PAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR RO,,

And that in turn is true because—if it were not that way—then we'd have to be undertaking to go at all the points of time there are; and then there would never be a time when we were not undertaking to go.

[336]

DE LTAR 'DOD NA MI 'THAD DE, LHAS SBYIN BSDAD PA BTANG NAS 'GRO BA'I BYA BA LA 'JUG PAR 'DOD DGOS PA'I PHYIR,

And yet we could never agree that this was the case, because we'd have to agree instead that John engages in the act of going once he has discontinued the act of standing still.

[337]

SKYES BU MA SONG BA'I LAM LA 'GRO BA'I RTZOM PA GA LA YOD DE, DE LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA MA RTZOM PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And how could a person undertake to go down a spot of the path that they hadn't gone down yet?
You couldn't undertake the act of going on it.

And no path with its parts

[338]

GNYIS PA NI,

This brings us to the second section from above: denying that there could be a path down which we go.

[339]

(II.14)

Gataṁ kiṁ gamyamānaṁ kiṁ agataṁ kiṁ vikalpyate,
Adṛśyamāna ārambhe gamanasyaiva sarvathā.

*Gatan kin gamyamanan kim agatan kin vikalpyate,
Adirshyamana arambhe gamanasyaiva sarvatha.*

, 'GRO BA {%' GRO RTZOM} RNAM PA THAMS CAD DU,
, SNANG BA MED PA NYID YIN NA,
, SONG BA CI ZHIG BGOM PA CI,
, MA SONG CI ZHIG RNAM PAR BRTAG

, CES SO.,

**At the point where undertaking
To go disappears completely,
Then where is the part gone done;
And where is the part
Being stepped upon;
And where is the part
We've yet to go down,
That we seek to investigate?**

[340]

GAL TE SONG MA SONG DANG BGOM BZHIN PA'I LAM GSUM YOD PAS, 'GRO BA MED NA NI DE GSUM MI RUNG NGO ZHE NA,

One may ask the following question:

You've been talking about three parts of a path: the part that a person has already walked down; the part that a person has yet to walk down; and the part that they are in the process of walking down. But if there is no going, how can these three be possible?

[341]

DE YANG MI RIGS TE, GANG GI TSE DON DAM DBYED? {%' DPYOD BYED} KYI RIGS PAS DPYAD PA'I TSE 'GRO BA'I RTZOM PA RNAM PA THAMS CAD DU SNANG BA MED PA NYID YIN PA DE'I TSE NA, SONG BA NI CI ZHIG DANG MA SONG BA NI CI ZHIG CES RNAM PAR BRTAG PAR BYA BAR MED PA'I PHYIR,

This question though is mistaken. When you make an analysis with clear reasoning which is investigating the ultimate, *undertaking to go disappears completely*. That is, *at this point* there is *no longer anything* that you can *investigate*, asking "Where is the part of the path we have already gone down?" and "Where is the part of the path we have yet to go down?"⁴⁸

⁴⁸ *Where is the part?* In the edition available to us, Choney Lama does not here mention "the part being stepped upon" from the root text; but it can be assumed.

[342]

DER THAL, 'GRO BA'I RTZOM PA MED NA 'GRO BA'I LAM GSUM [f. 19a] BZHAG TU MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR RO,,

And that is too the case, because if there can be no undertaking to go, then we can no longer posit three different parts of the path.

No standing still either

[343]

GSUM PA NI,

Which brings us to the third section above: denying that there could be an alternative to going. This is expressed in the root text as follows—

[344]

(II.15-16)

Gantā na tiṣṭhati tāvad agantā naiva tiṣṭhati,
Anyo gantur agantuś ca kas tṛtīyo 'tha tiṣṭhati.
Gantā tāvat tiṣṭhatīti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vinā gantā yadā naivopapadyate.

*Ganta na tishthati tavat aganta naiva tishthati,
Anyo gantur agantuś cha kas tirtiyo'tha tishthati.
Ganta tavat tishthatīti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vina ganta yada naivopapadyate.*

,RE ZHIG 'GRO BO {PO} MI SDOD DE,
'GRO BA PO MIN SDOD PA MIN,
'GRO PO 'GRO BA YIN PA LAS, {%'GRO PO MIN LAS GZHAN,}
,GSUM PA GANG ZHIG SDOD PAR 'GYUR,
,GANG TSE 'GRO BA MED PAR NI,
'GRO BO {PO} 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR NA,
,RE SHIG 'GRO PO SDOD DO ZHES,
,CI {JI} LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR,
ZHES SO,,

First of all, a goer

**Cannot stand still;
But neither can someone
Not a goer stand still.**

**There would be someone
Standing still
Who was a third possibility
Between one who was a goer
And someone not a goer.**

**At the point where
No going was there,
A goer then
Could never be correct.**

**How could it at all be correct
To say, in the first place,
That a goer was standing still?**

[345]

BSDAD PA RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD PAS 'GRO BA YOD DO ZHE NA,

Now suppose someone comes and says:

Standing still is something that exists through a nature of its own; therefore, going does exist.

[346]

RE SHIG 'GRO BA PO CHOS CAN, RANG BZHIN GYIS MI SDOD DE, 'OG TU 'CHAD PA'I RIGS PAS GNOD BA'I PHYIR,

Let's consider, *first of all*, someone who is *a goer*.

That *cannot stand still*, through some nature of their own;

Because the idea that they could is drawn into question by the clear reasoning that follows below.

[347]

**'GRO BA PO MIN PA SDOD PA PO CHOS CAN, RANG BZHIN GYIS SDOD PA MIN TE,
SDOD PA'I SNGA ROL NAS SDOD PA POR MA GRUB PA'I PHYIR,**

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And let's also consider *someone* who is *not a goer*;
that is, someone who is standing still.

They are *not* someone who *stands still* through some
nature of their own;

Because you cannot have someone who stands still before
there is a standing still.

[348]

KHYAB STE, RANG BZHIN GYIS SDOD NA 'DUG PA'I BYA BA LA MA BLTOS PAR
SDOD DGOS PA'I PHYIR TE SDOD PA'I BYA BA LA BLTOS TE SDOD DGOS NA THA
SNYAD DU BSDAD KYI, RANG BZHIN GYIS BSDAD PAR MA SONG BA'I PHYIR,

And this is necessarily the case; for if someone stood still through some nature of their own, then they would have to stand still without depending on the act staying. And that's because—if they did have to stand still by depending on the act of staying⁴⁹—then they would be standing still in a nominal sense: it would no longer qualify as standing still through some nature of its own.

[349]

SDOD PA'I SNGA ROL NAS SDOD PA POR MA GRUB STE, GRUB NA'ANG DUS THAMS
CAD DU'ANG SDOD PA POR 'GYUR BAS 'GRO BA PO DANG 'GRO BA SOGS MI 'THAD
DGOS PA'I PHYIR,

You can't say that someone is “one who is standing still” before there has been any standing still; if you could, then they would be a person who was standing still at every possible point in time. And then it would have to be incorrect to say that someone had become a goer; that there was any going; and so on.

[350]

**'GRO BA PO DANG 'GRO BA PO MIN PA LAS GZHAN GSUM PA GANG ZHIG SDOD
PAR 'GYUR TE, DE 'DRA MI SRID PA'I PHYIR RO,,**

And then *there would be someone standing still who was a third possibility*: someone other than *someone who was a goer*, and other than *someone who was not a goer*. But a person like that is an impossibility.

[351]

⁴⁹ *Depending on the act of staying*: We have supplied the “staying” (Tib: ‘*dug pa*’) here, rather than repeating *sdod-pa*, based on the preceding sentence.

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RGYU MTSAN GANG GI TSE STE PHYIR 'GRO BA'I BYA BA TSIG GI DON DU MED PAR NI 'GRO BA PO 'THAD BAR {PAR} MI 'GYUR NA, RE SHIG 'GRO BA PO SDOD DO ZHES SMRA BA JI LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR TE MI RIGS SO,,

The reason here—that's because—at the point where the thing that the term “act of going” refers to was not there, then it could never be correct to say there was a goer. And if that were so, then how could it at all be correct to say—to make the statement that—a goer was, in the first place, standing still? It would be wrong.

Nor any turning back

[352]
BZHI PA NI,

And with this we have reached our fourth and final section from above: denying that there could be, in the end, a turning back. This is found in the first part of the next verse of *Wisdom*:

[353]
(II.17a)

Na tiṣṭhati gamyamānān na gatān nāgatād api...

Na tishthati gamyamanan na gatan nagatad api...

,BGOM LAS LDOG PAR MI 'GYUR TE,
,SONG DANG MA SONG LAS KYANG MIN,
,ZHES SO,,

**There can be no turning back
Where we are stepping;
And not with where we've gone,
Or where we've yet to go.**

[354]
SNGAR SONG ZIN DANG MA SONG BA [f. 19b] GNYIS LA 'GRO BA'I BYA BA LAS PHYIR LDOG PA THA SNYAD DU MED DO {DE}, DE GNYIS LAS 'GRO BA'I BYA BA 'GAGS PA DANG MA SKYES PA'I PHYIR,

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Now there is no turning back, even in a nominal sense, from the act of going—from either the part of the path where we have already gone, or the part where we have yet to go. And that's because, for these two parts, the act of going has already stopped; or else not yet begun.

[355]

BGOM BZHIN PA LAS NGO BO NYID KYIS SLAR LDOG PAR MI 'GYUR TE, BGOM BZHIN PAR NGO BOS GRUB NA DUS KUN TU BGOM BZHIN PAR 'GYUR BAS LDOG BZHIN PA MI 'THAD PA'I PHYIR,

Neither can there be a turning back, in and of itself, on that part of the path *where we are* in the process of *stepping*. And that's because—if being in the process of stepping existed in and of itself, and thus existed in every point of time—then it would be wrong to say that we were also in the process of turning back.

[356]

DER THAL, GZHI GCIG LA BLTOS PA'I PHAR BGOM BZHIN PA DANG TSUR LDOG BZHIN PA GNYIS 'GAL BA'I PHYIR RO,,

And that is so the case, because it would be contradictory—with regard to a single basis—to both be in the process of stepping, and be in the process of turning back.

[357]

SONG ZIN PA DANG MA SONG BA'I LAM LAS KYANG 'GRO BA'I BYA BA LDOG PA MIN TE, RIM PA LTAR 'GRO BA'I BYA BA ZHIG PA DANG MA SKYES PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And it's not as if we can turn back from the act of going down a path, either with that part of the path that we have already gone down, or with that part of the path that we are yet to go down, because—respectively—the act of going has already disappeared; and has yet to begin.

Staying as going

[358]

GNYIS PA NI,

With this we have reached the second step in our denial of any nature to the person, by analyzing proofs for the existence of the act. Here we demonstrate how denying attempted proofs for the existence of the act already disproves a definitive act of staying. This is presented in the second half of the verse already begun:

[359]

(II.17b)

...Gamanam̄ sampravṛttiś ca nivṛttiś ca gateḥ samā.

...Gamanan sampravirttish cha nivirttish cha gateh sama.

, 'GRO BA DANG NI 'JUG PA DANG,
, LDOG PA YANG NI 'GRO BA DANG, {%'GRO DANG MTSUNGS,}

, ZHES SO,,

This is the same as with
The going: as regards
Going; engaging;
Or turning back.

[360]

GAL TE GNAS PA RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD DO SNYAM NA,

Now you might think to yourself, “But it seems to me that there must exist some kind of staying which exists through a nature of its own.”

[361]

GNAS PA RANG BZHIN GYIS MED DE DE DANG DE'I SGRUB BYED DU BKOD PA'I 'GRO BA DANG GNAS PA LA 'JUG PA RTZOM PA DANG, GNAS PA LA LDOG PA LA YANG NI 'GRO BA 'GOG PA'I SUN 'BYIN BRJOD TSUL SNGA MA DANG MTSUNGS PAS NGO BOS GRUB PA 'GOG NUS PA'I PHYIR,

And yet staying is not something that exists through any nature of its own. That's because the various proofs that have already been attempted to support this kind of going apply here as well —being in the act of *going*; first *engaging* in or undertaking some staying; or *turning back* from some staying. *These* ideas are overthrown in the *same* way that we overthrew those before, *with going*—the clear reasoning already presented possesses all the power to defeat as well the idea that anything here could exist in and of itself.

[362]

JI LTAR MTSUNGS NA, RE ZHIG GNAS PO MI 'GRO STE, , ZHES SOGS DANG, GNAS LA GNAS PA'I RTZOM MED DE, , ZHES SOGS BSGYUR NAS 'GOG TSUL 'GRO? {%'GRE} BA'I PHYIR RO,,

When we say “overthrown in the same way” what we mean is that you just follow the pattern that we saw in the verses before, substituting “staying” for “going.” And so you’d have verses that included wording like “First of all, a stayer / Cannot go...”; or “You cannot undertake to stay / Where you’ve already stayed...”⁵⁰

Goer & going: one or separate?

[363]

BZHI PA BYA BA'I NGO BO LA BRTAGS NAS 'GOG PA LA GNYIS, 'GRO BA PO DANG GCIG DANG THA DAD BRTAGS NAS DGAG PA DANG, 'GRO BA POR 'JOG PA'I BYA BA LA BYA BA GNYIS PA YOD MED BRTAG PA'O, ,DANG PO NI,

And this brings us to the fourth and final part of our expanded explication here. This is undertaking the denial of any nature to the person, by analyzing the essence of the act. We proceed in two sections: denying any nature to the person, by examining whether they are one with or distinct from the one who is going; and then denying any such nature by examining whether or not there is any second going, along with the going that establishes someone as one who is going. The first of these is covered in the next four verses of *Wisdom*:

[364]

(II.18-21)

**Yad eva gamanam gantā sa eveti na yujyate,
Anya eva punar gantā gater iti na yujyate.**

**Yad eva gamanam gantā sa eva hi bhaved yadi,
Ekībhāvah prasajyeta kartuh karmaṇa eva ca.**

**Anya eva punar gantā gater yadi vikalpyate,
Gamanam syād ṛte gantur gantā syād gamanād ṛte.**

**Ekībhāvena vā siddhir nānābhāvena vā yayoh,
Na vidyate tayoh siddhiḥ kathaṁ nu khalu vidyate.**

***Yad eva gamanan ganta sa eveti na yujyate,
Anya eva punar ganta gater iti na yujyate.***

Yad eva gamanan ganta sa eva hi bhaved yadi,

⁵⁰ You'd have verses: Referring to root text verses I.15 and I.12, respectively.

Ekibhavah prasajyeta kartuh karmana eva cha.

*Anya eva punar ganta gater yadi vikalpyate,
Gamanan syad irte gantur ganta syad gamanad irte.*

*Ekibhavena va siddhir nanabhavena va yayoh,
Na vidyate tayoh siddhih kathan nu khalu vidyate.*

, 'GRO BA DE DANG 'GRO BA PO,
, DE NYID CES KYANG BYAR [f. 20a] MI RUNG,
, 'GRO BA DANG NI 'GRO BA PO,
, GZHAN NYID CES KYANG BYAR MI RUNG,

, GAL TE 'GRO BA GANG YIN PA,
, DE NYID 'GRO PO YIN GYUR NA,
, BYED PA PO DANG LAS GNYIS KYANG,
, GCIG PA NYID DU THAL PAR 'GYUR,

, GAL TE 'GRO DANG 'GRO BA PO,
, GZHAN PA NYID DU RNAM BRTAG NA,
, 'GRO PO MED PA'I 'GRO BA DANG,
, 'GRO BA MED PA'I 'GRO BOR {POR} 'GYUR,

, GANG DAG DNGOS PO GCIG PA DANG,
, DNGOS PO GZHAN PA NYID DU NI,
, GRUB PAR GYUR PA YOD MIN NA,
, DE GNYIS GRUB PA JI LTAR YOD,

, CES SO.,

**It would be wrong to call
The going and the goer
Just that; but it would be
Just as wrong to say
That the going and goer
Were completely separate.**

**Suppose that the exact thing
Which was the act of going
Was the one who was going;
Then the agent and action as well
Would have to be one.**

**Suppose you look into the question
Of whether the going, and the goer,**

**Are entirely separate.
There would be a going
Where there was no goer;
And there would be a goer
Where there was no going.**

**Since this pair
Could never be a thing
Where they were one and the same,
And could never be a thing
Where they were entirely separate,
How then could these two
Even exist?**

[365]

SKYES BU GOM PA 'DOR BA YOD PAS 'GRO BA PO RANG BZHIN GYIS YOD DO ZHE NA,

Someone may come and make this assertion:

There does exist someone who is a goer and who exists through a nature of their own; because there does exist a person who takes steps.

[366]

DE MI 'THAD PAR THAL, SKYES BU GOM PA 'DOR BA'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA DE DANG 'DOR MKHAN GYI 'GRO BA PO SKYES BU GNYIS NI, RANG BZHIN GYIS GCIG PA DE NYID CES KYANG BYAR MI RUNG ZHING 'GRO BA DANG NI 'GRO BA PO GNYIS NI RANG BZHIN GYIS GZHAN PA NYID CES KYANG BYAR MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR,

And yet that's incorrect. Let's look at these two: the act of *going*—of taking steps—by a person; and the person who is a *goer*: who is someone taking the steps. *It would be wrong to call them "just that"*—one and the same—through some nature of their own; *but it would be just as wrong to say that the pair of the going and the goer were*, by nature, *completely separate* from one another.

[367]

GAL TE RTAGS DANG PO MA GRUB NA, BYED PA PO DANG LAS SU BYA BA GNYIS KYANG THA DAD MED PA'I GCIG PA NYID DU THAL BAR 'GYUR TE, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA GANG YIN PA DE NYID DANG 'GRO BA PO GNYIS RANG BZHIN GYIS GCIG TU KHAS BLANGS PA'I PHYIR,

And suppose you disagree to the first part of the reason we've given here. In that case, these two —*the agent* undertaking an action, *and the action* in which they are engaged, *as well—would have to be one* and the same thing: nothing separate at all. And that's because you would have already accepted that *the exact thing which was the act of going was* at the same time one and the same with *the one who was going*, through some nature of their own.

[368]

GAL TE RTAGS PHYI MA MA GRUB NA, DE YANG MI 'THAD PAR THAL, YANG 'GRO BAI BYA BA DANG 'GRO BA PO NGO BO NYID KYIS GZHAN PA'I THA DAD PA NYID DU GRUB MA GRUB BRTAGS NA DE'I TSE, 'GRO BA PO LA BLTOS PA MED PA'I 'GRO BA'I BYA BA DANG, 'GRO BA'I BYA BA LA BLTOS PA MED PA'I 'GRO BA PO BZUNG DU YOD PAR 'GYUR NA NI DE LTAR [f. 020b] 'DZIN PA YANG MIN PA'I PHYIR,

Suppose then that you disagree to the second part of the reason we gave. That too must be mistaken, since again you'd have to *look into the question of whether the act of going, and the person who is the goer, are—in and of themselves—entirely separate from each other*. And you would have to end up accepting that *there would be an act of going where there was no reliance upon a goer; and there would be a goer where there was no reliance upon an act of going*. And it's not the case that taking this position would be right.

[369]

SNGA PHYI GNYIS KAS BZLOG PA 'PHEN NO.,

Both the former and latter parts of our reason serve to imply that, in fact, their opposite is the case.

[370]

DE'I PHYIR BYED PA PO DANG BYA BA GANG DAG DNGOS PO STE RANG BZHIN GCIG PA DANG, DNGOS PO STE RANG BZHIN GZHAN PA NYID DU GRUB PAR GYUR PA YOD PA YIN {MIN} NA, DE GNYIS RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA JI LTAR YOD PAR 'GYUR TE MI RIGS PAR THAL, DE LTAR YOD PA LA RIGS PAS GNOD PA'I PHYIR,

And so *this pair—the agent of an action and the action itself—could never be a thing*, in the sense *where they were*, by nature, *one and the same; and they could never be a type of thing where they were*, by nature, *entirely separate from one another. How then could these two exist in a way where they existed by nature?* It would not be correct at all. Because the idea that something could exist in that way is thrown into question, by clear reasoning.⁵¹

⁵¹ *Clear reasoning:* Based on the Sanskrit of the root text—and the corresponding Tibetan, as found in the Derge Tengyur—we have adjusted the *yin na* here to *min na*.

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Appendices

Wisdom

Nagarjuna's Root Text

[f. 1b]

(title)

Prajñā Mūlamadhyāmaka Kārikā
Prajna Mulamadhyamaka Karika.

#, ,RGYA GAR SKAD DU,
,PRA DZNY'A N'A MA M'U LA MA DHY'A MA KA K'A RI KA ,

In Sanskrit, the title of this work is:
Prajna Nama Mulamadhyamaka Karika.

BOD SKAD DU,
,DBU MA RTZA BA'I TSIG LE'UR BYAS PA SHES RAB CES BYA BA,

In Tibetan, this is:
Uma tsaway tsik-leur jepa Sherab chejawa.

[In English, it is:
Wisdom: The Root Text on the Middle Way, Set in Verse]

(Tibetan translator's prostration)
,JAM DPAL GZHON NUR GYUR PA LA PHYAG 'TSAL LO,

I bow down to Gentle Voice, become young.

Chapter 1

An Examination of Factors

(I.1-2)
Anirodham anutpādam anucchedam aśāśvatam,
Anekārtham anānārtham anāgamam anirgamam,

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Yah pratītyasamutpādaṁ prapañcopaśamāṁ śivam,
Deśayāmāsa Saṁbuddhas tam vande vadatām varam.

*Anirodham anutpadam anuchedam ashashvatam,
Anekartham ananarthatm anagamam anirgamam,
Yah pratītyasamutpādaṁ prapanchopashaman shivam,
Deshayamasa Saṁbuddhas tan vande vadatan varam.*

,GANG GIS RTEN CING 'BREL PAR 'BYUNG,
'GAG PA MED PA SKYE MED PA,
,CHAD PA MED PA RTAG MED PA,
'ONG BA MED PA 'GRO MED PA,
,THA DAD DON MIN DON GCIG MIN,
,SPROS PA NYER ZHI ZHI BSTAN PA,
,RDZOGS PA'I SANGS RGYAS SMRA RNAMS KYI,
,DAM PA DE LA PHYAG 'TSAL LO,

I bow down to that highest of teachers;
To the fully Enlightened One,
Who teaches us to reach that peace
Where our fantasies about how things exist
Are put to a final rest.

I bow to the one who taught us
That things happen in dependence:
Nothing ends, and nothing begins;
Nothing stops, but nothing
Ever lasts forever.
Nothing comes, and nothing goes;
No two things are different,
Nor are any two the same.

(I.3)

Na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyan nāpy ahetutah,
Utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kva cana ke cana.

*Na svato napi parato na dvabhyan napyahetutah,
Utpanna jatu vidyante bhavah kva chana ke chana.*

,BDAG LAS MA YIN GZHAN LAS MIN,
,GNYIS LAS MA YIN RGYU MED MIN,
,DNGOS PO GANG DAG GANG NA YANG,
,SKYE BA NAM YANG YOD MA YIN,

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Nothing grows from itself;
Nothing grows from something else;
Nothing grows from both;
And nothing grows without a cause.
There is nothing at all that grows at all.

(I.4)

Catvāraḥ pratyayā hetur ārambaṇam anantaram,
Tathaivādhipateyam ca pratyayo nāsti pañcamah.

*Chatvarah pratyaya hetur arambanam anantaram,
Tathaivadhipateyan cha pratyayo nasti panchamah.*

,RKYEN RNAM BZHI STE RGYU DANG NI,
,DMIGS PA DANG NI DE MA THAG,
,BDAG PO YANG NI DE BZHIN TE,
,RKYEN LNGA PA NI YOD MA YIN,

The different types of conditions
Are four: the causal condition,
And just so then the object condition;
The condition for what comes immediate after;
And finally the dominant condition.
There is no fifth kind of condition.

(I.5)

Na hi svabhāvo bhāvānām pratyayādiṣu vidyate,
Avidyamāne svabhāve parabhāvo na vidyate.

*Na hi svabhavo bhavanam pratyayadishu vidyate,
Avidyamane svabhavе parabhavo na vidyate.*

,DNGOS PO RNAMS KYI RANG BZHIN NI,
,RKYEN LA SOGS LA YOD MA YIN,
,BDAG GI DNGOS PO YOD MIN NA,
,GZHAN DNGOS YOD PA MA YIN NO,

The nature of things is not something
That exists in their conditions or such;
If there is no thing that's a thing itself,
Then there is no thing that's something else.

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(I.6-7)

Kriyā na pratyayavatī nāpratyayavatī kriya,
Pratyayā nākriyāvantah kriyāvantaś ca santyuta.
Utpadyate pratītyemān itīme pratyayāḥ kila,
Yāvan notpadyata ime tāvan nāpratyayāḥ katham.

*Kriya na pratyayavati napratyayavati kriya,
Pratyaya nakriyavantah kriyavantash cha santyuta.
Utpadyate pratityeman itime pratyayah kila,
Yavan notpadyata ime tavan napratyayah katham.*

,BYA BA RKYEN DANG LDAN PA YIN { %MED },
,RKYEN DANG MI LDAN BYA BA MED,
,BYA BA MI LDAN RKYEN [f. 2a] MA YIN,
,BYA BA LDAN YOD 'ON TE NA,
,DI DAG LA BRTEM SKYE BAS NA,
,DE PHYIR 'DI DAG RKYEN CES GRAG
,JI SRID MI SKYE DE SRID DU,
,DI DAG RKYEN MIN JI LTAR MIN,

There is no act
Which has a condition;
And there is no act
Which has no condition.

If the act did have it,
And in that case
Conditions were called
What they are because
It had grown depending upon them,

Then until such time
As it had grown,
How could it be that they were not
Something that wasn't a condition?

(I.8)

Naivāsato naiva sataḥ pratyayo ‘rthasya yujyate,
Asataḥ pratyayah kasya sataś ca pratyayena kim.

Naivasato naiva satah pratyayorthasya yujyate,

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Asatah pratyayah kasya satash cha pratyayena kim.

,MED DAM YOD PA'I DON LA YANG,
,RKYEN NI RUNG BA MA YIN TE,
,MED NA GANG GI RKYEN DU 'GYUR,
,YOD NA RKYEN GYIS CI ZHIG BYA,

How could a thing ever be
A condition for something,
Whether that thing existed or not?

For if it didn't exist,
What would the condition
Be a condition for?

And if it did exist,
What would be
The use of the condition?

(I.9)

Na san nāsan na sad asan dharmo nirvartate yadā,
Katham̄ nirvartako hetur evam̄ sati hi yujyate.

*Na san nāsan na sad asan dharmo nirvartate yada,
Katham̄ nirvartako hetur evan sati hi yujyate.*

,GANG TSE CHOS NI YOD PA DANG,
,MED DANG YOD MED MI 'GRUB PA,
,JI LTAR SGRUB BYED RGYU ZHES BYA,
,DE LTA YIN NA MI RIGS SO,

Where something that neither exists,
Nor doesn't exist,
Nor both does and doesn't exist
Cannot be produced,
How can you call something a cause
That worked to produce it?
It would be wrong,
If that's the way it is.

(I.10)

Anārambaṇa evāyaṁ san dharma upadiśyate,

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Athānārambaṇe dharme kuta ārambaṇam punah.

*Anarambana evayan san dharma upadishyate,
Athānārambāne dharme kuta arambanam punah.*

,YOD PA'I CHOS 'DI DMIGS PA NI,
,MED PA KHO NA NYE BAR BSTAN,
,CI STE CHOS NI DMIGS MED NA,
,DMIGS PA YOD PAR GA LA 'GYUR,

You take something which already exists
And invariably refer to it
As not yet having an object.
And if you say, “Well then,
It does not exist,” then how
Could entities of perception
Ever possess an object?

(I.11)

Anutpanneṣu dharmeṣu nirodho nopapadyate,
Nānantaram ato yuktam niruddhe pratyayaś ca kah.

*Anutpanneshu dharmeshu nirodho nopapadyate,
Nānantaram ato yuktan niruddhe pratyayash cha kah.*

,CHOS RNAMS SKYES PA MA YIN NA,
'GAG PA 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR RO,
,DE PHYIR DE MA THAG MI RIGS,
,'GAGS NA RKYEN YANG GANG ZHIG YIN,

If things had not yet grown, then it
Would be incorrect for them to end.
Thus the idea of the one for what
Comes immediately after is wrong;
If it were to end, then how
Could it ever be a condition?

(I.12)

Bhāvānām niḥsvabhāvānām na sattā vidyate yataḥ,
Satīdam asmin bhavatītyetan naivopapadyate.

Bhavanān niḥsvabhavanān na sattā vidyate yataḥ,

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Satidam asmin bhavatityetan naivopapadyate.

,DNGOS PO RANG BZHIN MED RNAMS KYI,
,YOD PA GANG PHYIR YOD MIN NA,
,DI YOD PAS NA 'DI 'BYUNG ZHES,
,BYA BA 'DI NI 'THAD MA YIN,

Things though do possess a nature,
For if it were the case they didn't,
The statement made where it was said
That "This will happen, if that is there"
Could never have been correct.

(I.13-14)

Na ca vyastasamasteṣu pratyayevaśasti tat phalam,
Pratyayebhyah katham tac ca bhaven na pratyayeaṣu yat.
Athāsad api tat tebhyaḥ pratyayebhyah pravartate,
Apratyayebhyo 'pi kasmān nābhipravartate phalam.

*Na cha vyastasamasteshu pratyayashvasti tat phalam,
Pratyayebhyah kathan tach cha bhaven na pratyayeshu yat.
Athasad api tat tebhyaḥ pratyayebhyah pravartate,
Apratyayebhyo'pi kasman nabhipravartate phalam.*

,RKYEN RNAMS SO SO 'DUS PA LA,
,BRAS BU DE NI MED PA NYID,
,RKYEN RNAMS LA NI GANG MED PA,
,DE NI RKYEN LAS JI LTAR SKYE,
,CI STE DE NI MED PAR YANG,
,RKYEN DE DAG LAS SKYE 'GYUR NA,
,RKYEN MA YIN PA DAG LAS KYANG,
,CI YI PHYIR NA SKYE MI 'GYUR,

There cannot be any result at all
In the convening of each
Of the individual conditions.

How could something grow from conditions
If it had never been in those conditions?

For if the result were to grow from these
Conditions without being in them,
Then why couldn't the same result

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Begin to grow from things
That weren't conditions?

(I.15-16)

Phalam ca pratyayamayam pratyayāścāsvayaṁmayāḥ,
Phalamasvamayebhyo yat tat pratyayamayam katham.
Tasmān na pratyayamayam nāpratyayamayam phalam,
Saṁvidyate phalābhāvāt pratyayāpratyayāḥ kutah.

*Phalan cha pratyayamayam pratyayashchasvayamayah,
Phalamasvamayebhyo yat tat pratyayamayan katham.
Tasman na pratyayamayan naprattyayamayam phalam,
Sanvidyate phalabhavat pratyayapratyayah kutah.*

,'BRAS BU RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN NA,
,RKYEN RNAMS BDAG GI RANG [f. 2b] BZHIN MIN,
,BDAG DNGOS MIN LAS 'BRAS BU GANG,
,DE NI JI LTAR RKYEN RANG BZHIN,
,DE PHYIR RKYEN GYI RANG BZHIN MIN,
,RKYEN MIN RANG BZHIN 'BRAS BU NI,
,YOD MIN 'BRAS BU MED PAS NA,
,RKYEN MIN RKYEN DU GA LA 'GYUR,

Suppose you assert that results
Constitute a nature
Of their conditions;
But conditions are not things
With a nature of their own.

And so how could those,
Regardless of how you look at it,
Be some nature of their conditions?
Because there is none
With the nature of its conditions.

(chapter title)

,RKYEN BRTAG PA ZHES BYA BA STE RAB TU BYED PA DANG PO'O,,

Here ends the first chapter of *Wisdom*:
“An Analysis of Conditions”

Chapter 2 An Examination of Coming & Going

(II.1)

Gataṁ na gamyate tāvad agataṁ naiva gamyate,
Gatāgataviniṁuktam̄ gamyamānam̄ na gamyate.

*Gatan na gamyate tavad agatan naiva gamyate,
Gatagatavinirmuktan gamyamanam na gamyate.*

,RE ZHIG SONG LA MI 'GRO STE,
,MA SONG BA LA {LA'ANG} 'GRO BA MIN,
,SONG DANG MA SONG MA GTOGS PAR,
,BGOM PA BYED PAR MI 'GYUR RO,,

First of all, having gone
Is not going;
Neither is not having gone
Going.
And yet except for having gone
And not having gone,
You can never be stepping.

(II.2)

Ceṣṭā yatra gatis tatra gamyamāne ca sā yataḥ,
Na gate nāgate ceṣṭā gamyamāne gatis tataḥ.

*Cheshta yatra gatis tatra gamyamane cha sa yatah,
Na gate nagate cheshta gamyamane gatis tatah.*

,GANG NA G-YO BA DE NA 'GRO,
,DE YANG GANG PHYIR BGOM PA LA,
,G-YO BA SONG MIN MA SONG MIN,
,DE PHYIR BGOM LA 'GRO BA YOD,

Wherever one is in motion,
There is going.
And why is that so?
When we are stepping,
The motion is not having gone,

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Nor is it not having gone.
And so there is going
Where there is stepping.

(II.3)

Gamyamānasya gamanam katham nāmopapatsyate,
Gamyamānam vigamanam yadā naivopapadyate.

*Gamyamanasya gamanan kathan namopapatsyate,
Gamyamanan vigamanan yada naivopapadyate.*

,BGOM LA 'GRO BA YIN PAR NI,
,JI LTA BUR NA 'THAD PAR 'GYUR,
,GANG TSE 'GRO BA MED PA YI,
,BGOM PA 'THAD PA MED PHYIR RO,,

How could it be correct to say
That there was going
Where there was stepping?
For it would never be correct
To say there was a stepping
Where there was no going.

(II.4)

Gamyamānasya gamanam yasya tasya prasajyate,
Rte gater gamyamānam gamyamānam hi gamyate.

*Gamyamanasya gamanan yasya tasya prasajyate,
Irte gater gamyamanam gamyamanan hi gamyate.*

,GANG GI BGOM PA LA 'GRO BA,
,DE YI BGOM LA 'GRO MED PAR,
,THAL BAR 'GYUR TE GANG GI PHYIR,
,BGOM LA 'GRO BA YIN PHYIR RO,,

Where there is a going
Where there is a stepping,
The stepping would
Of a necessity
Lose the going—
For there is a going
In a stepping.

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(II.5-6)

Gamyamānasya gamane prasaktam gamanadvayam,
Yena tad gamyamānam ca yac cātra gamanam punah.
Dvau gantārau prasajyete prasakte gamanadvaye,
Gantāram hi tiraskṛtya gamanam nopapadyate.

*Gamyamanasya gamane prasaktam gamanadvayam,
Yena tad gamyamanan cha yach chatra gamanam punah.
Dvau gantaraū prasajyete prasakte gamanadvaye,
Gantaran hi tiraskirtya gamanan nopapadyate.*

,BGO {BGOM} LAM {LA} 'GRO BA YOD NA NI,
'GRO BA GNYIS SU THAL 'GYUR TE,
,GANG GIS DE BA GOM {DE BGOM} GYUR PA DANG,
,DE LA 'GRO BA GANG YIN PA'O,
'GRO BA GNYIS SU THAL 'GYUR NA,
'GRO BA PO YANG GNYIS SU 'GYUR,
,GANG PHYIR 'GRO BO MED PAR NI,
'GRO BA 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR RO,

If there existed a going
With the stepping,
Then there would have to be
Two goings:
The one where one was stepping,
And the one where that was going.

And if there had to be two goings,
Then there would have to be
Two goers too; for it would never be
Correct to say there was a going
Where there is no goer.

(II.7)

Gantāram cet tiraskṛtya gamanam nopapadyate,
Gamane 'sati gantātha kuta eva bhaviṣyati.

*Gantaran chet tiraskirtya gamanan nopapadyate,
Gamane'sati gantatha kuta eva bhavishyati.*

,GAL TE 'GRO BA {PO} MED GYUR NA,

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,'GRO BA 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR TE,
,'GRO BA MED NA 'GRO BA PO,
,YOD PA NYID DU GA LA 'GYUR,

Now going could never be correct
In a case where there's no goer;
For how could there ever be
The goer themselves,
In a case where there's no going?

(II.8)

Gantā na gacchati tāvad agantā naiva gacchati,
Anyo gantur agantuś ca kas tṛtīyo 'tha gacchati.

*Ganta na gachati tavad aganta naiva gachati,
Anyo gantur agantush cha kas tirtiyo tha gachati.*

,RE ZHIG 'GRO PO MI 'GRO STE,
,'GRO BA PO MIN 'GRO BA MIN,
,'GRO PO 'GRO PO MIN LAS GZHAN,
,GSUM PA GANG ZHIG 'GRO BAR 'GYUR,

First of all, no goer goes;
But neither does someone
Who's no goer go.
How so too could someone go
Who was some third possibility:
Someone besides a goer, or not?

(II.9)

Gantā tāvad gacchatīti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vinā gantā yadā naivopapadyate.

*Ganta tavad gachatiti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vina ganta yada naivopapadyate.*

,GANG TSE 'GRO BA MED PAR NI,
,'GRO BA {PO} 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR NA,
,RE ZHIG 'GRO BO {PO} 'GRO'O ZHES,
JI LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR,

In a case where there's no going,

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It would never be correct
For there to be a goer.
And so how could it ever
Be correct to say
That a goer now was going?

(II.10)

Pakṣo gantā gacchatīti yasya tasya prasajyate,
Gamanena vinā gantā gantur gamanam icchataḥ.

*Paksho ganta gachatiti yasya tasya prasajyate,
Gamanena vina ganta gantur gamanam ichatah.*

,GANG GI PHYOGS LA 'GRO BA PO,
'GRO BA DE LA 'GRO MED PA'I,
'GRO BO {PO} YIN PAR THAL 'GYUR TE,
'GRO BO {PO} 'GRO BAR 'DOD PHYIR RO,

In any position that says
That a goer is going,
There would have to be
A goer that wasn't,
Because you'd be saying
That the goer was going.

(II.11)

Gamane dve prasajyete gantā yadyuta gacchati,
Ganteti cājyate yena gantā san yac ca gacchati.

*Gamane dve prasajyete ganta yadyuta gachati,
Ganteti chajyate yena ganta san yach cha gachati.*

,GAL TE 'GRO BO {PO} 'GRO 'GYUR NA,
'GRO BA GNYIS SU THAL 'GYUR TE,
,GANG GI {GIS} 'GRO BOR {POR} MNGON PA DANG,
'GRO BOR {POR} GYUR NAS GANG 'GRO BA'O,

If the goer were going,
Then there would have to be
Two goings: one which
Specified the goer,
And the other the going

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Once one was a goer.

(II.12)

Gate nārabhyate gantum gantum nārabhyate 'gate,
Nārabhyate gamyamāne gantum ārabhyate kuha.

*Gate narabhyate gantun gantun narabhyate'gate,
Narabhyate gamyamane gantum arabhyate kuha.*

,SONG LA 'GRO BA'I RTZOM MED DE,
,MA SONG BA LA'ANG 'GRO RTZOM MED,
,BGO {BGOM} LA RTZOM PA YOD MIN NA,
,GANG DU 'GRO LA {BA} RTZOM PAR BYED,

You cannot undertake to go
Where you've already gone;
Neither can this be done
Where you've yet to go.
If the undertaking is not something
That could ever be there with stepping,
Then where could you ever
Undertake to go?

(II.13)

Na pūrvam̄ gamanārambhād̄ gamyamānam̄ na vā gatam,
Yatrārabhyeta gamanam agate gamanam̄ kutah̄.

*Na purvan̄ gamanarambhad̄ gamyamanan̄ na va gatam,
Yatrarabhyeta gamanam agate gamanan̄ kutah̄.*

,'GRO BA RTZOM PA'I SNGA ROL NA,
,GANG DU 'GRO BA RTZOM 'GYUR BA'I {BA},
,BGOM PA MED CING SONG BA MED,
,MA SONG [f. 3a] 'GRO BA GA LA YOD,

There exists no spot for stepping—
Where they are undertaking to go—
Before they have undertaken to go.

Neither does there exist a spot
Where they have already gone.

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And how could a person undertake
To go down a spot
That they hadn't gone down yet?

(II.14)

Gataṁ kiṁ gamyamānam̄ kiṁ agatam̄ kiṁ vikalpyate,
Adṛṣyamāna ārambhe gamanasyaiva sarvathā.

*Gatan kin gamyamanan kim agatan kin vikalpyate,
Adirshyamana arambhe gamanasyaiva sarvatha.*

,'GRO BA {%'GRO RTZOM} RNAM PA THAMS CAD DU,
,SNANG BA MED PA NYID YIN NA,
,SONG BA CI ZHIG BGOM PA CI,
,MA SONG CI ZHIG RNAM PAR BRTAG

At the point where undertaking
To go disappears completely,
Then where is the part gone done;
And where is the part
Being stepped upon;
And where is the part
We've yet to go down,
That we seek to investigate?

(II.15-16)

Gantā na tiṣṭhati tāvad agantā naiva tiṣṭhati,
Anyo gantur agantuś ca kas trītyo 'tha tiṣṭhati.
Gantā tāvat tiṣṭhatīti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vinā gantā yadā naivopapadyate.

*Ganta na tishthati tavat aganta naiva tishthati,
Anyo gantur agantush cha kas tirtyo 'tha tishthati.
Ganta tavat tishthatiti katham evopapatsyate,
Gamanena vina ganta yada naivopapadyate.*

,RE ZHIG 'GRO BO {%'PO} MI SDOD DE,
'GRO BA PO MIN SDOD PA MIN,
,'GRO PO 'GRO BA YIN PA LAS, {%'GRO PO MIN LAS GZHAN,}
,GSUM PA GANG ZHIG SDOD PAR 'GYUR,
,GANG TSE 'GRO BA MED PAR NI,
,'GRO BO {%'PO} 'THAD PAR MI 'GYUR NA,

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,RE SHIG 'GRO PO SDOD DO ZHES,
,CI {%JI} LTAR 'THAD PA NYID DU 'GYUR,

First of all, a goer
Cannot stand still;
But neither can someone
Not a goer stand still.

There would be someone
Standing still
Who was a third possibility
Between one who was a goer
And someone not a goer.

At the point where
No going was there,
A goer then
Could never be correct.

How could it at all be correct
To say, in the first place,
That a goer was standing still?

(II.17a)

Na tiṣṭhati gamyamānān na gatān nāgatād api...

Na tishthati gamyamanan na gatan nagatad api...

,BGOM LAS LDOG PAR MI 'GYUR TE,
,SONG DANG MA SONG LAS KYANG MIN,

There can be no turning back
Where we are stepping;
And not with where we've gone,
Or where we've yet to go.

(II.17b)

...Gamanām saṃpravṛttiś ca nivṛttiś ca gateḥ samā.

...Gamanan sampravirttish cha nivirttish cha gateh sama.

,'GRO BA DANG NI 'JUG PA DANG,

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,LDOG PA YANG NI 'GRO BA DANG, {%'GRO DANG MTSUNGS,}

This is the same as with
The going: as regards
Going; engaging;
Or turning back.

(II.18-21)

Yad eva gamanam gantā sa eveti na yujyate,
Anya eva punar gantā gater iti na yujyate.

Yad eva gamanam gantā sa eva hi bhaved yadi,
Ekībhāvah prasajyeta kartuh karmaṇa eva ca.

Anya eva punar gantā gater yadi vikalpyate,
Gamanam syād ṛte gantur gantā syād gamanād ṛte.

Ekībhāvena vā siddhir nānābhāvena vā yayoh,
Na vidyate tayoh siddhiḥ kathām nu khalu vidyate.

*Yad eva gamanan ganta sa eveti na yujyate,
Anya eva punar ganta gater iti na yujyate.*

*Yad eva gamanan ganta sa eva hi bhaved yadi,
Ekibhavah prasajyeta kartuh karmana eva cha.*

*Anya eva punar ganta gater yadi vikalpyate,
Gamanan syad irte gantur ganta syad gamanad irte.*

*Ekibhavena va siddhir nanabhavena va yayoh,
Na vidyate tayoh siddhiḥ kathan nu khalu vidyate.*

,'GRO BA DE DANG 'GRO BA PO,
,DE NYID CES KYANG BYAR [f. 20a] MI RUNG,
,'GRO BA DANG NI 'GRO BA PO,
,GZHAN NYID CES KYANG BYAR MI RUNG,

,GAL TE 'GRO BA GANG YIN PA,
,DE NYID 'GRO PO YIN GYUR NA,
,BYED PA PO DANG LAS GNYIS KYANG,
,GCIG PA NYID DU THAL PAR 'GYUR,

,GAL TE 'GRO DANG 'GRO BA PO,

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,GZHAN PA NYID DU RNAM BRTAG NA,
'GRO PO MED PAI 'GRO BA DANG,
'GRO BA MED PAI 'GRO BOR {POR} 'GYUR,

,GANG DAG DNGOS PO GCIG PA DANG,
.DNGOS PO GZHAN PA NYID DU NI,
,GRUB PAR GYUR PA YOD MIN NA,
,DE GNYIS GRUB PA JI LTAR YOD,

It would be wrong to call
The going and the goer
Just that; but it would be
Just as wrong to say
That the going and goer
Were completely separate.

Suppose that the exact thing
Which was the act of going
Was the one who was going;
Then the agent and action as well
Would have to be one.

Suppose you look into the question
Of whether the going, and the goer,
Are entirely separate.
There would be a going
Where there was no goer;
And there would be a goer
Where there was no going.

Since this pair
Could never be a thing
Where they were one and the same,
And could never be a thing
Where they were entirely separate,
How then could these two
Even exist?

To be continued!

An Excerpt from *The Sutra on the Source of the Jewels*

Arya Nagarjuna relies most famously upon sheer logic to prove emptiness in his masterpiece, Wisdom. Commentators since his time have added samples from some of the original sutras, typically at the end of chapters, to show that the Arya's ideas are firmly based as well on the direct word of the Buddha.

A popular source, mentioned by Choney Lama himself at the end of Chapter 1, is The Sutra on the Source of the Jewels—which is cited by Master Chandrakirti for example as he concludes his own explanation of the chapter. In his Sea of Emptiness, Je Tsongkapa offers his usual insightful commentary upon these lines, which we present here, to give our reader a taste of the original sources for Nagarjuna's wisdom.⁵²

[A1]

RIGS PA MI SHES SHING LUNG TZAM SKYABS SU GYUR PA RNAMS KYIS RTOG GE
SKAM PO'I BSTAN BCOS TZAM GYIS BSGRUBS PA YIN NO ZHES SMRA BA DGAG
PA'I PHYIR DANG,

Now some people might say:

All these books are just the product of some dry logicians who know nothing about clear reasoning—who hide in quotations from scripture, and use them to try to prove something.

One of the purposes of this chapter is to address these objections.

[A2]

CHOS RNAMS SKYE BA MED PAR STON PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD RAB TU
BYED PA 'DIS BSHAD PAR BYA BA YIN PAR BSTAN PA'I PHYIR NGES PA'I DON GYI
LUNG DANG SBYOR BA'I PHYOGS TZAM STON PA NI,

At the same time, we can present just a sampling of scripture which is literal—and not figurative—in order to show that this first chapter manages to explain the entire body of Buddhist scripture which treats the fact that nothing ever starts.

⁵² A taste of the original sources: For Je Rinpoche's treatment, see ff. 51a-52a of the *Sea* (%B2, S05401). For Master Chandrakirti's citation, refer to f. 30b of *Clarification of the Verses* (%S14, TD03860). Those lines found in the original sutra are at f. 433a of the teaching (%S15, KL00124).

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[A3]

'PHAGS PA DKON MCHOG 'BYUNG GNAS KYI MDO LAS,

And so here we go, from the *Sutra on the Source of the Jewels*:

(1a)

,GANG NA'ANG STONG PAR RIG PA MA MCHIS PAR,⁵³
,NAM MKHA' BAR SNANG BYA YI RJES DANG MTSUNGS,

The mind that understands emptiness
In anything at all
Is simply an impossibility;

It's just the same as the track
That a bird leaves behind
As it crosses the empty sky.

[A4]

ZHES DE KHO NA NYID DANG RO GCIG TU GYUR PA SPROS PA MED PA'I YE SHES
DPE DE DANG 'DRA BAR BSTAN NO.,

These lines are using a metaphor to refer to the wisdom which is free of all imagined things, and which becomes a single song with suchness.

[A5]

DE KHO NA NYID NI,

The suchness itself is then presented in the lines that come next:

(1b)

,GANG NA'ANG NGO BO NYID 'GA' YOD MIN PA,
,DE NI NAM YANG GZHAN GYI RGYUR MI 'GYUR,

(2a)

,GANG GI NGO BO NYID NI MI RNYED PA,
,RANG BZHIN MED DE JI LTAR GZHAN GYI RKYEN,

Nothing that never had
Any essence of its own

⁵³ *Gang na-ang stong-par*: We have presented the line as currently found in the Lhasa edition of the Kangyur; both Je Tsongkapa and Master Chandrakirti give it slightly differently.

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Could ever act as a cause
For something other than it.

How could something
That had no essence—
Something without a nature
Of its own—
Ever act as a cause,
For something else?

[A6]

,ZHES RGYU DANG RKYEN LA SKYED BYED KYI RANG BZHIN MED PA DANG,

What these lines are saying is that neither causes nor conditions have any nature of their own, where they make things start.

(2b)

,RANG BZHIN MED PA GZHAN GYIS CI ZHIG SKYED,
,RGYU DE BDE BAR GSHEGS PAS BSTAN PA'O,

And how could something
Without a nature
Ever be started
By something else?

These are the reasons
That the One Gone to Bliss
Taught for us.

[A7]

,ZHES 'BRAS BU LA BSKYED BYA'I RANG BZHIN MED PA'I STONG NYID RGYAL BAS
RGYU MTSAN DANG BCAS TE BSTAN PA DE NYID DO ZHES GSUNGS SO.,

These lines are expressing that results have no nature of their own either—of being started by something. This then is exactly the kind of place in scripture where the victorious Buddha says that things have no nature at all of these two kinds—of causing something else or being caused by something else. They are empty of any such nature.

(3)

,THAMS CAD CHOS KYANG MI GA-YO BRTAN PAR GNAS,
,[f. 51b] MI 'GYUR 'TSE BA MED CING ZHI BA STE,

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,JI LTAR NAMKHA' { %NAM MKHA' } SHES PA MED PA BZHIN,
,DE LA MI SHES 'GRO BA RMONGS PAR 'GYUR,

Of everything in the world,
It is the one thing that never wavers;
It stays steadfast, and never changes;
The one thing that can never hurt us,
The one thing that is peace.

You should not understand it
In the way you understand empty space;
And those who never understand it
Continue to live in darkness.

[A8]

,ZHES PAS NI CHOS RNAMS KYI DE KHO NA NYID DE MI GA-YO BA SOGS SU
BSTAN ZHING DE YANG NAM MKHA' RI BO LA SOGS PA'I THOGS BCAS BKAG TZAM
LA 'JOG PA MIN PA

In these lines the Buddha is saying, first of all, that the suchness of things is something that never wavers—and so on. And he is saying secondly that this suchness is not something that we arrive at through a process such as where we deny some kind of concreteness: where we say for example that empty space consists of the simple elimination of physicality, in the form of mountains or the like.

[A9]

GZHAN DU SHES PAR BYAR MED PAR BZHIN DU GA-YO BA DANG BRTAN PA SOGS
KYI SPROS PA BCAD TZAM DU SHES PAR BYA BA DANG, DON DE MA RTOGS PAS
'KHOR BAR GSUNGS SO,,

Suchness is not something that we can understand in these other ways; rather, we must understand it through the simple elimination of the ways we imagine things to be: that they are wavering, or that they are steadfast. And because we fail to understand this point—the Buddha is saying—then we continue to wander, in the cycle of pain.

(4)

,JI LTAR RI BO DAG NI MI SGUL PA,
,DE BZHIN CHOS RNAMS RTAG TU BSKYED MI NUS,
,'CHI 'PHO MED CING SKYE BA MED PA YI,
,CHOS RNAMS DE LTAR RGYAL BAS RAB TU BSTAN,

Mountains never get up

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And move some other place;
Neither can anything ever start
Anything at all.

Thus did the Victor
Teach us of things
Where there is no death,
And no moving on;
And where there is no birth.

[A10]

,ZHES PAS NI CHOS RNAMS RANG BZHIN GYIS STONG PA RNAM PA GZHAN DU DRANG DU MI NUS PA DANG 'CHI 'PHO SOGS MED PAR BSTAN NO,,

What this is saying is that the fact that things are empty of any nature of their own is not something you could ever try to understand in some other way. It is also saying that there is no death, and no moving on after death, nor anything of the like.

(5)

,CHOS GANG SKYE BA MED CING 'BYUNG BA MED,
'CHI 'PHO MED CING RGA BAR MI 'GYUR BA,
,MI YI SENG+GE YIS NI DER STON ZHING,
,SEMS CAN BRGYA PHRAG DAG NI DE LA BKOD,

That lion among all humankind⁵⁴
Taught us in these verses
That there is nothing at all that ever
Starts, or happens at all;

That there is no death, no moving on,
And that we will never get old.
This is the place that we are leading
Billions of beings to go.

[A11]

⁵⁴ *Lion among all humankind*: Verses 5-7 here are found in Chandrakirti's *Clarification* twice, the first time just after verses 1-4; and the second time, attributed to our sutra; but they are not found there in the edition available to us—although there is much similar language. They feel like they might be a wrap-up by the Master, or perhaps part of another version of the sutra; in any case, they are glossed by Je Tsongkapa together with the first four verses and we retain them here.

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,CES PAS NI RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE 'CHI MED PA'I DON DE GDUL BYA GZHAN DU
MA ZHIG KYANG 'DZIN DU BCUG CES DNGOS SU BSTAN PA'I SHUGS KYIS GZHAN
DAG GIS KYANG DE LA SEMS CAN RNAMS DGOD PAR BYA'O ZHES BSTAN NO,,

What this is saying is that we should encourage as many other disciples as we can to grasp this idea that there is no birth, and no death, that happens through any nature of its own. By implication the verse is saying that we should lead living beings to that same place, by using the other ideas presented here as well.

(6)

,GANG LA NGO BO NYID NI GANG YANG MED,
,GZHAN YANG MA YIN SUS KYANG MI RNYED PA,
,NANG NA MA YIN PHYI ROL DAG NA YANG,
,MI RNYED DE DAG LA NI MGON POS BKOD,

Our Savior leads them to the place
Where there is no essence, to anything—
But which is nothing else either:
The place that no one could find,
The place that is neither inside us,
Nor found outside of us either.

[A12]

,CES PAS NI CHOS GANG LA TSOL BA PO SUS GNAS SKABS GANG DU BTZAL YANG
RANG DANG GZHAN GYI NGO BO NYID MI RNYED PA'I DON DE LA SEMS CAN
RNAMS BKOD CES BSTAN TE GDUL BYA LA NGES DON GYI [f. 52a] GO BA BSKYED
LUGS BSTAN NO,,

What this is saying is that the Buddha leads living beings to a place where—no matter how hard anyone at all worked to find it—they would never find any nature, of things being themselves, or things being something else. These lines are meant to indicate how we help disciples to grasp what the Buddha really meant.

(7)

,BDE BAR GSHEGS PAS ZHI BA'I 'GRO GSUNGS KYANG,
'GRO BA GANG YANG RNYED PAR MI 'GYUR TE,
,DE DAG 'GRO LAS GROL BAR RNAM PAR GSUNGS,
,GROL NAS SEMS CAN MANG PO GROL BAR MDZAD,

It's true that the Ones Gone to Bliss
Have taught about how to go to peace;
But it's not as if you can find any going at all—

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Which is why they said that these beings
Who go through births can be liberated.
And once they are freed, they free as well
Many other suffering beings.

[A13]

CES PAS NI ZHI BAR 'GRO MKHAN DE YANG BTZAL NA MI RNYED PA DANG, DE LTA NA'ANG DE DAG 'GRO BA LNGA'I 'KHOR BA LAS GROL BA DANG RANG GROL NAS GZHAN MANG PO SGROL BAR GSUNGS TE RIGS PAS DPYAD NA MI RNYED PAS THAR PA DANG DE THOB MKHAN DANG DES DE THOB PA SOGS THAMS CAD MI 'GOG PA'I DON NO.,

This verse is talking about those people who go to peace; because if you look for them, you won't find anyone. Nonetheless, it has been stated by the Buddha that these same beings *can* be liberated from the five forms of suffering life; and that once they are liberated, they can lead many others to liberation. The point is that—once you analyze them—you cannot find these things; but that in turn means that we are *not* denying them: neither freedom itself, nor the person who attains it, nor the act of attaining freedom, or anything of the kind.

[A14]

DE LTAR NA RAB BYED DANG PO'I RIGS PA 'DI RNAMS NI 'DI DANG 'DI 'DRA BA'I SKYE MED STON PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD LTA BA'I MIG TU SHES PAR GYIS SHIG,

As such, you should understand that studying all the clear reasoning found in the first chapter of *Wisdom* is giving yourself the eyes to see into these words of the Buddha—and any others like them—which teach us what it means to say that “things never begin.”

{The “rab byed ‘dis...’” is a quotation; Je Rinpoche:

/Users/michaelroach/Documents/C DRIVE FILES/A/SUNGBUM UPDATED 6:22:16 NL/DBU MA_MIDDLE-WAY PHILOSOPHY (MADHYAMika PRASANGIKA SCHOOL)/RTZA BA SHES RAB GYI 'GREl PA_COMMENTARIES ON THE ROOT TEXT CALLED 'WISDOM' (MULAPRAJNA)/RJE TZONG KHA PA BLO BZANG GRAGS PA_JE TSONGKAPA LOBSANG DRAKPA (1357-1419)/S05401D_DBU MA RTZA BA'I TSIG LE'UR BYAS PA SHES RAB CES BYA BA'I RNAM BSHAD RIGS PA'I RGYA MTSO_The Ocean of Reasoning, an Explication of the Root Verses on the Middle Way entitled 'Wisdom'_RJE TZONG KHA PA BLO BZANG GRAGS PA (1357-1419).TXT

CHOS RNAMS SKYE BA MED PAR STON PA'I GSUNG RAB THAMS CAD RAB TU BYED PA 'DIS BSHAD PAR BYA BA YIN PAR BSTAN PA'I PHYIR NGES PA'I DON GYI LUNG DANG SBYOR BA'I PHYOGS TZAM STON PA NI, 'PHAGS PA DKON

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MCHOG 'BYUNG GNAS KYI MDO LAS, GANG NA'ANG STONG PA RIG PA MED
PA NI, ,NAM MKHA' BAR SNANG BYA YI RJES DANG MTSUNGS, ,ZHES DE
KHO NA NYID DANG RO GCIG TU GYUR PA SPROS PA MED PA'I YE SHES
DPE DE DANG 'DRA BAR BSTAN NO, ,

This language is repeated by him throughout his commentary; to the effect that “this chapter summarized all the content from the scriptures on this particular subject too...”}

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