CLARIFYING MIND
An Introduction to the Tradition of Pramana

PART THREE - LORIK
THE CLASSIFICATIONS OF MIND

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CLARIFYING MIND
An Introduction to the Tradition of Pramana

PART THREE - LORIK
THE CLASSIFICATIONS OF MIND

TOPICAL READING LIST

Root Text:
Presentation of the Classifications of Mind: The Essence of The Ocean of Texts on Reasoning, Khenchen Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, Trs. By Karl Brunnholzl. (Read sequentially along with the appropriate additional readings based upon the topics below).

Commentarial Literature:

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A. Asian Perspectives: Indian Theories of Mind, Georges Dreyfus and Evan Thompson, *The Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness*, pp. 89-111
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B. What is Valid Cognition?, *Buddhist Philosophy*, Daniel Cozort and Craig Preston, pp. 66-73.
C. Moving toward Knowledge, *Buddhist Psychology: The Foundations of Buddhist Thought Volume 3*, Geshe Tashi Tsering, pp. 121-136
D. Established Bases, *Debate in Tibetan Buddhism*, Daniel Perdue:
    1. Direct Perceivers, pp. 290-295
    2. The Enumeration of Valid Cognizers, pp. 295-297
E. Ideal Mind, *The Mind and Its Functions*, by Geshe Rabten, pp. 51-69
F. Explanation of Correct Reasons, *Debate 1 Workbook*, Nitartha, pp. 42-43

III. The Results of Valid Cognition

A. The Specific Explanation, Prasangika, *The Treasury of Knowledge, Book Six, Part Three: Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy*, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye, Trs. Elizabeth Callahan, pp. 231-233
B. Explanation of the Result of Valid Cognition, *Mind and Its World 1 Sourcebook*, Nitartha Institute, pp. 242-251

IV. The Essential Modes of Engagement of the Mind

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B. Asian Perspectives: Indian Theories of Mind, Georges Dreyfus and Evan Thompson, *The Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness*, pp. 89-111
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V. Mind and Mental Factors

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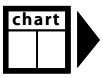
    1. Consciousness: Mind and Mental Factors, pp. 235-268

FOUR HĪNAYĀNA TEXTS OF THE TIBETAN SHEDRA CURRICULUM

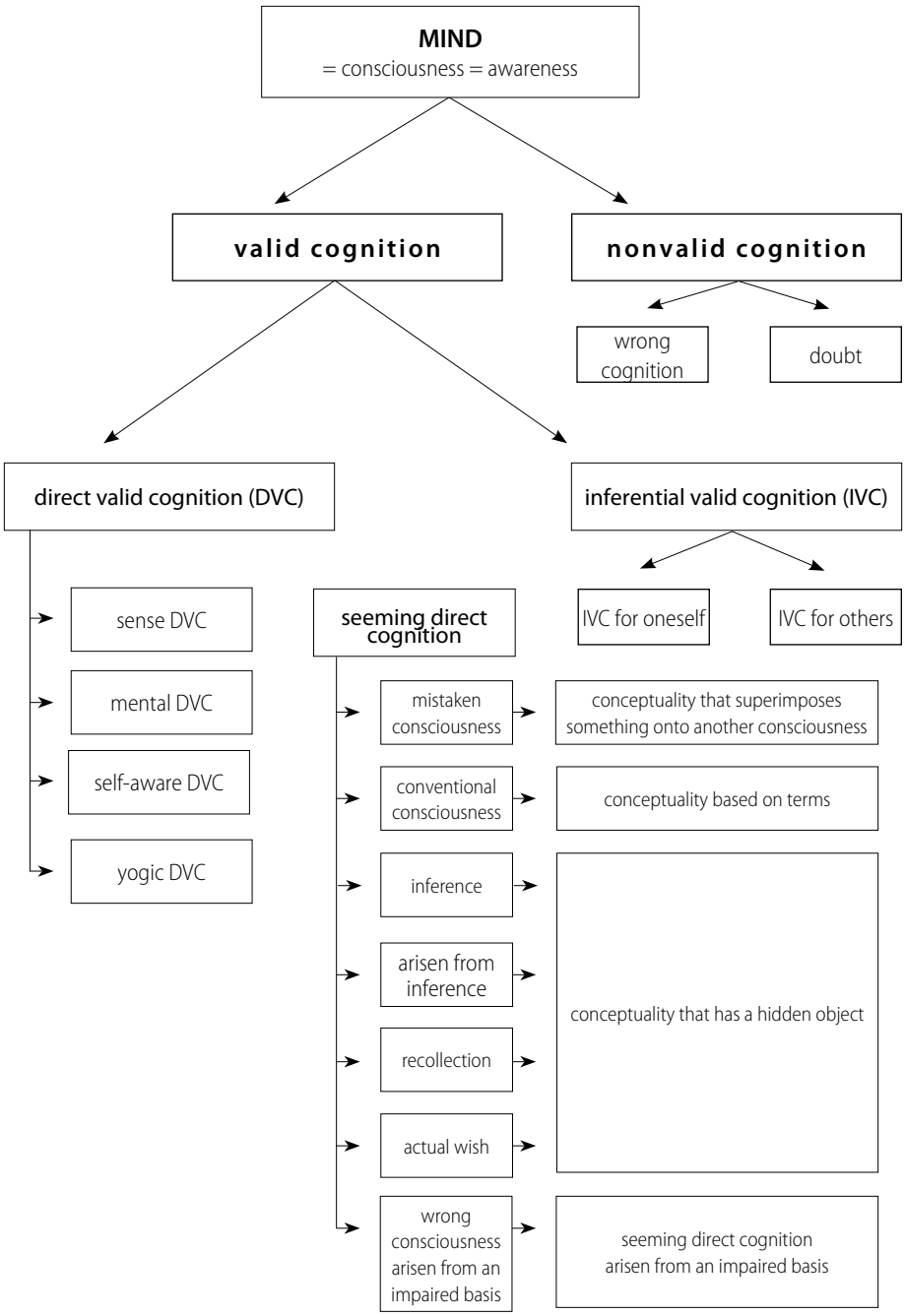


<table>
<tr><th>Texts/Subjects</th><th colspan="4">Classification of Objects</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Collected Topics
(Düdra)</td><td colspan="4">Object</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Thing</td><td rowspan="2">Nonthing</td></tr>
<tr><td>Matter</td><td>Consciousness</td><td>Nonassociated Formations</td></tr>
<tr><td>Philosophical Systems (Truptha)</td><td colspan="3">Ultimate Truth</td><td>Relative Truth</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="4">Cognized by:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Classifications of Mind (Lorik)</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="2">Direct Valid Cognition</td><td rowspan="2">Inferential Valid Cognition
(IVC is itself a thing, not a nonthing, though its object of cognition is a nonthing)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Classifications of Reasonings (Tarik)</td></tr>
</table>

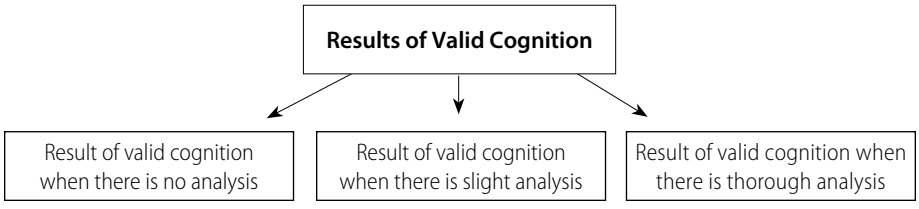
Name	Definition
Collected Topics *(Düdra)*	One of the three synopses of the pramāṇa literature used in the shedra study tradition, *Düdra* focuses on phenomenology, the objects of experience.
Philosophical Systems *(Truptha)*	"Philosophical Systems," a genre of literature in which a particular school or schools' views and textual bases are presented; typically, this will include a presentation of their tenets, their ontology and, in the case of Buddhist schools, their understanding of the ground, path, and fruition and of the relative and ultimate truths.
Classifications of Mind *(Lorik)*	Also translated as "mind and awareness" or "science of mind," the *Lorik* is one of the three synopses of the pramāṇa literature; it focuses on the subjective pole of phenomenal experience, the variety of states of mind and how mind functions.
Classifications of Reasonings *(Tarik)*	One of the three synopses of the pramāṇa literature, *Tarik* focuses on logic, specifically what constitutes valid and invalid reasoning.

OVERVIEW OF MIND & ITS WORLD I

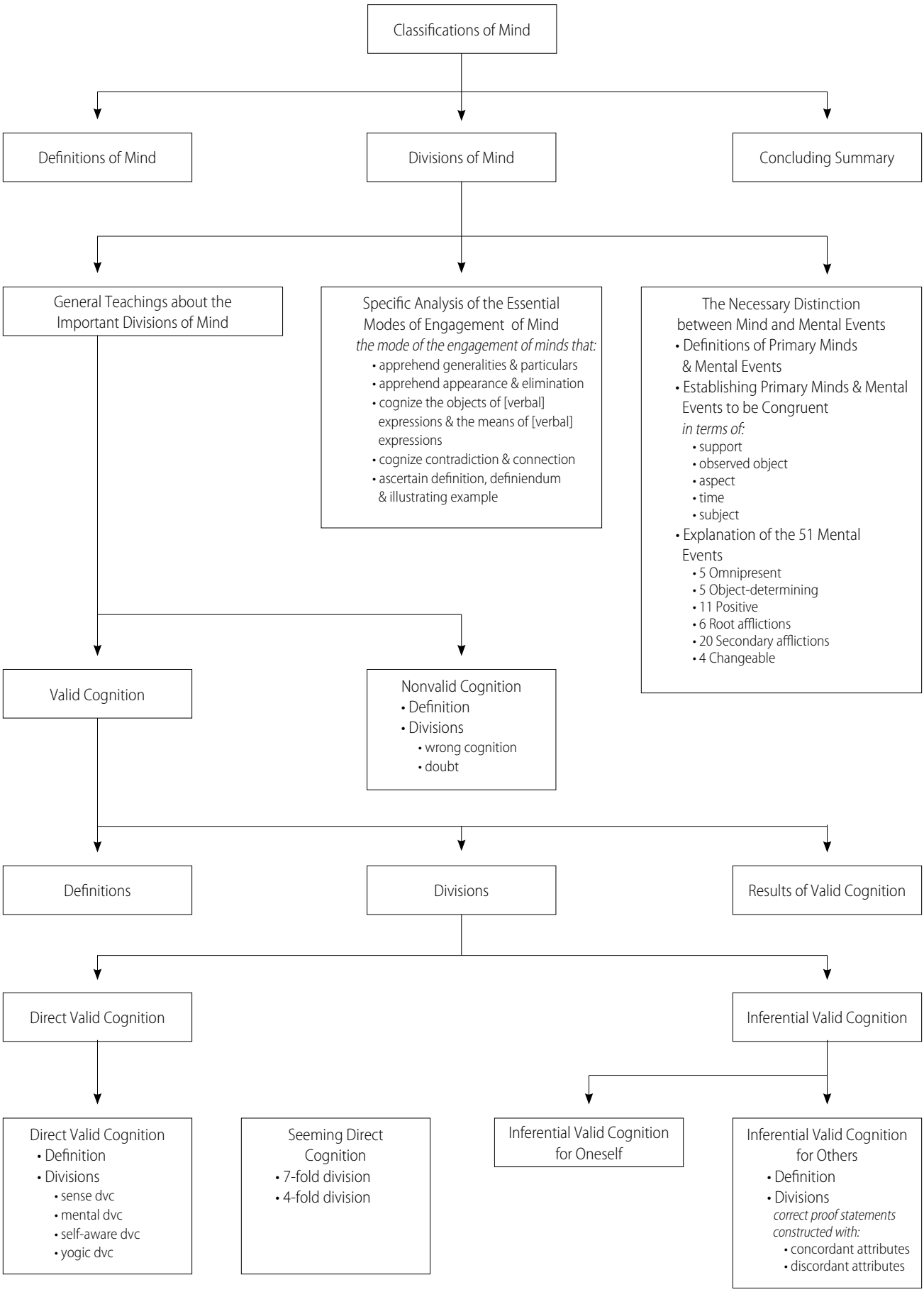
CLASSIFICATIONS OF MIND



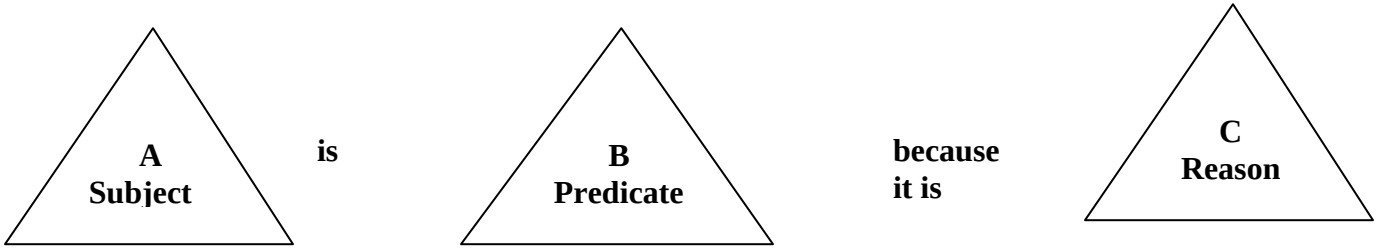
RESULTS OF VALID COGNITION



OVERVIEW OF THE *LORIK* TEXT



THE THREE-PART SYLLOGISM
For Inferential Valid Cognition



Example: A = B because B = C and A = C

Potential Faults: A ≠ C or B ≠ C

SUBJECT		PREDICATE	REASON		Types of Reasons
1a. Sound	is	Impermanent	because it is	Compounded	Nature
1b. Self	is	Empty	because it is	Compounded & impermanent	
1c. Dharmas	are	Empty	because they are	Neither one nor many Dependently arisen	
2a. Deer		Live here	because	There are deer droppings	Effect
2b. Fire	is	On the mountain	because there is	Smoke on the mountain	
3a. Children of barren women		Do not exist	because	Barren women do not have children	Non-Observation
3b. Horn of a hare		Does not exist	because	Hares do not have horns	

CLARIFYING MIND
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DUDRA: THE COLLECTED TOPICS
LORIK: THE CLASSIFICATIONS OF MIND

CHANTS

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

DEDICATION OF MERIT

By this merit may all obtain omniscience
May it defeat the enemy, wrong doing.
From the stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness and death,
From the ocean of samsara, may I free all beings

By the confidence of the golden sun of the great east
May the lotus garden of the Rigden's wisdom bloom,
May the dark ignorance of sentient beings be dispelled.
May all beings enjoy profound, brilliant glory.

The Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness

Edited by

Philip David Zelazo, Morris Moscovitch and Evan Thompson

University of Toronto

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CHAPTER 5

Asian Perspectives: Indian Theories of Mind

Georges Dreyfus and Evan Thompson

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 (*buddh*) 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 inebriating 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, necessarily 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 – *Sutra* 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 oversees the workings of the mind (or merely passively 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 phenomenology 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 (Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Purva Mimamsa, 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 (*ātman*) 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 *sattva* (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 transluscence (*sattva*), 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 unconsious. 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.

The intellect's reflecting the self and taking on the form of an object are not, however, sufficient to fully determine experience. To become fully cognitive, experience requires the formation of subjective and objective poles. Experience needs to be the experience of a particular individual apprehending a particular object. The formation of the subjective pole is the function of the 'ego-sense' (*ahaṃkāra*), the sense of individual subjectivity or selfhood tied to embodiment. This sense colors most of our experiences, which involve a sense of being a subject opposed to an object. The determination of the objective pole, on the other hand, is the function of 'mentation' (*manas*), which oversees the senses and whose special function is discrimination. This function allows mentation to serve 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. In this way, our experience of objects in the world is created.

Although the dualistic metaphysics associated with this view was rejected in the history of Indian philosophy, the Sāṃkhya model of the mind was taken over by other Hindu schools. It serves as a foundation of the philosopher Patañjali's (c. 2nd century BCE) Yoga view of mind, which is similar to the Sāṃkhya.[5] The Yoga view also rests on the opposition between passive self and active mental activities (*citta*), a rubric under which intellect, ego-sense, and mentation are grouped. Similarly, Śamkara (788–820 CE), who savaged the dualism of the Sāṃkhya, took over its model of the mind in his Advaita Vedānta, emphasizing the contrast between the transcendence of the self and the mental activities of the 'inner sense' (*antaḥkarava*) belonging to the person.[6] Hence, the Sāṃkhya view can be taken as representative of the Hindu view of the mind, especially in its emphasis on the difference between a passive witnessing consciousness and mental activity.

According to this view, as we have seen, mental events come about through the conjunction of two heterogeneous factors – a 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 tension 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 (*anātman*). 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 experiences 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 nirvana (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, 1971, I: 22). There are also lengthy treatments of the nature, scope, and types of soteriological practices prescribed by the Buddhist tradition, a central focus of the Abhidharma. But a large part of the Abhidharmic 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 Ahbhidharma 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*, *rgyud*), 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 *Mahavibhāṣā*, 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 pyschophysical 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.[8]

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 mental 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* (*caitesika*), 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).*[9]

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 gzhi rnam shes*) and *afflictive mentation* (*kliṣṭa-manas, nyon 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 circumstances, 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 (*ahaṃkāra*). 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 the 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 (lovingkindness), wisdom, equanimity, and non-harmfulness (compassion).
- Six root-afflictions: attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, negative doubt, and mistaken view.
- Twenty branch-afflictions: belligerence, vengefulness, concealment, spite, jealousy, 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.

The nature of this complex typology becomes clearer when one realizes that these six groups can be further reduced to three. The first three groups contain all the neutral factors. They are the factors that can be present in any mental state, whether positive or negative. Hence these factors are neither positive nor negative in and of themselves. The next three groups are different. These factors are ethically determined. The eleven virtuous factors are positive in that they do not compel us toward attitudes that lead to suffering. They leave us undisturbed, open to encounter reality with a more relaxed and freer outlook. The twenty-six afflictive factors, on the other hand, disturb the mind, creating frustration and restlessness. They are the main obstacles to the life of the good as understood by the Buddhist tradition. The very presence of these factors marks the mental state as virtuous or afflictive. Thus it is clear that the Abhidharma typology is explicitly ethical.

This presentation also offers interesting insights concerning the cognitive functions of the mind. In particular, the analysis of the five omnipresent factors – feeling, discernment, intention, attention, and contact – shows some of the complexities of Abhidharmic thinking. These five are described as omnipresent because they are present in every mental state. Even in a subliminal state such as the store-consciousness these five factors are present. The other factors are not necessary for the performance of the most minimal cognitive task (the apprehension of 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, tshor ba*) 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 (*saṃjñā, 'du shes* also often translated as perception or recognition). 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, mthan med*).[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 singlepointedly. 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 19), 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, nonhatred (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, 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 obvious 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, jealously, 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 biobehavioral 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; Dunne, 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 (*pramāṇa*) 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 *pramāṇa* 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, *pramāṇa* 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 nondeceptive (*avisaṃvādi-jñāna*):

> *Valid cognition is that cognition [that is] non-deceptive* (avisaṃvādi). *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, 1971–2).*

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 appears to it and in the process reveals the object that is apprehended. In this way, each mental state cognizes its object. But as an epistemologist, Dharmakīrti investigates issues left out by the Abhidharma, tackling questions that are central to any philosophical exploration of the mind. In this chapter, we examine some of these questions. First, we consider Dharmakīrti's analysis of the nature of cognitive events. We examine his view of the mind as apprehending representations of external objects, rather than the objects themselves, and the consequences that this view has for the issue of whether the mind is inherently reflexive (self-revealing and self-aware). We also examine Dharmakīrti's theory of perception, as well as some of his views on the nature of conceptuality and its relation to language. Finally, we revisit the issue of intentionality, showing the complexity of this notion and attempting to disentangle its several possible meanings within the context of a Buddhist account of the mental.

The Reflexive Nature of Mental Events

We commonly assume that we have unproblematic access to our environment through our senses. Even casual first-person investigation shows, however, that such access may well not be the case. There are cases of perceptual illusions, and even when we are not deceived, the perceptions of individuals vary greatly. Hence philosophy cannot take for granted the common-sense view of perceptual knowledge. Many Western philosophers have argued that our perceptual knowledge goes well beyond the sensible experiences that give rise to it. Although this claim is debatable, we cannot assume without examination that we understand the way in which cognition apprehends its objects.

In thinking about the nature of cognition, Dharmakīrti relies crucially on the concept of *aspect* (*ākāra*), a notion that goes back to the Sāṃkhya, but has been accepted by several other schools. The idea behind this position, which is called in Indian philosophy *sākāravāda* ('assertion of aspect'), is that cognition does not apprehend its object

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-presencing is not unique to Dignāga, its first Buddhist propounder, 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' (*svayaṃvedya*) 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 (*grāhakākāra*), 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 Dharmakīirti and his followers as a particular type of perception called *self-cognition* (*svasaṃvedana*). 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 (*ālambana*) and beholds itself. The apprehension of an external object is not direct, but results from the causal influence of the object, which induces cognition to 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 consciousnesss, 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, preferring 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 unmistaken (*abhrānta*) and free from conceptions (*kalpanāpoḍha*) (*Commentary on Valid Cognition*, III: 300 cd). Because perception is unmistaken 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 (*savikalpaka*) 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 unmistaken 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 impressions, which by themselves are not forms of knowledge but become so only when they are integrated within our categorical schemes. For example, when we are hit on the head, we first have an impression. We just have a sensation of pain, which is not by itself cognitive. This sensation becomes cognitive when it becomes integrated into a conceptual scheme, in which it is explained as being an impact on a certain part of our body due to certain causes. It is only then that the impression of being hit becomes fully intentional. Prior to this cognitive integration, the impression, or to speak Dharmakīrti's language, the aspect, does not yet represent anything in the full sense of the word. It only becomes so when interpreted conceptually.

This view of perception agrees with Dharmakīrti's analysis of the validity of cognitions, which consists in their being 'non-deceptive', a term interpreted in practical terms. Cognitions are valid if, and only if, they have the ability to lead us toward successful practical actions. In the case of perception, however, practical validity is not as straightforward as one might think. Achieving practical purposes depends on correctly describing the objects we encounter. It is not enough to see an object that is blue; we must also see it *as* being blue. To be non-deceptive, a cognition depends on the appropriate identification of the object as being this or that. Perceptions, however, do not identify their objects, for they are not conceptual. They cannot categorize their objects, but only hold them without any determination. Categorization requires conceptual thought under the form of a judgment. Such a judgment subsumes its object under an appropriate universal, thereby making it part of the practical world where we deal with long-lasting entities that we conceive of as parts of a determined order of things. For example, we sense a blue object that we categorize as blue. The perceptual aspect (the blue aspect) is not yet a representation in the full sense of the word, because its apprehension, the perception of blue, is not yet cognitive. It is only when it is interpreted by a conception that the aspect becomes a full-fledged 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 conceives 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 which words* (Ascertainment of Valid Cognition *40: 6–7, in Vetter, 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 treeness that 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 complex 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.[18]

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 Kumārila 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 we 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, including 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 naïve 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*): *sattva* (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 *antaḥkaraṇa*, internal organ. This is the grouping of *buddhi*, *ahaṃkāra*, 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 *vijñāna*, 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.

Alaya-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.

Bhavanga 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 Theravada school, which asserts its existence.

Kliṣta-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.

Svasaṃvedana: 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 Sutras* 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 Theravada Abhidharma does not recognize a distinct store-consciousness, its concept of *bhavaçga citta*, the life-constituent consciousness, is similar. For a view of the complexities of the *bhavaçga*, see Waldron (2003, pp. 81–87).
11. They are then said to be conjoined (*sampayutta, mtshungs ldan*), 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 Asaçga's *Abhidharma-samuccaya*. It is not, however, Asaçga'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, II: 150–178).
13. Although some of these states may be soteriologically 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

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PART ONE

Introduction

Awareness and knowledge (*blo-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 rtag 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 (*ākasmika-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 byung*) 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 century[10] 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 Paṇḍita, 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 (Paṇ-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-yang (bLo-bzang-rta-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-yang-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 – Vaibhāṣhika, 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 (*saṃvedana, 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, mngon sum*)
2 inferential cognizers (*anumāṇa, rjes dpag*)
3 subsequent cognizers (**parichchhinna-jñana, bcad shes*)[19]

4 correctly assuming consciousnesses (**manaḥ parīkṣhā, 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 (*abhrānta, 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 Vaisheṣhika 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 (**pratibhāṣhikī-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, rnal 'byor mngon sum*)

Sense direct perceivers are of five types: those apprehending forms (*rūpa, gzugs*), sounds (*shabda, sgra*), odours (*gandha, dri*), tastes (*rasa, ro*), and tangible objects (*spraṣhṭavya, reg 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, thun mong ma yin pa'i bdag rkyen*)
3 immediately preceding condition (*samanantara-pratyaya, de ma thag rkyen*)

Using the example of an eye consciousness (*chakṣhur-vijñāna, mig gi rnam shes*)[21] its observed object condition is the form it perceives. Its uncommon empowering condition is the eye sense power (*chakṣhur-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 Vaibhāṣhika, 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 consciousnesses 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 (*adhigam, 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 (*abhijñā, 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 (*saṃprajanya, shes bzhin*) 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, tshogs lam*), preparation (*prayoga-mārga, sbyor lam*), seeing (*darshana-mārga, mthong lam*), meditation (*bhāvanā-mārga, sgom lam*), and no more learning (*ahaikṣha-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 (*shamatha, zhi gnas*) and special insight (*vipashyanā, lhag mthong*). 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 (*liṅga, 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 (*avisaṃvādin, 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-jñāna, '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

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 (*āropa, 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

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.

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, Āryadeva'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.'[22]

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-viṣhaya, snang yul*) is necessarily mistaken with respect to its object of engagement (**pravṛtti-viṣhaya, '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 kyi 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.[23] 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 awarenesses 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-viṣhaya, 'jug yul*)
2 determined object (**adhyavasāya-viṣhaya, zhen yul*)
3 appearing object (**pratibhāsa-viṣhaya, snang yul*)
4 apprehended object (*grāhya-viṣhaya, bzung yul*)[24]

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 conceptual 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 (*svalakṣhaṇa, 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 awarenesses 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 (*pratyakṣha-pramāṇa, mngon 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, 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, yid kyi rnam shes*). The difference is one of basis (*āshraya, rten*). 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 (**apoha-pravṛtti, sel 'jug*); all non-conceptual ones are collective engagers (**vidhi-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, rnam 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 (**viṣhayapratiniyama, yul nges*)
3 virtuous (*kushala, dge ba*)
4 root afflictions (*mūlaklesha, rtsa nyon*)
5 secondary afflictions (*upaklesha, 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 (*samjñā, '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 (*sparsha, 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 (*chhanda, '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 (*shraddhā, dad pa*)
2 shame (*hrī, ngo tsha shes pa*)
3 embarrassment (*apatrāpya, khrel yod pa*)
4 non-attachment (*alobha, ma chags pa*)
5 non-hatred (*adveṣha, zhe sdang med pa*)
6 non-ignorance (*amoha, gti mug med pa*)
7 effort (*vīrya, brtson 'grus*)
8 pliancy (*prasrabdhi, shin tu sbyangs pa*)
9 conscientiousness (*apramāda, bag yod pa*)
10 equanimity (*upekṣhā, btang snyoms*)
11 non-harmfulness (*avihiṃsā, rnam par mi 'tshe 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* (*Adhidharmakosha*) 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 (*dṛṣhṭi, lta ba nyon mongs can*)

as well as twenty secondary afflictions:

1 belligerence (*krodha, khro ba*)
2 resentment (*upanāha, 'khon 'dzin*)
3 concealment (*mrakṣha, 'chab pa*)
4 spite (*pradāsa, 'tshig pa*)
5 jealousy (*īrṣhyā, phrag dog*)
6 miserliness (*mātsarya, ser sna*
7 deceit (*māyā, sgyu*)
8 dissimulation (*shāṭhya, g.yo*)
9 haughtiness (*mada, rgyags pa*)
10 harmfulness (*vihiṃsā, rnam pa 'tshe ba*)
11 non-shame (*āhrīkya, ngo tsha med pa*)
12 non-embarrassment (*anapatrāpya, khrel med pa*)
13 lethargy (*styāna, rmugs pa*)
14 excitement (*auddhatya, rgod pa*)
15 non-faith (*āshraddhya, ma dad pa*)
16 laziness (*kausīdya, le lo*)
17 non-conscientiousness (*pramāda, bag med pa*)
18 forgetfulness (*muṣhitasmṛtitā, brjed nges pa*)
19 non-introspection (*asaṃprajanya, shes bzhin ma yin pa*)
20 distraction (*vikṣhepa, rnam 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 (*vitarka, 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.

Buddhist Philosophy

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by Daniel Cozort and Craig Preston

Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York
Boulder, Colorado

What Is Valid Cognition?

Since our problem, saṃsāra, is a matter of making an error in judgment, Buddhism is very concerned with how to distinguish faulty cognition from reliable, valid cognition.[1] This has been a major topic in Buddhist philosophy since the very beginning, as it has been in many of the non-Buddhist schools.

All of the Buddhist schools identify at least six types of consciousness. Unlike the Western model of mind, in which we think of consciousness as singular and as fed by the senses, in Buddhism each of the senses is itself conscious and is capable of a kind of recognition. Our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, or body in general have consciousness and can know things that are familiar to them even before the mental consciousness, the sixth one, applies its conceptual labels.

The Cittamātrins Following Scripture add two more types of consciousness: the afflicted mentality and the mind-basis-of-all. The *afflicted mentality* is ignorance; in this case, it is the conception that the mind-basis-of-all, which is the "person" in this system, is a self-sufficient, substantial entity. The *mind-basis-of-all* is a very odd sort of entity that neither thinks nor perceives but is a kind of neutral, continuous medium to hold the karmic predispositions.

Asaṅga felt that if there were no mind-basis-of-all, there would be no continuously operating consciousness to be a basis for the infusion of karmic latencies, to appropriate a new body at the time of rebirth, or to be present during "mindless" states such as the meditative equipoise of cessation. As we have seen, other schools have been able to account for these functions without adding to the basic list of six consciousnesses.

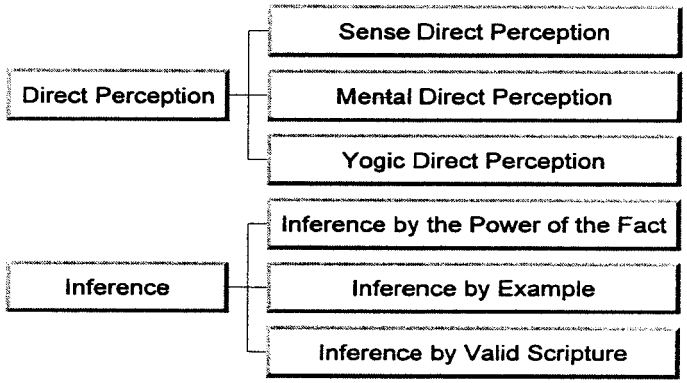
[1]Much of the discussion of direct perception that follows is based on Napper and Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism.*

What is "Valid"?

Except for Asaṅga's system and for that of the Vaibhāṣikas, Buddhist philosophers explain consciousness very similarly, taking their cues from the works of Dharmakīrti. This seventh-century writer used the term *pramāṇa* for valid cognition. His followers, whether they be otherwise classed as Cittamātrins or Sautrāntikas, have sometimes been called Pramāṇavādins ("Proponents of Valid Cognition") because of the centrality of this concept for them. In general, for a consciousness to be *pramāṇa* it must be "incontrovertible" regarding what it sees, hears, or thinks; it cannot be overturned.

Many of our awarenesses cannot meet that standard. *Correct assumptions* are cases when we choose correctly but without the conviction that reason might bring. *Unobservant awareness* occurs when we see or hear something but are too distracted to really notice it. *Doubt* is when we are not sure of where we stand. *Wrong consciousnesses* are common. We might experience some sort of a distortion, such as a mirage or a problem with our eyes, etc., or we might have faulty reasoning.

Valid cognition is of two main types: direct perception and inference. The main types of each are shown in the chart below.



Types of Direct Perception

Direct perception is knowledge that does not involve conceptuality. Thought, as we have previously discussed, is indirect because it employs generic images. When I recognize the thing before me as a table, I do so by mixing my sense perception of the top and legs with my idea of "table" gained from many exposures to tables. Direct perception, on the other hand, is unmediated. It has two types: sense direct perception and mental direct perception.

Sense direct perception is of the five well-known types: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and touch. But we should note that it requires three conditions:

1 the observed object
2 a sense power
3 a preceding moment of consciousness

The *observed object* is whatever form, sound, odor, taste, or tactile sensation is presented to awareness.

The *sense powers* are thought to be invisible, clear material forms that are located in the organs of perception. So, it is not precisely the case that my eyeball sees a flower; rather, the eye sense power transforms into the shape and color of the flower. This is called "taking on the aspect" of the object and it is the common tenet of all schools except Vaibhāṣika, which asserts that sense direct perception happens "nakedly." My "wind" (energy) flows out through my open eyes and knows the object without any transformation. In the case of a body consciousness, which is how we know tactile sensations and internal sensations, the body sense power is spread throughout the body (with the exception of the hair, nails, etc., which experience no sensations).

That there must be a *preceding moment of consciousness* not only makes the point that consciousness is an unbroken continuum—we are never without some sort of mind, even in special meditative states that are supposedly "mindless"—but also that perception takes time. We are well aware within our own experience that if we are exposed to something for only an instant we will not be able to notice it, getting at best a subliminal perception that we cannot remember. For sense direct perception to occur, it must be preceded by many moments ("moments" being fractions of a second) of attention.

Mental direct perception is a special type of knowing, very valued in Buddhism, wherein we know something without using the senses or conceptuality. Normally, this type of knowing is very, very brief; just before sense direct perception induces conceptuality, where we will attach a concept to what has been observed, there is a flash of mental direct perception. Otherwise, for ordinary persons, mental direct perception is what we would call extrasensory perception, which is rather rare.[1] Some of us occasionally, and others of us frequently, are able to know things that are beyond the limits of our senses. The Buddhist tradition recognizes many types of clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc. but does not consider instances other than those induced by meditation to be particularly significant.

Yogic direct perception is, in fact, a kind of mental direct perception but it is set forth separately because it is important and because it is produced in a special way, through the power of meditation. It designates the type of consciousness that can bring about liberation and omniscience. This consciousness is one that combines impeccable strength of concentration, the state of "calm abiding," with the inferential understanding of selflessness, the state of "special insight." It is, therefore, only found amongst Superiors, those who have directly understood selflessness (however it is defined in the various schools).

Types of Inference

An inference is an understanding based on reasoning. For instance, if we know that smoke and fire are related such that whenever we see smoke, we know that there must be fire, when we see smoke in a particular place, we are able to infer that fire exists there, too.

There are actually "three modes" in such a process. The first mode is the *presence of the reason in the subject.* If we say, "In a smoke-filled room, fire exists, because smoke exists," the *reason* is "smoke," and it is present in the subject, "smoke-filled room."

The second mode is the *forward entailment,* the logical relationship of the third element and the second, stated in that order. In our example, it would be, "Wherever there is smoke, there is fire."

The third mode is the other side of that coin, called the *reverse entailment.* Here, it is, "If there is no fire, there is no smoke." When we understand the three modes, we make an inference and have valid cognition.

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[1]Jamyang Shayba actually classifies these as mental consciousnesses and direct cognition but not as mental direct perception.

There are three main types of inference. The main one is **inference by the power of the fact**, i.e., inference based on the statement of valid reasons. The example of fire and smoke would be such an inference.

Inference comprehending through an analogy is to know something by way of an example. We might be said to comprehend a building through studying a scale model of it, for instance.

Finally, **scriptural inference** is to accept what a scripture teaches, having ascertained that it is not contradicted by direct perception, inference, or other scriptures. For instance, the Buddha taught about the subtle workings of karma, which is not something that we who are without omniscience can establish or disprove by direct perception or inference. It is a "very hidden phenomenon." Although in general the Buddha's statements are to be analyzed carefully, in some cases one simply trusts him on the basis of having analyzed his major teachings and having found them persuasive.[1]

Does the Mind Know Itself?

Those who follow Dharmakīrti—the Sautrāntikas Following Reasoning, the Cittamātrins Following Reasoning and the Yogācāra-Svātantrikas[2]—contend that our subjective consciousness is also an *object* of consciousness. That is, the mind is itself known at the same time that it knows its object. Otherwise, they argue, we could not remember not only the things we experience but our experiencing itself. That we *can* remember our own seeing, hearing, etc., is broadly accepted.

Self-consciousness is part of the "mind only" concept, for it is said to occur simultaneously with the mind that it observes (just as the Cittamātrins, etc., say that

[1]This typology of inference is the one that Losang Gönchok uses in the Prāsaṅgika school section but there are other lists of inferences, too. All include these types. Some of the non-Buddhist schools put a great deal of emphasis on inference, also. The Sāṃkhya school propounded two main types, inferences made for oneself and those made for others; the latter were divided into proof statements and consequences (roughly similar to the main logical forms used by the Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika schools in Buddhism). The Vaiśeṣika and Naiyāyika schools used the same divisions but added that reliance on valid scriptures is a type of valid cognition.

[2]The root text does not specify which Cittamātrins accept self-consciousness, but Losang Gönchok attributes it only to those who Follow Reasoning. He is probably following the *Great Exposition of the Middle Way*, where Jamyang Shayba points out that Asaṅga never mentions self-consciousness. But Losang Gönchok might have gone the other way as well, since Jamyang Shayba also states that some Cittamātrins Following Scripture diverge from Asaṅga on this point.

mind and object occur simultaneously, produced by the same karmic seed). Those who say self-consciousness exists say that mind is like a lamp: at the same time it illuminates other things, it illuminates itself.

Those who dispute self-consciousness use a different metaphor. Mind is like a measuring weight: it cannot measure itself at the same time it measures something else. Or, say the Prāsaṅgikas, it *is* like a lamp; but since the very nature of a lamp is illumination, it does not *act upon itself* to illuminate itself.

But how, other than self-consciousness, can we account for memory of the subjective aspect of experience? Except for the Prāsaṅgikas, other schools account for memory of consciousness itself by the mind's ability to perform "introspection" (looking inside), which observes a mental state (but a moment *after* it occurs, as with any other object).

Prāsaṅgikas deny that self-consciousness is necessary for several other reasons. The most intriguing is that my memories are times when I train my mind upon a past object. This is quite unlike our "mechanical" model of memory, in which we imagine that memory retrieves stored records of past events and displays them on the screen of consciousness. Rather, we are making contact again with a past object and subject. Śāntideva, the ninth-century author of the famous *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, even says that memory can reach the subjective aspect of experience even if that awareness was not *noticed* at the time, just by remembering the object. For instance, as long as I can remember Niagara Falls, I can remember my *seeing* of Niagara Falls through association.

Other Controversies

There are many other small differences between the schools on the subject of valid cognition. What follows are brief summaries of four issues on which Losang Gönchok dwells.

Valid Cognition Can be "Mistaken." Prāsaṅgikas are usually keen to uphold the conventions of the world and thus are inclined to classify as valid the cognitions that the world would agree are valid. However, as Jamyang Shayba says, "Until Buddhahood is attained, one has no non-mistaken consciousnesses except for a

Superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise."[1] Because things appear to exist inherently, there is a falseness to every appearance outside of meditation.

However, a consciousness does not have to be non-mistaken in order to be correct about the existence of its object. For instance, when we see mountains in the distance, they appear to be blue because of the haze. Although we might be mistaken about the color, we can still be correct regarding the mountains themselves.

Although this seems to be a minor point, it is a way of refuting the Svātantrika claim that things truly exist on a conventional level, as they appear, because otherwise the consciousnesses that realize things would not be valid. Prāsaṅgikas are saying, to the contrary, that a consciousness can be valid about the *existence* of its object without being correct about the *way* the object exists.

Direct Perception Can be Conceptual. Prāsaṅgikas also are alone in regarding our inferential cognitions as leading very quickly to a kind of direct cognition. They say that once we have had a real inference, which again means an incontrovertible understanding, we no longer depend on the reason that produced our inference. Our understanding is "direct," in that sense; it is still indirect in another sense, because conceptuality always involves a generic image, but it is powerful. Therefore, we can have a mental direct perception that is not merely the "flash" at the end of sense direct perception but which goes on for some time after an inference is made. This mental direct perception is memory, and memory is always conceptual.[2]

Do Objects Cast a True Aspect to Consciousness? True and False Aspectarians, who can be found among the Sautrāntikas and Cittamātrins, agree that the appearance of coarse objects as external is distorted by ignorance.[3] They disagree over whether the coarse appearances of wholes exists as they appear. For example, a patch of blue is actually many tiny parts that are blue; is the appearance of a "patch" true or false? Among True Aspectarians are those who contend that in

[1] *Great Exposition of Tenets* 37a.2–3 (in DSK edition), a commentary on a passage in Candrakīrti's *Clear Words*.

[2] This point is made by Dzongkaba in *Illumination of the Thought*, which is cited by Jamyang Shayba.

[3] There are several explanations of the differences between True and False Aspectarians and between types of each but here we are following Jamyang Shayba. Gönchok Jikmay Wangbo gives three versions and much more attention to the topic in his much shorter text (see Hopkins and Sopa, *Cutting*).

relation to a multifarious multicolored object there are as many eye consciousnesses as there are colors (or other aspects) of the object and those who say there is only one.[1]

Pramāṇa Does Not Mean "New." Of less consequence is that there is a difference between Prāsaṅgikas and others over whether *pramāṇa*, the term we have simply said means valid cognition, actually means "prime cognition," i.e., means only a *new* knower which is also incontrovertible. Dharmakīrti and his followers understand the prefix *pra* to mean "new"; Prāsaṅgikas regard it simply as meaning "foremost," or best.

[1] The three divisions are (1) the Proponents of Equal Number of Subjects and Objects, who hold the position that there are as many eye consciousnesses as there are colors (or other aspects) of the object; (2) "Half-Eggists" who speak of only one consciousness but who note that because of self-consciousness, both subject and object are observed simultaneously and are, therefore, one substantial entity; and (3) "Non-Pluralists" who speak of only one consciousness that perceives one multicolored object. Among False Aspectarians, Gönchok Jikmay Wangpo (but no one else, apparently) asserts that there are some Tainted False Aspectarians who either say that the mind is polluted by ignorance or that even Buddhas suffer from false appearances. Most Buddhists would say that neither is possible.

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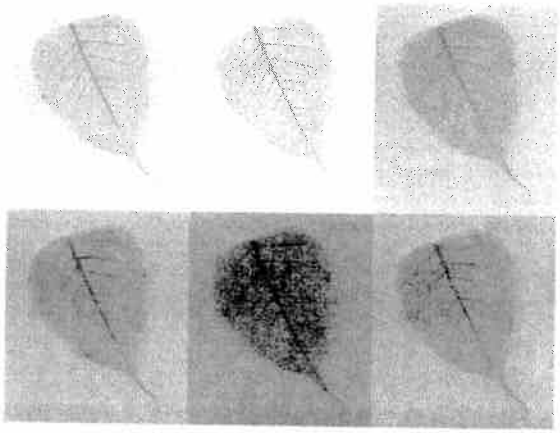

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VOLUME 3

GESHE TASHI TSERING

FOREWORD BY LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

EDITED BY GORDON MCDOUGALL

WISDOM PUBLICATIONS • BOSTON

never go on to realize emptiness directly, and enlightenment would be impossible.

The belief that because conceptual minds are mistaken they are therefore never valid is erroneous, for it leads to the verdict that realizing emptiness or enlightenment is impossible. Only through conceptual minds can we attain such states. In order to avoid the dangers of acceptance based on mere dogma, we must understand epistemology well and employ valid reasoning. To do that, we must examine perception—the phenomenon that bridges the conceptual mind and the external object.

Many masters make this fundamental point: if we trace all valid cognitions back to their origins, we arrive at perception. Eventually any valid cognition—perception or inference—must be validated by perception. Seeing smoke in the distance and apprehending that there is fire is mistaken in regards to its appearing object—we have no direct proof of fire—but valid because there *is* fire. But this inferential understanding is only possible through the valid perception of smoke. And we are only able to ascertain and accept this link between smoke and fire because we have previously perceived this causal relationship.

Perception and conception continually work hand in hand to bring us a complete picture of the world.

7 Moving Toward Knowledge

The Sevenfold Division

Part of epistemology is the knowledge of conceptions and perceptions, and of mistaken and valid minds, as we saw in the previous chapter. Another part is understanding the actual way we move from mistaken to correct minds and from conceptual to perceptual consciousnesses. In its examination of the validity of knowledge and the way we acquire it, the Gelug tradition commonly lists seven types of mind:

1. wrong consciousnesses
2. doubting consciousnesses
3. non-ascertaining consciousnesses
4. correctly assuming consciousnesses
5. subsequent cognizers
6. valid inferential cognizers
7. valid direct perceivers

Wrong Consciousnesses

Wrong consciousnesses, whether conceptual or perceptual, are erroneous with regard to the main object. Although a direct sense perception can

be a wrong consciousness, the error will generally be very superficial. The traditional illustration is seeing everything as yellow because of jaundice—although wearing sunglasses might be a more modern twist on this example. In contrast, wrong consciousnesses at the conceptual level, such as belief in a permanent self, can be quite deep.

Buddhist epistemology lists six sources of deception:

1. the object
2. the basis of perception
3. the situation
4. the immediate condition
5. karmic imprints
6. repeated familiarization

I'll deal with the first source of deception last. The second, the *basis of perception*, is deceptive when we mistakenly focus on an inappropriate object. Many minds and mental factors make up a mental event, and usually the mind moves to the most important but not always. Something can skew our appreciation of the object. For example, a loud sound can blind us to an oncoming car as we step off the curb.

The *situation* can also deceive us. For example, we may view a large male figure on a dark street as intrinsically threatening when no actual threat is present.

The *immediate condition* refers to the immediately preceding moments of mind that distort our appreciation of an event. An example is when intense anger leaves a residue that colors the following situation, causing us to see something we would ordinarily experience as pleasant or neutral as negative.

Karmic imprints trick us all the time. In fact, the propensities left on our mindstream from past actions have almost constantly programmed us to mistake things. The most important mistake relates to

the suffering of change, where we cling to objects as intrinsically desirable only to set ourselves up for future suffering when they inevitably "fail" us. The fault lies not in the object, but in our perception of it.

Similarly, *repeated familiarization* distorts the picture, dulling perception and making mistaken attitudes seem normal and correct. We see this with political rhetoric, advertising campaigns, and dysfunctional families when violence and selfishness are portrayed as desirable. It is also true of our habitual projection of self-existence onto objects.

These points are interesting to explore and, I think, reasonably easy to understand. But let us return now to the first source of deception on our list, the object. As I mentioned earlier, the object itself can also deceive us. The other sources of deception can be seen as subjective—they are all mistakes the mind makes. How is it that the object can be at fault?

In fact, the fault does not come from the side of the object, but rather from the inability of the mind to take in certain aspects of the object. These aspects are known in Buddhist epistemology as the *four densities:*

1. the density of continuity
2. the density of function
3. the density of object
4. the density of whole

Density is the word that English-language scholars use, but I prefer the Tibetan term, *nyurwa* or "quick"—as in, the object or event is too "quick" for the mind to apprehend.

The *density of continuity* refers to the mistake we make when we see a sequence of events in relation to an object and mistakenly impute them as simultaneous or continuous. The confusion arises because there the space of time between the first event and the second is so

small. The traditional example of this is of an arrow that is shot through a thick sheaf of paper. To the naked eye, it seems that the arrow has instantaneously created a hole through all the paper, but in fact it has gone through each sheet separately, one at a time.

We see another everyday example of this when we watch a film. Each second of a film is made of twenty-four separate frames, and each frame is a still picture. Because the frames are run through a projector very quickly, however, the movement in the picture seems to be continuous rather than composed of discrete stills.

The *density of function* looks at a set rather than a sequence as in the first density, but other than that it is quite similar. For example, walking up stairs seems like one single action to us, but, if we think about it, we can see that it involves a complicated set of motions.

The *density of object* refers to the way we see an object as a whole rather than as a collection of parts. A black-and-white photograph in a newspaper might look like one image of continuous tones, but if we examine it closely we will see it is nothing more than a collection of dots. Our mind makes connections that aren't actually present in the object itself.

The *density of whole* refers to objects that look uniform throughout although they are not. I see the front of something and presume the back and sides are identical. I bite into a delicious-looking apple only to find the inside is rotten. We are always making assumptions about wholes based on knowing only parts.

Recognizing that objects trick us all the time helps disengage us from appearances and look for deeper realities. Some people encountering television for the first time think that the characters and situations in soap operas are real. Of course we aren't like that (at least I hope not!), but we might well get so wrapped up in a good film that we forget we are watching actors in fictional situations. And rarely are we

conscious that the images we are watching on the screen are a series of still images.

This does not mean that objects and situations are utter illusions or that they do not function. They do function. A newspaper photograph functions as such, and merely because we fail to see that it is composed of many dots does not mean there is no photo. There is, however, an element of illusion at work that relies on our mind to fill in the spaces.

The lesson here is that we should not grasp onto things unreflectively, or take the labels our mind gives them as fixed. The capacity to create a little distance in this way can help us break the patterns that cause us so much unhappiness. This gap is essential for understanding reality and for reducing emotional distress.

Lama Yeshe offers a simple yet effective meditation.

> You check, you watch, your own mind. If someone's giving you a hard time and your ego starts to hurt, instead of reacting, just take a look at what's going on. Think of how sound is simply coming out of that person's mouth, entering your ear, and causing you pain in the heart. If you think about it in the right way, it will make you laugh; you will see how ridiculous it is to get upset by something so insubstantial. Then your problem will disappear—poof! Just like that.[29]

Wrong consciousnesses are minds that process the information about their objects incorrectly. This might seem a pedantic point but it is important to realize that there is a difference in Buddhist epistemology between a wrong consciousness, such as we have been discussing, and a mistaken consciousness. The Tibetan term for wrong consciousness, *lokshe*, means "reversed consciousness," implying a complete inaccuracy, such as seeing a flower and thinking it's a horse.

Mistaken consciousness (Tib. *trulshe*) is much more subtle, referring, as we saw above, to the conceptual mind's inability to perceive an object directly. As I have said, the conceptual mind is always mistaken in this way, whether or not it is wrong.

Doubting Consciousnesses

The second of the sevenfold division is *doubting consciousnesses*. This is a consciousness that is uncertain, wavering between one conclusion and its opposite. Everyday we are asked to make numerous choices, from products in the supermarket to decisions at work. If you are like me, most of those choices will be colored by indecision.

In Buddhist teachings, great doubt often arises in relation to the question of the inherent existence of things. We can listen to a teaching on emptiness and initially feel it is some esoteric concept that has nothing to do with our lives. That is doubt not tending toward the fact. If we hear more about it and start to feel that there is some possibility that things do not exist inherently, as the teachings are saying, that is doubt tending toward the fact. This is a powerful initial step in weakening the force of wrong view. It is the beginning of the process of moving toward correct understanding.

Even the suspicion that things and events may not be permanent is a thought diametrically opposed to our normal patterns and is in fact a very profound mind. As Aryadeva says in his *Four Hundred Verses (Chatushataka)*: "Even through merely having doubts, cyclic existence is torn to shreds."

In the sequence that leads us from wrong consciousness to direct perception, doubt is one of the first types of mind we want to eliminate. However, early on, healthy doubts that tend toward the fact are in fact positive minds. For instance, to doubt that this is the only life we have and wonder if there is a next life might lead us to think about

it, research it, and from the understanding we gain, produce a positive result.

The danger of doubt is the unsteady mind that does not examine closely and stays stuck in a wavering state, under the sway of whatever view was encountered most recently. If, while doubting the existence of future lives and not having examined the issue carefully, we attend a lecture by a charismatic speaker who asserts there is no life after death, we may get caught up in the presentation and immediately grant it credibility. In order to progress on the path, we need to move beyond this chronic indecision.

Non-Ascertaining Consciousnesses

Every day millions of sensory experiences appear to our consciousness. Say you walk from your home to a nearby park. When you return, you might be able to tell your partner about the noisy dog, the new display in the shop window, or the leaves turning brown in the autumn chill—but in fact you do not ascertain the vast majority of sensory input.

If we could analyze our minds over a twenty-four-hour period, most of what we experience would fall into this category. Of course we pay attention when we walk down a street—our survival depends on it—but the mind cannot possibly take in everything. The mind must filter input to make sense of the world, otherwise it would be like receiving every radio station in the world at once. The majority of our mental events are consciousnesses to which the object appears but is not ascertained, meaning the object has been apprehended by the consciousness without enough force to register.

Similarly, we may attend to an object, but it fails to register deeply. There is no certainty about the object. We attend a talk on Buddhism, but two days later cannot recall what was discussed

because the teaching did not penetrate our minds sufficiently. That is another example of the mind that apprehends the object without ascertaining it.

Correctly Assuming Consciousnesses

The fourth consciousness is the last of what is called the *noncognizing consciousnesses*, in that they are conceptions and not perceptions and so do not actually "cognize" or know their objects. Correctly assuming consciousness is a consciousness that conceives the object in accordance with reality, but in a fallible manner.

While the vast majority of our consciousnesses fall into the category of non-ascertaining consciousnesses, the majority of the minds that *do* ascertain the object are correctly assuming consciousnesses. We ascertain the object but only through assumption. This mind can be positive, negative, or neutral, and it is a necessary step in developing the actual mind of direct perception.

A correctly assuming mind draws its conclusion based either on no reason at all or on a faulty reason. We have heard it, it seems right, and so we accept it without our own reasoning or experience playing a part. Even if we do investigate it in some way, we don't take this far enough. Investigation ceases before there is a full, clear understanding and whatever we are investigating becomes incontrovertible; it assumes without fully knowing. *Correctly assuming* means just that—the mind is correct about its object but it is only an assumption, without the weight of detailed analysis or realization. Very often cultural assumptions are taken as truths without investigation. I know many Tibetans who are very simple, devoted people who recite mantras every day and have unwavering faith in the law of cause and effect, but possess no understanding at all of subjects such as the four noble truths.

Because this consciousness assumes rather than knows, it has no real power to actually recognize the object. We learn about impermanence and assume that things are impermanent, which is good to a point, but the whole thing can become quite dangerous if we become content with our limited analysis and never go deeper, especially if our assumption is accompanied by a good deal of intellectual egoism. Generally in Tibetan Buddhism we talk of three wisdoms: the wisdom of hearing, contemplating, and meditating. Correctly assuming consciousness belongs to the first and is only really useful if it leads to the second, which takes whatever it has understood to the next level and eventually leads to single-pointed meditation upon the subject.

Subsequent Cognizers

The last three of the sevenfold division are cognizers, minds that actually get at the object. A *subsequent cognizer*, as the name implies, is a cognition of something that has been apprehended previously. It is subsequent to an initial and fresh valid cognition—either a perception or an inference. It is not the first moment of that mind. My eye consciousness sees a pen. The first moment is a valid perception, the second moment is a subsequent cognizer. Subsequent cognizers can be either perceptual or conceptual.

This distinction between *first* and *subsequent* is a point of debate among Buddhist scholars—some saying subsequent minds are valid, some saying they are not—but on a practical level, the difference is not so important.

Inferential Cognizers

Although an inferential cognizer is a conception rather than a perception, it incontrovertibly realizes its object of cognition and, as such, is as reliable a form of knowledge as a direct perceiver. However, while a

direct perceiver contacts its object directly and nonmistakenly, an inferential cognizer makes contact via inference with things that are not available to perception. Many points, such as subtle impermanence or selflessness, are at present obscured from our immediate experience and can only be comprehended through a conceptual cognition.

As we progress on the spiritual path, our capacity for logic develops and our understanding of hidden phenomena becomes deeper. Things that once were hidden to us and only accepted through the power of belief become objects of knowledge. Perhaps you have already had times when some level of understanding about a subject has come about, not through logical deduction alone but because some deeper comprehension has been triggered through a far subtler mechanism. You could call this intuition, but it could also be karmic imprints ripening due to meeting the right conditions. Buddhists call this a realization. You might have a good intellectual understanding of impermanence as a result of years of study, but all this knowledge can and should be solidified until it becomes incontrovertible. The mind that brings this about is an inferential cognizer.

Valid Direct Perceivers

Valid direct perceivers, the last of the sevenfold classification, are consciousnesses that apprehend the object directly and in a nonmistaken way. *Nonmistaken* means that no false element appears to the consciousness. The apprehension of the pen by the eye consciousness is without fault. What appears is the real pen. This obviously is a simpler concept of perception than the one we examined earlier, in which the *aspect* acts as a veil between mind and object.

The definition *nonmistaken* also eliminates mistaken minds that are not conceptual but also not direct perceivers. Sometimes certain sensory consciousnesses see or hear things completely incorrectly due to

temporary distortions. While you are on a train that begins to pull away from the station, you may feel that the train is still while the people on the platform are moving. This is obviously mistaken. Although the perception of the moving people is a direct perceiver, it is not a *valid* direct perceiver because it is not nonmistaken.

In Buddhist epistemology there are four types of valid direct perceivers:

1. sense direct perceivers
2. mental direct perceivers
3. self-knowing direct perceivers
4. yogic direct perceivers

Sense direct perceivers operate with our five sense consciousnesses. *Mental direct perceivers*, on the other hand, are direct perceivers that are not part of the sensory consciousnesses. *Self-knowing direct perceivers* are also known as self-cognizers, the aspect of the mind that is self-aware and the source of memory. These minds are accepted as existent by all schools except Prasangika Madhyamaka, the highest subschool. It is worthwhile to look briefly at mental direct perceivers, which are said to be of two types: (1) those that occur at the end of a sensory direct perception and (2) clairvoyance.

Between the sense consciousness perceiving an object and the conceptual consciousness that superimposes conceptual thought upon the object, a brief moment of mental direct perception occurs. This consciousness is so brief that we ordinary people cannot recognize it. That moment is a mental direct perceiver at the end of a sensory perception.

The second type of mental direct perceiver is clairvoyance. There are different types of clairvoyance, such as the clairvoyance that directly sees other beings' minds, or the clairvoyance that sees their

past lives. This kind of direct perceiver is developed as a by-product of the profound meditation of calm abiding.

Whereas clairvoyance is almost a side-effect of meditation, the development of yogic direct perceivers is a major goal of meditative training. Although we have the capacity to effortlessly and directly perceive such things as forms and sounds with our eye or ear consciousnesses, we do not have that ability with regard to profound phenomena like subtle impermanence or selflessness.

Through meditation and logical reasoning we start to understand subjects on an increasingly deeper level, moving from doubt to assertion to absolute conviction. However, at the beginning all of this occurs only within the conceptual process. In relation to impermanence, for instance, we get a stronger and stronger feeling for the momentary changes that occur in all things. The Gelug school says that a yogic direct perceiver realizing impermanence or selflessness directly—a perception—can only be achieved through the valid inferential cognizer—a conceptual mind. But through repeated meditation, that conceptual mental image becomes more and more part of our mind until it transcends conceptuality and becomes a direct perception. This is a yogic direct perception—we have realized the object directly, not through our senses, but through our mental consciousness.

Unlike clairvoyance, which is an achievement not exclusive to Buddhist practitioners, yogic direct perceivers occur only in the continuum of superior beings.[39] Although it shares some features with our sensory direct perceivers, such as freedom from conceptuality and being nonmistaken, yogic direct perceivers only occur through training. For this training, we need a clear understanding of the complete process of mental cultivation. The goal of having a yogic direct perceiver that realizes impermanence or selflessness seems impossible without understanding the definite attainable steps that get us there.

We start with conceptual minds, beginning at the wrong consciousness that sees everything as permanent. Through reading and listening, our doubts become awarenesses. For example, we may, after listening to or reading some Buddhist teachings, start to doubt that compounded phenomena are permanent. This doubt settles into a conviction and becomes a correctly assuming consciousness. With deeper reflection over time, it eventually becomes an inferential cognizer.

How do we turn these conceptual minds into a yogic direct perceiver? We need to develop calm abiding and then special insight, first separately and then together. The union of the two is not a yogic direct perceiver itself, but the tool that will help us develop it. Once we have done so, we can increase our realizations not only of impermanence, but also of emptiness and bodhichitta.

Remember that I said that there is no intermediary between a direct perceiver and its object, as opposed to a conceptual mind that is separated from its object by an image. Using the union of calm abiding and special insight—a mind that is simultaneously deep in meditation and possesses a strong understanding of the object—we can move beyond a consciousness reliant on mental images. When we separate our mind from these images, we are left with a direct perception of the very subtle object. Having gone through this process and attained this realization, it will never degenerate; it will remain stable from lifetime to lifetime. This shows the extraordinary power of the mind of yogic direct perception, and should inspire us to persevere to develop it.

Differences in Process Between Wisdom and Method

Examining this sevenfold division helps us see the process we need to undergo in order to attain enlightenment—from wrong consciousness

all the way to a direct perception of the way things really are. There is a difference, however, between the wisdom approach and the method approach.

As you know, when we work from the wisdom point of view we address facts, such as emptiness or impermanence. But when we develop the method side of our minds, such as great compassion and bodhichitta, what we engage with is harder to pin down. Many texts explain that our conceptual understanding of emptiness or impermanence can become direct perceptions while we are still unenlightened beings. On the other hand, we cannot have a direct perception of bodhichitta until we attain enlightenment.

The reason for this is the object. Every mind must have an object. The object of a mind developing a realization of emptiness is emptiness itself. The object of the mind developing a realization of bodhichitta is the suffering of all sentient beings and enlightenment. We can manage to directly see the emptiness of, say, our own body—it is difficult but not impossible. But until we have an omniscient mind, it is surely impossible to directly know the entire suffering of every single sentient being.

Within the Mahayana tradition, this is considered the point of difference between individual-liberation practitioners and practitioners of the bodhisattva vehicle. When you realize emptiness directly, you can go on to attain liberation from suffering, but if your goal is complete enlightenment or buddhahood, the focus of your meditation is the suffering of all sentient beings. Liberation can be achieved within lifetimes, it is said, but enlightenment takes three countless great eons.

According to our tradition, both perspectives, wisdom and method, need to be developed in tandem. In the first stages, both are conceptual minds, but we develop them in different ways. Then, it is comparatively easily to transform our wisdom into a direct perceiver, but the same is not true of method. Certainly, the objects of bodhichitta and

great compassion can be realized before enlightenment, and we can have very powerful experiences in relation to them, but they cannot be realized *directly*. In the context of the sevenfold division, they do not become direct perceivers but only correctly assuming consciousnesses.

In the texts on *lamrim*, or the graduated path to enlightenment, the topics of calm abiding and special insight are taught after bodhichitta. In Tibetan Buddhism, and particularly in the Gelug presentation, we do not develop these later subjects in great detail in the early stages, focusing instead on laying the groundwork of study. However, my feeling is that without calm abiding and special insight we cannot experience direct realizations of anything. The earlier topics within the lamrim will remain intellectual exercises and not penetrate our consciousness in any deep way until we have engaged with them in stable and deep meditation.

The direct perception of emptiness starts at the path of seeing, the third of the five paths of a bodhisattva. This is a very subtle mind, and there is a risk, especially in the advanced stages of meditation, that we will be led into a blissful equanimity from which we will not want to emerge. It is said in some Mahayana sutras that when many individual-liberation practitioners get to a certain point, the wisdom realizing emptiness becomes a meditative absorption that can keep them in blissful stasis for many eons. Our goal is full enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, and if we keep this in mind then we will not get waylaid along the path.

It is difficult to develop this mind while we are still trying to deal with the gross mental afflictions that plague our daily lives. The layers of the mind must be systematically unpeeled to expose evermore subtle layers of affliction. Happiness—of ourselves and others—depends on reaching these deeper levels of mind and developing both wisdom and method in our practice. And in order to bring this about, we must cultivate a deep understanding of the mind and how it functions.

The understanding of the mind that is the subject of the Abhidharma and Pramana texts has been developed over centuries by masters who have been not only great logicians but also great meditators. Their theories have been formulated not in isolation but in the laboratories of their own minds; they actually experienced the mental states they write about.

I feel that so much of this understanding is not only relevant, but vital to our lives today. Our world is in crisis now, a crisis caused largely by an ignorance of the real path to happiness. Look about and see if this isn't so, in your own life, in the lives of the people you know, and in the way the cultures of the world are developing. More and more, the spiritual is being set aside for material pleasure; deep, lasting contentment for the quick buzz. This is due to an ignorance of the role the mind plays in creating happiness and suffering.

In our greed for possessions, we are eating the world we live in. Gandhi said that the world has enough for human need but not for human greed, and it is greed that we see manifesting so strongly in our lives today. Possibly there is no more greed today than in previous times, but with the increase in population and advances in technology, we now have the ability to destroy the delicate infrastructure of this planet. Wisdom has always been needed, but never more so than at this moment.

We have all the tools necessary for a great transformation, of ourselves and of the world we live in. All we need is an enquiring and persevering mind. Mind is complex, but not unknowable. The subjects covered in this book deal with understanding the mind and using that understanding to transform it. As with any tool, whether you use it is entirely up to you.

Appendix

The Fifty-one Mental Factors[31]

Always-Present Mental Factors

(1) contact (2) discernment (3) feeling (4) intention (5) attention

Object-Ascertaining Mental Factors

(6) aspiration (7) appreciation (8) recollection (9) concentration (10) intelligence

Variable Mental Factors

(11) sleep (12) regret (13) general examination (14) precise analysis

Wholesome Mental Factors

(15) faith (16) self-respect (17) consideration for others (18) detachment (19) nonhatred (20) nonignorance (21) enthusiasm (22) suppleness (23) conscientiousness (24) equanimity (25) nonviolence

This book has been approved for inclusion in **Textual Studies and Translations in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism.** The editorial board for this series includes:

Debate in Tibetan Buddhism

Daniel E. Perdue

Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York, U.S.A.

appearance of an internal image. "Thought is a reliable way to ascertain objects."[1] As a sign of the reliability of thought, the Dignaga-Dharmakirti schools of reasoning present inferential cognizers as one of the two types of valid cognizers (*tshad ma, pramaṇa*).

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 meaning-generality. 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, abhrānta*) 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, nirvikalpaka-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 consciousness 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 (*snang la ma nges pa, *aniyata-pratibhasa*).[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 (*yid 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 continuums 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 (*rnal '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 unmistaken 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 Dharmakirti's *Commentary on (Dignaga'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, Dharmakirti 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-sel-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, grahya-vishaya*) 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

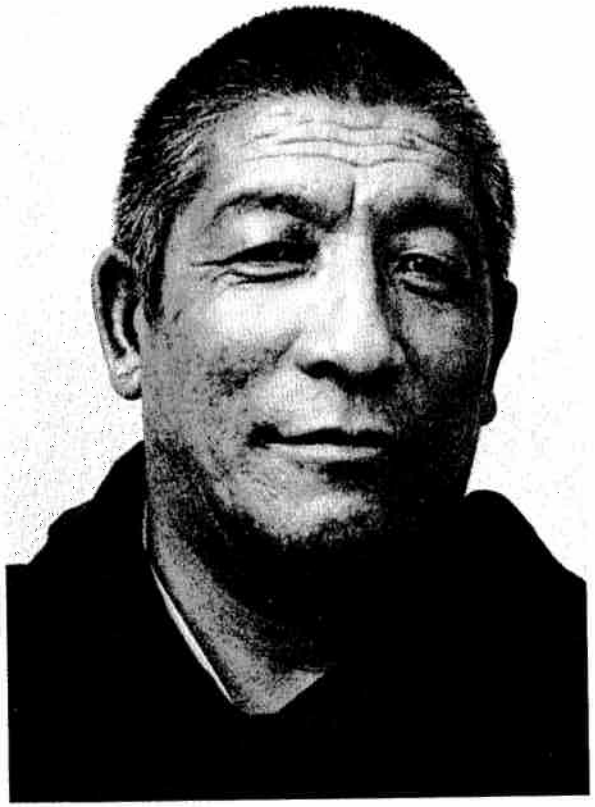
[1] Dharmakirti, *Commentary on (Dignaga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"*, P5709, Vol. 130, 88.3.4.
[2] Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 118.
[3] Jam-bel-trin-lay-yön-dan-gya-tso, Lo-sel-ling *Collected Topics*, p. 2.

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, Dharmakirti 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-pravṛtti*) and consciousnesses which are collective engagers (*sgrub 'jug, *vidhi-pravṛtti*). 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.



The Mind and its Functions

Geshe Rabten

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Contents of Chapter Three

Chapter Three
Ideal Mind

We have seen in the previous chapter that a cognition has to be either a perception or a conception. However, amongst all the various perceptions and conceptions we have some are said to be ideal, i.e. perfect, and some non-ideal, i.e. imperfect, states of mind. In this and the following chapter we shall discuss the factors that constitute an ideal mind. In addition, we shall see which cognitions lack these factors and are thus considered to be non-ideal. More specifically, these different ideal and non-ideal minds will be described under seven headings referring to what are known as the "seven types of mind". Two of these types, ideal perception and ideal inference, are ideal states of mind and will be covered in this chapter. The remaining five types, subsequent cognition, correct belief, inattentive perception, indecision and mistaken cognition, are non-ideal and will be explained in the following chapter.

I. ETYMOLOGY AND DEFINITION

In Sanskrit the term for ideal mind is *pramāṇa*. *Pra* means either initial, fresh, principal or best and *māṇa* means awareness or cognition. All the Buddhist schools of philosophy except the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas understand *pra* to mean that an ideal mind is an initial and a fresh cognition, i.e. only the first moment of cognition within a particular stream of comprehension. The Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas, though, gloss the prefix *pra* to mean the principal object cognised and thereby interpret *pramāṇa* as meaning a cognition that comprehends its principal object. For them ideal minds are not only the first moments of comprehension but also any subsequent moments of cognition that comprehend the object. In this work, however, since we are following the Sāutrantika system, the former interpretation is accepted.

All *ideal minds** bear three defining characteristics: freshness, infallibility and cognition.

A. Freshness

The characteristic of freshness indicates that an ideal state of mind only occurs as the initial cognitive act within any co-related series of cognitions. For example, we may comprehend sound to be impermanent in dependence upon a logical proof. The initial moment of comprehension, when we fully grasp the significance of this point for the first time, is said to be an ideal state of mind. But when we subsequently refer back to this point, although we retain our comprehension, it will always be induced by the force of the original comprehension (and lack its initial impact). In this way all ideal minds, whether perceptual or conceptual, bear this quality of freshness and originality through the force of which any subsequent cognition is induced. To assert freshness as a defining characteristic of an ideal mind eliminates the possibility of any subsequent cognition being considered as ideal as is the tradition of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas.

B. Infallibility (Comprehension)

The second defining characteristic of an ideal mind is that of infallibility. This means that an ideal mind is one that comprehends its object. But what does it mean for a mind to comprehend its object? It means that it is able to lead to a correct ascertainment of the object and to eliminate misconceptions regarding it. *Comprehension**, as it is understood here, can pertain to either perceptual or conceptual cognitions. An example of a perception that comprehends its object would be a visual perception of a rose that creates a sufficient impression on the mind to be able to induce the correct conceptual ascertainment that the object seen was a rose. Furthermore, since upon the basis of this perception there is no possibility of misconceiving the rose to be anything other than a rose, it is said to be capable of eliminating misconception about the object. Likewise, in terms of conception, the correct inferential cognition that sound is impermanent is able to give rise to complete certainty about this fact and to leave no room for any further doubts or misconceptions concerning it. Therefore, it is also regarded as being a comprehension of its object. Hence it is these two criteria that establish whether a cognition comprehends its object or not and thereby can be considered to be infallible.

Previously we talked of *true* perceptions and *true* conceptions. However, it should not be thought that being a true cognition is identical with being an infallible one.

What characterises a cognition to be true or false is whether the apprehension of its object is in accordance with reality or not but not whether it is capable of inducing conviction and certainty about the object or not. In the case of our correctly believing sound to be impermanent, for example, the apprehension is in accordance with reality and thus the belief is a true conception. But it is not considered to *comprehend* that sound is impermanent because, being merely a belief, it lacks the basis of any sound reasoning and is thus unable to give rise to any real certainty and conviction about the fact. Therefore, although a correct belief is true, it is not an infallible cognition. Thus it cannot be considered as an ideal mind even though it may bear the other two defining characteristics of freshness and cognition. Similarly, an inattentive perception of a sound, for example, is also regarded as a true perception. However it is not an infallible cognition because the impression it leaves on the mind is not strong enough to induce any certainty as to what the sound was or whether one actually heard the sound or not.

C. Cognition

The third defining characteristic of an ideal mind is that of cognition, which is included in order to eliminate the notion that non-conscious forms of ideal mind may exist. Specifically, we are referring to the Vaibāṣika's belief that the physical sense-organs, since they act as the bases for an ideal mind, are also ideal (*pramāṇa*). In fact they are merely material objects incapable of any conscious activity. [1]

1 For an explanation of the Vaibāṣika position see *Theory and Practice of Tibetan Buddhism* p. 79 seq.

II. IDEAL PERCEPTION

We have already discussed the topic of perception in general as well as what it means to be a true or false perception. Now we shall make a further distinction between true perceptions into those which are ideal states of mind and those which are non-ideal.

An ideal perception is necessarily a true perception, but a true perception is not necessarily an ideal perception. An *ideal perception** is defined as a fresh, infallible cognition that is free from conceptuality. Hence any true perception that lacks either the defining characteristics of freshness or infallibility is considered to be a non-ideal state of mind. All subsequent perceptual cognitions, therefore, are non-ideal since they lack the quality of freshness, and all inattentive perceptions are non-ideal since they lack the quality of infallibility. As for ideal states of perception we can distinguish four distinct types in accordance with the fourfold division of true perception into true sensory, mental, apperceptive and contemplative perception.

An *ideal sensory perception** is defined as a fresh, infallible cognition, free from conceptuality, that arises in dependence upon a physical sense-organ as its dominant condition. According to the sense-organ upon which it occurs a fivefold distinction can be made into visual, audial, olfactory, gustatory and tactile ideal sense perceptions. An example would be the initial, visual comprehension of a rose. Only the initial act of cognition is regarded as ideal since all subsequent cognitions pertaining to both the same continuum of the visual perception as well as to any resultant conceptual comprehensions are induced through the force of this initial perception. [2]

2 This refers to the fact that any initial perception of a particular rose can give rise to its own series of subsequent perceptions and

An *ideal mental perception** is defined as a fresh, infallible non-apperceptive cognition, free from conceptuality, that arises in dependence upon the mental organ as its dominant condition. As with ideal sensory perception the defining characteristics of ideal mental perception are similar to those of its corresponding true perception with the addition of the qualities of freshness and infallibility. Likewise there is a sixfold division into ideal mental perceptions of visual forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations and purely mental objects. Examples of these, however, are only to be found in the minds of Aryas. For ordinary beings true mental perceptions will always be inattentive. One such example would be the initial moment of an Arya's heightened awareness of another person's mind.

An *ideal apperceptive cognition** is defined as a fresh, infallible perception bearing the aspect of an apprehension and being free from conceptuality. We can distinguish two forms: ideal apperceptive experience of sensory cognitions and ideal apperceptive experience of mental cognitions. As before, an example would be the initial apperceptive experience of any state of cognition, which is able to induce a subsequent certainty and conviction about its object.

Finally, an *ideal contemplative perception** is defined as a fresh, infallible, non-apperceptive cognition in the mind of an Arya that is free from conceptuality and arises in dependence upon the unified concentration of mental quiescence and penetrative insight as its dominant condition. The various divisions are made, as with true contemplative perception, according to the different objects perceived. An example would be an Arya's initial comprehension of the selflessness of the person.

conceptions of that particular one. It does not mean that the first perception we have of a rose in this life acts as the basis for all subsequent perceptions and conceptions of roses.

In the case of sensory, mental and apperceptive perceptions there exist subsequent and inattentive states in addition to the ideal states that we have described here. But for contemplative perception, although there exist subsequent states, an inattentive state is impossible because all contemplative perceptions necessarily comprehend whatever appears to them. The nature of subsequent and inattentive perceptions will not be dealt with here but will be clarified in the following chapter.

III. IDEAL CONCEPTION (INFERENCE)

In contrast to an ideal perceptual comprehension of an object that occurs in immediate experience, an ideal conceptual comprehension has to directly rely upon the basis of sound logic and reasoning for its occurrence. Amongst all conceptions, only an initial state of inferential comprehension generated upon the basis of perfect reasoning is therefore considered to be an ideal conception. This state of mind, known as an *ideal inference**, is defined as a fresh, infallible conceiving cognition that arises in direct dependence upon a perfect reason as its basis. In Sanskrit the term for inference is *anumāna*. *Anu* means after and *māna* means cognition. Thus an inference is a comprehension of something that occurs after a certain amount of logical inquiry. In this tradition, however, the term "inference" only refers to an ideal inference and not just to any cognition that occurs after thought and investigation.

A. A Perfect Reason

Inference is especially important in comprehending things which are not evident to perception. Many points, such as subtle impermanence, the selflessness of the person and the

selflessness of phenomena are at present obscured from our immediate experience and can only be comprehended through a conceptual cognition. In order to make any progress along the path to enlightenment it is essential to understand these things. But prior to be being able to gain a perceptual insight into them, it is necessary to correctly ascertain them by means of inference. However, an inferential comprehension of these things will not arise in our minds simply due to praying or through undergoing certain physical hardships. It has to be cultivated through a process of exact reasoning. In order to inferentially understand that sound is impermanent, for example, a perfect reason has to be found, stated to and established within the mind. In this case a perfect reason for proving sound to be impermanent would be the quality of its being created (in dependence upon causes and conditions). But simply to state this reason is not sufficient for a comprehension to occur. The reason must first be established as being both applicable to the subject and congruent with the predicate. In this case the subject is sound, the predicate or the factor to be established is impermanence, and the reason is the quality of its being created. Firstly, the quality of being created is shown to be applicable to the subject, sound, since it is a natural property of sound. Secondly, the quality of being created is congruent with the predicate, impermanence, because whatever is created is necessarily impermanent. Therefore, the quality of being created is a perfect reason for establishing sound to be impermanent. The inferential comprehension that sound is impermanent can only arise when these conditions of applicability to the subject and congruence with the predicate are established within the mind of a person desirous of such knowledge. [3]

3 Here, for the sake of simplicity, we have only mentioned the establishment of the reason's applicability to the subject (*phyogs.chos*) and congruence with the predicate (*rjes.khyab*) as necessary to qualify it as a perfect reason (*rtags.yang.dag*). In fact it is also necessary to establish a third factor, namely, the reason's incongruence with the elements contrary to the predicate (*ldog.khyab*). These three factors are called "the three modes" (*tshul.gsum*) and they are the defining characteristics of a *perfect reason**.

B. Establishing Cognitions

We may wonder through what cognitive process does the establishment of the applicability to the subject and the congruence with the predicate take place. Prior to the generation of an ideal inferential comprehension two other comprehensions — known as *establishing cognitions** — must first be gained. These act as the contributory conditions that transform the mere correct belief that sound is impermanent into a true comprehension. One of these *establishing cognitions** has the task of ascertaining the applicability of the reason to the subject and the other the task of ascertaining the congruence of the reason with the predicate. So, in terms of our example, two cognitions, one establishing that the quality of being created is applicable to sound and the other establishing that whatever is created is necessarily impermanent, must be generated before an ideal inference that sound is impermanent can occur. The first of these, an establishing cognition comprehending sound to be created (in the context of proving sound to be impermanent by the reason of its being created), is defined as follows: it is a cognition in the mind of a suitable recipient for the proof that is *(a)* an infallible apprehension that sound is created and *(b)* a cause for the inference that comprehends sound to be impermanent by the reason of its being created. It is by means of this comprehension that the applicability of the reason to the subject is established. The second establishing cognition for this proof comprehends that whatever is created is necessarily impermanent. It is defined as a cognition in the mind of a suitable recipient for the proof, that is *(a)* an

infallible apprehension of the fact that whatever is created is necessarily impermanent and *(b)* a cause for the inference that comprehends sound to be impermanent by the reason of its being created. This comprehension is necessary in order to establish the congruence of the reason with the predicate. Furthermore both of these establishing cognitions may be either perceptual or conceptual comprehensions, i.e. an ideal perception, an ideal inference or a subsequent cognition induced by either. Thus an establishing-cognition can be a comprehension grounded in immediate experience or based upon yet other reasoning. Hence in certain cases an inferential comprehension of one thing may act as an establishing cognition that produces an inferential comprehension of something else. In the definition we also mentioned that an establishing cognition is a cognition in the mind of a suitable recipient. A suitable recipient for a proof is a person in whose mind the proof has yet to be established. Someone who already comprehends sound to be impermanent would therefore no longer be a suitable recipient for our proof.

C. Three Types of Ideal Inference

Initial conceptual comprehensions that arise in dependence upon a reason which has been established as both applicable to the subject and congruent with the predicate are to be understood as ideal inferences. Furthermore, an ideal inference is generated in dependence upon one of three types of reason: a direct reason, a conventional reason or a reason of belief. A direct reason is one that establishes a fact about the subject through the direct force of a logical mark borne by the subject. A conventional reason, in addition to being a direct reason, establishes a fact about the subject that is true merely through the force of popular convention. A reason of belief is not a

direct reason but one that establishes the validity of a scriptural citation based on one's belief in the infallibility of the person who uttered it. Thus the inferential comprehensions that occur in dependence upon these three types of reason are respectively called, "a direct inference", "a conventional inference", and "an inference of belief".

1. Direct Inference

An example of a direct inference would be the inferential comprehension that sound is impermanent, based upon the reason of its being created. The quality of being created is a direct reason for proving sound to be impermanent. Thus the ensuing inferential comprehension that sound is impermanent is called "a direct inference". Most inferences that comprehend concealed phenomena such as the existence of past and future lives, liberation, omniscience, selflessness and so forth are also direct inferences.

2. Conventional Inference

Secondly, an example of a conventional inference would be the inferential comprehension that the term "the bearer of the rabbit" is fit to denote the moon, based upon the reason that it is an object of conception. The "bearer of the rabbit" is a common term used in India and Tibet to refer to the moon since in those countries the shape of a rabbit is commonly made out from the markings on the moon. Therefore this is a conventional inference, because what is being established is true solely because certain people have agreed upon this particular convention.

3. Inference of Belief

Finally an example of an inference of belief would be the inferential comprehension that Nāgārjuna's statement,

"Wealth arises from generosity and happiness from moral discipline" [4] is infallible because it is a statement certified by three-fold investigation. The point made in this statement is understood to be infallible, i.e. actually true, based upon the reason that it is a scriptural citation certified or validified by three forms of investigation. This means that the statement is found to be non-contradictory with either ideal perceptions, direct inferences or other inferences of belief. Thus if a citation, which states something that is concealed from both our sense faculties as well as from direct reason, can withstand critical examination based upon these faculties and be found not to contradict them, then it is said to be certified by three-fold investigation. Any inference that understands the meaning of such a citation to be true because of such a reason is what we call an "inference of belief".

D. The Need for Inference

Ideal inference is extremely important because it enables us to comprehend those things that are concealed from our perceptual consciousness. Both in terms of worldly scientific investigation as well as in following the path of Dharma the initial comprehension of many things must first be gained through analytical research based upon perfect reasoning, Such inferential understanding, whether or not we call it "a direct inference" or "an inference of belief" is nevertheless an ideal state of mind capable of clarifying our conception of reality and leading us to yet greater states of comprehension.

If we think about it, we shall find that what we do not understand is far in excess of what we do. Nevertheless many people assume that what they understand is identical to what exists and what they do not understand is

4 See Nāgārjuna, *The Precious Garland* v. 438.

identical to what does not exist. Consequently they assert many existent things to be non-existent, whereas, in fact, their existence is merely concealed from immediate cognition. Upon the basis of this confused attitude towards what is not perceptually evident, one's thoughts and actions become adversely affected and an unwholesome way of life, that brings only sorrow and discontent to oneself and others, is pursued. It is therefore essential to come to a clear understanding of those aspects of reality that are at present concealed and obscured from us in order to be able to conduct our life in a wholesome and meaningful way. Furthermore, the only means whereby to gain such understanding is through conceptual investigation, based upon one's own and other's immediate experiences, that leads to ideal inferential comprehension. Since such insight is not at present available to the faculties of perception it is thus necessary to recognise the importance of inference.

IV. SELF-ASCERTAINABLE AND SELF-UNASCERTAINABLE IDEAL MINDS

Having discussed the constitution of an ideal state of mind, we shall now make a further distinction amongst ideal minds into those that are self-ascertainable. For an ideal mind to be *self-ascertainable** it means that, in addition to having the characteristics of an ideal mind, it is able, by its own force, to lead to the certainty that it would not occur if the essential component of what it comprehends were removed from its objective field of reference. In other words, it is an ideal mind that clearly comprehends what the essential component of its objective field of reference is. For example, when we see a very familiar figure such as our father or mother, we immediately recognise the essential component of what we are seeing,

namely our mother or father. Thereby we are able to induce, through the force of our visual perception, the certainty that were the essential component removed from the objective field of reference such a visual perception could not possibly occur. This ideal state of mind is thus said to be "self-ascertainable" since through its own force we can ascertain whether or not it would occur if the essential component were removed from the objective field. A self-unascertainable ideal mind, though, is one that does not have the ability to lead to this certainty by its own force. Instead, it has to rely upon the force of yet further comprehension in order to know what the essential component of the objective field of reference is. We may be driving along in our car and hear a ticking sound coming from the engine. We fully comprehend that this is a ticking sound but we do not know that it is the sound of a loose piston rod. In this case the audial perception is an ideal congnition of the ticking sound. But since it is unable to lead to the certainty that it would not occur if the essential component — the sound of a loose piston rod — were removed from the objective field of reference, it is a self-unascertainable ideal mind. In order to gain such certainty it would be necessary to rely upon further investigation and comprehension, either one's own or that of a mechanic, in order to discover what the essential component of the objective field of reference is. Therefore, a *self-unascertainable ideal mind** is defined as an ideal mind that needs to depend on the force of another cognition in order to lead to the certainty that it would not occur if the essential component of what it comprehended were removed from its objective field of reference.

A. Self-Ascertainable Ideal Minds

There are five types of self-ascertainable ideal mind all of which conform to the defining characteristics stated above.

i. Ideal sensory perception of an evident function. An example of such a perception would be the sensory apprehension that fire has the function to burn wood. When we observe fire consuming wood its evident function is clearly comprehended and thus the essential component within the objective field of reference is identifiable.

ii. Ideal sensory perception of a famliar object. Through the force of familiarity with an object certainty as to what it is occurs swiftly and easily. An example would be a child's sensory perception of its father's form.

iii., iv., v. These are ideal apperceptive cognition, ideal contemplative perception, and ideal inference respectively. The natures of these have already been explained above. In addition we should now understand them to be exclusively self-ascertainable ideal states of mind. Hence a self-ascertainable ideal mind is one in which the object comprehended is the same as the essential component of what is comprehended. Since it comprehends this essential component, it comprehends what object is responsible for its occurrence and thereby is able to give rise to the certainty that without the presence of that object it would not have occurred.

B. Self-Unascertainable Ideal Minds

When classified according to etymology there are six kinds of self-unascertainable ideal minds. An etymological classification is one in which the divisions are made primarily from the point of view of the term, thus allowing certain things to be classified that are not actually the thing in question but merely bear some resemblance to it.

i. An ideal mind to which what appears is self-ascertainable but to which the real nature of the object is self-unascertainable. An

example of this would be the true sensory perception that apprehends a reddish patch of colour from afar whilst one is uncertain whether or not it is the colour of a fire, when in fact it is. In this case there is a self-ascertainable ideal cognition of what appears, namely the red patch of colour, but the cognition is self-unascertainable with regard to the real nature of the object, its being the red colour of fire. Thus it fails to comprehend what the essential component of its object is. Therefore, it is unable to lead, by its own force, to the certainty that were the colour of fire not present in the object it would not have arisen. For this certainty to be generated it is necessary to rely upon either other persons or further ideal cognitions of one's own that comprehend the essential component of the object to be the colour of a fire.

ii. An ideal mind for which the universal character of the object is self-ascertainable but for which the particular character is self-unascertainable. An example of this would be the true sensory perception that apprehends a tree whilst one is uncertain whether or not it is a sandalwood tree, when in fact it is. Here the universal character of the object, its being a tree, is comprehended, but its particular character of being a sandalwood tree is not. Thus in this case the essential component of the object, a sandalwood tree, is not comprehended. Therefore, this cognition is regarded as a self-unascertainable ideal mind. With this and the previous example it should be clear that the essential component of what is comprehended and the object comprehended are different for a self-unascertainable ideal mind whereas for a self-ascertainable ideal mind they are the same.

iii. A cognition that becomes a self-unascertainable ideal mind although the object has appeared. An example of this would be the true sensory perception of a blue patch of colour that leads one to doubt whether one saw the blue

patch of colour or not. In this case one did actually perceive a blue patch of colour but the perception itself lacked the force to lead to any certainty of this fact. But although one would need to rely upon other cognitions or other persons to gain this certainty, since the original perception was not an ideal but an inattentive perception, this example cannot be regarded as a genuine self-unascertainable ideal mind even though it is called such.

iv. Initial true perception. An example of this would be the true sensory perception of the red colour of a rose in the mind of someone who has never seen a rose before. This is an initial true perception since it is the first time it has ever occurred for the person. It is a self-unascertainable ideal mind since the essential component of the object, the red colour of a rose, is not comprehended. The person only comprehends that the object is the colour of a flower. This perception is therefore unable, by its own force, to lead to the certainty that it would not have arisen, had the essential component of what was comprehended, the colour of the rose, not been present in the object, the colour of a flower.

v. Undirected true perception. An example of this would be the true sensory perception of a sound in the mind of a person who is strongly attracted to a beautiful visual form. Here, since the mind is completely involved in the apprehension of a visual-form, although sounds such as people talking may be heard, no attention is paid to them. But this state of perception is in fact an inattentive perception, a non-ideal mind, and hence cannot really be considered as a self-unascertainable ideal mind. It is included here only because of certain similarities it bears with self-unascertainable ideal minds that might lead us to consider it as such.

vi. True perception that is a source of deception. An example of this would be a true sensory apprehension of the colour

of a mirage that directly gives rise to the misconception that the mirage is water. This is an example of an actual self-unascertainable ideal mind. In this case the object comprehended is a shimmering colour but the essential component of the object is a mirage and this is not comprehended. Thus, instead of bringing about the certainty that the nature of the shimmering colour is a mirage, it leads to the misconception that the shimmering colour is water. In order to comprehend that the shimmering colour is in reality a mirage and not water other people or further cognitions have to be relied upon. Hence this ideal visual perception is regarded as a self-unascertainable ideal mind.

V. THE ETYMOLOGICAL DIVISION OF THE IDEAL

In addition to denoting all ideal states of cognition, the term "the ideal" (*pramāṇa*) is also used to express ideal persons and ideal forms of speech. An ideal person is one who does not deceive those who are striving for liberation from samsara. An example of such a person would be the Buddha Shākyamuni. A Buddha is regarded as a non-deceptive, infallible being in that he precisely delineates for his individual disciples the means by which freedom and enlightenment can be won. The fact of a Buddha's infallibility is directly and extensively proven in the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Commentary to Ideal Mind.* In the section dealing with the way in which a Buddha comes into being, his infallibility is mainly explained through a presentation of the Mahāyāna. While in the section dealing with his coming into the world and spreading the teachings, it is primarily explained through a presentation of the beings of intermediate and lesser spiritual capacity. For these reasons the second chapter of the *Commentary to Ideal Mind* is regarded as the substance of the entire work since it deals with this most essential point.

Likewise ideal speech is that in which the meaning communicated is both unmistaken and of benefit to others who are striving to find freedom from samsara. When the Buddha Shākyamuni delivered his discourses upon the Four Noble Truths, for example, this constituted ideal speech, because it instructed people in what has to be rejected, namely the truths of suffering and its origin, and in what has to be accepted, namely the truths of the cessation of suffering and the truth of the path that leads to such cessation.

Thus the term "ideal mind" (*pramāṇa*) is applicable to three things: ideal states of cognition, such as those that have been discussed above; ideal persons, such as a Buddha; and ideal speech, the discourse of an ideal person. It does not, therefore, exclusively denote states of mind.

DEBATE 1

workbook

This sourcebook is published as part of the Nītārtha Institute study program directed by The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche.

Nītārtha Institute is a division of Nitartha *international*: **www.nitartha.org**

First Draft Edition
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For further information contact: info@nitarthainstitute.org

Acknowledgments:
Sponsored by the Tsadra Foundation.
Edited & designed by Tashi Wangmo.

behalf of Nītārtha Institute, we wish to express our deep appreciation to the many transcribers, editors, designers, and translators who helped in the production of the transcripts that provided the material for this sourcebook: Elizabeth M. Callahan, Migme Chödron, Jirka Hladis, Kalden Lhamo, Sherab Norbu, Carmen Rumbaut, Phil Stanley, Mark Williams, Chryssoula Zerbini, and those whose work remains unnamed. Thank you! We would also like to give our inexpressible thanks to The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche and Āchārya Lama Tenpa Gyaltsen for their endless patience and compassion throughout the many, many years of teaching how us to debate!

EXPLANATION OF CORRECT REASONS

THE DZOGCHEN PONLOP RINPOCHE

Definition of a Correct Reason:
A reason that has the three modes.

The definition of a correct reason is "a reason that has the three modes." But before we discuss the three modes, we first need to look at the structure of a syllogism. It has three parts: the subject, the predicate, and the reason. An example of a syllogism is "Sound is impermanent because it is produced." The subject is "sound." The predicate is "impermanent," and the reason is "produced." The probandum—or that which is to be proven—is "Sound is impermanent." The three modes are the relationships between the different parts of the syllogism. The first mode is the subject, or the subject quality. The second mode is the forward inclusion, and the third mode is the reverse inclusion. Each mode is very particularly and strongly defined.

chart

Structure of a Syllogism

Subject	Predicate	Reason
Sound	is impermanent	because it is produced.
Probandum (what is to be proven)		

THREE MODES

There are three modes: the subject quality, the forward inclusion, and the reverse inclusion. The definition of the subject quality is "a reason that valid cognition has determined to be present in all instances of the flawless subject in question in a corresponding formulation." So the definition of the first mode is the presence of the reason in the subject. The definition of forward inclusion is "a reason that has been determined to be present only in the concordant class." The definition of the reverse inclusion "a reason that has been determined not to be present in a single instance of the nonconcordant class." These definitions are taken from the *Tarik* text written by Khenpo Rinpoche.

First Mode: Subject Quality

Definition of Subject Quality:
A reason that valid cognition has determined to be present in all instances of the flawless subject in question in a corresponding formulation.

The first thing we have to establish is the presence of the reason in the subject. The reason must be a quality of the subject.

In the definition, the subject is referred to as "the flawless subject in question." In Tibetan, it is *shedö*.[1] This is like "inquisitive mind" or "to be inquisitive." You wonder about something; you want to know more about it; you have doubts about it. This quality must be present; otherwise it will not be flawless. If you already know the probandum, and someone is trying to prove it again, it will not be a correct reasoning. It cannot be newly realized if you have already realized the probandum. Therefore in the reasoning "Sound is impermanent because it is produced," one must have a question about the subject, or an inquisitive mind regarding the subject that one is trying to establish.

The definition also says that the syllogism must be "in a corresponding formulation." This refers to different ways of putting forth a reason. In Tibetan, there are two verbs: *yinpa*,[2] "to be," and *yöpa*,[3] "to exist." When you say, "Sound *is* impermanent, because it *is* produced," the verbs used in the reason and the predicate correspond. In other words, you cannot put forth a reason with a different mode of expression from that

1 Tib. shes 'dod
2 Tib. yin pa
3 Tib. yod pa

of the predicate. One cannot mean "to exist" while the other means "to be." "Determined to be present in all instances," means that the reason is present in all aspects of the subject.

Corresponding & Noncorresponding Formulations

Corresponding Formulations	Noncorresponding Formulations
The verb "to be" *(yinpa)*: Sound *is* impermanent because it *is* produced	On the smoky mountain pass, *there is* a fire, because it *is* smoke.
The verb "to exist" *(yöpa)*: On the smoky mountain pass, *there is* a fire, because *there is* smoke.	

Second Mode: Forward Inclusion

The second mode is "a reason that has been determined to be present only in the concordant class." When you say, "Sound is impermanent because it is produced," the reason "produced" has been determined to be present only in that which corresponds to the predicate "impermanent." So the reason (what is produced) is present only in what is impermanent, which means it is not present in things that are not impermanent. It is present only in the predicate. In other words, the reason must be included in the predicate.

Definition of Forward Inclusion:
A reason that has been determined to be present only in the concordant class.

Third Mode: Reverse Inclusion

The third mode is easy. It is the reverse of the second mode, which means the reason has been determined not to be present in a single instance of the nonconcordant class. Every single element of what is not the predicate does not have the quality of the reason. In the statement "Sound is impermanent because it is produced," whatever is not impermanent does not possess the quality of the reason, which is "produced." The quality of being produced is not present in whatever is not impermanent. In other words, whatever is "produced" is not present in whatever is "not impermanent."

Definition of Reverse Inclusion:
A reason that has been determined not to be present in a single instance of the nonconcordant class.

We are speaking in double negatives. In our logic and debate tradition, we have triple negatives, or even more. "Whatever is produced is not present in all phenomena that are not impermanent" means: What is permanent is not produced. It is very simple.

The Three Modes

	Subject	Predicate	Reason	Illustrating example
Syllogism:	Sound	is impermanent	because it is produced.	a finger snap
Subject quality: A reason that valid cognition has determined to be present in all instances of the flawless subject in question in a corresponding formulation.	Sound	(is)	produced.	
Forward inclusion: A reason that has been determined to be present only in the concordant class.		is impermanent.	Whatever is produced	
Reverse inclusion: A reason that has been determined not to be present in a single instance of the nonconcordant class.		Whatever is not impermanent	is not produced.	

The Treasury of Knowledge

Book Six, Part Three:

Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy

A Systematic Presentation of the Cause-Based Philosophical Vehicles

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé

KALU RINPOCHÉ TRANSLATION GROUP
under the direction of Venerable Bokar Rinpoché

This volume
translated, introduced, and annotated by
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Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York
Boulder, Colorado

Since this makes the explanation and practice [of emptiness] quite easy, it is a genuine key instruction."

The Specific Explanation [(bb)]

The ground, the sphere of conduct, and the result are presented in accord with conventional expressions from a perspective of no analysis.
The absence of self-entity and the ultimate are presented from the perspective of slight analysis.
Superb analysis is the pacification of all conceptual elaborations.

[Three perspectives can be distinguished] in the teachings of the middle wheel of dharma generally and in the texts of the father Nāgārjuna and his son specifically.

[First: No Analysis]

The ground (the aggregates, constituents, and sense spheres), the path (the sphere of conduct and methods), and the result (the kāyas, awakened activities, and so forth) are presented according to the expressions of worldly conventionality, that is, in terms of what is commonly understood from a perspective of no examination or analysis. Most of these topics accord with worldly conventionalities, either as things that are part of worldly consensus or as things that are suitable to become so.[746] Some topics, however, [only] accord with yogic conventionalities, such as the way things appear during meditative equipoise and the subsequent state of attainment.[747]

[Second: Slight Analysis]

The sections of teachings that refute the two self-entities (the objects to be negated) and then expound nonarising, emptiness, and ultimate reality are presented from the perspective of a rational mind that analyzes slightly.

[Third: Superb Analysis]

Many teachings, such as the majority of explicit statements in the Mother [Sūtras],[748] say that nothing exists in any way: not as something existent, nonexistent, permanent, impermanent, empty, not empty, or the like. They

also say that nothing is suitable to be apprehended as anything at all. [This perspective is also expressed] in the first three lines of the following quotation from the *Fundamental Treatise [on the Middle Way, Called] Wisdom*:[749]

> Do not say "it is empty";
> do not state "it is not empty."
> Also do not say that it is both nor neither.
> [Such terms] should [only] be used as [conventional] designations.

By explaining these and the many similar passages in relationship to the phase of superb analysis, [the teachings] do not contradict each other in any way. The *Entrance to the Wisdom of the Middle Way* says:[750]

> In the primordial, unborn state,
> there is nothing to be negated and nothing to be affirmed.
>
> Transcending misery (nirvāṇa) and not
> are undifferentiated in the unborn state.
> Even nonarising itself is not so,
> because arising things do not exist.
>
> Conventionality does not exist, nor does the ultimate.
> Buddhas do not exist, nor do sentient beings.
> There is no view and no meditation;
> no conduct and no result.
>
> The import of that is what is to be meditated upon.
> Let the nonconceptual mind remain in its own peace.
> Without identifying anything or being distracted,
> meditate with clarity, free from characteristics.

[That expresses] the phase of thorough analysis, which is the final position of Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas.

It is necessary to relate [the teachings on emptiness] to three phases for the following reasons. To begin with, we counteract nonmeritorious acts and proceed on the path to the higher states by taking up what is virtuous and

turning away from what is negative. This does not require examination or analysis. In the middle, we reverse our belief in the two types of self-entity and progress on the path to liberation through practice that involves slight analysis. Finally, we eliminate all conceptual elaborations associated with a view and reach the end of the path to omniscience through the practice of superb analysis. Thus it is explained.

The Specific Explanation of Ground, Path, and Result [in Madhyamaka] [(iii)]

This is discussed in three sections: ground Madhyamaka: the unity of the two truths; path Madhyamaka: the unity of method and wisdom; and resultant Madhyamaka: the unity of the two kāyas.

Ground Madhyamaka: The Unity of the Two Truths [(aa)]

In this section, there are two parts: the actual [presentation of the two truths]; and the explanation of the way [the two truths] are established.

The Actual [Presentation of the Two Truths] [(1')]

> **It is taught that worldly conventional [reality] is the method and ultimate reality is what develops from that method.**

It is taught that conventional reality—which is whatever is commonly accepted as a convention in the world and talked about during the phase of no analysis using conceptual designations—is the method for realizing the ultimate. Ultimate reality is what develops from that method.[751] For Mādhyamikas, [the two truths] are the ground for [understanding] knowable objects. The way of unifying [an understanding of] the two truths is described in the words of the early Tibetan [masters]:

> Since there are appearances, we do not disregard the path of karma.
> Since they are empty, fixations do not arise.
> The unification of the two truths is the middle path.
> Heed this unerring, supreme [approach].

MIND & ITS WORLD 1

sourcebook

This sourcebook is published as part of the Nītārtha Institute study program directed by The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche.

Second Draft Edition
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Acknowledgments:
This sourcebook was sponsored by the Tsadra Foundation.
Edited by Tashi Wangmo
Designed by Stephanie Johnston
On behalf of Nītārtha Institute, we wish to express our deep appreciation to the many transcribers, editors, designers, and translators who helped in the production of the transcripts that provided the material for this sourcebook: Karl Brunnhölzl, Elizabeth M. Callahan, Migme Chödrön, June Crow, Tyler Dewar, Oona Edmands, Michelle Grissom, Lisa Hilliard, Brian Hilliard, Bill Karelis, Z.D. Labinger, Kalden Lhamo, Susan Neumeier, Sherab Norbu, Rafael Ortet, Tingdzin Ötrö, Steve Seely, Susan Spilman, Cara Thornley, Greg Torvik, Scott Wellenbach, Gabrielle Yakoushkin, Nyendrak Zangpo, Chryssoula Zerbini, and those whose work remains unnamed. Thank you!

EXPLANATION OF THE RESULT OF VALID COGNITION

THE DZOGCHEN PONLOP RINPOCHE

Khenpo Rinpoche presents the explanation of the result of valid cognition in verse form.

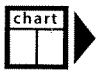
THREE RESULTS OF VALID COGNITION

The text says:

2.1.1.3 Explanation of the presentation of the result of valid cognition

This has three parts:
(1) Result of valid cognition when there is no examination or analysis
(2) Result of valid cognition when there is slight analysis
(3) Result of valid cognition when there is thorough analysis

The presentation of the result of valid cognition has three parts. The first part is the result of valid cognition when there is no examination or analysis, which means there is no reflection or contemplation. The second part is the result of valid cognition when there is slight analysis or contemplation. The third part is the result of valid cognition when there is thorough analysis—thorough reflection, contemplation, or meditation.



Results of Valid Cognition:

1. result of valid cognition when there is *no analysis*
2. result of valid cognition when there is *slight analysis*
3. result of valid cognition when there is *thorough analysis*

Result of Valid Cognition When There Is No Analysis

The text says:

2.1.1.3.1. Result of valid cognition when there is no examination or analysis

From the perspective of unexamined, commonly accepted
[understanding],
The outer object itself is asserted to be the object of comprehension,
The apprehended aspect to be the valid cognition,
And the cognition of the object to be the result of valid cognition.

Here, "no analysis" refers to the commonly accepted, mundane norm. It is the conventional understanding of our ordinary world without intellectual analysis or the insight of reflection. At this stage, "the object of comprehension" is asserted to be the outer object. "Outer object" refers to external form, sound, and so on. According to the Sautrāntika view, the object is hidden, but in the conventional world, there is no distinction made between the hidden object and the perceived object: they are seen as one—simply "the object."

When we see a book, in the conventional sense we believe that we see an external book. We do not refer to an aspect of the book outside or to a hidden object or the svalakṣhaṇa level of indivisible particles. Therefore, in this mundane norm, "the object" is what we perceive all together, without making distinctions. The object is simply outer things.

At this level, valid cognition is the apprehended aspect, according to Dharmakīrti. The apprehended aspect differs from the aspect of an object that we discussed previously

in the Sautrāntika view—the hidden object at the atomic level. The hidden object is the indivisible particles that consciousness cannot perceive or conceive directly. What you really perceive, according to Sautrāntika, is the apprehended aspect of an object. It is a reflection of your mind projected onto the particular object, a dual product of your mind and the indivisible particles. Without the indivisible particles of the hidden object, there can be no aspect of that object. Without an external glass, you cannot have an aspect of an external glass. You also need an apprehending mind.

To continue with the apprehended aspect, whenever you have an external object, you have the projected aspect of that object. If you have the color blue outside, you have the projected aspect of that blue. If you have a square shape outside, you have the projected aspect of that shape that arises from that hidden object, as well as your mind projecting onto that hidden object. For an ordinary person at the mundane level, these are seen as inseparable. When you say "glass," it refers just simply to a glass. That person cannot separate the hidden object from the projected aspect. He or she perceives the glass as one entity, a mixed entity—which is confused mind.

Here, we are making a subtle separation between the two. Whatever is the outer object is seen as the object, and the aspect of that object is regarded as a valid cognition because it is an aspect of mind. It is not an outer thing. It is an aspect of mind projected externally onto the particular thing.

"The result" is the cognition, understanding, or perception of the object. Later you might say, "I perceived a glass," or "I have conceived of a glass." That is the result of valid cognition when there is no examination.

We are trying to draw the difference between the hidden object, the real object outside, and the aspect of that object. When we say, "object," there are two things happening. One is the svalakṣhaṇa of the external object, the compound, indivisible particles. This is not perceived or conceived by any mind, according to the Sautrāntika view. It is always hidden from perception; it is not perceived directly. Like the fire on the other side of the mountain, so long as you stay here, it is always hidden from view. That is one thing happening with the object.

The second thing is the perceived aspect of that object, called the apprehended aspect. This theory is similar to the theory of modern science that says you cannot perceive the atomic level of things directly; you need machines to see it. What you perceive is an aspect of that object. The aspect that we perceive directly with our consciousness in the Sautrāntika view is known as "the apprehended aspect" of the object.

These are the two kinds of perception of the svalakṣhaṇa of the object. At the stage of no analysis, when we perceive an object, we think we are perceiving the outer object directly. That is what we usually think. When we perceive a table, we think we are perceiving all the atoms of the table. When we perceive a sound, we think we are perceiving all the sound particles directly with our ear consciousness. According to the Sautrāntika view, that is the mundane understanding of how object and perception work. We think that there is a solid object and a perception that perceives it directly. Out of the combination of perception and the object, the cognition of the object results. We say, "I perceived the table," or "I had a concept of the table."

That is the first level of no analysis. The cited stanza from Dharmakīrti says that as long as you are at that conventional level, the valid cognition that perceives the object is only the apprehended aspect. You cannot directly perceive the object. Indivisible particles are not perceptible or conceivable. When we say, "the cognition of an object," "cognition" refers to both a perceptual level and a conceptual level. We say, "I perceived a glass. I saw a glass," there are two results: We are talking about perceiv-

ing the svalakṣhaṇa of the perceived aspect of a glass, and we are conceiving the label of the glass. At the level of no examination, we are conceiving the mixture of perception and conception at the same time.

Student: The statement that says the apprehended aspect is the cognition, the one who cognizes, is like saying the object is the subject.

DPR: That's right. In the Sautrāntika view, there is no object perceived. It is the aspect of the object that has been perceived. That aspect of an object is an aspect of the mind projected outside. This view of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is seen as a combination Sautrāntika/Chittamātra view. It is getting closer to the Chittamātra view, but it is the Sautrāntika view because the object outside, the hidden object, still exists. The subtle level of atomic existence has not been given up. It has not yet reached the level of modern physics.

Student: In common experience, I don't think you would have an idea about apprehended aspect. It just doesn't occur. You just think that the object is out there.

DPR: Dharmakīrti is saying that we commonly believe that consciousness perceives an external object. When you look at it clearly and articulate what has really been perceived, what perceives what, then Dharmakīrti says that the closest reality you can posit is that the apprehended aspect is the valid cognition. Otherwise, there is no way to say we have perceived an object, because the hidden object is not perceptible or conceivable.

Student: Whenever you ask an ordinary being about images that occur in the mind, they would say that is mind, not the object.

DPR: When you say, "I perceive this glass," in the mundane sense, that perception is the apprehended aspect.

Student: Is the apprehended aspect conceptual? In the first stage of no analysis, is the apprehended aspect a conceptual construct?

DPR: I don't think so. It is the aspect that is projected outside as an object and is being perceived directly.

Student: Is the apprehended aspect a generally characterized phenomenon?

DPR: No, it is specifically characterized.

Student: I thought the Sautrāntikas said that you cannot perceive a specifically characterized phenomenon.

DPR: That is with regard to indivisible particles. You cannot perceive that kind of svalakṣhaṇa, but you can perceive the specifically characterized aspect of it. That is an aspect of mind—the object, which is the projection of mind.

Student: Are you saying that specifically characterized phenomena have two levels?

DPR: There are different kinds. One kind is the hidden object, which is a specifically characterized phenomenon. In addition, all aspects of mind, your direct perception and concepts, are specifically characterized phenomena.

Student: So concepts in and of themselves would be specifically characterized phenomena?

DPR: That's right. Concepts are the object of self-awareness. This must be a specifically characterized phenomenon because all the objects of direct valid cognition are

specifically characterized phenomena. Direct perception cannot take a generally characterized phenomenon as its object. Generally characterized phenomena are taken as objects by conception.

Student: So could we say that generally characterized phenomena are the objects of thoughts?

DPR: Yes.

Result of Valid Cognition When There Is Slight Analysis

The text says:

2.1.1.3.2. Result of valid cognition when there is slight analysis

> From the perspective of slight analysis,
> The apprehended aspect is asserted to be the object
> of comprehension,
> The apprehending aspect to be the valid cognition,
> And self-awareness to be the result of valid cognition.

This verse is quite different from the previous one. The apprehended aspect, which was valid cognition in the first verse, is now the object of comprehension. This is closer to the Sautrāntika view, or to the analyzed view of Buddhist tenets. Valid cognition in this case is the apprehending aspect, the perceiving mind. There is more sense of a perceiver in the apprehending aspect. It does not have any sense of being an object. It is very obviously the subject, whereas the "apprehended aspect" is felt to be more object than subject.

Here, the apprehending aspect is clearly the subject that perceives or conceives the object, and that apprehending aspect is said to be the valid cognition. It is apprehending the apprehended, or the outer aspects of the apprehended object.

At this level, mind is entering a subtler experience of the object. It is not just an appearing object. You are experiencing it more closely. At the stage of no analysis, it was the aspect of the glass. Now it is the experience of the aspect of the glass—however we may experience it. We see it as a glass, as pleasant or unpleasant, clear or unclear; we have so many different ways to experience the object. For example, if you were to see this glass in a very dark room, you would perceive some aspect of it, but not clearly. You would experience the aspect differently. Therefore, the different aspects of apprehending become the valid cognition at the level of slight analysis.

The result is self-awareness, a mind that experiences both inner and outer aspects. Self-awareness experiences insight, the inward experience of the perceiver. We apprehend an object through our perception, but after we apprehend the object, that perception itself is perceived by self-awareness. That perception itself, the apprehending aspect, is perceived by self-aware valid cognition.

At the second stage, the result is subtler than it was at the conceptual level. At the first level, it was more of a conceptual result, a coarser experience of the object. Now we are entering a subtler experience, the final level of experiencing the object, valid cognition fully experienced by self-awareness. This is the result of the stage of slight analysis.

Slight analysis does not occur in a mundane way. It needs more inward contemplation and intellectual analysis. In analytical meditation, one can come to certain experiences of the second stage of the result of valid cognition, which is closer to what we might call the original state of our experience—whereas the conceptual level of our experience is very superficial. The original level is the actual experience of the appre-

hended aspect of an object. This happens only at the level of direct valid cognition. Therefore, in the second stage, we are getting more into direct valid cognition; we are having a subtler or more naked experience of the object.

Result of Valid Cognition When There Is Thorough Analysis

The text says:

2.1.1.3.3. Result of valid cognition when there is thorough analysis

When thoroughly analyzed by reasoning,
Clear awareness empty of duality is said to be the object
of comprehension,
The apprehending aspect to be the valid cognition,
And self-awareness to be the result of valid cognition.

This is the same as the second verse, except the object changes. In the second verse, the apprehended aspect is the object, and in the third verse, the object is clear—or naked—awareness. That naked awareness is free from duality. Duality is conceptual clothing. That naked awareness is the object that is perceived by the apprehending aspect. The self-awareness that arises from that perception is the result.

At the third stage, we are going beyond the dualistic concept of perceived object and perception. Therefore subject, object, and result are all one in the state of self-awareness. There is no difference between them. Between clear awareness as the object and perception as the subject, there is not much difference. Self-awareness, which is the nature of clear awareness, is the perceived object; and perception, or the perceiver, also has the nature of clear awareness. Not having any difference between subject, object and result refers to the actual, basic experience of self-awareness. Really looking at self-awareness, you see the fundamental result of the third stage of thorough analysis.

Student: In the second and third stages, are the apprehending aspect and apprehending mind the same thing?

DPR: Yes, they are the same.

Results of Valid Cognition & Levels of Analysis

Level of Analysis	Object of Comprehension	Valid Cognition	Result of Valid Cognition
no analysis	outer object	apprehended aspect	cognition of the object
slight analysis	apprehended aspect	apprehending aspect	self-awareness *(an intellectual understanding)*
thorough analysis	clear awareness, empty of duality	apprehending aspect	self-awareness

The Three Stages in Relation to Madhyamaka

If we look at these three stages in relation to Madhyamaka philosophy, the stage of no analysis is the conventional truth—ordinary, worldly experience. Going back to our prior example, we experience "me" as the subject, the water in the glass as the object, and the function of the subject/object relationship as the result, when we say, "I perceive the glass of water." All this happens at the first stage. In Madhyamaka, this is regarded as conventional truth, which, according to Chandrakīrti, should never be analyzed because there is no true entity to be found.

The second stage of slight analysis, according to Madhyamaka, occurs when we analyze the existence of things using Madhyamaka reasonings. Through analysis, we bring the ultimate view of emptiness into a relative context. We apply ultimate analysis, such as considering how things exist in the external sense and whether they have

inherent existence or not, and then we come to a result—that nothing really exists. At this point, we possess an intellectual experience of emptiness, but we still do not have direct realization. It is still the object of intellectual mind, words and communication, and so it is still not the absolute absolute truth. It is absolute, but it is not the ultimate absolute.

In Madhyamaka philosophy, for the third stage of thorough analysis, "thorough" means going beyond. When we have a thorough analysis, it goes beyond analysis. When you go beyond analysis, you transcend words, communication, and concepts. At this stage, the true experience of emptiness without words and concepts cannot be recorded. The second stage, which invokes Madhyamaka analysis, leads to an experience of emptiness without words or concepts known as thorough analysis, which is no analysis. It is called analytical meditation because the thorough analysis of Madhyamaka leads to the resting meditation of nonconceptual realization. The third stage beyond words and concepts is the actual ultimate truth.

The progression of Madhyamaka analysis resembles the result of valid cognition. First, we have a very rough idea, a mundane conventional sense of things called the stage of no analysis. Then we have the slight analysis of the Sautrāntika view. Finally, we have thorough analysis, which is more like the Chittamātra/Shentong approach.

Student: When I think "analysis," it seems conceptual. Can you talk about the "aware" side of it?

DPR: Analysis is conceptual. If you analyze with the philosophical views at your disposal and look at the result of valid cognition, it becomes self-awareness. If you thoroughly analyze, it becomes self-awareness completely. Analysis at this stage may still be conceptual mind, but that conceptual mind is awareness at the same time—*lo* or *rigpa*. Within awareness, conceptual mind and awareness are the same. What was the definition of *lo*?

Student: "That which is clear and aware."

DPR: So mind is awareness.

Student: What happens to perceived outer objects in the last stage? Do outer objects become a manifestation of self-awareness? How does one interact with the ordinary world from this inward-turning perspective?

DPR: At this stage, you see the nondual nature of phenomena. You see that what was perceived as an object at the earlier stage was just mistaken perception. We have been seeing the aspect as an outer object where there is no real object perceived. All we have seen is the apprehended aspect of an object, which is a reflection of our mind. Therefore, at this stage, you see the nature of the object. This is like the Chittamātra view. There is no outer object; it is all just mind. That mind itself, if you look at it, is the nature of self-awareness. There is nothing but self-awareness. That understanding brings a nondual sense of realization.

Student: In the third verse, it says, "And self-awareness is the result of valid cognition." Does that refer to self-aware direct valid cognition? Or is self-awareness being used as a generalized term?

DPR: That's right, yes. It's not just self-aware direct valid cognition, but every state of consciousness is imbued with that nature of self-awareness.

Student: What is the main reasoning to assume the existence of matter?

DPR: I think, generally speaking, that as long as we live in the cycle of saṃsāric existence, as long as we have a mind, there is an object. You cannot posit the existence of one without the other. How can you say there is mind without matter? How can you say there is subject without object? Similarly, there can be no object without subject. They are interdependent in the sense of being relative.

Chandrakīrti says that as long as we remain in our dream, we have a subject and we have the object, and we have the sense organs of the dream. At the level of existence, subject and object and sensory perception equally exist. We cannot deny that. When we wake up from our dream, all these three things are equally nonexistent. In a similar way, when we wake up from this dream of saṃsāra, all these things are equally nonexistent; it is not as if subjects exist and objects do not.

Student: Regarding the result of valid cognition, the first question has to do with the apprehended aspect in the unexamined understanding in the first shloka. My understanding is that it is an aspect of consciousness, which is what makes it a cognition. Although it is an aspect of consciousness, is it not itself a knower?

DPR: What is the definition of consciousness?

Student: A mind or awareness. If we use awareness as a synonym, then it is cognition in the sense of being an aspect of awareness, but it is not itself aware of something. Is that true?

DPR: Are you saying the apprehended aspect is not aware of itself?

Student: It does not seem to be in this little piece.

DPR: It is said to be valid cognition because, in the mundane conventional sense, when you say, "I see an object," you are talking about direct seeing. There is no subtle understanding of the progression of the perceptions and their consequences. The "apprehended aspect" here refers to the most basic level of communication between a mind and its object. First, you have the object, and then, you project the apprehended aspect to that form. That is the first touch between object and mind. Before that there is no relation between the two. Therefore, the apprehended aspect is seen as the valid cognition. As long as the object is seen directly, that is the only point where the two really directly meet.

Student: Would that be, for example, the nidāna of contact?

DPR: Yes, that's what I think.

Student: I have a question about the relationship between the apprehended aspect and the apprehending aspect in the second stanza. Is there self-awareness because it is the result of this particular cognition? Are both the apprehended aspect and the apprehending aspect mind? Why would self-awareness be the result of the level of slight analysis? Is it because both the apprehended aspect, which is the object of comprehension, and the apprehending aspect are mind, based on the previous stanza? In other words, is mind comprehending itself at the level of slight analysis?

DPR: Yes, at the second level, when you apprehend the apprehending aspect, what you have actually seen is an aspect of mind. We think that the subject, which is consciousness, has seen an external object through the action of seeing, when actually, you have only seen an aspect of an object, which is mind, in this case, mind's projection. The subject that sees the object is also mind, and the action is also mind. Thus, at the end, what you are left with is the result of self-awareness. You have done everything, you know how everything is performed, and what reality is, in the reality

of mind. When everything has happened in the reality of mind, it is observed in the background by self-awareness, all the time.

Student: So as we go further into the analysis we are taken further and further into a nondual experience?

DPR: That's right, yes. At the level of slight analysis, we come to a point where we see that there is no solid duality. At the first stage, we think that everything out there is an object, and on our side, we are the subjects; the separation of subject and object, or perceiver and perceived, is very strong at this stage. At the second level, the distinction becomes softer, not so strong, because you realize that whatever you think is an object is nothing other than your mind's projection. At the third stage, it goes beyond that to where you see the nondual state of the subject/object experience.

Student: Is the self-awareness referred to here different from self-aware direct valid cognition? Is it more like the self-aware mind in the Chittamātra view?

DPR: The Sautrāntika/Chittamātra view is combined together. At the third stage, the notion of self-awareness is more Chittamātra than Sautrāntika. The basic sense of self-awareness does not differ much between the two, except that the relationship with the object changes.

Student: If the apprehended aspect is the valid cognition, then at the level of the unexamined, common understanding, you would associate the apprehended aspect with either the perception or the assumed object. Would self-awareness take the form of associating with what is being perceived?

DPR: Our presentation of the three stages is mainly taken from the view of the *Pramāṇavārttika.* At the first stage, we are not looking at it with thorough analysis or subtle understanding. We are just looking at it roughly—the way ordinary people like us look at it. "Ordinary" means the mundane level of how we experience, feel, and communicate. We are not looking at the subtle functioning of consciousness. Really looking at the subtle level occurs on the second or third stage. If you talk to anyone in the conventional world, that person will not discuss self-awareness, the apprehending aspect or apprehended aspect being the object, or the apprehending aspect being the subject. No such distinctions are made in the mundane sense.

The first stage gradually leads to the second level, and the second level leads to the third level. The seventh Karmapa's commentary clearly states that Dharmakīrti and Dignāga gave this progression in order to lead people to the correct understanding. At the first stage we say, "Yes, that is right—it is how we perceive and understand." At the second stage, we go deeply and subtly, and at the third stage, it becomes even more subtle.

Student: If the third level is empty of duality, why is there still an apprehending aspect as a valid cognition; why specify a self if there is no duality? This seems to be the same as the question about matter and mind—that you have to realize the nonexistence of the apprehender as well as the apprehended.

DPR: That's right, but we should not forget that this is the Sautrāntika/Chittamātra view. What you have said is more like the Madhyamaka view. Strictly speaking, according to the Chittamātra view, consciousness exists and matter does not. That is their main view, and that is why they are known as the Mind-Only school. The third stage mainly takes the Chittamātra view, with a slight continuity of consciousness as self-awareness. No matter how subtly you go into it, the continuum of consciousness still exists as the subject.

Student: The first stanza may be the mundane level, but how I would explain the apprehended aspect to somebody off the street?

DPR: You have to go to Pleasant Bay (laughter).

Student: Let's take the post office person in Pleasant Bay, Gladys. I would ask Gladys, "What is the object of your comprehension?" She would say, "It's you," or "It's the postcards; it's the things out there." That's all fine. If I ask her, "What is the valid cognizer? she would say, "It's me." She would not say that it is the apprehended aspect.

DPR: As I said before, the three stages present the progression. Dignāga and Dharmakīrti try to lead people from this very conventional experience to something subtler, which then leads to an even subtler experience. To cross the bridge, you have to have a certain understanding of the tenets. As long as people, such as in Pleasant Bay, perceive objects directly, they will say things like, "I see this glass," and not, "I see the apprehended aspect of the glass." At the level of conventional experience, the only valid cognition we can possibly posit is one that involves the apprehended aspect, as stated in the first stanza. That is the only bridge to direct communication.

Student: It looks to me like quite an analyzed view.

DPR: Yes, that is why we say that there is slight analysis. How can you be led to a subtler experience if you totally go with the mundane norm? At the first stage, it is still very mixed; the mundane is stronger than the Sautrāntika/Chittamātra philosophical view. Something subtler leads people to a second stage, which becomes even subtler and leads to another stage. That is how the progression works.

Student: The Sautrāntikas say that we do not actually perceive the object. The object is hidden. All we have is the mind's projection. Are they inferring that there is an object that enables a perception in the first place? In other words, must there be an object as a basis for the arising of a perception?

DPR: Yes, they are performing their best scientific tests on the basis of the Vaibhāṣhika view. The Vaibhāṣhika view first arose in Buddhism, and from that view came the Sautrāntika view. The Sautrāntikas analyzed the Vaibhāṣhika view and the perception/object relationship and concluded that you cannot really perceive the objects (because they are hidden), and that the aspect has to arise from a mutual thing, from your mind as well as the object. Without the object, there is no aspect of the object.

Student: How do they meet if the mind cannot perceive it? How does that moment of contact happen?

DPR: Contact arises when you have a subject/object relationship. If the glass is not here, and if you are not sitting there to perceive it, then there is no contact of the glass with your consciousness.

Student: You could explain that there really isn't a glass—that it is just a projection of mind...

DPR: If you are sitting in a room where no glass exists, you can think about it and try to project a glass on an empty table, try to project water into the glass, and then try to drink that water to quench your thirst. But that doesn't really work.

Student: It works when you're dreaming.

DPR: Yes, but not in the real world itself. In the dream, you also have a subject and object.

Student: But you do not have any real things.

DPR: If there is a subject perceiving water in a dream, then there is water in the dream. If there is no water in the dream, then there is no subject perceiving that water. At that level, they are equally nonexistent or equally existent. As long as you have the consciousness to project, there is the object. You cannot say there is only mind in a dream and not an object of that mind. That is a very Chittamātra fundamentalist view (laughter). Within the dream, the object is there: You encounter it and have a relationship with it. You cannot deny that. When you wake from the dream, then they both equally did not exist or equally did exist. ♟

This book has been approved for inclusion in **Textual Studies and Translations in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism.** The editorial board for this series includes:

Debate in Tibetan Buddhism

Daniel E. Perdue

Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York, U.S.A.

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 Dharmakirti's *Commentary on (Dignaga'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, Dharmakirti 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-sel-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-viṣhaya*) 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] Dharmakirti, *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-sel-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, Dharmakirti 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-pravṛtti*) and consciousnesses which are collective engagers (*sgrub 'jug, *vidhi-pravṛtti*). 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,

[1] The sources for this section are Den-dar-hla-ram-ba, *Beginnings of a Presentation of Generally and Specifically Characterized Phenomena* and Ngak-wang-dra-shi, Go-mang *Collected Topics*.

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] Lati Rinbochay, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 31.
[2] Ngak-wang-dra-shi, Go-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 (*yul*), time (*dus*), 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 conceptuality 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, Go-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/SA-GYA-BA 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 Sutra 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 Sa-gya-ba (*sa skya pa*) order. This dialectic between two orders of Tibetan Buddhism arises within the framework of their interpretations of the system of the Proponents of Sutra 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 Sa-gya-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 Sutra. Dak-tsang's interpretation is drawn from his general presentation of Buddhist tenets.[1]

The source of this Ge-luk-ba/Sa-gya-ba controversy is a particular passage in Dharmakirti's *Commentary on (Dignaga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"* (*pramāṇavarttika-kārika*) 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, Dharmakirti 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 Sa-gya-bas agree that ultimate truth and specifically characterized phenomenon are

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

[2] Dharmakirti, *Commentary on (Dignaga's) "Compendium of Valid Cognition"*, P5709, Vol. 130, 88.3.5-88.3.6.

The Mind and its Functions

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Contents of Chapter Two

Chapter Two
Perception and Conception

Now that we have discussed the fundamental characteristics of all states of mind, i.e. clarity and cognition, we shall now proceed to classify these states into various different types. The first distinction to be made will be the basic one between perception and conception. Then we shall continue, in chapters three and four, to explain which of these perceptions and conceptions are ideal and which are non-ideal.

What is meant by "perception" here is a non-conceptual state of mind, that is to say, a visual, audial, olfactory, gustatory or tactile sense cognition as well as certain immediate mental cognitions. "Conception", on the other hand, refers to any conceptual state of mind, i.e. a mental cognition that does not behold its objects immediately or barely as in perception but cognises them via the media of mental images.

I. PERCEPTION

A. Sense Perception and Mental Perception

In classifying the different perceptions that we have, the first distinction to be made will be that between sense-perception and mental-perception. "Sense-perception" here refers to all non-conceptual cognitions that are dependent for their arisal upon a physical sense-organ, an external form and a previous state of cognition. Hence a visual perception, for example, arises in dependence upon the eye sense-organ, a visual-form and whatever state of cognition that occured immediately prior to it. These three conditions of visual sense-perception are respectively called "the dominant condition",[1] the "object condition" and the "immediate condition". The eye sense-organ is said to be the *dominant condition** for visual perception since in addition to being a principal, direct cause for it, it also is the condition that is mainly responsible for it. This is so because the eye sense-organ is the exclusive basis upon which visual perception occurs and it is by means of this basis that we recognise visual perception to exist. A colour would be an example of an *object condition** for visual perception in that it is a principal, direct cause for

1 The dominant condition is of two types: the common dominant condition (*thun.mong.ba'i.bdag.rkyen*) and the exclusive dominant condition (*thun.mong. ma.yin.pa'i.bdag.rken*). The common dominant condition in a visual perception, for example, would be the mental-organ i.e. the immediately preceding moment of mental consciousness. This is said to be "common" since it is a dominant condition for all five sense perceptions. The exclusive dominant condition in this perception would be the eye-organ. This is called "exclusive" since it is only a dominant condition for visual perception. In this text when we refer to the dominant condition we always mean the exclusive dominant condition.

its bearing the aspect of a colour. Thirdly, the *immediate condition** for a visual perception is the principal, direct cause for its being a mere clear and cognisant experience, i.e. the immediately preceding moment of cognition. In the same way, all sense perceptions arise in dependence upon their respective dominant, object and immediate conditions.

sense perception	dominant condition	object condition	immediate condition
visual	eye-organ	visual-form	the immediately preceding moment of cognition
audial	ear-organ	sound	
olfactory	nose-organ	smell	
gustatory	tongue-organ	taste	
tactile	body-organ	tactile-sensation	

Mental perceptions are similar in nature to sense perceptions except that they do not depend upon a physical sense-organ as their dominant condition. Their dominant condition is said to be the mental-organ. This is not a physical organ but simply whatever state of cognition that immediately precedes the mental perception. This immediately preceding state of cognition, be it sensory or mental, is the dominant condition for a mental perception since it is primarily through its force that the mental perception comes into being. For a mental perception, then, the dominant conditon and the immediate condition are the same. As for its object condition, mental perception can arise in dependence upon physical forms as well as subtle objects

such as other person's minds although this latter example would only be perceived in a state of heightened awareness.

B. True and False Perception

Among all these various perceptions some are regarded as "true" whereas others are regarded as "false". A *true perception** is defined as a non-deceived cognition that is free from conceptuality. Whatever objects appear to a true perception necessarily exist in the way in which they appear. A false perception, however, although it is a cognition free from conceptuality, is deceived with regard to what appears to it. Its objects do not exist in the way in which they appear.

The majority of perceptions that occur from day to day in our lives are true and apprehend their objects in the way in which they exist, but sometimes, due to such things as a defect in the sense-organ, an object appears in a way in which it does not exist. For example, when we have jaundice the eye-organ is affected by the increase of bile in the organism, and consequently we see everything tainted yellow. In reality these things may not be yellow in colour but since they now appear to be, such a visual perception is regarded as false. Similarly the mental perception of a blue colour in a dream is mistaken because there is no externally existing blue colour that corresponds to the one beheld in the dream. These are examples of false perceptions. However, let us first consider the various types of true perception. These fall into four categories: true sense perception. true mental perception, true apperceptive cognition and true contemplative perception.

False perception will be discussed separately in Chapter Four, section V. A, under the heading "Mistaken Perception".

1. True Sense Perception

*True sense perception** is defined as a non-deceived cognition, free from conceptuality, that arises in dependence upon a physical sense-organ as its dominant condition. A non-deceived cognition is one that is unmistaken with regard to what appears to it. All true perceptions bear this defining characteristic whereas all false perceptions and conceptual cognitions are said to be deceived with regard to what appears to them. "Being free from conceptuality" means to be a clear or immediate perception. This means that the object appears to the mind without the admixture of any subjectively projected mental images and is clearly beheld in the way it objectively exists. Since there are five physical sense-organs, five corresponding types of true sense perception can arise in dependence upon them, namely visual, audial, olfactory, gustatory and tactile true sense perceptions.

Before discussing the remaining three categories it will be necessary to introduce the classification of mind into apperceptive and non-apperceptive cognitions.

2. Apperceptive and Non-Apperceptive Cognition

All cognitions experience themselves. They possess an inherent selfconscious quality. This quality of consciousness is known as *apperceptive cognition**. Apperceptive cognitions are exclusively perceptions. They only have states of mind as their objects and, in addition, they are substantially identical with those states of mind. They never observe any external phenomena. Non-apperceptive cognitions, on the other hand, are all the cognitions that apprehend, either conceptually or non-conceptually, external objects as well as cognitions that are not substantially identical with themselves. This category includes all sense

perceptions and conceptual states of mind as well as mental perceptions that perceive external objects. Non-apperceptive cognition has the defining characteristic of bearing the aspect of an apprehensible object, whereas apperceptive cognition has the defining characteristic of bearing the aspect of an apprehension. To illustrate these characteristics let us take as example the visual perception of a blue patch of colour. The object of this perception is something apprehensible as opposed to an apprehension and therefore the perception beholding it is said to bear the aspect of an apprehensible object. Cognition or apprehension is often compared to a piece of clear crystal. For in the same way that the colour of an object is reflected in a piece of crystal that is placed upon it, likewise the mind reflects or bears the aspect of whatever object it apprehends. In this way the visual perception of a blue patch of colour is said to bear the aspect of an apprehensible object, a blue patch of colour, and is therefore a non-apperceptive cognition. But, occuring simultaneously with this apprehension of an external blue patch of colour, an apperceptive cognition experiences the visual apprehension itself and is thus said to bear the aspect of an apprehension. This apperceptive cognition does not arise in causal dependence upon the apprehension it experiences, but is substantially identical with it. In other words it is naturally as opposed to causally related with it. Therefore, all non-apperceptive cognitions without exception are experienced in this way by an apperceptive counterpart, i.e. an inherent conscious quality present within every state of cognition.

3. *True Mental Perception*

It was necessary to make the above distinction in order to be able to understand what we mean by a true mental perception as opposed to a true apperceptive cognition. A *true mental perception** is defined as a non-deceived,

non-apperceptive cognition, free from conceptuality, that arises in dependence upon the mental organ as its dominant condition. An example of a true mental perception would be the heightened awareness of another person's state of mind. Such a perception, though, is only available to someone who has attained mental quiescence and then proceeded to develop this ability upon that basis. In the minds of ordinary people like ourselves the only true mental perceptions are those that occur for an extremely short moment immediately after a true sense perception and immediately prior to a conception. For us sense perception and conception are the predominant cognitive functions. Nevertheless, when a sense perception stimulates mental activity, initially a mental perception briefly glimpses the object before any conceptual response takes place. This true mental perception is of such short duration that it does not strongly register on the memory and is hence called an inattentive perception.

In addition a sixfold division of true mental perception can be made according to the six different types of objects it apprehends, namely: true mental perceptions of visual form, sound, smell, taste, tactile sensation and purely mental objects. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that when talking of true mental perception we are only referring to true *non-apperceptive* mental perceptions.

4. *True Apperceptive Cognition*

*True apperceptive cognition** is defined as a non-deceived cognition, free from conceptuality, that bears the aspect of an apprehension. In fact all apperceptive cognitions are non-deceived and non-conceptual and hence these characteristics are applicable to any apperceptive state of mind.

There is much discussion between the various systems of Buddhist philosophy as to whether apperceptive cognition really exists or not. Its existence is asserted by the

Sautrāntikas, the Cittamātrins and the Yogācārya-Svātantrika Mādhyamikas, but is denied by the Vaibāṣikas, the Sautrāntika-Svātantrika Mādhyamikas and the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas. Especially in the Prāsaṅgika system much emphasis is given to its refutation when attempting to disprove the validity of certain tenets asserted by the Cittamātrins.[2] Nevertheless, since this work is written according to the Sautrāntika school, here it should be assumed to exist.

5. True Contemplative Perception

Fourthly, *true contemplative perception** is defined as a non-apperceptive cognition in the mind of an Arya that is non-deceived and free from conceptuality, and which arises in dependence upon the unified concentration of mental quiescence and penetrative insight as its dominant condition. Such a perception is exclusively true, non-deceived and non-conceptual and only occurs in the mental continuum of an Arya, i.e. one who has immediately comprehended selflessness. In addition, to attain its dominant condition, the unified concentration of mental quiescence and penetrative insight, it is first necessary to bring the mind to a state of concentrated quiescence as well as to cultivate a penetrating state of intelligence that comprehends the meaning of such things as the selflessness of the person. But it is only when these two states of consciousness are unified into one concentrated stream that they are said to be able to give rise to a true contemplative perception. Examples of such contemplative perceptions would be those that perceive gross and subtle impermanence, those that perceive the selflessness of the person and those that perceive the selflessness of phenomena.

2 See Shāntideva, *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, IX: 19-24, and Chandrakirti, *A Guide to the Middle Way*, VI: 45-97

This concludes a general presentation of perception in which we have attempted to describe the basic characteristics of perceptual states of mind that distinguish them from the discursive processes of conception. In the following chapters we shall continue to discuss the various types of perception that have been introduced here from the point of view of their cognitive validity, i.e. the characteristics that determine them to be ideal, subsequent, inattentive or mistaken cognitions.

II. CONCEPTION

It is by means of thoughts and conceptions that we consciously respond to the objects that have been barely perceived by the senses. Constantly we have this tendency to think about the world of colours and shapes, sounds and smells, tastes and bodily sensations that constitute our day-to-day experience. It is through the conceptual processes that man has constructed systems of philosophy and psychology in an attempt to explain the world to himself. It is the development of these same processes that has led to the rise of science and the technological era in which we now live. Likewise it is a conception, of a fallacious kind, that is responsible for all mentally disturbing thoughts and emotions that in turn motivate the physical, verbal and mental activity that brings about a cyclic condition of existence (samsāra) wherein suffering and discontent are unavoidably experienced.

Perception is essentially a receptive, non-reflective form of cognition whereas conception is responsive and reflective. As we saw in the previous section, perception relies upon three primary causes for its arisal: the dominant, object and immediate conditions. Conception, though, only relies upon two of these, namely, the dominant and immediate conditions. Its arisal, therefore, is not primarily

dependent upon an object condition but only upon the previously occurring state of cognition, which for it, since it is a mental cognition, would be both the dominant and immediate conditions. Unlike perception it does not apprehend an object through the force of the object's appearing to it, rather, it apprehends the object primarily due to the force of a subjective disposition. For example, a colour, the eye organ and a state of cognition are the conditions that automatically produce a visual perception of colour. But, unlike this, the conception, "this is a colour", is an intentional reflection upon an object already presented to the mind by the visual sense perception. This is an example of the common type of conception formulated within the internal stream of thought that constantly accompanies our sense experience of the world. Also, in addition to this type, all the internal emotional responses we have to our experiences, whether wholesome or unwholesome, are also regarded as conceptual forms of cognition. Such subjective responses occur due to our predispositions that are established through habituation. Some people, for example, have a very strong tendency to respond with anger whereas others lack this tendency and, on the contrary, are capable of patiently accepting whatever situation confronts them. Such reactions as these are both due to the way in which the mind has been conditioned and trained in the past. Therefore, since these predispositions are not intrinsic properties of the mind, it is possible to overcome any unwholesome and disturbing tendencies through acquaintance and habituation with their corresponding wholesome antidotes.

A. Mental Images

The most distinctive element within a conceptual cognition is its apprehension of the object by means of "mixing" it

with a mental image. To any conception the object conceived appears indistinguishably mixed together with a subjectively projected image of the object. The conceptual cognition, however, is unable to distinguish between the object as it objectively exists and its own subjectively projected image that appears mixed together with the object. Therefore, it is said to be a deceived state of cognition. But to call a conception "deceived" is not necessarily a denial of any cognitive validity. The deception here only concerns the mode of appearance but not the mode of existence of the object. Of course certain conceptions are deceived as to the mode of existence of their objects as well as to their mode of appearance. Thus they fall into the category of mistaken cognition. But many conceptions do correctly apprehend their object's mode of existence although the object *appears* in a fallacious manner.

This process may be more simply illustrated by means of the following analogy: suppose that we have a man who is shortsighted. Without his glasses everything in the distance appears unclear and blurred to him but as soon as he puts his glasses on, the previously indistinct images come clearly into focus. Likewise, similar to the way in which this man perceives visual forms by means of the intermediary factor of his glasses, a conceptual cognition apprehends its object by means of the intermediary factor of a mental image. A further similarity is that just as the man wearing glasses is unable to distinguish between the objects he sees and the lenses in his glasses, a conception of something is unable to distinguish between the actual characteristics of its object and the subjectively imposed characteristics of the mental image. However, this does not imply that a mental image is non-apprehensible. Although it is not apprehended by the conceptual mind that mixes it with the object, nevertheless it can be apprehended by other conceptual minds. Especially during recollection we can separately cognise the mental image of the object by

means of another conception. But this conception of the mental image itself is always a conception other than that of the recollection which uses the image to refer to its object.

Every conceptual state of mind, be it a simple thought or memory of an object or the instinctual clinging to the notion of a self-existent "I", should be understood to apprehend its object in this way.

B. Conceptions Based on Experiential and Nominal Images

A *conception** is defined as a conceiving cognition that apprehends its object through the media of experiential and nominal images that are fit to be mixed. Generally speaking, we define a *mental image** of an object as a mentally projected entity that, whilst not being the object, appears as though it were. Here, although we have to make a distinction between experiential images on the one hand, and nominal images on the other, both of them nevertheless bear these defining characteristics. Thus experiential images and nominal images are both types of mental images. Their difference lies in the manner in which the object in question has been or is being apprehended. If we have had or are having a direct cognition of an object, then it is possible for us to conceive of it via the medium of an experiential image, but without such an experience it would only be possible to conceive of it by means of a nominal image. To conceive of something through a nominal image is not dependent upon a direct experience of the object but merely upon a verbal description of it. Only when we are familiar with the object through direct apprehension as well as through verbal description is it possible to conceive of it in both ways. In such a case the experiential and nominal images of the object appear together. Hence when the definition states "fit to be mixed",

this is to indicate that a conception of an object can occur by means of *either* an experiential image or a nominal image alone, *or* by means of the two of them together.

This leads us to make a three-fold distinction amongst conceptual cognition into conceptions of objects solely by means of an experiential image, solely by means of a nominal image and by means of both. An example of the first type, a conception of an object solely by means of an experiential image, would be a young child's conception of an object that he has directly seen and apprehended but for which he knows no name by which to describe or identify it. After this experience the child is able to conceive of what he has seen, but this conception occurs to him merely through the appearance of experiential images without any images based upon a verbal description. An example of a conception of something solely by means of a nominal image would be the conception of Rome in the mind of a person who has never actually been there and has only heard a description of the city. Once again the person will be able to form a conception in his mind of Rome. But in this case it will occur to him merely through the appearance of nominal images without any images based upon his own experience. Thirdly, a conception of an object by means of both experiential and nominal images would be the conception in a person's mind of an object, such as his house or his car, which he has both directly apprehended and which he recognises by name and description. In this case the person's conception of the object occurs by means of both an experiential image as well as a nominal image appearing to his mind.

In all these three examples it should be pointed out that although experiential and nominal images appear to the mind, they are not apprehended by the minds that have them as their appearing objects. In any conceptual cognition the experiential or nominal images simply act as the media—like the lenses of the glasses in our example—

through which the primary objects—what was seen by the child, Rome, or the man's house and car are apprehended. In all three examples the experiential and nominal images are similar in that they are subjective projections that duplicate an image of the object by means of the appearance of which a conception is able to take place. The difference between an experiential image and a nominal image is made according to the bases upon which the duplication was made. If the image is formed from a person's direct experience, then it is said to be an experiential image. But if the image is formed from labelling and describing the object, then it is referred to as a nominal image. Since many images are duplicated from both direct experience as well as labelling and description (without exclusive dependence upon either of these bases) we also talk of conceptions occuring by means of both experiential and nominal images together. All conceptions, therefore, occur in one of these three ways, and through amplification upon each of the examples given above we should be able to see how this is so.

C. Term-Connecting and Fact-Connecting Conceptions

Another distinction that can be made amongst conceptual cognitions is that according to their cognitive function into term-connecting and fact-connecting conceptions. Most conceptions are said to function in one of these two ways: either they simply give a name to an object or they ascribe certain qualities to an object. A *term-connecting conception** is defined as a conception that apprehends its object through connecting a term to it.

Examples of this would be the thoughts, "this is called a jug" or "that is called a table". In these cases the conceptual apprehension is taking place through the simple designation of the terms "jug" and "table" to the objects

that bear the necessary characteristics for such an identification.

The definition of a *fact-connecting conception** is a conception that apprehends its object through connecting a quality to its basis. An example of this would be the thought, "sound is impermanent". Here the object is not merely identified with a term but is referred to by a phrase which ascribes to it the characteristic of impermanence. Nevertheless, all term-connecting conceptions are necessarily fact-connecting conceptions. The thought, "this is called a jug", for example, in addition to simply designating the object with the label "jug" is also connecting the quality of jugness to its basis, the object with the flat base, round belly and the ability to hold water. Fact-connecting conceptions, however, are not necessarily term-connectors. The thought, "sound is impermanent", only ascribes a specific quality, impermanence, to an object, sound, but does not label sound with a term by which it is exclusively understood.

All conceptions, however, do not necessarily fall into either of these two categories. For example, the simple conception of a jug, although it apprehends its object by means of mixing it with its own subjectively projected image, is said to be neither term-connecting nor fact-connecting but merely a conceptual apprehension of the jug's fundamental presence.

D. True and False Conceptions

Furthermore, conceptions are said to be either true or false. A true conception is one in which the object apprehended is existent, whereas a false conception is one in which the object apprehended is non-existent. Hence the conception that sound is impermanent, for example, is in accordance with reality and thus true, but the conception

that sound is permanent is false, since it does not accord with reality. In the case of perception, the distinction between its being true or false was determined according to whether the object appeared in a deceptive manner or not. But for conceptions, since the object always appears in a deceptive manner, i.e. inseparably mixed with a mental image, they are only determined to be true or false on the basis of what they apprehend, not on the basis of what appears to them.

E. Recollection and Future-Oriented Imagination

Finally, another two types of conception should be mentioned here because of their frequent occurrence, namely recollection and future-oriented imagination. Perceptions are concerned with objects presently existing that we are able to immediately experience. The conceptual mind, however, in addition to considering one's present experience, is also capable of remembering past experiences and planning for events to occur in the future. A large amount of our time every day is spent in these two conceptual activities. We constantly refer back to and recollect past events as well as plot the course of our future, be it tomorrow or next year or even the next life. From a positive point of view we can use our memory to aid us in gaining an understanding of the transient and unsatisfactory character of our lives by recollecting and investigating the nature of our previous experiences. Likewise, we can constructively plan for the future by contemplating the various stages upon the path to enlightenment and by generating a desire to attain these stages and progress along the path. On the contrary, though, we tend to indulge in the memory of sensual pleasures and plan ahead only for limited personal gratification in the immediate future. Thereby, we waste the great potential of

human life and perpetuate the cycle of discontented existence. Most of our activity is motivated by this future-oriented imagination and we consequently spend our lives in striving to obtain our various goals although in many cases we do not succeed.

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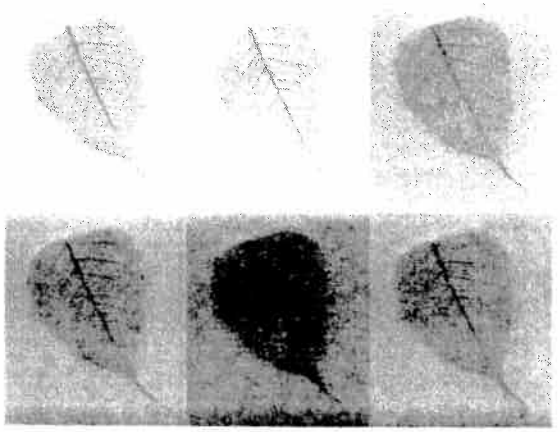

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BUDDHIST THOUGHT

VOLUME 3

GESHE TASHI TSERING

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EDITED BY GORDON MCDOUGALL

WISDOM PUBLICATIONS • BOSTON

good character, friendliness—our long-term aim is the attainment of bodhichitta.

From the very beginning it is important to have a strong long-term motivation and to see that the positive attitudes we are developing now are part of a much bigger plan. There is no solution that can solve *all* our problems immediately—even the different aspects of the mind we are now developing will take time to arise together as the causes for bodhichitta.

Mindfulness shows us the picture—what is happening in our activities or our thoughts—but neither mindfulness nor the other third-zone positive mindstates are the main antidotes to the deep-seated unwholesome mental factors such as attachment, anger, and jealousy. Whether they are manifest in our mindstreams at present or only there in potential, these positive mindstates are the tools to develop the more profound positive minds of loving-kindness and altruism.

6 Epistemology: Conception and Perception

Epistemology in Buddhism

Buddhist epistemology is the systematic investigation of the nature of knowledge: its scope, base, and reliability. It looks at the *scope* in terms of how far knowledge can go toward understanding reality, the *base* minds from which knowledge can grow, and whether knowledge can serve as a *reliable* source for an individual to completely understand reality.

Buddhist epistemology was first taught systematically and explicitly by the Indian scholar Dignaga (ca. 450 A.D.), and then by his commentator Dharmakirti (ca. 625 A.D.) in the *Commentary on Valid Perception (Pramanavarttika)*. As I have mentioned, although Nagarjuna and his disciple Aryadeva wrote texts on epistemology much earlier, this was not done in any structured or extensive way; thus Dignaga and Dharmakirti are considered the founders of Buddhist epistemology and logic.

Epistemology in Buddhism is not merely the study of knowledge for its own sake, but is aimed at bringing the seeker an understanding of how sentient beings can overcome their problems and eventually experience liberation—the cessation of suffering and its root causes. Dignaga and Dharmakirti's explanations of epistemology are not just empirical data, such as one would find in science—although of course

much within their explanations concurs with Western science. The difference between them is the motivation. In the case of Buddhist epistemology, this knowledge is acquired solely to develop the understanding that counteracts and eliminates our fundamental confusion.

Conception

Buddhist thought recognizes two basic kinds of mental experience: the experience in which the mind accesses its object directly, and the experience in which the mind relies on another mind to access its object.

These two states roughly correspond to *perception* and *conception*, terms most speakers of English would understand, although not always precisely, and certainly not in the context of the Buddhist analysis. If you feel that a concept is a thought and a perception is more direct, more correct, then you are getting there, but even so, as we will see, there's a great deal more to it than that.

Dharmakirti defines *conceptual cognition* as "that consciousness that apprehends the object indicated by words in relation to the actual thing." Here we see a close connection drawn between thought on one hand and language and concepts on the other. In the definition, "words" refers to both language and concepts. In Tibetan the term for "word" is *dadun*, literally the "object of concept." That is not to say that a concept is the same as a word. An intermediary mind helps the mind as a whole access its object, and that can take the form of an image or an idea, as well as an actual word or label.

For example, think about a particular table, perhaps the one in your living room. When you think about the table, the image of the table will probably arise in your mind. That image can never be more than a representation of the table. A thought about the table is not the actual table. Between your consciousness and the actual table you are thinking about is the intermediary image of the table you have evoked.

However, the concept of table is more than just the intermediary process that occurs between the mind and the actual object; it also encompasses what we *mean* when we say "table." Our subjective representation of a table is not directly connected to reality because it is constructed by language and concepts. Thus, a conceptual mind is fiction rather than reality—it is made up by our minds. The concept is a subjective representation of an object that relates the object to other objects in the same class and is understood by society to be a whole. It is not the direct expression of the object.

Let's break it down a bit. We all relate to the concept of *table*. It represents an object with properties shared with all kinds of things—wooden tables, iron tables, simple tables, ornate tables, coffee tables, dining room tables—that have specific parts—legs, top, and so on—and function as table. This is a mental concept. The concept does not arise from the side of the table itself, but is part of our linguistic construction of *table*.

In reality there is no actual table that shares all the properties of every other table. We assume a common "table-ness," but that essence is fiction. The representation of the table in the conceptual mind is separate from the real table, and furthermore this fictional entity, table, that we hold is superimposed over any "real" individual table we are investigating. Our experience of a table is predominantly a projection, an abstract generality.

That does not mean the table does not exist. The object we call "table" sitting in front of us at this moment does exist, but the "table" of our conceptual mind only exists as a generality, because it is a mere conceptual construct.

Conceptual Thoughts Engage Through Elimination

In the common division of existent things, Buddhist philosophers distinguish two categories: impermanent and permanent (which are categorized from the side of the object) or affirmation and negation (which are categorized from the side of the subject—the mind apprehending the object).

Although the former division is more widely discussed, in some ways the latter is more important because, from a Buddhist perspective, we can never know an object without the involvement of mind, and thus without some degree of subjectivity. Therefore, this twofold division contains objects that can be known by affirmation and those that can be known by negation. I would like to look at these now.

The conceptual mind does not apprehend its object through a positive recognition but by eliminating all other objects that are not that particular object. Therefore, in Buddhist epistemology the conceptual consciousness is construed as negative in nature, as it arises from a process of elimination.

For example, if I say "apple" to you, the image of an apple will come into your mind. According to Buddhist thought, it arises through the systematic negation of all things that are *non-apple*. If I qualify my concept by saying "green apple," your mind will refine the generic image, and my saying "That large green apple you have just eaten" will further refine it. Still, there is no direct perception of that just-eaten apple. The concept remains an elimination of all the stored memories of what is *not* that apple and a generic construct of what *is* that apple.

This process occurs through the use of a linguistic sign—a word or label. This is more than just seeing an apple and sticking on the mental label, "apple." The process is much more subtle than that. It is virtually impossible for ordinary people such as ourselves to have a direct perception of an object, unadorned by conceptual process. Even if we

have no conscious discursive thought about the object, we engage in this mental process of object classification.

The negation process of conception has parallels in the way Buddhist practice is pursued. For example, this page is impermanent, but our minds presently perceive it as permanent, at least on a moment-by-moment basis. We need to eliminate the misconception that it is permanent to perceive it accurately. In this case, the concept of permanence is the object of negation. That is similar to the way the conceptual mind operates, though in this case we need to consciously intend the negation. Without negating its permanence we will never see its impermanence—either as a concept or, at a very advanced stage of meditation, as a direct perception.

We are categorizing things all the time. We classify objects as beautiful, ugly, tall, short, and so on. Moreover, our categories depend on our cultural context—so in one culture "beautiful" might be equated with tall, slim, blond, and blue-eyed, while in another it might be fat and bald!

We are also constantly making value judgments—good or bad, fair or unfair, right or wrong. Observing our personal instinctive dialogue of judgment is a very interesting exercise because value judgments as categories are particularly removed from the object at hand and say more about the perceiver than they do about the object. By looking at them, we can learn a lot about our minds. According to Buddhist epistemology, we arrive at our judgments—which are concepts—by elimination. On the basis of all of our accumulated conditioning, we decide that something is good by eliminating all that is not good.

Conceptual Thoughts Are Always Mistaken

The conceptual mind apprehends its object through negation, therefore it is considered a mistaken mind. Although it is a construct based

on a linguistic, generalizing process that has little to do with the actual object before us, this is not the way we see it. According to our view, the object of our conceptual consciousness is real and accurate. This is a mistake.

As long as the dichotomy persists between *apple* and *non-apple*, or whatever our conceptual mind is apprehending through this elimination process, there is no way to overcome this fundamental mistake. Thus conceptual consciousness can never reflect reality as accurately as a perceptual consciousness.

A conceptual thought is merely a fiction projected onto an object or event and depends on socially shared assumptions. A table does not think of itself as a table—it does not think that it is wooden and comes from Ikea, or that its function is to hold a computer. These are all assumptions we attach to the object. In fact, the term *table* is a conventionality that exists in the English-speaking world. It has no reality based in the actual object. The assumptions we layer on objects arise from the social process of language acquisition and the habit of labeling our sense stimuli in certain ways over and over again. We want to buy a table, we plan the purchase in our minds, and we feel the table we want to buy is a real table, while in fact "tableness" is a fiction created by the conceptual mind and nowhere to be found.

Our experience of objects as real and our acceptance of the terms commonly used for such objects as natural are the two key factors for the formation of the conceptual mind. Superimposed on the real table is this combination of memory and socially constructed generalization that ignores the fact that one object labeled *table* is entirely separate and different from another object labeled *table*. In reality all physical objects are unique, individual things. In the realm of reality, this concept of *table* does not exist within all things we call tables; we superimpose it upon the object.

Conceptual Thoughts Provide Cognitive Content

Mistaken though they are, conceptual consciousnesses are vital to our lives and well-being. They provide the elaboration necessary for us to make sense of the raw data of the direct sensory consciousnesses. Only a conceptual mind can categorize objects; only a conceptual mind can analyze and discriminate; only a conceptual mind can plan—in short, only a conceptual mind can "think." Because of that, conceptual thoughts are very useful.

On one level they are always mistaken, misrepresenting the real world. On another level they are vital for sentient existence. They help us to apprehend things and events not apparent to our sensory consciousnesses, either because of their subtle nature, because of their temporal location—meaning they happened in the past or are still to happen—or because of their physical location—meaning they occur too far from our sense consciousnesses for us to apprehend them. In such circumstances the conceptual mind is the only way we can connect with those things and events.

As discussed above, we must strive to realize objects such as subtle impermanence and selflessness if we are ever to experience the complete cessation of suffering and its origin. Dignaga and Dharmakirti assert that such knowledge can only arise through conceptions. At our stage of development we cannot directly perceive subtle impermanence, thus the conceptual mind is the only tool we have to connect us to this truth in any way. Therefore, it is important to keep conceptuality in perspective. While we must understand that concepts always contain an element of error and do not reflect reality accurately, thinking is nonetheless crucial to our spiritual development.

Implicative and Nonimplicative Negation

If you asked a Gelug master about nonimplicative negation, he or she might just say that it is the most important thing you can ever know. It is such a strange term, and yet it is so important! Without understanding nonimplicative negation, it is impossible to understand ultimate reality.

The difference between the two types of negation lies in whether the negation causes something else to be implied in its place. Hence we have the terms *implicative* and *nonimplicative*. If you go to university where there are two choices, full-time or part-time study, and you tell a friend that you are not studying full-time, this is a negative statement. However, through this negation you imply a positive statement—that you *are* studying part-time. Thus your statement is an implicative negation. If I tell you there is no honey in the kitchen, that too is a negative statement, but it does *not* imply anything positive, such as the fact that there *is* sugar, or coffee. This is a nonimplicative negation.

Gendun Drub defines nonimplicative negation as:

> ...That which is realized through an explicit elimination of an object of negation and does not suggest some other positive phenomenon in place of its object of negation.[23]

In other words, a nonimplicative negation eliminates whatever needs to be eliminated without implying that anything exists in its place. To state that I don't play football does not imply that I do play tennis.

This may sound a little silly to you, but nonimplicative negations become crucial when we seek to understand emptiness or selflessness. We are all trying to understand emptiness (at least I hope we are!). But what are things are empty of? When we realize that all phenomena are

empty of inherent existence, do we simultaneously realize that they possess other qualities? The insight into emptiness brings no such implication. There is nothing beyond, not even something called "emptiness." It is the same with selflessness. The very word directs us to the absence of a self, but it does not imply that something else exists.

Meditating on emptiness is a long and profound process. The object we are trying to negate is quite crude early on, but slowly it becomes more and more subtle. If, at the end of our analysis, we are left with anything positive at all, the analysis has gone wrong. Our negation should be nonimplicative. When our mind realizes an object's ultimate nature, its absence of inherent existence, what it realizes is just a mere absence of inherent existence and absolutely nothing else. If, when inherent existence is negated, anything remains—even something profound, like a realization of dependent arising—that mind does not have a true understanding of emptiness.

How the Mind Generalizes

Conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken in that the mind takes something generic and assumes it is specific. Superimposed upon the perception of a book, for instance, is almost always the concept of *book*, which helps us interpret the object but denies us direct access to it. There are four types of generalizations the mind makes about objects:

1. collective generality
2. categorical generality
3. meaning generality
4. sound generality

Getting a clear picture of these four points can really help us see the process by which we superimpose and the mistakes this process can

bring. The effect of these mental mistakes is huge. In fact, the ways we react socially and individually to our world are dominated by these first three generalities.

A *collective generality* is really another name for the *density of whole*, a topic that comes up in the next chapter. In this context, however, we are focusing on the way the mind elaborates on the original sense data. *Collective generality* refers to the assumptions we make about the completeness of an object. For example, when we watch the news on television, we only see the top part of the anchorperson's body, but we assume the existence of his or her waist and legs. This is a conception rather than a perception. Our experience tells us that a person has all these parts, so if we see one part, we assume the others will follow. This is something we rarely question, and in most cases experience does not contradict it. However, this mistaken mind can harm us—even on a mundane level. Once, I was helping to renovate Jamyang Buddhist Centre after the building was first purchased, and I stepped on some old linoleum in a deserted upper-story room. I had assumed there was solid floor beneath, but in fact the floorboards were rotten—a collective generality that could have seriously injured me.

A categorical generality is a generalization the mind makes based on the category an object fits into. This can be a useful conceptual shorthand, but it can also be very harmful, as when we judge an entire race of people based on a stereotype.

No two objects are identical. Even if they are the same shape, color, and so on, they are two different entities. If you have two glasses in front of you, they may *look* identical, but of course they are different glasses; they are composed of different atoms. However, it would be impossible for the mind to keep up if it had to newly label every object in the universe every time it encountered one, and so we categorize. I have used *glass* as an example, and I know that you have no trouble imagining one. If I ask a friend to buy me a carton of soymilk

at the shop, I know she won't come back with dog food. Placing objects into manageable categories is an essential role of the conceptual consciousness.

The worrying side to this mental process is that by categorizing, we may deny the unique integrity of the object. We may pigeonhole, reduce to stereotypes, or at worst, judge a person based on our generalized assumption about a group. The prejudice—racial, sexual, or whatever—that is the cause of so much of the world's suffering is probably the most dangerous manifestation of this. People under the influence of prejudice need no deep philosophical understanding in order to hate. If people with a particular bias—against a race, religion, sex, or skin color—see someone in that category, they react based on the categorical generality they are making. It colors and distorts their perception.

A *meaning generality* is another term for the generic image the mind creates. We have already covered the way the conceptual mind functions through image and language. Here the focus is the mental image that arises in place of the perception. As we have seen, the conceptual mind creates the image through negation, systematically eliminating everything that is not its object. So if I ask you to imagine an apple, the image that arises in your mind is everything that is not non-apple. No matter how specific that image might seem, it is not the actual object—it is the meaning generality. Say we both met His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala in 1995 and I remind you that he shook your hand—a singular and powerful experience you are not liable to forget. That image may be strong and vivid in your mind, but it is still a meaning generality, a counterfeit of the actual event. In fact, we don't even remember real events at all for the most part; we recall our previous meaning generalities.

Sound generality is much the same, but based on sound. Think of your favorite song. In your mind you may hear it playing, although in

reality of course it is not. This is the conceptual mind producing a sound generality based on memories of listening to the sound. Again, for the most part this process is harmless, but because the mind is not apprehending the object exactly in accordance with reality, a fundamental mistake exists that can cause problems.

These generalities operate continually in our minds. They shape our opinions and color our entire world, and yet we are rarely aware of them as such. Although this topic is complex, we should seek to understand it, for the misunderstanding that skews our view of the world, no matter how subtle, causes mistakes that can lead to suffering.

Perception

As beings of the physical world, we are fortunate to not only possess the ability to make sense of our external environment, but also to possess the five sense faculties by which we can gather accurate information about it. According to Buddhist epistemology, although perception is not solely the realm of the sense consciousnesses—on certain occasions the mental consciousness can directly perceive sense data—nevertheless our sense perceptions are the main tools by which we gain impressions of the external world.

Perception can be defined as "a mental event that can apprehend its object positively, engaging the object as it is." This refers mainly to our five sense consciousnesses. I walk down a street and see a person on the other side, hear the traffic, smell the flowers in the park, and feel the cool breeze. I am also eating an ice cream cone. These mental events—seeing, hearing, tasting, and so on—engage the object—the person, the noise, and so on—directly and positively. At this level there is no elimination or indirect apprehension.

Of course, things do not remain so simple for more than an instant.

Immediately the mind begins to label things, and feelings and stories arise. The person is a friend, the traffic is loud, the breeze is cold, and so forth. This is the conceptual mind's process of enhancing the initial perceptions, but they are not in themselves perceptions.

Intuitively, when we see an object, hear a sound, or ascertain something with any of our other sense faculties, we assume that it exists exactly as we perceive it. But all Buddhist schools assert a discrepancy between the world as it actually exists and the world as we perceive it. There is even a school that denies the existence of the objects of the external world entirely.

Aspect

When we apprehend an object through direct perception, we assume we are ascertaining the actual object. We see a house and we think there is nothing between the actual house and our perception of it. But this is not so.

Among the schools of Buddhist thought, there is actually no clear agreement on what we actually see. In order to get an idea of the complexity of this issue, we need to examine the assertions of each of the four philosophical schools. For our purposes, we will limit our analysis to the first three schools, excluding the highest school, the Madhyamaka, as it really complicates the picture.

According to the Vaibhashika school, the least subtle of the four schools, our consciousness has direct and unmediated access to the object. However, the Vaibhashika also assert that we are unable to perceive an entire object with a single consciousness. If you think about it, this makes sense. We see an apple and think we are seeing the entire apple. In fact our eye consciousness has only taken in the color and shape of the part of the apple we can see, not its back or bottom, or the smell and taste that make up the complete object.

But apart from that, say the Vaibhashika scholars, a real apple exists, and that is exactly what our eye sees. For that reason we call the Vaibhashika a *realistic* school. This is not because they have an exclusive claim on the truth, but because they proclaim that things are real in the sense of having an intrinsic essence.

This assertion is strongly refuted by the other schools. First, say the others, this assumes a chronological impossibility, for according to the Vaibhashika, the existence of the apple and the apprehension of the apple would have to happen at the same time. This would eliminate the possibility of cause and effect, which by definition is sequential. If the apple and the apprehension of the apple were simultaneous, then the object could not be the cause for the mind that apprehends it, which, according to the other schools, is absurd.

The Sautrantika and Chittamatra schools introduce the concept of *aspect* (Tib. *nampa*) in their discussions of how objects are perceived. The aspect is the reflection of the object that becomes the direct perception. It is an intermediary between the object and the mind, and as such behaves in the same way as a conceptual consciousness. We see blue, but what is it that differentiates blue from yellow before the conceptual consciousness labels it? These schools say it is aspect. The aspect of blue is both caused by the "real" blue color of the object and its representation in the visual consciousness.

It is obvious that an object cannot physically be present within a consciousness. However, according to these schools, the object can cause an impact—a mark or a reflection—on the consciousness. This is like leaning on a freshly-painted wall. Your arm is not left on the wet paint, but the mark of your arm is. According to these schools, this is a necessary part of the process of perception—without it, there is no base for discrimination.

The difference in assertion between the Sautrantika and Chittamatra schools does not revolve around whether the sense consciousness

needs an intermediary, but around the status of the external object. The Sautrantika school assumes the external object exists, and the Chittamatra school refutes this. According to the Chittamatra, the aspects of color or taste that arise within our consciousness do not come about as a result of an impression from a real external object, but rather are produced by our own latent internal tendencies, or imprints. There is no experience of an external object without taking into account the mind that experiences it. Object and subject are one entity in that the table and the mind experiencing *table* arise at the same time from the same source.

Although having very different ideas about the subject/object relationship, both schools assert that a perception cannot arise independently of the object it perceives. Therefore perceptual aspects have a direct one-to-one correspondence with the objects they represent. A perceptual consciousness will arise only if there is an actual object, and therefore it can be said to hold the object itself. And so an eye sense consciousness apprehending a blue color is said to hold the actual blue even though it is only aware of the *aspect* of blue rather the blue itself.

Furthermore, an aspect is not something separate from consciousness. It is both a representation of the object in a consciousness as well as the actual consciousness that sees the object. Because of this double nature, it is said that the aspect has the *appearance* of the external object but the *nature* of consciousness.

The concept of aspect is also of great importance for these schools in that it opens the inquiry into self-cognition (Tib. *rangrig*),[24] or how the mind can apprehend itself. In relation to self-cognition, scholars such as Dharmakirti and Dignaga speak of two types of aspect, objective and subjective.

Objective aspect focuses on the object—the color blue, for instance—whereas the subjective aspect focuses on the eye consciousness itself as it apprehends blue. In any perception, two things

happen simultaneously: the object is reflected in the consciousness—the objective aspect—and the consciousness is aware that the process is happening—the subjective aspect.

Almost all of the schools besides Vaibhashika—Sautrantika, Chittamatra, and Svatantrika Madhyamaka—assert that subjective aspect is a valid mind and that it is synonymous with self-awareness or self-cognition. They consider its presence absolutely necessary to trigger future recollections of the object. Dharmakirti says that cognition is *self-luminous*, which means that at the same time that the eye perceives blue, it is aware—self-aware—that it is perceiving blue. The meaning of *self-luminosity* is similar to that of the English term *apperception*, which means the mind's awareness of itself. These three schools assert that the mechanism by which we hold an object from one moment to the next is self-cognition.

The subjective aspect of a mind cannot be a different entity from the mind itself. If it were, for example, one mind looking at a separate mind, we would find ourselves in an infinite regression—for a mind apprehending an object, there would need to be a second mind aware of that mind, but that second mind would require a third mind that was aware of that one, and a fourth, and so on, ad infinitum. The subjective aspect is the *same* mind but a *different* aspect. The subjective aspect of an eye consciousness *is* the eye consciousness. It is the mechanism within the eye consciousness that allows the mind to later recall it.

Comparing Perceptual and Conceptual Minds

At this stage it is worth reviewing the two main divisions of consciousness, perception and conception, and expanding upon them. The chart below details this.

perception	*conception*
engages in its object positively, by affirmation	engages in its object negatively, by elimination
engages in its object as it is (without exaggerating)	does not engage in the object as it is
engages in a real object	does not engage in a real object
is generally very accurate	is always mistaken
does not provide any integrative content	provides integrative content

A perception apprehends an object without any labels or stories. It is not mistaken, unless there is some short-term physical problem, such as when we squeeze our eyes shut and see two moons. In contrast, as we have seen, conceptual minds are always mistaken with regard to their object.

It is not the role of the perception to identify the object; it apprehends only raw data. The conceptual mind then immediately adds the content and discriminates one object from another: eliminating what it is not, and identifying what it is, labeling it, and categorizing it. This process can also quickly arrive at a judgment about the object: good or bad, beautiful or ugly, friend or enemy, and so on.

Basically, all phenomena are either impermanent or permanent—there is no other alternative. Impermanent things depend on causes and conditions to come into existence and make up most of the *things* of our world. Permanent things do not function, nor do they depend on causes and conditions. Permanent things include states such as emptiness or concepts such as time. They do exist, but are unchanging, which is not to say they are eternal—they are not—but while they exist, they are not subject to cause and effect.

Impermanent things are also called *positive* or *established*, referring

to the way the mind apprehends them, whereas permanent things can be called *negative* or *eliminative*.

Perceptions apprehend impermanent things positively. The eye sees a book—an impermanent thing—or the ear hears a sound. Conceptions apprehend permanent things. We can see how time and maybe emptiness may be permanent, since they are somewhat abstract to us right now. But what about the mind that apprehends a beautiful sunset? Surely a sunset is an impermanent thing? The actual sunset is, but not so the image of the sunset that the conceptual mind apprehends. That image is permanent, because it cannot perform a function and does not change moment to moment while it exists.

The sense consciousnesses operate without interpreting their apprehended object. When the eye sees something, there is no elimination process. According to some Buddhist schools, between the object and the consciousness is the aspect, which has a direct one-to-one relationship with the object and hence is nonmistaken. The sense consciousness sees the object directly and positively. The conceptual consciousness in contrast apprehends its object indirectly, through mediation, and negatively, through elimination.

A mental event is passive or active depending on whether a process is involved. The perceptual mind involves no process and therefore engages passively with its object. The conceptual mind, on the other hand, always operates through an intermediary and therefore engages actively with its object. A conceptual construct arises between the object and the mind—whether this be the label, the feeling of attraction or aversion, or any of the other sorts of elaboration that go on—the internal dialogue of comparison, judgment, and identification.

The perceptual mind only collects the raw sense data; the conceptual mind does everything else. The perceptual mind is like the latent image on the film in a camera—light rays hitting sensitized film. The conceptual mind develops and prints the film (and complains because it is out of focus!).

Usually, in our everyday lives, perceptual and conceptual minds work together. Directly perceiving a red traffic light and not going any further in the process is dangerous. We need the conceptual mind to label *traffic light* and *red* and enter into an internal dialogue that causes our foot to hit the brake. As we have discussed, however, the conceptual mind adds more information than is necessary, exaggerating and even getting it plain wrong. In reality, our partner is *not* the most wonderful person in the world (or the least), and this new flat screen TV will *not* be the key to never-ending pleasure.

Normally we experience the world around us without questioning it. Sights appear, sounds happen—they all become part of our experience, filtered, sorted, judged, and either filed or discarded. Unconscious of the mechanics of our mental life, we mindlessly develop attractions and aversions, we remember and forget, under the sway of mental addictions and habits. If we are ever to gain any control over this circus within our heads, we need to understand conception's power, and the way consciousness creates the world we encounter. We need to liberate ourselves from servitude to the negative conceptions that now dominate us.

Valid Cognition

Pramana

When direct perception is not mistaken with regards to its object, it is called *valid cognition*. In Sanskrit the term is *pramana* (pra MAH na; Tib. *tsema*), a term used in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist epistemology. Non-Buddhist schools generally use this term to refer to two things: an instrument for gaining knowledge of an object and the knowledge itself.

For Buddhist schools, pramana refers to knowledge itself. It is a nondeceptive cognition. Dharmakirti and Dignaga assert that a consciousness is only valid and correct if it is nondeceptive, and if that is so, then that consciousness is pramana.

In his *Drop of Reasoning (Nyayabindu)* Dharmakirti further states that valid cognition is a prerequisite for the fulfillment of all human purposes.[7] All roads to enlightenment must cross the threshold of valid cognition, says Dharmakirti. There is no use looking for fulfillment and happiness in anything if it stems from a mistaken mind, because sooner or later suffering will result. Without pramana, we might seek chocolate ice cream but end up with chilis. Of course Dharmakirti is referring to much deeper levels of mistaken cognition than this, things like seeing others without the lens of self-interest and seeing phenomena without the distortion of self-existence.

On a common-sense level, we can all see the truth in this. Misfortunes sometimes seem to come "out of the blue," but generally, when we suffer, we can identify mistakes we have made somewhere along the way. We make physical mistakes, such as not watching where we are stepping, or verbal mistakes, such as speaking without considering another's feelings—but the mistakes that matter most are made with the mind. The much-quoted Buddhist teaching is that the root of all our problems is ignorance, and that ignorance is the fundamental mistaken mind. It is not a mind of spaced-out nothingness, or a mind that simply does not know, but an active mind of mis-knowing. Therefore, it is vital that we understand and develop valid minds while eliminating those that are mistaken.

A valid mind correctly differentiates between existent and nonexistent objects. It can see that the horns of a rabbit are nonexistent and that the table in front of us does in fact exist.

The Etymology of Pramana

This Sanskrit term *pramana* is a precise technical term. Though I have not studied Sanskrit formally, I will try briefly to explain the term. Sanskrit words can be divided into base terms and either suffixes or prefixes. Grammatically, the word *pramana* can be split into the words *prama*, the base term meaning "knowledge-event," and *ana*, the suffix, which in this case is the active agent meaning "to bring about." Although *pramana* is generally translated into English as *valid cognition*, the term encompasses a broader meaning. The Western concept *knowledge* implies something enduring. In Buddhism, in contrast, knowledge is not static but momentary, and this is reflected in the use of the active term *ana*.

In the monasteries, as a learning tool, we divide the word slightly differently, into the syllables *pra* and *mana*. *Pra* has many different meanings depending on the context: among them "excellent," "perfection," "first," and "newly." *Mana* means to measure, cognize, recognize, or apprehend. So *pramana* literally means to cognize perfectly, excellently, or newly. Different schools interpret this differently. Prasangika Madhyamaka scholars, for instance, read the *pra* to mean "main" or "prime." For when it is taken to mean "first" or "newly," then only the first moment of a mind can be valid, which is limiting. We will come back to this point below.

Nondeceptiveness

For a consciousness to be nondeceptive, the outcome must be consistent with the intention, meaning the object we are seeking must be determined correctly. Suppose we are looking for our friend John in a crowd. He is tall, bald, and wears glasses, and we think we see him in the distance. The consciousness has apprehended its object. When

we move to the other side of the room, we see that the shape we took to be John is in fact another man. However, directly behind him is John. We sought John and found him, so there is agreement between the goal and the outcome—the practical effect is nondeceptive—but there has been a deception of the intention in that our actual object differed from the object we cognized.

A valid cognition can be either a direct perception or an inference. Inferential valid cognitions are discussed below. For either kind of consciousness to be a valid cognition, it needs to be nondeceptive in two ways: in terms of its practical effect (you want A and you get A) and in terms its capacity to capture the object accurately.

This means that cognition is more than just getting things right—it is getting things right *intentionally*. The eye consciousness looks at the table and mind apprehends it, and there is no incongruity between the intention and the practical effect. However, there is no valid cognition between the eye consciousness seeing Dave and the mind mistaking him for John, since the intention and the practical outcome are not in accord.

Novelty

If, as I mentioned above, one takes the first syllable of pramana to mean *new*, then a valid cognition must know its object newly. In fact Dharmakirti states that: "With respect to this, valid cognition is only that which first sees an uncommon object."[26]

This element of novelty is quite important. Although a mental event that repeats previous information can be beneficial and may reveal correct information, because it is a repetition of a previous consciousness and therefore gives no new information, technically it cannot be a valid cognition. If it adds nothing new to the cognitive process, it is, in terms of cognition, irrelevant.

For example, according to most Buddhist epistemology, memory is not a valid consciousness, because it is a mere conceptual repetition of previous knowledge. There is no direct exposure to an object or event to ensure its validity, and so no matter how clearly and correctly we remember something, it no longer exists except as a mental fabrication. A nondeceptive mind must apprehend the object freshly. Thus memory can never be nondeceptive.

Gendun Drub wrote many commentaries on Dharmakirti, and he is one who claims that the *pra* in pramana definitely means *new* and therefore if a cognition does not reveal new information, it is not a valid cognition.[27] This view is widely held, but it can lead to complications. Khedrup Je, one of Lama Tsongkhapa's two main disciples, disagreed with the widely held view, arguing that novelty was not in fact a prerequisite for validity. He defined valid cognition instead as "the cognition that is nondeceptive with respect to the object that it [the cognition] realizes by its own power."[28]

So what does *by its own power* mean? It means without the help of another consciousness. Some masters assert that this implies a new apprehension, because a second moment of apprehending an object depends on the first moment. This does not refer to the general way that any moment of consciousness always depends on the preceding one, but to the specific way in which subsequent cognitions of the same object become dulled, losing the power of that initial moment. Here, we are *not* speaking of the conceptual minds that come into being immediately after any perception, but the raw direct perception itself, in its second or subsequent moments.

Other masters say the second moment of *perception* is still valid, but differentiate it from the subsequent moments of *mental* apprehension, the *conceptions* about the object. For them the idea of "newly" excludes only conceptions and not subsequent perceptions. If your definition of valid cognition is a mind that apprehends an object "by its own

power," then second moments and so on can therefore still be *novel* if that apprehension is free of other minds—free, specifically, of conceptual superimposition.

Inferential Valid Cognitions

Within Tibetan Buddhism, it is generally agreed that there are only two sources of valid cognitions: perception and inference. Other philosophies also cite testimony, such as the words of a realized master, as a source of valid cognitions, or analogies that point to the truth, but these are disclaimed by most Buddhist scholars, including Dharmakirti and Dignaga.

As we've already seen, perceptual valid cognitions are simply our sense consciousnesses perceiving an object directly and correctly. To understand how an inference can be correct takes further consideration. Inference is a concept, and by definition concepts are mistaken minds, so is there a contradiction? We need to look carefully at the difference in meaning—within Buddhist philosophy, at any rate—between *valid* and *mistaken*. Some minds can be both.

Besides the usual twofold division of existent things into impermanent and permanent, there is also a division of phenomena into obvious, hidden, and very hidden things. *Obvious* things are things that we ordinary people can recognize without depending on inference, such as the everyday objects available to our five senses. However, our sense perceptions cannot apprehend *hidden* objects. To cognize such objects, we need inference.

The usual and very clear example of this is inferring fire from smoke. This is the example that eight-year-old monks love debating! When visible to our eye consciousness, fire is an obvious object. But it can also be hidden when, for example, there is a forest fire in the distance. All we see is smoke, but based on this appearance we can infer the

existence of fire. This mind is valid because the mind accords with the object, although there is no direct perception.

It is the same with things like subtle impermanence or even our birthdays. We have no direct perception of the day we were born, not even a memory of it. We must rely on our parents' honesty and birth certificates. Despite all that, we still seem convinced enough to celebrate! Many of the really important ideas in Buddhism are hidden phenomena—emptiness, enlightenment, reincarnation, and so on. To understand and to finally realize such things definitely depends on inference.

The third category, *very hidden objects*, takes this all one step further. We can be certain that we are the product of our mother and father, but have no idea why we have a certain personality or why were born in a particular place. Buddhism says these things are due to karma, and at its most subtle level karma is a very hidden object. Very hidden objects can only be seen directly by a buddha and are thus penetrated by neither inference nor the direct perception of non-enlightened beings.

Through inference we can understand that we were born on such and such a date, which is a valid inference, but because it is a conceptual mind and not a perceptual mind it is still mistaken in that it does not apprehend its object directly. A conceptual mind is *always* a mistaken mind, even if it is nondeceptive. Seeing smoke and inferring fire is correct, or valid, but the mind that infers *fire* is also mistaken because it is conceptual and does not therefore directly apprehend its object.

Perceptions cannot apprehend concepts. My eye consciousness can apprehend the table in front of me but not the table's emptiness. For this reason, the conceptual mind of inference is a vital part of spiritual development, where we naturally move from a shallow, intellectual understanding of the concept of something like emptiness to a deeper one, and then to a valid inferential cognition. Without this, we could

never go on to realize emptiness directly, and enlightenment would be impossible.

The belief that because conceptual minds are mistaken they are therefore never valid is erroneous, for it leads to the verdict that realizing emptiness or enlightenment is impossible. Only through conceptual minds can we attain such states. In order to avoid the dangers of acceptance based on mere dogma, we must understand epistemology well and employ valid reasoning. To do that, we must examine perception—the phenomenon that bridges the conceptual mind and the external object.

Many masters make this fundamental point: if we trace all valid cognitions back to their origins, we arrive at perception. Eventually any valid cognition—perception or inference—must be validated by perception. Seeing smoke in the distance and apprehending that there is fire is mistaken in regards to its appearing object—we have no direct proof of fire—but valid because there *is* fire. But this inferential understanding is only possible through the valid perception of smoke. And we are only able to ascertain and accept this link between smoke and fire because we have previously perceived this causal relationship.

Perception and conception continually work hand in hand to bring us a complete picture of the world.

7 Moving Toward Knowledge

The Sevenfold Division

Part of epistemology is the knowledge of conceptions and perceptions, and of mistaken and valid minds, as we saw in the previous chapter. Another part is understanding the actual way we move from mistaken to correct minds and from conceptual to perceptual consciousnesses. In its examination of the validity of knowledge and the way we acquire it, the Gelug tradition commonly lists seven types of mind:

1. wrong consciousnesses
2. doubting consciousnesses
3. non-ascertaining consciousnesses
4. correctly assuming consciousnesses
5. subsequent cognizers
6. valid inferential cognizers
7. valid direct perceivers

Wrong Consciousnesses

Wrong consciousnesses, whether conceptual or perceptual, are erroneous with regard to the main object. Although a direct sense perception can

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Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York USA

act as a cause for direct sense perception, in the higher systems, a phenomenon such as emptiness — which itself *is* the lack of a specific type of self — can be directly cognized.

Summary

The goal set forth in all Buddhist systems of tenets is to go beyond an ordinary, ignorant and unduly binding perception of the world to an enlightened and liberating view. This entails the cognition of certain phenomena such as subtle impermanence and selflessness because understanding and direct perception of these phenomena act as an antidote which overcomes ignorance. Because these subtle phenomena are at present inaccessible to direct perception, the only recourse for a practitioner is to turn to thought, which is seen as able to develop and cultivate mental images of subtle impermanence and selflessness. These mental images are mental exclusions. The mental image of a table, for example, as impermanent involves a conceptual picture of momentary disintegration, the evocation of which serves to eliminate non-disintegration or permanence for thought. From this point of view such an image is most accurately described to be an appearance as opposite from non-permanence or opposite from non-disintegration. Through cultivating a mental image of subtle impermanence or emptiness, through making it more and more vivid, one can eventually realize the actual fact of impermanence or (in the higher systems) of emptiness in direct experience, no longer needing the medium of the conceptual image.

In order to build up a correct mental image of such subtle phenomena, it is necessary to rely on verbal description and analysis. It is essential to the Gelubka presentation of the path that words and reasoned contemplation be able to elicit correct mental images, and that the conceptual thought which has these as appearing objects does actually get at existent phenomena. Therefore, in order to investigate more fully the Gelukba claim that words and conceptual thought both relate to actual phenomena and that if properly used they can lead to direct perception — vivid experience — of such phenomena, it is necessary to grasp in more detail exactly how one learns to connect words or names with certain phenomena and the way in which words and thoughts relate to existent objects. In the following chapter, the relationship between words, thought, and external phenomena is investigated in light of the Gelukba interpretation of positive and negative phenomena.

8 *Naming*

Although direct perception and conceptual thought operate separately in their own spheres, most types of experience involve some collusion between the two and, moreover, most conceptuality derives from previous direct perception. The interconnection of these is discussed in the Gelukba presentation of how naming works, which details how thought makes possible a conceptual identification of what is seen in direct perception. This serves to indicate from a different viewpoint what the assertions on the two truths, on direct perception and conceptual thought, and on positive and negative phenomena also underscore: that interaction between conceptuality and non-conceptuality is such that the former, far from being antithetical to the latter, can enhance it in scope and subtlety.

How is it that, if a child learns to identify a '55 green Chevrolet as a car, he or she will also be able to recognize an '81 blue Oldsmobile as a car? What enables a person to generalize from one to the other? According to this presentation, such is possible because the generic image of a car that was formed in the child's mind during the original identification applies equally to all types of cars. This generic image will be mixed with a mental image of a specific car — perhaps the '55 Chevy that was originally identified. Although the image is mixed with that of a specific car, because it also represents a factor which all cars possess, it serves as a means of identifying all instances of cars.

Moreover, when one originally learned the name, the term 'car' was affixed not to the specific Chevrolet of the moment, but to the

mental image of a car which then allowed one to distinguish car from non-car. The generic image itself is an appearance as opposite from non-car, whereby it can serve to represent everything that is not a non-car — in other words, everything that is a car. Every car is an instance of opposite-from-non-car, and just as there are individual instances of cars, so there are individual instances of opposite-from-non-car. It is not that there is a single entity of opposite-from-non-car which pervades all individual cars.

The overall Buddhist position on the relation of a mental image to particular objects is closely linked to the formulation of the relation between generalities and their instances. The Buddhist discussion of these issues, especially in Gelukba, is cast in part as a rebuttal to the non-Buddhist Indian Sāṃkhya school. The Sāṃkhya system asserts that a name is applied, not to a mental image, but to a partless generality which is present in every instance of, for example, a car. Thus, Sāṃkhya would maintain that through initially identifying the presence of the generality in one instance, a person is able later to identify all the various types of cars as 'cars.'

The Buddhist position, taking account of this earlier Sāṃkhya doctrine, contends that there is no car-generality which is a separate entity from its instances and which then pervades those instances. However, all cars are the same in not being non-car, or technically, in being opposite from all that is non-car. It is this factor which, upon being recognized, enables one to identify all cars of whatever size, shape, color, or condition as cars, and not confuse these with, for example, trucks. This presentation of naming and how it works is intended to establish that there is no need to posit a separate generality pervading its instances in order to account for the ability to apply the name learned with respect to one instance to other instances.

NAMES, CONVENTIONS, AND APPELLATIONS

Words or expressive terms,[1] as differentiated from meaningless sounds, have three distinct functions. Any word, depending on which function it performs at a given time, can be designated as a name, convention, or appellation. The term 'pot,' for example, is a name (*nāma, ming*) from the viewpoint that it leads or directs the mind to its object, a bulbous thing capable of holding fluid. The term 'pot' also has the function of bringing to mind the fact that

because a pot is able to hold fluid, it is useful in pouring water, tea and so forth, and is not useful for other purposes such as holding up rafters (this being the function of a pillar). Thus, from the point of view that the term 'pot' not only directs the mind to an object but conveys a sense of that object's function, this term is known as a convention (*vyavahāra, tha snyad*).

A term such as 'pot' can only direct the mind to a certain object or impart a sense of a pot's function after one has learned to connect the name 'pot' with the correct object. This is something that must be taught. A baby or a non-English speaker would not, on hearing the word 'pot', either be led to think about a bulbous thing able to hold fluids or understand its uses. In order for conceptual thought to understand the meaning of words it is necessary for someone else to make the initial connection between a word and the object to which it refers. When such a term is connected to an object due to the namer's wish to teach another how the word is used, that term is called an appellation (*saṃketa, brda'*).

Because the single term 'pot' has all three of these functions, it is a name, a convention, and an appellation. However, it does not perform all three functions every time it is used; indeed, until the word is connected with an object, it does not perform any functions. Moreover, the word 'pot' only performs the function of an appellation the first time it is connected to an appropriate object for a person newly learning the term. In subsequent usage by a person familiar with the term it does not perform an appellation's unique function of making the initial connection between word and object, although it does function as a name and a convention because it directs the mind to the object and conveys a sense of that object's function.

Once the appellation has been connected — that is, once the name has been learned — one is able to use the convention to say or understand such things as "Bring me a pot." This is possible because the relationship between the name 'pot' and its meaning has been ascertained. Thus, a thought consciousness which has become capable of connecting a name with its appropriate object associates the name learned when the object was first identified with the object subsequently observed while using the convention. The word functions as a verbal convention, that is, it operates in conventional usage, only after the initial connection has been made.[2]

REASONS FOR APPLYING THE APPELLATION TO A GENERALITY

It is an observable fact that once a specific object has been connected with its name, the person who has learned the name will, in most cases, be able to recognize other objects of the same type as suitable to be designated by the same name. A child who has learned that a specific grey cat is called a 'cat' will understand that a black or calico feline is also called 'cat.' This ability to generalize is taken as a sign that when the name 'cat' was learned it was not understood to apply only to the grey cat present at that time. If it had been, the learner later would not be able to identify cats of different color or size as suitable to be called 'cat.' In the Buddhist view, such generalization is made possible by the fact that the name was initially applied, not to the specific grey cat, but to opposite-from-non-cat. All cats of whatever color or size are similarly opposite from non-cat and, therefore, can be recognized as suitable to be called 'cat.'

Thus, when learning the name, the word 'cat' is applied to a mental image that is an appearance to thought as opposite from non-cat. Nevertheless, the base of applying the name is an actual external cat. A mental image cannot perform the functions of a cat and would not be suitable as a basis for the name 'cat.' However, the meaning-generality which is an appearance as opposite from non-cat is the actual object of expression (*dngos kyi brjod bya*) of the term 'cat,' and the name is connected to that internal image.

Learning to identify a cat also means that one learns what a cat is not. When the name 'cat' is initially connected to the object, there is an elimination of what is not cat, and the name is applied, in a sense, to what is left over.[3] If that elimination is not done correctly, future usage of the term will be faulty. If a child who is told "That is a horse" takes the characteristics of a horse to be the possession of four legs, a mane, a tail, and a long face, the same child might later see a zebra and think it was a striped horse. This could come about because 'black and white stripes' were not among the characteristics eliminated at the time of learning the name horse. In order for the naming process to lead to correct usage of the convention learned, it must initially be applied to a mental image that correctly represents what is to be eliminated as *not* the thing so named.

Therefore, although the person explaining the name points to a specific grey cat in making the identification that "This is a cat," the name is *not* applied or connected to that specific grey cat, nor to the

composite of grey cat and opposite-from-non-cat. Rather, it is connected to the image or meaning-generality (*artha-sāmānya, don spyi*) which is a conceptual appearance as opposite from non-cat.[4] However, it is the actual cat and not the image that is identified as a cat (*see table below*):

Table 5

NAME	OBJECT TO WHICH THE NAME IS APPLIED	OBJECT IDENTIFIED
cat	meaning-generality;here, a mental image of a cat	specifically characterized cat which is the basis of the name, i.e., the (impermanent) opposite from non-cat

Thus, although the grey cat is the basis of the process of naming, it is not the thing to which the name 'cat' is affixed. This is because the designator says, "This is a cat," and does not say, "This is a grey cat."

In order for the initial identification to be applied correctly, the learner must develop a general mental image which will apply equally to all instances of the thing being named. Otherwise, there will be error in subsequent use of the convention. The story is told that when the great Indian pandit Atīśa was travelling in Tibet he, not knowing Tibetan, pointed to a massive stone and asked its Tibetan name. He was told it was called a boulder. Sometime later a small pebble found its way into Atīśa's boot, and he told the group, "I have a boulder in my shoe." This error arose because when the appellation was initially given, Atīśa mistakenly connected the name 'boulder' with opposite from non-stone instead of opposite from non-*large* stone. Thus, he concluded that even a very small stone was suitable to be "called a boulder". The distinction between stone and boulder should have been made at the time of identification: "This is a stone; because it is a very large stone it is also called a boulder."[5]

An identification made with respect to a single instance allows one to recognize other instances of the same type because (1) an identification of, for example, 'cat' is made in connection with the opposite from non-cat and (2) because opposite-from-non-cat itself is a generality that applies to all instances of cat. Thus, identification by way of a single instance is sufficient. It will be possible for the learner to

use the convention 'cat' with respect to calico cats even though calico cats are not present when the convention is learned. This possibility comes because the term 'cat' is connected to an appearance or mental image that represents the elimination of non-cat; that is, to a mental appearance as opposite from non-cat. Any particular cat is an instance of opposite-from-non-cat, and is therefore suitable to be recognized as a cat on the basis of such a mental image. Although the image of cat in general can be mixed with the appearance of a specific cat, the mental image does not depict a particular cat such as a grey cat but cat in general. Similarly, because the general name 'cat' and not the more limiting name 'grey cat' is applied to this image, it can function as a generality allowing one to identify correctly all instances of opposite-from-non-cat, whether they be white, black, calico, large or small.

The generality by which instances are understood is the meaning-generality — for example, the appearance to the thought consciousness as opposite from non-cat. This is explained by Den-dar-hla-ram-ba, using the example of a pot:

> ... when the appellation is [originally] connected, [as in] "This golden bulbous thing is a pot," one is connecting the terminology to the appearance as opposite from non-pot [which appears] to the thought consciousness apprehending pot.[6]

The Gelukba interpreters of Sautrāntika assert that when an identification is made connecting the term 'pot' with a bulbous thing, the appearance or image produced in the hearer's mental continuum is the appearance as opposite from non-pot or, to describe the same image from another point of view, an appearance as pot. In any case, this appearance is an image of a factor common to all pots, namely, their not being non-pots. A thing's being bulbous, flat-based, capable of holding fluids, and so forth is the sign of its being a pot; similarly, the debate texts state that an animal's being a composite of a hump, dewlap, and so forth is the sign of its being an ox; heat and burning is the sign that an entity is fire. In dependence on such a sign, a person connects the name with the object, thinking, "This bulbous thing is a pot." She or he thus becomes capable of using the convention 'pot.' This capability or knowledge is said to be a realization of pot. In this way, terms originally connected with mental images do relate to actual external objects.

Although it is the actual pot and not the image that is designated as a 'pot,' the impermanent pot is not the isolated explicit object of expression (*dngos kyi brjod bya 'i rang ldog*) of the term pot. An actual pot consists of the present shape, color, and so forth of the spout, handle, belly and other parts of a pot as these appear to the eye consciousness that perceives pot directly. The word 'pot' refers only to the composite of these parts, not to the specific elements that make up a pot. Like conceptual thought, a name gets at only one feature of a specifically characterized phenomenon. To say 'pot' implicitly eliminates non-pot and calls to mind non-non-pot. It evokes a generic image of a pot. It does not, however, evoke an image of the impermanence of a pot, nor of the handle, spout, color, specific size, and so forth of a pot. Therefore, it is impossible for a word to express or refer to a pot just as it exists.

Moreover, since pots are impermanent, subtly disintegrating from one moment to the next, by the time one comes to use the word 'pot' the *specific* moment of color and shape being referred to has already ceased. The fact that the Mongolian Gelukba scholar Den-dar-hla-ram-ba points this out is an indication that in terms of wholes such as pots — which are ultimate truths and specifically characterized phenomena in the system under discussion — 'whole' refers to the continuum of the momentary pot rather than to some gross extension of its continuum over time. Nevertheless, in dependence on terms one *can* realize specifically characterized phenomena. Den-dar-hla-ram-ba explains that only the meaning-generality is explicitly expressed by a term (*see table, p.195*): however, the object itself, such as a pot, is also expressed in the sense that Pur-bu-jok calls it the "object of expression," omitting the qualification "explicit." The meaning-generality itself — the appearance to thought as opposite from non-pot, for example — is the means by which one can recognize external things as pots, for a pot itself is opposite from non-pot. Because all pots regardless of shape, size, or material are opposite from non-pot, a person who has properly learned the name 'pot' can apply this name correctly to all of them.

HOW SIMILARITY OF TYPE IS PERCEIVED

A meaning-generality such as the image of a pot is a generality in the sense that its appearance as opposite from non-pot represents a factor which is present in every instance of pot. Such an image is *not* however a generality in the sense of being concomitant with the

instances of that which it represents because an actual impermanent pot is not an image. Therefore, a mental image does not fit Pur-bu-jok's definition of a generality as "that which is concomitant with its instances"[7] in the sense that it does not apply to the various instances of the object it depicts. An instance, in turn, is defined as "a phenomenon having the [same] type of that which engages it as a pervader" [i.e., which is concomitant with it].[8] For example, a pot is a generality concomitant with all instances of silver, gold, and copper pot, for a silver pot is also a pot. From this point of view, a pot is a type-generality (*rigs spyi*) which is defined as "a phenomenon that is concomitant with many [phenomena] of its own type."[9] Roughly speaking, in order to use a term such as 'pot' or 'cat' or 'ox' correctly, it is not only necessary to apply this name to the proper mental image or meaning-generality, but to be able to recognize other phenomena of the same type to which the same name also can refer.

A proper understanding of a name and of the class comprised by the phenomena of similar type to which that name can later be applied requires understanding the typology implicit at the time of initially applying the name. For this reason, only persons adequately trained in the use of language can be the measure of whether or not any two or more phenomena are to be classified as belonging to the same type. A brief story illustrates why.

A clever man was having difficulty marrying off his daughter because she was considered uncommonly dull. In order to dispell this opinion, the father took her into the forest where there grew a rare tree known as a *pavonine tamāla*.[10] He taught her the name, which few others knew, intending that she would later identify it before a large group and thereby prove she was not dull. His daughter performed this successfully, but before the group could disperse, a dog ran up to her and the girl pointed to it saying, "This is a *pavonine tamāla*." Although she had learned the name, she had not learned to delimit the base to which it could be applied.[11] Not being trained in terminology, she was unable to identify correctly phenomena of the same type. She did not know what was excluded by the term.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPECIFIC AND GENERAL TYPOLOGIES

It is commonly acknowledged that maple, oak, and fir trees, for

example, are the same 'type' in that all are commonly recognized as trees, whereas pots and trees are not commonly seen to be of the same type despite both being products and forms. What is the basis for understanding types in this way? A maple and an oak tree are different substantial entities, just as a pot and a maple are different substantial entities. Yet, a mind of similar type commonly occurs with respect to the first pair but not the second. Therefore, the two trees are phenomena of similar type in general; the tree and pot are not, despite being the same type in that both are products. Den-dar-hla-ram-ba gives the following reason for positing certain phenomena as of similar type:

> Two phenomena are posited as one type [if] those trained in terminology *naturally* develop a mental conception of them as similar due to merely perceiving them by way of turning the mind [to them].[12]

Also, Pur-bu-jok speaks of phenomena similar in type as "appearing similar to the innate awareness of persons trained in terminology through their merely seeing them." Thus, even though pots and trees are both instances of impermanent phenomena and are products, they are not phenomena of similar type *in general* because one does not naturally conceive them to be so. The fact that they are of similar type in the sense of both being products and impermanent, therefore, does not make them of similar type in the broader sense.

If the fact of being opposite from the same thing, such as being opposite from non-product, were sufficient reason to consider the phenomena in question to be of one type, then all objects of knowledge — everything that exists — would be of one type. For, they are all equally opposite from non-object-of-knowledge. In the same way, all impermanent things from the coarsest forms up to and including the most subtle omniscient consciousness would be one type — for all are equally opposite from non-impermanent-thing. Therefore, the fact that a single exclusion can apply to a group of phenomena does not mean that a mind of similar type necessarily arises with respect to them. Although all existent phenomena are indeed one type from the viewpoint of being objects of knowledge, and although all products are the same type from the viewpoint of being impermanent things, this does not prove them to be one type in general because one does not naturally think of them as one type.[13]

WHY OBJECTS APPEAR SIMILAR IN TYPE

There are both internal and external reasons for certain objects appearing to be similar in type. The internal causes, in the Buddhist view, are a person's having been accustomed since beginningless time in countless past rebirths to applying a single word to designate oxen, for example, as a single type common to black, spotted, and other oxen.[14] Therefore, one is strongly predisposed to continue doing the same. Conversely, there is no such predisposition to consider ox and pot to be of similar type even though both are opposite from non-functioning-thing, opposite from non-object-of-knowledge, opposite from non-product, opposite from non-impermanent thing and so forth. Although both are the same type in being a functioning thing, object of knowledge, product, and so forth, they are not of the same type in general because one does not naturally think of them as the same type, there being no predispositions from the past to do so. This type of 'reasoning' tends to the circular, even if one grants the doctrine of rebirth. The second explanation of similarity is somewhat more compelling.

The external condition for perceiving similarity of type is said to be the visible similarity of shape. For example, all oxen, black, spotted, and so forth are the same in that all are equally the opposite of non-ox; that is, they are the same type of reverse or isolate (*ldog pa rigs gcig*). This is why the same type of mind arises with respect to them. This is colloquially analogized to the fact that whatever a human being's skin color — black, white, yellow, red, and so forth — the color of the shadow is always the same. There is no such thing as a yellow or red shadow. All shadows, just like all entities that are opposite from non-ox, are of the same type.[15]

The ability to understand correctly which phenomena are or are not of similar type, and in which contexts, is essential to the naming process. The correct designation of type relates to naming because the appellation is originally connected to a generality that applies to all phenomena of similar type; later use of the convention depends on being able to recognize other instances of that type, whether such discrimination comes naturally or not. For example, in order to apply the name 'ox' correctly it is only necessary to accord with what this system considers the natural inclination to see oxen as being the same type. However, in order to apply the name 'impermanent thing' correctly it is necessary to pass beyond natural impulse and distinguish phenomena that are in general of different type as the same type in the context of being impermanent.

In the case of oxen, the reason for applying the name is the presence of the various signs of being an ox — having a hump, dewlap, and so forth. These characteristics are said naturally to lead one to consider all animals possessing them to be of one type. Due to their being characteristic of all oxen, a person who has been taught to use the name 'ox' through initially connecting that name with a white ox as the basis is then capable of recognizing oxen of whatever color as belonging to the same category or type without needing to rely on any further reasoning or explanation.

NAME AND OBJECT

All names, like terms in general, are partial engagers (*sel 'jug*). Like thought, they do not operate in relation to all the factors which are of one entity of establishment and abiding with the object being designated. When the name 'cat' or 'pot' is spoken, for example, the object with respect to which that name operates — known more technically as the term's object of expression (*brod bya*) — is the actual cat or pot. An object of expression such as a pot has many features: spout, handle, colorful design and so forth. It is also characterized as being a product, impermanent thing, ultimate truth, specifically characterized phenomenon, and existent phenomenon. However, the term 'pot' does not refer to all these things individually, it refers only to the object which is a collection of these characteristics. The image of this is the word's *explicitly* expressed object. No one word could refer to all the specific qualities or aspects of any specifically characterized phenomenon.

Thus, a term such as 'cat' or 'ox' has two objects of expression, the actual chair or ox and the mental image that arises in the mind upon hearing that term. This is mentioned in Kay-drup's *Clearing Away Mental Darkness with Respect to (Dharmakīrti's) 'Seven Treatises'*:

> When the appellation 'ox' is connected taking a white ox as the basis, the two main objects of that appellation are (1) ox and (2) the [objective] exclusion opposite-from-non-ox. [These two, although different for thought, are one substantial entity.] Even though the meaning-of-the-term consists of the appearance of white ox *as* opposite from non-ox,

> [this] is the mere object of the appellation [and not the main one].[16]

This emphasizes Den-dar-hla-ram-ba's point, mentioned above, that it is the actual animal which is identified as, for example, an ox, even though the name is applied or connected to a mental image of that object on the basis of some specific ox. From this point of view, ox is the main object of expression of the term 'ox.' The other object of the term is the appearance as opposite from non-ox.

Table 6

NAME	EXPLICIT OBJECT OF EXPRESSION	MAIN OBJECT	BASIS
"ox"	the meaning-generality or mental image which is an appearance to thought as opposite from non-ox	ox opposite from non-ox	white ox
"white ox"	the meaning-generality or mental image which is an appearance to thought as opposite from non-white-ox	white ox opposite from non-white-ox	Sam's white ox

Thus, when the name of a phenomenon is initially learned, both thought and direct perception are involved. In the case of identifying an ox, one directly perceives the color and shape of a specific ox. The composite of hump and dewlap fully appears to direct perception. The terminological connection is made conceptually. Later, in dependence on seeing these limbs (*yan lag*) or segments of the ox, one recognizes the presence of an ox. (Since the ox is a being or person, it is not form and thus is not an object of apprehension of the eye consciousness, but there is no contradiction in an ox or another person's being directly seen by the eye consciousness because it is possible to see phenomena which are not technically objects of apprehension; if it were otherwise, it could not be said that persons can be seen directly.)

In the context of the Gelukba presentation of a path that uses verbal reasoning to refine conceptual thought as a means of generating deep understanding, it is essential to maintain that although words cannot conjure up all the richness of direct experience, words do express actual objects and do not just relate to internal images of them. This is the philosophical equivalent of having your cake and

eating it too. Various Gelukba writers have slightly different ways of doing this.

According to Den-dar-hla-ram-ba the meaning-generality is explicitly expressed, whereas the actual object is not explicitly expressed, except in the sense that an actual pot can be obtained in dependence on the internal image. He says that *in this sense* it can be asserted that the actual object is explicitly expressed. According to Jang-gya, the meaning-generality is the self-isolate — the unspecified entity — of the explicit object of a thought consciousness though the actual object can be an explicit object of thought. He also says that the meaning-generality is the self-isolate of the basis of engagement of a verbal convention whereas the object itself is an illustration-isolate, or particular instance, of the basis to which the verbal convention becomes affixed. The following chart illustrates how these two Gelukbas describe the relationship of the term 'pot' to the meaning-generality of pot and an actual pot:

Table 7

	MEANING-GENERALITY OF POT	ACTUAL POT
Den-dar-hla-ram-ba	explicitly expressed (*dngos su brjod pa*)[17]	not explicitly expressed (*dngos su ma brjod pa*), in a sense explicitly expressed (*dngos su brjod pa*), and not able to be explicitly expressed (*dngos su brjod mi nus pa*)[18]
Jang-gya	self-isolate of the explicit object of a thought consciousness (*rtog pa'i dngos yul gyi rang ldog*[19]	explicit object of thought (*rtog pa'i dngos yul*)[20]
	self-isolate of the basis of the verbal convention (*sgra'i tha snyad 'jug pa'i gzhi'i rang ldog*)[21]	illustration-isolate of the basis of engagement of the verbal convention (*sgra'i tha snyad 'jug pa'i gzhi'i gzhi ldog*)[22]

In this manner, these two scholars retain the cake of the Sautrāntika assertion that the explicit objects of expression of terms are meaning-generalities and at the same time enjoy preservation of a meaningful

connection between impermanent objects on the one hand and words and thought on the other. (In a similar vein, Bel-den-chö-jay [41.1-3] says that although specifically characterized phenomena actually appear to thought, their entities do not fully appear.)

Den-dar-hla-ram-ba explains that the thought apprehending pot does not explicitly apprehend pot; it explicitly apprehends the meaning-generality. Yet it is necessary to assert that thought explicitly *realizes* pot since, as stated above, a specifically characterized pot is undeniably obtainable in dependence on such a consciousness.[23] A different way of expressing this same point — that thought does actually get at impermanent phenomena even though, technically, these cannot be appearing objects of thought — is to say that the term 'pot' has two explicit objects. The two are the meaning-generality of pot and pot. However, it is still not the *specifically characterized* pot that is an explicit object of expression, but pot's self-isolate.[24] In the same vein, Jang-gya quotes Kamalaśīla[25] as saying that a thought consciousness is indirectly related with the actual thing but is incontrovertible with respect to the meaning. All these explanations preserve the basic ability of terms and thought consciousnesses to engage with impermanent phenomena in a significant and — in terms of the path — potentially constructive manner.

GENERALITIES AND THE NAMING PROCESS

The presentation of generalities and instances specifically takes issue with the non-Buddhist Sāṃkhya school of Indian thought. In both systems, the explanation of how different instances are recognized as the same type and therefore suitable to receive the same name has to do with the relationship of these instances to their generality.

Buddhists and Sāṃkhyas agree that naming works because one recognizes as suitable to receive a certain name not merely the specific instance at hand, but a generality of that instance. (This type of naming is a case of learning the meaning of a name; for example, learning the type of entity that the word 'table' or 'ox' refers to; it is not a case of learning to apply the name 'Sarah' to a particular individual.) As Jang-gya writes, Buddhists and Sāṃkhyas agree that:

1. a base such as a spotted ox is a basis for [initially] connecting the appellation
2. having taken one basis as an instance and made the terminological connection, all [instances] are recognized
3. the connecting of an appellation is for the sake of [later] conventional [usage].[26]

Both have to solve the problem of how, despite the fact that a name is learned with respect to a particular instance such as a green '55 Chevrolet, a person who learns the name can later apply it, without further instruction, to other very different instances of the same class. If the name 'car' had been applied *only* to the specific Chevy then, because that particular car is no longer present when the convention is used, one would be unable to designate old Volvos or brand new Buick convertibles as 'cars.' Both Buddhists and Sāṃkhyas assert that making a terminological connection to a specific item such as a car allows one to recognize all instances of cars because the generality 'car' applies in the same manner to each of its instances. The Buddhists and Sāṃkhyas have different views, however, on the manner in which a generality applies to or is concomitant with its instances.

Buddhist View on Generality and Instances

The relationship between a generality and its instances is something imputed by thought; there is no physical or metaphysical pervasion of instances by a generality. Thus, the general appearance to thought as being opposite from non-pot which applies to all instances of pots is a mental imputation; there is no general pot one can point to, there are only the specific instances of gold, silver, and so forth pots. This factor of being a pot that applies to all instances is permanent, which in this system means that it does not disintegrate from moment to moment. When the eye consciousness observes a pot, it sees only the impermanent factors that are one substantial entity of establishment and abiding with pot; it does not perceive the permanent factors that are the same entity as pot; nor does it perceive the permanent generality factor, for direct perception takes as its appearing object only impermanent phenomena.

Generalities can be either permanent or impermanent. A pot is a generality, as is uncaused space which is concomitant with all instances of uncaused space in the west, east, and so forth. Whether the phenomenon which is a generality is permanent or impermanent, the factor applying to or concomitant with its instances is permanent.

In the case of a pot, this factor is an appearance as opposite from non-pot; it is an appearance representing the exclusion of everything that is not pot. When the name 'pot' is initially learned, that name is applied to this appearance. Because all instances of pot are also opposite from non-pot, one can recognize them all as suitable to be called 'pot' even though the *specific* feature of being opposite from non-pot that is present in one pot is not present in another. If the name had not been connected with something broader than just the specific instance of the pot present at the time of learning the name, then it would be impossible to use the verbal convention later. Sagya Paṇḍita states in his *Treasury of Reasoning*:

> Because individual specifically characterized phenomena
> Are limitless, an appellation cannot be [connected with each].
> Also, at the time of using the convention
> It is difficult to find the original specifically characterized phenomenon.[27]

If the appellation 'pot' explicitly expressed only a single specifically characterized golden pot, for example, then because the number and variety of pots are limitless it would be impossible to connect all of them with names.

In this way, the Buddhists can posit an explanation of naming and object-identification without positing a generality that is a separate entity from the instances with which it is concomitant. In their view, a generality is not a Platonic ideal separate from its instances; there is only a factor of similarity, imputed by thought, that corresponds to the specific characteristic of, for example, being opposite from non-pot, present in all instances of pots. There is no general or abstract pot existing apart from the specific instances of pots and no separate nature of potness that is somehow shared by all pots.

Sāṃkhya Views on Generality and Instances

The Sāṃkhyas posit a generality known as the nature (*prakṛti, rang bzhin*) or principal (*pradhāna, gtso bo*) that pervades all its instances. The pervasion is not, as with the Buddhists, said to be merely imputed by thought; it is the actual nature of things that, for example, the general tree-nature pervades all instances of trees. In this system, instances are seen as evolutes (*parināma, rnam 'gyur*) of that nature. Accordingly, oxen, for example, are said to evolve or

arise from the ox-generality which in turn is a manifestation of the fundamental nature.

Buddhists maintain that the relationship between a generality and its instances is merely imputed by thought and, like Sāṃkhya considers a generality and its manifestations to be one entity, but in Sāṃkhya, this relationship is not merely imputed by thought. However, the ox-generality which is one substantial entity with all instances of oxen can also exist even if no instances exist. Thus, even if there were no oxen there could be an ox-generality containing the non-manifest-yet-to-be-evolved oxen within it.

The fact that oxen are evolutes of the ox-generality means that according to Sāṃkhya the identification or naming of 'ox' does not involve eliminating all that is not ox. Exclusion is not part of the process; all that is necessary is to identify the positive ox-nature present in all oxen. By contrast, the Buddhists consider that an identification of oxen is made through excluding all that is non-oxen; oxen are only known in relation to what are not oxen. Thus, unlike the Buddhists, the Sāṃkhyas do not posit a theory of exclusion in order to explain the naming process.

Buddhist Critique of Sāṃkhya

Sāṃkhya asserts that the general principal is partless and yet is fully concomitant with each of its instances. The fact that this generality is partless seems to signify that all of it pervades each and every instance; it is not a case of part of the pot-generality, for example, existing with one pot and part with another.

The Buddhist position is that a generality having parts does pervade its instances, it being merely imputed by thought to do so. In this way they avoid a difficulty for which Sāṃkhya is criticized, namely, that if the same partless generality pervades two separate instances, those instances must share an identical nature. The Sāṃkhyas would in fact agree that an oak and a cedar tree share the same tree nature. The Buddhists take this position to its absurd conclusion by maintaining that then it would follow that the nature of a cedar exists in an oak. This is untenable because, as the Buddhists emphasize, all impermanent phenomena abide as unmixed with other phenomena in terms of place, time, and nature. Mixture of place, time and nature is erroneously imputed by thought according to the Buddhists; Sāṃkhya, however, maintains that this is how things actually exist. Dharmakīrti in the first chapter of his *Commen-*

tary on (Dignāga's) 'Compendium on Valid Cognition' rejects this assertion in order to refute the Sāṃkhya tenet of a partless general principal that pervades all its instances:

> That entity possessed by a spotted [ox]
> Does not exist in a white one.[28]

In the Gelukba presentation of Sautrāntika, it would be unsuitable to consider that the nature or entity of one phenomenon exists in another phenomenon. In this view (1) there is no pervasive generality which exists apart from its instances and (2) the nature of phenomena is to be unmixed with any other phenomena. In other words, the specific characteristic of being a pot that exists in relation to a silver pot is not mixed with the specific characteristic of being a pot which exists in relation to a golden pot or another silver pot.

The Buddhists have another criticism of the Sāṃkhya view that a partless generality pervades its instances. Not only do they find this position difficult to posit in terms of the natures of the individual instances being mixed, but also in terms of the generality itself. The Buddhists ask, how can a single partless generality, such as Sāṃkhya asserts, be fully present in each and every instance? Either the generality would be many or the instances would be subsumed into a single, partless object. This would follow, they say, because Sāṃkhya considers it impossible to assert that only part of the generality inheres in any of its instances and in this sense holds that the generality is partless. Sāṃkhya maintains that the entire partless ox-generality, for example, inheres in each and every diverse instance of ox.

In the Buddhist view, Sāṃkhyas are correct to posit that generality and instance are one entity, but at fault in being unable to posit any difference between them at all. The Buddhists posit difference within sameness on the basis of their theory of exclusion. Although the generality pot and an instance of pot are one entity, they are different isolates — pot being opposite from non-pot and gold pot being opposite from non-gold pot. They are different opposites of the negative, or even more technically, opposite from not being one with pot and opposite from not being one with gold pot, respectively. These two are *not* separate for direct perception — one simply sees a pot which is gold. They *are* different for thought because thought can isolate a particular factor in relation to pot and focus only on it; thus one can think 'generality' or 'instance' with respect

to a single pot. In the Buddhist view, these categories are merely verbal or mental designations; thus, it is not necessary to have different ultimate entities that correspond to each designation. In the Buddhist view, the Sāṃkhyas are unable to posit difference within sameness because they have no theory of exclusion and thus no assertions regarding the ability of thought to isolate certain factors contained within the same entity; they therefore consider generality and instance to exist in a single entity in the sense that the instances are evolved from the general nature.

Because Sāṃkhyas consider that the relationship between a generality and its instances is not merely posited by thought but exists by the power of those phenomena themselves, they maintain that the entire, partless generality is actually present in each of its instances. Indeed, this generality, as noted above, is partless precisely because it exists in its entirety wherever it is found. It is not that part of it is in one place and part in another. In the Buddhist view, the generality-factor of, for example, a pot is merely imputed by thought. Generalities are not necessarily partless because gross impermanent objects such as chairs or tables are also generalities. In any case, the Buddhist meaning of 'partless' differs from the Sāṃkhya usage. In the view of the former, to be partless does not mean to be partless in every respect. For example, minute particles of matter are spatially partless in Sautrāntika, but they do have parts in the sense of possessing the various factors of being a product, being impermanent, being a functioning thing and so forth. Thus, the Buddhists can posit even a spatially partless particle as a generality because its factor of being opposite from non-partless particle is concomitant with all other instances of spatially partless particles. This concomitance, however, is merely imputed by thought; it does not, as in Sāṃkhya, exist from its own side or by its own power. In this way, the Buddhist position claims to avoid the difficulties involved in positing that a single generality exists in all its instances.

Sāṃkhya View on Similarity of Type

Based on their different presentations of generalities, the Buddhists and Sāṃkhyas also have different explanations as to why minds of similar type arise with respect to, for example, maple and oak trees. As noted above, the Buddhists maintain that because both maple and oak are trees — that is, both are opposite from non-tree — and because of predispositions formed by earlier naming, a mind con-

ceiving of 'tree' arises with respect to each. Sāṃkhyas, however, would say that oak and maple are recognized as being of similar type because the tree generality which is a positive phenomenon dwells in or is present in both. A pot and a tree are not naturally seen as similar in type because the tree-generality is not present in both. However, since there are some generalities such as impermanence and productness that are present in both pots and trees, it would seem that according to Sāṃkhya one would necessarily generate a mind seeing these as the same type, provided the initial identification of impermanence or productness had been made.

Sāṃkhyas further say that the fact of a single generality dwelling in both maple and oak trees proves the existence of the partless generality. For, they argue that there must be some cause for understanding the individually separate entities of maple and oak as being of one type, since, if there were no such cause, this type of understanding would not arise. Consequently, they hold that there exists a single cause which is the agent for the production of various individual effects of similar type such as different types of trees. Moreover, in the Sāṃkhya view it is unsuitable to posit anything other than the tree-generality as such a cohesive cause of its instances. The maple and oak are manifestations of that tree-generality. Prior to their manifest production both trees existed in non-manifest form within the tree generality. At that time they were one substantial entity with the tree-generality and after production they continue to be one substantial entity with that generality. Production, according to Sāṃkhya, is not a case of creating a new, separate substantial entity but rather a manifestation of an entity that previously existed in non-manifest form within the general nature. Although the tree-generality can exist separately from manifest trees because it is theoretically possible for all such trees to dissolve back into the tree-generality, that tree-generality is never separate from the potential for manifesting trees. In other words, it is always one substantial entity with non-manifest trees. Moreover, when the manifest tree appears to direct perception, the tree-generality also appears.

This markedly contrasts with the Buddhist view that the factor which applies to individual trees — the tree-generality or factor of being opposite from non-tree — may be imputed by thought and thus not appear to direct perception. Thus, Sāṃkhyas describe the naming process as a matter of identifying the single nature — a positive phenomenon — which pervades all instances. For Buddhists, naming involves eliminating all that is not the thing being named — for example eliminating non-ox — and connecting the name with a mental image — the appearance as opposite from non-ox — that corresponds to a negative phenomenon which exists with every instance of oxen; that is, to opposite-from-non-ox. The theory of exclusion and the ability to posit negative phenomena thus allows the Buddhists to describe the naming process without positing a positive generality that even in theory could exist separately from its manifest instances. In this way, they avoid the difficulties mentioned above.

The theory of exclusions also enables the Buddhists to posit difference within sameness; to assert that a single substantial entity can contain qualities or factors which are isolatable by thought.

PHENOMENA AS INEXPRESSIBLE

According to Gelukba, the Sautrāntikas consider all impermanent phenomena such as trees or oxen to be ultimate truths. Such phenomena can appear in all their richness of detail only to direct perception. Thought can realize these phenomena but cannot apprehend all the specifics that characterize them. Similarly, words cannot fully express impermanent phenomena, cannot evoke all the constituent aspects of, for example, a table.[29] An image of a table is the explicit object of expression of the term 'table' according to Den-dar-hla-ram-ba. It is to this image that the name 'table' was applied when one initially learned the term. However, it was not the *image* which was being identified as a table but an external object with four legs, a flat top, and so forth. Similarly, at the time of using the convention 'table', although the explicit object of expression is the image evoked by that term, the object to which the name refers and which is the main object of expression of that term is an actual table. Thus, ultimate truths — impermanent phenomena — though they cannot be *fully* expressed by words, are expressed by words. The inexpressibility of such phenomena simply means that words cannot evoke an understanding of any impermanent phenomenon, however ordinary, in all its detail. When we say 'table' we do not refer to 'product', 'impermanent thing', or 'specifically characterized phenomenon.' The name 'table' refers only to the collection-generality table. It does not refer to or operate with respect to these other factors even though they are all necessarily present together in one substantial entity.[30] Thus, a term is a partial

engager (*sel 'jug*) that refers to only some of the factors coalesced in any one object. When direct perception sees a table, for example, it sees all the factors involved with it: the factors of impermanence, its momentary disintegration, its productness and so forth. Thus, direct perception is a collective or complete engager (*sgrub 'jug*) that operates with respect to all the factors which are of one entity of establishment and abiding with the observed object.

Terms or names can never be complete engagers. Therefore, even though a person may directly perceive the object named, the name itself operates with respect to only the collection-generality — in this case, the table itself — and not with respect to a table as an ultimate truth, specifically characterized phenomenon, and so forth. Thus, words and thought pale in comparison with direct perception.

It should be noted that although it is considered essential and religiously significant to realize the coarse and subtle impermanence of phenomena, this is not, in the Buddhist view, the most profound fact that one can realize about them. It is even more helpful to understand things as empty; that is, in terms of the Sautrāntika path, to realize them as selfless in the sense of not being used by substantially existent persons; one comes to this understanding by realizing that substantially existent persons do not exist.

Sautrāntika emphasizes that although words cannot fully describe impermanent phenomena nor thought take them as appearing objects, words and thought do significantly get at such phenomena. Similarly, although words do not do full justice to a description of emptiness — whether the emptiness of a self-sufficient self-taught in Sautrāntika, or the more subtle emptiness of inherent existence in Mādhyamika — they do point the way. Just as specifically characterized phenomena are inexpressible in Sautrāntika, the emptiness taught in Mādhyamika is inexpressible also. Yet, just as words can be used in the process of cultivating an understanding of subtle impermanence, so they can be used to cultivate an understanding of emptiness. That words cannot evoke a conceptual realization of these phenomena that has all the clarity of direct perception is seen as less important than that through gaining familiarity with the meaning of those words one is actually taking the first steps along the road that culminates in full-fledged direct perception. The first time one hears an explanation of subtle impermanence or emptiness — and perhaps for many times thereafter — one may well be left with little more than a verbal echo in one's mind. The Gelukba structure of the path is based on the premise that the effects of words and of

the thoughts they induce are by no means limited to such meager benefits. Like beginning with an outline on canvas and then coloring it in with various shades and variety of detail, one can start with a mere term-generality and cultivate a more and more refined and evocative mental image until, finally, the picture comes to life, as it were, when both the term and meaning-generalities fade away and conceptual thought itself evolves into direct cognition. Gelukba may be unique in its willingness to wed so closely a vigorous and extensive scholastic tradition with a highly refined meditative technique for the overall purpose of transformative realization. This welding of the conceptual and non-conceptual elements of the path to liberating knowledge is founded on the conviction that the inexpressible can be discussed sufficiently well to give rise to factually concordant conceptual consciousnesses that can then be enriched into direct perception.

Frederick Streng notes that "Nāgārjuna [whose systemizations of the *Perfection of Wisdom* sutras are the basis for Mādhyamika] used the term emptiness with a keen awareness of the problems involved in expressing the inexpressible ..."[31] Similarly, in terms of the Sautrāntika presentation, the inexpressible is expressible to a significant enough degree to make such expression worthwhile. At the same time, the limitations of words and thought must be understood. To use words for any specifically characterized phenomenon — never mind for emptiness — is to talk about 'the inexpressible.' The message from Gelukba is not to expect too much from words, that is, not to expect the full measure of direct insight to arise from them, but not to underrate them either. In this view it would be unfortunate to conclude that because a complex discussion of impermanence or emptiness initially calls forth only minimal understanding, all conceptuality will always remain at that level.

The Sautrāntika presentation of naming and the relationship posited between a generality and its instances, as given here, is also accepted by the Cittamātrins and Mādhyamikas according to Gelukba. Their presentation underscores the tenet that words and thought do indeed relate to actual phenomena. Existent phenomena such as tables or chairs, but more importantly impermanence and selflessness, *can* be expressed by words to a degree sufficient for paving the way to direct perception and non-dualistic understanding. Further evidence set out in Sautrāntika to emphasize this possibility is discussed in the following chapter.

Also by Jeffrey Hopkins

Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism
(with Geshe Lhundup Sopa)

The Buddhism of Tibet and the Key to the Middle Way
(with Lati Rinbochay)

The Precious Garland and the Song of the Four Mindfulnesses
(with Lati Rinbochay)

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(with Lati Rinbochay, Lochö Rinbochay, and Leah Zahler)

Meditation on Emptiness

Jeffrey Hopkins

Assistant Editor:
Elizabeth Napper

Wisdom Publications · London

Both are impermanent whereas uncaused space, which is a non-affirming negative of obstructive contact, appears only to an inferential mental consciousness and is permanent. Like emptiness, it is a mere absence of a negated factor—for emptiness, inherent existence, and for space, obstructive contact.

Forms arising from promises. When one takes a vow of individual liberation, a form arises in dependence on the shape of the body, as in crouching, and in dependence on the sounds of speech, as in declaring that one will turn away from killing. This subtle physical entity is said to arise at the moment of first taking the vow and remains with the person until losing the vow or death. Similarly, a form arises from non-restraint as, for instance, in dependence on a butcher's physical and verbal actions in killing animals and selling their flesh. A middling variety of such is a form that arises from physical or verbal virtue. Forms arising from promises are continuations of virtue or sin and arise from revelatory actions of body or speech or arise from cultivating meditative stabilization. Since the motivations of these actions are not knowable by others, they are called 'non-revelatory forms' (*avijñaptirūpa, rnam par rig byed ma yin pa'i gzugs*).

Imaginary forms. Dream objects, such as elephants, and non-actual objects of meditation, such as corpses filling the world, appear as if they were actual forms but are not; thus, they are classed as imaginary forms. The Prāsaṅgikas say that a dream consciousness is solely a mental consciousness appearing in the aspects of the five sense consciousnesses. A dream object is an external object affecting a mental consciousness just as a reflection in a mirror is an external object affecting an eye consciousness. The non-Buddhist Mīmāṃsakas say that the light of the eye hits the mirror, and through returning to the eye an image is seen. The Buddhist Vaibhāṣhikas say that a clear type of form arises in the mirror. The Sautrāntikas, Chittamātrins and Yogāchāra-Svātantrikas say that a mirror image is a false appearance to the mind and is not a different entity from the mind. The Prāsaṅgikas, however, say that reflections, the falling hairs seen by one with

cataracts, and mirages are visible forms just as echoes are sounds. A consciousness perceiving these is nevertheless mistaken because, for example, a mirror image of a face appears to be a face and not just a mirror image.

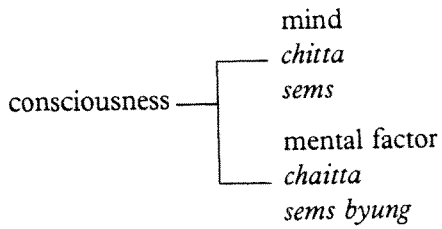
Forms for one with meditative power. Forms that appear to one who has attained mastery in meditation are objects of meditation that exist in fact. Mere earth or mere water as a meditative manifestation of one who has attained mastery in meditation is actual and is not an imaginary form. Included in this category are objects of meditative manifestation that can be shown to another being's eye consciousness, but this does not make the object as it appears to the master a visible form; for him it still is a form for the mental consciousness. This is compared to the varieties of externally existent objects seen by different types of beings, as in the case of a god's seeing a bowl of fluid as ambrosia and a hungry ghost's seeing pus and blood in the same place.

Consciousness

Sources:
Ye-shay-gyel-tsen's *Clear Exposition of the Modes of Minds and Mental Factors*
Lati Rinbochay's oral teachings

The second division of things, or impermanent phenomena, is consciousness, defined as the clear and knowing.[166] Consciousness is of two types:

Chart 20: *Divisions of Consciousness*



Minds

A mind is a knower of the mere entity of an object, whereas a mental factor is a knower which, on the basis of observing that

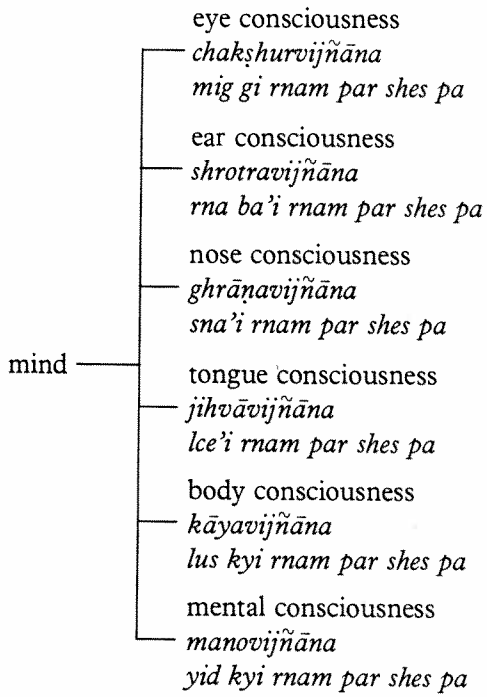
object, engages in the object from the point of view of other features, such as function and so forth. Minds and mental factors are different within being the same entity; they possess five similarities which, as described in Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmakosha*) are:

1 *Sameness of base.* A mind and its accompanying mental factors depend on the same sense power, as in the case of an eye consciousness and its mental factors which both depend on the physical eye sense power.
2 *Sameness of object of observation.* A mind and its mental factors observe the same object. For instance, when the main eye consciousness apprehends blue, so does the mental factor of feeling that accompanies it.
3 *Sameness of aspect.* For instance, if the main eye consciousness is generated in the aspect (or image) of blue, so is the mental factor of discrimination that accompanies it.
4 *Sameness of time.* A mind and its mental factors are produced, abide, and cease simultaneously.
5 *Sameness of substantial entity.* Just as at any one time the substantial entity of a particular mind is single and there are not many minds of the same type, such as several eye consciousnesses, so the substantial entity of, for instance, the mental factor of intention that accompanies the eye consciousness is also single.

Asanga's *Compendium of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmasamuchchaya*) combines the sameness of object of observation and sameness of aspect and adds another, sameness of realm and level. This refers to the fact that if, for instance, the main mind is of the Desire Realm, only mental factors of the Desire Realm will accompany it, and not mental factors of the Form or Formless Realms.

Minds are of only six types (see Chart 21). An eye consciousness is an individual knower depending on the eye and observing visible form. An ear consciousness is an individual knower depending on the ear and observing sound. A nose consciousness is an individual knower depending on the nose and observing odor. A tongue consciousness is an individual knower

Chart 21: *Divisions of Minds*



depending on the tongue and observing taste. A body consciousness is an individual knower depending on the body and observing tangible objects. A mental consciousness is an individual knower depending on the mind sense (which is a former moment of consciousness and thus non-physical) and observing phenomena.

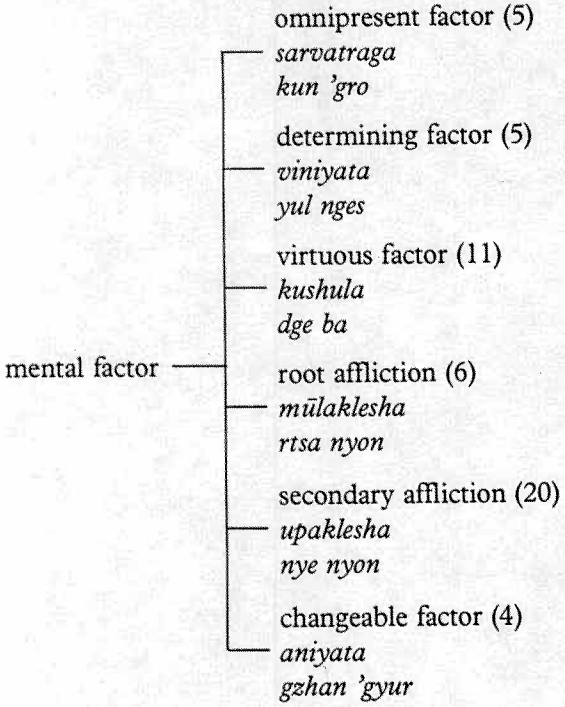
The mind cognizing emptiness, either inferentially or directly, is a mental consciousness, not an eye, ear, nose, tongue, or body consciousness, except in the case of a Buddha whose consciousnesses are cross-functional. The mental consciousness has the capacity to penetrate, first conceptually and then non-conceptually, the nature of phenomena, which not only is beyond the realm of a non-Buddha's sense perception but also is obscured by a false overlay that until Buddhahood accompanies sense perception. In dependence on reasoning, the mental consciousness

first realizes an emptiness of a particular object conceptually—by way of the image of a vacuity which is a negative of inherent existence; then through familiarity with that knowledge, the imagistic element is removed, whereupon the mental consciousness becomes a Superior's wisdom directly cognizing emptiness.

Mental factors

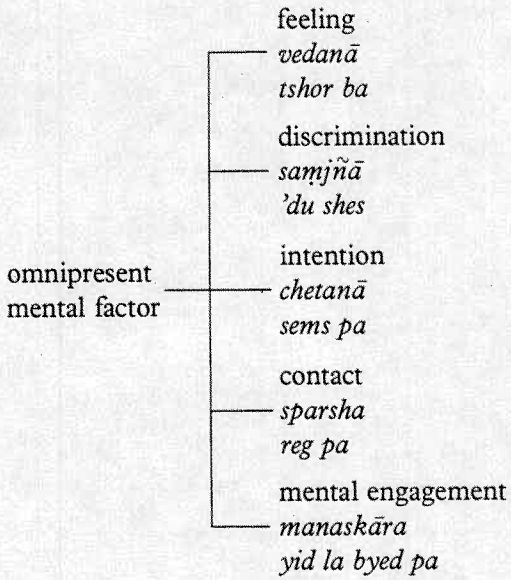
There are fifty-one mental factors which are classed in six groups:

Chart 22: *Divisions of Mental Factors*



Omnipresent mental factors. The omnipresent mental factors are so named because they necessarily accompany all minds, even the wisdom cognizing emptiness. The five omnipresent mental factors are:

Chart 23: *Divisions of Omnipresent Mental Factors*



Feeling. Feeling is an entity of experience individually experiencing the fruitions of virtuous and non-virtuous actions. Its objects are pleasure, pain, and neutrality. Pleasure is that with which, when it ceases, one wants to meet again; pain is that from which, when it arises, one wants to separate; and neutrality, being neither pleasure nor pain, is that with respect to which, when it arises, neither the wish to meet nor the wish to separate occurs. Pleasure, pain, and neutrality are called 'fruitions' in order to emphasize that all generations of pleasure, pain, and neutral feeling are results of former actions.

All pleasures, even that arising from a cool breeze in a hell, arise from virtuous actions (*karma, las*) accumulated in the past. Similarly, all pains, even a headache in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer, arise from non-virtuous actions accumulated in the past. In other words, pleasure and pain do not arise causelessly, or from a discordant cause, such as the nature (*prakṛti, rang bzhin*) asserted by the Sāṃkhyas or the lord Īshvara as asserted by the Aishvaras. Rather, general pleasure and pain, such as

being born as a human or as a hell-being, arise from general virtuous and non-virtuous actions, such as an ethical deed or the sin of murder. Similarly, the varieties of particular pleasures and pains arise from the varieties of particular virtuous and non-virtuous actions. The development of certainty as to this definite and undeceived relationship of action and effect—of pleasure to virtue and pain to non-virtue—is praised as the basis of all auspicious doctrines and called the correct view of all Buddhists.

Pleasure (*sukha*), pain (*duḥkha*), and neutrality (*aduḥkhā-sukha*) can each be divided into physical (*kāyikī*) and mental (*chaitasikī*) feeling, making six types of feeling. Physical feeling refers to that accompanying any of the five sense consciousnesses, not just that accompanying the body consciousness. It is called physical because the five sense powers are composed of clear matter and because the body sense power pervades the sense powers of eye, ear, nose, and tongue. Mental feeling is that accompanying the mental consciousness.

From the viewpoint of their base or sense power, feelings are of six types:

1 feeling arising from contact upon the aggregation of a visible object, eye sense, and eye consciousness (*chakṣhuḥsaṃsparshajā vedanā*)
2 feeling arising from contact upon the aggregation of a sound, ear sense, and ear consciousness (*shrotrasaṃsparshajā vedanā*)
3 feeling arising from contact upon the aggregation of an odor, nose sense, and nose consciousness (*ghrāṇasaṃsparshajā vedanā*)
4 feeling arising from contact upon the aggregation of a taste, tongue sense, and tongue consciousness (*jihvāsaṃsparshajā vedanā*)
5 feeling arising from contact upon the aggregation of a tangible object, body sense, and body consciousness (*kāyasaṃsparshajā vedanā*)
6 feeling arising from contact upon the aggregation of a phenomenon, mental sense, and mental consciousness (*manaḥsaṃsparshajā vedanā*).

Taking into account pleasure, pain, and neutrality, these six are further divided into eighteen types of feeling.

When divided from the viewpoint of object of abandonment and antidote, there are two types:

1 feeling as the base of attachment (*gredhāshritavedanā*), which is feeling accompanying attachment to attributes of the Desire Realm
2 feeling as the base of deliverance (*naiṣhkamyāshritavedanā*), which is feeling accompanying a mental consciousness that has turned away from desire for attributes of the Desire Realm and is included within an actual concentration.

This division into two is made in order to make known how attachment is induced by the power of feeling and how one separates from attachment to feeling in dependence on the concentrations.

There is also a division of feeling into materialistic (*sāmiṣha-vedanā*) and non-materialistic (*nirāmiṣhavedanā*). The former is feeling accompanying attachment to contaminated mental and physical aggregates, whereas the latter is feeling accompanying a wisdom consciousness directly cognizing selflessness.

Discrimination. Discrimination apprehends, upon the aggregation of an object, sense power, and a consciousness, the uncommon signs of an object. There are two types:

1 non-conceptual apprehension of signs: apprehension of the uncommon signs of an object appearing to a non-conceptual mind
2 conceptual apprehension of signs: apprehension of the uncommon signs of an object appearing to thought.

These two types of discrimination operate on (1) *perceptions*, involving the designation of expressions to objects manifestly perceived, (2) *hearing*, involving the designation of expressions in dependence on hearing believable words, (3) *differentiations*, involving the designation of expressions to objects ascertained in dependence on signs (such as in determining that an article is

good due to possessing the signs of superior quality), and (4) *knowledge*, involving the designation of expressions to objects ascertained directly.

There is also a division of discrimination into two types:

1 discrimination apprehending signs in objects: apprehension individually differentiating the features of an object, such as blue, yellow, and so forth
2 discrimination apprehending signs in expressions: apprehension individually differentiating the features of expressions, such as in, 'This is a man; that is a woman.'

From the viewpoint of its base, discrimination is of six types:

1 discrimination arising from contact upon the aggregation of a visible object, eye sense, and eye consciousness (*chakṣhuḥsaṃsparshajā saṃjñā*)
2 discrimination arising from contact upon the aggregation of a sound, ear sense, and ear consciousness (*shrotrasaṃsparshajā saṃjñā*)
3 discrimination arising from contact upon the aggregation of an odor, nose sense, and nose consciousness (*ghrāṇasaṃsparshajā saṃjñā*)
4 discrimination arising from contact upon the aggregation of taste, tongue sense, and tongue consciousness (*jihvāsaṃsparshajā saṃjñā*)
5 discrimination arising from contact upon the aggregation of a tangible object, body sense, and body consciousness (*kāyasaṃsparshajā saṃjñā*)
6 discrimination arising from contact upon the aggregation of a phenomenon, mental sense, and mental consciousness (*manaḥsaṃsparshajā saṃjñā*).

From the viewpoint of object of observation, it is also of six types:

1 reasoned discrimination (*sanimittasaṃjñā*): (a) discrimination skilled in the relationship of names and meanings, (b) discrimination observing products as impermanent and so forth, and (c) discrimination having a clear subjective aspect and object of observation

2 unreasoned discrimination (*animittasaṃjñā*): (a) discrimination unskilled in the relationship of names and meanings, (b) discrimination observing products as permanent and so forth, and (c) discrimination lacking clear subjective aspect and object of observation
3 discrimination of the small (*parīttā saṃjñā*): (a) discriminations in the continuum of an ordinary being in the Desire Realm who has not attained an actual concentration and (b) discriminations observing attributes of the Desire Realm
4 discrimination of the vast (*mahadgatā saṃjñā*): (a) discriminations observing the Form Realm and (b) discriminations in the continuums of beings of the Form Realm
5 discrimination of the limitless (*apramāṇasaṃjñā*): (a) discriminations observing limitless space or limitless consciousness
6 discrimination of nothingness (*akiñchinsaṃjñā*): discriminations observing nothingness (a state beyond coarse feeling and discrimination).

In general, discrimination involves the differentiation and identification of objects; as a mental factor accompanying a non-conceptual mind such as an eye consciousness, it implies a non-confusion of the details of the object without which a later identification could not be made.[167] Discrimination is the heart of identifying the object of negation in the view of selflessness and then reflecting on a reasoning proving non-inherent existence; thus, far from being a hindrance to the path, correct discrimination is to be enhanced.

Intention. Intention (or attention) is the mental factor that moves and directs the mind that accompanies it to its object; it has the function of engaging the mind in the virtuous (*kushala, dge ba*), non-virtuous (*akushala, mi dge ba*), and neutral (*avyākṛta, lung du ma bstan pa*). Intention is the most important of all mental factors because through its power minds and mental factors engage in objects, like pieces of iron powerlessly moved by a magnet.

From the viewpoint of its base, intention is of six types:

1 intention arising from contact upon the aggregation of a

visible object, eye sense, and eye consciousness (*chakṣhuḥ-saṃsparshajā chetanā*)
2 intention arising from contact upon the aggregation of a sound, ear sense, and ear consciousness (*shrotrasaṃsparshajā chetanā*)
3 intention arising from contact upon the aggregation of an odor, nose sense, and nose consciousness (*ghrāṇasaṃsparshajā chetanā*)
4 intention arising from contact upon the aggregation of a taste, tongue sense, and tongue consciousness (*jihvāsaṃsparshajā chetanā*)
5 intention arising from contact upon the aggregation of a tangible object, body sense, and body consciousness (*kāyasaṃsparshajā chetanā*)
6 intention arising from contact upon the aggregation of a phenomenon, mental sense, and mental consciousness (*manaḥsaṃsparshajā chetanā*).

Intention is mental action (*manaskarma, yid kyi las*) from among the two types of action (*karma, las*), actions of intention (mental actions) and intended actions (physical and verbal actions).

Contact. Contact distinguishes its object—upon the aggregation of object, sense power, and mind—as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral in accordance with subsequent feelings of pleasure, pain, or neutrality; thus, it has the function of serving as a basis for feeling. Since contact distinguishes its object as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral, it serves as a cause for the feelings of pleasure, pain, or neutrality which in turn serve as causes for desire, hatred, and ignorance.

From the viewpoint of its base, contact is of six types:

1 contact upon the aggregation of a visible object, eye sense, and eye consciousness
2 contact upon the aggregation of a sound, ear sense, and ear consciousness
3 contact upon the aggregation of an odor, nose sense, and nose consciousness
4 contact upon the aggregation of a taste, tongue sense, and tongue consciousness

5 contact upon the aggregation of a tangible object, body sense, and body consciousness
6 contact upon the aggregation of a phenomenon, mental sense, and mental consciousness.

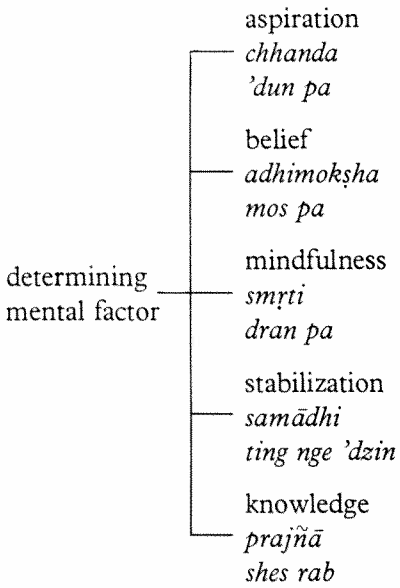
Mental engagement. Mental engagement directs the mind accompanying it to a specific object of observation (*ālambana, dmigs pa*). The difference between intention and mental engagement is that intention moves the mind to objects in general whereas mental engagement directs the mind to a specific object.

Without the five omnipresent factors, the experience of an object would not be complete. Without feeling, there would be no experience of pleasure, pain, or neutrality. Without discrimination, the uncommon signs of the object would not be apprehended. Without intention, the mind would not approach its object. Without contact, there would be no basis for feeling. Without mental engagement, the mind would not be directed to a specific object of observation. Thus, all five are needed to experience an object.

Determining mental factors. The five determining mental factors are shown in Chart 24.

Aspiration. Aspiration observes a contemplated phenomenon and seeks it. Aspiration serves as a base for the initiation of effort in the sense that, for instance, through perceiving the advantages of meditative stabilization, a captivating faith in meditative stabilization is produced, and in dependence on this, a strong continuous aspiration seeking meditative stabilization is generated such that one is able to generate continuous effort. Effort in meditative stabilization, in turn, generates a pliancy of mind and body that bestows an ability to remain in the practice of virtue night and day, thereby overcoming the laziness which is a non-delight in cultivating meditative stabilization and liking for what is discordant with meditative stabilization. Thus, faith, aspiration, effort, and pliancy are the antidotes to laziness.

Chart 24: *Divisions of Determining Mental Factors*



Aspiration is divided into three types: aspiration wishing to meet, aspiration wishing not to separate, and aspiration that seeks. The last is again divided into aspiration seeking desires, aspiration seeking views, and so forth.

Belief. Belief holds an ascertained object to be just as it was ascertained; it has the function of keeping the mind from being captivated by another view. For instance, when one considers Buddha and other teachers and analyzes to discover which is an undeceiving refuge, one ascertains that only Buddha is the teacher of an undeceiving refuge. Then, when the doctrine taught by him and the spiritual community properly achieving his doctrine are ascertained by valid cognition as undeceiving, a firm belief in them as final refuges is gained. Thereupon, Forders and so forth cannot lead one away from this position. One has then entered among the number of Buddhists, and based on this, all auspicious qualities increase.

Mindfulness. Mindfulness is non-forgetfulness with respect to a familiar phenomenon; it has the function of causing non-distraction. Mindfulness has three features:

1 objective feature: a familiar object. Mindfulness cannot be generated toward an unfamiliar object.
2 subjective feature: non-forgetfulness within observation of that object. Even though one might have become familiar with an object previously, if it does not presently appear as an object of mind, mindfulness cannot occur.
3 functional feature: causing non-distraction. Since the stability of the mind increases in dependence on mindfulness, non-distraction is specified as the function of mindfulness.

Mindfulness that possesses these three features is extremely important for both sutra and tantra practice, as all auspicious qualities of the grounds and paths increase in dependence on mindfulness and introspection. In particular, all achievements of meditative stabilization in sutra and tantra are attained through the power of mindfulness.

Stabilization. Stabilization is a one-pointedness of mind with respect to an imputed object; it has the function of serving as the base of knowledge, that is, special insight. The object of stabilization is specified as 'imputed' because when meditative stabilization is cultivated, the mind is held to a mentally imputed or imagined object of observation. This indicates that meditative stabilization is not generated by a sense consciousness, such as by an eye consciousness staring at an object, but by the mental consciousness observing an internal object. Through continuous cultivation of meditative stabilization, the object of observation —whether true or untrue—will be perceived clearly and non-conceptually.

In dependence on the meditative stabilization of calm abiding, which is a setting of the mind internally in equipoise, special insight is achieved through the force of analytical wisdom. Therefore, the function of stabilization is specified as serving as the base of knowledge. Stabilization, in turn, depends on ethics.

Knowledge. Knowledge (or wisdom) individually differentiates the faults and virtues of objects of analysis; it has the function of overcoming doubt. When one analyzes with reasoning and gains ascertainment, doubt is overcome; thus, the function of knowledge is specified as overcoming doubt.

Virtuous mental factors. The eleven virtuous mental factors are:

Chart 25: *Divisions of Virtuous Mental Factors*

virtuous mental factor
- faith — *shraddhā, dad pa*
- shame — *hrī, ngo tsha shes pa*
- embarrassment — *apatrāpya, khrel yod pa*
- non-attachment — *alobha, ma chags pa*
- non-hatred — *adveṣha, zhe sdang med pa*
- non-ignorance — *amoha, gti mug med pa*
- effort — *vīrya, brtson 'grus*
- pliancy — *prasrabdhi, shin tu sbyangs pa*
- conscientiousness — *apramāda, bag yod pa*
- equanimity — *upekṣhā, btang snyoms*
- non-harmfulness — *avihiṃsā, rnam par mi 'tshe ba*

Faith. Faith has the aspect of clarity (*prasāda, dang ba*), conviction (*abhisampratyaya, yid ches*), or a wish to attain (*abhilāṣha, 'thob 'dod*) with respect to the existent (such as actions and their effects), the possession of qualities (such as by the Three Jewels), or powers (such as the powers of the path to actualize cessation). It has the function of serving as a basis for aspiration. The faith of clarity, or clarifying faith, is, for instance, the clarity of mind that comes through perceiving the qualities of the Three Jewels; it is called 'clarifying' because just as when a water-clarifying jewel is put in water, the dirtiness in the water is immediately cleansed, so when this type of faith is generated in the continuum, mental troubles are cleared away, whereupon the qualities of realization are suitable to be generated.

The faith of conviction is, for instance, the gaining of conviction in dependent-arising or in actions and their effects through contemplating these doctrines as set forth by the Conqueror. The faith which is a wish to attain is, for instance, the faith thinking, 'I will definitely attain the cessation of suffering', upon contemplating the four noble truths, ascertaining true sufferings and true sources as objects of abandonment and true cessations and true paths as objects of attainment, and realizing that through striving in the proper way these can be attained.

Although the world equates faith (*dad pa*) and liking (*dga' ba*), they are not the same. Liking one's child or spouse and liking beer are cases of liking but not of faith. Also, the faith which is a concern and conviction from one's depths with respect to the faults of cyclic existence is faith but not liking. The faith which is a conviction and liking from the depths through contemplating the qualities of a spiritual guide or the benefits of wholesome actions and their effects is both faith and liking.

Furthermore, faith and respect (*gus pa*) are not the same though they are considered to be so in the world. For instance, liking a spiritual guide is faith, but respecting a spiritual guide involves contemplating his kindness, knowing shame, and valuing him highly; thus, faith and respect are different mental factors.

As explained earlier, effort is the cause of all auspicious qualities, and in order to generate effort, aspiration seeking those

qualities is necessary. In order to generate aspiration, one must perceive those qualities and have the faith of conviction in them. Thus, faith is frequently praised in the scriptures and their commentaries as the basis of all auspicious attainments.

Shame and embarrassment. Shame is an avoidance of misconduct due to one's own disapproval whereas embarrassment is an avoidance of misconduct due to others' disapproval. These mental factors both have the function of serving as a basis for restraining misconduct. In the case of shame, when one is about to engage in misconduct, one avoids it by thinking, 'This is not something I should do,' whereas in the case of embarrassment, one avoids it by thinking, 'Since others will despise me, this is not suitable.' This latter involves concern for the displeasure of a lama, teacher, or the like.

Shame and embarrassment serve as a basis for restraining misconduct in the sense that to restrain physical, verbal, and mental misconduct, one must definitely have shame and embarrassment; for if one does not have either concern from one's own point of view over the fruition of an action or concern for the discomfort of a lama or teacher, there is no way to cease misconduct.

Non-attachment, non-hatred, and non-ignorance. Non-attachment is an emergence from and non-desire for cyclic existence and the articles of cyclic existence. Non-hatred is a factor that, in observing either harmful sentient beings, sufferings, or sources of suffering, conquers the generation of hatred; it is an absence of the intent to harm. Non-ignorance is a knowledge of individual analysis that can serve as an antidote to ignorance; it is either attained from birth through the fruition of actions in an earlier lifetime without depending on contributing causes in this lifetime or arises through application by way of hearing, thinking, or meditating.

Non-attachment, non-hatred, and non-ignorance have the function of serving as bases for non-engagement in misconduct, being *roots* of all virtuous practices, *methods* for ceasing all misconduct, and the *essence* of all paths. Since all grounds and paths are for the

sake of abandoning the three poisons of desire, hatred, and ignorance and since these three mental factors cause one to emerge from the three poisons that cause all misconduct, their function is specified as serving as bases for restraining misconduct.

A being of small capacity generates non-attachment to this life and, turning away from this life, seeks his own welfare in future lives. A being of middling capacity generates non-attachment toward all the marvels of cyclic existence and, having reversed his grasping from the depths, seeks release from all cyclic existence. A being of great capacity generates non-attachment to both cyclic existence and a state of solitary peace and seeks the non-abiding nirvana of a Buddha wherein he can remain in meditative equipoise on emptiness while at the same time manifesting countless forms in order to help migrators in cyclic existence. In this way, all paths can be related to non-attachment as well as to non-hatred and non-ignorance.

Effort. Effort is a mental delight in virtue; it has the function of fulfilling and accomplishing virtues. Although in the world everything that involves striving is called effort, toil only for the sake of the affairs of this lifetime is not effort but is laziness that is an attachment to bad activities; it is discordant with effort.

There are five types of effort:

1 effort of armoring—this is the thought prior to engaging in virtue that is the mind's taking delight in that activity. It is like putting on great armor in that it affords a willingness to engage in extended activity.
2 effort of application—a mental delight while engaging in practice
3 effort of non-inferiority—a delight generated such that one will not be discouraged, thinking, 'How could one such as I do this?'
4 effort of irreversibility—a fullness of mental delight such that circumstances cannot divert one from engaging in virtuous activity

5 effort of non-satisfaction—a striving for higher qualities without being satisfied with achieving small virtues.

All auspicious qualities depend on effort.

Pliancy. Pliancy is a serviceability of mind and body such that the mind can be set on a virtuous object of observation as long as one likes; it has the function of removing all obstructions. It is of two types:

1 physical pliancy—through the power of meditative stabilization physical unserviceability is purified, whereupon the body is light like a ball of cotton and capable of being used in virtuous activity according to one's wish
2 mental pliancy—through the power of meditative stabilization the mind becomes free of unserviceability, whereupon it has the facility to engage in a virtuous aim without impediment.

The function of pliancy is specified as removing all obstructions because through its power all unfavorable conditions of mind and body are purified. Once pliancy is attained, meditative stabilization is increased from within; through this the bliss of pliancy increases, whereupon meditative stabilization again increases. Through this, in turn, the mind becomes empowered, when conjoined with special insight, to overcome obstructions.

Conscientiousness. Conscientiousness keeps the mind from contaminations and causes the achievement of virtue while abiding in effort. It keeps the mind from coming under the influence of the afflictions and has the function of serving as a basis for the achievement of all mundane and supramundane marvels. Conscientiousness is of five types:

1 conscientiousness with respect to the former—a remedying of past faults in accordance with the doctrine
2 conscientiousness with respect to the later—an earnest intention to remedy future faults
3 conscientiousness with respect to the middle—remedying faults without forgetfulness in the present

4 conscientiousness prior to activity—a tightening of the mind, thinking, 'How nice it would be if I could behave and abide in such a way that faults do not arise!'
5 conscientiousness of concordant behavior—abiding and behaving in such a way that faults do not arise.

Conscientiousness is very important as a root of all grounds and paths.

Equanimity. Equanimity is an evenness of mind, a dwelling in a natural state, and a spontaneous abiding discordant with the afflictions. It is associated with non-attachment, non-hatred, and non-ignorance and has the function of not allowing an opportunity for the afflictions.

In dependence on techniques for setting the mind one-pointedly, the nine states of mind (see pp.80-86) are gradually achieved. When the ninth is attained, the exertion of using the antidotes to laxity and excitement is no longer needed. At that point one attains a spontaneous abiding of the mind on its object, and with this state an equanimity that involves non-application of the antidotes to laxity and excitement is attained. Thus, equanimity here is an equanimity of application, not an equanimity of feeling nor the immeasurable equanimity of wishing that all sentient beings abide in an equanimity free of desire and hatred, intimacy and alienness.

The function of equanimity is specified as not allowing an opportunity for the afflictions because when the ninth state of mind is attained, it is easy to overcome the afflictions of the Desire Realm and also at the time of meditative equipoise laxity and excitement do not arise.

Non-harmfulness. Non-harmfulness is a compassionate attitude, included as part of non-hatred, which is patience devoid of intention to injure. It observes suffering sentient beings and thinks, 'May they be free of such suffering!' The function of non-harmfulness, not injuring sentient beings, is said to be the essence of Buddha's teachings.

These eleven virtuous mental factors are called 'natural virtues' because they are virtuous entities in themselves, without depending on consideration of other factors such as motivation and so forth. Though these eleven are the principal virtues, there are four other types:

1 virtue through relation—the minds and mental factors that accompany any of the eleven virtues
2 virtue through subsequent relation—virtuous predispositions established by virtuous minds and mental factors
3 virtue through motivation—physical and verbal actions motivated by faith and so forth
4 virtue through ultimacy—suchness, or emptiness, is designated a virtue because when one observes and meditates on it, all obstructions are purified; however, it is not an actual virtue.

From the viewpoint of state or situation, virtues are divided into eight types:

1 virtue by way of attainment at birth—such as faith that arises through the force of predispositions established in former lifetimes without depending on familiarization in this lifetime
2 virtue by way of application—such as the faith of wishing to attain Buddhahood that arises in dependence on relying on a virtuous spiritual guide, listening to the excellent doctrine, properly taking such to mind, and achieving doctrines that are conducive to attaining nirvana
3 virtue by way of an activity in front—imagining, for instance, a field of assembly of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and so forth in front of oneself, and then bowing down and making offerings
4 virtue by way of helping—actions such as ripening sentient beings by way of the four means of gathering students (giving articles, teaching the means for attaining high status in cyclic existence and definite goodness, causing others to practice what is beneficial, and behaving that way oneself)
5 virtue by way of bearing—such as wholesome actions that serve as the means for attaining high status and definite goodness

6 virtue by way of acting as an antidote—such as actions that possess the special power of directly overcoming objects of abandonment and the unfavorable
7 virtue by way of pacification—such as true cessations
8 virtue by way of concordant cause—such as the five clairvoyances and ten powers that arise through the force of attaining true cessations.

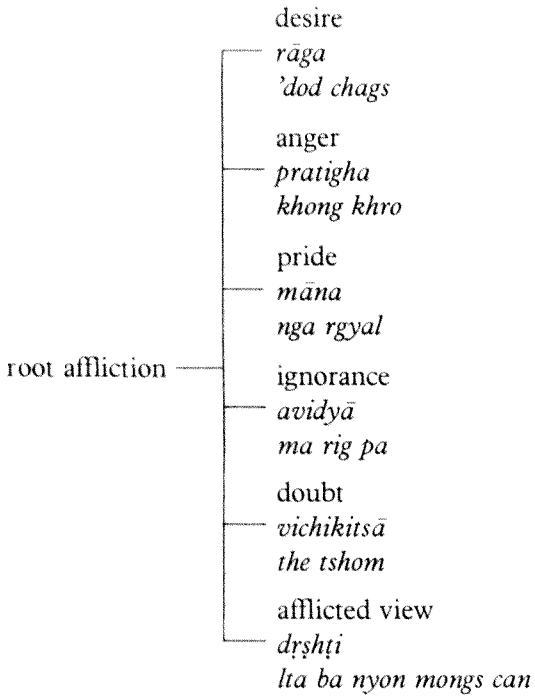
A similar presentation of seven types is made with respect to non-virtues:

1 non-virtue by way of attainment at birth—such as spontaneously engaging in murder due to predispositions from a former lifetime
2 non-virtue by way of application—such as misconduct of body, speech, and mind that arises in dependence on relying on a non-virtuous friend, listening to specious doctrine, improperly taking such to mind, and so forth
3 non-virtue by way of an activity in front—such as offering a blood sacrifice to an image
4 non-virtue by way of harming—such as actions of body, speech, and mind that injure sentient beings
5 non-virtue by way of bearing—such as actions impelling future lifetimes and actions completing the character of a future lifetime that yield only suffering as their fruit
6 non-virtue by way of non-conduciveness—such as bad views that prevent generation of non-contaminated paths
7 non-virtue by way of interruption—such as bad views that interfere with virtuous activity.

Root afflictions. Afflictions, in general, are defined as knowers that, when generated, cause the mental continuum to be very unpeaceful. The six root afflictions, which are so called because they are the sources of all other afflictions, are shown in Chart 26.

Desire. Desire perceives an internal or external contaminated phenomenon to be pleasant from the point of view of its own

Chart 26: *Divisions of Root Afflictions*



entity and thereupon seeks it. It has the function of generating suffering. Like oil that has set in cloth, desire adheres to its object of observation and thus is difficult to separate from it.

Desire is divided into three types: desire of the Desire Realm, desire of the Form Realm, and desire of the Formless Realm. The reason for stating that the function of desire is the generation of suffering is that the root of all suffering is birth, and the main cause of birth in cyclic existence is desire, or attachment.

Anger. Anger is an intention to harm sentient beings, to harm sufferings in one's own continuum, or to harm phenomena that are sources of suffering (such as thorns). It has the function of causing oneself not to remain in contact with happiness and serves as a basis for misconduct. Through anger, one does not

abide in happiness in this lifetime, and immeasurable suffering is induced in the future.

Pride. Pride depends on the view of the transitory collection as a real I and has the aspect of a puffing up of the mind upon observing one's own wealth, qualities, youth, and so forth. It has the function of serving as a basis for the arising of disrespect and suffering. There are seven types of pride:

1 pride—a puffing up of the mind, thinking that one is superior to lower persons
2 excessive pride—a puffing up of the mind, thinking that one is superior to equal persons
3 pride beyond pride—a puffing up of the mind, thinking that one is greatly superior even to persons who are superior to others
4 pride of thinking I—a puffing up of the mind, observing the appropriated aggregates of mind and body and thinking, 'I'
5 pride of conceit—a puffing up of the mind, thinking that one has attained what has not been attained, such as clairvoyance or meditative stabilization
6 pride of slight inferiority—a puffing up of the mind, thinking that one is just a little lower than others who are actually greatly superior
7 wrongful pride—a puffing up the mind, thinking that one has attained auspicious qualities when one has actually deviated from the path, such as claiming high attainments when one has actually been carried away by a spirit.

Because pride causes disrespect for high qualities and for those who possess high qualities, it serves to obstruct the new attainment of doctrines of verbalization and realization, to cause rebirth in bad migrations, and, even when reborn as a human, to cause birth in a low class, such as a servant. Thus, it produces the unwanted in both this and later lives.

Ignorance. Ignorance is an absence of knowledge that involves obscuration with respect to the status of phenomena. It has the

function of serving as a basis for the arising of false ascertainment, doubt, and afflictions. Its principal antidote is the wisdom cognizing selflessness.

Ignorance is of two types: obscuration with respect to actions and their effects and obscuration with respect to suchness. The latter serves as the causal motivation for all rebirth in cyclic existence, but in terms of operational motivation at the time of actions, obscuration with respect to actions and their effects is specified as the cause of accumulating actions that result in birth in bad migrations whereas obscuration with respect to suchness is specified as the cause of accumulating actions that result in birth in happy migrations.

In dependence on ignorance, the other afflictions arise, and in dependence on them contaminated actions are accumulated. From those, all sufferings in cyclic existence are produced. Therefore, all afflictions and faults arise in dependence on ignorance.

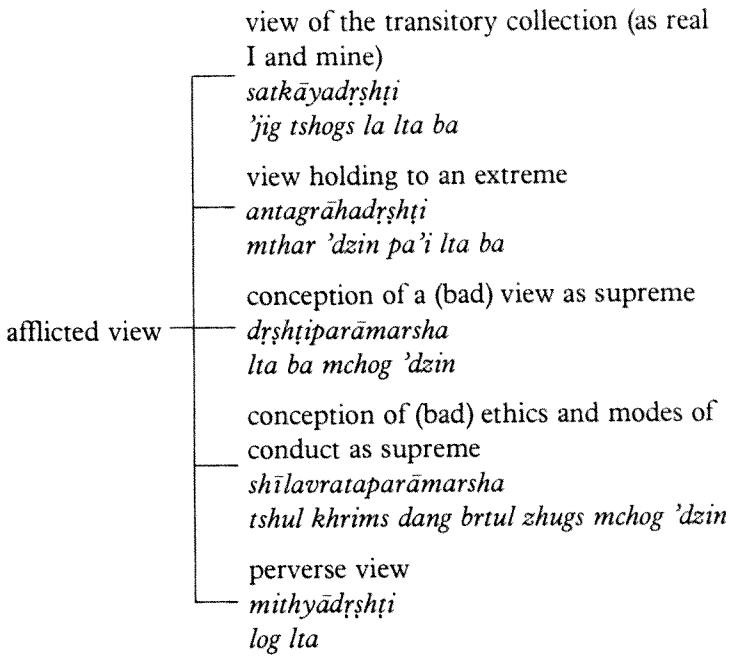
Doubt. Doubt is a two-pointedness of mind with respect to the four noble truths, actions and their effects, and so forth. It has the function of serving as a basis for non-engagement in virtues. Doubt obstructs all virtuous activities and especially interferes with seeing the truth.

Afflicted views. There are five afflicted views: (see Chart 27).

View of the transitory collection. A view of the transitory collection observes the appropriated mental and physical aggregates and conceives them to be a real I and mine. It is an *endurance* in the sense of not fearing the mistakenness of inherently existent I and mine; a *desire* in the sense of seeking a mistaken object; an *intelligence* in the sense of thoroughly discriminating its object; a *conception* in the sense of adhering strongly to its object; and a *view* in the sense of observing its object. A view of the transitory has the function of serving as a basis for all bad views.

It is called the view of the transitory collection because the mental and physical aggregates, which are the base of the view,

Chart 27: *Divisions of Afflicted Views*



are impermanent, and thus transitory, and are a composite of the plural, and thus a collection. The name itself indicates that there is no permanent and partless person. (See p.176 for its divisions.)

A view of the transitory collection conceives of an inherently existent I and exaggerates the distinction between self and other. Thereupon, desire for one's own side and hatred for others arises.[168] Through viewing the self, pride is generated, a view of the self as eternal or as annihilated at death arises, and the conception of one's own bad behavior as superior is generated. Similarly, teachers of selflessness and their teachings of cause and effect, the four noble truths, the Three Jewels, and so forth are conceived to be non-existent or become objects of doubt. In this way, the view of the transitory collection acts as the basis of all afflictions. Although usually identified as ignorance, in this context its relation to ignorance is like the relation of a mind conceiving the presence of a snake to the dimness surrounding a rope in a dark area.

View holding to an extreme. A view holding to an extreme observes the self as apprehended by the view of the transitory collection and conceives it to be either permanent in the sense of unchanging or annihilated in the sense of not transmigrating to another lifetime. Since it causes descent to the extremes of permanence and annihilation, it has the function of obstructing progress on the middle way free from the two extremes. As above, it is an endurance, desire, intelligence, conception, and view.

Conception of a (bad) view as supreme. A conception of a (bad) view to be supreme observes a view of the transitory collection, a view holding to an extreme, a perverse view, or the mental and physical aggregates in dependence on which these views arise and conceives such (1) to be supreme in the sense of claiming it to be perfect, (2) to be chief in the sense of holding that there is nothing greater, (3) to be superior, or (4) to be ultimate in the sense of holding that it has no equal. A conception of a (bad) view to be supreme has the function of serving as a basis for adhering strongly to bad views in that it establishes predispositions for not separating from them in this and future lives. As above, it is an endurance, desire, intelligence, conception, and view.

Conception of (bad) ethics and modes of conduct as supreme. A conception of (bad) ethics and modes of conduct to be supreme takes as its object (1) a faulty system of ethics that is intended to abandon faulty ethics, (2) a faulty mode of conduct that prescribes dress, behavior and physical and verbal activities, or (3) the mental and physical aggregates in dependence on which these are performed. It considers these to purify sins, liberate from afflictions, and release from cyclic existence. It has the function of serving as a basis for fruitless fatigue. As above, it is an endurance, desire, intelligence, conception, and view.

Perverse view. A perverse view is a denial of cause, effect, functionality, and existent phenomena and can involve holding that Īshvara and so forth are the cause of beings migrating in cyclic existence. Denial of cause is a view that good and bad

behavior and so forth do not exist. Denial of effect is a view that fruitions of virtuous and sinful actions do not exist. Denial of functionality is a view that former and later lives and so forth do not exist. Denial of existent phenomena is a view that, for example, attainment of the state of a Foe Destroyer does not exist.

Perverse views have the function of severing virtuous roots, causing tight adherence to non-virtuous roots, serving as a basis for engaging in non-virtue, and causing non-engagement in virtue. Since denial of cause, effect, and rebirth sever all virtuous roots, these are the worst among all perverse views.

Secondary afflictions. The twenty secondary afflictions, which are so called because they are close to or portions of the root afflictions, are shown in Chart 28.

Belligerence. Belligerence is an intention to harm another through striking and so forth when one is in any of the nine situations of harmful intent, thinking:

1 'This person has harmed me.'
2 'This person is harming me.'
3 'This person will harm me.'
4 'This person has harmed my friend.'
5 'This person is harming my friend.'
6 'This person will harm my friend.'
7 'This person has helped my enemy.'
8 'This person is helping my enemy.'
9 'This person will help my enemy.'

Belligerence has the function of serving as a basis for bearing weapons, punishing, and preparing to injure others. It differs from the root affliction anger in that anger is an impatience and intent to harm that arises when a harmful sentient being, or one's own suffering, or sources of suffering appear to the mind. Belligerence is an extremely disturbed state of mind which, upon a great increase of anger, is a wish to inflict harm on another such as by physically striking that person when he is in one's presence.

Chart 28: *Divisions of Secondary Afflictions*

- secondary affliction
  - belligerence, *krodha, khro ba*
  - resentment, *upanāha, 'khon 'dzin*
  - concealment, *mrakṣha, 'chab pa*
  - spite, *pradāsha, 'tshig pa*
  - jealousy, *irṣhyā, phrag dog*
  - miserliness, *mātsarya, ser sna*
  - deceit, *māyā, sgyu*
  - dissimulation, *shāṭhya, g.yo*
  - haughtiness, *mada, rgyags pa*
  - harmfulness, *vihiṃsā, rnam par 'tshe ba*
  - non-shame, *āhrīkya, ngo tsha med pa*
  - non-embarrassment, *anapatrāpya, khrel med pa*
  - lethargy, *styāna, rmugs pa*
  - excitement, *auddhatya, rgod pa*
  - non-faith, *āshraddhya, ma dad pa*
  - laziness, *kausīdya, le lo*
  - non-conscientiousness, *pramāda, bag med pa*
  - forgetfulness, *muṣhitasmṛtitā, brjed nges pa*
  - non-introspection, *asaṃprajanya, shes bzhin ma yin pa*
  - distraction, *vikṣhepa, rnam par g.yeng ba*

Resentment. Resentment is a wish to harm or to answer harm, involving non-release of a continuum of anger. It has the function of serving as a basis for impatience.

Concealment. Concealment is a wish, through the force of ignorance, to hide a fault when another person, such as a spiritual guide, points out that fault. It has the function of increasing faults, of serving as a basis for contrition and not abiding in contact with happiness, and of impelling rebirth in bad migrations.

Spite. Spite is a wish, through the force of belligerence and resentment, to speak harsh words out of ill-will to another who has pointed out a fault. It has the function of causing one not to abide in happiness in this lifetime by causing engagement in many faulty actions, such as speaking harsh words, and by generating many non-meritorious actions. Spite also generates unpleasant fruitions in future lives.

Jealousy. Jealousy is a disturbance of the mind from the depths that involves an inability to bear another's fortune due to being attached to goods and services. It involves hatred and has the function of causing discomfort of mind and not abiding in contact with happiness.

Miserliness. Miserliness is a tight holding onto articles without letting them go through the power of attachment to goods and services. It has the function of serving as a basis for the non-diminishment of possessions, and it generates the unwanted in this and later lives.

Deceit. Deceit is a pretension of having good qualities, whereas one does not, through the force of strong attachment to goods and services. As in the case of the hypocrisy of pretending to have a disciplined mind in order to deceive others, deceit can involve ignorance and desire and has the function of serving as a basis for wrong livelihood. 'Wrong livelihood' refers to deceitfully gaining goods

(1) through hypocrisy, (2) through speaking soft words in accordance with another's thought, (3) through praising others' possessions, (4) through speaking on the faults of miserliness and so forth, and (5) through praising another's act of giving and so forth.

Dissimulation. Dissimulation is a wish to hide one's faults from others through the force of desire for goods and services. Both dissimulation and deceit have the function of preventing the attainment of true preceptual instruction and cause one in this and future lifetimes not to meet with a Mahāyāna spiritual guide.

Haughtiness. Haughtiness is a puffing up of the mind through taking joy and comfort in observing one's own good health, youth, beauty, power, signs of long life, prosperity, and so forth. It has the function of serving as a basis for all afflictions and secondary afflictions and acts as a root of non-conscientiousness.

Harmfulness. Harmfulness is an unmerciful wish to harm other sentient beings. Involving anger, it is a lack of compassion as in wanting to harm or to cause others to harm, or in taking delight when seeing or hearing of harm to sentient beings. It has the function of injuring others.

Non-shame. Non-shame is a non-avoidance of faults from the viewpoint of one's own disapproval or of religious prohibition. It can involve desire, hatred, and ignorance and has the function of assisting all root afflictions and secondary afflictions. For example, if a monk, when encountering an intoxicant, did not avoid drinking it, thinking, 'This is something I should not do,' he would have the mental factor of non-shame.

Non-embarrassment. Non-embarrassment is non-avoidance of faults from the viewpoint of another's disapproval. It can involve desire, hatred, and ignorance and has the function of assisting all root afflictions and secondary afflictions. If one does

not avoid faults thinking that the Teacher Buddha and clairvoyant gods would be disturbed and others would criticize oneself, one would have non-embarrassment. It and non-shame assist all afflictions and act as causes of all faults, for without a wish to avoid faults, one cannot keep from them. Thus, these two mental factors are said to accompany all non-virtuous minds.

Lethargy. Lethargy is a heaviness and unserviceability of body and mind. It involves ignorance and has the function of assisting all root and secondary afflictions, for in dependence on lethargy these increase.

Excitement. Excitement is a scattering of the mind to attributes of the Desire Realm experienced previously and an engagement in them with attachment. Excitement is a non-peacefulness of mind that involves desirous engagement in the pleasant; it has the function of preventing calm abiding. Thus, all scatterings of the mind are not instances of excitement since excitement is a portion of desire whereas the mind is frequently distracted to objects by way of afflictions other than desire and even scatters to virtuous objects of observation. Scattering involving desire is both scattering and excitement whereas other instances are just scattering.

Non-faith. Non-faith is non-conviction, non-delight, and non-wishing with respect to virtuous phenomena. It involves ignorance and has the function of serving as a basis for laziness. Non-faith is the opposite of the three types of faith; it is non-conviction in actions and their effects, etc., non-delight and dislike of the possessors of auspicious qualities such as the Three Jewels, and non-wishing or non-seeking of liberation and so forth.

Laziness. Laziness is a non-delight in virtue due to attachment to lying down and so forth. It involves ignorance and has the function of preventing application in virtue. (See p.71.)

Non-conscientiousness. Non-conscientiousness causes a looseness of mind, not keeping it from afflictions and faults and

resulting in non-cultivation of virtuous phenomena. It can involve an abiding in desire, hatred, and ignorance as well as laziness and has the function of serving as a basis for the increase of non-virtues and decrease of virtues.

Forgetfulness. Forgetfulness is an unclarity of mind and a forgetting of virtuous objects through mindfulness of objects of the afflictions. It has the function of serving as a basis for distraction in that, based on afflicted mindfulness, the mind is distracted to the objects of observation of the afflictions.

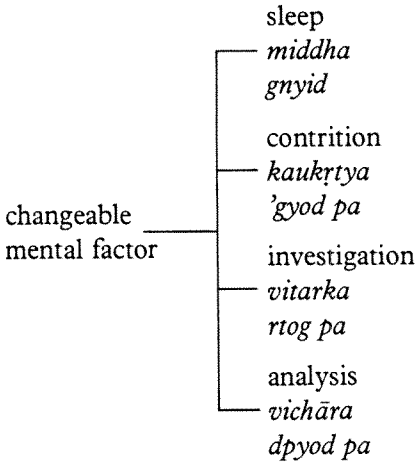
Non-introspection. Non-introspection is an unknowing engagement in physical, verbal, and mental deeds. It has the function of serving as a basis for the infractions of codes of ethics.

Distraction. Distraction is a scattering of the mind from its object of observation. It can involve desire, hatred, and ignorance and has the function of preventing separation from desire. Excitement is a scattering of the mind to pleasant objects whereas distraction is a scattering to any object.

Changeable mental factors. The four changeable mental factors are so called because they become virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral by the power of the motivation and the minds accompanying them. They are shown in Chart 29.

Sleep. Sleep is a powerless withdrawal inside of the engagement by sense consciousnesses in objects. It depends on causes such as heaviness of body, weakness, fatigue, taking the figure of darkness to mind, and so forth. Sleep involves ignorance and has the function of serving as a basis for losing virtuous activities. The proper time for sleep is the middle watch of the night, not the first or last watches nor during the day. During the middle watch of the night one should sleep with a wish to practice virtue, and not motivated by afflictions. Thus, there are two types of sleep, virtuous and non-virtuous, the latter having the function of degenerating virtuous activities.

Chart 29: *Divisions of Changeable Mental Factors*



Contrition. Contrition is remorse or regret for a deed done by oneself in accordance with one's own thought or upon pressure by someone else which one subsequently comes to dislike. It involves ignorance and has the function of interrupting the stability of the mind. Contrition is of three types:

1 virtuous—remorse for sins done previously
2 non-virtuous—remorse for meritorious actions done previously, such as making donations and then feeling sorry for having depleted one's wealth
3 neutral—remorse for activities that neither helped nor harmed others, such as making a mistake sewing.

Contrition for sins is suitable when their fruition has not yet occurred and they can still be affected by confession and so forth. When the fruition of a sin has already occurred, such as in having been born blind, contrition can no longer overcome the effect of the deed.

Investigation and analysis. Investigation is an inquiry into the rough entities of objects as well as their names whereas analysis is a fine discrimination of these. In dependence on their objects,

investigation and analysis are of three types, virtuous, non-virtuous, and neutral. The virtuous, such as analyzing selflessness with an intention to emerge from cyclic existence, has the function of serving as a basis for abiding in contact with happiness in that it generates pleasant effects. Non-virtuous investigation and analysis, such as inquiring into pleasant and unpleasant objects motivated by desire and hatred, has the function of serving as a basis for not abiding in happiness in that it generates unpleasant effects. Investigation and analysis into crafts, styles, and so forth without a virtuous or non-virtuous attitude are neutral. (For another way of presenting consciousness see Appendix 1.)

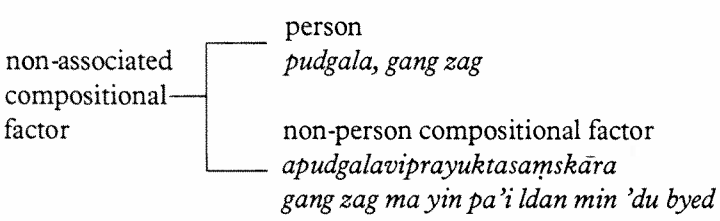
Non-associated compositional factors

Source

Gön-chok-den-bay-drön-may's *Beginnings of Annotations on (Dzong-ka-ba's) 'Essence of the Good Explanations'*

The final division of impermanent phenomena is comprised of compositional factors which are neither form nor consciousness.[169] They are called compositional factors because of being factors that allow for the aggregation of causes and conditions and for the production, abiding, and cessation of products. They are called 'non-associated' because, unlike minds, they are not associated with minds or mental factors. Non-associated compositional factors are divided into two types:

Chart 30: *Divisions of Non-Associated Compositional Factors*



A person is a non-associated compositional factor because of being designated in dependence upon a collection of form and consciousness. Since a person is neither form nor consciousness but impermanent, it can be only an instance of the remaining category

of impermanent phenomena, a non-associated compositional factor.

Non-person non-associated compositional factors are of twenty-three types (see Chart 31). These twenty-three are called 'designations to states'. 'Acquisition' is designated to a state of the increase and decrease of virtues and so forth, of which there are two types: 'finding acquisition' which is a new attainment of such increase or decrease and 'possessive acquisition' which is the retention of it.

'Absorption without discrimination' is designated to a state involving a lack of the coarse feelings and discriminations associated with the third concentration and below. It is produced in dependence on the fourth concentration by common beings only. 'Absorption of cessation' is designated to a state achieved only by Superiors in which there is a lack of the coarse feelings and discriminations associated with the peak of cyclic existence (the highest formless level) and below. 'One having no discrimination' is designated to the state of a person born among the gods in the condition of being without coarse feelings and discriminations.

'Life faculty' or 'life' is designated to the state of living; it is the base of consciousness and warmth. 'Similarity of type' is designated to the state or condition of likeness. 'Birth' (or 'production'), 'aging', 'duration', and 'impermanence' are designated to states of the characteristics of things. 'Group of stems', 'group of words', and 'group of letters' are designated to various states of verbal conventions. Stems are bare names without case endings, etc., whereas words are stems with case endings, etc.

'State of an ordinary being' is designated to one who has not attained the qualities of Superiors. (The Vaibhāṣhikas substitute non-acquisition for this category and do not assert the remaining nine, limiting their presentation of non-associated compositional factors to fourteen.) 'Continuity' is designated to the non-interrupted state of a continuum of causes and effects. 'Distinction' is of three types: distinction of the particular and the general, distinction of virtues and sins and pleasures and pains, and distinction of causes and effects. 'Relatedness' is of three