

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

**BY ALL-KNOWING PADMA KARPO**

**BY LOTSAWA TONY DUFF  
PADMA KARPO TRANSLATION COMMITTEE**

## Copyright and Fair Usage Notice

Copyright © Tony Duff 2008. All rights reserved.

The translations and commentaries contained herein are made available online as a gift of dharma. They are being offered with the intent that anyone may download them, print them out, read and study them, share them with friends, and even copy and redistribute the files privately. Still, the following must be observed:

- The files may be copied and given to others privately provided that no fee is charged for them.
- Other web-sites are encouraged to link to this page. However, the files may only be put up for distribution on other sites with the expressed permission of the author.
- Neither the files nor their content are in the public domain; the copyright for both remains with the author.
- In accord with standard copyright law, you may use reasonable portions of these files for your own work, publication or translations.

If you do use them in that way, please cite these files as if they were printed books. Please make it clear in your work which portions of your text is coming from our translation and which portions are based on other sources.

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

**BY ALL-KNOWING PADMA KARPO**

**BY LOTSAWA TONY DUFF  
PADMA KARPO TRANSLATION COMMITTEE**

This book is intended for free public distribution, however, the content is copyrighted. For enquiries regarding permission to reproduce this book or any portion of it, or to obtain further books, please write to the given address or contact the author via internet and e-mail.

Copyright © 2008 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 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008

Palatino typeface with diacritical marks  
Designed and created by Tony Duff  
Tibetan Computer Company  
<http://www.tibet.dk/tcc>

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

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	v
FIRST CHAPTER AND COMMENTARY .....	1 to 35
SECOND CHAPTER AND COMMENTARY .....	37 to 39



## INTRODUCTION

Arousing the enlightenment mind is at the core of the teachings of the Great Vehicle and is the foundation of all Great Vehicle spiritual practice, including all of the practices of the Vajra vehicle. Even at the loftiest heights of spiritual practice, embodied in the Vajra vehicle teachings of Mahāmudrā and Mahāti (known in Tibetan as Dzogpa chenpo), the enlightenment mind, which is the drive towards an enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings in those who are not yet buddhas and the mind of enlightenment itself in those who are buddhas, is key. In both of these highest of spiritual teachings there is a special instruction that sums up the whole practice:

“Look up to the guru with devotion,  
Look down at the sentient beings with  
compassion,  
And, in between do your own practice!”

In other words, even at that highest level, developing compassion for sentient beings through the trainings and conduct of enlightenment mind is one of the two main practices. Furthermore, any discussion of the enlightenment mind in these two systems is always very practical and, though a lot can be said at the time the teachings are actually given, there

is very little about it that is theoretical. The text translated here on enlightenment mind fits very much with that approach.

The Sanskrit term for enlightenment mind is “bodhicitta”. The Tibetan translation of it follows the Sanskrit literally and exactly with “byang chub sems” in which “byang chub” is the Tibetan equivalent of “bodhi” and the “sems” following that 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. For example, the term “bodhi” does not mean “awakening” as it is so often translated 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”. Now comes the question of how the two should be joined. The Sanskrit simply places the two terms together in such a way that bodhi describes the type of citta. The Tibetan translates that juxtaposition and 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 adds no more meaning but just explicitly shows appositional connection between the two terms as is implicit in the original Sanskrit; it 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 by adding the appropriate case marker to give the appositional meaning, similar to what can be done in Tibetan and in that case it would be “mind of enlightenment”.

It would be very wrong to translate this as is often done with “mind for enlightenment” or any other variation. This can be known not only through a proper grammatical analysis as given above but can also through all Tibetan commentaries on the term, in which it is pointed 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 its final and most complete form in a truly complete buddha. Thus, to translate it for example as “mind for enlightenment” would exclude the fact that it also refers to the enlightenment mind found in a buddha. Compare this with the translation “mind of enlightenment” derived through grammatical analysis; that is correct not only grammatically but also from the standpoint that it does include all possibilities of the type of mind. If you would like to know where this type of information can be found, look at the *Ornament of Manifested Realizations*, the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* of Maitreya and Asanga in which the enlightenment mind is divided into twenty-two types corresponding to twenty-two levels of development of that mind up to and including that of a buddha. This division, by the way, is mentioned in this commentary when the divisions of enlightenment mind are presented. There are various other teachings within the Buddha word and the treatises on it that establish the same point.

Following on from this, there is the term “bodhisatva” which is the name given to a person who has aroused the enlightenment mind. In this term, 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 towards his goal in strong, courageous, and determined way. Thus the term could be translated into English as “enlightenment

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

Note the spelling of "bodhisatva". All Tibetan texts spell it this way and do consider that this is the correct spelling, despite the Western world's insistence that it should be "bodhisattva". I have researched this matter thoroughly and concluded that the Tibetan translators and the Indian acharyas who were advising them, felt that this was the correct spelling. My stance has resulted in some truly acrimonious debates with Westerners who come up with a lot of argument but who fundamentally seem only interested in supporting the Western view of the matter. For myself, since all Tibetan texts do spell it this way, since Sanskrit does provide the possibility that this could be the correct spelling, and since very learned Tibetans such as Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche do insist that it is not a casual mistake but is the correct spelling, I follow the Tibetan approach and spell it "bodhisatva". Aside from the scholarship involved, if Tibetan texts unilaterally use the spelling "bodhisatva" how can I as the translator pompously say this must be wrong and change the spelling? That is not my job!

The bodhisatva arouses the enlightenment mind, then takes on the vows of a bodhisatva, and then follows the behaviour or conduct of a bodhisatva from the beginning of his journey all the way up until the time that he becomes a buddha. Thus the issue of how a bodhisatva conducts himself is a singularly important and large one. The great Indian master Śhāntideva while he was at Nālandā University put a lot of effort into

reading the scriptures of the Buddha word and the treatises on them that deal with this topic. He composed a text that summed up what he found and called it “bodhisatvacaryāvātāra” or in English, “Entering the Bodhisatva’s Conduct”. His text was so well written that it became the main text used within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition as a whole for the study of how to conduct oneself as a bodhisatva.

There are many commentaries on Śhāntideva’s work. Many of them turn into textbooks that cover every detail of the whole of the Great Vehicle, with endless amounts of information. The commentary here is very useful because it does not do that but just goes through the main points of the original text bit by bit and illuminates Śhāntideva’s intent without trying to cover every, related detail.

There are many types of commentary in the Buddhist tradition, for example there are ones that quote the original text and then clarify it by adding footnotes called “annotated commentaries” and there are ones that take every single word of the original and explain it, called “word by word commentaries”, and there are ones that give an overview of a subject “called overviews”. There are many others, too. One of them takes an original and comments on it by taking the sections, large or small, perhaps a whole paragraph, perhaps a single word, that needs explanation and then giving a commentary on that. In Tibetan a meaningful unit, whether as small as a single letter or as large as a whole section of text, is called a “*bru*” or bit, so a commentary that explains a text by commenting on its bits is called a “*bru grel*”, a bit by bit or bitwise commentary. The specific style of commentary given here is a bitwise commentary.

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

Padma Karpo is considered, as with all of the Drukchens, as very highly realized. In addition though, Padma Karpo is singularly known for his 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 that a person “knows it all”.

Padma Karpo was one of those rare beings who was not only knowledgeable but who was very expert at composition. And not only was he expert at composition but he was a truly prolific writer, his collected works totalling twenty-four or more full Tibetan volumes of over three hundred folios each.

Padma Karpo was even more amazing in that he had a unique skill for writing in which he would weave many complex ideas together into a minimum of space. Even amongst expert Tibetans, he is regarded 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 authors and is frequently read by people of traditions other than Kagyu simply because his works are so illuminating.

Padma Karpo wrote major commentaries on most of the main textbooks used in the Tibetan Buddhist system. The one here is his extensive commentary on *Entering the Bodhisatva's Conduct*. It has the feature mentioned earlier of being a "bit wise" type of commentary and shows the meaning of the text in a way that makes it a nice handbook for someone wanting to get the meaning of the original and make use of it. Nonetheless, it retains the full force of Padma Karpo's extraordinary scholarship, eloquence, and remarkable ability to weave a subtle story in his compositions. I don't think that there is any other commentary like it, certainly not in English.

Padma Karpo starts with the title of the original text and presents it bit by bit, weaving all of the bits of the original text into his own commentary. We have signalled the words of the original text by putting a dagger at the beginning of each bit and putting the text of the bit into an alternative colour. Padma Karpo's words are simply written in black. We worked hard to keep the sequence of words in English as close to Padma Karpo's sequence as possible and were quite successful at doing so. Thus the translation really does represent the way that Padma Karpo sets out both the original text and his commentary on it. We found the result to be very enjoyable and think you will, too!

Padma Karpo's works can be difficult to translate because of the depth of his style of writing mentioned earlier. Still, three of my students all of very sharp intellect approached me in September 2006, asking for teachings on Tibetan grammar. I gave them the basic teachings and then, in order to help them put what they had learned into practice, selected this text of Padma Karpo because I felt that they could manage it. We worked on it together, spending two full months, three hours a day going through the first chapter. The work was

not finished at the time because I had to translate for Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche at the Jangter empowerments he was giving in India. However, I promised my students that I would finish the work and publish it. The three of them were most helpful in doing the hard work of preparing a draft at the time and they all are to be thanked as major contributors to this work: David Gonpo Maya, Ian Mac Cormack, and Mike Smith. Thank you gentlemen! We had a fine time working together! Note that Śhāntideva's text has ten chapters and Padma Karpo's commentary on it is complete but our work together on the commentary only goes through the first chapter.

In English writing, starting a paragraph with the same words over and over again is regarded as poor composition. However, it is just the sort of thing that Padma Karpo might do, in order to weave his composition. Therefore, somehow, the style of my own composition in the preceding paragraphs makes me chuckle, because it does introduce the author of the commentary quite nicely!

I have been working for many years on providing electronic tools that would allow Tibetans to preserve their extraordinary heritage of Buddhist literature on the one hand and that would allow Westerners to gain access to Tibetan materials and translations thereof on the other. To this end, I have created a whole suite of software, with reference works and dictionaries. Our web site at <http://www.tibet.dk/pktc> is home to many free texts and reference works. My plan with Padma Karpo's work was to make the Tibetan text of the commentary free on the site, with the other texts and then to make this translation free, to go with it. This way a fully searchable edition of the original text can be read in conjunction with our electronic dictionaries and with this translation.

You will find on the same site the massive work of my dear friend Andreas Kretchmar who has undertaken the work of translating Śhāntideva's text and one of the most famous Nyingma commentaries to it, the work by Khenpo Kunphel. Andreas's work is available for free. It is a work that picks through every possible detail connected with Śhāntideva's text and is a veritable mine of information. It shows what a Westerner who has put in his time by living with Tibetans for many years, learning their language, and learning their dharma system properly can do. His commentary is an extremely in-depth word by word commentary whereas this is a bitwise commentary; you will find that Andreas's work and our work complement each other very well. I am pleased to be able to present this all under one umbrella.

Like Andreas, I have only one concern. You are welcome to use this translation for your own edification and you can pass it on to others, too. However, even though the edition is made free, the text of the translation is not in the public domain and the copyright to it remains with myself, the author of this book. Any hint of plagiarization will stop this program that Andreas and I have worked on for so long. So, please use it and enjoy it but respect the copyright.

With my very best wishes,  
Lotsawa Tony Duff,  
Swayambunath,  
Nepal,  
November 8th, 2007



“A LAMP FOR THE PATH OF THE MIDDLE WAY”  
A BITWISE COMMENTARY ON  
*ENTERING THE CONDUCT*  
BY ALL-KNOWING PADMA KARPO<sup>1</sup>

CHAPTER ONE

Homage to the Precious All-knowing Drukpa, Ngawang Chokyi Gyalpo<sup>2</sup>.

The virtue of offering even a hair from the body  
Can please all the buddhas whose forms without  
exception are clear on it,

---

<sup>1</sup>Text obtained from the electronic edition produced by the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project. The original is contained in Padma Karpo's Collected Works (padma dkar po'i bka' 'bum). The electronic text, with Śhāntideva's root text highlighted is available free on our web site in TibetDoc format. The idea is that you can use the original Tibetan text in conjunction with this translation.

<sup>2</sup> The name of Padma Karpo's guru.

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,

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 glory<sup>3</sup>;  
 I bow to their great force descended from the heavens.

The deva who dwells in the gem of peace<sup>4</sup>  
 By making the entrance into the ocean of  
 The bodhisatva's conduct  
 Eliminated the lower level of the rivers and valleys  
 of this world<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> Tib. 'jam pa'i dpal. Softened glory is a play on words against the name of Mañjuśrī. Mañjuśrī, briefly stated, means "he who, having totally softened his mind, is glorious".

<sup>4</sup> Śhāntideva, the author's name, is cleverly given; Śhānti is "peace" and deva is "god".

<sup>5</sup> He showed a higher dharma, one that belongs to the heavenly realms, as just described, which equates with Buddha Shakyamuni and his system of teacher, dharma, and saṅgha, which is a heavenly

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 throat<sup>6</sup>,

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 Mahatma 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”.

---

kind of dharma compared to the ordinary levels of this world.

<sup>6</sup> 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 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.

Now, comes the first bundle<sup>7</sup>. 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.

## 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<sup>8</sup> which shows what buddha is; buddhas have gone to bliss because of having an abandonment having three distinct features or, alternatively, their being gone to bliss is a realization with three distinct features because, as Dharmakīrti said,

---

<sup>7</sup> 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 needles 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. So here, Padma Karpo is saying, all right, now we have looked at the title and the Tibetan translator's signature line used to indicate the type of text, next 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.

<sup>8</sup> Skt. sugata, Tib. bde gshegs, English 'ones gone to bliss'.

“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 samsara. 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 † dharma 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, † together with their sons, is originally “suta” which, ascertained through “erasure / addition”<sup>9</sup>, has the meanings

---

<sup>9</sup> Tib. sras bcas. The Tibetan term is the official translation equivalent for the Sanskrit “suta”. Sanskrit has very strong rules of grammar. One of several processes that can come into play when making a

“born into the family”, “member of the family line”, and “doer of the activities”<sup>10</sup> all of which comes to mean “son”, that is, part of the group who trains in bodhi. The doer of this particular set of activities is “someone who has properly entered and become involved with the Great Vehicle saṅgha”.

Of the refuge objects classified by Jowo, this<sup>11</sup> has the character of the one explained in the *Higher 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.

Now, having paid homage like that, the particular subject that is going to be expressed in here is mentioned. It is the

---

word in Sanskrit is the process belonging to Sanskrit grammar called “erasure / addition”. It is a process in which an affix, such as su, is first put at the end of the word it is modifying. However, these kinds of affixes are not allowed to reside at the end, so it is erased from the end of the temporary new word and added to the beginning of the word instead. Thus the new word is ascertained, as he says.

The original in both Sanskrit and Tibetan says “son” not “daughter” nor “sons and daughters”. As the translator, it is my job to translate the text, not to change it according to someone else’s idea. This same principal applies throughout the translation.

<sup>10</sup> Meaning someone who, because he is a member of the family line, is someone who carries out the activities belonging to that kind of family. If he were not a member of that family, then he would not be expected or allowed, in short, would not, be a doer of those activities.

<sup>11</sup> Meaning the sugatas as described and their sons as described.

† restraints of the sugatas' sons<sup>12</sup> and it 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<sup>13</sup>. 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.

---

<sup>12</sup> Skt. saṃvara, Tib, sdom pa. Both terms mean “a restraint”, something that fully holds you in place. The term has often been rendered in English as “vow” which can be correct—the vows that you have taken serve to hold you to a certain style of conduct. However, the other meaning of vow, which is the vow itself is not quite the meaning intended. Therefore the phrase here is the “vows of a bodhisatva” with the specific sense of the conduct to which a bodhisatva restrains himself. And that is exactly what he means when he says in the next sentence, when he says that “that is what bodhisatvas do”.

<sup>13</sup> In other words, the vows of a bodhisatva contain the fullness of what bodhisatvas actually do, what they actually practise, or instead of that you could say the bodhisatva's conduct because it comes down to the same thing. That is what bodhisatvas engage in, which is both the name of the text and what he is stating here as the subject of the text.

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 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 composition<sup>14</sup>.

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,<sup>15</sup> and that connection is made

---

<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> In the system that developed in India of composing a Buddhist treatise, it became necessary that a treatise had to fulfil a test in order to be accepted as a valid treatise. The test is that it has to have, correctly, all of what are called, “The four dharmas (aspects) of a treatise”. The *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary* gives the following.

“According to Indian tradition, a properly written བསྟན་བཅོས་ treatise has four aspects present. They are: 1) བརྗོད་བྱུ་, “that which is to be expressed, i.e., the specific meaning to be transmitted by the རྗོད་བྱུ་ written expressions in the treatise; 2) དགོས་པ་ the need i.e., what

so 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 main parts to it: the conduct of entry, arousing the enlightenment mind; the conduct of accomplishing,

---

purpose is being addressed by the expressions of the treatise; 3) ཉིང་དགོས་, the core need or the real, inner purpose being addressed by the expressions of the treatise and which is a further extension of "the need"; 4) འབྲེལ་བ་, "the relationship" which is that the previous three must connect together or there is 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."

It is customary for a commentator to show that a treatise is a valid treatise. This is done just after the declaration of composition and just prior to the commentary on the actual body of the text. It has to be done here because, until the declaration of composition has been made, the text of validity cannot be applied and because if the test failed, the treatise having been seen as invalid, it would not be proper to continue on with an commentary of the body of the treatise.

If you look closely, you will see that Padma Karpo has clearly laid out "that to be expressed" when he shows Śhāntideva's statement about the "restraints of a bodhisatva". Then he deals with the rest of the declaration of composition, which contains the need and core need. After that, he writes this paragraph in which he draws all three together and then shows that there is a correct relationship between the need and core need. Padma Karpo is particular skilful in his own composition and this section demonstrates well how cleverly he weaves things together.

training in the pāramitās; and the conduct of accomplishment, explaining buddha.

## 2.1 The Conduct of Entry, Arousing the Enlightenment mind

This has three main parts to it: 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 dharmata is the one spoken of in, “Every sentient being does have the buddha essence”. Because of that, in the end, every one will become buddha. Buddhas arise earlier and later due to the closeness and distance of the conditions of waking which come about due to the size larger and smaller of the accumulation of roots of virtue. Conditions for awakening being closer are defined in terms of a perfect body support and an excellent thought support.

**The first of the two** is stated in terms of the non-conductive side, which is † **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 samsara 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<sup>16</sup>;

“Monks, these eight constituting non-freedom are not a time in which persons abide in brahmācharya<sup>17</sup>. Saying so means that though this support alone is defined as “leisure”, it is just one of the times in which 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<sup>18</sup>,

---

<sup>16</sup> He is saying that, when leisure, of leisure and endowment, is defined, it is defined as being the one thing, “non-freedom” which is a set of eight circumstances. Now, if you were to take that one thing and expand on it, there is scripture that does it and here, for example, is how it goes...

<sup>17</sup> Brahmācharya means “the pure conduct of Brahma” which in Ancient India referred to keeping celibacy.

<sup>18</sup> The formless realm is comprised of many abodes of sentient beings. The major levels in it are the four dhyānas. And within the fourth and highest one of those, there is a specific level called “Greater Result”. Everything mentioned so far is part of the usual enumeration of sentient beings’ birth places. However, there is a specific subdivision of Greater Result which is not commonly mentioned. It is called “non-perception”. Long-life god is a general term that refers to many of the higher births in cyclic existence, starting with the gods of the desire realm. In the context of the eight states of non-freedom, the category “long-life god” is usually defined more tightly

and within one of the formless realms. However, Acharya Vira defines it as the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and so on, both in terms of the possibility of entering homelessness<sup>19</sup>

---

than that; it is defined as either birth in the “non-perception” just mentioned or as birth in any of the four main levels constituting the formless realm. This is so because birth in these five places is not only particularly 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. Compare this with some other god realms in which there is the chance to understand one’s position and to do something about it. Despite the usual definition, Acharya Vira, also known as Aśhvaghōṣha, a particularly knowledgeable Indian master, came up with a different definition. Based on the Buddha’s statement that the excellent support of a precious human body is one in which there is the opportunity to take on brahmacarya and given that the gods of the Heavens of the Thirty Three and all of those above it do not have that opportunity, and based on Buddha’s calling that support “a body more special than that of the gods” meaning the gods in general, Aśhvaghōṣha defined the long-life god category as birth in any of the god realms in cyclic existence, starting with those in the Heavens of the Thirty Three and going up. Padma Karpo prefers the latter, as it really fits well with what the Buddha has said.

<sup>19</sup> Sanskrit pravṛjita, Tib. rab byung. The original has the meaning that one leaves home, which equates with worldly life, and goes off to the superior life of being a mendicant on a spiritual journey. In Buddhist literature, it then comes to mean taking ordination as a monk or nun which in turn means entering celibacy, or brahmacarya. In this way, Padma Karpo again for the implication of celibacy here connects back to the celibacy mentioned in the earlier quotation.

Not having ordination is seen as one of the requirements for being able to make the cause of another excellent support, i.e., precious human birth. Padma Karpo does not draw this point out

and in terms of its being designated as “a body more special than the gods” so in my way of thinking, this latter one is the one that fits. The *Buddha Essence* explains it extensively with,

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

Since they are conducive conditions, they are defined as endowments, like the property 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! The occurrence of a tathāgata, arhat, truly complete buddha is difficult to find. Even in many hundreds of thousands of tens of millions of hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas a tathāgata might be seen and also might not be seen in the world, like for example, the Uḍumbara’s flower.”

---

explicitly but it is yet another thread of meaning contained in his commentary.

The cause of this support is perfect discipline<sup>20</sup>. 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”.

**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 meritorious because of seeking enlightenment, † arise. At the time they arise, the enlightenment mind should be aroused.”<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Tib. tshul khrims phun sum tshogs pa. It would be popular to translate that these days as “perfect discipline” but what does that mean. In the sūtras, the buddha made clear that a precious human body comes about on the basis of discipline meaning the vowed disciplines that he gave his disciples. And he goes on to say that the disciplines of a fully ordained person are superior for the purpose. So one meaning of “perfect” here is that one has the most complete set of vows available. Then the buddha also points out that in order to create the merit needed for a precious it is not merely a matter of having the vows, regardless of the level, but that it is also a matter of keeping them purely. Thus “perfect” here means, according to the Buddha, both a complete set of vows and the keeping of them.

<sup>21</sup> I have taken some trouble to translate this very famous verse both literally and as Padma Karpo translates it. The translation into Tibetan leaves out most of the Sanskrit grammatical apparatus so Tibetan commentators give slightly different renderings of it. Therefore, here is a complete explanation of it.

Firstly, note that the original verse has a term that is usually not translated into English. It is the term ལྷོན་རུས་. It means “within the depths of clouds”. English translations often leave out the “clouds” and almost universally leave out the imagery of “deep

---

within the depths" of clouds. You might have seen rain clouds on a dark night or when the sky is very dark because of clouds. Sometimes the lightning flashes inside the cloud and when it does everything is brightly illuminated all around. That is the meaning of the original. It is an example of the buddha mind, which exists deep within the thick clouds of ignorance and, suddenly flashing forth produces illumination throughout the clouds and all around, just as he says further on.

Then, Padma Karpo chooses to make out the meaning of the བར་ in the བར་སྒྲོང་ of the Tibetan as "the duration of the moment that the lightning flashes". Other commentators make it out as going with the སྒྲོང་ in which case it does not refer to the duration of the moment but gives the sense of the area up in the heavens being illuminated. This latter idea fits more the sense of the lightning flashing within the depths of the rain clouds as just mentioned. Again, if you have seen lightning flashing inside clouds, you will get the sense of what Śhāntideva was saying.

What Śhāntideva did not say was what so many people loosely think when they read the current English translations, that there is a fork of lightning appearing in the sky on a dark night and that the whole landscape is illuminated because of it. His imagery and example is much more precise and beautiful than that.

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 not only the buddha mind itself can cause that but that the teachings of a buddha that are still present in some world have the same kind of power to cause a moment of illumination in the deeply ignorance mind of beings.

Sanskrit has a particular term that carries the sense of "a fraction measured in hundredth parts", it conveys the sense of something that only occurs a fraction of the time where the fraction is counted in hundredths, which in Ancient India, was a minute amount of time. Most English translations these days give it as "rarely" or

---

something similar. The original gives the sense of a very, very small fraction of the time.

So, due to the power of the buddhas or their teachings that are present, just a few at most moments of a good, intelligent type of mind, appear and this is something that happens a minute fraction of the time. And these moments of intelligent type of mind are not the usual non-merit of ignorant intelligent mind as it goes about its samsaric business but is a meritorious type of intelligent mind specifically because the type of mind that he is referring to is one that seeks full enlightenment. In other words, Śhāntideva is not merely saying that a meritorious mind appears once in a while. Rather, he is specifically saying that, very, very rarely a good mind that seeks enlightenment—the kind of mind which is the whole subject of this text—appears for a few moments.

There are various ways to explain how it appears. If you add them all up, it can be because of the external buddhas themselves causing it, because of the internal buddha potential suddenly manifesting, or because of the external teachings of the buddhas that are available causing it. The imagery as Śhāntideva gives it suggests strongly that he is talking about the buddha mind within actually flashing forth for a moment in its drive to return from the darkness of ignorance to the fully illuminated state of reality. Many texts, especially of the Kagyu and Nyingma, emphasize this understanding because it is a very practical understanding as opposed to a philosophical one. This fits very much with the opening words “the ones gone to bliss” and Padma Karpo’s explanation that Śhāntideva is showing here what buddha really means, in other words, Śhāntideva is using practical words, not philosophical words, and the same applies in this verse. Just once in a while your own buddha mind flashes out, in a moment of illumination that cuts through the gloom of your own clouds of ignorance. That illumination is for a change a meritorious state of mind in which your fundamental drive towards your own enlightened condition takes over for just a moment.

Padma Karpo adds that, when this wonderful event occurs,

That sort of thing does occur but what it does is to cause 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.  
For seeds sined by fire  
How can there be green shoots?”

and the *Precious Rosary* says,

“Because they have faith  
They rely on the dharma.”

Faith, further, 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 Lamp of the Jewels Sūtra*<sup>22</sup> says,

“Having faith in the conquerors and the  
conquerors’ dharma  
Then developing faith in the conduct of the  
conquerors’ sons causes

---

it should be used as a condition for going further and actually arousing the enlightenment mind. That means, for a person who is on the path, that they should train themselves so that if a good mind like this does arise, they should use it as an opportunity to apply their knowledge of the Great Vehicle teachings and actually arouse the enlightenment mind on the spot. If a person did, then all of the comments in the rest of the chapter would apply. And that’s just how the flow of Śhāntideva’s text goes. Again, Padma Karpo is a very skilful writer.

<sup>22</sup> In this name, Jewels is the refuge object, the Three Jewels.

The development of faith in unsurpassable  
 enlightenment; that 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,

"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 first time arousal of mind so it is not so fixed<sup>23</sup>.

---

<sup>23</sup> Padma Karpo is summing up the section on the support. He is saying that for example in the case of a beginner or in the case of an ordained person who has created evil perhaps through breaking their vows, they might be a person who would fit into the category of having a bad support. The definition of support as it is usually presented would then mean that this person could not progress on the path because a good support is required for that, it is said. However, in scripture, it also says 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. That what is a bad

## 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 for the sake of rousing enthusiasm; the chapter on laying aside primarily concerned with joining with it; and the chapter on full acceptance primarily concerned with the main part.

The first of those three chapters is in three parts: the common benefits and advantages of enlightenment mind; the divisions of enlightenment mind; and the individual benefits and advantages of the two<sup>24</sup>.

### 2.1.2.1 The common benefits and advantages of the enlightenment mind

† In view of that, the occurrence of the intelligence that does virtue is both difficult one and 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, mentioned there but also about what is to be accomplished. † The leaders of the sages<sup>25</sup>, who have given their

---

support and not cannot be taken as rigidly as some might like to suggest. In short, even a so-called bad support could lead to entering the path to enlightenment.

<sup>24</sup> Śhāntideva's text divides enlightenment mind into two types. The third section shows their individual advantages.

<sup>25</sup> Skt. munendra. This is one of many epithets for the buddhas in general. In Śhākyamuni Buddha's time, there were many types of sages; the buddha was the foremost one, the one at the head of

utmost thought to it for many kalpas, 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 were formerly individualized beings † anxious at being caught in the prison of samsara 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 *Agama of Sharidvīpa*,

“Shari’s Son said<sup>26</sup>, “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,

---

all the others.

<sup>26</sup> The wording of the original implies that he spoke politely to the buddha.

“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<sup>27</sup> 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, for the all-knowing ones, the full acceptance of the arousing of the mind type of extractor of the essence through the wisdom that totally dedicates the roots of merit totally exhausts the iron of the obscurations of karma and affliction in its entirety and makes all dharmas into the golden colour of the all-knowing one. Nevertheless, for the all-knowing ones, that arousing of the mind type of extractor of the essence alone cannot end up as affliction because of that iron of karma and affliction in its entirety.”

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,

---

<sup>27</sup> Tib. srang. The equivalent of an ancient Indian weight measure that was equal to about one ounce.

“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, Sailey<sup>28</sup> 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 carry out the illumination of the dharma dhatu 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 it 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 their fruit once their root † will become finished, the living tree of the enlightenment mind perpetually gives good † fruit without finishing and steadily † grows larger. That being so, 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.”

---

<sup>28</sup> The name of a particular type of gold in Ancient India. It was regarded as the finest type of gold available.

† Even though someone has done extreme evil, if they rely on a warrior type of person for an escort, they 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, the being of 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 insight 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 force<sup>29</sup>.

Aside from those two, † its benefits and advantages are fathomless. The trader Stable Wealth’s son, Youthful Good Wealth, aroused the mind in front of Mañjuśhrī, taking it up in the city of 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. Shāntipa was the eleventh, and Good Wealth posed one thousand, one

---

<sup>29</sup> The fictional arousing of the mind can temporarily overcome fears that would be caused by others. The superfactual arousing of the mind has the ability to destroy, for good, the negativities of one’s own mindstream, bringing the realization of the path of insight and leading one out of samsara in the process.

hundred questions to him. Finally, he went to a place on the shores of a lake where there was a house whose walls were ornamented with an images of Vairochana. He went inside with the special thought free of all birth<sup>30</sup> and met † Maitreyañātha who asked whether his journey went well? The † intelligent one<sup>31</sup> was petitioned by Good Wealth who requested of him, “Noble One, if I were to enter unsurpassed, truly complete enlightenment, I would not have to seek the bodhisatva’s conduct. Would the Noble One, the one having the great qualities of being separated from enlightenment by one life, please advise me on how to do the trainings?” Maitreyañātha praised him, saying, “You have aroused the enlightenment mind. It is good, it is good!”. Then † 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 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 like that has those good qualities and also has measureless other specific qualities”.

---

<sup>30</sup> This is a particular type of development of the enlightenment mind. “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, it is a very high level of development of enlightenment mind.

<sup>31</sup> gave explanation of the benefits of the enlightenment mind to Good Wealth, as appear a little further on when it says “explained at length”

### 2.1.2.2 The divisions of that enlightenment mind

The basis upon which the divisions are made 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 levels, and so on into twenty-two sub-divisions, and when it is sub-divided in a medium way, it is divided into on the basis of the intentional, 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. † 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 this 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 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 as well, 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 as well, the name bodhisatva is not rejected—all poor people of samsara will completely turn around towards it.”

You might think, “If we assert that the refuge of the Great Vehicle refuge is also attainment of buddhahood for the sake of others, then there would be no difference between that and aspiring by 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 first<sup>32</sup>. The first is the simple thought, “I will obtain it”, the second is total dedication through the thought, “I will attain it, may it be

---

<sup>32</sup> 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 that are part only of main minds called in Sanskrit (Skt. *caitta*, Tib. *sems byung*). He is saying that the first thing is merely a mental event. The second thing is a mental event but it causes a whole consciousness that is a full-blown main mind which is very different from the first thing. In particular, it produces the consciousness that is the two types of enlightenment (full blown main) mind.

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 † cyclic existence 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 liberation sentient beings of infinite realms a mind that does not turn back, will have genuinely taken on the vows 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 One Requested by Subāhu*,

“If someone who, because of having the aims of a sentient being intent on the lesser way is wanting the stated<sup>33</sup> good qualities of a pratyekabuddha or 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

---

<sup>33</sup> Here stated means as stated by the Buddha as being the case.

intent on and aspires to<sup>34</sup> the the buddha dharmas with good qualities infinite and good qualities limitless, strengths infinite and strengths limitless, to the realization of them in their entirety, and to their total completion when the four causes, four conditions, and four references of those<sup>35</sup> 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, moment 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<sup>36</sup>, 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,

---

<sup>34</sup> Orientation and aspiration here refer to the person following the great vehicle who is at the levels of aspiring rather than engagement.

<sup>35</sup> ...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...

<sup>36</sup> Tib. phan 'dogs bsam pa, which also is used in the abbreviated form “phan bsam”. This is usually translated as “beneficial mind” or “beneficial thought” but that is not the meaning, exactly. It does not refer to a thought which in its own right is beneficial, which is the meaning of “beneficial thought”. Rather, it means “a mind that has in it the type of thought that would benefit others”. There is no euphonious way to put this properly into English (which is way people have resorted to a euphonious sounding but incorrect translation, unfortunately). Therefore I have used “thought to benefit” here and throughout the text; it is not euphonious like “beneficial thought” but is correct.

the wish to dispel every suffering of samsara, † the unfathomable unhappiness of each sentient being, and the wish also to produce in each one of them buddhahood with † unfathomable good qualities<sup>37</sup>;

“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 kalpas 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? † Do those who are taken as a refuge by the world, † gods and ṛishis either one or Brahmā even, have this mind to benefit or not? † Those sentient beings who each one 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 of † 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!

---

<sup>37</sup> The previous quotation from *The One Requested By Subāhu* continues on.

† 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 *One Requested 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 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 perversions have † **delusion** defeat the possibility of † **their own happiness as though it were an enemy**. That is why it is correct to undertake the perseverance of enlightenment mind. So, for † **that which, for those who**

are low on happiness and have much suffering would satisfy them with total happiness, and which eliminates all of their suffering and even dispels their delusion, where is there a virtue equal to it? Where is there a virtuous 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, uncommitted<sup>38</sup>, † 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 count of a half day still, beings would laud it, saying, “This is virtuous”<sup>39</sup>. So, † what need is there to mention the perpetual giving to the sentient beings infinite in number for a period of time

---

<sup>38</sup> Here, uncommitted means that he might not have and has not been given any special commitment to benefit others. Normally in the world, selfless appearing behaviour requires some commitment, for example, being a parent, being married, being a king, having been commissioned to do a certain job, etc. The bodhisatva has none of this type of commitment but truly works selflessly for others.

<sup>39</sup> 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.

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 *One Requested by Nārāyaṇa*,

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

† The Muni himself said in the *Sūtra Showing Complete Certainty of Illusion*, † that, should anyone produce a negative mind towards 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,

“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 kalpas.”

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 lots of negativity or anger towards a bodhisatva mahāsattva<sup>40</sup> intent

---

<sup>40</sup> A bodhisatva mahāsattva is a “great being bodhisatva” but this does not simply mean “great bodhisatva” as is sometimes translated. It is the specific term for a bodhisatva who has completed the first six of the ten bodhisatva levels and, with his perfected insight into emptiness thus obtained, is travelling on the very highest reaches

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 uncountably greater than the first. Why is that so? From bodhisatvas bhagavat buddhas are born, and 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 the eye for all sentient beings of the realms of the worlds of the ten directions being turned out for him, 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 them<sup>41</sup>? Mañjuśrī, another son of the

---

of spiritual levels just prior to becoming a truly complete buddha.

<sup>41</sup> The terminology here is terminology of Ancient India. An "eye of the world" is a person who has developed compassion for the beings of world and looks over it, caring for it. Thus, if you have two situations, one in which someone accepts another person after looking them over as being an eye of the world and one in which the same thing happens but it is one member of the bodhisatva community to another, then the latter situation of admiration will be especially meritorious compared to the first. Thus from this, we can know that admiration for a bodhisatva is very meritorious, which is the point being made.

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 worth 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 harm to them creating great evil?” No it does not; if there is no repair of the evil created, the fully ripening follows immediately from it. All of that kind of harm and so on turns into to the cause of happiness for the long term; for others cyclic existence 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 cyclic existence for them!

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



## CHAPTER TWO

The second chapter, the chapter on laying aside evil deeds, which is primarily preparation, has three parts: the basis for accumulating merit, the practice of making offerings; the basis for awakening the family, going for refuge; and the basis for purifying evil deeds, laying aside.

### 1 The Basis for Accumulating Merit, the Practice of Making Offerings

An explanation of the ritual for the purpose of † taking hold of the precious mind has three parts—preparation, main part, and conclusion and this is the preparation.

#### 1.1 The object to which the offerings are made

† I offer nicely to the stainless Jewels of the tathāgatas and of the holy dharma, and to the oceans of virtue, the buddha sons. The *Compendium of Trainings* says,

“It begins with this: all receipt of authoritative instruction, and conscientious familiarization with the subject which is the taking of vows or you can say the bodhisatva trainings, comes from one with the vows. When done that way, any transgression of the training could lead to extreme shame on

your side and concern in the guru that you are deceiving him. However, it could also be that, without having excessive worry over that, you practise with joy and respect. Thus bodhisatvas, in full view of the buddhas, will take up genuinely whichever of the trainings in the bodhisatva training that they find to be suitable. Thus the ones who have the supreme of all virtues, the conquerors, have said this, “Vows are the general dharma” and “the bodhisatva vows are contained within attending to the spiritual friend.””

If a guru with the requirements cannot be found, the *Compendium of Trainings* says,

“Alternatively, if there is no spiritual friend of that sort, meditate on the buddhas of the ten directions and the bodhisatvas as being present and take the vows by joining the vows with your own force. If that is not the case, then the buddhas, bodhisatvas, and worlds including the gods will be deceived.”

It says so, thus it is done before either a spiritual friend who is actually present or one mentally seen.

## 1.2 The substances which are used for the offerings

There are the five unsurpassed offerings: offering of unowned things; offering of the body; mentally manifested ones; pleasing, melodious praises; and practice.

Of them, the first is that, in this human world: † as many types of flowers as there are; † whichever types of medicines made from roots, leaves, and trunks; † as many types of precious things of the world as there are; † whichever types of pure

water; † precious mountains and likewise precious † forests. Furthermore, † isolated and agreeable places; † trees embellished with flowers and so on that are † adorning them; † trees whose branches are bending with whichever fruits could be eaten. And not only that but † also in all † the worlds of the gods and so on, † fragrances, incense, wish-fulfilling trees, precious substances, harvests that arise without cultivation, without planting; † and furthermore ornaments that are suitable to be offered through effort, † and lakes and ponds adorned with lotuses haunted with wild geese of beautiful cry and delightful plumage.

[Translation of Chapter Two not complete]

† That was the second chapter from *Entering the Bodhisatva's Conduct*, the chapter that explains the benefits and advantages of the enlightenment mind.







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.tibet.dk/pkctc>