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CHAPTER TWO

Analysis of Going and Coming

THE ANALYSIS of going and coming will be treated under the same three headings that were used in the previous chapter.

THE CONTEXT OF CHAPTER 2

First we will discuss the chapter's context. Concerning its relation to the profound sūtras, we may consider the following passages. The *Mother of the Victorious Ones* states:

Form does not come from anywhere or go anywhere, nor does it remain anywhere.

While the *Noble Jewel Mound* states:

The venerable ones do not proceed anywhere, nor have they arrived from anywhere. The monk Subhūti does not go somewhere, and he has not come from anywhere. For this reason, the Transcendent Conqueror has taught the Dharma.

The present chapter employs reasoning to ascertain the meaning of such passages.

As for the chapter's relation to the other chapters, we may see it as a response to the following idea: "By demonstrating that dependent origination does not occur, the analysis of conditions has also implicitly established that there is no going or otherwise. Nevertheless, the nonexistence of going and coming should be proven explicitly using a form of reasoning that is thoroughly accepted by the opposition."

Hence, this chapter explicitly refutes this concept by undermining the very notion of going and coming.

THE CONTENT OF CHAPTER 2

Second, the explanation of the content will include (1) an elaborate explanation of the reasoning that refutes the act of going and (2) the conclusion that this refutation leads to. The first of these topics covers (1) a refutation of the act of going by analyzing it in terms of the three times, (2) a refutation through a threefold examination of the agent, (3) a refutation of the arguments used to substantiate the act of going, (4) a refutation through examining whether the act of going and its support, that is, the one who goes, are the same or different from one another, and (5) a refutation of the act of going by examining whether it is singular or multiple. The first refutation involves (1) a general refutation of the act of going on the paths of the three times and (2) a specific refutation with respect to going in the present.

Going and the Paths of the Three Times

On the first issue, the treatise states:

*Where there has been going, there is none;
Where it has yet to occur, there is no going either.
Aside from what has been traversed and what has not,
No place where walking occurs can be identified. [II.1]*

The act of going is brought about by an agent in relation to an object. Going must, therefore, entail these two. The term “object” refers here to the basis for engaging in the act of going, that is, the path that is traversed. Such a path, moreover, can be one of only three types: It can be one that has already been traversed, one that has yet to be travelled, and one upon which going has manifested and is still occurring.

Now, if going occurs, it must take place on one of these three paths. Yet it cannot occur on a path that has already been traversed because the act has ceased and is absent there. Likewise, going does not take place on a path that has yet to be traversed since the act, having not yet occurred, is

also absent there. Finally, going does not occur on a path that is presently being walked upon either. Consider a single walker proceeding along a path. Because having and not having been traversed are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, we will fail to identify, or observe, any path that is presently being traversed aside from where the walker has already gone or has yet to go. Hence, there is no path being traversed in the present aside from these two.

It may be thought, “Indeed, going is over where the walker has already gone, and where he has not yet gone, it is still to come. Nevertheless, we will find the present act of going on the exact location where the individuals feet are currently stepping.”

The walker’s feet, however, can be broken down into most subtle particles. The particles that lie behind the particles constituting the tip of the toes on the back foot relate to the path that has already been traversed, while the particles located ahead of the particles that make up the heel of the front foot relate to the path that has yet to be covered.

Moreover, even the most subtle particles that make up the feet must themselves be composed of numerous parts. Therefore, as explained before, in a particle that touches the ground, all that lies behind the front of the particle is included in the path that has already been traversed, while what is ahead of the back part of the particle will belong to the path that has yet to come.

The nonexistence of any path upon which walking presently occurs and which is neither that which has already been traversed nor that which has yet to be walked upon is also established in the verses that begin, “Since what is taking birth is already partly born. . . .” In other words, the path that is currently being traversed cannot reasonably be anything other than a part that has already been covered and a part that has yet to come.

Going in the Present

Our discussion of the second issue begins with a presentation of the opposing view:

*Where there is movement, there is going,
And movement is found where walking takes place,
Not where going has been, nor where it has yet to occur.
Hence, going is found where walking takes place. [II.2]*

Here, the opponent may argue, “Certainly, going does not take place on a path that has already been traversed, nor on one that has yet to come. Nevertheless, going is indeed found where walking presently takes place because that is where movement occurs. What evidence do we have? And to what does this evidence pertain? By ‘movement’ we understand the action of the legs as they step. ‘Going,’ on the other hand, refers to the act of leaving behind one location and proceeding to another. Defined in this way, movement entails going, as can be seen when noticing that wherever a walker is in this type of motion, we also observe going.

“The property of the position is established as follows. Generally, mere movement is observed in direct perception. Moreover, such movement is not present on a path that has already been traversed, or on a path that has yet to travelled. In these two cases, movement has already ceased and not yet occurred, respectively. We must, therefore, conclude that it is found exclusively where walking takes place in the present.”

It has already been explained that there is no path presently being walked upon other than what was already traversed and what has yet to be travelled. Since the location where walking occurs in the present itself lacks establishment, the subject that is the basis [for this argument] is not established. Nevertheless, let us imagine that there is such a thing as a path where walking takes place in the present. We may then consider the sentence: “Going is found in the part of the path that is presently being traversed, that is the location where walking takes place.” What we will notice is that neither the verbal phrase, [“going,”] nor the object phrase, [“where walking takes place,”] can be related to the act of going. This will be shown by demonstrating (1) that if the object phrase refers to the act of going, the verbal phrase is devoid of meaning, (2) if the verbal phrase refers to the act of going, the object phrase is devoid of meaning, and (3) if it is referred to by both, there will be absurd consequences.

The Object Phrase Referring to the Act of Going

On the first issue, the treatise states:

*Going where walking takes place,
How could that make sense,
When, without going, there cannot reasonably be
Any place where walking takes place? [II.3]*

When an agent of going, such as Devadatta, goes somewhere, there is but a single act of going. The singular nature of the act is shown by the fact that the result, having gone somewhere, is exclusively singular as well. Therefore, though it is meaningful to link this singular act with the object phrase “where walking takes place” and use this expression accordingly, since the act of going is not twofold, the verbal phrase “going” will have become divorced from its referent, the act of going, and so will be rendered meaningless. How, then, could we make sense of the expression, “going is found where walking takes place”? This statement would make as little sense as the statement, “sound is permanent.”

“Why,” one may wonder, “does the object phrase ‘where walking takes place’ have to refer to the act of going?”

To explain, consider how one cannot rightly speak of somebody as ‘rich’ if that person does not possess any wealth. In the same way, speaking of a *place* where walking takes place does not make sense if it is not thereby implied that the *act* of going is present there. To avoid this nonsensical position, the object phrase “where walking takes place” must, therefore, necessarily refer to the act of going. The necessity of this relationship is evident from the fact that if the expression “where walking takes place” is disconnected from the act of going, it will carry no meaning.

The present stanza can also be seen to anticipate the following explanation. Let us consider that the singular act of going is referred to, and expressed by, the verbal phrase “going.” When this is the case, the object phrase “where walking takes place” loses its referential connection to the action. Moreover, speaking of a place where walking occurs does not make sense if it does not include a reference to the act of going. Thus, this stanza can also be read as [an explanation of the way] the object phrase is rendered meaningless.

The Verbal Phrase Referring to the Act of Going

On the second issue, the treatise states:

*For whomever there is going where walking takes place,
It then follows
That there is no going where walking takes place
Because “going is found where walking takes place.” [II.4]*

It may be thought: “The aforementioned flaw does not occur when the verbal phrase ‘going’ refers to the act of going.” However, as explained before, there are not two acts of going. For this reason, the object phrase “where walking takes place” will lose the meaning it is meant to convey and the statement “going is found where walking takes place” will then no longer make sense.

The opponent holds that because the statement “where walking takes place” does not imply the act of going, it should be understood purely as a noun phrase. Instead, it is the verbal phrase “going” that refers to the act of walking. For those who take this position, however, it follows that there is no act of going in relation to the object phrase “where walking takes place.” How so? Because a) there is only a single act of going and b) it was explained that while the phrase “where walking takes place” should be understood purely as a noun phrase, it is the verbal phrase “going” that refers to the act of going.

This stanza can also be read in accordance with the explanation above,⁹⁸ in which case the position under critique claims that the act of going pertains to the place where walking occurs. With this position, the opponent thus holds that the phrase “where walking takes place” indicates the existence of going. For those who take this position, the assertion that the phrase “where walking takes place” refers to the act of going leads to the conclusion that the verbal phrase “going” does not refer to the existence of the act of going. Again, this follows because here it is held that the phrase “where walking takes place” is linked with the act of going. We thus arrive at this interpretation by reading the statement “where walking takes place” in the third line as another way of speaking about going. Seen in this way, this stanza also shows how the verbal phrase ends up being rendered meaningless.

Both Phrases Referring to the Act of Going

On the third issue, the treatise states:

*If going took place where walking takes place,
It would follow that there are two acts of going:*

98. In an apparent error, the Tibetan text here reads “the explanation below” (’og gi bshad pa).

*One due to which there is a place with walking
And another that is the going that happens there. [II.5]*

*When it follows that there are two acts of going,
It follows that there are two agents of going,
Because without something that goes,
It makes no sense for there to be going. [II.6]*

One may then object further, “Neither of these problems occurs because both object- and verbal phrase involve the act of going.”

If this were the case, both the object phrase “where walking takes place” and the verbal phrase “going” would have a referent. Nevertheless it would, therefore, follow that a single agent of going performs two acts of going. One act qualifies the path that is walked upon, justifying the use of the phrase “where walking takes place” to refer to it. The second is the act of going over that place and proceeding to somewhere else. Thus, we end up with two acts of going. Yet this is unacceptable because if there were two acts of going, there would also be two agents.

We cannot argue that having two actions with a single agent presents no problems. Generally, whenever an action is performed, it is done by an agent and in relation to some object. Hence, there cannot reasonably be any act of going without an agent, that is, without something that goes.

To this, one may respond, “Indeed, if nothing goes, there cannot reasonably be an act of going. However, a single agent performing two actions at the same time is not a contradiction. Take the case of Devadatta, for example. Though he is a single agent, we still observe him performing different actions at the same time, such as looking, speaking, and sitting.”

Nevertheless, while a substantially singular agent may simultaneously perform several different actions, we will never observe the simultaneous performance of two actions of the same kind (such as two acts of going). Alternatively, we may say that a substantially singular agent never performs two actions at the same time since there is never more than a single effect, such as having gone to another place. Both of these arguments are excellent.

The *Commentary*⁹⁹ explains that the agent is a capacity, not a substance. Hence, when a substantially singular person is engaged in numerous

99. That is, Candrakīrti’s *Clear Words*.

actions, such as speaking and sitting, there are an equal number of capacities involved. Therefore, the example of a single agent that simultaneously performs multiple actions is not established. However, on such an explanation, the single substance of the person may well include two capacities for going, and it will then not be contradictory for there to be two acts of going as well. In this way, the point of contention—a single substance of a person that performs two acts of going at the same time—cannot be refuted. The earlier replies, therefore, seem preferable.

Refutation through a Threefold Examination of the Agent

Third is the refutation of going by means of a threefold examination of the agent. This section includes (1) an explanation that going and the agent of going are coextensive, (2) a general refutation of the idea that a third-party person performs the act of going, and (3) a specific refutation of the notion that the agent of going goes.

Going and the Agent of Going Are Coextensive

On the first issue, the treatise states:

*If there is nothing that goes,
Going makes no sense.
In the absence of any going,
How could there be one who goes? [II.7]*

As explained before, all acts are performed by agents. Without an agent of going,—something that goes—it makes no sense for there to be an act of going. Likewise, agents are universally classified as such in consideration of the particular acts they perform. Hence, how could there be any agent of going if the act of going to which it owes its very existence is absent? [The agent of going would then be as nonexistent] as space.

The *Commentary*¹⁰⁰ here anticipates the idea that the existence of going is due to the existence of its support, the agent of going. Thus, this stanza is seen as a refutation of the notion that an agent of going can be used to prove the act of going.

100. That is, Candrakīrti's *Clear Words*.

A Third Party Does Not Perform the Act of Going

On the second issue, the treatise states:

*One who goes does not go,
Nor does one who does not go.
Other than goers and nongoers,
What third party could be going? [II.8]*

Going is entailed by the agent of going. Who, then, is it that goes? Is it one who goes, someone with the activity of going? Or is it one who does not go, someone with no such activity? Or, perhaps, is it a third party that ensues from the negation of the former two? Someone who is already one who goes does not go, for there would then have to be two actions, and there are not two acts of going. Neither does someone who does not go, for such an agent would lack the act of going in the same way that space lacks it. What third party—someone who is not one who goes, and yet not someone who does not go either—could be going? One who goes and one who does not are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, so no third category can be derived from the negation of both.

Those Who Go Do Not Go

One may then respond, “A nongoer does not go, and it is likewise true that no going is performed by some party that is neither someone who goes nor someone who does not. Nevertheless, the one who goes does indeed go.”

The refutation of this idea parallels the reasoning demonstrated above. A single agent of going cannot, at a given point in time, perform more than a single act of going. Hence, if the verbal phrase refers to the single act of going, the agent phrase will be rendered meaningless. On the other hand, if the agent phrase refers to it, the verbal phrase loses meaning, and if linked with both, the result is absurdity. In the next section, these three consequences will be examined individually.

Linking Going to the Verbal Phrase

On the first issue, the treatise states:

*When, in the absence of going,
A goer does not make sense,*

*The statement “going is engaged in by the one who goes” —
How could that possibly make sense? [II.9]*

These lines raise the question of how it could possibly make sense to say that “going is engaged in by the one who goes,” indicating that this phrase is entirely nonsensical. Why is it nonsensical? Well, someone who goes, such as Devadatta, does not perform more than a single act of going. If the verbal phrase “going is engaged in” refers to that action, then that phrase is meaningful. However, there are not two actions, and “the one who goes” does not make sense unless it carries a reference to going. The problem, here, is then that the agent phrase ends up losing its meaning. In other words, although the verbal phrase is meaningful in this case, the agent phrase is not. We will, therefore, fail to make sense of the sentence “going is engaged in by the one who goes.”

The present stanza can also be seen to indicate what is explained below,¹⁰¹ arguing that since the term “the one who goes” does not make any sense without an act of going, this part of the sentence must refer to such an act. Yet, as a consequence of making this link, there is no act of going left to be designated by the verbal phrase “going is engaged in.” This term ends up being devoid of meaning.

Linking Going to the Agent Phrase

On the second issue, the treatise states:

*For those who hold that going is engaged in by one who goes
It would then follow that there is
One who goes in the absence of going,
For it is asserted that going is performed by one who goes. [II.10]*

It may be thought that such inconsistencies can be avoided by asserting that the agent phrase refers to the act of going. However, in that case the verbal phrase “going is engaged in” cannot express the meaning it should, that is, the action of going. The phrase “going is engaged in by one who goes” could not, then, reasonably be said to make sense.

101. In an apparent error, the Tibetan text here reads “what is explained above” (gong gi bshad pa).

This explanation is given to an opponent who holds that the agent of going is linked with the act of going. Thus, in the sentence “going is engaged in by one who goes,” the term “one who goes” applies to the act of going. For this reason, it follows that the word “going” cannot serve to designate the act of going because it is held that the agent phrase “one who goes” is linked with the single act of going, insofar as it expresses that meaning.

Alternatively, this stanza can be seen to indicate the explanation above. According to this reading, the opponent holds that the verbal phrase “going is engaged in” refers to the single act of going. For this position, it follows that the one who goes is unrelated to the act of going because there are not two actions. In this case, “one who goes” is mere verbiage. The assertion, here, is that the verbal phrase “going is engaged in” contains the sense of going. The consequence of this position is that the one who goes has no association with going. Thus, this stanza can also be interpreted to mean that the agent phrase is rendered meaningless.

Linking Going to Both the Agent Phrase and the Verbal Phrase

On the third issue, the treatise states:

*If going is engaged in by the one who goes,
It follows that there are two acts of going:
One that characterizes the one who goes,
And another going in that capacity. [II.II]*

In response, one may say, “Both of these flaws will be avoided by holding that ‘the one who goes’ and ‘going is engaged in’ refer to the act of going.”

However, when it is held that both of these elements in the sentence are linked to the act of going, it follows that there are two acts of going. One act of going qualifies Devadatta for the label “the one who goes,” and so makes him the agent of that action. The second is the going that he, in that capacity, subsequently performs. Hence, there are two actions here: the going [that characterizes the agent] plus the going that the agent is to perform. This, however, is untenable because if there are two acts of going, there must, as was explained before, also be two individuals that engage in those acts of going.

Refuting the Arguments for the Act of Going

Third, refuting the arguments that are advanced to prove the act of going involves five separate refutations. We will begin by refuting the “initiation” that causes going to occur.

Refuting the Initiation of the Act of Going

Here an idea such as the following is anticipated: “It is certainly in the nature of things that there are acts of going. We can know this from the fact that such acts are initiated. When in this way the initiation of going is used as evidence to prove the existence of going, it is not the case that the property of the position and the entailment are not established. We directly perceive that standing still comes to an end and that is precisely the initiation of going. If going were as nonexistent as a robe made of tortoise hair, it would not make sense for it to be initiated.”

Once examined and investigated, however, this argument can be shown to be unestablished. This involves demonstrating that the initiation of going is not established, (1) even if it is accepted that there is an object to which it relates, and (2) that the initiation of going is not established because the object to which it relates is not established.

On the first issue, the treatise states:

*Going does not begin where it has been,
Nor does it begin where it has yet to occur.
Going does not begin where walking takes place,
So where does going begin? [II.12]*

Let us assume that such a thing as ceasing to stand still and stepping onto the first part of a path, thus initiating the act of going, existed naturally. In terms of where it would take place, the beginning of such an act can be conceived of in only three ways. Going would have to be initiated on a path that has already been tread, on one that has yet to be traversed, or on a path where walking is ongoing in the present.

A path that has already been traversed is not where going begins because it has ceased there. Neither is going initiated on a path that has yet to be traversed, for there, the act of going has not been initiated and is still absent. It is also contradictory for an act of going to commence where walking has yet to occur. Going does not begin on a path where walking

takes place in the present either because, as explained before, there is no path upon which there may be walking in the present apart from what has already, or not yet, been tread. If this is where going were initiated, it would also follow that there are two acts of going.

If going does not begin on any of these three paths, where *does* it start? The answer that is implied here is, “nowhere.”

On the second issue, the treatise states:

*Before going has been initiated,
There is no place where walking occurs or has taken place
Upon which going could begin.
And how could there be going where there is none yet? [II.13]*

For going to begin, there must first be a place for it to occur. Before going begins, however, the path that has already been traversed, the one where the act of going has ceased, does not exist. Similarly, there is no path where going takes place in the present either. Since these paths do not exist, going cannot be initiated on them.

“Before going has been initiated,” one may object, “there is still a path that has yet to be traversed. That is where going is initiated.”

Nevertheless, the initiation of going requires the act of going, and no such act has been initiated on a path that has yet to be traversed. Hence, as going is not occurring there, how could that possibly be the place where it is initiated?

Refuting the Object to Which Going Relates

Second is a refutation of the object that going relates to. On this topic, the treatise states:

*Since we never witness a beginning of going
How can we conceive of the traversed,
Of what is being traversed,
And what has yet to be traversed? [II.14]*

This stanza anticipates the following objection: “You have not explicitly refuted the existence of the object to which going relates, namely, the

paths that are covered in the past, future, and present. Therefore, going by nature does indeed exist because these three paths exist. This argument, moreover, does not lack entailment because the act of going is the cause for the designation of these three paths.”

In response, it is shown how the evidence presented in this argument, that is, the natural existence of the three paths, is itself not established. As was explained earlier, the initiation of going can never be witnessed or perceived from the perspective of reason. How, then, can we conceive of a path where the act of going has ceased, that is, a path that has already been traversed? Likewise, how should we conceive of a path where the act of going has not been initiated and which has yet to be traveled? Finally, how may we imagine a path upon which going has occurred and not yet ceased, a path that is being walked upon in the present? Indeed, the implication here is that there is nothing to conceive of in any way at all.

Refutation of the Result, Stopping

Third is a refutation of the result of going, stopping. On this topic, the treatise states:

*Stopping does not occur where walking takes place,
Where going has been, or where it has yet to occur. [II.17a–b]*

“The act of going exists by nature,” one may think, “because its result, stopping, exists. Moreover, it is not the case that the property of the position and the entailment are not established. The commencement of standing still is directly perceived, and that commencement is itself the cessation of going. Moreover, the stopping that results cannot occur without its cause, namely, going, just as one who has not observed a pure lifestyle cannot later stop doing so.”

Two stanzas below, it is shown how the evidence presented in this argument is not established since once we subject it to analysis we will find that there is no stopping. Stopping does not occur on a path that has already been traversed, or on one that has yet to be traveled. On the first, the act of going has ceased, while on the second it has yet to occur. Stopping does not occur on a path where walking is presently taking place either. Such a path does not exist because we will fail to observe any path where walking occurs in the present apart from what has and has not been traversed. Locating stopping on a path where walking is presently taking place, more-

over, would also entail that there are two acts of going: one that is the act of walking along the path and another that is stopping.

Refutation of That Which Counters Going

Fourth, refuting that which counters going, the treatise states:

*The one who goes does not stand still,
Nor does one who does not go.
Aside from those that do and do not go,
What third party could stand still? [II.15]*

*In the absence of going,
There cannot reasonably be anyone who goes.
How, then, could it reasonably be said
That it is the one who goes who stands still? [II.16]*

“Standing still counters going,” it may be thought, “yet this has not yet been explicitly refuted. Therefore, because something that makes it stop exists, going has a natural existence as well, for something that does not exist cannot be countered, just as the son of the barren woman cannot have an enemy.”

In response, it is explained that this evidence is not established. The reason, here, is that when the act of standing still is examined with reference to the three possible types of agent, as was done in an earlier section, the act of standing still will be seen to be nonexistent. The one who goes cannot also be standing still because going and standing still are incompatible. Moreover, someone who is not going cannot stand still either because there would have to be two acts of standing still were this to take place, and this is not the case. Finally, apart from those who go and those who do not, what third party could stand still? Since being and not being someone who goes are directly contradictory, the existence of a third party that ensues from the negation of the former two is impossible.

One may then object, “While nongoers and third parties do not get to stand still, those who are involved in going do.”

Let us explain the contradictory nature of this notion. A sentence such as “x stands here” indicates the presence of the act of standing still. Moreover, it also affirms the absence of going, for the act of going is incompatible with standing still. Therefore, in a situation where the act of going is

absent, it would be meaningless to say that there is someone who goes. In such a situation, to speak only of standing still would be meaningful, but the words “the one who goes” would be meaningless. How, then, would we make sense of the sentence, “It is the one who goes who stands still”? Indeed, this statement is nonsensical.

Refuting the Arguments for That Which Counters Going

Fifth is a refutation of the arguments for that which counters going. The treatise states:

*With going, beginning, and stopping,
The case is the same as with going. [II.17c–d]*

There are three parts here. First, it may be thought that standing still, that which counters going, has a natural existence since its counterpart, going, exists. This idea is shown to be untenable by refuting the argument advanced to support it. In other words, going, as that which counters standing still, is refuted in the same manner as before, in which standing still, as the contrary to going, was refuted. Hence, whereas before it was argued that, “The one who goes does not stand still,” the argument now becomes, “The one who stands still does not go, nor does one who does not stand still.” In this way, stanzas fifteen and sixteen turn into a refutation of the natural existence of standing still.

Second, these lines also anticipate the notion that standing still, the contrary to going, exists because there is something that causes it, namely, the initiation of standing still. The refutation of this cause, the initiation of standing still, is equivalent to the one applied to the initiation of going. Whereas before it was, “Going does not begin where it has been,” we may now read, “Standing still does not begin where it has been.” Thus, stanzas twelve through fourteen turn into a refutation of the initiation of standing still, which is what counters going.

Third, one may seek to prove the existence of standing still by arguing: “That which counters going, standing still, has a natural existence because standing still eventually stops.”

The refutation of this argument parallels the one explained in relation to the stopping of going. The natural existence of stopping going was refuted by arguing, “Stopping does not occur where walking takes place, where going has been, or where it has yet to occur.” Hence, the refuta-

tion of what counters standing still now becomes, “Going does not occur where there is standing still, where standing still has been, or where it has yet to occur.”

In this way, the very refutations of that which counters going, the initiation that causes going, and the stopping that results also serve as refutations of the same factors in relation to standing still, which is what counters going. Hence, these verses can be read as saying, “With the contrary, beginning, and stopping, the case is the same as with going.”

Is Going Identical to or Different from Its Support?

In this fourth section, the refutation of going involves examining whether agent and action are identical or different. The treatise states:

*The act of going and the one who goes
Cannot rightly be said to be the same.
The act of going and the one who goes
Cannot rightly be said to be different. [II.18]*

*If that which is the going
Were also the one who goes,
It would follow that agent and act
Would be one and the same. [II.19]*

*Yet if the going and goer
Are thought to be different,
There could be going without something that goes
And someone who goes in the absence of going. [II.20]*

*When two things cannot be
Established as identical,
Yet not as different things either,
How can they be established at all? [II.21]*

In the preceding verses, the thesis is presented first. The act of going and its support, the one who goes, cannot rightly be claimed to be identical in essence, yet they cannot rightly be considered essentially different either. Why not? Well, if that which is the act of going were identical with the one who goes, it would universally follow that all agents are essentially

the same as their activities. In other words, they would be the same as the actions they perform. The entailment of this argument is ensured by an equivalence of identical reasons. This notion is untenable because, to give one example, a woodcutter would end up being essentially the same as the act of cutting wood. This, however, stands in direct opposition to what we see.

If, on the other hand, the act of going and the one who goes are thought to be essentially different, these two would have to be independent of one another. It would then follow that there can be an act of going without there being any support for it, that is, anyone who goes. Likewise, there could also be someone who goes in the absence of going. However, we do not observe anything of this sort. Thus, since action and agent are mutually dependent, they cannot be established as essentially different.

It might be thought that while the one who goes and the act of going cannot be said to be either identical or different, they nevertheless are existent by nature. Yet that will not do either. As was already explained, when two things, such as the act of going and the one who goes, cannot be established as either the same or different, how can they be existent by nature? The negation of two directly contradictory notions cannot possibly lead to the establishment of a third category.

Is Going Singular or Multiple?

Fifth is a refutation of the act of going by examining whether it is singular or multiple. The treatise states:

*The one who goes does not engage in the going
That characterizes him as someone who goes,
Because there is no one who goes before going.
Someone goes somewhere. [II.22]*

*The one who goes does not engage in going other than
The going that characterizes him as someone who goes,
The reason being that for a single agent of going,
It does not make sense for there to be two acts. [II.23]*

*Someone who goes does not engage
In any of the three kinds of going.*

*Someone who does not go does not engage
In any of the three kinds of going. [II.24]*

*Someone who does and does not go does not engage
In any of the three kinds of going either. [II.25a–b]*

One may then respond, “We may say that ‘a speaker utters an expression’ or ‘an agent performs an action.’ Just so, going as well exists as an act that is performed by an agent.”

Now, when someone who goes performs the act of going, is this act then the same as the one that characterizes him or her as someone who goes or is it different? First, Devadatta does not engage in the act of going that characterizes him as someone who goes, that is, the going that qualifies him for the label “someone who goes.” A potter can make pots because he exists prior to the pot he makes. Likewise, if a given agent of going were to exist prior to the act of going that characterizes him or her as such, then that previously existent individual could perform the act of going to a given location, such as a town or a city. Thus, the fourth line in the stanza shows the argument’s reverse entailment. The third line presents the evidence: The agent of going does not exist as an agent of going prior to the act of going that qualifies him or her as such an agent. The implication here is that there cannot be someone who goes independent of the act of going. This way of reversing the last two lines, and so reading them as respectively the reverse entailment and the evidence, is the approach of the *Commentary*.

Secondly, apart from the act of going that characterizes and qualifies Devadatta as someone who goes, that is, the one that shows that he is the agent of that action, there is no other act of going being performed. It does not make sense for there to be two acts of going: one that qualifies a goer such as Devadatta as someone who goes and another going that this goer engages in.

Furthermore, neither does it make sense for someone who goes to engage in the act of going. The reasoning, here, is as follows: Someone who is a goer by virtue of his or her being engaged in the act of going does not engage in any of the three types of going. In other words, this person does not engage in an act of going that is already an action, one that is not yet an action, or one that both is and is not an action. The same is true

when we consider someone who does not go, someone not engaged in the act of going. Such a nongoer does not engage in any of these three types of going. Finally, someone who both does and does not go, someone who both is and is not engaged in going, does not engage in any of these three kinds of going either.

In the chapter that analyzes actions and agents, the notions that the act of going is performed by someone who is already someone who goes, by someone who is not, and by someone who both is and is not someone who goes are likewise all refuted. In that chapter, it is argued:

That which is an agent would have no activity.
There would also be action without an agent.¹⁰²

Likewise:

If one that is not an agent performs,
The agent will lack its cause.¹⁰³

And:

Since being and not being are incompatible in one thing,
How could this ever be the case?¹⁰⁴

The ideas that something that is already an act, something that is not an act, and something that both is and is not an act can be performed are also addressed. Dispensing with these ideas, the text states:

That which is an action is not performed,
So the agent would be lacking its action.¹⁰⁵

and:

¹⁰². *Root of the Middle Way*, VIII.2a–b.

¹⁰³. These two lines appear to be based on *Root of the Middle Way*, VIII.3.

¹⁰⁴. *Ibid.*, VIII.7c–d.

¹⁰⁵. *Ibid.*, VIII.2c–d.

If something that is not an action is performed
The action will lack its cause.¹⁰⁶

and:

Since being and not being are incompatible in one thing,
How could this ever be the case?¹⁰⁷

CONCLUSION

This second section relates to the chapter's conclusion. The treatise states:

*There is, therefore, no going,
No one who goes, and nothing traversed. [II.25c–d]*

Thus, as explained above, once we have investigated the matter with reasoning, we find no act of going, no agent engaging in such an act, and no foundation for the activity (that is, no path that is traversed).

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER'S SIGNIFICANCE

Having explained the progression of the text, we may now offer a summary of the third topic: the significance of this chapter. Here, we have seen explicit refutations of the objects of the act of going and coming as they pertain to the three times, of the three categories that pertain to the agent, of the act and its agent being either the same or different, and of the act itself being singular or multiple. As a result, any going and coming that occurs within dependent origination *in reality* has been existentially negated. Similarly, it has also been affirmed that the *appearance* of going and coming pertains to the relative and resembles an illusion. Implicitly, this also serves as an excellent analysis of all active phenomena by considering the objects to which these phenomena relate in terms of the three times.

106. These two lines appear to be based on *Root of the Middle Way*, VIII.3.

107. *Ibid.*, VIII.7c–d.

Moreover, a phenomenon without a function is impossible. Thus, we find statements such as the following:

That which does not act is equal to the nonexistent.¹⁰⁸

As well as:

Apart from what originates dependently,
There are no phenomena at all.¹⁰⁹

In terms of reality, the present chapter therefore existentially negates all constructs associated with the full range of outer and inner phenomena, while with respect to the relative it establishes illusion-like dependent origination. Thus, as was the case with the previous chapter, it serves to engender an unmistakable insight into the two truths. In the process, it reveals the full significance of the following passage from the *Sūtra Taught by Akṣayamati*:

Venerable Śāriputra, “coming” means assembling, “going” means separating. That which cannot be described as either “assembling” or “separating” knows neither coming nor going. Indeed, this absence of coming and going is the going of the noble ones.

This concludes the explanation of the second chapter, the analysis of going and coming, in the *Ornament of Reason*, a commentary on the *Root of the Middle Way*.

108. Āryadeva, *Four Hundred Stanzas*, X.17c.

109. *Root of the Middle Way*, XXIV.19a–b.