

More Questions for Karl Brunnhölzl

1. Is conceptuality necessarily based on ignorance? Is all ignorance conceptual? Can ignorance exist without conceptuality?

Best to debate the relationship between conceptuality and ignorance! Conceptuality is not always based on ignorance, for example, inferential valid cognition. In other words, it can be based on prajna. Not all ignorance is conceptual, for example the clinging to dualistic appearance is not necessarily conceptual (such as in one's sense perceptions). In bodhisattvas, there is still subtle ignorance, most of which is nonconceptual, based on latent tendencies

2. Who are the four sons of Phatsap (sp?)?

Tsangba Sarbö (Tib. gtsang pa sar sbos), Majaba Jangchub Yeshe (Tib. rma bya pa byang chub ye shes), Ngar Yönten Tra (Tib. ngar yon tan grags), and Shang Tangsagba Yeshe Jungnay (Tib. zhang thang sag pa ye shes 'byung gnas).

3. Is emptiness and/or selflessness generally characterized or specifically characterized? If it's generally characterized, how can it be the object of a direct valid cognition? If it's specifically characterized, how can it perform a function?

As usual, different people give different answers, some say that emptiness is specifically characterized, some say it is generally characterized (such as a nonimplicative negation), some say it is neither. Most masters except for the Gelugpas say that it is definitely not generally characterized, otherwise it could never be directly perceived by yogic direct valid cognition. Most explain emptiness not in terms of Dudra categories, because, strictly speaking, it not really a phenomenon in the first place. It is said to be beyond existence, nonexistence, both and neither, so how can it be existent? Since it is not an existent, how can it be specifically characterized or generally characterized? However, by equating it with buddha nature, nonconceptual wisdom, and so on, some explain emptiness as the ultimate entity that is able to perform a function.

4. Things are divided in terms of entity into matter, mind, and non-associated formations. The five skandhas are generally divided into matter (form) and mind (sensation, perception, formation, and

consciousness). Are non-associated formations within the fourth skandha of formation? Are they then mind, meaning things can only be divided into matter and mind (with non-associated formations as a subset of mind)? If nafs are neither mind nor matter why are they included in the fourth skandha?

Naf belong to the fourth skandha, but they are not mind. They are included in that skandha as a terminological classification, not in terms of entity. For those people who assert nafs, they have to go somewhere, unless you want to have a sixth skandha, and among all skandhas, they fit best in the fourth (associated and non-associated formations). However, some say that nafs are just imputations and thus do not really exist. Thus, they do not present them anywhere.