

CLARIFYING MIND
An Introduction to the Tradition of Pramana
A Shambhala Core Texts Program
Ten Tuesdays, 7-9:30 pm
March 31; April 14, 21, 28; May 5, 19, 26; June 2, 9 and 16
(Skipping April 7 and May 12)

PART TWO
DUDRA: THE COLLECTED TOPICS
LORIK: THE CLASSIFICATIONS OF MIND

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MANJUSHRI SUPPLICATIONS

Through the blessings of awareness-emptiness, Prince Manjushri,
Open the eight treasures of courage, which descend from the expanse of wisdom,
So I may become the commander of the ocean of the dharma treasury of scripture
and realization.

I supplicate Mipham, the melody of gentleness (Manjughosha).
Om Arapachana Dhi Hum

This was composed by Mipham Translated by the Nalanda Translation Committee

Whatever the virtues of the many fields of knowledge
All are steps on the path of omniscience.
May these arise in the clear mirror of intellect.
O Manjushri, please accomplish this.

*This was specially composed by Mangala (Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche). Translated by the
Nalanda Translation Committee*

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Part Two
DUDRA: THE COLLECTED TOPICS
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READING LIST

Dudra

1. *Collected Topics*, Compiled by Acharya Lama Tenpa Gyaltzen, Trs. By Karl Brunnholz
2. bsDus grwa Literature, by Shunzo Onoda, pp. 187-198
3. Established Bases, *Debate in Tibetan Buddhism*, Daniel Perdue, pp. 267-290:
 - a. Introduction, pp. 267-269
 - b. Established Bases, pp. 269-272
 - c. Functioning things, pp. 272-279
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 - e. Specifically and Generally Characterized Phenomena, pp. 284-287
 - f. Thought Consciousness, pp. 287-290
4. Colors and So Forth, *Debate in Tibetan Buddhism*, Daniel Perdue, pp. 185-221:
 - a. Introduction, pp. 185-192
 - b. External Forms – Visible forms, pp. 192-200
 - c. Internal Forms, pp. 217-221

Lorik

5. *Presentation of the Classifications of Mind: The Essence of The Ocean of Texts on Reasoning*, Khenchen Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, Trs. By Karl Brunnholz
6. Part One: Introduction, by Elizabeth Napper, in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, Lati Rinpoche, pp. 11-39
7. Established Bases, *Debate in Tibetan Buddhism*, Daniel Perdue, pp. 290-295:
 - a. Direct Perceivers, pp. 290-295
 - b. The Enumeration of Valid Cognizers, pp. 295-297
 - c. Eliminative Engagers and Collective Engagers, pp. 297-300
 - d. The Mixture of Place, Time and Nature, pp. 300-304
8. Asian Perspectives: Indian Theories of Mind, Georges Dreyfus and Evan Thompson, in *The Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness*, pp. 89-111

Bodhicharyāvatāra
Dedication 10th Chapter
Select verses for recitation

May beings everywhere who suffer
Torments in their minds and bodies
Have by virtue of my merit
Joy and happiness in boundless measure (2)

As long as they may linger in saṃsāra
May their present joy know no decline,
And may they taste of unsurpassed beatitude
In constant and unbroken continuity (3)

Throughout the spheres and reaches of the world,
In hellish states wherever they may be
May beings fettered there, tormented,
Taste the bliss and peace of Sukhāvati (4)

May the poor and destitute find wealth,
The haggard and the careworn, joy,
May confidence relieve those in despair
And bring them steadfastness and every excellence
(20)

May those who go in dread have no more fear
May captives be unchained and now set free
And may the weak receive their strength
May living beings help each other in kindness (22)

And thus by all the merit I have gained,
May every being, leaving no one aside,
Abandon all their evil ways
Embracing goodness now and ever more (31)

From bodhichitta may they never separate,
And constantly engage in bodhisattva deeds,
And may they be accepted as disciples by the
buddhas,
And turn aside from what is demons' work (32)

From bird song and the sighing of the trees,
From shafts of light and from the sky itself,
May living beings, each and every one,
Perceive the constant sound of Dharma (37)

May they come into the presence of the buddhas,
And meet with bodhisattvas, offspring of the same;
With clouds of offerings unbounded,
May the teachers of the world be worshipped (38)

May kindly spirits bring the rains on time,
For harvests to be rich and plentiful;
May princes rule according to the Truth,
And may the world be blessed with all prosperity
(39)

And let no being ever suffer pain;
Let them neither ail nor languish, never doing evil,
May they have no fear, nor suffer insults,
And may their minds be ever free from sorrow (41)

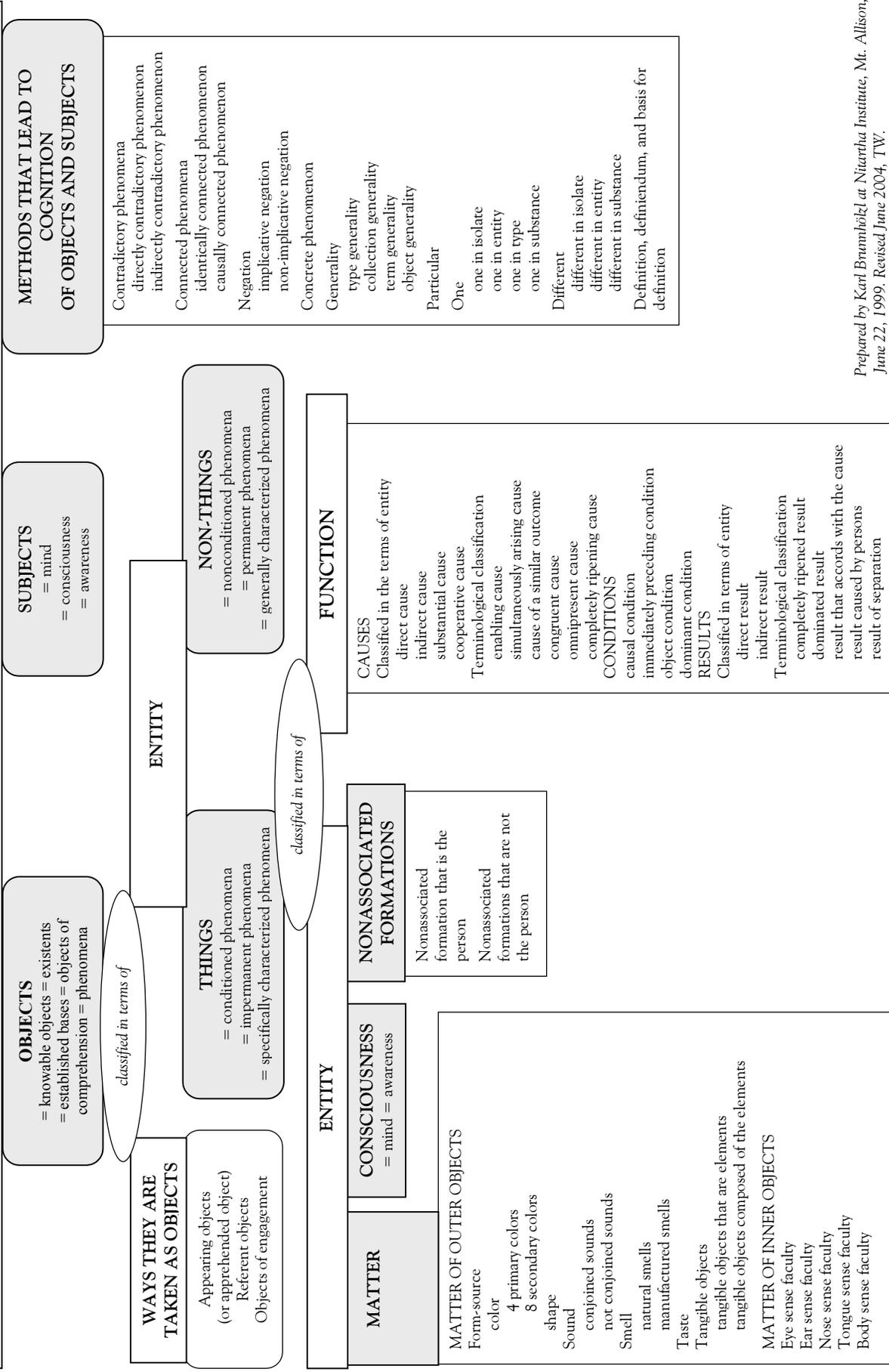
The pains and sorrows of all wandering beings –
May they ripen wholly on myself,
And may the virtuous company of bodhisattvas
Bring about the happiness of beings (56)

May the doctrine, only remedy for suffering,
The source of every bliss and happiness,
Be nurtured and upheld with reverence,
And throughout a vast continuance of time, endure!
(57)

And now to Mañjuḥṣa I prostrate,
Whose kindness is the wellspring of my good intent,
And to my virtuous friends I also bow,
Whose inspiration gave me strength to grow (58)

And now as long as space endures,
As long as there are beings to be found,
May I continue likewise to remain
To drive away the sorrows of the world (55)

CLASSIFICATION OF PHENOMENA



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Roger R. Jackson

*Essays in Honor of
Geshe Lhundup Sopa*

Snow Lion
Ithaca, New York

- Poussin, Louis de La Vallée
1923-31 *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*. Paris: Geuthner.
- rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan
GTNZ *Grub mtha'i rnam gsalng*. Bylakuppe: Se-ra Byes Grwa-tshan,
1977.
- Ruegg, David Seyfort
1981 *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*.
Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Shastri, Swami Dvarikadas, ed.
1970 *Abhidharmakośa & Bhāṣya of Acārya Vasubandhu with Sphuṭārtha
Commentary of Acārya Yaśomitra*. Bauddha Bharati Series 5.
Banaras: Bauddha Bharati.
- Shes rab rin chen, sTag tshang lo tsā ba
GTKS *Grub mtha' kun shes nas mtha' bral grub pa zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos
rnam par bshad pa legs bshad kyi rgya mtsho*. Thimphu: Kun bzang
stobs rgyal, 1976.
- Snelgrove, David L.
1987 *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Succes-
sors*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Sopa, Geshe Lhundup and Jeffrey Hopkins
1990 *Cutting Through Appearances: The Practice and Theory of Tibetan
Buddhism*. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- 1976 *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*. London: Rider.
- Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma
GTSM *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi khungs dang 'dod tshul ston pa legs bshad
shel gyi me long*. Samath: Chhos Je Lama, 1963.

Chapter 10

bsDus grwa Literature¹

Shunzo Onoda

Texts of the *bsdus grwa* genre were some of the most influential works of Tibetan philosophical literature, since more than any other genre of text they determined how scholastics in the predominant dGe lugs pa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism reasoned and conceptualized. The term *bsdus grwa* or *bsdus rwa* originally probably meant *bsdus pa slob pa'i sde tshan gyi grwa* or "the schools or classes in which [primary students] learn *bsdus pa* or summarized topics [of logic or dialectics]." Later, the term was etymologized as *rig pa'i rnam grangs du ma phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa'i grwa*, or "the class where many arguments are summarized together."² In modern usage, the term has both a general and a more restricted meaning. *bsDus grwa* in its broad sense means the introductory course or classes in dialectics, which consist of the three categories: *bsdus grwa* (in the narrow sense; ontology), *blo rigs* (epistemology) and *rtags rigs* (logic). Without mastering these basic stages, a student cannot advance any further in the dGe lugs pa tradition of Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism.

The *bsDus grwa* Course in Modern Monastic Colleges

Although there exist a few differences in the dGe lugs pa monastic curricula among different colleges, in the main there are five principal subjects to be taught, which are known as the "five books" (*po ti bsga*): (1) *Pramāṇa (shad ma)*, (2) *Prajñāpāramitā (phar phyin)*, (3) *Madhyamaka (dbu ma)*, (4) *Vinaya ('dul ba)*, and (5) *Abhi-*

dharmakośa (*mingon mdzod*). Each of these subjects is divided into small classes (called *'dzin grwa*), and by advancing through these classes—a process which takes at least ten years—one can finally attain the degree of *dge bshes* (see Newland, in this volume).

Here we should remark that the last four of these five subjects, i.e., Prajñāpāramitā, Madhyamaka, Vinaya and Abhidharmakośa, are studied in direct dependence upon original Indian texts (*rgya gzhang*). As for Pramāṇa, however, the initial study by dGe lugs pa monks is undertaken exclusively on the basis of the native Tibetan *bsdus grwa* literature, rather than Indian texts, and at this initial stage the subject of study is commonly called *bsdus grwa* or *rigs lam*, instead of *tshad ma* (*pramāṇa*: Indian Buddhist logic and epistemology) properly speaking.

All monastic universities are composed of a number of *grwa tshang*, or self-supported colleges, and most of these colleges have a few *khang tshan*, or regional houses. Students live in *khang tshans* associated with their native place, and during the school term they attend their appointed class (*'dzin grwa*) in the *grwa tshang*. One year is divided into seven or eight school terms. Apart from the two terms of mid summer and mid winter, lessons are held inside the college.³

Three Stages of *bsDus grwa*: *bsDus grwa*, *Blo rigs* and *rTags rigs*

As we have said, the course of *bsdus grwa* can be divided into the following three stages: *bsdus grwa* (in the narrow sense), *blo rigs* and *rtags rigs*. Roughly speaking, these three treat of ontology, epistemology and logic, respectively. This threefold classification is sometimes expressed as the study of "objects" (*yu*), "subjects" (*yu* *can*), and "the ways to cognize objects" (*yu* *de* *rtags pa* *i* *tshul*). The precise contents of *bsdus grwa* texts are not completely uniform, but these texts do nonetheless share a corpus of principal subjects or "lessons" (*rnam bzhiag*).

Let us now briefly examine the contents of *bsdus grwa*, *blo rigs* and *rtags rigs* by focusing on a few representative subjects. The first stage of the primary course is *bsdus grwa* in its narrow sense, generally comprised of three lessons. The first, which is common to all colleges, is known as "*kha dog dkar amar*," which literally means "white and red colors." Some colleges even assign a separate class (*'dzin grwa*) to the subject. At this stage, students learn

about the notion of pervasion or entailment (*khyab pa*), as occurs, for example, between white color and color itself—the former entailing the latter. Similarly, students learn to differentiate between general propositions involving pervasions, such as "whatever is red must be a color" (*dmar po yin na kha dog yin pas khyab*), and those involving specific topics (*chos can*), such as "take as the topic, red; it is a color" (*dmar po chos can kha dog yin*) (see Tillemans: 286).

In the next class, called *gzhi grub* (literally, "established bases"), students are introduced to some ontological notions construed more or less in accordance with the system of the Indian Sautrāntika school, especially as it is portrayed by Dharmakīrti. Here again, students pay special attention to the inclusions and differentiations holding among the key concepts.

After completing this initial class, students proceed to the next, where they learn more abstract and theoretical notions. At this level, schemata necessary for logical thinking such as concept (*ldog pa*, literally "isolate"), cause and effect (*rgyu dang 'bras bu*), genus and species (*spyi dang bye brag*), relations and contraries (*bral ba dang gal ba*) and definition and definiendum (*mtshan nyid dang mtshon bya*) are introduced and examined.⁴ In the last class of this first stage, students learn to use the *thai' gyur* (*prasaṅga*) argumentation form, i.e., "consequences" or "reductio ad absurdum" (see Onoda, 1986, 1988) and other logical operators such as "implicative negations" and "non-implicative negations" (*ma yin dag dang med dag*). In short, the purpose of this first stage, i.e., *bsdus grwa* as more narrowly conceived, is not only to introduce students to basic theoretical schemata, but also to allow them to acquire the practical mastery of debating techniques which will be indispensable for more advanced dialectical study.

When a student has finished the initial stage of *bsdus grwa* classes, he is allowed to proceed to the next stage, i.e., *blo rigs*, which is largely concerned with epistemological matters. The main subjects are the classifications of cognition in terms of "valid and invalid means of cognition" (*tshad ma dang tshad min*), "conceptual and non-conceptual cognition" (*r'tog pa dang rtog med*), "self-awareness and other-awareness" (*rang rig dang gzhan rig*) and "mind and mental factors" (*sems dang sems byung*). These classifications in turn frequently admit of sub-classifications. For example, invalid means of cognition (*tshad min*) is divided into five: subsequent cognition (*dpyad shes*), true presumption (*yu* *dpyod*), inattentive cognition (*sngag la ma nges pa*), doubt (*the tshom*), and erro-

neous cognition (*log shes*). Valid means of cognition (*tshad ma*) is divided into two: direct perception (*mingon sum gyi tshad ma*) and inference (*rjes su dpag pa'i tshad ma*). It should be noted that this type of sevenfold division of cognition (*blo rigs bdun du dbye ba*) is said to have originated with Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109-1169) (see van der Kuip, 1979).

The last stage, *rtags rigs* (see Onoda, 1981), introduces an Indian type of logic centered around the elaboration of the threefold criteria—the so-called *tshul gsum* (or *trairūpya*)—which enables one to distinguish between correct, or valid, logical marks (*rtags yang dag*) and those which are invalid, or more literally are pseudo-marks (*rtags liar snang*).

These three types of texts—*bsdus grwa*, *blo rigs* and *rtags rigs*—teach students the practical applications of disputation or debate (*rtsoed pa*). One of the main reasons why adepts of such a training are called *mtshan nyid pa* is that they pay special attention to terms and definitions (*mtshan nyid*), memorizing them and analysing them for inconsistencies, insufficiencies and redundancies. A further reason as to why this preliminary training is so indispensable is that the school manuals (*ying ch'a*) for advanced classes such as Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka are written in the special style and format which we find in *bsdus grwa* texts. This format, where arguments are presented largely by means of *prasaṅgas* (*thal gyur*), was christened *thal phyir*, or “sequence and reason,” by Stcherbatsky (55), who maintained that it probably had its origins with Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (see Jackson, 1987: 152, n. 28; cf. van der Kuip, 1983: 294, n. 220).

The *bsdus pa* as Predecessor to *bsDus grwa* Literature

Both the conventional style and contents of the so-called *bsdus grwa* literature are widely said to have originated with the eighteen *bsdus grwa* subjects of Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge. According to A.khu rin po che's list of rare books, Phya pa wrote two Pramāṇa summaries: one entitled *Tshad [ma'i] bsdus [pa] yid kyi mun sel* (MHTL 11805) and the other *Tshad ma'i bsdus pa yid kyi mun sel rang 'grel dang bcas pa* (MHTL 11804). Probably one was a verse work and the other was its autocommentary. According to Śākya mchog ldan (1428-1507), Phya pa wrote not only these Pramāṇa summaries but also an *dBu ma bsdus pa* (“Madhyamaka Summary”). Aside from Phya pa, other scholars of gSang phu Monastery are also

said to have written texts entitled *bsdus pa*. For instance, rGya dmar ba Byang chub grags who was a student of rInGog lo tsā ba (1059-1109) is said to have written several *Tshad ma'i bsdus pa* (MHTL 11810).⁵ gTsang nag pa brTson 'grus seng ge (twelfth century) wrote an *dBu ma'i bsdus pa*. Chu mig pa (thirteenth century) who was an abbot of gSang phu Upper Monastery, also wrote a *Tshad ma bsdus pa* (NTR: 453). Even among the works of 'U yug pa (thirteenth century) of the early Sa skya pa we can find the title *bsdus pa rigs sgrub*, though this may simply be an abridgment of his famous Pramāṇa work. Although we cannot be sure about the contents of these works until the texts themselves appear, the term *bsdus pa* in their titles probably can be translated as “Summary.” But as noted above, such a term was not used only for Pramāṇa summaries in the early period (twelfth to thirteenth centuries).

According to Klong rdol bia ma (1719-1794/5),⁶ Phya pa summarized Pramāṇa theories into the following eighteen subjects in his *Tshad ma'i bsdus pa yid kyi mun sel*:

- (1) white and red colors (*kha dog dkar dmar*)
- (2) substantial phenomena and conceptual phenomena (*rāzas chos ldog chos*)
- (3) contraries and non-contraries (*'gal dang mi 'gal*)
- (4) genus and species (*spyi dang bye brag*)
- (5) related and unrelated (*'brel dang ma 'brel*)
- (6) difference and non-difference (*tha dad thad [= tha dad] min*)
- (7) positive and negative concomitances (*rjes su 'gro ldog*)
- (8) cause and effect (*rgyu dang 'bras bu*)
- (9) the three times (*snga bean bar bean phyi bean*)
- (10) definition and definiendum (*mtshan mtshon*)
- (11) [*prasaṅgas*] with multiple reasons and multiple predicates (*rtags mang gsal mang*)
- (12) exclusionary negations and determinations (*dgag pa phar tshur*)
- (13) direct and indirect contraries (*dngos 'gal rgyud 'gal*)
- (14) equal pervasions (*khyab mnyam*)
- (15) being and non-being (*yin gyur min gyur*)
- (16) negation of being and negation of non-being (*yin log min log*)
- (17) cognizing existence and cognizing nonexistence (*yod rtogs med rtogs*)
- (18) cognizing permanence and cognizing real entities (*rtag rtogs dngos rtogs*)

The great scholar Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182-1251), in his *Tshad ma rigs pa'i gter*, criticised many of Phyva pa's theories, showing how the latter's ideas differ from those of Indian Buddhist philosophers, who for Sa paṇ were the only source of authentic Buddhism. Sa skya Paṇḍita's criticisms relied predominantly on Dharmakīrti's own texts, with the result that after Sa paṇ, the theoretical focus of Pramāṇa studies in Tibet slowly but gradually shifted away from Phyva pa's so-called Tibetan style to Sa skya Paṇḍita's more Indian-based orientation. Nonetheless, on the practical level, most dGe lugs pa and to some extent even Sa skya pa scholars continued to practice Phyva pa's style of logic, debating on such typical Phyva pa subjects as substantial and conceptual phenomena (*rdzas chos ldog chos*), even though some were aware that such subjects were simply Tibetan in origin.⁷ Especially in the dGe lugs pa school, with the establishment of the big monastic universities, it was the *bsdus grwa* tradition propagated by Phyva pa that continued as the primary practice for beginners in dialectics.

Later gSang phu and dGe lugs pa *bsdus grwa* Literature

About three centuries after Phyva pa's activity, mChog lha 'od zer (1429-1500),⁸ who occupied the abbatial seat of gSang phu just as Phyva pa had previously done, composed the manual known as the *Ra bstod bsdus grwa*. This text was widely used as the beginner's manual not only in the dGe lugs pa monasteries but also, it is said, in one or two Sa skya pa seminaries (such as at modern Na-lendra). mChog lha 'od zer wrote this text mostly based on Phyva pa's tradition but also adopted a few elements of Sa skya Paṇḍita's position.⁹

Even after the three major dGe lugs pa monasteries in the Lhasa area had developed their own sets of debate manuals (*yig cha*), the *Ra bstod bsdus grwa* was still used by dGe lugs pa monks when they began their basic Pramāṇa studies. Another famous *bsdus grwa* text, the *bTsan po bsdus grwa*, was written at the Ra bstod college of gSang phu by gSer khang pa Dam chos mnam rgyal (seventeenth century), who served as the twenty-first abbot of the Ra bstod college, i.e., fourteen abbots later than mChog lha 'od zer (Vostrikov: 61) (see Onoda, 1989c, 1991). Unfortunately, since the text is lost, we know only the subject headings in the *bTsan po bsdus grwa*, but

they can be seen to exhibit a close resemblance to those of mChog lha 'od zer's work.¹⁰

The *bTsan po bsdus grwa* was written in response to a request from Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub (1622-1699). The word "bTsan po" stands for "bTsan po no mon han," which was the honorific title of Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub, the teacher of the celebrated dGe lugs pa author of scholastic manuals 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje (1648-1721), who in turn served as the teacher of Sras Ngag dbang bkra bshis (1678-1738), author of the influential *Sras bsdus grwa* used in 'Bras spungs sGo mang College. So, in short, we can say that Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub was probably the person who served as the link between the 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa tradition of *bsdus grwa* and the *bsdus grwa* tradition which had been handed down at gSang phu Monastery since Phyva pa Chos kyi seng ge.

It is as yet unknown how many *bsdus grwa* texts Ngag dbang 'phrin las himself actually wrote, but we are informed (van der Kuip, 1989: 16) that he wrote a *bsDus grwa'i rnam bzhang chia tshang ba'i rig gnas legs bshad bang mdzod* (Smith: 70), which has the following six subjects:

- (1) pervasions (*khyab mitha'*)
- (2) negation of being and negation of non-being (*yin log min log*)
- (3) cause and effect (*rgyu 'bras*)
- (4) definition and definiendum (*mtshan mtshon*)
- (5) genus and species (*spyi bye brag*)
- (6) substantial phenomena and conceptual phenomena (*rdzas ldog*)

It should be noted that in the *Complete Works* of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje there is a *bsdus grwa* text entitled *Kha dog dkar dmar*,¹¹ which has exactly the same six subjects as Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub's shorter work. Here then is possible further confirmation of the relationship between the gSang phu lineage of *bsdus grwa* studies of Ngag dbang 'phrin las and that of sGo mang College.

The *Complete Works* of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje has four other titles which are concerned with *bsdus grwa*:¹²

- (1) Presentation of *bsdus grwa* called "elegant description" (*bsDus grwa'i rnam bzhang legs par bshad pa*)

- (2) A summary of the advanced presentation of *prasaṅga* (*Thal gyur che ba'i rnam bzhiag midor bsduṣ*)
- (3) Advanced presentation of *bsduṣ grwa* called "the golden key to open the art of science" (*bsDus chen gyi rnam bzhiag rigs lam gser gyi sgo 'byed*)
- (4) The essence of *bsduṣ grwa* called "the treasury of whole presentations" in verse (*bsDus sbyor gyi snying po kun bsduṣ rig pa'i mdzod rtsa tshig*)

In addition to these *bsduṣ grwa* of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, a number of other influential *bsduṣ grwa* texts were written as college manuals for the dGe lugs pa monastic universities.¹³ Blo gsal gling College of 'Bras-spungs Monastery used Pan chen bSod nam grags pa's (1478-1554) *bsduṣ grwa*. sGo mang College used not only the above-mentioned *bsduṣ grwa*s of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, but also that of Ngag dbang bkra shis, which was commonly known as the *Khiri ryan tshang gi bsduṣ grwa* or *Sras ngag dbang bkra shis bsduṣ grwa* because the author was a chief disciple (*sras*) of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje (Vostrikov: 61).¹⁴

Perhaps nowadays the most widely used *bsduṣ grwa* is the *Phur loog bsduṣ grwa*, which was adopted as a school manual in the Byes pa College of Se ra Monastery (Perdue). The text is also called the *Yongs 'dzin bsduṣ grwa* (Onoda, 1981) because its author, Phur bu loog Byams pa tshul khriṃs rgya mtsho dpal bzang po (1825-1901), was the personal teacher (*yongs 'dzin*) of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.¹⁵

Sa skya pa bsDus grwa Literature¹⁶

The *bsduṣ grwa* of the Sa skya pa has so far hardly been studied at all. Here I will just enumerate the few such treatises known to me, without trying to indicate their relation to the dGe lugs pa *bsduṣ grwa* or earlier gSang phu traditions. To begin with, 'U yug pa Rigs pa'i seng ge (b.1250s or 1260s) who was a disciple of Sa skya Paṇḍita, is said to have written a (*Tshad ma'i bsDus pa* which was entitled *bsDus pa rigs sgrub* (ZNDG: 469.3) or *bsDus don rigs pa'i sdom* (DGPK: 323). According to the list of the sDe dge printing house, a certain Byang chub dpal wrote a *Tshad bsduṣ legs bshad rig pa'i 'od zer* (DGPK: 145) and this may be an early Sa skya pa *tshad ma'i bsduṣ pa*. The outstanding scholastic gYag ston Sangs rgyas dpal (1348-1414) wrote a *rtags rigs* work (SCNT: 74). Likewise, mKhas grub bstan gsal (fl. fifteenth century), disciple of

Byams chen rab 'byams pa (1411-1485), is said to have written a *Tshad ma'i rtags rigs chen mo* (see van der Kuijp, 1989: 17). Go rams pa bSod nam seng ge (1429-1489) is said to have learned *bsduṣ grwa* in Kham using the *bsDus grwa* of dGe ba rgyal mtshan (1387-1462), who was the third abbot of Na-tendra Monastery (Jackson, 1989: 34). Go rams pa's disciple Kong ston dBang phyug grub (late 1400s), who was the second abbot of rTā nag Thub bstan nam rgyal Monastery, wrote a *Tshad ma'i spyi don blo rtag[s]* (SKKC: 67). In about the same period, Glo bo mkhan chen bSod nam lhun grub (1456-1532) wrote *blo rigs* and *rtags rigs* texts entitled *Blo'i rnam bzhiag sde bitun gyi snying po* and *rTags kyi rnam bzhiag rigs lam gsal ba'i sgron me* (Jackson, 1987: 564). Such works continued to appear in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho (1523-1596), for instance, is said to have written a *Blo rigs chen po (mo?)* (SKKC: 100), and the famous Sa skya pa scholar Ngag dbang chos grags (1572/3-1641/2) wrote a *blo rigs* entitled *Blo rigs gi legs bshad* (SKKC: 108). Within the later lineage of Go rams pa's monastery, rTā nag Thub bstan nam rgyal, there appeared the most famous recent Sa skya pa *bsduṣ grwa*, the *Chos rnam rgyal gi bsduṣ grwa*. A copy of this text is preserved at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala. The author, Chos nam rgyal (fl. seventeenth century) also wrote a *rtags rigs*.¹⁷ The most recent of such works in the Sa skya pa tradition were written by Blo gter dbang po (1847-1914?), who also got his initial training at rTā nag Thub bstan nam rgyal Monastery. The *bsduṣ grwa* works he composed were entitled *Blo rigs zur bkol*, *rTags rigs zur bkol* (SKKC: 162), and *Tshad ma rtags rigs skor gtan la 'bebs par byed pa sde bidun sgo brgya 'byed pa'i 'phrul gyi lde'u mig* (DGPK: 326).

Conclusion

The *bsduṣ grwa* logic was not just a training exercise, but was important for all levels of Tibetan philosophical studies in the gSang phu and dGe lugs pa traditions. As for the relationship to the Indian tradition, only a careful and detailed investigation and comparison of the *bsduṣ grwa* literature and the more Indian-based *rigs gter* tradition of the Sa skya school will enable us to discriminate meaningfully between the Indian and Tibetan elements in this system of logic. At any rate, the importance of this complex Indo-Tibetan relationship should not be underestimated. Anyone

who wishes to investigate seriously the indigenous Tibetan commentaries on such key Indian texts as the *Pramāṇavārttika* is confronted immediately by the fact that much of the terminology and many of the concepts used in such commentaries owe a heavy debt to the *bsdus grwa*.

Notes

1. This article summarizes a number of points which I first discussed in my articles (in Japanese) (Onoda, 1979, 1982, 1983, 1989a and 1989b), and in my monograph (in English) (Onoda, 1992). I am gratefully indebted to Dr. David Jackson and Dr. Tom Tillemans, who kindly took the trouble to read through my original manuscript and to correct my English, and who gave me their pertinent criticisms and fruitful suggestions.
2. Originally *bsdus pa* was short for *Isiad ma'i bsdus pa* or "summarized topics of Pramāṇa" (see Jackson, 1987: 128-131). For traditional definitions, see van der Kuip, 1989: 13-15.
3. The curriculum of study varies somewhat from college to college. Phur bu lcoḡ Ngag d'bang byams pa (1682-1762), describing the composition of the main monasteries in about the year 1744, reported that dGa' ldan Monastery had two colleges, viz., Byang rse and Shar rise, while 'Bras spuṅgs had seven: Blo gsal gling, sGo mang, bDe dbyangs, Shaḡ skor, Thoḡ bsam gling (rGyal ba), 'Dul ba and sNgags pa. Se ra Monastery had four old colleges: rGya, 'Brom steng, s'fod pa, sMad pa, and two new colleges: Byes pa and sNgags pa. Later on, only sMad pa remained among the four old colleges (PKPB: 46). As for bkra shis lhun po Monastery in the district of gTsaṅg, it had four colleges: Shar rise, Thoḡ bsam gling, dKyiḡ khang and sNgags pa. It should be noted, however, that all four sNgags pa colleges were meant almost exclusively for the study of Tantra, that they did not principally pursue the study of dialectics (*miḡshan nyid*), and that they did not have *bsdus grwa* courses.
4. Goldberg (1985) illustrates many traditional arguments about *gciḡ miḡshan nyid dang miḡshan bya*, *spyi dang bye brag* and *rīzas chos dang lāḡ chos*.
5. If so, Phya pa was perhaps not the true father of *bsdus grwa*. Śākya mchog ldan (NITR: 451) *Isiad bsdus dang/abu bsdus kyi srol thog mar phyae*; see also Jackson (1987: 129). I am told by Dr. David Jackson that rNgog lo tsā ba himself is said to have composed an *dBa ma'i bsdus pa*—perhaps the forerunner of all *bsdus pa*. This is stated in rNgog's biography by the latter's disciple Gro lung pa (eleventh to twelfth centuries).
6. kLong rdol bla ma (TNNG: 663); Horváth (1987: 320) corrects a line missed in copying in the Sata-Piṭaka edition.
7. mChog lha 'od zer (RTDG: 68): *dang sang ni gzhung lugs gang dang yang mi miḡshan pa i rīzas lāḡ smra ba mang du lhos mod/...gsang phu'i nye skor bstun ma'i bshad sra riḡ pa rno ba 'khirul byed du byas pa las gzhung gi go ba sogs la yang mi phun pa'i ngag rgyur chag...*

8. Van der Kuip (1989: 16) considers the spelling mChog lha to be preferable. *Phyogs la*, *Phyogs las* and *Phyogs lha* are also found in many texts.
9. The Ra b'stod *bsdus grwa* (RTDG) is constituted as follows: [Chung:] (1) *kha lāḡ*, (2) *gzū grub*, (3) *lāḡ pa ngos 'dzin*, (4) *yin loḡ min loḡ*, (5) *yin gyur min gyur*, (6) *rgyu 'bras chung ba*, (7) *spyi bye brag*, (8) *rīzas lāḡ*. [Bring:] (1) *gal 'brel*, (2) *yoḡ rtoḡs med rtoḡs*, (3) *bar shun*, (4) *miḡshan miḡshan che ba*, (5) *rgyu 'bras che ba*, (6) *rjes 'gro lāḡ khyab*, (7) *dāḡg bshags sgrub bshags*. [Chie:] (1) *drug sgra*, (2) *bsdus tshān kun la mkho ba khas blangs song tshul*, (3) *dāḡg gzhi dris 'phangs*, (4) *thial 'gyur*, (5) *gzhan sel*, (6) *sel 'jug sgrub 'jug*, (7) *yul yul can*, (8) *miḡshan sbyor*, (9) *rtaḡs sbyor*.
10. According to Klong rdol bla ma's account (TNNG: 663) the subjects of the *bTsan po bsdus grwa* were: (1) *kha dāḡg dkar 'amar*, (2) *gzhi grub*, (3) *lāḡ pa ngos 'dzin*, (4) *yin loḡ min loḡ*, (5) *yin gyur min gyur*, (6) *rgyu 'bras chung ba*, (7) *spyi bye brag*, (8) *rīzas lāḡ*, (9) *gal 'brel*, (10) *yoḡ rtoḡs med rtoḡs*, (11) *bar shun miḡshan miḡshan*, (12) *rgyu 'bras 'khor lo ma*, (13) *rjes 'gro lāḡ khyab*, (14) *dāḡg gshags sgrub bshags*, (15) *drug sgra rīsi tshul*, (16) *bsdus tshān kun la mkho ba khas blangs song tshul*, (17) *thial 'gyur*, (18) *gzhan sel*, (19) *sel 'jug sgrub 'jug*, (20) *yul yul can*, (21) *miḡshan sbyor rtaḡs sbyor*.
11. *The Complete Works of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje* (YYSB), vol. 3, no. 18, ff. 606-718; MHHTL 4082.
12. *The Complete Works* (YYSB) has four other titles which are concerned with *bsdus grwa*. Their order of subjects is as follows:
 - (A) *bsDus grwa'i rnam bzhaḡ legs par bshad pa* (vol. 3, no. 19, ff. 719-774): (1) *kha dāḡg dkar 'amar*, (2) *yoḡ rtoḡs med rtoḡs*, (3) *yin loḡ min loḡ*, (4) *rgyu 'bras chung ngū 'khor lo ma*, (5) *yul yul can*, (6) *lāḡ pa ngos 'dzin*, (7) *gciḡ thā dad*, (8) *spyi dang bye brag*, (9) *thial 'gyur chung ba*.
 - (B) *Kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pas mādad pa'i thial 'gyur che ba'i rnam bzhaḡ mador bsdus* (vol. 3, no. 20, ff. 775-793; MHHTL 4084): (1) *thial 'gyur che ba*.
 - (C) *bsDus chen gyi rnam bzhaḡ riḡs lam gser gyi sgo 'byed lung dang riḡs pa'i gān mādod blo gsal yid kyi mun sel skal ldan dad pa'i jug ngogs* (vol. 15, no. 10, ff. 377-459; MHHTL 4153): (1) *das gsum*, (2) *spyi miḡshan dang rang miḡshan*, (3) *dāḡg sgrub*, (4) *gzhan sel*, (5) *sel 'jug dang sgrub 'jug*, (6) *brjod byed kyi sgra*.
 - (D) *bsDus sbyor gyi snying po kun bsdus riḡ pa'i mādod rīsa tshāḡ* (vol. 15, no. 11, ff. 461-482; MHHTL 4154): (1) *rīzas lāḡ*, (2) *gal 'brel*, (3) *spyi bye brag*, (4) *miḡshan miḡshan*, (5) *rgyu 'bras*, (6) *yoḡ med rtoḡs*, (7) *yin min loḡ*, (8) *rjes 'gro lāḡ*, (9) *dāḡg gzhi rīsi tshul*, (10) *ngā phyi bisan*, (11) *skor 'begs*.
13. Phur loḡ Ngag d'bang byams pa (PKPB) informs us that many *blo riḡs* and *rtaḡs riḡs* were used in those monastic colleges. In Blo gsal gling College of 'Bras spuṅgs Monastery, bSod nams grags pa's (1478-1554) *blo riḡs* and *rtaḡs riḡs* were used. sGo mang College used 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's (1648-1721) *blo riḡs* and *rtaḡs riḡs*. In the sMad pa College of Se ra Monastery, the monks study Grags pa bshad sgrub's (1675-1748) *rtaḡs riḡs rgyas pa* and *rtaḡs riḡs bsdus pa*. dByangs can dga' ba'i blo gros's *rtaḡs riḡs kyi sdom* and *Blo riḡs kyi sdom*, and Chu bzang bla ma Ye shes rgya mtsho's *blo riḡs* and *rtaḡs riḡs*. Byes pa College relied upon Phur loḡ yongs 'dzin's (1825-1901) *blo riḡs* and *rtaḡs riḡs*, while Shar rise College of dGa' ldan used bSod nams grags

pa's works, and Byang rtshe took sByin pa Chos 'phei rgya mtsho's *blo rigs* and *rtags rigs*.

14. The full title is: *Tshad ma'i dgongs 'grel gyi bstan bcos chen po rnam 'grel gyi don gcig tu dril ba bio rab 'bring tha gsum du ston pa legs bshad chen po mkhas pa'i ngul rgyan skal bzang re ba kun skong*, and it expounds the following subjects: (1) *dbyibs dang kha dog*, (2) *yod rtags med rtags*, (3) *yin log min log*, (4) *ldog pa ngos dzin*, (5) *gcig dang tha dad*, (6) *rgyu 'bras chung ngu*, (7) *yul dang yul can*, (8) *spyi dang bye brag*, (9) *'gal 'brel*, (10) *mtshan mtshan*, (11) *chia pa'i tugs kyi rdzas idog*, (12) *rang lugs kyi rdzas idog*, (13) *khujab mtha' god tshul*, (14) *lhyab pa sgo brgyad*, (15) *khas len song tshul*, (16) *drug sgra*, (17) *thal 'gyur chung ngu*, (18) *das gsum*, (19) *rang mtshan dang spyi mtshan*, (20) *sel 'jug dang sgrub 'jug*, (21) *rigs brjed dang tshogs brjed*, (22) *dgag sgrub*, (23) *gzhan sel*, (24) *'gal 'brel che ba*, (25) *thal 'gyur che ba*, (26) *rgyu 'bras che ba*. The Peking edition of *Sras bsdus grwa* (SNDCG) contains *Sras bsdus grwa*'s summary in verse entitled *bsDus grwa'i rtsa tshig dwangs gsal me long*.

15. The full title is *Tshad ma'i gzhung don 'byed pa'i bsdus grwa'i rnam bzhang rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig*. Its subjects are: [Chung:] (1) *kha dog akar amar*, (2) *gzhi grub*, (3) *ldog pa ngos dzin*, (4) *yin log min log*, (5) *rgyu 'bras chung ngu*, (6) *spyi dang bye brag*, (7) *rdzas idog*. [Bring:] (1) *'gal 'brel*, (2) *yod rtags med rtags*, (3) *mtshan mtshan*, (4) *rgyu 'bras che ba*, (5) *ries 'gro idog khujab*, (6) *dgag gshags sgrub gshags*. [Che:] (1) *thal 'gyur chung ba*, (2) *thal 'gyur che ba*, (3) *gzhan sel dgag sgrub*, (4) *sel 'jug sgrub 'jug*.

16. Much of this section is derived from Jackson (1987: 128-131), from van der Kuip (1989: 17) and from information personally received from Dr. David Jackson.

17. According to SKKC: 113, *rTags rigs las rigs lam che 'bring chung gsum gyi yig ch'u soqs mang du bzhugs*.

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'Jam dbyangs mChog lha 'od zer
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9 Established Bases

INTRODUCTION

The single most important chapter in the Collected Topics texts is "Established Bases", the essential introductory description of ontology in the system of the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning. All of the information on forms that has come before in "Colors—White, Red, and So Forth" could have been included in the discussion of established bases (*gzhi grub*, **vastu-siddha*). Moreover, this chapter serves as an important guide to all the chapters that follow. Without a thorough familiarity with the topics presented in this chapter, one cannot hope to understand the Collected Topics or Buddhist reasoning.

The broadest possible category, including all existents and non-existents as well, is that of the selfless (*bdag med*, *nairātmya*). All Buddhist tenet systems except perhaps for that of the Proponents of a Person (*gang zag yod par smra ba*, *puḍgala-vādin*) assert selflessness as the main principle of their philosophies. What is selfless is empty of or lacks a certain type of self (*bdag, ātman*). A fundamental assertion in

Buddhism is that only through understanding selflessness, or emptiness (*stong pa nyid*, *shūnyatā*), can one gain liberation and thereby be relieved of powerless rebirth into the suffering of cyclic existence. The nature of selflessness is variously identified in the different Buddhist systems, but all agree that: "Phenomena are selfless in the sense that they are empty of being a permanent, partless, independent self or of being the object of use of such a self."¹ The higher philosophical schools describe some forms of selflessness that are more subtle, more difficult to pierce, than those asserted in the lower schools. Still, in each case the assertion of a lack of self is not a theory of nihilism, that phenomena do not exist at all, but an identification that phenomena lack certain qualities that they are incorrectly assumed to have. It is precisely these misapprehended, non-existent qualities that constitute the self the Buddhists deny in the theory of selflessness.

In the Great Vehicle schools, selflessness is divided into two types, the selflessness of persons (*gang zag gi bdag med*, *puṅgala-nairātmya*) and the selflessness of phenomena (*chos kyi bdag med*, *dharma-nairātmya*). In all systems, the selflessness of persons is further divided into coarse (*rags pa*, *sthūla*) and subtle (*phra ba*, *sūkṣma*) varieties. In the two Lesser Vehicle systems, the Great Exposition School and the Sūtra School, the coarse selflessness of persons is a person's lack of being a permanent, partless, independent self (*rtag gcig rang dbang can bdag gis stong pa*) and the subtle selflessness of persons is the lack of being a substantially existent self in the sense of being self-sufficient (*rang rkya thub pa'i rdzas yod bdag gis stong pa*).² The subtler emptiness is more difficult to get at, more profound, and only by understanding persons as lacking the subtle self does one gain liberation. The Lesser Vehicle systems "both present an emptiness that must be understood in order to reach the goal, and in both systems this emptiness is the non-substantiality of persons. Through

realizing and becoming accustomed to this insubstantiality, the afflictions and, thereby, all sufferings are said to be destroyed."¹

The two Lesser Vehicle systems do not assert a selflessness of phenomena because they propound a view that external phenomena truly exist. Still, based on their assertion of persons as empty of being substantially existent, they assert that phenomena other than persons are empty of being objects of use of such a self. Therefore, it may be said that even for the Proponents of Sūtra all phenomena are selfless. Moreover, not only are all existents selfless, but also all non-existents are selfless, for they are neither substantially existent persons nor objects of use of such a person. Through understanding merely that they do not exist, one can understand that they lack any certain type of existence. However, the realization of the non-substantial establishment of a non-existent is not considered a realization, as the base does not exist at all. Still, the broadest possible category, the selfless, may be divided into the existent (*yod pa*, *sat*) and the non-existent (*med pa*, *asat*).

ESTABLISHED BASES

In order to understand selflessness, it is necessary to understand the phenomena that are the bases of selflessness. Therefore, in the beginning, students are taught what exists and how one can know those existents. The material presented in the chapter on established bases forms the essential bedrock on which one can build understanding.

Established base is mutually inclusive with object of knowledge, existent, phenomenon, object of comprehension, object, object of comprehension of an omniscient consciousness, and hidden phenomenon. Also, established base is mutually inclusive with its own definition as well as with the definitions of the phenomena mutually inclusive with it. Table IV gives this list:

¹ Sopa and Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 68.

² Tsong-ka-pa, *Tantra in Tibet*, p. 180.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

Table IV: Established Base and the Phenomena Mutually Inclusive With It

<u>Definienda</u>	<u>Definitions</u>
1 established base (<i>gzhi grub</i> , * <i>vastu-siddha</i>)	established by a valid cognizer (<i>tshad mas grub pa</i>)
2 object of knowledge (<i>shes bya</i> , <i>jñeya</i>)	suitable as an object of an awareness (<i>blo'i yul du bya rung ba</i>)
3 existent (<i>yod pa</i> , <i>sat</i>)	observed by a valid cognizer (<i>tshad mas dmigs pa</i>)
4 phenomenon (<i>chos</i> , <i>dharma</i>)	that which holds its own entity (<i>rang gi ngo bo 'dzin pa</i>)
5 object of comprehension (<i>gzhal bya</i> , <i>prameya</i>)	object realized by a valid cognizer (<i>tshad mas rtogs par bya ba</i>)
6 object (<i>yul</i> , <i>viśaya</i>)	object known by an awareness (<i>blos rig par bya ba</i>)
7 object of comprehension of an omniscient consciousness (<i>nam mkhyen gyi gzhal bya</i> , <i>sarvākārā-jñāna-prameya</i>)	object realized by an omniscient consciousness (<i>nam mkhyen gyis rtogs par bya ba</i>)
8 hidden phenomenon (<i>lkog gyur</i> , <i>parokṣha</i>)	object realized in a hidden manner by a thought consciousness apprehending it (<i>rang 'dzin rtog pas lkog tu gyur pa'i tshul gyis rtogs par bya ba</i>)

An established base is established by a valid cognizer. Valid cognizers are correct, certifying consciousnesses that incontrovertibly realize their objects. These are either direct per-

ceivers (*ngon sum*, *pratyakṣha*), consciousnesses free from conceptuality which unmistakably know their objects without depending on internal images, or inferential cognizers (*rjes dpag*, *anumāna*), conceptual consciousnesses which correctly realize their objects by way of the appearance of internal mental images. Whatever exists is certified as existing by a valid cognizer, and whatever is the object of comprehension of a valid cognizer is necessarily an existent.

Established bases are objects of knowledge; they are suitable as objects of awarenesses. Awareness (*blo*, *buddhi*) is mutually inclusive with consciousness (*shes pa*, *jñāna*) and knower (*rig pa*, *samvedana*). Existents are suitable to be known by awarenesses, and non-existents are not. It is not possible to know something that does not exist. Objects of knowledge are continually known by some awareness. "Without even considering the penetrating clairvoyances of Buddhas and yogis, the various hungry ghosts and unusual types of beings which exist everywhere insure that even particles in the centers of huge rocks are cognized by some being."¹ Established bases are constantly observed, realized, and known by awarenesses, be they consciousnesses of ordinary beings or consciousnesses of omniscient Buddhas.

Established bases are *phenomena*, for they hold or bear their own entities (*ngo bo*, *vastu*). This does not mean that phenomena are self-arisen without depending on any causes or conditions, but that each phenomenon is the bearer of its own entity; it is one with itself and distinct from all else. Also, though some phenomena may change, they do not radically transform from moment to moment. A table does not become an elephant, and then the next moment become a consciousness. Rather, phenomena hold their own entities and remain of a similar type for some time.

All established bases are *hidden phenomena*, objects realized in a hidden manner by the thought consciousnesses (*rtog pa*, *kalpanā*) apprehending them. Thought must realize its object in a hidden manner by taking cognizance of an

¹ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 215.

internal appearing object. Objects are hidden for a thought consciousness because it cannot apprehend them directly. Indeed, even something suitable as an appearing object of direct perception (*ngon sum gyi snang yul*) such as a patch of blue cannot be known directly by a thought consciousness, but must be known by means of a mental image. Thus, all existents are hidden phenomena in the sense that they are objects of thought consciousnesses.

Established bases are *objects*, objects known by awarenesses. One division of objects is into objects and object-possessors or subjects (*yul can, viśhayanin*). However, even though subjects, such as consciousnesses, are themselves knowers of objects, they too are objects and suitable to be known by awarenesses. This does not imply that all consciousnesses are self-knowing, conscious of themselves, but that all consciousnesses are known by some awareness, by some valid cognizer. Subjects, as existents, are objects as well.

Many divisions of established bases and the phenomena mutually inclusive with it are discussed in the Collected Topics tradition, but the chief of these is the exhaustive division of established bases into permanent phenomena (*rtag pa, nitya*) and functioning things (*dingos po, bhāva*). Functioning things or, simply, things are impermanent phenomena which are produced, abide, and disintegrate moment by moment. On the other hand, permanent phenomena in this system are not necessarily eternal but are those existents which are not momentary in the sense that they do not disintegrate moment by moment.

Functioning Things

A thing is defined as:

that which is able to perform a function (*don byed nus pa, artha-kriyā-shakti* or *artha-kriyā-sāmarthyā*).

The main function or the main object produced by a functioning thing is an effect which is the substantial continuum

of that functioning thing itself in the next moment. Thus, functioning things principally perform the function of producing effects. Only such things, impermanent phenomena, are produced by their causes and conditions, abide for a single moment, and disintegrate only to be re-produced in the next moment. The main or substantial cause (*nyer len gyi rgyu, upādāna-kāraṇa*) of the table of this moment is the table of the former moment which has produced a type similar to but not the same as itself. Reflecting this nature of functioning things, the phenomena mutually inclusive with it include cause, effect, created phenomenon, momentary phenomenon, and so forth. Table V shows functioning thing and the phenomena mutually inclusive with it:

Table V: *Functioning Thing and the Phenomena Mutually Inclusive With It*

<u>Definienda</u>	<u>Definitions</u>
1 functioning thing (<i>dingos po, bhāva</i>)	that which is able to perform a function (<i>don byed nus pa, artha-kriyā-shakti</i>)
2 impermanent phenomenon (<i>mi rtag pa, anitya</i>)	momentary phenomenon (<i>skad cig na, kṣhanika</i>)
3 product (<i>byas pa, kṛta</i>)	created phenomenon (<i>skyes pa, utpanna</i>)
4 composed phenomenon (<i>'dus byas, saṃskṛta</i>)	disintegrating phenomenon (<i>'jig pa, vinnāsa</i>)
5 cause (<i>rgyu, hetu</i> or <i>kāraṇa</i>)	producer (<i>skyes byed, janaka</i>)
6 effect (<i>'bras bu, phala</i>)	object produced (<i>bskyes bya, janya</i>)

- 7 ultimate truth (*don dam bden pa, paramārtha-satya*) phenomenon which is ultimately able to perform a function (*don dam par don byed nus pa'i chos*)
- 8 specifically characterized phenomenon (*rang mtshan, svalakṣaṇa*) a phenomenon which is established by way of its own character without being merely imputed by a term or thought consciousness (*sgra rtog gi btags tsam ma yin par rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa'i chos*)
- 9 manifest phenomenon (*mngon gyur, abhimukhī*) object explicitly realized by a direct valid cognizer (*mngon sum gyi tshad mas dangos su rtogs par bya ba*)

Things are *phenomena which are able to perform a function*. An example is a pot which is defined as:

a bulbous flat-based phenomenon able to perform the function of holding water (*lto ldir zhabs zhum chu skyor gyi don byed nus pa*).

According to this definition, a pot has the nature of being a bulbous flat-based thing. And, in addition to performing the function of producing a pot which is its own continuation of the next moment, a pot is able to perform the function of holding water. Functioning things are often defined, at least in part, in terms of their functions. Fire, for instance, is defined as:

that which is hot and burning.

Its nature is heat, and its function is to burn. Only functioning things, impermanent phenomena, are active entities which produce effects and perform functions.

That which performs a function necessarily undergoes change and is an impermanent phenomenon. This is so

because, for instance, the pot of a former moment which produced the pot of the present moment must no longer exist, for a cause and its effect cannot exist simultaneously. Similarly, the pot of the present moment will no longer exist when it has produced the pot of the next moment. Thus, a pot performs one function in one moment, and the pot which is its effect performs another function in another moment.

Functioning things are *impermanent*, momentary phenomena. Impermanent phenomena are defined as momentary because they disintegrate moment by moment. This doctrine of subtle impermanence (*phra ba'i mi rtag pa, *sūkṣma-anitya*) is to be distinguished from the doctrine of coarse impermanence (*rags pa'i mi rtag pa, *sthūla-anitya*). "All Buddhist schools agree that coarse impermanence is the production of a thing such as a table, its lasting for a period of time, and finally its disintegration such as its being consumed by fire."¹ All products openly display their nature of coarse impermanence. Tables, chairs, and even great mountain systems are produced in dependence upon certain causes and conditions, abide for some time, and inevitably decline into non-functionality. A human life comes into existence in dependence upon certain causes and conditions. One enjoys this life due to those causes, and when the power of the causes which impelled this life is exhausted, this life too will end. Thus, death is an example of coarse impermanence.

Moreover, all of the Buddhist tenet systems assert a subtle impermanence which is a momentary disintegration of products. A moment is identified as one sixtieth part of the time that it takes for a healthy person to snap the fingers or blink the eyes.² Functioning things are produced, abide, and disintegrate sixty times within the snapping of the fingers.

¹ Sopa and Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 77.

² Kensur Ngawang Lekden, oral commentary (reported by Jeffrey Hopkins). According to Kensur Lekden, in the Consequence School the span of a moment is identified as one three hundred sixtieth part of the time it takes for a healthy person to snap the fingers or blink the eyes, not one sixtieth as it is in the Sūtra School system.

Although subtle impermanence does appear to ordinary beings, it is not ascertained except by advanced practitioners who are able to realize a single moment.

The Proponents of Sutra assert that production alone is all that is required for momentary disintegration. However, in the Great Exposition School production, abiding, aging, and disintegration are four separate agents that act on the impermanent phenomena themselves. Because these four exist simultaneously with the impermanent phenomena but perform their functions serially, the Proponents of the Great Exposition identify momentariness as the period of these four instants.¹

All other Buddhist systems, including the Sūtra School, assert that it is the impermanent phenomenon itself that is produced, abides, ages, and disintegrates. It requires no outside agents to cause aging and disintegration. The Proponents of Sutra "hold that production is the new arising of what did not exist before, abiding is the remaining of a type similar to what preceded it, aging is the non-similarity in entity of a later moment and a former moment, and disintegration is a product's not remaining a second moment after its present."² Products last for only a moment and cannot last for a second moment. Their production alone is sufficient for their disintegration. The very nature, the defining characteristic, of impermanent phenomena is their momentariness.

Functioning things are *products* because they are made or created in dependence upon causes and conditions. They do not exist without being produced, and what is produced is impermanent. They are *composed phenomena* because they are composed after the aggregation of their causes. Once created, they abide for a moment and inevitably disintegrate, for they are not able to abide for a second moment.

As phenomena arisen in dependence upon their causes and conditions, functioning things are *effects*. Effects are

objects produced from causes or objects helped (*phan gdags bya*) by causes. Functioning things are also *causes*, producers or helpers (*phan 'dags byed*) of effects. Whatever is an impermanent phenomenon is necessarily both a cause and an effect. This does not imply that functioning things continue in a similar type or necessarily produce a phenomenon of a similar type. For example, a seed produces a sprout, a different type of phenomenon which is unlike the seed. Also, the last moment of a flame causes only smoke, an effect of a different type, and does not continue its own substantial entity of fire. Still, all functioning things are effects of their causes that preceded them and are causes of their effects that arise subsequent to them.

Causes are of two types, substantial causes (*nyer len, upādāna-kāraṇa*) and cooperative conditions (*lhan cig byed rkyen, sahakāri-pratyaya*). A substantial cause is a cause which produces an effect which is a continuation of its own substantial entity, and a cooperative condition produces an effect which is not a continuation of its own substantial entity. Whatever is an effect necessarily has both a substantial cause and a cooperative condition. For instance, the substantial cause of a clay pot is the mud which serves as a cause for that pot, and a cooperative condition of a pot is a person who molds the clay and so forth. In the case of a person's present mind, the substantial cause is the mind of the immediately preceding life and the cooperative conditions include one's mother and father and the karmic action of ethics, performed in a former life, which impels this life.

The study of causes and effects is essential to the study of Buddhism. Buddha identified the causes of suffering and of liberation. Thus, Buddha is revered as one who taught causes and effects. The fifth chapter of "The Introductory Path of Reasoning" is an introductory presentation of causes and effects in which the topics of substantial causes and cooperative conditions are discussed in greater detail. The topic of causes and effects is introduced here only as an aid to understanding the nature of impermanent phenomena.

¹ Paraphrased from Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 350.

² Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 350.

Functioning things are *ultimate truths*, phenomena which are ultimately able to perform functions. In all the Buddhist systems, existents are divided into ultimate truths and conventional truths. Ultimate truths are so called because of being truths for an undeceived ultimate awareness. An ultimate awareness (*blo don dam pa*) is a direct perceiver, a consciousness free from conceptuality and non-mistaken with respect to what appears to it—an ultimate truth. Ultimate truths are phenomena which appear just as they exist.

What is identified as ultimate truth varies from system to system, and only the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning present ultimate truth as mutually inclusive with impermanent phenomenon. This interpretation of the system of the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning and the issues surrounding their assertions on the two truths will be taken up below in greater detail.

Functioning things are *specifically characterized phenomena*, phenomena established by way of their own characters (*rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa*, *svalakṣaṇa-siddhi*) without being merely imputed by terms or thought consciousnesses. They are truly established (*bden par grub pa*, *satya-siddha*) objects, for they exist from their own side (*rang ngos nas grub pa*, **svarūpa-siddhi*) without depending on mental or verbal imputation. Rather, functioning things are capable of being explicitly known by direct perceivers. The emphasis is on the consciousnesses which know specifically characterized phenomena. Functioning things are specifically characterized because of being phenomena which appear together with all of their specific characteristics of impermanence and so forth. As opposed to permanent phenomena which are generally characterized phenomena known only in a general way by a thought consciousness, specifically characterized phenomena are known nakedly and directly as specific phenomena. This topic of specifically and generally characterized phenomena will be discussed in greater detail below.

Finally, functioning things are *manifest phenomena*, objects explicitly realized by direct valid cognizers. Again, the phe-

nomena are defined in terms of the consciousnesses which realize them. The emphasis on consciousnesses illustrates the nature of this system of Buddhist logic as inseparable from its epistemology. Functioning things—forms, consciousnesses, and so forth—are manifest phenomena, explicitly realized by direct valid cognizers.

Permanent Phenomena

Other than functioning things, all remaining established bases are permanent phenomena. A permanent phenomenon is defined as:

a common locus of a phenomenon and the non-momentary (*chos dang skad cig ma ma yin pa'i gzhi mthun pa*).

That is, permanent phenomena are both phenomena and non-momentary. The portion of the definition qualifying permanent phenomena as *phenomena* serves to include established bases and exclude non-existents. The portion of the definition which qualifies permanent phenomena as *non-momentary* excludes impermanent phenomena and includes permanent phenomena and non-existents because, indeed, non-existents are not momentary. The two portions of the definition together exclude non-existents and impermanent phenomena and include only permanent phenomena.

An example of a permanent phenomenon is uncomposed space (*'dus ma byas kyī nam mkhā'*, *asamskṛta-ākāśa*), which is a mere absence of obstructive contact. "Space is all pervading because there is an absence of obstructive contact everywhere, even where solid objects exist, for without an absence of obstructive contact an obstructive object could not be there in the first place."¹ Such space is not produced from causes and conditions. Uncomposed space is to be dis-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

tinguished from composed space which results from removing objects to allow passage and so forth.

Another example of a permanent phenomenon is non-cow which refers to all non-existents as well as to all existents other than cows. Non-cow is a permanent phenomenon because of being a common locus of a phenomenon and the non-momentary. This is so because it both is an existent and, since it includes permanent phenomena such as uncomposed space, is not a momentary phenomenon. Furthermore, as is the case with all permanent phenomena, non-cow can only appear to a thought consciousness. It is an existent which must be brought to mind by means of an internal mental image and cannot be realized by a direct valid cognizer. Although it is true that many non-cows such as pots, pillars, horses, and so forth can be realized by direct valid cognizers, it is not the case that all non-cows or non-cow itself can be known by direct valid cognizers. Rather, non-cow depends on imputation by a thought consciousness or by the term "non-cow" in order to be understood.

In the system of the Proponents of Sūtra the most important permanent phenomenon is the subtle selflessness of the person, "a person's emptiness of being substantially existent or self-sufficient (able to exist by itself)".¹ Since selflessness itself, as a permanent phenomenon, cannot be directly realized, the Proponents of Sūtra say that the yogi realizing selflessness cognizes the mind and body as not qualified with such a substantially existent self. "Thus, it is products, the mental and physical aggregates, which are directly cognized, and thereby the emptiness of the personal self is implicitly realized. This fact greatly distinguishes the Sautrāntikas from the Mahāyāna schools which assert direct cognition of emptiness itself."²

In all of the Buddhist systems except Proponents of the Great Exposition School, permanent is not taken to mean lasting eternally. Rather, as in the definition, "permanent"

refers to phenomena that are not momentary. Thus, whatever lasts for even a second moment without changing is a permanent phenomenon. Permanent phenomena are of two types, those which are stable in time (*das brtan pa'i rtag pa*) and those which are occasional (*res 'ga' ba'i rtag pa*).¹ Indeed, some permanent phenomena such as established base and the phenomena mutually inclusive with it, non-cow, and selflessness in general are stable in time and do last forever. However, some permanent phenomena are not eternal, but are occasional. For instance, the uncomposed space inside a pot is a permanent phenomenon but is not eternal. "When the pot is destroyed, the space is no longer suitable to be designated. Also, the space inside a pot does not change moment by moment and thus cannot be called impermanent. It is an occasional permanence because it does not disintegrate momentarily as do all impermanent phenomena and does not exist forever."²

Similarly, specific cases of selflessness are permanent phenomena which are occasional. For example, the selflessness of Thomas Jefferson came into existence when he was born and went out of existence when he died. This does not imply that Jefferson's selflessness was created by the same causes which impelled his birth or by any causes at all. Rather, since selflessness is a mere absence of a certain type of self, it abides as a nature of the person, uncreated and non-disintegrating. Yet, when the person who is the basis of selflessness dies, the selflessness is no longer suitable to be designated and goes out of existence when its basis is destroyed. Although specific cases of selflessness are occasional permanents, selflessness itself is an eternal permanent, for there is no time when the selflessness of persons does not exist.

The phenomena mutually inclusive with permanent phenomenon closely parallel those of functioning thing. For instance, just as functioning thing is mutually inclusive with

¹ Lati Rinbochay, oral commentary.

² Sopa and Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 95.

¹ Sopa and Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 104.

² *Ibid.*, p. 105.

product, so permanent phenomenon is mutually inclusive with non-produced phenomenon. It must be noted, however, that permanent phenomenon is not mutually inclusive with non-product. This is so because non-product includes not merely permanent phenomena but also non-existent. Although they are not phenomena, non-existents are non-products because of not being impermanent phenomena produced from causes and conditions. Rather, it must be said that permanent phenomenon is mutually inclusive with non-produced phenomenon (*ma byas pa'i chos, akṛta-dharma*), the qualification "phenomenon" being added for the sake of eliminating non-existents.

Table VI lists permanent phenomenon and the phenomena mutually inclusive with it:

Table VI: Permanent Phenomenon and the Phenomena Mutually Inclusive With It

<u>Definienda</u>	<u>Definitions</u>
1 permanent phenomenon (<i>rtag pa, nitya</i>)	common locus of a phenomenon and the non-momentary (<i>chos dang skad cig ma ma yin pa'i gzhi mthun pa</i>)
2 non-produced phenomenon (<i>ma byas pa'i chos, akṛta-dharma</i>)	non-created phenomenon (<i>ma skyes pa'i chos</i>)
3 uncomposed phenomenon (<i>'dus ma byas kyi chos, asaṃskṛta-dharma</i>)	non-disintegrating phenomenon (<i>mi 'jig pa'i chos</i>)
4 conventional truth (<i>kun rdzob bden ba, samvṛti-satya</i>)	phenomenon which is ultimately unable to perform a function (<i>don dam par don byed mi nus pa'i chos</i>)

5 phenomenon which is a non-thing (*drigos med kyi chos, abhāva-dharma*)

phenomenon which is empty of the ability to perform a function (*don byed nus stong gi chos*)

6 generally characterized phenomenon (*spyi mtshun, sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*)

phenomenon which is merely imputed by a term or through consciousness and is not established as a specifically characterized phenomenon (*sgra rtog gis btags nomenon (sgra rtog gis btags pa tsam yin gyi rang mtshun du ma grub pa'i chos)*)

Permanent phenomena are *non-produced phenomena*; they are not created from causes and conditions. They are *uncaused phenomena*, not effects, and not disintegrating phenomena.

Permanent phenomena are *non-things*, for they lack the ability to perform a function. They do not serve as causes and cannot perform the function of producing effects. Rather, they are static and inactive. The Great Exposition School alone says that permanent phenomena are things, able to perform a function. This is so, they claim, "because, for instance, a space performs the function of allowing an object to be moved. [However,] the other systems of tenets say that the presence or absence of another obstructive object is what allows or does not allow an object to be moved, not space itself."¹ Still, all of the Buddhist systems of tenets agree that permanent phenomena are not momentary.

Permanent phenomena are *conventional truths*, ultimately unable to perform a function. Again, in the system of the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning only functioning things—those phenomena which are able to perform a function—are ultimate truths, and permanent phenomena—unable to perform a function—are conventional truths. Permanent phenomena are not truths for an ultimate mind,

¹ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 219.

a direct perceiver which is not mistaken with regard to the object appearing to it. In the system of the Proponents of Sūtra permanent phenomena are realized by thought consciousness only (with the exception of a Buddha's omniscient consciousness). As such, they are conventional truths, truths for a conventional [mind] or truths for an obscured [mind] (*kun rdzob bden ba, samvrti-satya*). Thought consciousnesses are called "obscured minds" because they are prevented from taking impermanent phenomena as their appearing objects. Being unable to perceive their objects directly, they must apprehend their objects by means of a permanent internal image.

Permanent phenomena are *generally characterized phenomena*, phenomena which are merely imputed by terms or thought consciousnesses and are not established as specifically characterized phenomena. Generally characterized phenomena are not established by way of their own character but must be imputed by a thought consciousness or by a term such as "non-cow". Therefore, they are mere imputations. This does not mean that they do not exist, but that they are not established from their own side.

SPECIFICALLY AND GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED PHENOMENA

In the topic of specifically and generally characterized phenomena, one finds the essence of the presentation of permanent and impermanent phenomena and the two truths according to the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning. The distinction between generally and specifically characterized phenomena turns on whether or not the phenomena must be understood by a thought consciousness. Generally characterized phenomena, all permanent phenomena, must be gotten at by means of a thought consciousness. On the other hand, specifically characterized phenomena, all impermanent phenomena, need not be cognized by a thought consciousness. As hidden phenomena—that is to say, as existents—specifically characterized phenomena may

be understood by thought consciousnesses, but since they are also manifest phenomena, they may be realized by direct perceivers.

Since generally characterized phenomena and specifically characterized phenomena may be distinguished in this way as those phenomena which must be realized by thought consciousnesses and those which may be realized by direct perceivers, the presentation of these phenomena depends on the description of the differences between thought consciousnesses and direct perceivers. In this regard, the main avenue to understanding the differences between these two types of awarenesses is the account of the four main types of objects of consciousnesses:

- 1 object of engagement (*'jug yul, *pravṛtti-viśhaya*)
- 2 determined object (*zhen yul, *adhyavasāya-viśhaya*)
- 3 appearing object (*snang yul, *pratibhāsa-viśhaya*)
- 4 apprehended object (*bzung yul, grāhya-viśhaya*).¹

The object of engagement or determined object of a consciousness is that object that it is actually getting at or understanding. "However, there is the qualification that the term 'determined object' is used only for conceptual consciousnesses, whereas 'object of engagement' is used for both conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses."² This difference in usage arises due to the fact that only thought consciousnesses are determinative knowers (*zhen rig, *adhyavasāya-sampredana*) because they determine, "This is such and such. That is such and such."³ Thus, for both a direct perceiver apprehending blue and a thought consciousness conceiving blue the object of engagement is blue, and for such a thought consciousness it also may be said that blue is its determined object.

¹ Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 28. For sources of Sanskrit given in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* see p. 163, note 24.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

The appearing object or apprehended object is the object that is actually appearing to the consciousness but is not necessarily what the consciousness is understanding.

Since the actual object that appears to direct perception is what it realizes, its appearing object, apprehended object, and object of engagement are all the same—in the example of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, all three are blue. However, for a conceptual consciousness, although the object of engagement and determined object are the actual object the consciousness is understanding—i.e., blue for a thought consciousness apprehending blue—the appearing object and apprehended object are just an [internal mental] image of blue.¹

By distinguishing the *appearing objects* of direct perceivers and thought consciousnesses one is led to understand the distinction between specifically characterized phenomena and generally characterized phenomena and thereby between ultimate truths and conventional truths in the system of the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning. In the seventh debate in the presentation of established bases, permanent phenomena is identified as mutually inclusive with the appearing object of a thought consciousness (*rtog pa'i snang yul*) and functioning thing is identified as mutually inclusive with the appearing object of a direct perceiver (*mingon sum gyi snang yul*). Reflecting the importance of these alliances, in this system specifically characterized phenomena are ultimate truths, truths for an ultimate awareness (*blo don dam pa*), and generally characterized phenomena are conventional truths, truths for a conventional awareness (*blo kun rāzob pa*). Thus, here phenomena are called "ultimate" or "conventional" in dependence on the awarenesses that take them as their appearing objects.

This fact points up a central emphasis of the Buddhist systems—clear preference is given to direct perceivers over

thought consciousnesses. (See pp. 13-21.) Although thought consciousnesses, specifically inferential cognizers, are an essential feature of the path leading to liberation, they are not able to carry one to the final attainment and eventually must be transcended. The reason for this is the nature of thought as a mistaken consciousness (*'khrul shes, bhrānti-jñāna*).

Thought Consciousnesses

Every thought consciousness (*rtog pa, kaipana*) is mistaken with respect to its appearing object—an internal mental image which is a meaning-generality (*don spyi, artha-sāmānya*). A meaning-generality, necessarily a permanent phenomenon, is an image which, although it appears to be the actual object being understood, merely serves as an elimination of what is not that object. For instance, the thought consciousness conceiving of a table understands its object indirectly by means of a representative image, a meaning-generality of a table. A meaning-generality of a table is not an actual table, but is a mere mental image of a table which is an elimination of non-table.

Thus, thought proceeds by an essentially negative process. What appears to the thought consciousness apprehending a table is the elimination of non-table. That is, all that is not a table is eliminated, and thought understands the table in a general way. In this way thought understands the generality of table rather than any particular instance. Therefore, permanent phenomena are called generally characterized phenomena because their characters are known only in a general way by an imputing thought consciousness, and since they depend on such imputation, they are not established from their own side. There is no way to realize a permanent or generally characterized phenomenon by way of its own specific entity.

One might wonder why, if these mental images are dependent upon having seen external phenomena of that type, are meaning-generalities permanent phenomena

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

rather than products. "Each person's images or concepts do indeed come into existence in dependence on the person's having formed an image of such an object, but from the viewpoint of their being the exclusion of everything that is not that object, they are said to be permanent."¹

The Collected Topics logicians present naming as an essentially arbitrary process. Whatever exists is suitable to be designated by any name. It is only by conditioning that we come to refer to these four-legged creatures with fur, wagging tails, and so forth as "dogs". One comes to learn the meaning of "dog" in dependence upon seeing a dog and being taught the name by one's mother and so forth. In this way a meaning-generality of dog, which may be an appearance of, perhaps, a golden retriever that serves as an elimination of all that is not a dog, comes into existence.

For instance, one sees a golden retriever and then later in another place the form of that animal is remembered clearly.² The image of the dog seen earlier appears to a conceptual consciousness and does not appear to a direct perceiver. That appearance of a golden retriever is a meaning-generality, not an actual dog. The meaning-generality cannot be an actual dog, for if it were, then when that golden retriever grew old and died the meaning-generality too would have to appear just as old and decrepit as the dog does. Such is not the case, for it is well known that the internal image of a youthful golden retriever can continue to appear clearly long after the actual external dog has grown old and died. Also, the conceptual or internal dog is not an actual dog because it would have to be able to perform the functions of a dog. Then it would be the case that wherever the thought of a dog existed, there would exist a dog. Or, if by thinking of gold one came to have actual gold, then no

one would be without gold. The meaning-generality of dog, although it appears to be a dog, is not an actual dog.

Therefore, a conceptual awareness is necessarily a mistaken consciousness (*'khrul shes*, *bhrānti-jñāna*), defined as:

a knower which is mistaken with regard to its appearing object (*rang gi snang yul la 'khrul ba'i rig pa*),

because a meaning-generality of, for instance, a pot appears to a thought consciousness to be a pot although it is not.¹ Still, even though a thought consciousness is necessarily mistaken, it is not necessarily a wrong consciousness (*log shes*, *viparyaya-jñāna*), defined as:

a knower which is mistaken with regard to its object of engagement (*rang gi 'jug yul la 'khrul ba'i rig pa*)

because a correct thought consciousness is able to realize validly and incontrovertibly its object of engagement, the actual object it is getting at or understanding.² That is, within the context of being mistaken with regard to its appearing object—a meaning-generality, a conceptual consciousness may be correct with regard to its object of engagement—the actual object it is cognizing. For instance, an inferential cognizer (*rjes dpag*, *anumāna*), necessarily a thought consciousness, realizing the impermanence of sound is mistaken with regard to its appearing object—a meaning-generality of impermanent sound which appears to be sound but is not. However, such a thought consciousness is not a *wrong* consciousness because it is not mistaken with regard to its object of engagement—the impermanence of sound—which it realizes correctly.

Thus, every thought consciousness is such that what appears to it and what it understands are different. This does not entail that thought is unreliable, but that it is only able to understand its object—impermanence, gold, pot, dog, and so forth—in an indirect manner, through the

¹ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 347.

² The source for this section on the process of thought is *Den-dar-hla-ram-ba* (*bstan dar lha ram pa*), *Beginnings of a Presentation of Generality and Specifically Characterized Phenomena* (*rang mtshan spyi mtshan gyi rnam gzhag risom 'phro!*), Collected Works of *Bstan-dar Lha-ram of A-lag-sha*, Vol. 1 (New Delhi: Lama Guru Deva, 1971).

¹ See Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 133ff.

² See Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 109-110.

appearance of an internal image. "Thought is a reliable way to ascertain objects."¹ As a sign of the reliability of thought, the Dignāga-Dharmakīrti schools of reasoning present inferential cognizers as one of the two types of valid cognizers (*śhad ma*, *pramāṇa*).

Direct Perceivers

The other type of valid cognizer is a direct perceiver (*mngon sum*, *pratyakṣha*), a consciousness able to realize specifically characterized phenomena. They are so called because they realize their objects *directly* without depending on the appearance of an internal image. The actual object appears to be a direct perceiver whereas a thought consciousness gets at its object only by means of an appearing meaningfulity. A direct perceiver is defined as:

a non-mistaken knower that is free from conceptuality
(*rtog pa dang bral zhing ma 'khrul ba'i rig pa*).²

The portion of the definition which specifies it as a *knower*—mutually inclusive with consciousness and awareness—serves to include all consciousnesses and exclude all else—forms, permanent phenomena, and so forth. The portion that specifies direct perceivers as *free from conceptuality* eliminates the possibility that there could be a direct perceiver that knows its object by way of an internal image rather than contacting its object directly.

Direct perceivers are non-mistaken (*ma 'khrul pa*, *abhraṇta*) knowers, for they are not mistaken with regard to their appearing objects, specifically characterized phenomena which appear directly to the apprehending consciousness. Further, since the object of engagement of a direct perceiver is the same as its appearing object, it is not mistaken with regard to its object of engagement and thereby is not a wrong consciousness. The differences between the processes

¹ Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 30.

² See Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 49ff.

of conception and direct perception may be illustrated in this way: Thought consciousnesses are limited to knowing their objects indirectly by the appearance of a representation of that object, like seeing an image reflected in a mirror. Direct perceivers, on the other hand, are not limited in this way, for their objects appear to them directly. Thus, direct perceivers are non-mistaken knowers.

Indeed, a specifically characterized phenomenon which is the appearing object of a direct perceiver appears to that consciousness just as it is. However, this does not mean that for the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning the content of direct perception is wholly determined by the external object. Rather, the perception may also be influenced by the physical sense power or the consciousness of the one making the perception. For example, an eye consciousness which sees snow-covered mountains as blue, which sees a single moon as double, or which sees everything as red when one is embroiled in anger is a faulty perceiver due to subjective errors.

Such an eye consciousness, necessarily a non-conceptual consciousness (*rtog med kyi shes pa*, *nirvikalpa-jñāna*), is nonetheless a *mistaken* consciousness because it is mistaken with respect to its appearing object and a *wrong* consciousness because it is mistaken with respect to its object of engagement. Since what appears to a non-conceptual consciousness is the same as what it is engaging or understanding, such consciousnesses which are mistaken with respect to both of these do not qualify as actual direct perceivers. Thus, in his *Compendium of Valid Cognition* (*pramāṇasamuchchaya*) Dignāga includes "dimness of sight" as one of the types of counterfeit direct perceivers (*mngon sum ltar snang*, *pratyakṣha-ābhāsa*) indicating all non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses as knowers which falsely appear to be direct perceivers but are not actually such.¹

Still, since such wrong consciousnesses are not direct perceivers, they do not show that the content of actual direct

¹ See Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 72-73.

perception is not wholly determined by the object. In this regard, the Collected Topics logicians note that whereas a direct perceiver is necessarily a consciousness to which a specifically characterized phenomenon *appears* together with all of its uncommon characteristics, it does not necessarily *ascertain* those characteristics. For instance, a directly perceiving eye consciousness apprehending blue is a non-mistaken knower correctly ascertaining the color which appears to it, but it does not ascertain the subtle impermanence of that specifically characterized phenomenon which appears together with it. Thus, with respect to its appearing object, blue, it is a direct perceiver, but with respect to the subtle impermanence of blue it is an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained (*shang la ma nges pa, *aniyata-pratibhāsa*).¹ Such an eye consciousness is a non-mistaken non-conceptual knower of blue, but due to the fact that subtle impermanence is an object of engagement of a mental consciousness only it does not cognize all that appears to it. Thus, the content of direct perception is influenced by the perceiving consciousness.

Direct perceivers are of two types—sense direct perceivers (*dbang po'i mngon sum, indriya-pratyakṣha*) and mental direct perceivers (*yiḍ kyi mngon sum, mānasa-pratyakṣha*). There are five types of sense direct perceivers corresponding to the five sense consciousnesses—eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body sense consciousnesses. Consciousnesses of all types are impermanent phenomena, and, in the case of directly perceiving consciousnesses, their explicit objects are also impermanent phenomena, objects which disintegrate moment by moment. Thus, some have raised the qualm that since consciousnesses last for only a moment and their objects too are momentary phenomena, how can a sense consciousness know any object? One Buddhist answer is: "What we experience as sense perception is a continuum of moments of consciousness apprehending a continuum of

¹ See Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 99-106.

moments of an object which is also disintegrating moment by moment."¹

"Sense consciousnesses are also capable of comprehending their object's ability to perform a function; thus, an eye consciousness itself can perceive that fire has the ability to cook and burn."² Therefore, direct perceivers do not merely register sensory input, but are non-mistaken knowers which are capable of realizing their objects.

Although direct perceivers may induce conception, they themselves are totally non-conceptual. Such consciousnesses do not name or classify their objects, but experience them apart from *conceptually* determining types and so forth. Still, this does not mean that direct perceivers are not aware of their objects' qualities. "Sense consciousnesses can also be trained such that an eye consciousness can know not only that a person being seen is a man but also that that person is one's father."³

A sense consciousness would not *conceive* that its object is one's father, but it may induce a conceptual consciousness which affixes names, determines types, remembers associations, and so forth. In this way, people are drawn into conceptuality, quickly abandoning the richness of direct perception in favor of mental imagery and abstraction. Specifically characterized phenomena appear nakedly to direct perceivers; however, ordinary beings do not perceive them nakedly because (1) generally these objects maintain a continuum of similar type moment by moment and thereby appear to persist and (2) such beings are under the influence of predispositions for naming objects.

Mental direct perceivers are the second type of direct perceivers, and again these are of several types.⁴ Included among these is mental direct perception in the continuum of ordinary beings. "The Ge-luk-bas assert that at the end of a continuum of sense direct perception of an object there is

¹ Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 18.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ See Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 54-74.

generated one moment of mental direct perception; this in turn induces conceptual cognition of that object, naming it and so forth."¹ Such mental direct perceivers serve to link the knowledge of raw sense data to conceptual consciousnesses which notice, name, determine types, and so forth. Lasting only an instant, these mental direct perceivers are too ephemeral for an ordinary person to notice; however, they are ascertained by advanced practitioners who have more stable and insightful awarenesses.

The most important of direct perceivers is yogic direct perceivers (*nyal 'byor mngon sum, yogi-pratyakṣha*), a kind of mental direct perceiver which is a non-conceptual, direct realizer of such profound objects as subtle impermanence and selflessness or, more specifically, the mind and body qualified as selfless. Yogic direct perceivers do not occur in the continuums of ordinary beings but exist only in the continuums of Superiors (*phags pa, ārya*)—those who have attained the path of seeing (*mthong lam, darshana-mārga*) in which the truth is realized directly.

Such yogic direct perceivers do not arise effortlessly but must be cultivated over a long period through engaging in extensive practice. The yogi first understands, for instance, subtle impermanence conceptually. Then through continued and sustained familiarization with that conceptual realization, he is able to bring the image appearing to that inferential cognizer—that is, a meaning-generality of subtle impermanence—into exceptionally clear focus. Having cultivated a conceptual understanding to the peak of its capacity, the yogi eventually passes beyond the need for a representative image of what is understood and develops a direct perception of the object. These yogic direct perceivers are the most exalted of all knowers; being able to realize the profound truths in a totally unimistaken manner, they are the actual antidote to ignorance, the source of all suffering in cyclic existence. The achievement of yogic direct perceivers is the goal of all Buddhist reasoning.

¹ Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 18.

The Enumeration of Valid Cognizers

All established bases are divided exhaustively between the two, phenomena suitable to appear to direct perceivers and those which must appear to thought consciousnesses. The divisions as stated are mutually exclusive, for what must appear to a thought consciousness cannot appear to a direct perceiver and what is suitable to appear to a direct perceiver cannot be the *appearing* object of thought consciousnesses. This is not to say that what appears to direct perception cannot also be known by thought, for all phenomena are suitable to be known by thought. Both permanent and impermanent phenomena are hidden phenomena, one of the phenomena mutually inclusive with established bases, defined as:

objects realized in a hidden manner by the thought consciousnesses apprehending them.

They are qualified as objects of thought, and they are hidden in the sense that they appear to the thought consciousnesses apprehending them only by way of an internal mental image which represents them. However, only impermanent phenomena are manifest phenomena as well in that they are also:

objects explicitly realized by direct valid cognizers.

These are phenomena *suitable* to appear to direct perceivers. They are forms and so forth which are manifest for the five sense consciousnesses and mental direct perceivers. Still, manifest phenomena are hidden phenomena in the sense that they are objects realized in a hidden manner by the *thought consciousnesses* apprehending them. Thus, even though all phenomena are suitable to be realized by thought, phenomena may be divided without exception into those *suitable* to appear to direct perceivers and those which *must* appear to thought consciousnesses.

Specifically characterized phenomena are objects suitable to appear to direct perceivers, and generally characterized phenomena are objects which must appear to thought consciousnesses. These are the two types of objects of comprehension. Most Collected Topics texts begin the presentation of established bases with citation of a passage from the third chapter, on direct perceivers, of Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"* which says, "Because objects of comprehension are two, valid cognizers are two."¹ The intention of this passage is to establish the enumeration of two valid cognizers, direct valid cognizers and inferential valid cognizers, as definite in order to clear away the many Hindu assertions of fewer or more valid cognizers. In so doing, Dharmakīrti presents a quintessential instruction on Buddhist logic and epistemology. He proves conclusively that there are only two valid cognizers "by way of showing that more than two are unnecessary and less than two would not include them all!"²

The Lo-sef-ling *Collected Topics* expresses the meaning of this passage in syllogistic form:

With respect to the subject, valid cognizers, they are definitely enumerated as two, direct valid cognizers and inferential valid cognizers, because their objects of comprehension are definitely enumerated as two, manifest phenomena which are objects realized within taking a specifically characterized phenomenon as the apprehended object (*bzung yul, grāhya-viśhaya*) and hidden phenomena which are objects realized within taking a generally characterized phenomenon as the apprehended object.³

All objects of comprehension, specifically and generally characterized phenomena, are suitable as objects of comprehension by a valid cognizer. Direct valid cognizers are able

¹ Dharmakīrti, *Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"*, P5709, Vol. 130, 88.3.4.

² Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 118.

³ Jam-bel-trin-lay-yön-dan-gya-tso, *Lo-sef-ling Collected Topics*, p. 2.

to realize specifically characterized phenomena which serve as their apprehended objects. Apprehended object is mutually inclusive with appearing object and "refers to the object which is actually appearing to the consciousness and not necessarily to what it is comprehending".¹ In the case of a direct perceiver the apprehended object and what is being comprehended are the same. In the case of a thought consciousness the apprehended object is a meaning-generality and the object comprehended is the actual object, any hidden phenomenon. Inferential valid cognizers, necessarily thought consciousnesses which are produced in dependence upon a correct sign, have the special ability to realize generally characterized phenomena. Although inferential cognizers are able to comprehend any hidden phenomenon, their apprehended object is necessarily a generally characterized phenomenon. Thus, by means of the two valid cognizers, direct and inferential, one is able to realize all objects of comprehension, specifically and generally characterized phenomena. The enumeration of valid cognizers as two is both necessary and sufficient; therefore, Dharmakīrti concludes, the enumeration is definite.

Eliminative Engagers and Collective Engagers

Corresponding to the division of consciousnesses into conceptual and non-conceptual types is the division into consciousnesses which are eliminative engagers (*sel 'jug, *apoha-prāyrtti*) and consciousnesses which are collective engagers (*sgrub 'jug, *vidhi-prāyrtti*). Thought consciousnesses are eliminative engagers and direct perceivers are collective engagers. "Whereas in the conceptual/non-conceptual division the emphasis is on what the consciousness sees, i.e., whether the actual object or an image of the object appears to it, here the emphasis is on the way in which that consciousness apprehends its object."²

¹ Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 29.

² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

A direct perceiver is a collective engager, it engages its object in a collective manner because its object appears to it together with all of its uncommon characteristics.¹ For instance, a direct perceiver realizing blue does not comprehend its object by explicitly eliminating non-blue or anything else in order to understand blue. Rather, it realizes its object nakedly and directly. Beyond that, it is *capable* of realizing its object just as it is—that is to say, together with all of its uncommon characteristics. The “uncommon characteristics” of an impermanent phenomenon are those impermanent characteristics that are the same substantial entity in terms of being established, abiding, and disintegrating simultaneously with that thing. These are phenomena such as the individual particles that compose a material phenomenon, the impermanence of the object, its productness, and so forth that are produced together with the object, last one instant with the object, and disintegrate simultaneously with the object.

Although a direct perceiver is *capable* of realizing all of the uncommon characteristics of a specifically characterized phenomenon it does not necessarily do so. These characteristics appear to an ordinary direct perceiver, but such a consciousness is unable to notice them. Only a yogic direct perceiver notices and ascertains all of the uncommon characteristics together with its appearing object. If an ordinary direct perceiver realized all of the uncommon characteristics of a specifically characterized phenomenon, then in order to understand subtle impermanence it would be necessary merely to stop conception rather than to familiarize with the object first by means of inferential cognizers. Still, “In the Sautrāntika system all the qualities that are established, abide, and cease with a thing—such as its shape, colour, impermanence, nature of being a product,

and so forth—appear to any direct perceiver apprehending that object.”¹

Direct perceivers do not superimpose artificial characteristics on their objects. The appearing object of a direct perceiver is necessarily a specifically characterized phenomenon, “a thing with respect to which place, time, and nature are not mixed.”² Essentially, the meaning of the assertion that specifically characterized phenomena, impermanent phenomena, functioning things, and so forth are phenomena with respect to which place, time, and nature are not mixed is that these phenomena appear to direct perceivers nakedly, just as they are, without being at all mixed or confused with phenomena of other places, times, or natures.

Specifically characterized phenomena have the character of appearing as they are, specifically, without depending on the appearance of a meaning generality. In the system of the Proponents of Sūtra, these are phenomena that are established by way of their own characters without depending on imputation by thought. Moreover, they appear together with all of their own characteristics of impermanence and so forth without being generally characterized in a rough way by association with phenomena of other places, times, and natures. “A specifically characterized phenomenon is so called because of being a phenomenon of which the entity is able to appear to a direct valid cognizer without depending on the elimination of an object of negation, the indirectness of a meaning-generality, and so forth.”³ Specifically characterized phenomena can appear without involving the errors of conceptuality.

Thought consciousnesses are not collective engagers but eliminative engagers. Thought does not comprehend its object together with all of its uncommon characteristics, but understands its object in a general way by a negative

¹ The sources for this section are Den-dar-hla-ram-ḥa, *Beginnings of a Presentation of Generality and Specifically Characterized Phenomena* and Ngak-wang-dra-ḥi, *Co-mang Collected Topics*.

¹ Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 31.

² Ngak-wang-dra-ḥi, *Co-mang Collected Topics*, p. 411.

³ *Ibid.*

process of eliminating all that is not that object. The thought consciousness apprehending a table does not comprehend a table just as it is, for it comprehends a mere mental imputation which is an elimination of non-table. Such a thought consciousness explicitly ascertains a table, but a table is not its appearing object. The meaning-generality of table is the appearing object, but it is not what the thought consciousness ascertains.

The Mixture of Place, Time, and Nature

The appearing object of a thought consciousness is necessarily a generally characterized phenomenon, a permanent phenomenon. Generally characterized phenomena are so called because their characters are realized not by way of their own entities but by way of a generality. They are realized in a general way. For instance, the thought consciousness apprehending ice cream understands it through the elimination of non-ice cream by way of the appearance of a mental image of something which is the opposite of non-ice cream. By this process ice cream is not understood together with all of its specific qualities but merely in a general way, as the elimination of non-ice cream. Thus, a conceptual consciousness can know something in only a general way rather than appreciating its object's freshness and fullness.

A meaning-generality of ice cream appearing to a thought consciousness apprehending ice cream is a phenomenon with respect to which place (*yu*), time (*du*), and nature (*rang bzhin*) are mixed. That is, upon reading the word "ice cream" or contacting the actual object, what appears to the thought apprehending ice cream is an internal image of ice cream that was encountered in a different place, in an earlier time, and had a different nature.

For instance, when one was a child training in the use of language, upon going to the amusement park and first encountering this cold sweet chocolate food one's mother explained, "This is ice cream." Confirming the association the child thinks, "This cold sweet chocolate food is ice

cream." Thus, an image of the cold sweet chocolate food appears to the thought consciousness as ice cream and as the opposite of non-ice cream. Then when one encountered a cold sweet strawberry food at the aunt's house, one immediately thought, "This is ice cream." In terms of what appears to that thought consciousness, factors of chocolate ice cream experienced earlier at the amusement park appear to be present also in the strawberry ice cream at the aunt's house. Thought is mixing or confusing places, for the factors which existed with an ice cream in one place appear to thought to be present also with an ice cream in another place. The mixing of times is that factors which existed with the ice cream of an earlier time appear to be present with the ice cream of the present time. The mixing of natures is thought's perception of the factor of chocolate ice cream's being ice cream and the factor of strawberry ice cream's being ice cream as being the same whereas they are different. Thus, thought takes cognizance merely of its object's general quality as ice cream and does not appreciate the freshness and fullness of its object as a vibrant, impermanent, specifically characterized phenomenon.

Thought is by its very nature a mistaken consciousness, and for ordinary people usual perception is dominated by thought. Upon meeting an old friend we say, "This is my friend from years ago," and in so doing we are apprehending the former friend and the later friend as if the same whereas there are doubtless changes. Such thought mixes objects of different places, times, and natures.

Still, as interpreted by the Ge-luk-ba order it is a fundamental and shared assertion of all the Buddhist tenet systems that thought is essential on the path leading to liberation. Eventually, the need for thought consciousnesses is transcended, but in order to attain a direct realization of the truths it is necessary to engage in rigorous analytical investigation over a long period of time. Through training in reasoning one can eventually progress to the point when conceptualization is no longer necessary.

The stated purpose for Buddhist reasoning is the development of yogic direct perceivers realizing subtle impermanence, the mind and body as selfless, etc. Only yogic direct perceivers can serve as the antidote to the ignorance that binds one in the suffering of cyclic existence. Such consciousnesses are produced in dependence on a very stable and insightful mind developed by the power of meditation, but some of the best qualities of this very special consciousness are shared by all direct perceivers, those in the continuums of ordinary beings as well as those in the continuums of Superiors. For instance, all direct perceivers are non-mistaken consciousnesses to which the appearing object, a specifically characterized phenomenon, appears just as it is together with all of its uncommon characteristics of impermanence and so forth. Still, even though subtle impermanence *appears* equally to all direct perceivers, it is only yogic direct perceivers which are able to take such impermanence as an object of *realization*. Direct perceivers in the continuums of ordinary beings are not able to notice the subtle impermanence which appears. This failure is due to the influence of both internal conditions—thick predispositions for adhering to permanence—and external conditions—the object's abiding in a similar type in former and later moments. By the power of these two conditions, a direct perceiver in the continuum of an ordinary being is unable to induce the ascertainment of subtle impermanence. The process of sharpening one's direct perception to the point of being able to realize all of the qualities that appear depends on thought consciousnesses, the analytical reasoning inducing inferential cognizers, which are like a tonic for empowering perception.

One good quality shared equally by all types of direct perceivers is that they are consciousnesses which do not mix place, time, and nature. Whereas thought consciousnesses understand their objects by the appearance of an associated object of a similar type which was encountered in a different place at an earlier time, direct perceivers experience their objects just as they are.

The meaning of non-mixture of place is not simply that what exists, for instance, in the east must necessarily not exist in the west, for if that were the correct interpretation it would absurdly follow that some phenomenon which is present everywhere such as object of knowledge would not exist in the west because it exists in the east.¹ Rather, the meaning of a non-mixture of place is that even though some functioning thing exists in both the east and west, just that factor which exists in the east does not exist in the west. Indeed, general phenomena such as functioning things and objects of knowledge do exist in both the east and west, but precisely what exists in the east does not also exist in the west. This is merely an appeal to the uniqueness of all specifically characterized phenomena.

Similarly, if one interprets the meaning of a non-mixture of time to be that what existed yesterday morning necessarily does not exist today, then it would absurdly follow that an unchanging phenomenon—a permanent phenomenon—would not exist today because it existed yesterday morning. More accurately, the meaning of a non-mixture of time is identified: Even though some functioning thing exists both this morning and this evening, just that factor which existed in the morning does not exist in the evening. The objects of direct perceivers are specifically characterized phenomena, momentary phenomena; therefore, precisely what existed this morning could not also exist this evening.

Finally, someone might mistakenly interpret the meaning of a non-mixture of nature to be that whatever encompasses a pot (in the sense of being a generality of a pot) necessarily does not encompass a pillar, and whatever encompasses a pillar necessarily does not encompass a pot. Such an interpretation is not correct because it would absurdly follow that the subject, functioning thing, would not encompass a pillar because it encompasses a pot. Functioning thing is a generality of both a pot and a pillar, and as such it equally

¹ The source for the meanings of the non-mixture of place, time, and nature is Ngak-wang-dra-shi, *Co-mang Collected Topics*, pp. 406-408, 411.

encompasses each of them. Thus, the meaning of a non-mixture of natures is that although some functioning thing encompasses both a pot and a pillar, just that factor which encompasses a pot does not encompass a pillar. Again, this is an appeal to the uniqueness of specifically characterized phenomena. Although all functioning things share the nature of being able to perform functions as they are causes and so forth, there are certain qualities in the nature of, for instance, a pot that are not also present in the nature of a pillar.

A GE-LUK-BA/SĀ-ĠYA-Ā DEBATE

All of the Buddhist systems agree with one voice that in the end direct perception is preferable to conceptuality. However, there are many interpretations of the nature of the objects suitable to be realized by direct perceivers and the nature of the objects that must be realized by thought consciousnesses. The interpretation that has been presented here is that of the Tutor Pur-bu-jok Jam-ba-gya-tso, author of the text translated in Part Two of this work. This is a Ge-luk-ba interpretation of the system of the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning and is in great measure supported by other Ge-luk-ba Collected Topics manuals, commentaries, and so forth. However, in the general study of the tenet systems, the many commentators—both within Ge-luk-ba and between the traditions—have frequently disagreed. By considering the commentators' various stances in their interpretations of a point of doctrine one can come to understand the issues much more clearly.

In this regard, it is instructive to consider the differences between two interpretations of the doctrine of the two truths, a Ge-luk-ba view and an opposing view presented by at least some interpreters of the Sā-ġya-ba (*sa skyā pa*) order. This dialectic between two orders of Tibetan Buddhism arises within the framework of their interpretations of the system of the Proponents of Sūtra and focuses on the question of the relation between the two truths, or specifically

and generally characterized phenomena, and impermanent and permanent phenomena. The presentation of the Ge-luk-ba interpretation is drawn from the Tutor's *Collected Topics*, a recent work which is consistent with the basic Ge-luk-ba stance established earlier. The Sā-ġya-ba position was formulated by the monk-scholar Dak-tsang (*stag tshang*, b. 1405) who raised several objections to the Ge-luk-ba interpretation of the system of the Proponents of Sūtra. Dak-tsang's interpretation is drawn from his general presentation of Buddhist tenets.¹

The source of this Ge-luk-ba/Sā-ġya-ba controversy is a particular passage in Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition" (pramāṇavarttika-kārikā)* which says:

That which is ultimately able to perform a function

Exists ultimately here [in this system]; other [phenomena, unable to do so] exist conventionally.

These explain specifically characterized [phenomena] And generally characterized [phenomenon].²

Thus, Dharmakīrti identifies specifically characterized phenomena as those ultimately able to perform a function and explains that they ultimately exist, thereby indicating specifically characterized phenomena as ultimate truths. Also, he identifies generally characterized phenomena as those which exist and are other than those ultimately able to perform a function. Thus, generally characterized phenomena exist conventionally and are explained to be conventional truths.

Both the Ge-luk-bas and the Sā-ġya-bas agree that ultimate truth and specifically characterized phenomenon are

¹ Dak-tsang (*stag tshang lo tsā ba shes rab rin chen*), *Ocean of Good Explanations, Explanation of "Freedom From Extremes Through Understanding All Tenets"* (*grub mtha' kun shes nas mtha' brai grub pa zhes bya ba'i bstam bcos rnam par bshad pa legs bshad kyi rgya mistho*), (Thim-phu: Kun-bzang-stobs-rgyal, 1976).

² Dharmakīrti, *Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"*, P5709, Vol. 130, 88.3.5-88.3.6.

8 Colors and So Forth

INTRODUCTION

Before examining the first debates, an introductory overview of the topics considered in the presentation of colors and so forth will be beneficial. This is done in order to give the reader a broader perspective on the issues, thereby rendering the debates more accessible.

All of the Collected Topics debate manuals begin with a presentation of colors (*kha dog, warna*). In the Tutor's *Collected Topics*, this first chapter is an examination of not only colors but also all types of external forms—visible forms (*gzugs, rūpa*), sounds (*sgra, shabda*), odors (*dri, gandha*), tastes (*ro, rasa*), and tangible objects (*reg bya, sprashīṭṭya*). The topics are asserted in accordance with the philosophical tenets of the Buddhist system of the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning as interpreted by the Tibetan Ge-luk-ba order.

The first few debates in this text are indeed limited to a consideration of colors, and this topic is precisely where the traditional study of Buddhist reasoning commences for the novice monks as Geshé Rabten recalls:

We were first taught the easiest subject—the relationships between the four primary and the eight secondary colours. They were explained carefully; and we learned how to apply simple logical reasoning to them. ... While the subject of colours and their relationships is very simple, it is the manner of phrasing the question in debate that trains the mind. This becomes very interesting and challenging. Once we had mastered it, our intelligence developed somewhat.¹

These debates on colors and so forth, as the first introduction to debate and formalized reasoning, are simple and straightforward. Beyond teaching the form and procedure of the debating process, they offer little content. Still, there is a purpose for beginning the reasoning texts with a presentation of colors and other forms because, using this as a basis, one is able to progress toward higher, more profound topics:

The purpose is to train the potency of the mind so that one will be able to penetrate the difficult topics. At the beginning of the study of reasoning it would be difficult to prove the existence of omniscience or the existence of liberation. For the sake of understanding, one initially settles such topics as impermanent phenomena, non-impermanent phenomena, and objects of comprehension. In order to understand in debate the extension of pervasions [*khyab pa che chung*] with regard to such topics, it is necessary to first settle this in relation to phenomena that can be seen with the eye—colors and shapes—as well as others such as sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects. That is, in relation to the objects of direct perception. From among these, we are most involved with color; thus, the study begins with color.²

¹ Rabten, pp. 38-39.

² Dharma Lochö Rinbochay, oral commentary.

Underlying this pedagogy is the Buddhist view that sentient beings caught in cyclic existence are constantly involved with forms, being distracted by colors, shapes, and so forth while not mixing their minds with reasoning. Due to this, sentient beings remain confused with respect to the ultimate and conventional natures of phenomena and are powerlessly imprisoned in cyclic existence. Thus, the textbooks on introductory reasoning take forms as the first topic of debate in order to lead trainees to the path of reasoning through first analyzing the familiar. What is familiar is more accessible. An examination of forms requires no special introduction, and so it is an easy and suitable topic with which to begin training young monks, usually between the ages of seven and fifteen.

By training in easier topics, one advances and is eventually able to handle the more difficult. This is the reason why the presentation of white and red colors is given at the beginning. If this purpose is not understood, one might think it is senseless to talk about white and red colors.¹

As mentioned above, in the Tutor's *Collected Topics* this first chapter is more generally an examination of all types of external form (*phyi'i gzugs, bahirdhā-rūpa*). One of the main sources of the *Collected Topics* texts is Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge (abhidharmakosha)* which presents form in the following passage:

Forms are the five sense powers, the five Objects, and non-revelatory forms only.
The bases of the consciousnesses of these types—
The eye [sense] and so forth—are forms.
[Visible] forms are of two types or twenty types.
Sounds are of eight types.

¹ *Ibid.*

Tastes are of six types. Odors are of four types. Tangible objects are of just eleven [types].¹

In sūtra Buddha said, "Monks, it is called the appropriated aggregate of form because it exists as form and it is suitable as form."² Ajitamitra, in his commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*, reports that *rūpa* (form) means "that which is breakable", for form may be broken.

All forms are impermanent phenomena because they are produced in dependence on causes and conditions and, once produced, disintegrate. As such, forms may be perceived by direct perception. In this system, the various types of forms serve as the fields of activity of the five sense consciousnesses (*dbang shes, indriya-jñāna*)—eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousnesses.

According to the *Treasury of Knowledge*, form is divided into eleven types: the five physical sense powers (*dbang po, indriya*), the five external objects (*phyi'i don, bahirdhā-ārtha*) of those senses, and non-revelatory form (*rnam par rig byed ma yin pa'i gzugs, avijñapti-rūpa*), also called form for the mental consciousness (*chos kyi skye mched pa'i gzugs, dharmāyatana-rūpa*), which is not any of the other five external forms and is an object apprehended by the mental consciousness only.³ These are:

- 1 eye sense power (*mig gi dbang po, cakṣur-indriya*)
- 2 ear sense power (*rna ba'i dbang po, śrotra-indriya*)
- 3 nose sense power (*snā'i dbang po, ghrāṇa-indriya*)
- 4 tongue sense power (*lce'i dbang po, jihvā-indriya*)

¹ Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Knowledge (abhidharmakośha)*, PS590, Vol. 115, 117.25-117.2.6.

² Gen-dün-drup-ba (*dge 'dun grub pa*), *Commentary on (Vasubandhu's "Treasury of Knowledge", Illuminating the Path to Liberation (dam pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa thar lam gsal byed)* (Sarnath, India: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Press, 1973), p. 28.

³ In the system of the Proponents of the Sūtra School Following Reasoning non-revelatory form or form for the mental consciousness is asserted but not as fully qualified form. It is probably included among non-associated compositional factors because it is impermanent but neither a consciousness nor actual form.

- 5 body sense power (*lus kyi dbang po, kāya-indriya*)
- 6 visible form (*gzugs, rūpa*)
- 7 sound (*sgra, śabdā*)
- 8 odor (*dri, gandha*)
- 9 taste (*ro, rasa*)
- 10 tangible object (*reg bya, sprashṭavya*)
- 11 non-revelatory form (*rnam par rig byed ma yin pa'i gzugs, avijñapti-rūpa*).¹

In the system of the Proponents of Sūtra, form (*gzugs, rūpa*) and matter (*bem po, kantihā*) or material phenomenon are mutually inclusive. Whatever is the one is necessarily the other. In accordance with the above passage from sūtra (p. 188), form is defined as:

that which is suitable as form (*gzugs su rung ba, rūpana*).

This definition is more tautological than descriptive and is an appeal to ordinary experience.

Matter is defined as:

what which is atomically established (*rdul du grub pa, *anusiddha*).

A material phenomenon is generally a collection of many atoms or particles, though a single atom too is matter. Matter is divided into two types: external matter (*phyi'i bem po, bahirdhā-kantihā*) and internal matter (*rang gi bem po, ādhyātmika-kantihā*). The division into external and internal varieties can also be made for form.² External matter is defined as:

that which is atomically established and is not included within the continuum of a person (*skyes bu'i rgyud kyi ma bsduṣ pa'i rdul du grub pa*).

¹ The source for the Sanskrit in this list is Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 221.

² Lati Rinbochay, oral commentary.

External matter consists of visible forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects. The definition of internal matter is:

that which is atomically established and is included within the continuum of a person (*skyes bu'i rgyud kyis bsduṣ pa'i rdul du grub pa*).

Internal matter is included within the continuum of a person in the sense of being appropriated as the body or form of a person and being a sensate portion of the body. Thus, internal matter includes the fleshy body—though not the hair or nails beyond where they may be felt—as well as the five sense powers: eye sense power, ear sense power, and so forth.

The five sense powers are neither the coarse organs, which are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body, nor are they consciousnesses. They are clear matter located in the coarse organs which cannot be seen by the eye but can be seen by certain clairvoyants. They give their respective consciousnesses dominance or power with respect to certain objects and thus are called "powers" (*indriya*).¹

Indeed, the five "external" forms also exist as internal forms included within a person's continuum because what is internal for one person is external for another and because internal form has color, shape, and so forth as does external matter. Still, the Collected Topics logicians do not assert ten internal forms including visible forms, sounds, odors, and so forth in addition to the five sense powers, probably because it would be repetitious to enumerate the five "external" sources again.

The subtle internal sense powers cannot be perceived by anyone's sense consciousnesses—they do not appear to the senses. Thus, the texts assert only five internal forms. Given this apparent inconsistency, forms may be posited as three

¹ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 221-222.

types: internal forms, external forms, and forms which are both internal and external. Material phenomena which are both internal and external are, for instance, the loci of the senses: the eyes, ears, and so forth. For example, the fleshy eye, not the sense power, is an internal form because of being a material phenomenon which is included within the continuum of a person, and it is an external form because of being matter which is an object of others' sense consciousnesses.¹

It should be noted that even though the above passage from Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* identifies eleven types of form (see pp. 188-189), in the system of the Proponents of Sūtra there are only ten because non-revelatory form is not asserted as actual form. Jang-gya Rol-bay-dor-jay (*lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje*) explains in his presentation of tenets, "Those who assert non-revelatory form as fully qualified form are definitely the two, Proponents of the Great Exposition and Consequentialists."² An example of a non-revelatory form in the system of the Great Exposition School, the point of view of the *Treasury of Knowledge*, is a form arising from promises.³ Such a form is said to be a subtle physical entity which arises at the moment of first taking a vow and remains with the person until losing the vow or death.⁴ In the system of the Proponents of Sūtra, non-revelatory forms or forms for the mental consciousness are asserted but not as fully qualified forms; thus, they are not generally discussed in the Collected Topics texts. Still, the Lo-sel-ling *Collected Topics* does list form for the mental consciousness as the sixth type of external form and defines it as:

¹ Lati Rinbochay, oral commentary.

² Jang-gya (*lcang skya*) *Presentation of Tenets/Clear Expositions of the Presentations of Tenets, Beautiful Ornament for the Meru of the Subduer's Teaching* (*grub pa'i mtshā'i rnam par bzhiog pa gsal bar bshad pa thub bstan thur po'i mdzes rgyan*) (Sarnath, India: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Press, 1970), p. 88.

³ Kensur Yeshey Tupden, oral commentary.

⁴ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 234.

that which is suitable as a form which appears only to a mental consciousness (*yiid shes kho na la snang ba'i gzugs su rung ba*).¹

Since non-revelatory forms are objects only of the mental consciousness, they are not form-sources (*gzugs kyi skye mched, rūpa-āyatana*) but are phenomena-sources (*chos kyi skye mched, dharmā-āyatana*).²

Even though forms are technically of three types—external, internal, and both external and internal—a study of just external and internal varieties, apart from a separate consideration of forms which are both, is adequate to assess the presentation of forms in the Collected Topics tradition. Following the pedagogical technique of beginning with more familiar topics, we will first consider external forms.

EXTERNAL FORMS

The five external forms—visible forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects—are the objects of experience of the five sense consciousnesses—eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body sense consciousnesses. External forms are the five sources (*skye mched, āyatana*), the five objects (*yu, viśaya*), the five meanings (*don, artha*), and the five object-sources (*yu gi kyi skye mched, viśaya-āyatana*). An external form is called a “source” because of being a form that is a *door, cause, condition, or source* of a sense consciousness.³

Visible Forms

A form-source (*gzugs kyi skye mched, rūpa-āyatana*), meaning a visible form, is defined as:

an object apprehended by an eye consciousness (*mig shes kyi gzung bya*)

and is the first of the five types of external sources. The term “form-source” is “to be distinguished from the general term ‘form’ (*rūpa*) which is the basis of the division into eleven types of forms”.¹ Form-sources include only the two types of visible forms—that is, just colors and shapes—whereas forms include sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects as well. The Co-mang *Collected Topics* lists form-source (*gzugs kyi skye mched*), form-constituent (*gzugs kyi khamis*), and demonstrable form (*bstan yod kyi gzugs*) as mutually inclusive phenomena. Any color or shape is called a “demonstrable form” because it may be demonstrated as an object for the eye consciousness.²

Very often the Collected Topics texts begin a new chapter with citation of some relevant passages from source literature. One source-quote cited at the beginning of the colors chapter in several Collected Topics texts is a passage from the chapter on inference for oneself (*rang don rjes dpag, svārtha-anumāna*) in Dharmakīrti’s *Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compendium of Valid Cognition”* which says:

Because the individual potencies, blue and so forth, are seen by the eye consciousness.³

According to Kensur Yeshey Tupden, the meaning of this passage is that blue produces an eye consciousness apprehending blue in the sense of serving as a cause of that consciousness; thus, here blue is called a “potency”. Similarly, yellow serves as a cause of an eye consciousness apprehending yellow, and so on. Thus, an eye consciousness is established in dependence on the individual potencies.⁴

¹ *Ibid.*

² Ngak-wang-dra-shi (*ngag dbang btra shis*), Co-mang *Collected Topics* (*sgo mang bsodus groa*), (n.p., n.d.), p. 13.

³ Dharmakīrti, *Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compendium of Valid Cognition”* (*pramāṇavārttikārikā*), P5709, Vol. 130, 79.5.6.

⁴ Kensur Yeshey Tupden, oral commentary.

¹ Jam-bel-trin-lay-yön-dan-gya-tso (*jam dpel 'phrin las yon tan rgya mtsho*), Lo-sei-ling *Collected Topics* (*blo gsal gling bsodus groa*), (Mundgod, India: Drepung Loseling Press, 1978), p. 4.

² Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 232.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

The *Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"* does not present an organized explanation of colors as such but does refer to colors in this and other passages. The presentation of colors and, more generally, forms in the Collected Topics debate manuals issues from passages in this text, the *Treasury of Knowledge*, and other Indian Buddhist sources.

The above passage from Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* (see pp. 187-188) says, "[Visible] forms are of two types or twenty types."¹ This sentence indicates the types of form-sources, not forms in general. Form-sources are divided briefly into two types, colors (*kha dog, varṇa*) and shapes (*dbyibs, samsthāna*). If divided extensively, there are twelve types of color and eight types of shape, totaling twenty types of form-sources. The twelve types of color consist of four primary colors and eight secondary colors:

- 1 primary color (*rtsa ba'i kha dog, mūla-varṇa*)
 - blue (*sngon po, nīla*)
 - yellow (*ser po, pīta*)
 - white (*skar po, avadāta*)
 - red (*dmar po, lohita*)
- 2 secondary color (*yan lag gi kha dog, aṅga-varṇa*)
 - cloud (*sprin, abhira*)
 - smoke (*du ba, dhūma*)
 - dust (*brdul, rajah*)
 - mist (*khug sna, mahikā*)
 - illumination (*snaṅg ba, āloka*)
 - darkness (*mun pa, andhakāra*)
 - shadow (*grib ma, chhāyā*)
 - sunlight (*nyi ma'i 'od ser, ātapa*).²

The definition of a color is:

that which is suitable as a hue (*mdog tu rung ba*).

As in the case of the definition of a form (p. 189) this definition relies on ordinary empirical experience indicating that the Collected Topics logicians do not have or need anything further to say at this point. The definition of a color is extended similarly to the many types of color—that which is suitable as a secondary hue (*yan lag gi mdog tu rung ba*) being the definition of a secondary color, that which is suitable as a blue hue (*sngon po'i mdog tu rung ba*) being the definition of blue, and so forth.

A primary color is defined as:

that which is suitable as a primary hue (*rtsa ba'i mdog tu rung ba*).

According to Lati Rinbochay, primary colors may be divided into natural, or innate, primary colors (*lhan skyes kyi rtsa ba'i kha dog, saḥaja-mūla-varṇa*) and manufactured primary colors (*sbyar byung gi rtsa ba'i kha dog, sāmyogika-mūla-varṇa*). A natural color is something that is not made by a person; it is not the result of someone's having dyed it into the material or such but is a color arisen through natural causes. A manufactured color is something made by a person by dyeing and so forth. For example, the color of a flower is a natural color and the color of a red car is a manufactured color.¹

More frequently, primary colors are divided into the four—blue, yellow, white, and red. The four primary colors are associated with the elements which exist in all forms. "Wind is blue; earth, yellow; water, white; and fire, red."²

Generally, in the scientific description of colors white is not included among the primary colors, these being only red, blue, and yellow. White, in terms of pigments, is an absence of color, and what is called white light is a light having all colors of the spectrum. Still, it is unmistakable that white is something that appears to the eye consciousness and is normally taken as a color. It is not, as in the

¹ Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Knowledge*, P5590, Vol. 115, 117.2.5.

² The source for the Sanskrit in this list is Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 224.

¹ Lati Rinbochay, oral commentary.

² Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 223.

case of pigments, an absence of colors like a desert without water. If the primary colors are taken to be those root colors that are "not derivable from other colors";¹ then is it not the case that white is a primary color? As pigment, white cannot be derived from any combination of other pigments. As light, what is called white is a clear appearance of illumination, but by no combination of light rays can one derive truly white light. If primary colors are taken as those root colors from which all other colors are derived, then white must be considered a primary color because some colors are derived from white in combination with other colors, such as pink which is a mixture of white and red. When the Collected Topics texts enumerate the primary colors as four, it is indefinite whether they are indicating colors on the basis of pigment or light. Still, the basis of the division into primary and secondary colors is color, that which is suitable as a hue. It is that object apprehended by an eye consciousness, and it is what is suitable to be demonstrated as a hue to the eye consciousness. Within this framework, it is unmistakable that white is a color, and here it is asserted to be a primary color.

The eight secondary colors of cloud, smoke, and so forth (p. 194) do not include all secondary colors because mixtures of colors, such as green which is a mixture of blue and yellow, are also secondary colors. The Lo-sel-ling *Collected Topics* says, "Those which arise from a mixture of two or three primary colors are secondary colors."²

Cloud etc. are the eight famous secondary colors indicated in Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge*. Gen-dün-drup-ba's (*dge 'dun grub pa*) *Commentary on (Vasubandhu's Treasury of Knowledge)* lists these: "There are eight secondary colors because there are shadow, sunlight, illumination, darkness, cloud, smoke, dust and mist."³ This

¹ Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1963), p. 675.

² Jam-bel-trin-lay-yön-dän-gya-tso, *Lo-sel-ling Collected Topics*, p. 2.

³ Gen-dün-drup-ba, *Commentary on (Vasubandhu's Treasury of Knowledge)*, p. 29.

enumeration is not taken to mean that clouds, smoke, dust, and mist are colors, but that the colors of these are colors and may be secondary colors. For instance, the color of a gray cloud is a secondary color. Technically, these eight "secondary colors" must be specified as secondary colors; thus, the debate manuals qualify these as, for instance, "a cloud color which is that" (*der gyur pa'i sprin gyi kha dog*) referring to a cloud which is a secondary color. Some cloud colors are secondary colors and some are not. For instance, the color of a gray cloud is a secondary color because of being gray, not because of being a cloud color. However, the color of a white cloud is a primary color because of being white. Taken as adjectives—cloudy, smoky, and so on—these describe characteristics of colors and identify them as secondary colors.

Unlike cloud, smoke, dust, and mist, some scholars assert that illumination, darkness, shadow, and sunlight themselves are secondary colors.¹

Illumination refers to the light of the moon, stars, fire, medicine, and jewels. Darkness refers to a form that obscures other forms and causes one to see gloom and blackness. Darkness obscures other forms such that they cannot be seen, whereas shadow makes other forms a little unclear but still perceivable; thus, darkness and shadow have a difference of density. Sunlight refers to the illumination of other forms when the sun appears.²

Of the twenty types of form-sources indicated in Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* twelve are colors and the remaining eight are shapes (*dbyibs, samsthāna*). The eight types of shape are:

- 1 long (*ring ba, dirgha*)
- 2 short (*thung ba, hrasva*)
- 3 high (*mtho ba, unniata*)

¹ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 224.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

- 4 low (*dma' ba, avanata*)
- 5 square (*ham pa, vṛtta*)
- 6 round (*zhum po, parimaṇḍala*)
- 7 level (*phyi le ba, śhāta*)
- 8 non-level (*phyi le ba ma yin pa, vishāta*).¹

A shape is defined as:

that which is suitable to be shown as a shape (*dbyibs su bstan du rung ba*).

As before in the case of secondary colors, it seems this list is not exhaustive of all shapes because shapes such as those of a triangle or an octagon are apparently not included.

Concerning long, short, high, and low, Lati Rinbochay explains that they may be posited even in terms of where one is; that is, in relation to other shapes. Thus, a long or tall form is, for instance, the shape of Mount Meru, the mountain at the center of the world system. A short form is, for instance, the shape of a single atom. Since in relation to our land the fourth concentration—the highest level of form lands where sentient beings live—is high, the shape of an immeasurable palace in the fourth concentration may be posited as a high shape. Similarly, it is asserted that below our land there is a *maṇḍala* of wind which is the lower basis of the world system. Since it is below our land, its shape may be posited as a low shape. In the same way, if one is in a valley, the shape of a mountain is high, and if one is on a mountain, the shape of a valley is low.² Since some shapes may be posited in relation to other shapes, such figures as triangles and octagons, which are not otherwise included, may be included among long, short, high, or low forms depending on one's perspective.

A square (*ham pa*) is designated as being four-sided (*gru bzhi*) and the Ra-dö, Lo-sel-ling, and Shar-dzay Collected Topics texts list four-sided in place of square. However, it

¹ The source for the Sanskrit in this list is Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 226.

² Lati Rinbochay, oral commentary.

seems either designation is not meant literally, for the category includes not only proper squares but also other plane figures such as rectangles and even cubes and other rectangular solids. An example of a "square" is the shape of a square house.

Similarly, round shapes include not only circles but also spheres and other ellipsoids and, according to the Go-mang Collected Topics, even egg-shaped figures. Thus, a round form is, for instance, the shape of a round ball.¹

A level form is the shape of an even surface (*ngos mnyam pa'i dbyibs*). A non-level form is the shape of an uneven surface. The Lo-sel-ling Collected Topics, rather than listing level (*phyi le ba*) and non-level (*phyi le ba ma yin pa*) shapes, lists attractive (*phyi legs pa*) and unattractive (*phyi legs pa ma yin pa*) ones.² An attractive shape is, for instance, the shape of a Buddha's Complete Enjoyment Body (*sambhoga-kāya*). An unattractive shape is, for instance, the shape of a rotting corpse. This assertion seems to be unique to Lo-sel-ling, as none of the other Collected Topics texts lists attractive and unattractive shapes. Also, Gen-dün-drup-ba's *Commentary on (Vasubandhu's) "Treasury of Knowledge"* gives level and non-level, not attractive and unattractive, as the seventh and eighth type of shapes. Such a division is theoretically acceptable, as some of the other divisions of forms are done, at least in part, on the basis of attractiveness and unattractiveness. Still, such an assertion is at odds with the bulk of the tradition. The difference in interpretation could have arisen easily out of an error in the oral tradition as the two terms, "*phyi le ba*" meaning even and "*phyi legs pa*" meaning attractive, sound quite similar in Tibetan.

Generally, color and shape are taken to be mutually exclusive. Each appears to the eye consciousness, but what is the one is necessarily not the other. However, the Go-mang Collected Topics takes a stance at odds with this position in asserting that any of the four—cloud, smoke,

¹ Examples are from Lati Rinbochay, oral commentary.

² Jam-bel-trin-lay-yön-dan-gya-tso, Lo-sel-ling Collected Topics, p. 2.

dust, or mist—is both a color and a shape.¹ This Go-mang view is in accordance with Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* and the system of the Great Exposition School. Bel-den-chö-jay's *Presentation of the Two Truths* says, "In the Sūtra School, one designates the conventions of long and so forth to certain different arrangements of particles of color."² This means that the Proponents of Sūtra assert shapes as imputedly existent (*btags yod, prajñānti-sat*) because they are merely imputed to arrangements of color particles. However, the Proponents of the Great Exposition assert shapes as substantially existent (*rdzas su yod pa, dravya-sat*) because they are not merely imputed to arrangements of color particles but are established as an independent type of form-source. Following the Great Exposition School interpretation, the Go-mang *Collected Topics* asserts red as a color but not a shape, long as a shape but not a color, and a cloud as something which is both a color—suitable to be shown to an eye consciousness as a hue—and a shape—suitable to be shown to an eye consciousness as a shape.

Sounds

The second of the five types of external form is sound (*sgra, shabda*). "Sound, sound-constituent [*sgra'i khamis, shabda-dhātū*], and sound-source [*sgra'i skye mched, shabda-āyatana*] are synonyms."³ A sound is defined as:

an object of hearing (*nyan bya*).

The definition of a sound-source is:

an object of hearing of an ear consciousness (*rna shes kyī nyan bya*).

All sounds are included within the eight types of sound:

- 1 pleasant articulate sound caused by elements conjoined with consciousness (*zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du ston pa'i sgra snyan pa, upātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-sattvākhyā-yaśha-shabda*)
- 2 unpleasant articulate sound caused by elements conjoined with consciousness (*zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du ston pa'i sgra mi snyan pa, upātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-sattvākhyā-ayasha-shabda*)
- 3 pleasant inarticulate sound caused by elements conjoined with consciousness (*zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du mi ston pa'i sgra snyan pa, upātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-asattvākhyā-yaśha-shabda*)
- 4 unpleasant inarticulate sound caused by elements conjoined with consciousness (*zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du mi ston pa'i sgra mi snyan pa, upātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-asattvākhyā-ayasha-shabda*)
- 5 pleasant articulate sound caused by elements not conjoined with consciousness (*ma zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du ston pa'i sgra snyan pa, anupātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-sattvākhyā-yaśha-shabda*)
- 6 unpleasant articulate sound caused by elements not conjoined with consciousness (*ma zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du ston pa'i sgra mi snyan pa, anupātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-sattvākhyā-ayasha-shabda*)
- 7 pleasant inarticulate sound caused by elements not conjoined with consciousness (*ma zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du mi ston pa'i sgra snyan pa, anupātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-asattvākhyā-yaśha-shabda*)
- 8 unpleasant inarticulate sound caused by elements not conjoined with consciousness (*ma zin pa'i 'byung ba las gyur pa'i sems can du mi ston pa'i sgra mi snyan pa, anupātta-mahābhūta-hetuka-asattvākhyā-ayasha-shabda*).¹

¹ The source for the Sanskrit in this list is Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 227.

¹ Ngak-wang-dra-shi, *Go-mang Collected Topics*, p. 12.

² Bel-den-chö-jay (*dpal ldan chos rje*) a.k.a. Ngak-wang-bel-den (*ngag dbang dpal ldan*), *Explanation of the Meaning of Conventional and Ultimate in the Four Tenet Systems* (*grub mtha' bzhi'i lugs kyī kun rdzob dang don dam pa'i don rnam par bshad pa*), (New Delhi: Lama Guru Deva, 1972), 21.7.

³ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 226.

Smoothness arises from a preponderance of water and fire. Roughness arises from a preponderance of earth and wind. Heaviness arises from a preponderance of earth and water. Lightness arises from a preponderance of fire and wind. Cold arises from a preponderance of water and wind. Hunger arises from a preponderance of wind. Thirst arises from a preponderance of fire.¹

Furthermore, all material phenomena which are not elements are arisen from elements. Visible forms, sounds, odors, tastes and tangible objects which are not the elements themselves are all caused by the elements. "The colors of particles depend upon the element that is predominant. If the earth element is predominant, the color is yellow; if water, white; if fire, red; and if wind, blue."² Shapes are arrangements of color particles and in that way are caused by the elements. Sounds are divided into those caused by elements conjoined with consciousness and those caused by elements not conjoined with consciousness; in either case, they are arisen from the elements. Odors and tastes too are caused by the elements, and tangible objects which are not the elements themselves are caused by the relative preponderances of the elements.

All form, the elements and that arisen from the elements, is atomically established. Form is constructed of atoms or particles of matter which in turn are composed of eight factors—earth, water, fire, wind, visible form, odor, taste, and tangibility arisen from the elements. This means that even in a stone the wind element exists, in wind the earth element exists, and so forth. Among forms there is a difference of relative dominance of the elements. Obviously, the earth element predominates in a stone, the water element predominates in milk, and so on. Still, because of the pervasiveness of all four elements in every form, the water, fire,

and wind elements exist in a more or less dormant state in a stone. The earth, fire, and wind elements exist in a more or less dormant state in water, and so forth for the fire and wind elements as well.

Since all the elements exist in all forms, skillful yogis are said to be able to utilize the potencies of form in any way, using a wall as an open passageway, drawing water from a rock, using air as a platform, and so on. This does not mean that yogis can counteract the nature of phenomena by, perhaps, using fire to quench thirst. Rather, they are able to transform matter from one state to another by drawing on the potencies that are present but dormant in phenomena and using them in a "miraculous" way. The Indian Buddhist saint Chandrakīrti is said to have been able to use the potencies of forms, as in the story of his taking milk from the painting of a cow by means of his special powers.¹

INTERNAL FORMS

The internal forms are the bases of a person's feelings of physical pleasure and pain.² In addition to the fleshy material phenomena within a person's continuum—organs, skin, and so forth—which are technically both internal and external matter, internal forms include the five sense powers (*dbang po, indriya*).

The eye sense power gives the eye consciousness (*mig shes, *chakshur-jñāna*) dominance over visible forms, colors and shapes. The three causes of a visual perception are the eye sense power, the external visible object, and the former moment of the eye consciousness. Sense powers are not consciousnesses and cannot know an object. Rather, the eye consciousness, empowered by the eye sense power and observing an external color or shape, is generated in the aspect of that object and an eye consciousness apprehending the object is produced. The sense powers give their respec-

¹ Khetsun Sangbo Rinbochay, oral commentary.

² Kensur Yeshey Tupden, oral commentary.

¹ Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 230-231.

² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

tive consciousness dominance with respect to only certain external objects. For instance, the nose consciousness is empowered with respect to odors but not with respect to sounds and so forth. It is said that a Buddha's consciousnesses are cross-functional such that his eye consciousness can perceive sounds, his ear consciousness can perceive colors, and so forth, but for ordinary persons this is not so.

The definition of an eye sense power is:

a clear internal form which is the uncommon empowering condition for its own effect, an eye consciousness (*rang 'bras mig gi rnam shes kyi thun mong ma yin pa'i bdag rkyen du gyur pa'i nang gi gzugs can dtang ba*).

An illustration of an eye sense power is a clear internal form having a shape like a *zar-ma* flower, this form being in the continuum of a person. A sense power is *clear internal form* because it is matter within the physical body of a person and cannot be perceived by any sense consciousness. The eye sense power is located in the eye and is in the shape of a flower. The other sense powers have different shapes. A sense power is an *uncommon empowering condition* (*thun mong ma yin pa'i bdag rkyen, asādhāraṇa-adhipati-pratyaya*) because it alone can give its consciousness power with respect to its field of perception. That is to say, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition for its effect which is an eye consciousness.

The Co-mang *Collected Topics* lists eye (*mig*), eye sense power (*mig dbang*), and eye-constituent (*mig gi kham*) as mutually inclusive phenomena. Also, that text divides eye sense powers into two types: eye sense powers which are bases (*rtan bcas kyi mig dbang*) and eye sense powers which are like bases (*rtan mishungs kyi mig dbang*). An example of the first type is an eye sense power seeing white, blue, and so on. An example of the second type is an eye sense power at the time of sleep.¹ The eye sense power exists whether one

¹ Ngak-wang-dra-shi, *Co-mang Collected Topics*, p. 17.

is perceiving external colors and shapes or not. When one is engaged in visual perception, the eye sense power is a basis of perception. When sleeping, however, one is not engaged in perceiving external colors and shapes, and the eye sense power is merely "like a basis".

The definitions, divisions, and illustrations for the remaining sense powers are similar to those for the eye sense power. The definition of an ear sense power is:

a clear internal form which is the uncommon empowering condition for its own effect, an ear consciousness.

An illustration of an ear sense power is a clear internal form having a shape like a cut bundle of wheat, this form being in the continuum of a person. The bundle of wheat seems as if cut off on one end and has the shafts oriented toward the outside of the ear.

The definition of a nose sense power is:

a clear internal form which is the uncommon empowering condition for its own effect, a nose consciousness.

An illustration of a nose sense power is a clear internal form having a shape like two copper needles, this form being in the continuum of a person.

The definition of a tongue sense power is:

a clear internal form which is the uncommon empowering condition of its own effect, a tongue consciousness.

An illustration of a tongue sense power is a clear internal form having a shape like a cut half moon, this form being in the continuum of a person.

The definition of a body sense power is:

a clear internal form which is the uncommon empowering condition of its own effect, a body consciousness.

An illustration of a body sense power is a clear internal form having a shape like smooth skin, this form being in the continuum of a person.

The five sense powers are clear internal forms located within the coarse seats of the senses, the eye sense power being in the eyes, the ear sense power in the ears, etc. The body sense power pervades the body.

The five internal forms, in combination with the five external forms, are necessary to give rise to the five sense consciousnesses—eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousnesses. The sense powers and consciousnesses are always cited in the same order: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body. Some scholars say that they are given in this order because that is the order of certifiability or reliability. That is, the eye consciousness is least reliable and the body consciousness is most reliable. If one is unable to see clearly the form of a person, hearing that person's voice can serve as certification of the person's presence. Also, if the eye consciousness cannot discriminate clearly some form, one naturally seeks to verify with the hand. Others point out that the given order of the sense powers and consciousnesses merely reflects the physical placement of those senses within the body. Roughly, the eye is above the ear, the ear above the nose, and so forth. However, the body consciousness is present throughout the body and may not be said to exist predominantly in any one part of the body as do the other consciousnesses. Still other scholars say that the forms and consciousnesses are listed in this order because it reflects the range of perception, visible objects being perceptible from the greatest distance and tangible objects being perceptible only in direct contact with the body. One can perceive a visual object as far away as the stars. A sound must be much closer, within a few miles or so. Odors must be still closer, and tastes and tangible objects must be in direct contact.

Each sense has domain over its own field of operation: the eye consciousness being empowered with respect to colors and shapes; the ear consciousness, with respect to sounds,

and so forth. However, each consciousness is totally insensitive with respect to the objects of the other consciousnesses. Thus, upon meeting an object such as a flower the eye consciousness alone is able to perceive its colors and shape; the nose consciousness, its odor, and so on. In this way one perceives an object through the various doors of perception with each consciousness perceiving one aspect. But what is the object itself? It is commonly said that one sees, for instance, a pot, but does this mean that a pot is an object apprehended by an eye consciousness? It is the color and shape, the visible form, of a pot that an eye consciousness sees, not the pot itself. In this regard, the Collected Topics debaters make a distinction between what the eye consciousness sees (*mig shes kyi mihong rgyu*) and an object apprehended by the eye consciousness (*mig shes kyi gzung bya*). The former is whatever one may be said to see—a pot, a flower, a person, and so on. The latter is only those visual forms that the eye consciousness has domain over—the color and shape of a pot, the color and shape of a person's body, and so on.

Some scholars say that particular forms are classified as one of the five types of external matter on the basis of its predominant purpose or usage. Thus, a painting is a visible form; bread is an object of the tongue consciousness; flesh and bones are earth and thus tangible objects, and so forth. Others say that pots, bread, flowers, and so forth are tangible objects because of being objects experienced by the body consciousness. Indeed, the eye consciousness perceives the color and shape of a pot, but by this interpretation the pot itself is earth and thus a tangible object. Seeing fire is a case of seeing the color and shape of fire, but the element fire, that which is hot and burning, is apprehended solely by the body consciousnesses.

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CHAPTER 5

Asian Perspectives: Indian Theories of Mind

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Abstract

This chapter examines Indian views of the mind and consciousness, with particular focus on the Indian Buddhist tradition. To contextualize Buddhist views of the mind, we first provide a brief presentation of some of the most important Hindu views, particularly those of the Sāṃkhya school. Whereas this school assumes the existence of a real transcendent self, the Buddhist view is that mental activity and consciousness function on their own without such a self. We focus on the phenomenological and epistemological aspects of this no-self view of the mind. We first discuss the Buddhist Abhidharma and its analysis of the mind in terms of awareness and mental factors. The Abhidharma is mainly phenomenological; it does not present an epistemological analysis of the structure of mental states and the way they relate to their objects. To cover this topic we turn to Dharmakīrti, one of the main Buddhist epistemologists, who offers a comprehensive view of the types of cognition and their relation to their objects.

Introduction

In discussing Asian views of mind and consciousness, we must start from the realization that this topic presents insurmountable challenges. The diversity of Asian cultures from China to India to Iran is so great that it is impossible to find coherent ways to discuss the mental concepts of these cultures over and above listing these conceptions and noting their differences. Hence, rather than chart a territory that hopelessly extends our capacities, we have chosen to examine Indian views of the mind, with a special focus on the Indian Buddhist tradition, which can be traced back to the first centuries after the life of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha (566–483 BCE), and which continued to develop in India through the 7th and 8th centuries CE. This approach allows us to present a more grounded and coherent view of the mind as conceived in the Indian philosophical tradition and to indicate some areas of interest that this tradition offers to cognitive scientists and philosophers of mind.

In talking about the mind, it is important to define the term, for it is far from unambiguous. In most Indian traditions, the mind is neither a brain structure nor a mechanism for treating information. Rather, mind is conceived as a complex cognitive process consisting of a succession of related mental states. These states are at least in principle phenomenologically available; that is, they can be observed by attending to the way in which we experience feeling, perceiving, thinking, remembering, and so on. Indian thinkers describe these mental states as cognizing (*jñā*) or being aware (*buddhī*) of their object. Thus, the mind is broadly conceived by traditional Indian thinkers as constituted by a series of mental states that cognize their objects.

This general agreement breaks down quickly, however, when we turn to a more detailed analysis of the nature and structure of the mind, a topic on which various schools entertain vastly different views. Some of these disagreements relate to the ontological status of mental states and the way they relate to other phenomena, particularly physical ones. Such disagreements are related to well-known ideas in the Western tradition, particularly the mind-body dualism that has concerned Western philosophy since Descartes. But many of the views entertained by Indian thinkers are not easily mapped in Western terms, as we see in this chapter.

Most Indian thinkers do not consider the ontological status of mental states to be a particularly difficult question, for most of them accept that there is an extra-physical reality. Among all the schools, only the Materialist, the Cārvāka, reduces the mental to physical events. For its proponents, mental states do not have any autonomous ontological status and can be completely reduced to physical processes. They are just properties of the body, much like the irritating property of beer is a property of beer. Most other thinkers reject this view forcefully and argue that the mind can neither be eliminated nor reduced to the material. Their endorsement of an extra-physical reality does not, however, necessar-

ily amount to a classical mind-body dualism (of the sort found in Descartes' *Meditations* or Plato's *Phaedo*). Moreover, although they agree in rejecting the materialist view, they strongly disagree in their presentations of the mind.

In this chapter, we focus mostly on the Buddhist tradition, exploring some of its views of the mind. One of the most salient features of this tradition is that its accounts of the mind and consciousness do not posit the existence of a self. According to this tradition, there is no self, and mental activity cannot be understood properly as long as one believes in a self. The Hindu tradition, by contrast, maintains that mental life does involve a permanent self. Thus, to contextualize Buddhist views of the mind, we begin with a brief presentation of some of the most important Hindu views. We then present the Buddhist Abhidharma and its analysis of the mind in terms of awareness and mental factors. Traditionally, the Abhidharma makes up one of the 'three baskets' into which Buddhists divide their scriptures – *Sūtra* or sayings of the Buddha, *Vinaya* or monastic discipline, and *Abhidharma*, which systematizes Buddhist teachings in the form of detailed analyses of experience. In examining the Abhidharma, we examine the ways in which this tradition analyzes the different functions of the mind without positing the existence of a self. These analyses are in certain ways reminiscent of those in cognitive science that aim to account for cognitive processing without invoking a homunculus or 'little man' inside the head who overpassively witnesses the results; see Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991, for further discussion of this parallel). The Abhidharma, however, is phenomenological; its concern is to discern how the mind works as evidenced by experience (but especially by mentally disciplined and refined contemplative experience). Although thus it is also epistemological, the Abhidharma does not present any developed epistemological analysis of the structure of mental states and the way they relate to their objects so as to produce knowledge. To cover this topic we turn to

Dharmakīrti (c. 600 CE), one of the main Buddhist epistemologists, who offers a comprehensive view of the types of cognition and their relation to their objects.

The phenomenological analyses contained in the Abhidharma and the epistemological analyses of Dharmakīrti offer significant resources for cognitive scientists and philosophers of mind in their efforts to gain a better understanding of consciousness. These analyses also constitute the theoretical framework for the ways in which the Buddhist tradition conceives of meditation and mental training, both with regard to the phenomenon of contemplative mental states and the epistemology of the types of knowledge that these states are said to provide. Given the increasing scientific interest in the physiological correlates and effects of meditation and their relation to consciousness (see Chapter 19), it is important for the scientific community to appreciate the phenomenological and philosophical precision with which these states are conceptualized in the Buddhist tradition.

Self and Mental States: A Sāṃkhya View

One of the most important views of the mind in the Hindu tradition is found in the Sāṃkhya school. Traditionally this school is said to have been founded by the philosopher Kapila, a legendary figure who may have lived as early as the 7th century BCE, but the earliest Sāṃkhya text we possess dates from the 3rd century CE. The Sāṃkhya tradition is one of the six classical schools of Hindu philosophy (Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Purva Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta). Its influence extends to the other schools, particularly the Vedānta school, which later became especially important in the development of Hindu thought. The Sāṃkhya was in fact less a school proper than a way of thinking based on the categorization of reality. It was crucial in the formation of Indian philosophical thinking before and after the start of the Common Era, and hence it is unsurprising that its view of the

mind has been largely adopted in the Hindu tradition and beyond.¹

The Sāṃkhya approach rests on a dualistic metaphysics built on the opposition between material primordial nature (*pradhāna*) or materiality (*prakṛti*) and a spiritual self (*āīman*) or person (*puruṣa*).² Nature is the universal material substratum out of which all phenomena other than the self emerge and evolve. These phenomena, which make up the world of diversity, are physical transformations of the three qualities (*guṇa*) that compose primordial nature. These three qualities are *saṭva* (transparency, buoyancy), *rajas* (energy, activity), and *tamas* (inertia, obstruction). They are principles or forces, rather than building blocks. All material phenomena, including the intellect and organs of perception, are understood to be made up of a combination of these three principles. The one principle not included in this constant process of transformation is the self, which is permanent, non-material, and conscious or aware. The self is also described as the conscious presence that witnesses the transformations of nature, but does not participate in them. As such it is passive, though it witnesses the experiences deriving from the transformations of the world of diversity.³

Although the Sāṃkhya analysis of mind is dualistic, it does not fit within classical mind-body dualism. For the Sāṃkhya, the mind involves a non-material spiritual element, namely the self. The self, however, is not the same as the mind. Rather, the self is the mere presence to or pure witnessing of the mental activities involved in the ordinary awareness of objects. This pure witnessing, untainted by the diversity of the material world, is not sufficient for mental activities, for mental activities are representational or semantic and require more than passive mirroring. Mental activity is the apprehension of an object, and this activity requires active engagement with objects and the formation of ideas and concepts necessary for purposeful action in the world. The self cannot account for such activity, however, because it is changeless and hence passive. To account for our cognitive activities,

we therefore need other elements that participate in the world of diversity. Because any element that participates in the world of change must emerge out of primordial materiality and hence be material, it follows that the analysis of mental states cannot be limited to their spiritual dimension (the self), but must also involve material elements. Hence, for the Sāṃkhya, mental activity requires the cooperation of the two fundamental types of substance that make up the universe, passive consciousness and material nature.

Having described the Sāṃkhya metaphysics, we can now sketch its influential analysis of mental activity.⁴ This analysis starts with *buddhi*, which is usually translated as 'the intellect' and is the ability to distinguish and experience objects. This ability provides the prereflective and presubjective ground out of which determined mental states and their objects arise; it is also the locus of all the fundamental predispositions that lead to these experiences. The intellect emerges out of primordial matter and therefore is active, unlike the non-material and passive self. The self is described metaphorically as a light, for it passively illuminates objects, making it possible for the intellect to distinguish them. The intellect operates in a representational way by taking on the form of what is known. This representational ability works in two directions – toward the conscious and uninvolved self and toward the objects. The intellect, thanks to its quality of clarity and transcendence (*svatva*), takes on the form of the self by reflecting it. As a result, it seems as if the self experiences the diversity of objects, when it is actually the intellect that undergoes these experiences, the self being the mere witness of them. This ability of the intellect to usurp the function of consciousness helps the intellect in its apprehension of objects, for by itself the intellect is active but unconscious. Awareness of objects arises only when the intellect takes on the light of the self and reflects it on objects, much like pictures are created when light is projected onto a film. In this way, the intellect becomes able to take on the form of the object and thus to discern it.

transcendent self and a diversity of mental activities. It is a basic presupposition of the Hindu tradition that mental life involves a permanent self. Yet because mental life also undeniably involves change, it cannot be reduced to this single, motionless factor of the self; hence the need for the complicated analysis briefly summarized here. This tenet in accounts of the mind and consciousness between identity and change, unity and diversity, is of course also prevalent throughout Western philosophy and persists in cognitive science. We turn now to the Buddhist tradition, which presents a different perspective on this issue.

The Abhidharma Tradition and its View of the Mind

The Buddhist tradition is based on the opposite view of no-self (*anātmān*). For the Buddhists, there is no self, and hence mental activity is not in the service of such an entity, but rather functions on its own. In short, for the Buddhists there is no self that is aware of the experiences one undergoes or the thoughts one has. Rather the thoughts themselves are the thinker, and the experiencer is the experiencer.

How, then, do Buddhists explain the complexities of the mind? How do they explain mental regularities if there is no central controller to oversee the whole process?

For an answer, we turn to the Abhidharma, one of the oldest Buddhist traditions, which can be traced back to the first centuries after the Buddha (566–483 BCE). First elaborated as lists,⁷ the Abhidharma contains the earlier texts in which Buddhist concepts were developed and hence is the source of most philosophical developments in Indian Buddhism. But the Abhidharma is not limited to this role as a source of Buddhist philosophical development. It remained a vital focus of Buddhist thought and kept evolving, at least until the 7th or 8th century CE. In this chapter, we focus on two Indian thinkers from the 4th or 5th century CE, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, and ignore

the diversity of opinions and debates that has animated this tradition.

The object of the Abhidharma is to analyze both the realm of sentient experience and the world given in such experience into its components in language that avoids the postulation of a unified subject. This analysis concerns the whole range of phenomena, from material phenomena to nirvāna (the state of enlightenment, understood as the direct realization of the nature of reality, including especially the lack of any essential self and the consequent liberation from suffering). For example, there are elaborate discussions of the four primary and four secondary elements that make up matter (see de la Vallée Poussin, 1973, I: 22). There are also lengthy treatments of the nature, scope, and types of soteriological practices proscribed by the Buddhist tradition, a central focus of the Abhidharma. But a large part of the Abhidharma discourse focuses on the analysis of mental phenomena and their various components. It is this part of the Abhidharma that we examine in this chapter.

In considering experience, the Abhidharma proceeds in a rather characteristic way that may be disconcerting for newcomers, but reflects its historical origin as mnemonic lists of elements abstracted from the Buddha's discourses. For each type of phenomenon considered, the Abhidharma analyzes it into its basic elements (*dharma*), lists these elements, and groups them into the appropriate categories (examples are given below). The study of the Abhidharma thus often revolves around the consideration of series of extended lists.

In elaborating such lists of components of experience and the world given in experience, the Abhidharma follows the central tenets of Buddhist philosophy, in particular the twin ideas of non-substantiality and dependent origination. According to this philosophy, the phenomena given in experience are not unitary and stable substances, but complex and fleeting formations of basic elements that arise in dependence on complex causal nexuses. Such non-substantiality is particularly true of the person, who is not a substantial self, but a changing construct

dependent on complex configurations of mental and material components. This analysis, which is diametrically opposed to the Sāṃkhya view, is not just limited to the person, but is applied to other objects.

All composite things are thus analyzed as being constituted of more basic elements. Moreover, and this point is crucial, these basic elements should not be thought of as reified or stable entities, but as dynamically related momentary events instantaneously coming into and going out of existence. Thus, when the Abhidharma analyzes matter as being made up of basic components, it thinks of those components not as stable particles or little grains of matter, but rather as fleeting material events, coming into and going out of existence depending on causes and conditions. Similarly, the mind is analyzed into its basic components; namely, the basic types of events that make up the complex phenomenon we call 'mind'.

This Abhidharmic analysis is not just philosophical but it also has practical import. Its aim is to support the soteriological practices that the Buddhist tradition recommends. The lists of material and mental events are used by practitioners to inform and enhance their practices. For example, the list of mental factors we examine shortly is a precious aid to various types of meditation, providing a clear idea of which factors need to be developed and which are to be eliminated. In this way, the Abhidharma functions not just as the source of Buddhist philosophy but also informs and supports the practices central to this tradition.

In the Abhidharma the mind is conceived as a complex cognitive process consisting of a succession of related momentary mental states. These states are phenomenologically available, at least in principle: They can be observed by turning inwardly and attending to the way we feel, perceive, think, remember, and so on. When we do so, we notice a variety of states of awareness, and we also notice that these states change rapidly. It is these mental states arising in quick succession that the Abhidharma identifies as being the basic elements of the mind.

It should be clear from this preliminary characterization that in elaborating a theory of the mind the Abhidharma relies primarily on what we would call a first-person approach. It is by looking directly at experience that we gain an understanding of mind, not by studying it as an object and attending to its external manifestations. This approach of the Abhidharma is not unlike that of such Western thinkers as James, Brentano, and Husserl, who all agree that the study of the mind must be based on attention to experience (see Chapter 4). This approach is well captured by James's famous claim that in the study of the mind, "Introspective Observation is what we have to rely on first and foremost and always" (James, 1981, p. 185).

As James himself recognizes, however, first-person observation of the mind, although it might seem a straightforward enterprise, is not a simple affair and raises numerous questions. What does it mean to observe the mind? Who observes? What is being observed? Is the observation direct or mediated? In addition to these difficult epistemological issues (some of which we take up in the next section), there are also questions about the reliability of observation. We are all able to certain degrees to observe our own minds, but it is clear that our capacities to do so differ. Whose observations are to be considered reliable? This question is significant for the Abhidharmists, who may include in their data not only ordinary observations but also the observations of trained meditators. This inclusion of observation based on contemplative mental training and meditative experience marks an important difference between the Abhidharma and James, as well as other Western phenomenologists. Nevertheless, the degree to which meditative experience is relevant to Buddhist theories of the mind is not a straightforward matter, as we see shortly.

The comparison between the Abhidharma and James goes further, however, than their reliance on an introspective method. They also share some substantive similarities, the most important of which is perhaps the idea of the *stream of consciousness*.

For the Abhidharma, mental states do not arise in isolation from each other. Rather, each state arises in dependence on preceding moments and gives rise to further moments, thus forming a mental stream or continuum (*santāna vṛttid*), much like James's stream of thought'. This metaphor is also found in the Buddhist tradition in which the Buddha is portrayed as saying, "The river never stops: there is no moment, no minute, no hour when the river stops: in the same way, the flux of thought" (de la Vallée Poussin, 1991, p. 69, translation from the French by Dreyfus).

Unsurprisingly, there are also significant differences between James and the Abhidharma. One difference of interest to contemporary research is the issue of whether mental states arise in continuity or not (see Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991, pp. 72–79). James's view is well known: "Consciousness does not appear to itself chopped up in bits" (James, 1981, p. 233). Although the content of consciousness changes, we experience these changes as smooth and continuous, without any apparent break. The Abhidharma disagrees, arguing that although the mind is rapidly changing, its transformation is discontinuous. It is only to the untrained observer that the mind appears to flow continuously. According to the Abhidharma, a deeper observation reveals that the stream of consciousness is made up of moments of awareness, moments that can be introspectively individuated and described.

Several Abhidharma texts even offer measurements of this moment, measurements one would expect to be based on empirical observation. Yet such claims are problematic, for different Abhidharma traditions make claims that at times are strikingly at odds with one another. For example, the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, an important text from the first centuries of the Common Era, states that there are 120 basic moments in an instant. The text further illustrates the duration of an instant by equating it to the time needed by an average spinner to grab a thread. Not at all, argues another text: This measurement is too coarse. A moment

is the 64th part of the time necessary to click one's fingers or blink an eye (see de la Vallée Poussin, 1991, pp. 70–71). Although these measurements differ, one could argue that given the imprecision of premodern measurement, there is a rough agreement between these accounts, which present a moment of awareness as lasting for about 1/100th of a second. This is already significantly faster than psychophysical and electrophysiological estimates of the duration of a moment of awareness as being on the order of 250 milliseconds or a quarter of a second (see Pöppel, 1988; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991, pp. 72–79). But consider the claim made by a Theravada Abhidharma text that "in the time it takes for lightning to flash or the eyes to blink, billions of mind-moments can elapse" (Bodhi, 1993, p. 156). The time scale in this account, which is standard in the Theravada tradition, is faster by many orders of magnitude.

This dramatic discrepancy alerts us to some of the difficulties of accounts based on observation. For whom are we to believe? On which tradition should we rely? Moreover, we cannot but wonder about the sources of these differences. Do they derive from the observations of meditators, or are they the results of theoretical elaborations? It is hard to come to a definitive conclusion, but it seems reasonable to believe that these accounts are not simply empirical observations, but largely theoretical discussions, perhaps supplemented by observation reports. Hence one must be cautious and not assume that these texts reflect empirical findings. Although some may, they are mostly theoretical elaborations, which cannot be taken at face value, but require critical interpretation. Finally, another Abhidharma text seems to muddy the waters further by claiming that the measure of a moment is beyond the understanding of ordinary beings. Only enlightened beings can measure the duration of a moment (de la Vallée Poussin, 1991, p. 73). Thus it is not surprising that we are left wondering!

According to the Abhidharma, the mental episodes that compose a stream of consciousness take as their objects either real or

fictional entities. This object-directed character of mind has been called 'intentionality' by Western philosophers, such as Brentano and Husserl. Brentano claimed that intentionality is an essential feature of consciousness and proposed it as a criterion of the mental. All acts of awareness are directed toward or refer to an object, regardless of whether this object is existent or not. We cannot think, wish, or dread unless our mind is directed toward something thought about, wished for, or dreaded, which thus appears to the mind. Therefore, to be aware is for something to appear to the mind. The Abhidharma seems to share this view, holding that every moment of cognition relates to particular objects, and hence it assumes that intentionality and consciousness are inseparable.⁵

The Abhidharma also holds that this stream of consciousness is not material. It is associated with the body during this lifetime, but will come to exist in dependence on other bodies after the death of this body. It is crucial to recognize, however, that the immaterial stream of consciousness is not a soul in the Platonic or Cartesian sense, but an impersonal series of mental events. Buddhist philosophers do not believe in an ontology of substances – that reality comprises the existence of independent entities that are the subjects of attributes or properties. Rather, they argue that reality is made up of events consisting of a succession of moments. Thus, mind and matter are not substances, but evanescent events, and mental and material events interact in a constantly ongoing and fluctuating process. Moreover, Buddhist philosophers partake of the general Indian reluctance to separate the mental and the material. Hence they do not hold that the divide between the material and mental spheres is absolute. Nevertheless, for the Buddhists, in contrast to the *Sāṃkhya*, there is a sharp divide between the mental, which is intentional and conscious, and other elements. In this respect, Buddhists are perhaps the closest among Indian philosophers to a classical mind-body dualism.

The Abhidharma, however, does not stop at a view of the mind as a succession of men-

tal states, but goes much further in its analysis, breaking down each mental state into its components. According to the Abhidharma schema, which is to our knowledge unique, each mental state is analyzed as having two aspects: (i) the *primary factor of awareness (citta)*, whose function is to be aware of the object, and (ii) *mental factors (caittesikā)*, whose function is to qualify this awareness by determining its qualitative nature as pleasant or unpleasant, focused or unfocused, calm or agitated, positive or negative, and so on. The philosopher Vasubandhu (c. 4th or 5th century CE), one of the great Abhidharmists, explains this distinction between awareness and mental factors as follows:

Cognition or awareness apprehends the thing itself, and just that; mental factors or dharmas associated with cognition such as sensation, etc., apprehend special characteristics, special conditions (de la Vallée Poussin, 1971, I: 30).⁶

The basic insight is that mental states have two types of cognitive functions – (1) awareness and (2) cognitive and affective engagement and characterization. The mental state is aware of an object. For example, the sense of smell is aware of a sweet object. But mental states are not just states of awareness. They are not passive mirrors in which objects are reflected. Rather, they actively engage their objects, apprehending them as pleasant or unpleasant, approaching them with particular intentions, and so forth. For example, a gustatory cognition of a sweet object is not just aware of the sweet taste but also apprehends the object as pleasant, distinguishes certain qualities such as its texture, and so on. It also categorizes the object as being (say) one's favorite Swiss chocolate. Such characterization of the object is the function of the mental factors. We now describe this distinction between the *primary factor of awareness* and *mental factors* in more detail.

The Primary Factor of Awareness

The primary factor of awareness (*citta*) is also described as *vijñāna*, a term often

translated as *consciousness* or *cognitive awareness*. It is the aspect of the mental state that is aware of the object. It is the very activity of cognizing the object, not an instrument in the service of an agent or self (which, as we have seen, the Buddhist philosophers argue is nonexistent). This awareness merely discerns the object, as in the above example where one apprehends the taste of what turns out to be one's favorite Swiss chocolate. Thus Vasubandhu speaks of awareness as the "bare apprehension of each object" (de la Vallée Poussin, 1971, I: 30).

In most Abhidharma systems, there are six types of awareness: five born from the five physical senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch) and mental cognition. Each type of sensory cognition is produced in dependence on a sensory basis (one of the five physical senses) and an object. This awareness arises momentarily and ceases immediately, to be replaced by another moment of awareness, and so on. The sixth type of awareness is mental. It is considered a sense by the Abhidharma, like the five physical senses, though there are disagreements about its basis (see Guenther, 1976, pp. 20–30).

Some Abhidharma texts, such as Asaṅga's (Rahula, 1980), argue that these six types of consciousness do not exhaust all the possible forms of awareness. To this list Asaṅga adds two types of awareness: the *store-consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna, kun gshi nam ryon yid; Rahula, 1980, p. 17)*.¹⁰ The idea of a store-consciousness is based on a distinction between the six types of awareness, which are all described as manifest cognitive awareness (*pravṛtti-vijñāna, jug shes*), and a more continuous and less manifest form of awareness, which is the store-consciousness. This awareness is invoked to answer the following objection: If there is no self and the mind is just a succession of mental states, then how can there be any continuity in our mental life? Asaṅga's answer is that there is a more continuous form of consciousness, which is still momentary, but exists at all times. Because it is subliminal, we usually do not notice it. It is only in special circum-

stances, such as fainting, that its presence can be noticed or at least inferred. This consciousness contains all the basic habits, tendencies, and propensities (including those that persist from one life to the next) accumulated by the individual. It thus provides a greater degree of continuity than manifest cognitive awareness on its own.

The store-consciousness is mistaken by the afflictive mentation as being a self. In this way one's core inborn sense of self is formed. From a Buddhist point of view, however, this sense of self is fundamentally mistaken. It is a mental imposition of unity where there is in fact only the arising of a multiplicity of interrelated physical and mental events. The sense of control belonging to one's sense of self is thus largely illusory. There is really nobody in charge of the physical and mental processes, which arise according to their own causes and conditions, not our whims. The mind is not ruled by a central unit, but by competing factors whose strength varies according to circumstances.

Thus Asaṅga, allegedly Vasubandhu's half-brother, posits as many as eight types of consciousness, a doctrine usually associated with a particular Buddhist school, the Yogācāra. This school contains many interesting insights, without which there is no complete understanding of the depth of Buddhist views of the mind, but there is not space to discuss these insights here. Let us simply point out that there are some interesting similarities between the Yogācāra and the Sāṃkhya views. The store-consciousness, in acting as the holder of all the potentialities accumulated by an individual, is not unlike the intellect (*buddhi*), whereas the afflictive mentation seems similar to the ego-sense (*aḥamkāra*). Furthermore, mental cognition does not seem too different from mentation (*manas*). These similarities indicate the reach of the Sāṃkhya model, even in a tradition whose basic outlook is radically different.

Mental Factors

Mental states are not just states of awareness; they also actively engage their objects,

qualifying them as pleasant or unpleasant, approaching them with a particular attitude, and so on. Mental factors, which are aspects of the mental state that characterize the object of awareness, account for this engagement. In other words, whereas consciousness makes known the mere presence of the object, mental factors make known the particulars of the content of awareness, defining its characteristics and special conditions of its object. They qualify the apprehension of the object as being pleasant or unpleasant, attentive or distracted, peaceful or agitated, and so forth.

The translation of these elements of the mind (*caitesika*) as *factors* is meant to capture the range of meanings that the Abhidharma associates with this term. The relation between cognitive awareness and mental factors is complex. At times the Abhidharma construes this relation diachronically as being causal and functional. Factors cause the mind to apprehend objects in particular ways. At other times, the Abhidharma seems to emphasize a synchronic perspective in which cognitive awareness and mental factors coexist and cooperate in the same cognitive task.¹¹

In accordance with its procedure, the Abhidharma studies mental factors by listing them, establishing the ways in which they arise and cease, and grouping them in the appropriate categories. Each Abhidharma tradition has a slightly different list. Here we follow a list of 51 mental factors distributed in 6 groups.¹² The mental typology presented in this list has a number of interesting features in relation to more familiar Western philosophical and scientific typologies:

- Five omnipresent factors: feeling, discernment, intention, attention, and contact
- Five determining factors: aspiration, appreciation, mindfulness, concentration, and intelligence
- Four variable factors: sleep, regret, investigation, and analysis
- Eleven virtuous factors: confidence/faith, self-regarding shame, other-regarding shame, joyful effort, pliability, conscientiousness, detachment, non-hatred

an object, however dimly and indistinctly). Hence they are not present in all mental states, but only in some.

One striking feature of this list is the pre-eminent place of feeling (*vedanā, ishor bhā*) as the first of the factors. This emphasis reflects the fundamental outlook of the tradition, which views humans as being first and foremost sentient. But it also reflects a distinctive view of the cognitive realm that emphasizes the role of spontaneous value attribution. For the Abhidharma, a mental state is not only aware of an object but at the same time it also evaluates this object. This evaluation is the function of the feeling tone that accompanies the awareness and experiences of the object as either pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. This factor is central in determining our reactions to the events we encounter, because, for the most part, we do not perceive an object and then feel good or bad about it out of considerate judgments. Rather, evaluation is already built into our experiences. We may use reflection to come to more objective judgments, but those mostly operate as correctives to our spontaneous evaluations.

Feeling is not the only important factor, however. A mental state involves not only awareness and feeling but also discernment (*samjijā, 'du shes* also often translated as perception or cognition). This factor involves the mind's ability to identify the object by distinguishing it from other objects. This concept of discernment presents some difficulties, however. In its most elaborate form, discernment is based on our semiotic ability to make distinctions, mostly through linguistic signs. But for the Abhidharma, the mind's ability to identify objects is not limited to linguistic distinctions, however important they may be. Infants and non-human animals are understood to have the ability to make distinctions although they do not use symbolic thinking. Are these prelinguistic cognitions nevertheless semiotic? Do they involve non-linguistic signs, or do they make distinctions without the use of signs? It seems plausible to argue that some of these states involve non-linguistic signs, as in the case of visual cognitions that distinguish objects

on the basis of visual clues. For the Abhidharma, however, this question strikes deeper, because several meditative states in the Buddhist tradition are described as signless (*animitta, mīhan mēd*).¹³ Can the mind in these states identify its object without making distinctions? Or is it the case that even in the case of signless states the mind still makes distinctions, although they are not linguistic or even conceptual? In a short chapter such as this one, we cannot delve into this issue, despite its relevance to the dialogue between Buddhism and the sciences of mind.

Other factors are also significant. Intention (*cetanā, sems pa*) is a central and omnipresent factor, which determines the moral (not ethical) character of the mental state. Every mental state approaches its object with an intention, a motivation that may be evident to the person or not. This intention determines the moral nature of the mental state, whether it is virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral. This factor is associated with the accomplishment of a goal and hence is also thought of as a focus of organization for the other factors.

Also important is the role of attention (*manasikāra, yid la byed pa*), another one of the five omnipresent factors. It is the ability of the mind to be directed to an object. A contemporary commentator explains attention this way: "Attention is the mental factor responsible for the mind's advertence to the object, by virtue of which the object is made present to consciousness. Its characteristic is the conducting of the associated mental states [i.e., factors] to the object. Its function is to yoke the associated mental states [i.e., factors] to the object" (Bodhi, 1993, p. 81). Every mental state has at least a minimal amount of focus on its object; hence attention is an omnipresent factor.

Attention needs to be distinguished from two other related factors. The first is concentration (*samādhi, ting nge 'dzin*), the ability of the mind to dwell on its object single-pointedly. The second is mindfulness (*smṛti, dran pa*, also translated as recollection), which is the mind's ability to keep the object in focus without forgetting, being distracted, wobbling, or floating away from the object.

Both abilities are not present in every mental state. Concentration differs from attention in that it involves the ability of the mind not just to attend to an object but also to sustain this attention over a period of time. Similarly, mindfulness is more than the simple attending to the object. It involves the capacity of the mind to hold the object in its focus, preventing it from slipping away in forgetfulness. Hence both factors, which are vital to the practice of Buddhist meditation (see Chapter 10), are included among the determining factors. They are present only when the object is apprehended with some degree of clarity and sustained focus.

The factors discussed so far are mainly cognitive, but the Abhidharma list also includes mental factors we would describe as emotions. Consider the ethically determined factors, starting with the eleven virtuous ones: confidence/faith, self-regarding shame, other-regarding shame, joyful effort, pliability, conscientiousness, detachment, non-hatred (lovingkindness), wisdom, equanimity, and non-harmfulness (compassion).

We would describe several of these factors, such as lovingkindness and compassion, as emotions. These two factors belong to what we would characterize as the affective domain, although here they are understood not with regard to their affectivity, but rather in relation to their ethical character.¹⁴ Hence they are grouped with other factors, such as wisdom and conscientiousness, that are more cognitive than affective. For the Abhidharma all these factors are grouped together. They are all positive in that they promote well-being and freedom from the inner compulsions that lead to suffering.

The afflictive factors, on the other hand, are precisely those that lead to suffering. They are by far the most numerous group and are clearly a major focus of this typology:

- Six root-afflictions: attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, negative doubt, and mistaken view.
- Twenty branch-afflictions: belligerence, vengefulness, concealment, spite, jealousy,

ously, avarice, pretense, dissimulation, self-satisfaction, cruelty, self-regarding shamelessness, other-regarding shamelessness, inconsideration, mental dullness, distraction, excitement, lack of confidence/faith, laziness, lack of conscientiousness, and forgetfulness.

Here again we notice that this list contains factors that look quite different. Some factors such as ignorance are clearly cognitive, whereas others such as anger and jealousy are more affective. They are grouped together because they are afflictive: They trouble the mind, making it restless and agitated. They also compel and bind the mind, preventing one from developing more positive attitudes. This afflictive character may be obviously in the case of attachment and jealousy, which directly lead to dissatisfaction, frustration, and restlessness. Ignorance – that is, our innate and mistaken sense of self – is less obviously afflictive, but its role is nonetheless central here, because it brings about the other more obviously afflictive factors.

Although there are many elements in the typology of mental factors that we can identify as emotions (anger, pride, jealousy, lovingkindness, and compassion), there is no category that maps onto our notion of emotion. Most of the positive factors are not what we would call emotions, and although most of the negative factors are affective, not all are. Hence it is clear that the Abhidharma does not recognize the notion of emotion as a distinct category of a mental typology. There is no Abhidharma category that can be used to translate our concept of emotion, and similarly our concept of emotion is difficult to use to translate the Abhidharma terminology. Rather than opposing rational and irrational elements of the psyche, or cognitive and emotive systems of the mind (or brain), the Abhidharma emphasizes the distinction between virtuous and afflictive mental factors. Thus, our familiar Western distinction between cognition and emotion simply does not map onto the Abhidharma typology. Although the cognition/emotion

distinction has recently been called into question by some scientists (see Chapter 29 and Damasio, 1995), it remains central to most of contemporary cognitive science and philosophy of mind. The Abhidharma typology offers a different approach, one in which mental factors are categorized according to their ethical character. This typology could prove fruitful for psychologists and social and affective neuroscientists interested in studying the behavioral components of human well-being (see Goleman, 2003).

The analyses of mental factors we have reviewed indicate the complexity, sophistication, and uniqueness of the Abhidharma mental typology. For this reason, the Abhidharma is often called, somewhat misleadingly, 'Buddhist psychology'.¹⁵ Yet the Abhidharma analysis does not answer all the questions raised by the Buddhist view of the mind as lacking a real self. In particular, it leaves out the issue of the cognitive or epistemic structure of the mental states that make up the stream of consciousness. To examine this issue, we turn to another Indian Buddhist tradition, the logico-epistemological tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti (see Dreyfus, 1997; Duménil, 2004).

Buddhist Epistemology

This tradition was started by Dignāga around 500 CE and was expanded significantly more than a century later by Dharmakīrti, the focus of our analysis. Its contribution was the explicit formulation of a complete Buddhist logical and epistemological system. The importance of this system in India can be seen in the continuous references to it by later Buddhist thinkers and the numerous attacks it received from orthodox Hindu thinkers. It gradually came to dominate the Indian Buddhist tradition, even eclipsing the Abhidharma as the prime focus of intellectual creativity.

The concern of this tradition is the nature of knowledge. In the Indian context, this issue is formulated as this question: What

is the nature of valid cognition (*pramāna*) and what are its types? Hindu thinkers tend to present a realist theory, which liberally allows a diversity of instruments of valid cognition. For example, the Sāṃkhya asserts that there are three types of valid sources of knowledge: perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), and verbal testimony (*śabda*). The Nyāya, perhaps the most important Hindu logico-epistemological tradition, added a fourth type of valid cognition, analogy (*upamāna*). This fourfold typology provided the most authoritative epistemological typology in India. Buddhist epistemology, however, rejects these typologies and offers a more restrictive view, limiting knowledge to inference and perception. It is in its examination of inference as a source of knowledge that the Buddhist tradition analyzes reasoning, in particular the conditions necessary for the formation of sound reasons and all their possible types. Hence this tradition is often described, also somewhat misleadingly, as 'Buddhist logic'.¹⁶

The interpretation of the word *pramāna* is itself a topic of debate among Buddhist and Hindu thinkers. For the latter, this word, in accordance with its grammatical form, refers to 'means of valid cognition'. This understanding also accords with the basic view of this school that knowledge is owned by a subject, the self, to whom knowledge is ultimately conveyed. For example, the Nyāya asserts that knowledge is a quality of the self. It is only when I become conscious of something that I can be said to know it. This view is energetically rejected by Dharmakīrti, who follows the classical Buddhist line that there is no knowing self, only knowledge. Hence, *pramāna* should not be taken in an instrumental sense, but as referring to the knowledge-event, the word itself being then interpreted as meaning *valid cognition*. This type of cognition is in turn defined as that cognition that is non-deceptive (*avisamvādi-jñāna*):

Valid cognition is that cognition [that is] non-deceptive [avisamvādi]. Non-deceptiveness [consists] in the readiness

[for the object] to perform a function (Dharmakīrti, Commentary on Valid Cognition II: 1, translated by Dreyfus, in *Miyasaka*, 1971-3).

This statement emphasizes that *pramāṇa* is not the instrument that a knowing self uses to know things. There is no separate knowing subject, but just knowledge, which is *pramāṇa*. According to this account, a cognition is valid if, and only if, it is non-deceptive. Dharmakīrti in turn interprets non-deceptiveness as consisting of an object's readiness to perform a function that relates to the way it is cognized. For example, the non-deceptiveness of a fire is its disposition to burn, and the non-deceptiveness of its perception is its apprehension as burning. This perception is non-deceptive because it practically corresponds to the object's own causal dispositions, contrary to the apprehension of the fire as cold.

The scope of the discussion of *pramāṇa*, however, is not limited to the analysis of knowledge, but constitutes a veritable philosophical method used in investigating other philosophical and even metaphysical topics. All pronouncements about the world and our ways of knowing it must rest on some attested forms of knowledge, such as perception and inference, if they are to be taken seriously. No one can simply claim truth, but must be able to establish statements by pinning down their epistemic supports. The advantage of this method is that it provides intertraditional standards of validation and the development of a relatively neutral framework within which philosophical and metaphysical claims can be assessed, without regard to religious or ideological backgrounds. This procedure is different from the Abhidharmic approach, which presupposes Buddhist ideas and vocabulary.

In analyzing the mind, Dharmakīrti starts from the same view of mind as the Abhidharma. Mind is made up of momentary mental states that arise in quick succession. Each moment of consciousness comes to be and disappears instantaneously, making a place for other moments of awareness. Moreover, each moment apprehends the object that

nakedly, but rather through an aspect, which is the reflection or imprint left by the object on the mind. For example, a visual sense consciousness does not directly perceive a blue color, but captures the likeness of blue as imprinted on cognition. Thus, to be aware of an object does not mean apprehending this object directly, but having a mental state that has the form of this object and being cognizant of this form. The aspect is the cognitive form or epistemic factor that allows us to distinguish mental episodes and differentiate among our experiences. Without aspects, we could not distinguish, for instance, a perception of blue from a perception of yellow, for we do not perceive yellow directly. The role of the aspect is thus crucial in Dharmakīrti's system, for it explains a key feature of consciousness: Consciousness is not the bare seeing that direct realism and common sense suppose, but rather the apprehension of an aspect that represents this object in the field of consciousness. The aspect is not external to consciousness. It is not only the form under which an external object presents itself to consciousness but also the form that consciousness assumes when it perceives its object. Thus an aspect is a representation of objects in consciousness, as well as the consciousness that sees this representation.

The implication of this analysis is that perception is inherently reflexive. Awareness takes on the form of an object and reveals that form by assuming it. Thus, in the process of revealing external things, cognition reveals itself. This view of cognition as self-luminous (*svayam prakāśa*) and self-presenting is not unique to Dignāga, its first Buddhist proponent, or to Dharmakīrti, his follower. It is also accepted by other thinkers, particularly the Hindu Vedāntins, who identify consciousness as the self and describe it as being 'only known to itself' (*svayamvedya*) and 'self-effulgent' (*svayamprabha*; see Gupta 1998, 2003; Mayeda, 1979/1992, pp. 22, 44). For Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, however, the inherently reflexive character of consciousness is not a consequence of its transcendent and pure nature, but of its consisting of

the beholding of an internal representation. From one side, consciousness has an externally oriented feature, called the objective aspect (*grāhyākāra*). This feature is the form that a mental state assumes under the influence of an external object. The second side is the internal knowledge of our own mental states. It is called the subjective aspect (*grāhākāra*), the feature that ensures that we are aware of the objective aspect, the representation of the object. These two parts do not exist separately. Rather, each mental state consists of both and hence is necessarily reflexive (aware of itself in being aware of its object).

The necessary reflexivity of consciousness is understood by Dharmakīrti and his followers as a particular type of perception called *self-cognition* (*svasamvedana*). Self-cognition can be compared to what Western philosophers call *apperception*; namely, the knowledge that we have of our own mental states. It is important to keep in mind, however, that apperception does not imply a second and separate cognition directed toward a given mental state of which one is thereby aware. For Dharmakīrti, apperception is not introspective or reflective, for it does not take inner mental states as its objects. It is instead the self-cognizing factor inherent in every mental episode, which provides us with a non-thematic awareness of our mental states. For Dharmakīrti, reflexivity is a necessary consequence of his analysis of perception, according to which a subjective aspect beholds an objective aspect that represents the external object within the field of consciousness. Self-cognition is nothing over and above this beholding.

Self-cognition is the intuitive presence that we feel we have toward our own mental episodes. We may not be fully aware of all the aspects and implications of our experiences, but we do seem to keep track of them. Tibetan scholars express this idea by saying that there is no person whose mental states are completely hidden to him- or herself. This limited self-presence is not due to a metaphysical self, but to self-cognition. Because apperception does not rely on reasoning, it is taken to be a form of perception.

Apperception does not constitute, however, a separate reflective or introspective cognition. Otherwise, the charge that the notion of apperception opens an infinite regress would be hard to avoid.

Dharmakīrti's ideas are not unlike those Western philosophers who have argued that consciousness implies self-consciousness (see Chapters 3 and 4). Such philosophers include (despite their otherwise vast differences) Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, Kant, Husserl, and Sartre (see Wider, 1997, pp. 7–39). According to Locke, a person is conscious of his or her own mental states. He defines consciousness as "the perception of what passes in a man's mind" (*Essay Concerning Human Understanding* II: ii, 19). Leibniz, in his *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (II: i, 19), criticizes Locke, pointing out that this view leads to an infinite regress, for if every cognitive act implies self-awareness, self-knowledge must also be accompanied by another awareness, and so on ad infinitum. This regress arises, however, only if knowledge of one's mental states is assumed to be distinct from knowledge of external objects. This assumption is precisely what Dharmakīrti denies. A consciousness is aware of itself in a non-dual way that does not involve the presence of a separate awareness of consciousness. The cognizing person simply knows that he or she cognizes without the intervention of a separate perception of the cognition. This knowledge is the function of apperception, which thus provides an element of certainty with respect to our mental states. Apperception does not necessarily validate these states, however. For example, one can take oneself to be seeing water without knowing whether that seeing is veridical. In this case, one knows that one has an experience, but one does not know that one knows. The determination of the validity of a cognition is not internal or intrinsic to that cognition, but is to be established by practical investigation.

Several arguments are presented by Dharmakīrti to establish the reflexive nature of consciousness.¹⁷ One of his main arguments concerns the nature of suffering and happiness as it reveals the deeper nature of

mental states. For Dharmakīrti, as for the Abhidharma, suffering and happiness are not external to consciousness, but integral to our awareness of external objects. Our perceptions arise with a certain feeling-tone, be it pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral; this feeling-tone is a function of the presence of the mental factor of feeling as described by the Abhidharma. This feeling needs to be noticed, however; otherwise we would not be aware of how the apprehension of the object feels. Because this noticing cannot be the function of another mental state without incurring the problem of an infinite regress, it must be the mental state apprehending the external object that becomes aware at the same time of the feeling. This conclusion indicates, for Dharmakīrti, the dual nature of mental states. In a single mental state, two aspects can be distinguished: (1) the objective aspect, the representation of the external object in consciousness, and (2) the subjective aspect, the apprehension of this appearance or self-cognition.

For Dharmakīrti, a mental state thus has two functions. It apprehends an external object (*ādambhana*) and beholds itself. The apprehension of an external object is not direct, but results from the causal influence of the object, which induces cognition or experience (*anubhava*) the object's representation. Hence, mind does not experience an external object, but beholds an internal representation that stands for an external object. Cognition cannot be reduced to a process of direct observation, but involves a holding of an inner representation. This beholding is not, however, an apprehension in the usual sense of the word, for the two aspects of a single mental episode are not separate. It is an 'intimate' contact, a direct experiencing of the mental state by itself through which we become aware of our mental states at the same time as we perceive things.

Theory of Perception

This view of cognition as bearing only indirectly on external objects has obvious consequences for the theory of perception. The

theory of perception is an important element of Dharmakīrti's epistemology, for we have access to external reality first and foremost through perception, the primary valid cognition. But this access is not as unproblematic as one might think. Although it might seem commonsensical that perception results from our encounter with the world, in reality consciousness does not directly cognize the object, but only indirectly cognizes it. For Dharmakīrti, as we have seen, the mind has direct access only to the representational aspect caused by the object; the object itself remains inaccessible to consciousness. The similarity between object and aspect – and hence between object and consciousness, the aspect being the cognitive form of the object that stands for the object in the field of consciousness – is the crucial element in this causal theory of perception. This similarity ensures that perception is not locked up in its own appearances, as conceptions are. Consciousness is not in direct contact with the external world, but only with an internal impression caused by the external object. Hence the external object remains hidden, though not completely.

When pressed by these problems, Dharmakīrti sometimes shifts between the views of two different Buddhist philosophical schools, using one perspective to bypass problems that arise in the other. These two views are the Sautrāntika theory of perception, which is representationalist in the ways just described, and the Yogācāra theory, which is idealist and denies that there is anything outside of consciousness. Following Dignāga's example and his strategy of ascending scales of philosophical analysis, Dharmakīrti holds that the Yogācāra theory is truer and hence higher on the scale of analysis. This theory denies that there are any external objects over and above the direct objects of perception. Thus its view of perception is phenomenalist: It reduces external objects to interpreted mental data, but such data are no longer taken to stand for external objects (because it is now held that nothing exists outside of consciousness). This theory, however, is counter-intuitive, and so Dharmakīrti refers to it only occasionally, prefer-

ring to argue on the basis of the commonsensical assumption that external objects exist. His theory of perception thus has a peculiar two-tiered structure, in which he presupposes the existence of external objects, which he then ultimately rejects to propound a form of idealism.

Among these two tiers, the one Dharmakīrti most often refers to is the Sautrāntika representationalist theory of perception. According to this view, consciousness does not have direct access to external objects, but grasps objects via the intermediary of an aspect caused by and similar to an external object. He sometimes replaces this view by a Yogācāra view, which holds that internal impressions are not produced by external objects, but by internal tendencies. This shift into full-blown idealism allows Dharmakīrti to bypass the difficulties involved in explaining the relation between internal perceptions and external objects. Because there are no external objects, the problem of the relation between internal impressions and external objects does not arise. At this level, his philosophy of perception can be described as phenomenalist, for it holds that there is no external object outside of aspects.

Another major feature of Dharmakīrti's account is his sharp separation between perception and conception, a separation enshrined in his definition of perception as the cognition that is unmistakable (*abhānta*) and free from conceptions (*kalpanāpōḥka*) (*Commentary on Valid Cognition*, III: 300cd). Because perception is unmistakable and conception is mistaken, perception must be free from conception. This analysis of perception differs sharply from the dominant account in India, the epistemological realism of the Nyāya school and its assertion of the existence of a determinate (*sarvālpaka*) form of perception. For the Nyāya, perception does not stop with the simple taking in of sensory stimuli, but also involves the ability to categorize this input. Although we may start with a first moment of indeterminate perception, in which we merely take in external reality, we do not stop there but go on to formulate perceptual judgments. Moreover, and this is the crux of the

question, these judgments are for the Nyāya fully perceptual. They are not mistaken conceptual overlays, but true reflections of reality.

This commonsensical view of perception is not acceptable to Dharmakīrti, for it leads to an unenviable choice: either accept the reality of the abstract entities necessary for the articulation of the content of perception or reject the possibility of an unmitigated cognition. Because neither possibility is acceptable for Dharmakīrti, he holds that perception can only be non-conceptual. There is no determinate perception, for the judgments induced by perception are not perceptual, but are just conceptual superimpositions. They do not reflect the individual reality of phenomena, but instead address their general characteristics. Because those are only constructs, the cognitions that conceive them cannot be true reflections of reality. Hence for perception to be undistorted in a universe of particulars, it must be totally free from conceptual elaborations. This position implies a radical separation between perception, which merely holds the object as it is in the perceptual ken, and interpretation of this object, which introduces conceptual constructs into the cognitive process.

This requirement that perception be non-conceptual is the cornerstone of the Buddhist theory of perception. But it creates problems for Dharmakīrti. It would seem that given his privileging of perception he should hold an empiricist view, according to which perception boils down to a bare encounter with reality and knowledge is given to the senses. Dharmakīrti should hold the view that the aspects through which we come to perceive reality are fully representational like Locke's ideas, that they stand for external objects, and that their apprehension is in and of itself cognitive. Dharmakīrti's view of perception, however, is more complex, for he shares with Sellars (1956) the recognition that knowledge, even at the perceptual level, does not boil down to an encounter with reality, but requires active categorization. We do not know things by sensing them, for perception does not deliver articulated objects, but only impres-

intentional object standing for an external object. Hence, Dharmakīrti's account of perception leads us to realize the importance of categorical interpretation in the formation of perceptual knowledge, a position that is not without problems for his system, given his emphasis on the primacy and non-conceptuality of perception. Nevertheless, the merit of this analysis is that it disentangles the processes through which we come to know the world, explaining the role of perception as a way to contact the world while emphasizing the role of conceptual categorization in the formation of practical knowledge.

Thought and Language

In examining thought (*kalpanā*), Dharmakīrti postulates a close association with language. In fact, the two can be considered equivalent from an epistemological point of view. Language signifies through conceptual mediation in the same way that thought conveys of things. The relation between the two also goes the other way: We do not first understand things independently of linguistic signs and then communicate this understanding to others. Dharmakīrti recognizes a cognitive import to language; through language we identify the particular things we encounter, and in this way we integrate the object into the meaningful world we have constructed. The cognitive import of language is particularly obvious in the acquisition of more complex concepts. In these cases, it is clear that there is nothing in experience that could possibly give rise to these concepts without language. Without linguistic signs thought cannot keep track of things to any degree of complexity. Dharmakīrti also notes that we usually remember things by recollecting the words associated with those things. Thus concepts and words mutually depend on each other.

This close connection between thought and language, inherited from Dignāga, differentiates Dharmakīrti from classical empiricists, such as Locke and modern sense-data theorists, who believe in what Sellars (1956) describes as the 'myth of the

given'. Locke, for example, holds that concepts and words are linked through association. The word 'tree' acquires its meaning by becoming connected with the idea *tree*, which is the mental image of a tree. Hence for Locke the representation of the tree is not formed through language, but is given to sensation (Dharmakīrti's perception). We understand a tree as a tree through mere acquaintance with its representation without recourse to concepts. Dharmakīrti's philosophy is quite different, for it emphasizes the constitutive and constructive nature of language. This conception of language is well captured by one of Dharmakīrti's definitions of thought:

Conceptual cognition is that consciousness in which representation (literally, appearance) is fit to be associated with words (Ascertainment of Valid Cognition 40: 6-7, in Verter, 1966).

Thought identifies its object by associating the representation of the object with a word. When we conceive of an object we do not apprehend it directly, but through the mediation of its aspect. Mediation through an aspect also occurs with perception, but here the process of mediation is different. In the case of perception there is a direct causal connection between the object and its representation, but no such link exists for thought. There is no direct causal link between the object and thought, but rather an extended process of mediation in which linguistic signs figure prominently.

For Dharmakīrti, the starting point of this process is our encounter with a variety of objects that we experience as being similar or different. We construct concepts in association with linguistic signs to capture this sense of experienced similarity and difference. This linguistic association creates a more precise concept in which the representations are made to stand for a commonality that the objects are assumed to possess. For example, we see a variety of trees and apprehend a similarity between these objects. At this level, our mental representations have yet to yield a concept of tree. The concept of tree is formed when we connect our

representations with a socially formed and communicated sign and assume that they stand for a tree because we take individual trees to share. In this way experiences give rise to mental representations, which are transformed into concepts by association with a linguistic sign. The formation of a concept consists of the assumption that mental representations stand for an agreed-upon imagined commonality. Thus concepts come to be through the conjunction of the experience of real objects and the social process of language acquisition. Concept formation is connected to reality, albeit in a mediated and highly indirect way.

But concept formation is also mistaken, according to this view. A concept is based on the association of a mental representation with a term that enables the representation to stand for a property assumed to be shared by various individuals. In Dharmakīrti's nominalist world of individuals, however, things do not share a common property; rather, the property is projected onto them. The property is manufactured when a representation is made to stand for an assumed commonality, which a variety of individuals are mistakenly taken to instantiate. Hence this property is not real; it is merely a pseudo-entity superimposed (*adhyāropa*) on individual realities. This property is also not reducible to a general term. In other words, the commonality that we project onto things does not reside in using the same term to designate discrete individuals. Upon analyzing the notion of sameness of terms, we realize that identifying individual terms as being the same presupposes the concept of sameness of meaning, in relation to which the individual terms can be identified. Thus commonality is not due simply to a term, but requires the formation of concepts on the basis of the mistaken imputation of commonality onto discrete individuals.

What does it mean, however, for a concept to be based on an assumed commonality? Here Dharmakīrti's theory must be placed within its proper context, the *apoha* or exclusion theory of language, which was created by Dignāga. This com-

plex topic is beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to say that the *apoha* theory is a way to explain how language signifies in a world of individuals. Linguistic meaning poses a particularly acute problem for Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, for they are committed to a connotationist view of language, in which sense has primacy over reference. Such a view, however, is difficult to hold in a nominalist ontology that disallows abstract entities, such as meaning.¹⁹

The *apoha* theory tries to solve this conundrum by arguing that language does not describe reality positively through universals, but negatively by exclusion. Language is primarily meaningful, but this does not mean that there are real senses. Rather, we posit agreed-upon fictions that we construct for the sake of categorizing the world according to our purposes. Thus 'cow' does not describe Bessie through the mediation of a real universal (cowness), but by excluding a particular (Bessie) from the class of non-cow. Matilal describes Dignāga's view this way:

Each name, as Dignāga understands, dichotomizes the universe into two: those to which the name can be applied and those to which it cannot be applied. The function of a name is to exclude the object from the class of those objects to which it cannot be applied. One might say that the function of a name is to locate the object outside of the class of those to which it cannot be applied (Matilal, 1971, p. 45).

Although linguistic form suggests that we subsume an individual under a property, analysis reveals that words merely exclude objects from being included in a class to which they do not belong. The function of a name is to locate negatively an object within a conceptual sphere. The impression that words positively capture the nature of objects is misleading.

This theory was immediately attacked by Hindu thinkers, such as Kumārla and Uddyotakara, who raised strong objections. One of them was that this theory is counter-intuitive, because we do not perceive ourselves to eliminate non-cows when we

conceive of cows. Dharmakīrti's theory of concept formation is in many ways an attempt to answer these attacks. It argues that the *apoha* theory is not psychological, but epistemological. In conceiving of objects we do not directly eliminate other objects, but instead rely on a representation that is made to stand in for an assumed commonality shared by several particulars. It is this fictional commonality that is the result of an exclusion. There is nothing over and above particulars, which are categorized on the basis of their being excluded from what they are not. The concept that has been formed in an essentially negative way is projected onto real things. In the process of making judgments such as 'this is a tree', the real differences that exist between the different trees come to be ignored and the similarities are reified into a common universal property, which is nothing but a socially agreed-upon fiction.

The eliminative nature of thought and language is psychologically revealed when we examine the learning process. The word 'cow', for instance, is not learned only through a definition, but by a process of elimination. We can give a definition of 'cow', but the definition works only if its elements are known already. For example, we can define cows as animals having dewlaps, horns, and so on (the traditional definition of 'cow' in Indian philosophy). But how do we know what counts as a dewlap? Not just by pointing to the neck of a cow, but by eliminating the cases that do not fit. In this way, we establish a dichotomy between those animals that fit, and other animals or things that do not, and on the basis of this negative dichotomy we construct a fictive property, cowness. This construction is not groundless, however, but proceeds through an indirect causal connection with reality. Concepts are not formed a priori, but elaborated as a result of experiences. Dharmakīrti's solution to the problem of thought and meaning is thus to argue that in a world bereft of real abstract entities (properties), there are only constructed intensional (linguistic) pseudo-entities, but that this construction is based on experience; that is, perception.

This grounding in perception ensures that, although conception is mistaken in the way reviewed above, it is neither baseless nor random and hence can lead to the formation of concepts that will be attuned to the causal capacities of particulars.

Dharmakīrti and Abhidharma: Intentionality Revisited

Dharmakīrti's analysis has in certain respects a great deal of continuity with the Abhidharma. Both view the mind as constituted by a succession of mental states in accordance with their ontological commitments, which privilege the particular over the general. Reality is made up of a plurality of elements (here moments of awareness), and generality, when it is not a figment of our imagination, is at best the result of aggregation. This emphasis on the particular derives from the central tenets of the Buddhist tradition; namely, non-substantiality and dependent origination. In Dharmakīrti's epistemological approach, this emphasis expresses itself in valuing perception over conception, and in the problematic but necessary cooperation between the two forms of cognition. We do not come to know things by merely coming across them, but by integrating them into our conceptual schemes on the basis of our experiences.

One question raised by this analysis concerns intentionality. The Abhidharma tradition had assumed all along that cognitions were intentional, but did not provide a systematic analysis of intentionality. Dharmakīrti fills this gap, analyzing the way in which various types of cognition bear on their objects. But because he makes a sharp distinction between perception and conception, his analysis does not yield a single concept of intentionality, but on the contrary leads us to realize that this central notion may have to be understood in multiple ways. The cognitive process starts with our encounter with the world through perceptions, but this encounter is not enough to bring about knowledge. Only when we are able to integrate the objects delivered through the senses into our categorical

schemes can be said to know them in the full sense of the word. Hence, if we understand intentionality as cognitive – that is, as pertaining to knowledge – we may well have to agree with Dharmakīrti that perception is not in and of itself fully intentional. Only when perception is coordinated with conception does it become intentional; hence it can be said to be intentional only in a derived sense of the word. Perception is not in and of itself cognitive, but only inasmuch as it has the ability to induce conceptual interpretations of its objects. This does not mean, however, that perception is completely blank or purely passive. It has an intentional function, that of delivering impressions that we take in and organize through our conceptual schemes. Hence, perception can be said to have a phenomenal intentionality, which may be revealed in certain forms of meditative experiences.

Dharmakīrti alludes to such experiences when he describes a form of meditation, in which we empty our mind without closing it completely to the external world (*Commentary on Valid Cognition* III: 123–5, in Miyasaka 1971–2). In this state of liminal awareness, things appear to us but we do not identify them. We merely let them be. When we come out of this stage, the usual conceptual flow returns, and with it the conceptualization that allows us to identify things as being this or that. This experience shows Dharmakīrti argues, that identification is not perceptual, but is due to conceptualization. In such a state, perception takes place but not conceptualization. Hence, perception is a non-conceptual sensing onto which interpretations are added.

Due to the speed of the mental process, the untrained person cannot differentiate conceptual from non-conceptual cognitions. It is only on special occasions, such as in some form of meditation, that a clear differentiation can be made. There, the flow of thought gradually subsides, and we reach a state in which there is a bare sensing of things. In this state, what we call shapes and colors are seen barely (i.e., as they are delivered to our senses without the adjunctions of conceptual interpretations). When one gradually emerges from such a non-conceptual state,

the flow of thoughts gradually reappears, and we are able to make judgments about what we saw during our meditation. One is then also able to make a clear differentiation between the products of thoughts and the bare delivery of the senses and to distinguish cognitive from phenomenal intentionality.

The analysis of intentionality, however, may have to go even further to account for all the forms of cognition known to Buddhist traditions. We alluded above to the Abhidharmic idea of a store-consciousness, a subliminal form of cognition that supports all the propensities, habits, and tendencies of a person. Although such a store-consciousness is usually asserted by the Yogācāra to support their idealist view, it is known to other traditions under other names and hence has to be taken seriously within a Buddhist account of the mind, regardless of the particular views that are associated with it. But given the particularities of this form of consciousness, its integration within a Buddhist view of the mind is not without problems. The difficulties come from the fact that the store-consciousness does not seem to have cognitive or even phenomenal intentionality. Because it does not capture any feature, it cannot be said to know its object, like conceptions. Because it is subliminal, it is difficult to attribute to it a phenomenal content able to induce categorization, like perceptions. How then can it be intentional?

To respond to this question would necessitate an analysis that goes well beyond the purview of this chapter. Several avenues are open to us. We could argue that the store-consciousness is not intentional and hence that intentionality is not the defining characteristic of the mental, but only of certain forms of cognitions. We would then be faced with the task of explaining the nature of the mental in a way that does not presuppose intentionality. Or we could extend the concept of intentionality, arguing that the store-consciousness is not intentional in the usual cognitive or phenomenal senses of the word, but rather that its intentionality consists in its having a dispositional ability to generate more explicit cognitive states. Some Western phenomenologists, notably Husserl and

Merleau-Ponty, distinguish 'object directed intentionality' from 'operative intentionality' (see Chapter 4). Whereas the former is what we usually mean by intentionality, the latter is a non-reflective tacit sensibility, a spontaneous and involuntary level that makes us ready to respond cognitively and affectively to the world, though it is not by itself explicitly cognitive. This most basic form of intentionality is important in explaining our openness to the world. It also seems an interesting avenue for exploring the cognitive nature of the store-consciousness.

Conclusion

We can now see the richness and the complexities of the Indian Buddhist analyses of the nature of the mind and consciousness. The Abhidharma provides the basis of these analyses, with its view of the mind as a stream of moments of consciousness and its distinction between the primary factor of awareness and mental factors. This tradition also emphasizes the intentional nature of consciousness, the ability of consciousness to be about something else. As we have seen, however, this concept is far from self-evident and needs further philosophical clarification. This clarification is one of the important tasks of Dharmakīrti's philosophy. In accomplishing this task, Dharmakīrti critically explores the variety of human cognitions, distinguishing the conceptual from the perceptual modes of cognition and emphasizing the constructed nature of the former and its close connection with language. Yet, as we have also seen, this philosophy is not always able to account for all the insights of the Abhidharma, particularly those concerning the deeper layers of consciousness.

When we look at the Indian Buddhist tradition, we should not look for a unified and seamless view of the mind. Like any other significant tradition, Indian Buddhist philosophy of mind is plural and animated by debates, questions, and tensions. This rich tradition has a great deal to offer contemporary mind science and philosophy, includ-

ing rich phenomenological investigations of various aspects of human cognition and exploration of various levels and types of meditative consciousness. This tradition also shows, however, that it would be naive to take these investigations of consciousness as being objectively given or established. Rather, they are accounts of experience that are often intertwined with doctrinal formulations and hence are open to critique, revision, and challenge, like any other human interpretation. Indeed, these formulations need to be taken seriously and examined with the kind of critical spirit and rigorous philosophical thinking exhibited by Dharmakīrti. Only then, can we do justice to the insights of this tradition.

Glossary

Sāṃkhya

Pradhāna: primordial nature or *prakṛti*, materiality. The primordial substance out of which the diversity of phenomena arise. It is composed of three qualities (*guṇa*): *satva* (transparency, buoyancy), *rajas* (energy, activity), and *tamas* (inertia, obstruction). They are the principles or forces whose combination produces mental and material phenomena.

Ātman: spiritual self or *puruṣa*, person. The non-material spiritual element that merely witnesses the mental activities involved in the ordinary awareness of objects.

Buddhi: usually translated as 'the intellect'. It has the ability to distinguish and experience objects. This ability provides the prereflective and presubjective ground out of which determined mental states and their objects arise. It is also the locus of all the fundamental predispositions that lead to these experiences.

Ahaṃkāra: egoity or ego-sense. This is the sense of individual subjectivity or selfhood tied to embodiment, which gives rise to the subjective pole of cognition.

Manas: mentation. It oversees the senses and discriminates between objects. By serving as an intermediary between the intellect and the senses, mentation organizes sensory impressions and objects and integrates them into a temporal framework created by memories and expectations.

Citta: mental activities or *antahkaraṇa*, internal organ. This is the grouping of *buddhi*, *ahamkāra*, and *manas*.

Pramāṇa: instrument of valid cognition of the self. The Sāṃkhya recognizes three such instruments: perception, inference, and testimony. The Nyāya adds a fourth one, analogy.

Buddhist

Citta: primary factor of awareness or *viññāna*, consciousness. It is the aspect of the mental state that is aware of the object, or the bare apprehension of the object. It is the awareness that merely discerns the object, the activity of cognizing the object.

Caitesika: mental factor. Mental factors are aspects of the mental state that characterize the object of awareness and account for its engagement. In other words, whereas consciousness makes known the mere presence of the object, mental factors make known the particulars of the content of awareness, defining the characteristics and special conditions of its object.

Ālaya-vijñāna: store-consciousness. This continuously present subliminal consciousness is posited by some of the Yogācāra thinkers to provide a sense of continuity in the person over time. It is the repository of all the basic habits, tendencies, and propensities (including those that persist from one life to the next) accumulated by the individual.

Bhavaṅga citta: life-constituent consciousness. Although this consciousness is not said to be always present and arises only during the moments where

there is no manifest mental activity, it also provides a sense of continuity for the Theravāda school, which asserts its existence.

Kīṣṭa-manas: afflictive mentation. This is the inborn sense of self that arises from the apprehension of the store-consciousness as being a self. From a Buddhist point of view, however, this sense of self is fundamentally mistaken. It is a mental imposition of unity where there is in fact only the arising of a multiplicity of interrelated physical and mental events.

pramāṇa: valid cognition. Not the instrument of a self but the knowledge-event itself. There are only two types of valid cognition admissible in Buddhist epistemology, *pratyakṣa*, perception, and *anumāna*, inference.

Svasamvédāna: self-cognition. This is the limited but intuitive presence that we feel we have toward our own mental episodes, which is due not to the presence of a metaphysical self but to the non-thematic reflexive knowledge that we have of our own mental states. Because self-cognition does not rely on reasoning, it is taken to be a form of perception. It does not constitute, however, a separate reflective or introspective cognition. Otherwise, the charge that the notion of apperception opens an infinite regress would be hard to avoid.

Notes

1. Presenting the Sāṃkhya view in a few lines is problematic given its evolution over a long period of time, an evolution shaped by the addition of numerous refinements and new analyses in response to the critiques of Buddhists and Vedāntins. For a quick summary, see Mahalingam (1977). For a more detailed examination, see Larson and Bhattacharya (1987).
2. Contrary to Vedānta, the Sāṃkhya holds that there are many individual selves rather than a universal ground of being such as *Brahman*.

3. The notion of a pure and passive 'witness consciousness' is a central element of many Hindu views about consciousness (see Gupta, 1998, 2003).
4. For a thoughtful discussion of this view of the mind, see Schweizer (1993).
5. Numerous translations of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras* are available in English.
6. For discussion of the Advaita Vedānta view of consciousness, see Gupta (2003, Chapter 5). For a philosophical overview of Advaita Vedānta, see Deutsch (1969).
7. For a glimpse of the origins of the Abhidharma, see Gethin (1992).
8. For Husserl, by contrast, not all consciousness is intentional in the sense of being object-directed. See Chapter 4 and the final section of this chapter.
9. All quotations from this work are translated from the French by G. Dreyfus.
10. See Rahula (1980, p. 17). Although the Theravāda Abhidharma does not recognize a distinct store-consciousness, its concept of *bhavaṅga citta*, the life-constituent consciousness, is similar. For a view of the complexities of the *bhavaṅga*, see Waldron (2003, pp. 81–87).
11. They are then said to be conjoined (*sam-payuta*, *mishungs idan*), in that they are simultaneous and have the same sensory basis, the same object, the same aspect or way of apprehending this object, and the same substance (the fact that there can be only one representative of a type of consciousness and mental factor at the same time). See Waldron (2003, p. 205).
12. This list, which is standard in the Tibetan tradition, is a compilation based on Asaṅga's *Abhidharma-samuccaya*. It is not, however, Asaṅga's own list, which contains 52 items (Rahula 1980, p. 7). For further discussion, see Napper (1980) and Rabten (1978/1992). For the lists of some of the other traditions, see Bodhi (1993, pp. 76–79) and de la Vallée Poussin (1971, ff. 150–178).
13. Although some of these states may be psychologically significant and involve the ability to transcend duality, not all need be. The practice of concentration can involve signless meditative states, and so too does the practice of some of the so-called formless meditative states.

14. For a discussion of whether compassion and lovingkindness, seen from a Buddhist point of view, are emotions, see Dreyfus (2002).
15. For a brief but thoughtful discussion of the idea of Buddhism as a psychology, see Gomez (2004).
16. For discussion of the characteristics of Indian logic, see Matilal (1985) and Barlingay (1975). On Buddhist logic, see Kajiyama (1966). For an analysis of Dharmakīrti's philosophy, see Dreyfus (1997) and Dunne (2004).
17. For a detailed treatment of Dharmakīrti's arguments and their further elaboration in the Tibetan tradition, see Dreyfus (1997, pp. 338–341, 400–415).
18. For more on this difficult topic, see Dreyfus (1997) and Dunne (2004).

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B. Computational Approaches to Consciousness

Mind in Tibetan Buddhism

Oral Commentary on
Ge-shay Jam-bel-sam-pel's
*Presentation of Awareness and Knowledge
Composite of All the Important Points
Opener of the Eye of New Intelligence*

Lati Rinbochay

TRANSLATED, EDITED, AND INTRODUCED
BY ELIZABETH NAPPER

PART ONE

Introduction

GABRIEL / Snow Lion
Valois, New York, U.S.A.

Awareness and knowledge (*bio-rig*) is the study of consciousness, of mind. Understanding mind is essential to understanding Buddhism in both its theoretical and practical aspects, for the process of achieving enlightenment is one of systematically purifying and enhancing the mind.

Mind and body, though associated, are not inseparably linked; they have different substantial causes. That this is so means that the increase and development of the mind is not limited to that of the body; though the continuum of the body ceases at death, that of the mind does not. This difference stems from the fact that whereas the body is composed of matter and as such is anatomically established, mind is not. It is an impermanent phenomenon (*anitya-dharma, mi ritag pa'i chos*), changing in each moment, and having a nature of clear light. Pure in its essential nature, the mind is stained by adventitious defilements (*ākasika-mala, glo bur gyi dri ma*), the result of having misapprehended from beginningless time the actual nature of phenomena. These defilements can be removed; the mind can be totally purified, and the stages in this process of purification constitute the levels of progress towards enlightenment.

Within the Ge-luk-ba order of Tibetan Buddhism, on whose viewpoint this work is based, mind is first formally studied in the topic of 'Awareness and Knowledge'. It is the second major area of study undertaken during a course of intellectual

training that culminates after twenty to twenty-five years of intensive study in the attainment of the degree of *ge-shay* (*dge bshes*).⁵ 'Awareness and Knowledge' is primarily an identification of the different types of minds, of consciousnesses which occur in the mental continuum, an introduction to the vocabulary connected with the mind, and a means of training the student in the processes of reasoning – an endeavour integrally linked with all steps of the *Ge-luk-ba ge-shay* training. Consciousness is examined mainly by dividing it into types and subtypes from several points of view, whereby a student develops a sense of the variety of consciousnesses, their functions, and interrelationships. Not found within the topic of 'Awareness and Knowledge' are descriptions of means for developing and training the mind nor even of the stages in that process; these are included in such topics as 'Grounds and Paths', the 'Concentrations and Formless Absorptions', the 'Perfections', 'Madhyamaka', and so forth – later areas of study for which thorough familiarity with 'Awareness and Knowledge' provides a necessary basis.

Presentations of 'Awareness and Knowledge' find their primary source in the works of the great Indian commentators Dignāga (480–540) and Dharmakīrti (600–660),⁶ especially in Dignāga's *Compendium on Prime Cognition* (*Pramāṇasamuchchaya*)⁷ and in Dharmakīrti's *Seven Treatises on Prime Cognition*, particularly his *Commentary on (Dignāga's) 'Compendium on Prime Cognition'* (*Pramāṇavarttika*).⁸ The one exception is the section on minds and mental factors (*chitta-chaitta*, *sems sems bying*) the source of which is Asaṅga's *Compendium of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmasamuchchaya*).⁹

These Indian texts as well as a number of Indian commentaries on them were translated into Tibetan, at the latest by the eleventh century¹⁰ and the Tibetans continued the tradition of writing commentaries on them. They also began a new tradition of drawing important topics from those texts and presenting them in conjunction with the Sautrāntika mode of reasoning. The twelfth-century Ga-dam-ba (*bKa'-gdams-pa*) scholar Cha-ba-chö-gyi-seng-gay (*Cha-pa-chos-kyi-seng-ge*,

1109–1169) wrote the first text of this type, his work and subsequently the genre as a whole being entitled *The Collected Topics [of Prime Cognition]* (*bsDus sgrva*). His text, no longer extant, had eighteen sections, one of which was entitled 'A Presentation of Objects and Object-Possessors', a topic which includes within it what is studied as 'Awareness and Knowledge'.

Shortly after Cha-ba-chö-gyi-seng-gay, the Sa-gya (*Sa-skya*) scholar Sa-gya Pandita (*Sa-skya Pandita*, 1182–1251/2) wrote a commentary on the Indian texts on prime cognition entitled *The Treasury of Reasoning*.¹¹ Contained within its second chapter is a complete presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge'. Sa-gya Pandita himself wrote a commentary to this, and it was extensively elaborated on by later scholars within the Sa-gya tradition.

The founder of the Ge-luk-ba order, Tsong-ka-pa (*Tsong-kha-pa*, 1357–1419), did not write a separate presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge' but did write a brief introductory commentary to Dharmakīrti's *Seven Treatises* entitled *Door of Entry to the Seven Treatises*.¹² This has three parts, the second of which, 'Object-Possessors', is a presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge'. His disciple Kay-drup (*mKhas-grub*, 1385–1438) wrote a more extensive commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Seven Treatises*, *Clearing Away Darkness of Mind with Respect to the Seven Treatises*,¹³ which includes a presentation of objects and object-possessors that extensively sets forth 'Awareness and Knowledge'. Another of Tsong-ka-pa's main disciples Gen-dun-drup (*dGe'-dun-grub*), the First Dalai Lama, 1391–1474) extensively set forth 'Awareness and Knowledge' within his *Ornament for Valid Reasoning*.¹⁴

The first Ge-luk-ba presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge' as a separate text was probably that of Pan-chen Sö-nam-drak-ba (*Pañ-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa*, 1478–1554),¹⁵ textbook author for the Lo-sel-ling College of Dre-bung monastery. The next was that of Jam-yang-shay-ba, textbook author for the Go-mang College of Dre-bung, which is not so much a formal composition but his lectures on the topic to beginning

students which were subsequently written down. The next was a very extensive presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge' by Lo-sang-da-nyang (bLo-bzang-ta-dbyangs, 1867-1937),¹⁶ which is a composite of all those that preceded it. Another important and quite recent text of this type is Pur-bu-jok's *Explanation of the Presentation of Objects and Object-Possessors as well as Awareness and Knowledge* from within his *Presentation of the Collected Topics Revealing the Meaning of the Treatises on Prime Cognition*. The text by Ge-shay Jam-bel-sam-pel translated in Part Two of this book is a recent presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge', written in Tibet sometime prior to 1959. The particular feature of this text, currently used by Lo-sel-ling College as its textbook for the study of 'Awareness and Knowledge' is that it is a very concise presentation of the topic which dispenses with the syllogistic format usually employed in such works and merely lays out directly the salient points concerning 'Awareness and Knowledge'.

The Tibetan presentations of 'Awareness and Knowledge' unquestionably derive from and rely on Indian sources. However, the Tibetans also contributed a great deal to the topic, both in systematizing it and in refining the use of terminology. Although all the various topics and divisions within 'Awareness and Knowledge' are considered by the Tibetans to be indicated in the Indian texts, in support of which sources can be cited, they are not always indicated with the terms by which they are known in Tibet. For example, among the sevenfold division of awareness and knowledge, only four - the first two and the last two (direct perceivers, inferential cognizers, doubt, and wrong consciousnesses) - are mentioned by name either by Dignāga or Dharmakīrti; the remaining three (subsequent cognizers, correctly assuming consciousnesses, and awarenesses to which the object appears but is not ascertained) are not explicitly mentioned, but that they are indicated is a necessary conclusion from the sources cited by Jam-nyang-shay-ba. It appears that these terms were current in Tibet by the time of Sa-gya Pandita and perhaps even Cha-ba-chö-gyi-seng-gay,¹⁷ but it is not clear whether

they were an early Tibetan innovation or perhaps may be found in the later Sanskrit commentaries.¹⁸ This is an excellent topic for future study, the goal of this work, however, being to set out clearly the basic Ge-luk-ba presentation of 'Awareness and Knowledge' in the context of the oral tradition.

Among the four systems of Buddhist tenets studied in Tibet - Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Chittamātra, and Mādhyamika, in ascending order - the specific viewpoint of the study of 'Awareness and Knowledge' is Sautrāntika, and within the division of Sautrāntika into Followers of Scripture and Followers of Reasoning, the latter. However, the general presentation is common at least to Sautrāntika, Chittamātra and Mādhyamika, and thus a study of 'Awareness and Knowledge' is used as a basis for all areas of study, requiring only slight modifications for each area.

MIND AND ITS TYPES

Consciousness (*jñāna*, *shes pa*), awareness (*buddhi*, *blo*), and knower (*samvedana*, *rig pa*) are synonymous; they are the broadest terms among those dealing with the mind. Any mind (*chitta*, *sems*) or mental factor (*chaitta*, *sems byung*) is a consciousness, is an awareness, is a knower. These terms should be understood in an active sense because minds are momentary consciousnesses which are active agents of knowing. In Buddhism mind is not conceived to be merely a general reservoir of information or just the brain mechanism, but to be individual moments of knowing, the continuum of which makes up our sense of knowing.

Consciousnesses can be divided in a number of different ways; a major mode of division is into seven:

1. SEVENFOLD DIVISION

- 1 direct perceivers (*pratyakṣha*, *mingon sum*)
- 2 inferential cognizers (*anumāna*, *rjes dpag*)
- 3 subsequent cognizers (**parichchinnā-jñāna*, *bcad shes*)¹⁹

- 4 correctly assuming consciousnesses (**manah parikṣhā, yid dpyod*)
 5 awarenesses to which the object appears but is not ascertained
 (**aniyata-pratibhāsa, snang la ma nges pa*)
 6 doubting consciousnesses (*saṃshaya, the tshom*)
 7 wrong consciousnesses (*viparyaya-jñāna, log shes*)

Direct perceivers

Direct perceivers are, by definition, knowers which are free from conceptuality (*kalpanā-apodha, rtog bral*) and non-mistaken (*abhāntā, ma 'khrul ba*). To be free from conceptuality means that such a consciousness deals with its object directly without making use of an internal image. This is illustrated by the difference between seeing a pot – as is done by a directly perceiving sense consciousness – and thinking about a pot – as is done by a conceptual mental consciousness. In the first case, the consciousness is produced in dependence on contact with an actual pot, whereas in the second the mind is dealing only with a mental image of a pot.

To be non-mistaken means that there is no erroneous element involved in that which is appearing to the consciousness. As will be explained below (page 21), conceptual consciousnesses are necessarily mistaken in this regard; thus, the qualification 'non-mistaken' alone would be sufficient to eliminate them from the category of direct perceivers. 'Free from conceptuality', though redundant, is specifically stated in order to eliminate the non-Buddhist Vaiśeṣhika view that there are conceptual sense consciousnesses.

The term 'non-mistaken' also eliminates from the class of direct perceivers those non-conceptual (*nirvikalpaka, rtog med*) consciousnesses which are mistaken due to a superficial cause of error (**pratibhāṣikī-bhrānti-hetm, phral gyi 'khrul rgyu*)²⁰ such as a fault in the eye, sickness, and so forth. These are free from conceptuality, but not from mistake. An example is an eye consciousness of someone riding in a boat, to whom the trees on the shore appear to be moving. That person's eye consciousness is non-conceptual, for it is dealing directly with the trees, but is mistaken with respect to them in that they appear to be

moving whereas they are not; thus, such a consciousness is not a direct perceiver.

Direct perceivers are of four types:

- 1 sense direct perceivers (*indriya-pratyakṣha, dbang po'i mngon sum*)
- 2 mental direct perceivers (*mānasa-pratyakṣha, yid kyi mngon sum*)
- 3 self-knowing direct perceivers (*svasaṃvedana-pratyakṣha, rang rig mngon sum*)
- 4 yogic direct perceivers (*yogi-pratyakṣha, mal 'byor mngon sum*)

Sense direct perceivers are of five types: those apprehending forms (*rūpa, gzugs*), sounds (*śabda, sgra*), odours (*gandha, dri*), tastes (*rasa, ro*), and tangible objects (*spraśtavya, teg bya*). They are produced upon the aggregation of three conditions:

- 1 observed object condition (*ālambana-pratyaya, dmigs rkyen*)
- 2 uncommon empowering condition (*asādhāraṇa-adhipati-pratyaya, thum mong ma yin pa'i bdag rkyen*)
- 3 immediately preceding condition (*samanantara-pratyaya, de ma thag rkyen*)

Using the example of an eye consciousness (*chakṣur-vijñāna, mig gi nam shes*)²¹ its observed object condition is the form it perceives. Its uncommon empowering condition is the eye sense power (*chakṣur-indriya, mig dbang*), a type of clear internal matter which empowers it in the sense that it enables it to comprehend visible forms as opposed to sounds, tastes, and so forth. Its immediately preceding condition is a moment of consciousness which occurs immediately before it and makes it an experiencing entity.

In all systems but Vaiśeṣhika, cause and effect must occur in a temporal sequence – they cannot be simultaneous. Thus, since the object observed by a consciousness is one of its causes, it must precede that consciousness, and therefore a consciousness is posited as knowing a phenomenon which exists one moment before it. Moreover, although consciousnesses are

momentary phenomena, that is, disintegrate moment by moment, one moment of consciousness is too brief to be noticed by ordinary persons. Rather, what we experience as sense perception is a continuum of moments of consciousness apprehending a continuum of moments of an object which is also disintegrating moment by moment.

Sense direct perceivers do not name their objects nor reflect on them. Non-conceptual in nature, they merely experience. All discursive thought about the object observed by sense direct perception is done by later moments of conceptual consciousness induced by that sense perception. Within the Buddhist tradition this has caused sense direct perceivers to be labelled 'stupid' and has led to the widespread view among Western interpreters of Buddhism that sense consciousness are mere passive 'transmitters', passing a signal from the sense organ to thought. Such is not the case, for sense consciousnesses do *know*, do realize (*adhiḡam, rtogs*) their object. Not only that, but sense consciousnesses can also be trained such that an eye consciousness can know not only that a person being seen is a man but also that that person is one's father. This is not to say that the eye consciousness labels the person, 'This is my father,' but it does know it, and that knowledge induces the subsequent conceptual consciousness which actually affixes the name 'father' without any intervening reflection. Sense consciousnesses are also capable of comprehending their object's ability to perform a function; thus, an eye consciousness itself can perceive that fire has the capacity to cook and burn.

The second division of direct perceivers, mental direct perceivers, has two types. The Ge-luk-bas assert that at the end of a continuum of sense direct perception of an object there is generated one moment of mental direct perception; this in turn induces conceptual cognition of that object, naming it and so forth. That one moment at the end of sense direct perception is the first type of mental direct perception. It is too brief to be noticed by ordinary beings but can be observed by Superiors (*Ārya, 'Phags pa*) those advanced in meditative

training who have through extensive practice developed the ability to perceive selflessness directly. The second type of mental direct perception includes various types of clairvoyances (*abhiññā, mngon shes*) such as the ability to know others' minds, to remember one's former lives, to perceive forms and sounds too distant or subtle to be apprehended by the sense consciousnesses, and so forth.

The third type of direct perceiver is a self-knower. The positing or not of the existence of such a direct perceiver serves as a major basis for distinguishing schools of tenets; among the four tenet systems – Vaibhāṣhika, Sautrāntika, Chittamātra, and Mādhyamika – Sautrāntika, Chittamātra, and Yogāchāra-Svātantrika-Mādhyamika posit the existence of self-knowers, whereas Vaibhāṣhika, Sautrāntika-Svātantrika-Mādhyamika and Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika deny the existence of such. For those schools which do posit the existence of a self-knower, its function is to make possible the memory of one's cognitions. Its proponents say that if there were no consciousness observing the consciousness that perceives an object, there would be no way for one to know that one had perceived something. The systems which do not assert self-knowers deny that they are necessary in order to remember one's cognitions and say that positing them leads to an infinite regress of self-knowers knowing the self-knowers, and so forth.

The function of a self-knower is just to make possible memory of former consciousnesses. It does not have an active role of introspection, or self-awareness, as its name might suggest; such is carried out by a mental factor called introspection (*samprajanya, shes bzhiin*) which can accompany a main consciousness. Thus, self-knowers are not something which one seeks to develop as part of training the mind. They perform their function in the same way at all levels of mental development.

The fourth and final type of direct perceiver is a yogic direct perceiver. Unlike clairvoyances which can occur in the continuum of anyone – Buddhist or non-Buddhist – and do not necessarily require advanced mental training, yogic direct

perceivers occur only in the continuums of Superiors, that is, those who from among the five paths - accumulation (*sambhāra-mārga*, *ishogs lam*), preparation (*prayoga-mārga*, *shyor lam*), seeing (*darshana-mārga*, *mihong lam*), meditation (*bhāvanā-mārga*, *sgom lam*), and no more learning (*ahaitṣha-mārga*, *mi slob lam*) - have attained the path of seeing or above. Whereas the uncommon empowering condition of the five sense direct perceivers is their respective sense power, such as that of the eye, ear, nose, and so forth, the uncommon empowering condition of yogic direct perceivers is a meditative stabilization (*samādhi*, *ting nge 'dzin*) which is a union of calm abiding (*śamatha*, *zhi gnas*) and special insight (*vipaśhyānā*, *lhug ni/hong*). Thus, yogic direct perceivers are a level of consciousness very different from ordinary sense perception despite their similarity in being non-mistaken, non-conceptual knowers of objects.

The development of yogic direct perceivers is a major goal of meditative training. Although one effortlessly has the capacity to perceive directly such things as forms and sounds with an eye or ear consciousness, one does not have that ability with regard to profound phenomena such as subtle impermanence and selflessness. Thus, these must originally be understood conceptually, that is, they are comprehended by way of a mental image rather than directly. Then, through repeated familiarization with the object realized, it is possible to develop clearer and clearer realization until finally the need for a mental image is transcended and one realizes the object directly. Such yogic direct perceivers have great force, being able to overcome the misconceptions that bind one in cyclic existence.

Direct perceivers, therefore, include both ordinary and highly developed consciousnesses.

Inferential cognizers

An inferential cognizer is a type of conceptual consciousness which realizes, or incontrovertibly gets at, an object of comprehension which cannot be initially realized by direct perception. Generated as the culmination of a process of

reasoning, it is said to be produced in dependence on a correct sign (*linga*, *rtags*) acting as its basis. The meaning of this can be illustrated with a worldly example; if one looks out the window and sees smoke billowing from a neighbouring house, one will immediately infer that inside the house there is fire. The basis, the sign in dependence on which this inference was generated, was the presence of smoke. Because of the fact that there is an invariable relationship between the presence of an effect - in this case smoke - and the preceding existence of its cause - fire, one can correctly infer that fire is present. Such knowledge is not direct perception, for one did not actually see the fire; nonetheless it is valid, reliable knowledge.

Inasmuch as an inferential cognizer incontrovertibly realizes its object of cognition it is as reliable a form of knowledge as is a direct perceiver. However, there is the difference that whereas a direct perceiver contacts its object directly and non-mistakenly, an inferential cognizer, being conceptual, must get at its object through the medium of an image. That image, called a meaning generality (*artha-sāmānya*, *don spyi*), appears to thought as if it were the actual object although it is not, and in this respect a conceptual consciousness is mistaken with respect to the object that is appearing to it. This element of error does not, however, interfere with the accuracy with which that consciousness comprehends the object represented by the meaning generality, and thus it is a correct and incontrovertible (*avisamvādin*, *mi slu ba*) knower.

All conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken with respect to the object that appears to them, the meaning generality, and thus all are said to be mistaken consciousnesses (*bhrānti-jāna*, *'khrul shes*). However, only some are mistaken with respect to the actual object they are comprehending, the object in which thought is actually engaged. Conceptual consciousnesses which are not mistaken with respect to the object they are getting at are mistaken consciousnesses, but not wrong consciousnesses; those mistaken with respect to the object being gotten at are also wrong consciousnesses. Inferential cognizers are, by definition, *not* mistaken with respect to the

inferential consciousnesses, correctly assuming consciousnesses arrive at their conclusions either without reason, in a manner contrary to correct reasoning, or based on correct reasoning but without bringing it to its full conclusion. Most of the information we take in by listening to teachers or reading books, etc., falls within the category of correct assumption; much is just accepted, and even most which we think about and analyse has not been realized with the full force of inference. Because of the weakness of the basis from which it is generated, a correctly assuming consciousness is not a reliable form of knowledge as it lacks incontrovertibility; one will easily lose the force of one's conviction, as, for example, when confronted by someone strongly presenting an opposite viewpoint.

Awarenesses to which the object appears but is not ascertained

An awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained is a type of direct perceiver, set forth separately within the sevenfold division of awarenesses and knowers to emphasize that not all direct perceivers are minds which realize their objects. Like direct perceivers, they are non-conceptual consciousnesses which are non-mistaken with respect to the object they are comprehending. However, these are minds which for some reason, such as one's attention being intently directed elsewhere or the duration of the consciousness being too brief to be noticed, are unable subsequently to induce ascertainment (*nishchaya*, *nges pa*) knowing that one had that particular perception. A familiar example of this occurs when one is walking down a street while intently engaged in conversation with someone and has a sense of people passing by but later cannot at all identify who they were. Such a mind is not mistaken, for in that it does not perceive something that is not actually so to be so, it has not introduced an element of error; thus it is included among direct perceivers. However, because it does not provide reliable information and has no factor of certainty, it is not considered to realize its object or to be incontrovertible.

object comprehended, being incontrovertible in the sense that their realization is firm; this gives them their force and validity.

Subsequent cognizers

The first moment of a direct perceiver comprehends its object through the force of experience; the first moment of an inference does so in dependence on a sign. For both those types of perception, later moments within the same continuum of perception, that is, while still apprehending the same object, no longer rely on either experience or a sign but are merely induced through the force of the first moment of cognition. These later moments are called subsequent cognizers. The strength of the initial realization has not been lost, and therefore subsequent cognizers are incontrovertible knowers that do realize their objects. However, the element of realization is not gained through their own power, for they themselves do not do the removing of superimpositions (*aropa*, *sgro 'dogs*) which enables realization to occur. Rather, they realize that which has already been realized by the former moment of consciousness which has already removed superimposition and which induces them.

Correctly assuming consciousnesses

A correctly assuming consciousness is, as the translation indicates, necessarily a correct mode of thought; it must also be a conceptual consciousness as opposed to direct cognition. What distinguishes it from the above three types of consciousnesses — direct perceivers, inferential cognizers, and subsequent cognizers — is that unlike them it does not realize its object; it is not incontrovertible. Thus, a distinction is made between merely being correct with regard to an object and actually realizing, or getting at, that object. The reason for this difference lies in the mode of generation; whereas, firstly, direct perception is generated through the force of experience, secondly, an inferential cognizer is generated as the culmination of a lengthy and convincing process of reasoning, and, thirdly, subsequent cognizers are continuations of direct perceivers or

Doubting consciousnesses

Necessarily conceptual in nature, doubting consciousnesses are minds distinguished primarily by their quality of indecisiveness, or two-pointedness. Doubt can tend towards one side of an issue or another, or it can be completely undecided, but it is always accompanied by an element of uncertainty. The most forceful conclusion doubt can arrive at is, 'Probably it is such and such.' Included within doubt are consciousnesses that are correct, incorrect, and those that are neither. For example, a mind which wonders whether or not future lives exist and thinks that probably they do would be doubt tending toward the fact (*don 'gyur gyi the tshom*), correct doubt; one which wonders whether or not they exist and thinks that probably they do not would be doubt not tending to the fact (*don mi 'gyur gyi the tshom*), or incorrect; and one which merely wondered whether or not future lives exist and entertained both positions equally would be equal doubt (*cha mnyam pa'i the tshom*), neither correct nor incorrect.

Although inferior in force of realization to even correct assumption and far from the incontrovertibility of direct perception and inference, doubt tending toward the fact is nonetheless a powerful initial step in weakening the force of a strongly adhered to wrong view and in beginning the process toward development of correct understanding.

Emphasizing the force of doubt tending to the fact, Aryadeva's *Four Hundred* says, 'Those whose merit is small have no doubts about this doctrine [the profound nature of phenomena]. Even through merely having doubts, cyclic existence is torn to tatters.'²⁴

Wrong consciousnesses

Wrong consciousnesses are those that are mistaken with respect to the object they are engaged in, the object which is actually being comprehended. As such they are to be distinguished from mistaken consciousnesses which, as described above in the context of inference, are mistaken with respect to what

appears to them. For example, conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken in that an image of the object appears to them as the actual object, but nonetheless they are capable of realizing correctly their object of comprehension. Such is not the case with wrong consciousnesses which cannot realize their objects and are thoroughly mistaken with respect to them.

Wrong consciousnesses are of two types, non-conceptual and conceptual. Non-conceptual ones are, for instance, an eye consciousness which sees snow-covered mountains as blue, an eye consciousness which due to jaundice sees everything as yellow, an eye consciousness which sees a double moon, and so forth. Because what appears to a non-conceptual consciousness is just the object that it is comprehending, or engaged in, a consciousness mistaken with respect to its appearing object (**pratibhāsa-viśhaya*, *snang yul*) is necessarily mistaken with respect to its object of engagement (**pravṛtti-viśhaya*, *'jug yul*) and thus, non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses are mistaken with respect to both.

Wrong conceptual consciousnesses are, for instance, a mind which conceives that there are no former or future lives or one which conceives that there is a substantially existent self (*dravya-sat-ātman*, *rdzas yod kyī bdag*). Being conceptual, these minds are necessarily mistaken with respect to their appearing object - an image of that being comprehended which mistakenly appears to be the actual object. In addition they are mistaken with respect to the object being engaged in, thinking in the case of the view of the non-existence of former and future lives that what does exist does not and in the case of the view of self that what does not exist does.

These conceptual wrong consciousnesses provide the *raison d'être* for Buddhist meditational practice, for what Buddhism posits as the root cause, the basic motivating antecedent, of the endless round of birth, ageing, sickness, and death in which beings powerlessly cycle and in limitless ways suffer is just a wrong consciousness - the misapprehension of self where there is none. The way to free oneself from this suffering, to attain liberation from cyclic existence, is to identify its root as this

misapprehension of self and then engage in a means to overcome it. The means identified by the Ge-luk-ba tradition is reasoning (*nyāya*, *rigs pa*), and one can take the sevenfold division of awareness and knowledge as illustrative of the stages one might go through while developing correct understanding through its use.

One begins with a wrong view such as the idea that there is a substantially existent self. As long as this idea is held forcefully, it is a wrong consciousness. Then, through hearing teachings of selflessness one might begin to wonder whether in fact there is such a self. At this point one would have generated doubt; initially one's tendency could still be to think that most likely there was a self - this would be doubt not tending to the fact. Through repeated thought one would pass through the stage of equal doubt in which, wondering whether or not there is a substantially existent self, one reaches no conclusion either way, and would eventually develop doubt tending to the fact in which one feels that there probably is no self but is nonetheless still uncertain.

The next step in the development of the view of selflessness is to generate a correctly assuming consciousness, one which definitely decides that there is no substantially existent self. At this point one is holding the correct view. However, one has not yet realized selflessness, although the oral tradition describes the initial generation of correct assumption with regard to selflessness as a very powerful experience. It is now necessary to contemplate selflessness again and again, using reasoning, seeking to develop a certainty from which one cannot be shaken.

An inference is the end result of a specific process of reasoning. One establishes that if there were a substantially existent self, it would have to exist in one of a limited number of ways and that if it does not exist in any of those ways, it does not exist; through reasoned investigation one establishes that it does not exist in any of those ways and hence concludes that it does not exist. For this conclusion to have the force of reasoned conviction, one must go through the steps of this

investigation over and over again, so that one is accustomed to it and thoroughly convinced of it. One's consciousnesses throughout this process of familiarization are correct assumptions; when this is brought to the point of unwavering certainty, one generates an inference.

With the generation of an inferential cognizer, one can be said to have realized selflessness and to have incontrovertible knowledge of it. However, this is not the end of the process, for at this point one's realization is still conceptual, is still getting at selflessness only by way of an image. The goal is to develop one's realization still more and to bring it finally to the point of direct perception in which all need for an image has disappeared and one's mental consciousness is able to contact its object directly; such direct perception of selflessness is the actual antidote which, upon extended cultivation, is able to eradicate for ever the conception of self as well as all the other wrong views and afflictions that conception brings with it, thereby making liberation from cyclic existence possible.

The way in which an inference is transformed into direct perception is just repeated familiarization with the object of meditation. One's initial inference was generated in dependence on a sign. Later moments of that realization are subsequent cognizers, no longer directly dependent on the reasoning. Through taking selflessness to mind again and again within the force of one's realization, the clarity of appearance gradually increases until finally the image of the object disappears and is replaced by just clear appearance of the object itself. When this occurs, one has generated direct perception of one's object of meditation. This initial direct perception of selflessness is able to eradicate completely and forever a portion of the apprehension of self, but is not able to get rid of all levels of that conception. Inasmuch as the conception of self is the root of cyclic existence - is that view which has bound countless beings in immeasurable suffering since beginningless time - it is deeply ingrained and its force is extremely great. Initial direct perception overcomes only the grossest level of it, those

conceptions based on false reasoning and so forth. One must then continue to cultivate realization of selflessness, developing the force of one's direct perception; direct perceivers of increasing strength overcome more and more subtle levels of the conception of self until finally it is eradicated completely.

The sevenfold division of awareness and knowledge is not an exhaustive presentation of consciousness – there are minds not included anywhere within it, such as highly developed conceptual meditative consciousnesses like great compassion and non-conceptual ones in which a yogi views all his surroundings as only earth or only water.²⁸ Rather, the sevenfold division is a distinguishing of various types of consciousness in terms of their correctness and incorrectness and the degree to which they actually get at their objects, as well as an ordering of them in terms of preference.

II. THREEFOLD DIVISION

The division of awareness and knowers into three is in terms of the object appearing to them. The three are:

- 1 conceptual consciousnesses which take a meaning generality as their apprehended object
- 2 non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousnesses which take a specifically characterized phenomenon as their apprehended object
- 3 non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses which take a clearly appearing non-existent as their apprehended object.

There are four main types of object posited for consciousnesses:

- 1 object of engagement (**pravṛtti-viśhaya*, *'jug yul*)
- 2 determined object (**adhyavasāya-viśhaya*, *zhen yul*)
- 3 appearing object (**praitbhāsa-viśhaya*, *snang yul*)
- 4 apprehended object (*grāhya-viśhaya*, *bzung yul*)²⁹

The first two refer to the object that a consciousness is actually getting at and understanding. However, there is the qualification that the term 'determined object' is used only for con-

ceptual consciousnesses, whereas 'object of engagement' is used for both conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses. Thus the object of engagement of an eye consciousness apprehending blue is blue; both the object of engagement and the determined object of a *thought* consciousness thinking about blue are blue.

The latter two types of objects – appearing and apprehended – refer to the object which is actually appearing to the consciousness and not necessarily to what it is comprehending. Since the actual object that appears to direct perception is what it realizes, its appearing object, apprehended object, and object of engagement are all the same – in the example of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, all three are blue. However, for a conceptual consciousness, although the object of engagement and determined object are the actual object the consciousness is understanding – i.e., blue for a thought consciousness apprehending blue – the appearing object and apprehended object are just an image of blue, called a meaning generality.

This threefold division of consciousnesses centres on differences in the appearing, or apprehended, objects of different types of consciousnesses. All thought consciousnesses necessarily take as their appearing object a meaning generality. A meaning generality is a permanent phenomenon in that it does not disintegrate moment by moment as do impermanent phenomena and it is a negative phenomenon, an image which is a mere elimination of all that is not the object. Thus, for example, the meaning generality of pot that appears to a thought consciousness apprehending pot is not an externally existent pot with all its own uncommon features, but just a general image 'pot' which is described negatively as being an appearance of the opposite of that which is not pot. The relative impoverishment of such an image in comparison to the richness of the appearance of the object involved in direct perception is the reason why direct perception is so much more highly valued than thought. However, in order to understand things which we are now unable to perceive directly, we must

rely on thought, for it provides the means to train the mind so that direct perception can eventually be developed. Thus, in this system although thought is finally transcended by direct perception, its importance as the means to that goal is recognized and valued.

It is a common Western misunderstanding of Buddhism that because external objects cannot appear directly to thought but must be realized by means of an image, thought has absolutely no relationship to objects. This fails to take into account the two types of objects of thought consciousnesses; although that which appears to thought – for example, an appearance of the elimination of all that is not pot – is indeed only an image and not the actual object, the determined object of that consciousness, that which is understood through the image, is just that object itself. What it causes one to understand is just pot and not anything else such as house. The negative nature of the image eliminates everything else and leaves as that to be realized just pot. Thus, thought is a reliable way to ascertain objects.

The last two of the threefold division of awareness and knowledge are made from the viewpoint of the objects apprehended by non-conceptual consciousnesses. The first is a non-conceptual non-mistaken knower which takes as its apprehended object a specifically characterized phenomenon (*svalakṣaṇa*, *rang mtshan*). It is synonymous with direct perceiver. Here, the emphasis is on the object appearing to such a consciousness – a specifically characterized phenomenon, synonymous in the Sautrāntika system with an impermanent phenomenon. Any impermanent phenomenon is suitable to be the appearing object of a direct perceiver, but no permanent phenomenon can, as the permanent appear only to thought.

The use of the term 'specifically characterized phenomenon' emphasizes that, unlike permanent phenomena which are mere imputations by thought, impermanent things have their own uncommon, or specific, characteristics which can appear to a direct perceiver. For example, whereas the image of pot that appears to thought is general in that it serves to represent all

pots at different times in different places, a specifically characterized pot is unique – of a certain size, shape, colour, in a certain place, at a certain time. Furthermore, all the uncommon characteristics of a pot appear to the direct perceiver that apprehends it. In the Sautrāntika system all the qualities that are established, abide, and cease with a thing – such as its shape, colour, impermanence, nature of being a product, and so forth – appear to any direct perceiver apprehending that object. An ordinary direct perceiver is unable to notice all of these, but a yogic direct perceiver can see and ascertain them.

Because the clarity of perception of the object is so much greater for direct perceivers than for conceptual consciousnesses the former are said to have clear appearance (*spuṭābha*, *gsal snang*) of their object whereas the latter do not. The third of the threefold division, non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses, are also said to have clear appearance because they perceive their objects without relying on an image. However, in their case what appears is a non-existent rather than a specifically characterized phenomenon. For example, one might clearly see blue snow mountains, but blue snow mountains do not exist. Such a consciousness is mistaken in that a clearly appearing non-existent is seen as if it did exist.

III. TWOFOLD DIVISIONS

There are many twofold divisions of awareness and knowledge, of which six are discussed in the text translated here, each approaching the subject of consciousness from a slightly different angle.

Prime cognizers and non-prime consciousnesses

A prime cognizer (*pramāṇa*, *tshad ma*) is defined as a knower which is new and incontrovertible.²⁵ From within the sevenfold division of awareness and knowers, the first three – direct perceivers, inferential cognizers, and subsequent cognizers – are necessarily incontrovertible. However, only some direct perceivers and inferential cognizers and no subsequent cognizers fulfil the second qualification of a prime cognizer –

newness. Only the first moment of a continuum of consciousness apprehending an object is considered new.

Thus, the first moment of a direct perceiver is a direct prime cognizer (*pratyakṣa-pramāṇa*, *mgon sum tshad ma*), for it is both new and incontrovertible; later moments within the same continuum – i.e., knowing the same object and without interruption by a consciousness knowing another object – are still direct perceivers but, no longer prime cognizers, are now subsequent cognizers. Similarly the first moment of an inferential cognizer is an inferential prime cognizer (*anumāna-pramāṇa*, *rjes dpag tshad ma*) whereas later moments within the same continuum of consciousness are inferential subsequent cognizers.²⁶ Thus from within the sevenfold division of awareness and knowledge, only the first moments of direct perceivers and inferential cognizers are prime cognizers; all later moments of these two as well as all instances of the other five types of consciousnesses – subsequent cognizers, correctly assuming consciousnesses, awarenesses to which the object appears but is not ascertained, doubting consciousnesses and wrong consciousnesses – are non-prime consciousnesses (*apramāṇa-jñāna*, *tshad min gyi shes pa*).

The division into prime and non-prime consciousnesses is an exhaustive one for any specific consciousness is one or the other.²⁷ Limiting the types of prime cognition to two in this way is specifically done to set the Buddhist view off from that of various non-Buddhist systems, which accept many other sources of prime, or valid, cognition such as the Vedas, for example, and so forth. The Buddhist assertion is that two types of prime cognizers are both sufficient and exhaustive.

Conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses

This again is an exhaustive division of awarenesses and knowers, the emphasis here being on the manner in which a consciousness gets at its object – either directly or by means of an image. No statement is made as to relative correctness or newness, for included within each are both right and wrong as well as prime and non-prime consciousnesses.

Mistaken and non-mistaken consciousnesses

This division is made in terms of the correctness or incorrectness of consciousnesses with respect to what appears to them – their appearing or apprehended object – as opposed to their object of engagement. Thus, non-mistaken consciousness is a category which includes only correct non-conceptual consciousnesses – i.e., direct perceivers. All conceptual consciousnesses are included within mistaken consciousnesses inasmuch as the image of the object they are comprehending appears to them to be the actual object. A wrong conceptual consciousness such as one conceiving sound to be permanent and a right one conceiving the opposite are both mistaken with respect to their appearing objects, and thus both are classed as mistaken consciousnesses.

The appearing object and object of engagement of *non-conceptual* wrong consciousnesses are the same thing; thus, once such a consciousness is mistaken with respect to its object of engagement, it is also necessarily mistaken with respect to its appearing object whereby it is both a wrong and a mistaken consciousness.

Mental and sense consciousnesses

Again an exhaustive division, these consciousnesses are described in terms of whether the knower of an object is one of the five sense consciousnesses (*indriya-jñāna*, *dbang shes*) – eye, ear, nose, tongue, or body – or is a mental consciousness (*mano-vijñāna*, *yiid kyi rnam shes*). The difference is one of basis (*āśraya*, *riten*). Sense consciousnesses are produced in dependence upon an uncommon empowering condition which is a physical sense power – eye, ear, nose, tongue, or body sense power – which is clear matter located within the sense organ – eye, ear, nose, tongue, and throughout the body; mental consciousnesses are produced in dependence on a mental sense power – a former moment of consciousness.

Sense consciousnesses are necessarily non-conceptual; mental consciousnesses can be either conceptual or non-conceptual.

Mental, self-knowing, and yogic direct perceivers are all non-conceptual mental consciousnesses. Inference, correct assumption, doubt, and so forth are conceptual mental consciousnesses. A conceptual consciousness is necessarily a mental and not a sense consciousness.

Eliminative and collective engagers

This division, again exhaustive, resembles the division into conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses and like it is a way of describing how a consciousness gets at its object. All conceptual consciousnesses are eliminative engagers (**apohā-pravṛtti, sel 'jug*); all non-conceptual ones are collective engagers (**vidhī-pravṛtti, sgrub 'jug*). Whereas in the conceptual/non-conceptual division the emphasis is on what the consciousness sees, i.e., whether the actual object or an image of the object appears to it, here the emphasis is on the way in which that consciousness apprehends its object.

A direct perceiver is a collective engager in the sense that all the factors of its object – all those things that are established with the object, abide with it, and disintegrate when it does – such as the individual particles of the object, its impermanence, momentariness, and so forth, appear to that consciousness.²⁸ It engages its object in a positive manner, without eliminating anything. However, the mere appearance of all these to the consciousness does not mean that they are necessarily ascertained; most are not noticed due to the interference of thought and predispositions. For example, when an ordinary person sees a pot, its momentary impermanence is not noticed due to the force of thick predispositions for apprehending permanence and due to seeing the conjunction of former and later moments of similar type. However, with training, one can come eventually to notice all these factors that appear to direct perception.

Thought on the other hand engages its object in an eliminative manner. Not apprehending all the uncommon features of an object, thought apprehends a general image which is a mere elimination; thus, a thought apprehending pot sees an

image which is the opposite of that which is non-pot. Thought lacks precision – golden pot, copper pot, silver pot and so forth are all seen as 'pot', their shared quality of 'potness' taking precedence over their many dissimilar features. Also thought mixes time, as, for example, when one sees someone and thinks, 'This is the person I saw yesterday.' Because thought operates in a negative, or eliminative, manner it can never come to perceive all the uncommon features of its object as can direct perception, and this is why this system values direct perception so much more than thought. However, this does not make thought worthless or something to be immediately and utterly abandoned, for thought is the means by which direct perception can be trained to ascertain all those things which now appear to it but are not noticed. Left just as it is, direct perception would not naturally improve; however, careful use of thought such as training in the processes of reasoning, can gradually bring direct perception to its full potential in Buddhahood. At such a time thought is no longer necessary, but prior to that point there is no way of progressing without the use of thought.

Minds and mental factors

This twofold division is a way of describing the various functions of consciousness. Mind (*chitta, sems*) here is synonymous with main mind (*gtso sems*) and is that which knows the mere entity of the object being apprehended. Minds are accompanied by mental factors which apprehend various features of that object, affecting the manner in which the mind apprehends its object and so forth. Minds and mental factors have, with respect to any particular object, five similarities (*samprayukta, mtshungs par ldan pa*):

- 1 They are produced in dependence on the same basis (*āshraya, rten*), and thus if the eye sense power is the uncommon empowering condition of the main mind it is also that of the accompanying mental factors
- 2 they observe the same object (*ālambana, dmigs pa*)

- 3 they are generated in the same aspect (*ākāra, nam pa*), in that if the eye consciousness is generated in the aspect of blue, the accompanying mental factors are also generated in the aspect of blue
- 4 they occur at the same time (*kālā, dus*), in that when one is produced the other is also produced
- 5 they are the same substantial entity (*dravya, rdzas*), in that the production, abiding, and cessation of the two occur simultaneously

Main minds are, for example, the five sense perceivers and the mental perceivers. Mental factors are commonly described in a list of fifty-one which are divided into six categories, although this list is not all-inclusive. The six categories are:

- 1 omnipresent (*sarvatraga, kun 'gro*)
- 2 determining (**viśayapratiniyama, yul nges*)
- 3 virtuous (*kushala, dge ba*)
- 4 root afflictions (*mūlakleśa, rīsa nyon*)
- 5 secondary afflictions (*upakleśa, nye nyon*)
- 6 changeable (*anyathābhāva, gzhan 'gyur*)

So-called because they accompany every main mind, the five omnipresent factors are:

- 1 feeling (*vedanā, tshor ba*) – that factor which experiences an object as pleasurable, painful, or neutral
- 2 discrimination (*saṃjñā, 'du shes*) which apprehends the uncommon signs of the object
- 3 intention (*chetanā, sems pa*) which directs the mind to the object
- 4 mental engagement (*manasi-kāra, yid la byed pa*) which directs the mind to the particular object of observation
- 5 contact (*sparsa, reg pa*) which serves as the basis for the generation of the feelings of pleasure, pain, or neutrality

The five determining factors are:

- 1 aspiration (*chanda, 'dun pa*)
- 2 belief (*adhimokṣha, mos pa*)

- 3 mindfulness (*smṛti, dran pa*)
- 4 stabilization (*samādhi, ting nge 'dzin*)
- 5 wisdom (*prajñā, shes rab*)

If one of these is present all five are present; however these do not accompany all minds; they accompany all virtuous minds and no others.

The remaining groups of mental factors do not function as a simultaneous unit in the way that the first two do. There are eleven virtuous mental factors:

- 1 faith (*śraddhā, dad pa*)
- 2 shame (*hrī, ngo tsha shes pa*)
- 3 embarrassment (*apatrāpya, khrel yod pa*)
- 4 non-attachment (*alobhā, ma chags pa*)
- 5 non-hatred (*adveśha, zhe sdang med pa*)
- 6 non-ignorance (*amoḥa, gñi mug med pa*)
- 7 effort (*virya, brtson 'grus*)
- 8 pliancy (*prasabdhī, shin tu sbyangs pa*)
- 9 conscientiousness (*apramāda, bag yod pa*)
- 10 equanimity (*upekṣhā, btang snyoms*)
- 11 non-harmfulness (*avihiṃsā, miṃ par mi 'tsho ba*)

These can never occur at the same time as any of the afflictions – root or secondary. Although it is possible for all eleven to occur simultaneously, it is not the case that they always do; this Sautrāntika assertion differs from the system of Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge (Adhidharmakośha)* which states that if one is present all are necessarily so.

There are six root afflictions:

- 1 desire (*rāga, 'dod chags*)
- 2 anger (*pratigha, khong khro*)
- 3 pride (*māna, nga rgyal*)
- 4 ignorance (*avidyā, ma rig pa*)
- 5 doubt (*vichikitsā, the tshom*)
- 6 afflicted view (*dṛṣṭi, lta ba nyon mongs can*)

as well as twenty secondary afflictions:

- 1 belligerence (*brodha*, *khro ba*)
- 2 resentment (*upanāha*, *khon 'dzin*)
- 3 concealment (*mraṅśha*, *'chab pa*)
- 4 spite (*pradāsa*, *'tshig pa*)
- 5 jealousy (*ir-ṣyā*, *phrag dog*)
- 6 miserliness (*māṣarya*, *ser sna*)
- 7 deceit (*māyā*, *sgyu*)
- 8 dissimulation (*śāṭhya*, *g.yo*)
- 9 haughtiness (*mada*, *rgyags pa*)
- 10 harmfulness (*vihimsā*, *nam pa 'tshé ba*)
- 11 non-shame (*āhrikya*, *ngo tsha med pa*)
- 12 non-embarrassment (*anapatrāpya*, *khrel med pa*)
- 13 lethargy (*styāna*, *rmugs pa*)
- 14 excitement (*audharya*, *rgod pa*)
- 15 non-faith (*āśhradhya*, *ma dad pa*)
- 16 laziness (*kausīdya*, *le lo*)
- 17 non-conscientiousness (*pramāda*, *bag med pa*)
- 18 forgetfulness (*muṣhitasmṛitīā*, *brjed nges pa*)
- 19 non-introspection (*asamprajanya*, *shes bzhin ma yin pa*)
- 20 distraction (*vikṣhepa*, *ruam par g.yeng ba*)

It is not possible for all the root afflictions to be present simultaneously; for example, if desire is present, hatred will not be, and vice versa; similarly for the secondary afflictions, those of the type of desire, such as jealousy, will not be present at the same time as those of the type of hatred, such as belligerence or resentment. However, secondary afflictions and root afflictions of the same type such as hatred and belligerence can be present simultaneously although they do not have to be.

The four changeable factors are:

- 1 sleep (*middha*, *gnyid*)
- 2 contrition (*kaukritya*, *'gyod pa*)
- 3 investigation (*vītarika*, *rtog pa*)
- 4 analysis (*vichāra*, *dpyod pa*)

They are changeable in the sense that they can become either virtuous or non-virtuous depending on the motivation which impels them.

Through study of 'Awareness and Knowledge' one comes to know what the different types of minds are, and moreover, which sorts of minds it is helpful to develop and which should be abandoned. One can understand what the state of one's mind is at present as well as into what it can eventually be transformed. With this as a basis, it is then far more meaningful both to engage in further study of the stages involved in the process of transformation and actually to enter into it.