



**“A LAMP FOR THE PATH
OF THE MIDDLE WAY”**
**A BITWISE COMMENTARY ON
ENTERING THE CONDUCT**
BY DRUKCHEN PADMA KARPO

TONY DUFF • PKTC

PREVIEW TEXT

**CONTAINING THE INTRODUCTION
AND CHAPTER ONE**

BY TONY DUFF

PADMA KARPO TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

Copyright © 2013 Tony Duff. All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photography, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system or technologies now known or later developed, without permission in writing from the publisher.

First edition, November 8th 2008

Second edition, September 30th 2013

ISBN paper book: 978-9937-572-67-5

ISBN e-book: 978-9937-572-66-8

Garamond typeface with diacritical marks and
Tibetan Classic Chogyal typeface
designed and created by Tony Duff,

Produced, Printed, and Published by
Padma Karpo Translation Committee
P.O. Box 4957
Kathmandu
NEPAL

Committee members for this book: translation and composition, Lama Tony Duff; editorial Jason Watkins, cover design, Christopher Duff.

Web-site and e-mail contact through:
<http://www.pktc.org/pktc>
or search Padma Karpo Translation Committee on the web.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	v
A BITWISE COMMENTARY ON <i>ENTERING THE CONDUCT</i> CALLED “A LAMP FOR THE PATH OF THE MIDDLE WAY” BY ALL-KNOWING PADMA KARPO	1
Preface	3
Chapter One	6
Chapter Two	35
Chapter Three	57
Chapter Four	71
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	83
SUPPORTS FOR STUDY	103
INDEX	109

INTRODUCTION

About the Texts in this Book

Entering the Bodhisatva's Conduct by Shāntideva

The *Bodhisatvacaryāvatāra* or *Entering the Bodhisatva's Conduct* is a text that details the conduct to be followed by a person who wishes to attain complete enlightenment. The text was written by the very learned and highly accomplished Indian master Śhāntideva [8th century CE] during his stay at the famous Buddhist university of India called Nālandā. When he first taught the text to the masters and students of the university they were amazed by its beautiful composition and expert treatment of the topic. Since then it has only increased in fame and is now regarded as one of the essential texts to be studied by someone who wishes to follow the path to complete enlightenment.

The title is sometimes shortened. For example, sometimes it is shortened to *Bodhicaryāvatāra* or *Entering Enlightenment Conduct*¹ in order to make the intent of the text clearer. “Enlightenment conduct” is the standard term used in these teach-

¹ Note that this, the correct spelling of bodhisatva, is used throughout this book. For more information, see bodhisatva in the glossary.

ings of the path to complete enlightenment to refer to the *conduct* that will be followed by a person wanting to attain the unsurpassed *enlightenment* of a truly complete buddha.²

The title is also frequently abbreviated to *Caryāvatāra* or *Entering the Conduct*. “Conduct” in that case is understood to mean the “enlightenment conduct” described in the previous paragraph. This abbreviation is seen in the title of the text presented in this book, *A Bitwise Commentary on Entering the Conduct called “A Lamp for the Path of the Middle Way”*, which was written by one of the greatest Tibetan authors, Padma Karpo [1527–1592 CE] of the Drukpa Kagyu tradition.

The path to the unsurpassed complete enlightenment of a buddha starts with understanding the great value of the mind of enlightenment. Accordingly, Śhāntideva starts his text with a chapter on the virtues of that mind. Having understood its great value, one decides to develop that mind and undertake the journey to complete enlightenment. Accordingly, Śhāntideva continues with a chapter on the preparations to be made in order to commit oneself to developing that mind, followed by a chapter on taking the vows connected with developing that mind, followed by a chapter on arousing heedfulness, followed by a chapter on guarding the vows. Once the vows have been taken and one has donned the armour of protecting them, one begins the actual training. The training consists of perfecting

² The importance of the term “enlightenment conduct” cannot be understated. A full explanation of it can be found in PKTC’s publication *Samantabhadra’s Prayer and Commentaries* by Tony Duff, ISBN 978-9937-572-60-6, a large treatise on Samantabhadra’s Prayer which also provides explanations of the bodhisattva’s conduct and forms a good companion to Śhāntideva’s text.

what are known as the six pāramitās or six aspects of being which are consistent not with this deluded, unenlightened type of being in which we now live but with the fully enlightened being of a buddha; they are: generosity, discipline, patience, perseverance, meditative concentration, and prajñā or a correctly functioning intelligence. The pāramitās of generosity and discipline were covered in the chapters just mentioned. Accordingly, Śhāntideva devotes a chapter to each of the four remaining pāramitās. In the path to enlightenment, dedication always concludes any main practice. Accordingly, Śhāntideva devotes a final, tenth chapter to dedication.

In sum, in the approach to enlightenment there is the preparatory phase of taking the vows of a person who has decided to undertake the journey to enlightenment and this is covered in the first five chapters of *Entering the Conduct*. That is followed by entering the main practise, the practice of the six pāramitās, which is covered in the sixth to ninth chapters of *Entering the Conduct*. That is followed by a concluding phase in which appropriate dedications and prayers of aspiration are made, and that is covered in the tenth chapter of *Entering the Conduct*. In that way, Śhāntideva covers the entire journey of a person who treads the path to unsurpassed enlightenment in ten chapters.

Commentaries to Clarify Shantideva's Text

Śhāntideva's text is both beautiful and expert in its treatment of the path of the bodhisatva or heroic type of person who travels the path to unsurpassed enlightenment. However, as Śhāntideva himself says in his text, the text is not intended to be an in-depth discussion of the many details connected with the path but a set of notes derived from his study of the teachings and made for his own use. Thus the text is at times terse in places and some assistance is needed in order to understand exactly

what he is saying. Because of this, a number of commentaries have been written by Indian and Tibetan masters in order to clarify the meaning of Śhāntideva's words. Some commentaries go further and amplify Śhāntideva's distillation of the teachings with excerpts from the explanations given by the Buddha himself and by the Indian masters who were expert in his teachings. These commentaries are essential if the correct meaning of Śhāntideva's words is to be known and, moreover, if further detail is required for deeper levels of study of the teachings which he has distilled.

Most of the available commentaries are lengthy works that amplify Śhāntideva's words by going into the path to unsurpassed enlightenment in great detail. On the other hand, the bitwise commentary written by Padma Karpo does not weigh the reader down with endless amounts of detail but adds just enough to Śhāntideva's own words that they can be correctly understood and that the connection between what is written in his distilled notes and the actual teachings of the path becomes visible. To do this, his commentary goes bit by bit through the original text, adding information here and there in order to illuminate Śhāntideva's words.

There are many types of commentary in the Buddhist tradition. For example, there are "annotated commentaries" that quote the original text and then clarify it by adding footnotes, there are "word by word commentaries" that take every single word of the original and explain it, and there are "overviews" that give an overview of a subject. There are also "bitwise commentaries" that take the original text in sections that need explanation—perhaps a single word, perhaps a phrase, perhaps a whole paragraph—and then add some words or explanation to that

section of text in order to make its meaning clearer or to give it some further, needed explanation.³

Padma Karpo's bitwise commentary has a special feature: it gives special attention to explaining the ninth chapter of Śhāntideva's text, which deals with the pāramitā of prajñā.

Prajñā as taught in the pāramitā of prajñā is a mind which is functioning correctly and is also seeing reality as it is. Because all the conduct of a person travelling to unsurpassed enlightenment has to be informed by a mind that is correctly functioning and correctly seeing reality, prajñā pāramitā is all-important in these teachings and needs to be explained correctly. Śhāntideva gives a very clear explanation of it in the ninth chapter of his text—this chapter has become an especially famous part of the text and is often taught by itself without explanation of the other chapters.

The ninth chapter goes through the various levels of Buddhist view of reality, ending with the one which is regarded as the highest view, that of Madhyamaka or The Middle Way. The various Tibetan schools of Buddhism have not always agreed on how The Middle Way should be understood so Padma Karpo's explanations of the ninth chapter are especially interesting. His explanations are given from the perspective of the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions of Tibet and those explanations will not always agree with the explanations given by the experts of other Tibetan schools, such as the Sakya and Gelug schools.

³ Given that a meaningful unit of text, whether as small as a single letter or as large as a paragraph, is called a "bit" (Tib. 'bru), a commentary that explains a text by commenting on its bits is called a "bit by bit" or "bitwise commentary" (Tib. 'bru grel).

With the explanations given above, it is possible to understand the full meaning of the title of Padma Karpo's commentary: *A Bitwise Commentary on Entering the Conduct called "A Lamp for the Path of the Middle Way"*. It is a bitwise type of commentary on Śhāntideva's text which has the abbreviated name *Entering the Conduct*. It clarifies Śhāntideva's words and amplifies them just enough so that a reader can clearly understand Śhāntideva's text without being overwhelmed by the enormous amount of detail available in the Buddha's teaching on the topics of the text. Moreover, it gives special treatment to the ninth chapter of Śhāntideva's text by shining a light on the meaning of the chapter according to the understanding of the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions. Therefore, Padma Karpo sub-titled his text "a lamp which illuminates the meaning of the Middle Way".

About the Authors

Shantideva

The story of Śhāntideva has been told many times and is available in many languages. Andreas Kretschmar gives an excellent exposition of Śhāntideva's life and the story of his first volume of translations of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary on Śhāntideva's text.⁴

⁴ Andreas Kretschmar's work, which contains translations of Śhāntideva's text and one of the most famous Nyingma commentaries to it, the treatise by Khenpo Kunpal, is available on the PKTC web-site. Andreas's work goes through Śhāntideva's text in great detail. His work and the bitwise commentary presented in this book complement each other very well.

All-Knowing Padma Karpo

Padma Karpo was the fourth of the Drukchens, or heads of the Drukpa Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism. The Drukchens in general are regarded as the emanations of Tsangpa Gyare, the founder of the Drukpa Kagyu school and one of the great disciples of Phagmo Drupa, who was in turn one of the great disciples of Lord Gampopa of the Kagyu school.

Padma Karpo is considered, as with all of the Drukchens, to have been very highly realized. He was also known for his



Figure 2. All-knowing Padma Karpo,
the fourth Drukchen

extraordinary knowledge; he was one of the two or three persons that appeared in each century in Tibet who was so knowledgeable that he received the title “All-Knowing”. This title, “kun mkhyen” in Tibetan, has often been translated as “omniscient” but that is not the meaning of the term. It means a person who “knows

it all”. Padma Karpo was not only knowledgeable but was very expert at composition. Moreover, he was a prolific writer, his collected works totalling twenty-four or more full Tibetan volumes of over three hundred folios each.

Padma Karpo had a unique skill for composition in which he would weave many complex ideas together into a minimum of space. Even expert Tibetans regard him as one of the most rewarding yet difficult writers to read; rewarding because of the depth of his knowledge and realization and difficult to read because he so subtly packs many threads of information into his compositions. Nonetheless he is one of the most widely read of the early Tibetan authors and is frequently read by people of traditions other than Kagyu simply because his works are so illuminating.

Padma Karpo's extraordinary scholarship, eloquence, and remarkable ability to weave a subtle story in his compositions is very much in evidence in his commentary here. I do not think that there is any other commentary on Śhāntideva's text like it.

Essential Terminology Clearly Explained

Buddhist teachings are expressed with a specialized vocabulary. Many specialized terms are explained in the glossary, which is worth reading before reading the text.

The teachings which show the path to unsurpassed, truly complete enlightenment contain four terms which are all-important. In Sanskrit, these terms are: bodhi, buddha, bodhicitta, and bodhisatva. All of these terms are derived from the one Sanskrit root "budh" which has the straightforward meaning of an illumined or enlightened condition. In support of this, Indian masters have said that the next best word in Sanskrit to explain "budh" is "avagamana", meaning to have a mind filled with realization or knowledge.

A person decides that the type of existence he has at present, one based on a fundamental ignorance of reality, is unsatisfactory. He decides to travel the path to a totally satisfactory type of existence in which there is no ignorance of reality. That type of existence is the state of *bodhi* or enlightenment. In order to achieve that he starts by arousing in himself the *bodhicitta* or enlightenment mind. Once he has accepted the need for and aroused in himself that enlightenment mind, he is known as a *bodhisatva* or an enlightenment hero, a person who is heroic because of undertaking the long and difficult path to enlightenment. When he has completed the path to enlightenment, he is no longer a bodhisatva on the path to enlightenment but a *buddha* or enlightened one.

There have been significant problems with the translation of these terms due to a variety of misunderstandings that appeared for Tibetans and these days for non-Tibetans. The most common mistake that has occurred is that the Sanskrit “budh” which is the root for these four all-important terms has been misunderstood to mean “awakened condition” in English. The explanations of why this mistake has occurred can be traced especially to a misunderstanding of the Tibetan term “sangs” which is part of the Tibetan translation “sangs rgyas” of the Sanskrit word “buddha”. Briefly stated, “sangs” has to be understood as “cleared out”, with the sense that all of the ignorance that pollutes the fundamentally ignorant mind has been cleared off so that an enlightened condition prevails. Unfortunately, some Tibetans and following them some non-Tibetans have thought that “sangs” means “to wake up”, which is a secondary meaning of “sangs” but not the one applicable in the translation of “budh”. An in-depth treatment of this matter

can be found in *Unending Auspiciousness, the Sūtra of the Recollection of the Noble Three Jewels*⁵.

In short, bodhi, buddha, bodhicitta, and bodhisatva do not respectively mean awakening, awakened one, awakening mind, and awakening hero as is often seen. They respectively mean enlightenment, enlightened one, enlightenment mind, and enlightenment hero and that is how they appear in this book. There are further issues with how some of these terms should be understood and they are discussed below.

Bodhicitta or enlightenment mind

The Tibetan translation of bodhicitta follows the Sanskrit literally and exactly with “byang chub sems” in which “byang chub” is the Tibetan equivalent of “bodhi” and “sems” is the Tibetan equivalent of “citta”. Many translations of the term into English have appeared but most of them are not exact or are wrong for various reasons. Firstly the term “bodhi” does not mean “awakening” but equates very closely with the English “enlightenment”. The term “citta” corresponds to the English “mind”, though there is the problem that citta is a specific term for a specific type of mind and since there is not a specific term corresponding to that in English we have to use the generic word “mind”.

Next comes the question of how the two terms enlightenment and mind should be joined. The Sanskrit bodhicitta has the two terms placed together in such a way that bodhi describes the type of citta. The Tibetan translates that juxtaposition and

⁵ Published by Padma Karpo Translation Committee, 2010, authored by Tony Duff, ISBN: 978-9937-8386-1-0.

meaning exactly either by putting the terms one after the other in “byang chub sems” or by joining the two terms with a “kyi” to make “byang chub kyi sems”. When a “kyi” is used, it does not add meaning but explicitly shows the appositional connection between the two terms which is implicit in the original Sanskrit. In other words bodhicitta is a mind and, in particular, an enlightenment kind of mind. In English, the correct way to join the terms so as to give the meaning required is to write enlightenment followed by mind and with no more grammatical apparatus included: “enlightenment mind”. Alternatively, the appositional meaning can be explicitly shown as is sometimes done in the Tibetan by adding the appropriate case marker “of” to give the appositional meaning.

It would be very wrong to translate bodhicitta with “mind for enlightenment”. This can be known through the correct grammatical analysis given above and also through Indian and Tibetan commentaries which unanimously point out that the term applies to a whole range of minds, starting from its form in its very first arousal in a samsaric person all the way through to its final and most complete form in a truly complete buddha. The *Ornament of Manifested Realizations*, the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* of Maitreya and Asanga divides enlightenment mind into twenty-two types corresponding to twenty-two levels of development of that mind up to and including that of a buddha (and this division is mentioned in Padma Karpo’s commentary when the divisions of enlightenment mind are presented). There are various other teachings within the Buddha word and the Indian treatises on it that establish the same point.

The translation “mind for enlightenment” is not only incorrect grammatically but excludes the enlightenment mind of a buddha or enlightened one. Thus, use of the term has caused and

continues to cause a wrong understanding to arise in the minds of English-speaking people. On the other hand, the translations “enlightenment mind” and “mind of enlightenment” are not only correct grammatically but are also correct from the standpoint that they include all possibilities of the enlightenment type of mind. Their use causes a correct understanding of the term bodhicitta to arise in the minds of English-speaking people. Therefore, they are used in all of our translations including in this book.

A point to note here is that there is the terminology “mind for enlightenment”. This is not the same as “enlightenment mind”. Enlightenment mind is the general term for all levels of the enlightenment mind, from someone who has first engendered that mind all the way up to someone who has, in becoming a buddha, perfected it. However, at the time when one is on the path and is arousing a mind which has the thought that it will head for enlightenment, that mind is enlightenment mind but is also described as a *mind* that has consciously oriented itself towards or *for enlightenment*. This distinction is used in the commentary and I have maintained it correctly in the translation, so be careful not to confuse the two.

Bodhisatva or enlightenment hero

Following on from that, there is the Sanskrit term “bodhisatva” which is the name given to a person who has aroused the enlightenment mind. In it, “bodhi” is equivalent to “enlightenment” as mentioned earlier and “satva” refers to a person who is a heroic type of person, a true warrior. “Satva” was translated into Tibetan with “dpa’ bo” which means a heroic person, one who is not overcome easily but heads toward his goal in a strong, courageous, and determined way. It is different from the term “sattva” which simply means “a being”; for example,

the term in Sanskrit for what Tibetans translated as “sems can” and which we translate into English as “sentient being” is “sattva”.

Thus the term could be translated into English as “enlightenment hero” or the like. The terminology for the translation of “satva” has not been settled in English and the term “bodhisatva” has become part of dharma jargon in English, so I have left it as bodhisatva throughout this book. Still, if you wanted to, you could read it as “enlightenment hero”.

The bodhisatva arouses the enlightenment mind, then takes the vows of a bodhisatva, and then follows the conduct of a bodhisatva from the beginning of his journey all the way up until the time that he achieves bodhi and becomes a buddha. Thus the issue of a bodhisatva’s conduct, also known as enlightenment conduct, is singularly important to a person wanting to have the unsurpassed enlightenment of a truly complete enlightened one. The great Indian master Śhāntideva put a lot of effort into reading the sūtras of the Buddha and the Indian treatises on them that deal with this topic and then wrote his text *Entering the Enlightenment Conduct*. Śhāntideva points out at the beginning of his text that he wrote it not to prove that he was expert in these matters or very capable at composition but as a set of notes which distilled these teachings into a form that he could easily remember. Padma Karpo’s commentary is especially useful because it helps us to see the larger context of these teachings from which Śhāntideva made his condensed notes.

Related Matters

Partial translation

Padma Karpo's commentary is very large; it contains the entire *Entering the Conduct* text as well as his commentary to it. This book is volume one of a series. It covers the first four chapters of *Entering the Conduct* and its commentary. Further volumes with further chapters will become available in time.

Differentiating the actual text and commentary

The words of Śhāntideva's text are woven into Padma Karpo's commentary. It is important to be able to differentiate the two, so the words of the root text are marked off. In the paper edition, this is done with small marks to show the beginning and ending of each bit of the root text. In e-book editions, the beginning and ending of each bit of the root text is additionally marked off with a change of colour, and possibly bolding of the text.

Sources

The Tibetan text for this translation was the electronic edition produced by the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project which was input from the original in Padma Karpo's *Collected Works*⁶. The electronic text is available on PKTC's web-site.

Over the many centuries since Śhāntideva's work was first translated into Tibetan, a few editions of the text with variant readings have appeared. Furthermore, the production of many

⁶ Tib. padma dkar po'i bka' 'bum

copies of those editions made by scribes and wood-block cutters who were not learned has resulted in many minor errors appearing within the copies of those editions. In the end, most of the differences in the Tibetan text do not make a difference to the translation. However, there are places where they do make a difference and for that reason you will occasionally find that the meaning of Śhāntideva's text in this book will differ from other editions in English.

Translation issues

One of the features of Śhāntideva's text is beauty of poetry. Although I have tried to retain that, because of wanting to ensure that the meaning was transmitted faithfully, I have not done what some other Western translators have done and lost the meaning of the words for the sake of a pleasant-sounding result. For example, one translator continually takes the wording "migrator", a term which has a specific significance in the Buddhist way of speaking, and turned it into "all the world". While the later may make more sense to English speakers who do not know Buddhist terminology, it is a major mistake and detracts from the translation.

Note also that there are mistakes in the translations of Śhāntideva's text available in English at the time of writing. One of the values of Padma Karpo's commentary in this book is that it will highlight most of those mistakes and give a reason for the correct rendering found here.

The gender considerations

The teachings of the Buddha were given within a male dominated society and tended to reference the male side more than the female side. Nowadays it is popular for women to insist

that such “gender bias” be removed by altering the wording of written materials. There is even an English version of Śhānti-deva’s text floating around the internet which has been revised throughout by a rather foolish person who had virtually no knowledge of the details of the Great Vehicle teaching but felt that his modified “version without the gender bias sounds better”.

There is great danger in doing such a thing with Buddhist scripture unless you are exceptionally knowledgeable of the Buddhist teaching. For example, the Buddha speaks only of “buddha sons”, “conquerors’ sons”, “sons of the tathāgatas”, and “sons of the sugatas” and not their female equivalents because the concept of “son” in these terms has a specific meaning, a meaning which is one of the main threads of the Great Vehicle teaching. Any attempt to change this language, for example to “buddha children” or “buddha sons and daughters” or even as one group has done “buddha heirs” shows an extreme lack of knowledge of the Buddha’s teaching regarding bodhisatvas and the role they play in the overall picture of the Great Vehicle teachings. And in fact, those changes just mentioned do, when you understand the fullness of the teaching, undermine important threads of the Buddha’s teaching regarding the bodhisatva. What is crucial to understand here is that, when the Buddha defined these particular terms, he defined them as terms in which the use of “son” had a particular meaning and importance and used them with the understanding that they *applied equally to men and women*. That is how the Great Vehicle teaching was given and its words mostly cannot be altered without damaging the teaching itself.

No attempt has been made to change the gender of terminology in this text. From a translator’s perspective it would be wrong

to do so given that this is a translation of a text from a certain time and place and the wording of the text reflects that. If the culture in which it was written was “gender biased”, well, so be it! It is not up to us to change the wording of several-hundred year old texts to suit our needs—that would be an incredibly arrogant thing to do. Moreover, from the perspective of “not editing the teaching”, which the Buddha taught as one of the major faults a Buddhist could fall into, such changes cannot be made because they would introduce corruption into the teaching as explained above.

Sanskrit and diacriticals

Sanskrit terms are an important aspect of the technical explanations found in the commentary. They are properly rendered into English with diacritical marks, therefore, for the sake of precision, diacritical marks have been used with them throughout this book.

The IATS system of transliteration of Sanskrit, which is the one generally in use in academic circles is hard for non-scholars to read. Therefore, we have modified that system slightly to make the transliterated Sanskrit more readable even when the meaning of the diacritical marks is not understood. This same approach seems to be becoming commonplace amongst translators of Tibetan Buddhism. In it:

- ś is written the way it sounds, as śh ;
- ṣ is written similarly as ṣh ; and
- ṛ is written similarly as ṛi ;
- ca is written as cha;
- cha is written as chha.

The other letters for transliteration are used in the same way as they are used in the IATS scheme. In general, if you do not

understand the system, simply read the letters as though they did not have the diacritical marks and, with our modified system, you will have a good approximation to the actual pronunciation.

About Padma Karpo Translation Committee, the author and their supports for study

Padma Karpo Translation Committee has amassed a range of materials to help those who are studying Tibetan Buddhism. Please see the chapter containing information on supports for study at the end of the book for the details.

With my very best wishes,
Lama Tony Duff,
Swayambunath,
Nepal,
October 2, 2013

A Bitwise Commentary on
Entering the Conduct
called
“A Lamp for the Path of
the Middle Way”
by
All-Knowing Padma Karpo

PREFACE

Homage to the precious All-knowing Drukpa, Ngawang Chokyi Gyalpo⁷.

The virtue of offering even a hair from the body is enough
To please all the buddhas whose forms without exception are
clearly visible on it.
To that indisputable wonder, at the feet of the all-knowing
Drukpa,
I respectfully prostrate.

Having completed every part of actual bowing, there is the
teacher, a tree able to grant every wish,
From whom the whole nectar of peace descends as the excellent
speech, a moon water crystal itself,
Producing a most excellent harvest of merit here, the holy field
of the good qualities of the saṅgha;
In this glorious system of that King of the Śhākyas, worthy of
having praise heaped on it,

⁷ The name of Padma Karpo's guru.

There is the might of the experts who are victorious over the
 enemy of not knowing
 Without need of entering the battle-field of a long training
 Who have entered the lofty position of softened glory⁸;
 I bow to their great force descended from the heavens.

Śhāntideva, the god who dwells in the gem of peace,⁹
 Made his entrance into the ocean of
 The bodhisatva's conduct and thereby
 Eliminated the lower level of the rivers and valleys of this
 world¹⁰.

The lotus of the commentary within it smiles
 To reveal its anthers, the power of analysis contained within,
 And like Sarasvati coaxing her vīṇā,
 The pure white swan atop the drum of my throat¹¹,

⁸ Tib. 'jam pa'i dpal. Softened glory is a play on words against the name of Mañjuśhrī. Mañjuśhrī, briefly stated, means "he who, having totally softened his mind, is glorious".

⁹ Śhānti is "peace" and deva is "god".

¹⁰ He showed a higher dharma, one that belongs to the heavenly realms, as just described, which equates with Buddha Śhākyamuni and his system of teacher, dharma, and saṅgha, which is a heavenly kind of dharma compared to the ordinary levels of this world.

¹¹ It is worthy of note that the section of poetry just completed has been done in the style that shows the greatest level of mastery of composition. That style is one in which the metre is changed as the verses are written. The first verse is done in eleven units to the line, the next in fifteen units to the line, the next in nine units to the line, the next in seven, and the last in nine. These are the main

(continued...)

gives the explanation of this holy dharma that is to be given here, whose name is, **in Indian Language “bodhisatvacaryāvātāra”, in Tibetan language, “byang chub sems dpa’i spyod pa la ’jug pa”**, [and in English language, “Entering the Bodhisatva’s Conduct”]. The author is the great being Śhāntideva. The size of the text is one thousand śhlokas, in ten chapters. It belongs to the sūtra piṭaka of the three piṭakas thus the wording recorded for the translation homage is **“Homage to all of the buddhas and bodhisatvas”**.

¹¹(...continued)

metres of Tibetan verse and he shifts through all of them, something which is very difficult to do. Moreover, it is usual in Tibetan composition to end the verse section and then explicitly start the prose section. However, Padma Karpo just shifts directly from verse into prose. Again, this is a sign of someone who has not only totally mastered composition but who is willing to use that mastery to make a high level of eloquence.

CHAPTER ONE

The Benefits of Enlightenment Mind

Now, comes the first bundle¹². The purpose for it is known through the contents explained in it, so how is the content set out? It is set out in three parts: the goodness of the beginning, the prefatory matter; the goodness of the middle, the main matter; and the goodness of the end, the concluding matter.

¹² Tib. bam po. Texts in India were written on palm leaves which were then held together by a thread that was passed through the stack of leaves on either side with a needle and then used to tie the bundle of leaves together. A long text might be comprised of several such bundles. Here the bundles did not represent volumes the way that a long book in English might be divided into volumes but simply represented a convenient number of leaves for a group, without any consideration of content. There were then systems of chapters and volumes used to divide long texts that had no bearing on the number of the bundle. Padma Karpo is saying that the title and translator's homage have been dealt with so now we look at the actual content of the text and that will be the same as looking at the beginning leaf of the first bundle of the Indian text.

1. The Goodness of the Beginning, The Prefatory Material

This first part is twofold, consisting of the expression of worship and the declaration of composition.

The first of those says, **the ones gone to bliss**, that is, the sugatas, a term that defines a buddha. Buddhas have gone to bliss in that they have attained a total abandonment of saṃsāra or alternatively a final realization that has three distinct features; as Dharmakīrti said:

Abandonment of causes, having three qualities, the ones gone to bliss.

The Indian equivalent “sugata” consists of the upasargaḥ “su” which, of its many usages, is understood here to have the three meanings of “beautiful”, “not regressing”, and “all without exception”, and of “gata” meaning “gone”, that is, gone to the other side of saṃsāra. By combining these to give “gone to the beautiful” and the other two, the three distinct features of abandonment are obtained. Or, taking “gata” as realization and by making the combinations as before, we get “realization of the beautiful”, and so on, realization with three distinct features.

The ones gone to bliss are those who **have** the **dharmā** body where dharma means both realization of the dharma and the dharma teaching and body, **kāya**, means “a collection”; because of having it, the buddhas’ function, the teaching that is turning the wheel of dharma, occurs. As it says the *Two Truths*:

To comment on, “because it is a body of all dharmas” and what follows: being a body consisting of every dharma, it is the dharmakāya, so every one of the

migrators never goes past being the entity of buddha. As for the meaning of body, since it is “a collection”, dharmakāya refers to the assemblage of all dharmas.

Then, in **together with their sons**, “sons” is originally “suta” which, ascertained through “erasure / addition”, has the meanings “born into the family”, “member of the family line”, and “doer of the activities” all of which comes to mean “son”, that is, part of the group who trains in enlightenment. The doer of this particular set of activities is “someone who has properly entered and become involved with the Great Vehicle saṅgha”.¹³

Of the refuge objects classified by Jowo, the sugata described here has the character of the one explained in the *Highest Continuum* as the suchness Three Jewels so, to those, **and then to all worthy ones as well**—Three Jewels other than that which is both the ones who are realization manifested and the ones who are the cause of its manifestation—**I respectfully pay homage.**

¹³ Tib. sras. “Sons” exactly translates the Sanskrit “suta”. One process that can come into play when making a word in Sanskrit is called “erasure / addition”. In it, an affix, such as su, is first put at the end of the word it is modifying. However, such affixes are not allowed to stay at the end of the word, so they are erased from that position then added to the beginning instead, whereby the new word is ascertained.

A son here means someone who, because of being a member of the tathāgata family line, is the appropriate person or one authorised to carry out the activities of that family. This term cannot be changed to a gender neutral term without changing the meaning of the Buddha’s teaching, as explained in the introduction.

Now, having paid homage like that, the particular subject that is going to be expressed in here is mentioned. It is the vowed **restraints of the sugatas' sons**¹⁴ and is stated that way because what bodhisatvas actually do, whatever it is that they take up as their practice, is contained within that. Alternatively, you can also say that the conduct of the bodhisatvas is just exactly that. Thus it is about **engaging in such**. And then, it will be expressed **in accordance with scripture** and the style of that expression is that **it will be expressed as a summary**.

For what purpose will this be expressed? From the perspective of the meaning he says that **there will be nothing expressed here not already said before and** from the perspective of the words he says **I have no skill in the art of composition, therefore**, given both of those, he says **I did not do this for the sake of others**, rather, **I composed it for the purpose of cultivating my own mind**.

You might think, “What has to be involved in cultivating one’s own mind?” It has been said, “It is the approach of considering something again and again, of weighing it and developing a correct comprehension of it”, thus it is to consider something again and again for the purpose of gaining ease of comprehension. **Because it is familiarization with virtue, these things will cause the force of my faith to increase for a little while**

¹⁴ Skt. *saṃvara*, Tib, *sdom pa*. What is usually translated as vow actually means a restraint or binding. Therefore, the phrase here is the “vows of a bodhisatva” with the specific sense of the conduct to which a bodhisatva binds himself. The bodhisatva vows contain the actual practise or conduct in which bodhisatvas engage.

and, similarly, should others equal in fortune to myself see these, for them too, it will be meaningful.

That is what he says for the declaration of composition¹⁵.

The bodhisatva's conduct is what is to be expressed. By setting out the words in a way that is easy to grasp, there is the need of ease of familiarization for oneself and others. And then from that, there is the core need, which is that done on account of the attainment of unsurpassed enlightenment. A connection of the type that, if there is not something prior then something later will not arise, is shown,¹⁶ and that connection is made so

¹⁵ The words “and having paid homage like that” signal the end of the expression of worship section. The words after that and up to here are the declaration of composition section.

¹⁶ In the system that developed in India of composing a Buddhist treatise, it became necessary for a treatise to pass a test in order to be accepted as valid. The test was that it had to have all of what are called, “the four things of a treatise”. The *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary* gives the following.

They are: 1) that which is to be expressed, i.e., the specific meaning to be transmitted by the written expressions in the treatise; 2) the need, i.e., what purpose is being addressed by the expressions of the treatise; 3) the core need or the real, inner purpose being addressed by the expressions of the treatise and which is an extension of the need; 4) the relationship, which is that the previous three must connect together or the treatise does not fulfil its function. That system entailed the requirement that a treatise fulfilled a purpose, core purpose, and that the former and latter were connected.

(continued...)

that those who understand will involve themselves with the treatise on the basis of respect for it.

2. The Goodness of the Middle, The Main Material

This has three parts: the conduct of entry, arousing the enlightenment mind; the conduct of accomplishing it, that is, training in the pāramitās; and the conduct of having accomplished it, that is, explaining the meaning of buddha.

2.1. The conduct of entry, arousing the enlightenment mind

This has three parts: a basis that is fortunate, a support that has the family; a basis that joins with the conduct, arousing the enlightenment mind; a basis of accomplishment of great enlightenment, practising by following the trainings.

2.1.1. A basis that is fortunate, a support that has the family

Of the two types of family, the one present in dharmatā is the one spoken of in, “Every sentient being has the buddha essence”. Thus, in the end, every one will become buddha. Bud-

¹⁶(...continued)

A commentator usually shows that a treatise is valid after the declaration of composition and prior to the actual body of the text because the validation cannot be done until the declaration of composition has been made and because if the test fails, the treatise is invalid and there is no point to continuing.

Padma Karpo connected the “restraints of a bodhisatva” with “that to be expressed”, then, after the declaration of composition containing the need and core need, he shows that there is a correct relationship between the two needs, which validates the treatise.

dhas arise earlier and later due to the closeness and distance of the conditions of awakening which themselves come about due to the size larger and smaller of the accumulation of roots of virtue. Conditions for awakening being closer are defined as having a perfect body support and an excellent thought support.

2.1.1.1. Perfect body support

This was explained in terms of the non-conducive side, **leisure**, meaning being separated from the eight states that are non-freedom, **and** in terms of the conducive side, which is having a complete set of the ten **endowments**, a total of eighteen altogether. **This human body having the eighteen is extremely difficult to obtain and with it what is meaningful for beings, buddhahood, can be obtained, so if, having this kind of support, a person were not to use it to benefit, were not to arouse the mind of enlightenment, then when in the future could that person truly get such a thing again**—after all, each one of us has been wandering continuously in saṃsāra from time without beginning up till now, haven't we?

The set of eight are defined as the one state of non-freedom but there is scripture that expands on that:¹⁷

Monks, these eight constituting non-freedom are not occasions when persons are dwelling in brahmācharya. Saying so means that though this support alone is defined as “leisure”, it is just one of

¹⁷ He is saying that when leisure—of leisure and endowment—is defined, it is defined as the opposite of the one thing, “non-freedom”, a set of eight circumstances. There is scripture that expands on that one thing and here it is ...

the occasions when persons have the leisure of being able to abide in brahmācharya. The tathāgata having appeared in this world, he also shows the dharma ...

The long-life god category of non-freedom is usually asserted to be birth in the non-perception which is a specific place within Greater Result, another of the four dhyāna abodes, and within one of the formless realms. However, master Vīra defines it as the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and so on, both in terms of the possibility of entering homelessness¹⁸ and in terms of its being designated as “a body more special than the gods” so in my way

¹⁸ Sanskrit pravrajita, Tib. rab byung. This means that one leaves household life, which at that time meant worldly life, and goes forth into a spiritual life. In Buddhist literature, it then comes to mean taking ordination as a monk or nun which in turn means entering celibacy or brahmācharya.

Having ordination is seen as one of the requirements for being able to make the cause of another excellent support, that is, precious human birth in the future. Padma Karpo does not draw this point out explicitly, but it is yet another thread of meaning contained in his commentary.

of thinking, this latter one is the one that fits.¹⁹ The *Buddha Essence* explains it extensively with:

Monks! Leisure and endowment is tenfold: the five external endowments and the five personal endowments ...

Being conducive conditions, they are defined as endowments, like property that the rich have for their use.

Following on from that, there is the difficulty of obtaining this support: in this world, the appearance of a buddha is rare. And this support depends on that circumstance; as it says in the *White Lotus of the Holy Dharma*:

Monks! It is difficult to meet with the occurrence of a tathāgata, arhat, truly complete buddha. Even in many hundreds of thousands of tens of millions of hundreds of thousands of millions of aeons a tathā-

¹⁹ Long-life god is a general term for the higher births in saṃsāra, from the gods of the desire realm and up. In the eight states of non-freedom, the category “long-life god” is usually defined as birth in the “non-perception” just mentioned or as birth in any of the four levels of the formless realm because birth in those places is not only very long in length but has a loss of perception associated with it such that it is not possible to recognize that one is in cyclic existence and must get out. However, the knowledgeable Indian master Vīra, based on the Buddha’s statement that the precious human body can take on brah̥mācharya whereas the gods of the Heavens of the Thirty Three and above cannot, and based on Buddha’s calling that human body “a body more special than that of the gods”, defined long-life god here as birth in any of the god realms in saṃsāra from the Heavens of the Thirty Three and up. Padma Karpo finds that this fits with what the Buddha said.

gata might be seen and also might not be seen in the world, like for example, the Uḍumbara's flower.

The cause of this support is perfect discipline²⁰. It causes meeting with an occurrence of a buddha in the world because, as it says in the *Sūtra of Authentic Discipline*, “A person with discipline meets with the occurrence of a buddha”.

2.1.1.2. The thought support

The author advises, **“Just as during the moment that lightning flashes inside rain clouds in the gloom of a dark night, it illuminates all, similarly, by the power of the buddhas or the presence of their teaching, a minute fraction of the time, in the worlds, a few intelligent thoughts that are meritori-**

²⁰ Tib. tshul khirms phun sum tshogs pa. The Buddha stated that a precious human body comes about on the basis of the vowed disciplines given to his disciples, and said that those of a fully-ordained person are best. Thus, one meaning of “perfect” here is having the most complete set of vows available. Then he also stated that, in order to create the merit needed for a precious human birth it is not merely a matter of having the vows but also of keeping them purely. Thus “perfect” here means, according to the Buddha, both a complete set of vows and the keeping of them.

ous because of seeking enlightenment, **arise**.”²¹ At the time they arise, the enlightenment mind should be aroused.

When that sort of thing occurs it causes connection to the faith that is present as one of the good mental qualities belonging to the support—the *Sūtra of the Ten Dharmas* says:

For men without faith
The white dharmas do not arise.

²¹ It is popular nowadays to think that there is simply a fork of lightning appearing in the sky on a dark night for a moment because some English translations have ignored the term “within the depths of clouds”. When included, the verse refers to lightning flashing *inside* rain clouds on a dark night because of which there is a sudden brightness illuminating everything around, a metaphor for the buddha mind existing deep within a person’s thick clouds of ignorance appearing, its all-knowing quality illuminating everything for just a moment. The imagery of lightning that is powerful and has the ability to illuminate these dark depths is joined to the idea of the power of buddha mind and its ability to manifest as a moment of illumination in the ignorant minds of beings (Padma Karpo adds that the teachings of a buddha that are still present in the world have the same kind of power.) Then, there is a term that literally says “a fraction measured in hundredth parts”, meaning something that only occurs a minute fraction of the time. Then, there is the term “meritorious”; with it, Śhāntideva is not saying that a meritorious saṃsāric mind appears but that the meritorious enlightenment mind appears once in a while. What causes it to appear is the buddha-mind’s inherent drive to return from the darkness of ignorance to the state of enlightenment; the intent of this verse is that, when it actually happens, it should be a condition for going further and actually arousing the enlightenment mind then training it, which is what the rest of the text is about.

For seeds singed by fire
How can there be green shoots?

and *The Precious Garland* says:

Because they have faith
They rely on the dharma.

Faith is of three kinds. The first kind is admiring faith so-called because, through knowing the good qualities of the Three Jewels, the mind admires them. Coming after that, there are also both trusting and longing faiths; the *Sūtra of the Lamp of the Jewels*²² says:

Having faith in the conquerors and the conquerors'
dharma
Then developing faith in the conduct of the
conquerors' sons causes
The development of faith in unsurpassable
enlightenment; when that has been done
It is called, "the birth of the mind of the great
beings".

Faith gives rise to an intentional drive. Then through that, because of seeking out what is meaningful, the condition for waking up the family is obtained. Ngog Lotsāwa gives a nice explanation; he puts this circumstance as simply having taken refuge and says that the nature of that refuge is simply the wish to attain enlightenment. Thus, by this, the first factor conducive to enlightenment has been obtained. For just this much, the arousing of the enlightenment mind does not have to be done beforehand; the *Ornament of The Sūtra Section* says:

²² Jewels throughout the text refers to one or all of the refuge objects, the Three Jewels.

Family, and orientation to dharma, and
Likewise arousal of mind, and ...

which is saying that having an orientation to the Great Vehicle dharma is included in the causes of arousing the mind.

And for these, from the standpoint of a beginner or someone who is ordained, there is an explanation in scripture that, even though their support is destined for bad migrations, there can be the arousal of mind for the first time, so it is not so fixed.²³

2.1.2. A basis that joins with the conduct, arousing the enlightenment mind

There are three chapters connected with this: the chapter that teaches the benefits and advantages of the enlightenment mind in order to rouse enthusiasm for it; the chapter on laying aside which is primarily concerned with connecting to it; and the chapter on fully accepting it which is primarily concerned with actually taking it up.

The first of those three chapters has three parts: the common benefits and advantages of enlightenment mind; the divisions of

²³ This sums up the section on the support. In the cases, for example, of a beginner or an ordained person who has created evil through breaking vows, the person is normally defined as having a bad support, meaning that he could not progress on the path given that a good support is required for that. However, it also says in the sūtras that even a person whose support is sufficiently bad that it will lead to a bad migration can still arouse the enlightenment mind for the very first time. Thus, what is and is not a bad support is not fixed and even a so-called bad support could lead to entering the path to enlightenment.

enlightenment mind; and the individual benefits and advantages of the two types.

2.1.2.1. The common benefits and advantages of enlightenment mind

In view of that, the occurrence of the intelligent mind that pursues virtue in does not happen easily and is short in duration so **it is perpetually feeble**. **Evil** doing on the other hand **is overwhelmingly strong so, what, other than** roots of virtue created by the enlightenment mind, **could overpower it?** Nothing else could.

It is not just about the destruction of that to be abandoned, evil deeds, mentioned there, but also about what is to be accomplished. **The leaders among Capable Ones, who have given their utmost thought to it for many aeons, have seen just this to be** the cause of being **beneficial**. **It causes the immeasurable assembly of beings to attain easily** what is to be accomplished, **the supreme bliss** of buddhahood.

Thus, for **someone who wants to defeat the hundreds of sufferings of their own existence and who wants to dispel the unhappiness of every one of the other sentient beings, and who wishes them both to live in plentiful happiness will therefore never let go of the enlightenment mind.**

Furthermore, **when the enlightenment mind has been produced, those who formerly were individualized beings anxious at being caught in the prison of saṃsāra will be called “sons of the sugatas” and will become an object of veneration of the worlds with their gods and men, like a person who, immediately on being let out of such a prison is**

appointed to the position of king's regent; from the *Āgama of Śharidvīpa*:

Śhari's son said, "Bhagavat, I prostrate also to the bodhisatva who for the first time has aroused the mind".

and if it says that, then what need to mention for others? And it is not only that but, like **the alchemist's liquid that turns things to gold turns iron into gold's supreme form, this impure body that has been taken up is then turned into the priceless jewel of a conqueror's body, therefore this thing called "the enlightenment mind"** is like an alchemical extractor of the essence. The *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* says:

Son of the family, it is like this. For example, there is what is called "the mercury substance that makes things into the appearance of gold" and just one ounce of that will transform one thousand ounces of iron into gold. That single ounce of mercury will be exhausted by the one thousand ounces of iron but cannot be transformed into iron in the process. Similarly, the all-knowing ones' full acceptance of the arousing of the enlightenment mind also is an extractor of the essence that functions to draw out wisdom; through it, the roots of merit are wholly dedicated, the iron-like obscurations of karma and affliction are entirely exhausted, and all dharmas are made into the golden colour of an all-knowing one. However, the iron of karma and the afflictions cannot ever cause that arousing of the mind extractor of the essence to turn into affliction for the all-knowing ones.

and that is the logic by which it **should be firmly accepted**.

Furthermore, the **single captains of migrators**, the buddhas, with their **measureless** and immeasurable **minds having totally and thoroughly examined this matter**, have seen it **be a thing of great value for all those wanting to free themselves from birth in the five places of migrators**, their precious jewel that provides all wants and wishes both short and long term, **so the precious enlightenment mind should properly be firmly accepted**. In regard to this, too, the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* says:

Son of the family, it is like this. For as long as the sun and moon's disks carry on illuminating with light, for that long, all of the gems, grains, Saley²⁴ gold, silver, flowers, incense, garlands, smearing substances, clothes, and property as much as there are will never be able to match the value of the foremost gem of the conquerors. Similarly, for as long as, in the three times, the wisdom of the conquerors carries out the illumination of the dharmadhātu realm, then for that long, all the roots of virtue with outflow and without outflow as many as there are of gods, men, all sentient beings, śhrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas will never be equal in value to arousing the enlightenment mind which is the foremost great precious gem of the conquerors.

That is saying that the enlightenment mind is more efficient at increasing that to be accomplished, virtue, and is the leading factor in overcoming that to be abandoned, evil.

And in addition to those two, furthermore, **whereas all other virtues are like the plantain tree, in that, having produced**

²⁴ "Saley" was the name of for the finest gold in Ancient India.

their fruit once, their root **will be exhausted, the living tree of the enlightenment mind perpetually gives good fruit without finishing and steadily grows larger**. Following on from that, the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* also says it is so with:

Roots of virtue are also held by the enlightenment mind; if the all-knowing ones dedicate, it is for its increase in every way.

Even though someone has done extreme evil, if he relies on a warrior type of person for an escort, he will be freed from very great fears and, likewise, whenever the enlightenment mind is relied on, for a short while one will be freed, thus the attentive ones never stop relying on it, no matter what. The *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* says:

The being who truly relies on a heroic type is not scared by any enemy. Similarly, the bodhisatva who truly relies on the heroic type, a being having the enlightenment mind, is not scared by any of the enemies of bad action.

And, furthermore, **it does, like the fire of the end of time incinerates the world system, definitely incinerate in a moment great evils** through generating the path of seeing which absorbs them in the first moment of acceptance. The former happens because of the arousing of the fictional mind and the latter is one of the benefits and advantages of the arousing of the superfactual mind; this is understood as the difference between other force and own force²⁵.

²⁵ The fictional arousing of the mind concerned with love and compassion for others can temporarily overcome fears that would be caused by others. The superfactual arousing of the mind

(continued...)

Aside from those two, **its benefits and advantages are fathomless**. The son of the trader Stable Wealth, youthful Good Wealth, aroused the mind in front of Mañjuśhrī, taking it up in the city Source of Glory. Starting from there, he went off and, travelling all roads to the south, took teaching in general from one hundred and ten spiritual friends. Śhāntipa was the eleventh, and Good Wealth posed one thousand, one hundred questions to him. Finally, he went to a place on the shores of a lake where there was a house whose walls were decorated with images of Vairochana. He went inside with the special thought free of all birth²⁶ and met **Guardian Maitreya** who asked whether his journey had gone well. Maitreya, **the intelligent one** was petitioned by Good Wealth who requested of him, “Noble One, if I were to enter unsurpassed, truly complete enlightenment, I would no longer have to seek the bodhisatva’s conduct. Would you, noble one who has the great qualities that come with being separated from enlightenment by one life, please advise me on how to do the trainings?” Guardian Maitreya praised him, saying, “You have aroused the enlightenment mind. It is good, it is good!” Then he **explained to Good Wealth** at length, “Why is that? Son of the family, the mind of enlightenment is like the seed for all of the buddha

²⁵(...continued)

concerned with insight into emptiness has the ability to destroy, for good, the negativities of one’s own mindstream, bringing with it the realization of the path of seeing and leading one out of saṃsāra in the process.

²⁶ “Free of all birth” means that it was not produced in a dualistic mind, in other words, it was the superfactual enlightenment mind. “Special” refers to the final level of the various levels of development of bodhicitta on the fictional side. Altogether, he had a very high level of development of enlightenment mind.

dharmas. It is like a field because it totally increases the white dharmas of all migrators. It is like the ground because it shows the whole world. And it is like a synopsis because it incorporates every conduct and prayer of the bodhisatva. It is like a stūpa in the worlds of gods, men, and asuras. Son of the family, the enlightenment mind has in that way those good qualities and also has measureless other specific qualities”.

2.1.2.2. The divisions of enlightenment mind

The basis upon which the divisions are made is as follows. That very thing that has the previously discussed benefits and advantages of the arousing of the fictional mind, a mental consciousness referencing the enlightenment mind, emptiness having a core of compassion, is something that can produce inexhaustible merit and virtues. When it is sub-divided in a larger way, it is divided on the basis of the levels²⁷, and so on, into twenty-two sub-divisions, and when it is sub-divided in a medium way, it is divided on the basis of the intentional²⁸, and so on, into four sub-divisions. Those twenty-two and four sub-divisions as they are generally stated are fictional arousings of mind but each of them does also have a superfactual arousing of mind with it.

²⁷ “Levels” here means all levels of the path to enlightenment, those on the saṃsāric paths of accumulation and connection and on the non-saṃsāric paths of seeing, meditation, and no more training.

²⁸ “Intentional” refers to the levels of the path within saṃsāra. The other three are the impure bodhisatva levels, the pure bodhisatva levels, and the level of a buddha. Each of these circumstances is said to have a particular type of enlightenment mind.

When summarized, it is to be understood as two types: a mind that aspires to enlightenment; and one that engages in enlightenment. These two, which are fictional only, have the following difference. In accordance with **wanting to go**, there is the aspiration, “For the sake of sentient beings, I will become a buddha.” This is not a mind that has set off on the journey but one which only aspires to it. **And** then there is **going**, which is to have set off on the journey to the enlightenment that was aspired to. **Just as these particulars of the example are understood, so intelligent people will understand that there is a sequence of these two particulars of the actual case, the two being distinguished in the actual case as having undertaken and not undertaken the activity of going to enlightenment.**

Having set off on the journey to enlightenment, the aspiration is included within the engagement, for example, when walking along according to the aspiration to go. Yet the mere starting out on engagement is the work only of aspiration for, as the *Avatamsaka* says:

Son of the family, it is like this. A precious vajra even when broken overwhelms every excellent gold ornament and on top of that the name precious vajra is not rejected—all poor people will completely turn around towards it. Son of the family, similarly, the precious vajra of arousing the mind for all-knowing does, without any effort, overwhelm all the ornaments of the qualities of the śhrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas and on top of that, the name bodhisatva is not rejected—all poor people of saṃsāra will completely turn around towards it.

You might think, “If we assert that the refuge of the Great Vehicle is also attainment of buddhahood for the sake of others, then there would be no difference between that and aspiring itself”, but it is not so. The first is asserted as a mental event. The second is, because of the sake of others, an intentional drive that wants truly complete enlightenment and that being a consciousness that produces the two minds with equivalency is very different from the first²⁹. The first is the simple thought, “I will obtain it”, the second is total dedication to it through the thought, “I will attain it, may it be so!” whereby it has turned into something that is not working at the level of mental event.

2.1.2.3. The benefits and advantages of the individual enlightenment minds

The mind that aspires to enlightenment alone gives rise to many greater results—such as birth as a wheel-wielding king—whilst cycling about in saṃsāra, but unlike arousing the mind of engagement does not give rise to a continuous stream of merit because it, being merely a commitment, is divorced from accomplishing of it. **From the time that it is taken up, the mind of engagement, since it is, for the purpose of liberating sentient beings of infinite realms, a mind that does not turn back, will have genuinely taken on the vows**

²⁹ This is a technical way of talking based on an Abhidharma understanding of the differences between main minds (Skt. citta, Tib. sems) and mental events (Skt. caitta, Tib. sems byung). The first thing is merely a mental event; the second is a mental event but causes a consciousness or main mind. In particular, it produces the consciousness that is the two types of enlightenment mind.

of the enlightenment mind. **From that time on, even if asleep or not paying attention, it will be an extraordinary source of a force of merit that is continuous** in terms of time and **equal to space** in terms of vastness.

This, which has been explained as above, **is explained to be something that could be trusted**. It is so because it is said by the tathāgata himself in the *Sūtra Petitioned by Subāhu*:

If someone who, because of having the aims of a sentient being intent on the lesser way is wanting the stated³⁰ good qualities of a pratyekabuddha or the good qualities of śhrāvaka, also, moment of mind by moment of mind, develops infinite and infinite again roots of merit and has the expansion of infinite and infinite again roots of merit, then what need to mention some son of the family or daughter of the family who wishes for and is intent on and aspires to the buddha qualities with infinite good qualities and limitless good qualities limitless, infinite strengths and limitless strengths, to the realization of them in their entirety, and to their total completion when the four causes, four conditions, and four references of those³¹ who even have fallen into not paying attention or being asleep result in four infinite and limitless heaps of roots of virtue that lead to four infinite and limitless heaps of enlightenment accumulation that, mo-

³⁰ “Stated” means stated by the Buddha to be the case.

³¹ ... sons and daughters of the family who are not merely wanting, intent on, and aspiring to these qualities of complete buddhahood but who are engaging in the conduct that leads to the qualities of complete buddhahood ...

ment of mind by moment of mind, will develop and expand.

Even the thought, “I will dispel just the headaches of sentient beings” is a thought to benefit, so what need to mention that which will be the source of unfathomable merit, that which, like a very dear woman friend, is of unfathomable merit, the wish to dispel every suffering of saṃsāra, the unfathomable unhappiness of each sentient being, and the wish also to produce in each one of them buddhahood with unfathomable good qualities. The previous sūtra continues:

Subāhu, furthermore, a bodhisatva trains authentically like this, thinking, “If someone wanting to dispel for just one moment of mind of the moments of mind the connection to suffering of the infinite and infinite again mass of sentient beings, also, moment of mind by moment of mind develops infinite and infinite again roots of merit and has the expansion of infinite and infinite again roots of merit, then what need is there to mention someone who, for future, not yet come infinite, unfathomable aeons has the wish to dispel the suffering of birth up through the suffering of becoming of the infinite and infinite again mass of sentient beings?”

Who of the ones close to you, your father or mother, either one, has this kind of mind to benefit others? Do those who are taken as a refuge by the world, gods and ṛiṣhis either one or Braḥmā even, have this mind to benefit or not? Those sentient beings each one of whom cherishes himself also have not up till now even in a dream dreamt of this kind of mind for their own benefit, so how could they have concern for others’ purposes arise? This special, precious mind, this one

which thinks of sentient beings' purposes, concerning itself with others without thought for itself arising, a wonder that has not previously existed in this world has now been born!

So then how could the merit belonging to what becomes the cause of joy in all migrators, the nectar for dispelling the suffering of sentient beings, that precious mind, be measured? How would this precious mind of merit, whatever it is, be measured? It says in the *Sūtra Petitioned by Śhrī Dāna*:

Enlightenment mind's merit,
If it developed form,
Would fill the whole of space;
Therefore it is special.

Even the mere aspiration that thinks to benefit is superior to offering to the buddhas. That sūtra says:

Compared to a buddha field filled not
With the amount of the sands of the Ganges
But with the seven precious things
And offered to the guardians of the world,

The offering made by anyone who
Puts his hands in añjali and
Arouses the enlightenment mind
Has no limit to it, so is superior.

If it says that, then **what need to mention** the mind of engagement that **perseveres at an aim of happiness of every one of the sentient beings without exception**. You might think, "Sentient beings are expert at removing their own suffering and making their own happiness themselves so there is no point to the enlightenment mind persevering at their aims", but it is not

so. Sentient beings **do have a mind that wants to get rid of their own suffering themselves but what they actually do is race to manifest suffering** as though doubting that they have already produced it. **They want happiness but due to the four perversions³² have delusion defeat the possibility of their own happiness as though it were an enemy.** That is why it is correct to undertake persevering at enlightenment mind. So, **for that which for those who are low on happiness and have much suffering satisfies them with total happiness and eliminates all of their suffering and even dispels their delusion, where is there a virtue equal to it? Where is there a virtuous spiritual friend such as this? Where is there merit like that?**

For these reasons, given that **any kind of beneficial response is deemed worthy of a little praise** by the world which says of the doer, “He is a good person”, **then what need to mention the praiseworthiness of the bodhisatva who, uncommitted³³, does only good for others?** Furthermore, were someone to **give a few migrators a regular supply of food, or just enough food for the moment, that is for a meal, or were to give in a condescending way for the time of a half day still,**

³² The four perversions are four wrong ways of looking at one’s world which serve to bind one into saṃsāra: seeing the impure as pure, seeing the impermanent as permanent, seeing the unsatisfactory as satisfactory, and seeing the compounded as uncompounded.

³³ “Uncommitted” means that he does not have any special worldly commitment such as those coming with marriage, service to a higher person, and so on; without any of that the bodhisatva truly works selflessly for others.

beings would laud it, saying, “This is virtuous”³⁴. So, what need is there to mention the perpetual giving to the sentient beings infinite in number for a period of time lasting as long as space remains of the unsurpassed bliss of the sugatas or the entirety of what mind thinks of with nothing left out and with everything made complete? It says in the *Sūtra Petitioned by Nārāyaṇa*:

If I am willing to give and give totally even this body of mine to sentient beings, then what need to mention external things? Whatever it is, this and that, that this and that sentient being might need, I will give it, this and that, to this and that one.

The Capable One himself said in the *Sūtra Showing Complete Certainty of Illusion*, that, should anyone produce a negative mind towards a son of the conquerors who acts in this way as all sentient beings’ donor, he will, for as many moments as the negative mind was produced, reside in hell,

³⁴ There are four different ways of giving here that are mentioned in the sūtras as being inferior in one way or another. Giving to a few beings for a sustained period is a case where the object of the practice of giving is limited; giving only food is a case where the substance is limited—after all one could give more than just food; giving just once is a case where the duration is limited; and giving in condescending manner, which was a fact of gifts of food to beggars in Asia where they might have been beaten as well as offered food, is a case of limited quality of treatment. A bodhisatva’s giving exceeds all of these as is pointed out one by one in the rest of the commentary.

A bodhisatva who rouses a mind of anger and rouses a mind of condescension towards a bodhisatva will for as long as it lasts himself reside in hell for aeons.

Furthermore, the *Sūtra On Creating Strength of Faith* says:

Son of the family or daughter of the family, if someone were to destroy or burn stūpas numbering the sands of the Ganges and, son of the family or daughter of the family, someone were to rouse a harmful mind or much negativity or anger towards a bodhisatva mahāsattva intent on the Great Vehicle, and to try to bring him down with bad talk because of it, this in comparison would produce a level of evil action that was incalculably greater than the first. Why is that so? From bodhisatvas bhagavat buddhas are born, and from buddhas arise stūpas, every item of happiness, and every one of the gods' levels.

You might say, “That being the result that comes from harming a bodhisatva, what sort of thing comes from being respectful?”

Yet someone who develops great admiration creates a result that increases even more than that evil mentioned previously; the *Sūtra on Certain and Not Certain* says:

Mañjuśrī, what if there is someone whose full acceptance after thorough examination results in his becoming an eye of all sentient beings of the realms of the worlds of the ten directions and also if there is full acceptance after thorough examination, if some sons of the family or daughters of the family abiding in the mind of loving kindness are the ones who are

creating the eye of all of them³⁵? Mañjuśhrī, another son of the family or daughter of the family who looks on a bodhisatva intent on the Great Vehicle with a mind of admiration—this would produce merit especially greater than that.

For the conquerors’ sons even though something might create **a major problem** harmful even to the point of losing their lives over it, the enlightenment mind has no thoughts of anger, and so on, in it, so **evil does not occur** and, on their side, there is patience and there is a special kind of compassion with force like that of a king’s loving kindness produced by the circumstance for whatever is causing the harm, so **in a state of virtue**, they **improve**.

Therefore, in order to show that, “The bodhisatva is worthy of veneration”, he says “**Whoever has had the jewel of that holy mind arise** within his mindstream, **I prostrate to him**. **And**, not only is he a source of happiness when assisted but even when harmed, because he totally accepts the person for the long term, the person is connected with happiness. Thus whether benefited or harmed he is a source of happiness and **I take refuge in that source of happiness**.

You might ask, “Does this not contradict the earlier statement about doing harm to them creating great evil?” No it does not; if there is no repair of the evil created, the full-ripening follows immediately from it. All of that kind of harm and so on turns

³⁵ An “eye of the world” is a person who has developed compassion for the beings of world and looks on them with that compassion. From this, we can know that admiration for a bodhisatva is very meritorious, which is the point being made.

into the cause of happiness for the long term; for others saṃsāra is endless, but please look at the bodhisatva with faith! Someone might have harmed him, but because of that person and the surrounding circumstances, he then totally ripens all of the sentient beings, none of whom he rejects; that person causes him to keep his mind on changing this so that there will be an end to saṃsāra for them!

That was the chapter that explains the benefits and advantages of the enlightenment mind the first chapter of *Entering the Bodhisatva's Conduct*.

... END OF PREVIEW TEXT ...



Tony Duff has spent a lifetime pursuing the Buddha's teaching and transmitting it to others. In the early 1970's, during his post-graduate studies in molecular biology, he went to Asia and met the Buddhist teachings of various South-east Asian countries. He met Tibetan Buddhism in Nepal and has followed it since. After his trip he abandoned worldly life and was the first monk ordained in his home country of Australia. Together with several others, he founded the monastery called Chenrezig Institute for Wisdom Culture where he studied and practised the Gelugpa teachings for several years under the guidance of Lama Yeshe, Lama Zopa, Geshe Lodan, and Zasep Tulku. After that, he offered back his ordination and left for the USA to study the Kagyu teachings with the incomparable Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. Tony was very active in the community and went through all possible levels of training that were available during his twelve year stay. He was also a core member of the Nalanda Translation Committee. After Chogyam Trungpa died, Tony went to live in Nepal where he worked as the personal translator for Tsoknyi Rinpoche and also translated for several other well-known teachers. He also founded and directed the largest Tibetan text preservation project in Asia, the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project, which he oversaw for eight years. He also established the Padma Karpo Translation Committee which has produced many fine translations and made many resources for translators such as the highly acclaimed *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary*. After the year 2000, Tony focussed primarily on obtaining Dzogchen teachings from the best teachers available, especially within Tibet, and translating and teaching them. He has received much approval from many teachers and has been given the titles "lotsawa" and "lama" and been strongly encouraged by them to teach Westerners. One way he does that is by producing these fine translations.

PADMA KARPO TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 4957

Kathmandu

Nepal

<http://www.pktc.org/pktc>