

Good nagarjuna and the search for the middle way essay example

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The Mūlamadhyamakakārikā is one of the many Karikas, or verse work, that contain Nagarjuna's doctrines. The goal Nagarjuna had in mind when writing this particular Karika, was to present a strong argument against materialism and return Buddhism to a more middle position or way in which things are not absolutes. Take motion and objects moving for example. According to Nagarjuna one cannot exist without the other and they depend on each other. In other words, there must be a goer for a going to exist and both are relative to each other. It is necessary to understand this notion if one wants to grasp the idea of motion and time Nagarjuna proposes.

The same kind of reasoning is found in many other sections of the book. For example, Nagarjuna enters into a very interesting discussion about the existence of autonomous and dependent entities. The traditional western way of thinking would not allow the existence of contradictory states of existence, but Nagarjuna not only sees that it is possible, but says it is the only way to conceive certain things. Indeed, there are concepts that are considered existent and non-existent at the same time.

As an example, in a discussion more related to life as a cycle, the boundaries between Samsara and Nirvana become blurred. Nagarjuna explains that Nirvana cannot be conceived as an existent being subject to the process of birth, growth and decay, and cannot be thought of as an absence because it would be object dependent. His conclusion is that it is neither one nor the other, and the same principle could be applied to Samsara. It makes sense if one supposes that suffering leads to bliss which leads to suffering again, as it seems to happen very often in life.

It can be seen that, for Nagarjuna, there are no extremes in nature but a

constant indetermination. This embarked him in a search for a point where the contraries could coexist.