

Substantial Existence & Establishment

Excerpts from Vaibhashika in *Meditation on Emptiness* by Jeffrey Hopkins

'Vaibhashika' (*Bye brag smra ba*) also means one who asserts that past, present, and future objects are all instances (*vishesha, bye brag*) of 'substantial entities' (*dravya, rdzas*). It is further said that Vaibhashikas are so called because, like the non-Buddhist Vaisheshikas, they propound many 'substantially established phenomena' (*dravyasiddhadharma, rdzas grub kyi chos*) such as uncaused space which the other Buddhist systems say are existent but only designated by thought.

Both ultimate and conventional truths are substantially established (*dravyasiddha, rdzas grub*), though only ultimate ones are substantially existent (*dravyasat, rdzas yod*). Vaibhashika is the only school to differentiate 'substantially established' and 'substantially existent', the intention being to provide a status of 'substantiality' for conventional truths. Though conventional truths are imputedly existent (*prajnaptisat, btags yod*) they are substantially established because in this system these imputations are true; when the objects designated are sought, an autonomous entity is found.

Self-Sufficiently Knowable Phenomena

From "Self-Sufficiently Knowable and Imputedly Knowable Objects" by Dr. Alexander Berzin

<https://studybuddhism.com/en/advanced-studies/lam-rim/emptiness-advanced/self-sufficiently-knowable-and-imputedly-knowable-objects>

In general, there are four ways of asserting substantial existence (*rdzas-yod*):

1. Substantial existence in the sense of being stable and unchanging (*brten-pa mi-'gyur ba'i rdzas-yod*). This includes only static (*rtag-pa*, permanent), unaffected (*'dus ma-byas*, unconditioned) phenomena.
2. Substantial existence in the sense of being able to perform a function (*don-byed-nus-pa'i rdzas-yod*). This includes only nonstatic (*mi-rtag-pa*, impermanent), affected (*'dus-byas*, conditioned) phenomena.
3. Substantial existence in the sense of being established logically (*rigs-pas grub-pa'i rdzas-yod*). This includes all existent phenomena. This is also known as substantial existence established by being the focus of valid cognition (*tshad-ma'i dmigs-pa'i rdzas-yod*).
4. Substantial existence in the sense of being self-sufficient (*rang-rkya thub-pa'i rdzas-yod*, self-sufficiently substantially existent). This includes only forms of physical phenomena (*Dzugs*) and ways of being aware of something (*shes-pa*).

All Buddhist tenet systems agree that only self-sufficient substantial existence is definitional substantial existence (*rdzas-yod mtshan-nyid-pa*). ... A self-sufficiently substantially existent phenomenon is defined as "a validly knowable phenomenon that, when actually cognized (*dngos-bzung*), does not rely on actual cognition of or by something else." ... "Actual cognition of something else" refers, for example, to actual cognition of the phenomenon's basis for imputation (*Ddags-gzhi*, basis for labeling). ... Let us call "self-sufficiently substantially existent" "self-sufficiently knowable" for short. In full, self-sufficiently knowable phenomena are "phenomena that substantially exist as things that are self-sufficiently knowable."