

B = Stephen Batchelor? (according to internet site)

SB = Stephen Batchelor: VERSES FROM THE CENTER: A BUDDHIST VISION OF THE SUBLIME (New York: Riverhead Books, 2000)

S = Frederick J. Streng, EMPTINESS: A STUDY IN RELIGIOUS MEANING (New York: Abingdon Press, 1967), Appendix A & B; pp. 183-227

G = Jay L. Garfield, THE FUNDAMENTAL WISDOM OF THE MIDDLE WAY: NAGARAJUNA'S MULAMDHYAMAKAKARIKA (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995)

I = Kenneth K. Inada, NAGARJUNA: A TRANSLATION OF HIS MULAMADHYAMAKAKARIKA WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1970)

K= David J. Kalupahana, MULAMADHYAMAKAKARIKA OF NAGARJUNA: THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE MIDDLE WAY (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1986)

For an English translation of the karikas (virtually identical with G above) together with Je Tsongkhapa's commentary on them, consult Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield (trans.), OCEAN OF REASONING: A GREAT COMMENTARY ON NAGARJUNA'S MULAMADHYAMAKAKARIKA (NY: Oxford University Press, 2006)

बन्धनमोक्षपरीक्षा नाम षोडशमं प्रकरणं

B: Investigation of Bondage and Freedom (Life)

SB: Life

S: An Analysis of Being Bound (bandhana) and Release (moksa) (bondage and release)

G: Examination of Bondage

I: Examination of Bondage and Release

K: Examination of Bondage and Release

संस्काराः संसरन्ति चेन्न नित्याः संसरन्ति ते।

संसरन्ति च नानित्याः सत्त्वे ऽप्येष समः क्रमः ॥ १

B: If it is said that impulses are “samsara”, if they were permanent, they would not move around. Even if impermanent, they would not move around. Sentient beings too are similar in this respect.

SB: Is life what drives me? Whether constant or fleeting, Drives are not alive like life. How am I alive?

S: When conditioned elements (dispositions, conditioning?) continue to change (through rebirths?), they do not continue to change as eternal things (the same before and after).

Likewise they do not continue to change as non-eternal things (different before and after).

The arguments here is the same as for a living being.

G: If compounded phenomena transmigrate, They do not transmigrate as permanent. If they are impermanent they do not transmigrate. The same approach applies to sentient beings.

I: If mental conformations are transmigratory (i.e., as cyclic nature), they, as permanent entities, do not transmigrate. In fact, as impermanent entities, they also do not transmigrate. The same (relationship) also holds true for a sentient being.

K: If it is assumed that dispositions transmigrate, they would not transmigrate as permanent entities. Neither do they transmigrate as impermanent entities. This method (of analysis) is applicable even in the case of a sentient being.

पुद्गलः संसरति चेत्स्कन्धायतनधातुषु।

पञ्चधा मृग्यमाणो ऽसौ नास्ति कः संसरिष्यति ॥ २

B: If it is said that persons "move around," if they are non-existent when searched for in five aspects among the aggregates, sense fields and elements, what would move around?

SB: When I cannot be found / Inside this mind or body, Who is there to be alive?

S: If the personality would change when it is sought five ways in the "groups" (skandha), "bases of sense perception" (ayatana), and the "irreducible elements" (dhatu),

Then it does not exist. Who [is it who] will change (i.e. transmigrate)?

G: If someone transmigrates, Then if, when sought in the five fold way / In the aggregates and in the sense spheres and in the elements, He Is not there, what transmigrates?

I: If man's individuality is transmigratory with respect to the five-fold realms of skandhas, ayatanas and dhatus, then it is non-existent. What then does transmigrate?

K: It may be assumed that person transmigrates. Yet, such a person, sought for in the fivefold way in the aggregates, spheres (of sense) and elements, does not exist. Who then will transmigrate?

उपादानादुपादानं संसरन् विभवो भवेत्।

विभवश्चानुपादानः कः स किं संसरिष्यति ॥ ३

B: If one moves around in having clung [to something] and then clinging [to something else], there would be no becoming. If there were no clinging and no becoming, who would move around?

SB: If I survived by clinging on / To thoughts and feelings, How could I evolve?

S: Moving from "acquisition" (upadana) to "acquisition" would be "that which is without existence" (vibhava).

Who is he who is without existence and without acquisition? To what will he change (i.e. transmigrate)?

G: If one transmigrates from grasping to grasping, then / One would be nonexistent. Neither existent nor grasping, Who could this transmigrator be?

I: Anything moving from one (sensual) grasping to another will be without a body or form. How does a bodiless or non-grasping thing ever transmigrate?

K: Moving from one form of grasping to another, there would be other-becoming. Who is this person who has ceased to be and is [therefore] non-grasping? Wherein does he transmigrate?

संस्काराणां न निर्वाणं कथं चिदुपपद्यते।

सत्त्वस्यापि न निर्वाणं कथं चिदुपपद्यते ॥ ४

B: It is in no way feasible that impulses go beyond misery.
And it is in no way feasible that living beings go beyond misery.

S: The final cessation (nirvana) of the conditioned elements certainly is not possible at all.

Nor is the final cessation of even a living being possible at all.

G: How could compounded phenomena pass into nirvana? That would not be tenable. How could a sentient being pass into nirvana? That would not be tenable.

I: Why is it that nirvana (or quiescence) is not possible with mental conformations? Also, why is it that even a sentient being is not possible of nirvana?

K: The cessation of dispositions is somehow not appropriate. The cessation even of a sentient being is also not appropriate in any way.

न बध्यन्ते न मुच्यन्त उदयव्ययधर्मिणः ।

संस्काराः पूर्ववत्सत्त्वो बध्यते न न मुच्यते ॥ ५

B: Impulses that have the properties of being born and dying are not bound and will not be freed. In the same way as above living beings too are not bound and will not be freed.

SB: Without clinging or evolving, Who can be alive? If I came and went, How could be freed?

S: The conditioned elements, whose nature (dharma) is arising and destruction, neither are bound nor released.

Likewise a living being neither is bound nor released.

G: All compounded phenomena, as arising and ceasing things, Are not bound and not released. For this reason a sentient being / Is not bound, not released.

I: The mental conformations are endowed with the characteristics of production and extinction, and thus cannot be bound or attain release. Similarly, a sentient being cannot be bound or attain release.

K: Dispositions that are of the nature of uprising and ceasing are neither bound nor released. A sentient being, like the foregoing, is neither bound nor released.

बन्धनं चेदुपादानं सोपादानो न बध्यते ।

बध्यते नानुपादानः किमवस्थो ऽथ बध्यते ॥ ६

B: If clinging binds, the one who has clinging would not be bound. And there would be no bondage without clinging. In what situation would there be bondage?

SB: If clinging binds, I who cling would be unbound / Like those who do not cling.
How is it I am trapped?

S: If the acquisition (upadana) were the "binding," that one [having] the acquisition is not bound;

Nor is that one not having the acquisition bound.

Then in what condition is he bound?

G: If grasping were bondage, Then the one who is grasping would not be bound. But one who is not grasping is not bound. In what circumstances will one be bound?

I: If (sensual) grasping per se is bound or restricted, then the grasping entity will be free from bonds. A non-grasping entity will also be free from bonds. Then, in what abiding condition is (one) bound?

K: If grasping were to be considered a bondage, one who is with grasping is not being bound. Neither is one without grasping being bound. A person in which state is then bound?

बन्धीयाद्वन्धनं कामं बन्ध्यात्पूर्वं भवेद्यदि।

न चास्ति तत् शेषमुक्तं गम्यमानगतागतैः ॥ ७

B: If binding existed prior to one who is bound, [that unbound person] would depend on binding. That too cannot be. The rest has been explained by the gone, the not-gone and the going.

S: Certainly if the "binding" would exist before "that which is bound," then it must bind;
But that does not exist. The remaining [analysis] is stated in [the analysis of] "the present going to," "that which has already gone to" and "that which has not yet gone to."

G: If prior to binding / There is a bound one, There would be bondage, but there isn't.
The rest has been explained by the gone, the not-gone, and the goer.

I: If bonds exist prior to the bondage, they could bind freely or at will. But this is not so.
The other matters have already been discussed with respect to gamyamana, gata and agata.

K: If it is assumed that bondage exists prior to the binding of that which is to be bound, that does not exist. The rest has been explained by [the analysis of] present moving, the moved and the not moved.

बद्धो न मुच्यते तावदबद्धो नैव मुच्यते।

स्यातां बद्धे मुच्यमाने युगपद्वन्धमोक्षणे ॥ ८

B: Those who are bound will not be free. And those who are not bound will not be free. If those who are bound become free, bondage and freedom would be simultaneous.

SB: Neither bound nor unbound are free – Were the bound to be freed, Freedom and bondage / would be simultaneous.

S: Therefore, "that which is bound" is not released and "that which is not bound" is likewise not released.

If "that which is bound" were released, "being bound" and "release" would exist simultaneously.

G: Whoever is bound is not released. Whoever is not bound does not get released. If a bound one were being released, Bondage and release would occur simultaneously.

I: In truth, then, a bound entity cannot be released and it is so also with an unbound entity. If by chance a bound entity is in the process of being released, then bondage and release will be simultaneous phenomena.

K: One who is bound is not released, nor is one who is not bound freed. When there is releasing of one who is bound, then there would be simultaneous occurrence of bondage and release.

निर्वास्याम्यनुपादानो निर्वाणं मे भविष्यति।

इति येशां ग्रहस्तेषामुपादानमहाग्रहः ॥ ९

B: "I, without clinging, am beyond misery. Nirvana is mine." Those who grasp in that way have great grasping and clinging.

SB: "I am free! I cling no more! Liberation is mine!" -- The greatest clinging / is to cling like this.

S: "I will be released without any acquisition."

"Nirvana will be mine."

Those who understand thus hold too much to "a holding on" [i.e., both to the acquisition of karma, and to a viewpoint].

G: "I, without grasping, will pass beyond sorrow, And I will attain nirvana," one says.
Whoever grasps like this / Has a great grasping.

I: Those who delight in maintaining, "Without the grasping, I will realize nirvana;
Nirvana is in me;" are the very ones with the greatest grasping.

K: "Non-grasping, I shall be free. Freedom will then be mine." For whomsoever there
is grasping in this manner, that will be a gigantic grasping.

न निर्वाणसमारोपो न संसारापकर्षणं।

यत्र कस्तत्र संसारो निर्वाणं किं विकल्प्यते ॥ १०

B: When nirvana is not born and samsara not eliminated, then what is samsara? And
what is considered as nirvana?

SB: What do you think / Of a freedom that never happens? What do you make / of a life
that won't go away?

S: Where there is a super-imposing of nirvana [on something else], nor a removal of
existence-in-flux,
What is the existence-in-flux there?
What nirvana is imagined?

G: When you can't bring about nirvana, Nor the purification of cyclic existence, What is
cyclic existence, And what is the nirvana you examine?

I: Where nirvana is not (subject to) establishment and samsara not (subject to)
disengagement, how will there be any conception of nirvana and samsara?

K: Wherein there is neither the attribution of freedom nor the elimination of the life-
process, what is it that being discriminated as life-process or as freedom?