

Analytical Meditation in the Chittamatra

Generally speaking, we all can notice that the mental poisons arise within us. Yet, this arising is but a relative one. It only comes about as a dependent origination, due to the meeting of causes and conditions. In truth the mental poisons are free from arising. This can be shown by the example of a dream. While dreaming, all kinds of images arise. Whatever arises comes about interdependently as an illusory appearance. In truth these appearances are free from arising. Whatever appears during a dream does not exist, not even in the form of a single atom. Arising as something adventitious and being able to be removed like mud in water or clouds in the sky, the mental poisons are not truly existent. Their essence has been free from arising since beginningless time. When one dreams, for example, and the appearances in this dream are seen differently as friend and enemy, aversion in view of the enemy and affection and desire in view of the friend will arise. These mental poisons are free of arising; they do not truly exist. Since the object is free from arising, the subject perceiving it is also free from arising, or in other words, not truly existent. In this sense one should reflect thoroughly. While one has a dream containing the duality of friend and enemy, and while as a reaction desire and aversion arise, the objects, that is, friend and enemy, do not truly exist. While friend and enemy do not truly exist, at the same time they form the basis for the arising of the mental poisons. These arise fleetingly and do not have an arising in terms of being truly existent. When the perceived object does not truly exist, it is not permissible to state that the perceiving subject is truly existent.

When reflecting in this way, in my opinion the Chittamatra view constitutes a very deep approach for a beginner. The view of the Madhyamaka, for instance, is not directly realized until the first bodhisattva level is reached. Its realization will be attained when, on the path of junction, a view is cultivated that corresponds to that of the Chittamatra system. This has been stated by the omniscient Pema Karpo and others in many scriptural passages. When, while traveling the path of junction, one believes the truth of the Madhyamaka view, but for the sake of its direct realization cultivates that of the Chittamatra during one's meditation, then these two aspects will become one.

The above is excerpted from a commentary by Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso in:
Buddha Nature, The Mahayana Uttarantra Shastra with Commentary.

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